

# Book Thug

## Spring 2016 catalogue

Adventures in Literary Publishing since 2004

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD THUG

Dear Amazing Bookseller, hello!

As I pieced together this catalogue, I found myself thinking about discoverability. I've been thinking about it for years, actually: How does a press like BookThug get noticed in the wide sea of literary publishing? An acquaintance of mine once shared with me a graph that mapped the populations of North America against the number of books published each year. In 1913 there were approximately 1,200 readers for any given book that was published. Move forward in time and we're presently swimming in books of every size, shape, and description coming into the market on a daily basis. In fact, if the graph is accurate, there are more books published today than there are available readers to consume them, let alone absorb them and discuss them and make them part of our living culture. And while it's a fabulous time to be a reader of the world, small-press publishers like BookThug are left to strategize around one big (huge!) question: How can we cut through the clutter, to get our authors' writing into the hands of more readers?

One simple step we've taken—that's no secret if you've kept up with our publishing catalogue over the years—is to acquire new, engaging, and contemporary work that pushes boundaries. In a way, we built BookThug because we'd been looking for a publishing house that was willing to take chances and get people talking, and each and every book we publish is selected for a particular aesthetic reason that helps to define our publishing territory in new and exciting ways. We're careful to ensure that each book contains a clearly unique voice, and it's fascinating to hear how that voice speaks with and to all the books we've published before and will publish in the future. We're always excited and delighted by each author's contribution to the party we invited them to, and we're particularly proud of the ways in which BookThug authors take risks with their work—asking questions and, well, demanding discussion about writing and the world we live in.

In spring 2016, we have a wide variety of such writing for your most discerning patrons to enjoy. This includes four new works of fiction that tackle a variety of contemporary issues:

The amazing Jacob Wren is back with an enticing and slightly unnerving novel, *Rich and Poor* (which, yes, kind of sounds like it could be a Russian novel. But fear not, it's anything but!)—a new literary political thriller that tackles the ever-growing divide between these two economic poles with compelling language that frames "the personal as political" like never before.

In something of a companion (yet wholly original) book, we're also excited to be publishing a debut novel by our very own fiction editor Malcolm Sutton. *Job Shadowing* examines the relationship between labour and identity, and explores what it means to be involved in the process of art-making in our current contracted economic climate.

The flash fiction of Stephen Thomas's *The Jokes* reinvents the 'short-take' in cerebral ways that stretch the concept of the punchline into something beyond mere humour.

And Joni Murphy's *Double Teenage* tells the story of two teenage girls and their relationship to the over-sexualized and uber-violent nature of the world they, and all of us, live in. Smartly engaged with what it means to be a woman in our contemporary times, *Double Teenage* is the antidote for getting out of girlhood alive.

The latest contribution to our diverse creative nonfiction list comes from none other than prominent Canadian poet Margaret Christakos. *Her Paraphernalia: On Motherlines, Sex/Blood/Loss and Selfies* is an uncompromising and original book that cracks the genre wide open: it is an open, human, and beautiful book that will change readers' conceptions of memoir forever.

Poetry holds a special place in our hearts at BookThug. This spring, we're featuring five titles to tantalize readers of all stripes:

We have a great new collection by Phil Hall titled *Conjugation*. We know how hard Phil has worked to hone the work in this collection: one time he detailed to us a dream he had about one of the poems that resulted in him waking up to rearrange the order of the words in a line. He has been working on these poems and sequences night and day, it would seem, and the result is another stunning collection that bridges his typical confessional openness that we know and love with formal experimentation.

The spring also harkens the work of two Vancouver-based poets: Adrienne Gruber's sexually fluid *Buoyancy Control* explores the relationship between land and sea and mind and body, and will rescue readers from any finite definition of self that they may hold claim to. *Waiting Room*, a collection of poems from Jennifer Zilm, ruminates on that space we all sit in before the therapy begins, whether it be mental or physical. Zilm's work bridges the realm of patience and patients, and we're excited to introduce this emerging poet to new readers.

In a similar vein to Margaret Christakos' book on motherlines we have a wonderful translation from the French about the relationship between fathers and sons. *My Dinosaur* by François Turcot, rendered into English by Erin Moure, is a stunning sequence of poems that stands as testament to memory and loss, and is a beautiful tribute to all our dads.

Lastly, we're releasing a newly uncovered work through our Department of Reissue. Historically, tricksters Jerrold Levy and Richard Negro ruffled some feathers when they created *Poems of Gerard Legro*. This important and heretofore unpublished document of the Black Mountain School has been edited and contextualized by Canadian expat scholar Alessandro Porco for contemporary readers and scholars.

To close, dear Bookseller, let me just say how much we appreciate your role in providing readers with opportunities to discover our books and our authors. Just as we curate our lists for our community, we know that you curate your store for yours. Your care and attention to stocking and displaying and sharing our titles in your stores provides a gateway to new readers every day, and we'd love more than anything for our communities to continue to come together to celebrate reading in the years to come.

**Jay MillAr**

Publisher (and BookThug forever)



SPRING 2016

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SPRING 2016

COVER NOT FINAL

## FRONTLIST FICTION



### Rich and Poor Jacob Wren

*Who hasn't, at one time or another, considered killing a billionaire?*

Following on the critical success of his novel *Polyamorous Love Song* (BookThug, 2014; finalist for the Fence Modern Prize in Prose and one of *The Globe and Mail's* 100 best books of 2014), Canadian writer and performer Jacob Wren picks up the mantle of the politically and economically disenfranchised in *Rich and Poor*—the story of a middle-class, immigrant pianist who has fallen on hard times, and now finds himself washing dishes to make ends meet.

Wren capably balances personal reflections with real-time political events, as his protagonist awakens to the possibility of a solution to his troubles and begins to formulate a plan of attack, in which the only answer is to get rid of “the 1%.”

*Rich and Poor* is a rare work of literary fiction that cuts into the psychology of politics in ways that are off-kilter, unexpected, and unnerving. In drawing comparisons to fiction that focuses on “the personal as political” (including Chris Kraus’s *Summer of Hate* and Roberto Bolaño’s *The Savage Detectives*), *Rich and Poor* is a compelling, fast-paced, and energizing read for adventure-seeking, politically active and/or interested readers who rowdily question their position among “the 99%.”

April 2016 | Fiction  
8x5.25 inches | 240 pages

Trade Paper: 9781771662383  
\$20.00

Author Hometown: Montréal, QC

#### Praise for *Polyamorous Love Song*:

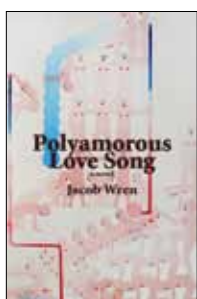
“The book of your dreams.” —*The Globe and Mail*

“*Polyamorous Love Song* is... surreal, transgressive, and unsettling. It has the capacity to not only deliver itself like a punch to the gut but also leave a lingering sting.”  
—*Quill & Quire* (starred review)

“As interdisciplinary as its author.... This is a surreal and unhinged examination of the nature of art and performance.... Worth reading.” —Keith Cadieux, *The Winnipeg Review*

“To enter the world of Jacob Wren’s novel *Polyamorous Love Song* is to enter a bizarre yet compelling dreamscape.... A thrilling though at times disturbing read, it is flirtatious and experimental, unconcerned with literary convention, and unapologetically playful yet utterly serious.... Imperfectly beautiful... fragmented, honest, and raw.”  
—Lesley Trites, *Montreal Review of Books*

#### By the Same Author:



*Polyamorous Love Song*  
Fiction  
Jacob Wren

Trade Paper  
8x5.25 inches  
9781771660303  
\$23.00

from *Rich and Poor*

1.

I will kill him. It will solve nothing and help no one, but, for me at least, it will bring something to an end. The poor must kill the rich, one at a time, at every opportunity. One man kills another and the message is clear, your wealth is cruel and unnatural. You can put fences, guards and dogs around your home, so you are like a prisoner in your own life, but if you are rich you will live in fear. You will fear your servants. You will look out the window of your limousine and, at every traffic light, wonder if each and every passerby has a gun and bullet with your name on it. It is only that the killing must be completely random. The victims having nothing in common other than their wealth, the killers nothing in common other than their poverty. The message should be clear: if you are rich you can be killed at any time. The police would arrest millions, but there would always be another poor man that could suddenly snap. We would only have to kill ten to start, to strike fear in the hearts of every billionaire in the world. And he will be the first. I will see to it.

On a social level, people have to look after each other, but on an ethical level, each of us has to look after ourselves. If you are a billionaire it is because you have done evil in the world. You have exploited and caused untold misery. You have bent laws and governments to your will. I don't want to shoot him. I want to strangle him with piano wire. I don't want to escape. I want to be caught and explain my idea to the world. I want to be executed. I now have nothing to lose. We will all be forgotten. But if ten of us manage to kill billionaires those ten will be remembered forever. Our poverty will become history. Wealth is impersonal, but we will make it personal again.

2.

Violence has always been a last resort. So much is possible without violence, but so much more with just the threat of it, and even more if you occasionally go over the top. I am not a violent man. Therefore I must work with violent men. Violent men I can trust. There are two kinds of violence I have made use of in my work: violence connected to a government and violence that takes place without any government knowledge. Both have their very specific, but separate, strategic dangers. When you can convince the government to do your violence for you the benefits are obvious, but there are also clear pitfalls: the government might lose popularity, be voted out or overthrown, and your business, having been closely associated with that particular government, might have to go as well. This scenario has played out in my professional life several times. However, even if this were to happen all is not lost, because there is still the possibility to convince the new government to continue working with you. Violence without the use of government is considerably more costly, since all expenses are your own, but what you lose in the form of money you gain in agency and independence.



Jacob Wren makes literature, performances, and exhibitions. His books include *Families Are Formed Through Copulation* (2007), *Revenge Fantasies of the Politically Dispossessed* (2010), and *Polyamorous Love Song* (BookThug, 2014; finalist for the 2013 Fence Modern Prize in Prose and one of *The Globe and Mail's* 100 best books of 2014). As co-artistic director of Montréal-based interdisciplinary group PME-ART, Wren has co-created the performances: *En français comme en anglais, it's easy to criticize* (1998), *Individualism Was A Mistake* (2008), *The DJ Who Gave Too Much Information* (2011), and *Every Song I've Ever Written* (2012). Wren lives in Montréal, travels internationally with alarming frequency, and frequently writes about contemporary art. Connect with him on his blog ([www.radicalcut.blogspot.com](http://www.radicalcut.blogspot.com)) or on Twitter @EverySongIveEve.

## FRONTLIST FICTION



### Job Shadowing Malcolm Sutton

BookThug is excited to publish *Job Shadowing*, the first full-length work of fiction by Malcolm Sutton, the widely published interdisciplinary artist and writer (and BookThug's own Fiction Editor).

As well as being thematically driven by the increasingly precarious employment situation of the present and the inescapable legacies of the Baby Boom generation, *Job Shadowing* interrogates ways in which two people can exist together in tight proximity: as a woman married to a man; as an ambitious employee joined to a problematic shadow; as an idealistic artist dependent on a wealthy employer; and as multiple generations negotiating their statuses with one another.

Sutton's work combines the transformational-fantastic with crystal-clear contemporary reality in two cross-cutting storylines: In the first, 40-year-old Gil, drawn by the promise of a job opportunity, becomes the real shadow of an ambitious 23-year-old woman employed by an educational company. In the second, Gil's wife, Etti, seeks a more lucrative source of income while expanding the limits of her artistic practice. Little does she expect that, upon venturing into a new line of work as memoirist to the ultra-wealthy Caslon, her role will go far beyond being a writer to something more like a mute witness to all of her client's worldly actions, from the mundane to the speculative to the violent. It's under these seemingly unbreakable contracts that Gil and Etti's lives are propelled into territories of ethical uncertainty, forcing them to rewrite their imagined futures.

Sutton's plot- and idea-driven novel delivers an imaginative take on the present-day crisis in work, particularly as it relates to identity and belonging. Its interrogative style, likened to the avant-garde writing of Tom McCarthy in *Satin Island*, explores the processes of art-making in our current social and economic moment. All of this makes *Job Shadowing* an intriguing and topical book that will appeal to readers of contemporary literary fiction with an experimental edge, and specifically people in their 20s, 30s, and 40s who might relate to the speculative world of un(der)employment living.

#### Praise for *Job Shadowing*:

"A smooth art thriller in the tradition of Bolaño, *Job Shadowing* meddles with corporate culture, dying domesticity and the living, breathing life of the alienated worker. Malcolm Sutton's work is stimulating and standalone."

—Tamara Faith Berger, author of *Maidenhead*

"*Job Shadowing* is a work of pure, energizing imagination that speaks directly to our times. As we hang on through each plausible yet impossible turn, the parallel worlds Malcolm Sutton effortlessly creates pull us ever-closer to the underlying currents and desires that make the personal political, then twist back around to become deeply personal once again. A book for our shadow-generation and, at the same time, a work of literature that just might subtly help us break free."

—Jacob Wren, author of *Polyamorous Love Song*

May 2016 | Fiction  
8x5.25 inches | 228 pages

Trade Paper: 9781771662024  
\$20.00

Author Hometown: Toronto, ON

#### Also of Interest:



*Giving Up*  
Fiction  
Mike Steeves

Trade Paper  
8x5.25 inches  
9781771660914  
\$20.00



## from *Job Shadowing*

The last time she was with F in person was at a big fundraising gala, where a selection of artists were invited to come for free, as attractions of the night – and in one sense they were the whole pretext for the event as the makers of art work that fed the gallery – while the rest paid at a fundraiser rate: philanthropists or people who identified themselves with an idea of art viewership and who were desirous to be part of it all. Etti was surprised she'd been invited, and perhaps only when an occasion like this gala came up did she consider what her ranking was among other artists of the city. The pedagogy of her work required time to explain, and its eventness, that it happened in time and space collaboratively, making it an effort to explain what it looked like, which was at the heart of what people almost always wanted to know. She had been at it for long enough that it was just what she did, it was an extension of her, and others who had followed her work over the years saw a new project just as the next iteration of a series of similar works, one more of her experiments with adolescents doing group work in strange places, or so she likely thought as she glanced around at the big players in the art world who were being celebrated. Her dear friend standing right beside her, had recently entered the art-world limelight, her name ballooning from the excavations she made of her ever-more-public sex-life, presenting her findings in a collision of mediums, often everyday objects from her life treated with a jarring arrangement, smart work propelled to the foreground because sex is always foreground, but also because her variety of honest excavation slipped in amid a present Zeitgeist. The work was unadorned and unsentimental except where sentimentality enabled a sense of vulnerability to come through. People were taking it seriously, people were taking F very seriously, and among those doing the vulnerable open sex thing F had risen into visibility while some had remained obscure. Even Etti was likely taking it more seriously now that the timing was right, now that it had become part of what really felt like a historical moment. Somehow its coincidence with the energy of the moment overshadowed all the flaws of the work that might still have remained there. All this to the degree that Etti was starting to think that maybe she needed to do more to embrace the current Zeitgeist in her own work.

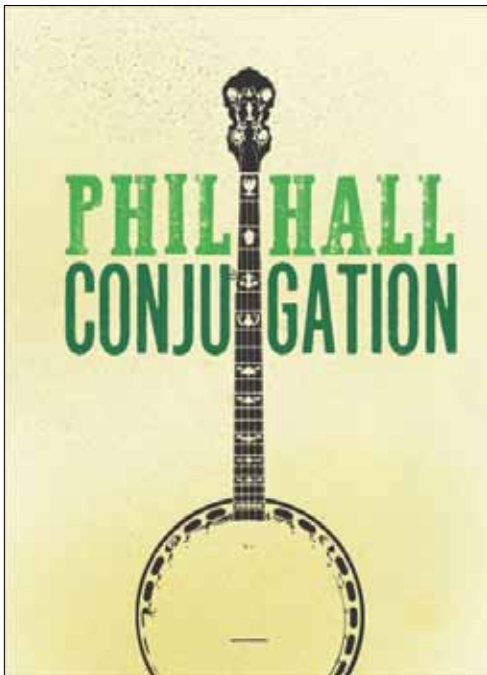
Now they were drinking shoulder to shoulder, tall, thin, attractive in the eyes of benefactors, taking in the people whom they'd never seen before. They talked about feeling like curiosities on display but also enjoyed the low-level stardom occasions of real money and art conferred to those typically not looking for it. How fucked up it all was but how that was part of it, and how delving into its fucked-upness gave them a little charge.



photo: Simon Rogers

Malcolm Sutton is a writer, editor, and interdisciplinary artist living in Toronto. His fiction has appeared in *Maisonneuve*, *Joyland*, and *Drunken Boat*, and his writing on art has appeared in *C Magazine* and *Border Crossings*. He is the Founding Editor of *The Coming Envelope* journal of innovative prose, and the Fiction Editor at BookThug. In addition to editing and writing, he works as a graphic designer and collaborates with artists on text- and performance-based projects. *Job Shadowing* is his first novel. Learn more at <https://malcolmsutton.wordpress.com/writing>.

## FRONTLIST POETRY



### Conjugation Phil Hall

*I am sitting outside at dawn on Otty Lake, where I live, in the woods. The light is coming over the trees, and each morning the poem is written as if right while it is being read.*

*The lyric weaving of honesty about the self—toward revelation & transformation.*

*My poetics has widened, here, to include more space, more primitive sounds and glyphs, less metaphor, less anecdote, more tangential conjugating...*

*My poetics, in its growing inclusiveness, is not sad but hopeful.*

The term “conjugation” refers to more than the obvious grammatical movement of pronouns through time (I am / you are / they will be). For, in Biology, it also refers to the transfer of information between cells. And *Conjugation*—the new collection of poetry from Governor General’s Literary Award- and Trillium Book Award-winning poet Phil Hall—sees an open realm where individual letters inside a word are each rolling through their possibilities, from A to Z. Thereby the language in this, Hall’s eighteenth book of poetry, and the fourth to be published by BookThug, travels into and out of itself, as he says, “escaping my ego, while revealing, word by slightly different word, my deeper connections and disconnections to things—to what used to be called poetry’s ‘subjects.’”

Replete with images of the natural world and in some cases, the mechanisms that transform it—horses, leaping fish, trees, canals, and locks—Hall has created in *Conjugation* at once a return to the nature/nurture elements that have wound their way through his earlier collections, but also a versed ode to the discouragement that many Canadians have felt about the progression of their country and government over the past number of years.

As much care was taken with the writing of this collection as the shaping of the poems themselves. Hall’s poems are shaped into a form of free-verse terza rima (2-line / 1-line alternating pattern), where spaces between phrases and words allow the syntax to be infused with floods of words from other angles. This results in a quilting or cross-hatching or braiding effect that ensures that readers will be captured in the flow of *Conjugation*’s wordplay and the evolution that takes place through its pages.

#### Praise for Phil Hall:

“These are poems of ferocity and humility, of vulnerability and wit, poems whose skilled complexities elucidate the lyric disturbance of melody, memory and self. Grasping his intimate line like a kind of loved and fortuitous hand-tool, what Hall constructs is a voice that attends to the familial and psychic histories submerged in landscape, in all their bitterness and gorgeousness. There is a rough amplitude in his compositional principle: that ‘between the body & language / a ravine of call and response.’ In this work, out of the uncertainty and lag of dailiness comes the knowledge that although precision isn’t always simple, by the precise ear we may arrive at the heart.”

—Judges’ citation, Griffin Poetry Prize, 2006

“Phil Hall has come, by strife with words and their embedded values, to a technique of compression that reminds of Paul Celan’s knotted poems: they beam straight through the skull... Poetry that recalls the organs of the body, that invents and compounds verbs, nouns and adjectives to reach toward what cannot be spoken, only named, if we use all the names, without censoring our hands’ flutter.” —Erin Moure

March 2016 | Poetry  
8x6 inches | 112 pages

Trade Paper: 9781771662185  
\$18.00

Author Hometown: Perth, ON

#### By the Same Author



*Killdeer*  
Winner, Governor  
General’s Award & the  
Trillium Book Award  
Phil Hall  
Trade Paper  
8x6 inches  
9781897388815  
\$18.00



from *Conjugation*

from "Essay on Legend"

~

Most days Al Purdy

wrote poems as good as Alden Nowlan  
but maybe 30 times Al wrote a poem we now call a Purdy poem

as if some days his name were All not Al

Nowlan also at times sawdust flying achieved a wider name  
All-Done-Now Land or Old In No Land

they both wrote a lot of friendly crap that sounds the same

if read now but who can stand to read them exhaustively now  
they were drinkers & that will get a soul above itself some

as the booze digs under eloquence like surf

but Purdy seems to have seen & heard his over-self  
he caricatured Al as All or was that us

while Nowlan just kept writing down memories & impressions

without distinguishing small town small talk from the bull moose secret life  
so we tend to forget him

~

How many times have I told the story

my father throwing the cat in the air & shooting it  
I have told the story for its shock value tons

but in truth I don't remember seeing the cat blown to pieces

I don't think I ever actually saw my father heave the cat up  
& wait for it to peak its pitch that point at which it stops rising

there was a jet going over a jet-trail

apogee & just before it begins to fall no I did see  
I was there my sister & mother were there too

it was my sister's cat

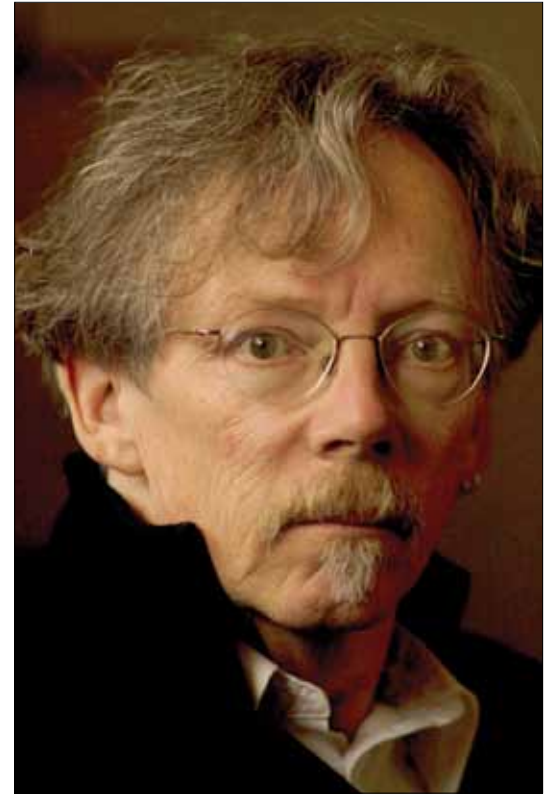
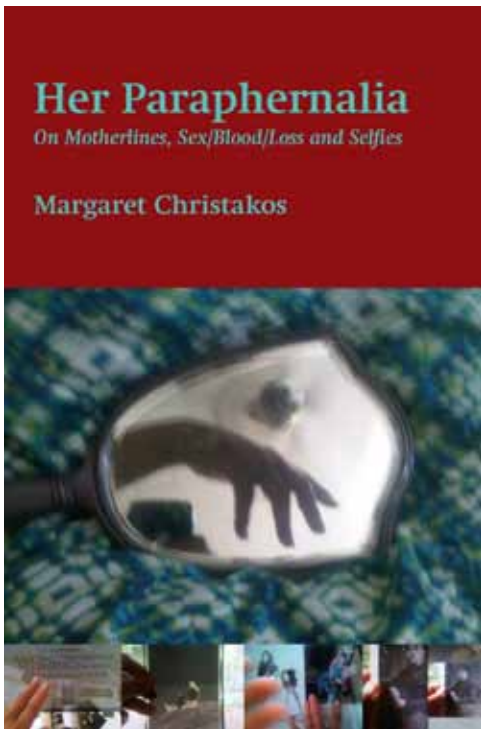


photo: Brother Lawrence Morey

Phil Hall is a writer, editor, and teacher. His first book, *Eighteen Poems*, was published in 1973. Among his many published titles are: *Old Enemy Juice* (1988); *The Unsaid* (1992); *Hearthedral—A Folk-Hermetic* (1996); *An Oak Hunch* (2005); *White Porcupine* (BookThug, 2007); *Killdeer* (BookThug, 2011; winner of the 75th Governor General's Literary Award for Poetry and the Trillium Book Prize, and shortlisted for the Griffin Poetry Prize); *Small Nouns Crying Faith* (BookThug, 2013); *Guthrie Clothing: The Poetry of Phil Hall, a Selected Collage* (2015); and *My Banjo and Tiny Drawings* (2015). Hall has taught writing at York University, Ryerson University, Seneca College, George Brown College, and elsewhere, and has held the position of Poetry Editor for BookThug since 2013. Phil lives with his wife near Perth, Ontario.

## FRONTLIST NONFICTION

COVER NOT FINAL



### Her Paraphernalia: On Motherlines, Sex/Blood/Loss and Selfies Margaret Christakos

*Her Paraphernalia*, the new book of creative nonfiction from noted Canadian poet Margaret Christakos, presents an intimate and original collection of midlife writings that seeks to make readers think in a very personalized way about family genealogy, private sexuality and life changes, including those experiences that exist at the intersections of contemporary digital culture.

Through a sequence of ten études (consisting of entre-genre pieces, including prose and lyric poetry, experimental writing that integrates elements of social media posts, and other forms), Christakos's virtuosity with language and wordplay tantalizes, as she explores women's and girls' relationship to self-portraiture in the age of social media, and considers aspects of how we negotiate our public and private identities as women, mothers, and daughters. Christakos takes as her starting point the reproductive touchstones of ages 15 and 50, and in this light, reflects upon the closeness and distances between herself, her own daughter, and her Greek and English immigrant grandmothers.

Written as a love song to her mother and daughter, *Her Paraphernalia* is at once a personal and yet wholly personable entrée into major themes that so many people of all ages and stages can relate to—self-identity, the beauty of the selfie, social media, partnership, miscarriage, menstruation, sexual lust, solo travel, depression, menopause, the death of a parent, the writing life, divorce, and women's transgenerational vitality, among others.

Interesting, unusually honest and open-minded, this collection will find a welcome audience among people interested in contemporary culture and feminist questions; mothers of young women; people in midlife who may be experiencing the loss of a parent, empty nest syndrome, or divorce; readers interested in the overlap of artists who are mothers and vice versa; and poets and readers interested in Christakos's oeuvre in general.

#### Praise for Margaret Christakos:

"Easily one of our most daring, consistently inventive and deeply engaged contemporary Canadian poets." —rob mclennan

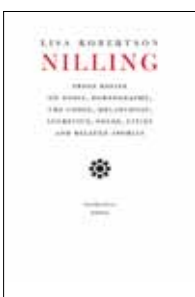
"In Christakos's work the public and private are emphatically not separate. *Multitudes* provides readers with a poetics well tuned to rearticulate an insistent present tense." —Jason Weins, *Quill & Quire*

May 2016 | Memoir / Nonfiction  
8x6 inches | 200 pages

Trade Paper: 9781771662345  
\$20.00

Author Hometown: Toronto, ON

#### Also of Interest:



*Nilling: Prose Essays on Noise,  
Pornography, The Codex,  
Melancholy, Lucretius, Folds,  
Cities and Related Aporias*

Lisa Robertson  
Trade Paper  
9x6 inches  
9781897388891  
\$18.00

from *Her Paraphernalia*

From 2012 to the present day is three years. It is April 2015, and for most of the last nine months I have barely written a creative word, certainly not a word within the bleak and tumultuous mid-life stage of my motherlines itinerary. In some respects the lapse in writing reflected a disappearance of my old self and the formation of a new self, a process brought on by a treacherously difficult separation from my partner of 23 years. A simple forensic: he decided to call it, after my tendencies to fall in love with others sucked the trust out of his belief in the longevity of our common-law partnership. We raised three glorious children together; the heart lifts to admire what was creative about the marriage.

At the same time I have been adjusting to the strange metabolic flatness of menopause. I have watched a small troughline form on one side of my brow, as if a miniature riverbed has been dessicated of the clear-flowing stream that used to replenish automatically. Gone are the peaks and valleys of my mood chart. Almost gone – for the moment—are the spontaneous tremors of turn-on that always characterized my physical life; now if I stop and notice a sudden moistened charge in my groin, it may be with as much scientific inspection as bold unedited pleasure.

I am only 52. These emotions seem like they should belong to a woman in her seventies or eighties. But no, now I see, how to become 50 as a woman can mark a scraping off of sexuality and subjectivity that, no matter how much prepared by a hurrah feminist intentionality for agency, operates like a self-aware social trouncing. Did my mother feel these losses and erasures as she entered her sixth decade, sleeping separately from my father in the house, functionally divorced but for the unchanged front door lock, her youngest of four children now entering his late teens, myself at age 19 involved in a serious live-in relationship in Toronto? I saw my mother as vibrant, full of life, and rich in community—eclectic, powerful, a small electric ball of opinion, always changing, actively learning, fearless, driven, unsleeping, free. I did not identify her as lonely, or ailing, or missing sex. I didn't have such words to attach to the older women of my family, although it was plain as day across all of them: Nobody was getting any.

They looked at me as though I was lucky, with a kind of luck that would have no end, being attractive and sensual and talented and uncontained by cultural expectations about needing to settle down and commit to one person, to be drawn into a prescribed loop of monogamous safety. When at 22 I told my mother I was going to marry the man I had been living with, even though she was very fond of him, her pallor dropped a few shades. She asked wasn't I a little young to be making such a choice.

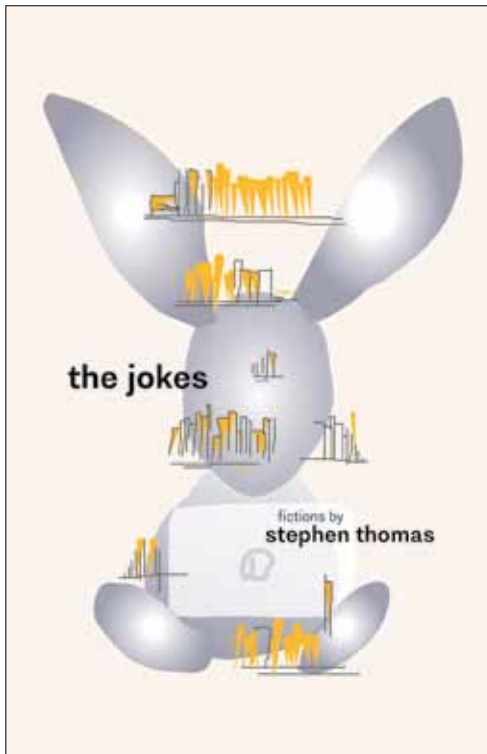


photo: Clea Christakos-Gee

Canadian writer Margaret Christakos has published nine collections of poetry, including *Multitudes* (2013), *Welling* (2010; A Globe 100 book), *Sooner* (2005; a Pat Lowther Memorial Award nominee), and *Excessive Love Prostheses* (2002; winner of a ReLit Award), as well as a novel, *Charisma* (2000; a Trillium Book Award nominee). Christakos designed and facilitated *Influency: A Toronto Poetry Salon* from 2006 to 2012 and was Canada Council Writer in Residence at the University of Windsor (2004–05). Margaret Christakos lives in Toronto. Connect with Christakos on Twitter @MChristakos.

## FICTION

COVER NOT FINAL



### The Jokes Stephen Thomas

We sit, hunched over the words that appear on our smartphone screens, altogether unaware of the story of our lives that is going on around us, even as we focus on the minutiae of our social media “friends” daily activities. These are the stories that draw our undivided attention, and these are the types of deftly observed, wholly engrossing narratives that make up Stephen Thomas’s debut flash-fiction collection, *The Jokes*.

Presented in the form of a most common present-tense—as a series of moments in a social-media-like ‘feed’—this collection of very short stories riffs on the form of ‘the joke,’ but as this might be understood by the best culture-critical comedians of our time: Andy Kaufman, Stephen Wright, Norm McDonald, Jon Stewart, Richard Pryor. And much like those stand-up artists who sanctified the joke-form, these stories deal with sometimes-intense subjects, yet with a kind of SSRI-like placidity that allows readers to cling to each word as the narratives unfold.

In drawing comparisons to Lydia Davis’s creatively detached but inventively curious writing, Thomas’s *The Jokes* is a book for thinkers; sad and funny, hopeful and determined, nostalgic and cerebral, these vignettes offer a very personal, yet amazingly relatable entry-point into some of the big ideas that trouble our times—religion, sexuality, life and death, and ways of being in the world—all while coloured by touches of weird otherworldliness that living in someone else’s social media feed can bring.

Fans of metafiction and philosophy, ‘alt lit,’ artists and academics (particularly students of art history and theory), readers interested in experimental and somewhat cerebral fiction in the vein of Ben Marcus, Lily Hoang, or Maggie Nelson, as well as audiences interested in the uses and abuses of the Internet and social media, will connect with Thomas’s particular take on worlds within worlds.

#### Praise for *The Jokes*:

“Stephen Thomas is a writer who’s smart, thoughtful, engaging, but also mischievous, like a little kid who knows he shouldn’t misbehave, but does it anyway. His debut collection, *The Jokes*, feels to me like an absent-minded Lydia Davis trying to write deadpan comedy skits for Cartoon Network’s Tim & Eric. It’s anti-humour that’s actually funny, sketches in which nothing is ever resolved, mini-stories that start at Point A and then seem to forget what they were even talking about. This is a book full of surprises.”

—Guillaume Morissette, author of *New Tab*

“Lydia Davis and Etgar Keret move in together and decide to adopt a son. They settle on Stephen Thomas. He has a pithy style and a funny bone. Years later, at the launch of his book *The Jokes*, Stephen reads a little story. It packs a novel’s worth of material into two short paragraphs. At the back of the room, sipping their red wine, Lydia and Etgar beam.”

—Neil Smith, author of *Boo*

“The jokes (what else can you call them?) in *The Jokes*—Stephen Thomas’s double-taking book of serrated sentences—ignite the slowest of slow burns, the deadest pan you can imagine on steroids. These muscle-bound bons mots are the love children of Nietzschean aphorisms and stoned status updates. They capture eloquently the X-Acto-knifed, juxtaposed, and collaged to smithereens language we negotiate everyday via the electromagnetic soup that we now all inhabit. *The Jokes* is at once a hilarious and an anxious dippity-do, as well as a crate of fresh-baked fortune cookie fortunes gone quite mad.” —Michael Martone, author of *Michael Martone* and *Winesburg, Indiana*

March 2016 | Fiction  
8x5.25 inches | 160 pages

Trade Paper: 9781771662062  
\$18.00

Author Hometown: Toronto, ON

#### Also of Interest:



*Pauls*  
Fiction  
Jess Taylor

Trade Paper  
8x5.25 inches  
9781771661683  
\$20.00



from *The Jokes*

### Taken

A person who has trained in all the martial and spy arts for forty long years has his daughter taken from him. He flies to Paris to find her. He has ninety-six short hours. Will he do it. He's handsome, makes five to ten million dollars per movie, his name's Liam Neeson.

It's fun to watch a movie without caring about it while sitting in your chair on a Friday afternoon. All that weekend ahead of you. Feeling relaxed, drinking coffee, talking to people on Facebook and Twitter, looking at Wikipedia. Liam Neeson is Irish, which I did not know, and presently lives in Millbrook, New York, a place I've never heard of and know nothing about.

In the freeze-frame on my other screen Liam Neeson is wearing a black trench coat and he's looking down, determinedly. He's recently told someone he'd "kill" them. I go into the kitchen and make spinach and veggie-sausage pasta. Liam takes out twenty men with an arm and drives to the cliff's edge. I want to do something worthwhile with my life.

### The Fall

A person with a) above-average self-consciousness, but also b) an above-average ability to tune in to other people's wavelengths, is having trouble deciding what to wear, and that problem spirals into a more generalized anxiety, and she decides to email a community member. The email says: "Give me a reason to live."

She goes out to her back deck. The sun is hot and the stadium reaches above town to high heaven. Her roommate's panties have been left out in the rain and cling uglily to the railing. The person feels kind of fucked, she's freaking out.

A breeze comes off the cemetery, scatters shrivelled gumwood leaves across the sidewalk, and fills the person's nostrils with sweet, new air.

She thinks: "Oh my fucking God, when will the angel of mercy descend for me and pluck out my heart with a talon?"



photo: Daniel Goodbaum

Stephen Thomas is a Toronto-based writer of fiction, nonfiction, plays, and Facebook statuses. His work has appeared in numerous publications, including *Hazlitt*, *Playboy*, *The Atlantic's CityLab* blog, *DIAGRAM*, *Little Brother*, *The Seneca Review*, *The Fanzine*, *The Puritan*, and *Definitely Not the Opera* (CBC-Radio One). He has been awarded a Truman Capote Scholarship, an Edward F. Albee Fellowship (Summer 2012), has been nominated for the Journey Prize (2010, 2013), a National Magazine Award (2015), and *Best American Experimental Writing* (2015). *The Jokes* was shortlisted for the Metatron Prize for Rising Authors of Contemporary Literature. Learn more at [www.stephenthomaswriter.com](http://www.stephenthomaswriter.com).



COVER NOT FINAL



## Double Teenage

Joni Murphy

*Double Teenage* tells the story of two young teenagers (best friends, Celine and Julie) who are coming of age in the 1990s in a small, desert town along the US–Mexico border—a place where nothing seems to happen, but only because what counts as ‘something’ is defined by far-off centres of power. In their small-scale life, they become a twin pair. Through their love of theatre, they find their way into a wider world, rich with opportunity, but at the same time, dense with situations of peril and violence.

This unrelenting novel shines a spotlight on the paradoxes of Western culture—obsessed with depictions of fantasy sexual violence, while at the same time, willfully blind to the many ways in which desire and hurt twine together in real life; where angry, emotional, and loving girls have been told time and again that they overthink things; where survival goes hand-in-hand with trauma and witnessing; where art, books, movies, TV, and plays work to both shield us from reality and also help us to face it, and powerful healing rituals can be made out of everyday material goods—hoodie sweatshirts, homemade alcoholic punch, joints, and blood pacts. In this way, *Double Teenage* ultimately offers a way through violence into an emotionally alive place beyond the trap of girlhood.

Informed and influenced by the films of David Lynch, Agnes Varda, Chris Marker, and Jacques Rivette, Murphy has developed an emotional dialogue in *Double Teenage*, one that wrestles with the borders of our bodies, our countries, and our realities where borderlands (the US/Mexican and the Canadian/US) become gendered, performative spaces that are hard and soft, depending on who is trying to cross. Though the girls move away from the Southwest to Vancouver and Chicago, and gain entry into rarified academic and artistic circles, they discover that the violence and solitude of the borderlands are still stuck within them.

### Praise for *Double Teenage*:

*“Double Teenage* is the definitive book of The Young Girl. It’s also a definitive book about NAFTA, the Ciudad Juárez femicides, spectacular serial killings, culture and class, and the comforting media-lull of repetition. In an effort to understand, if not everything, at least those things that surround her protagonists, Murphy writes with an unforced and calm beauty. *Double Teenage* is a stunning first novel, moving with stealth and intelligence against the North American landscape.”

—Chris Kraus, author of *I Love Dick*

*“Joni Murphy speaks to us directly. She speaks to us from a place of borders, of countries, and of languages that are strange to her and in need of reinvention. Through her ear and her eye, through her transmissions from these dusklands, we recognize something actual, an event or place, but cross-examined, rendered, and remixed. Sometimes theatrical, sometimes cinematic, always urgent and painted on a broad canvas, unafraid of the depth of each landscape, of the mountains that we cannot see that lie beyond the mountains that we can.”*

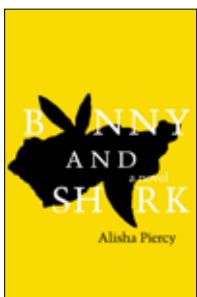
—Matthew Goulish, founding member of the performance groups Goat Island and Every House Has a Door

April 2016 | Fiction  
8x5.25 inches | 260 pages

Trade Paper: 9781771662109  
\$20.00

Author Hometown: Brooklyn, NY

### Also of Interest:



*Bunny and Shark*  
Fiction  
Alisha Piercy

Trade Paper  
8.75x5.5 inches  
9781771660518  
\$20.00



from *Double Teenage*

Sleep deprived from drink, infatuation, and sex, they stumbled around her new unfamiliar city, his city. Each neighborhood Celine saw as cinematic because each mimicked other neighborhoods in other countries. The surroundings hummed right because they stirred memory of elsewhere. Fragments of the world collided in the architecture. From the beginning Brendan spoke the lover's dialect of imagery and suggestion. He unwrapped his crumbly city as if it were a Spanish cookie or a Mexican candy. Every walk they took was not an action, but a treat he gave for her special worthiness.

"That's the junkie bridge and the next one is where people go for cocaine." The structure he pointed to looked work-a-day Midwestern. Office workers and tourists rushed and strolled.

"How could you tell?"

"You have to realize drugs flow under most of reality."

"There's the museum. We'll go sometime, but for now forget about it. Just the trash heaps of dead pillagers anyhow. Instead let's go home, have a coffee, get high and then, I want to take your clothes off." She walked faster, smiling. She put her hands together. Here is the church and here is the steeple, open the doors, where are the people?

They went out and out and out. He smiled and danced drunk. She held his hand as they kept dancing. The people of the city were also more beautiful, happier and more free. People laughed amid radio hits and fragrant steam. The bartender started singing along to Morrissey.

Then they were in his apartment that was all of a sudden hers too. The tree outside tapping at the window. Plants in ceramic pots. Framed photos. Keys on a hook. He talked like he'd been waiting for forever for her ears. He said darling and sweetheart, and then there was the way he laughed with his whole self. His grey cat appeared and disappeared. Brendan opened the window to allow cool air to slink in.

"I think I'm totally in love with you," she said, then felt a stabbing in her side. A fear. Silence fell songs.

"Be careful with that. I'm bad news," he replied like it was funny, but then she pouted so he wrapped her in kisses and babies and darlings.



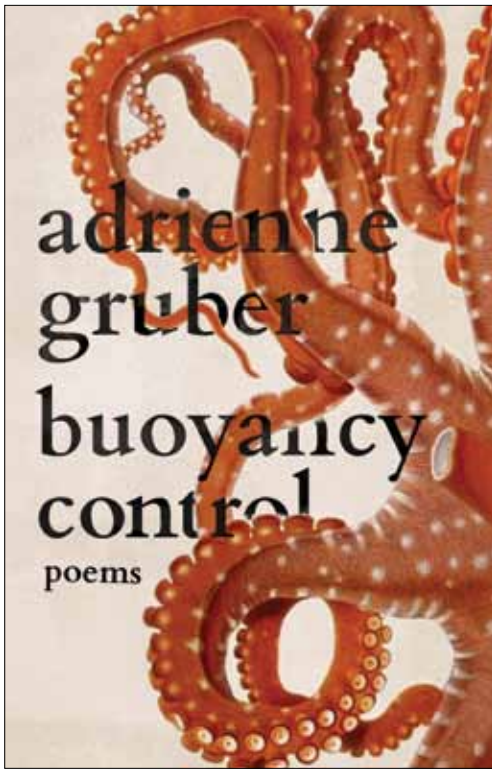
photo: Brendan Wallace

Joni Murphy is a writer and artist living in New York City, where she is a writing fellow at The Writers' Institute at the CUNY Graduate Center. Originally from Las Cruces, New Mexico, Murphy was a poet in residence through the Poetry Foundation programming in Chicago public schools, and taught writing and visual thinking at SAIC, New Jersey City University, Abrons Art Center, and The Maryland Institute College of Art. Her writing has been published in *The Capilano Review*, *Canadian Ecstasy*, and *Canadian Art*, among other publications. *Double Teenage* is her debut novel. Learn more at [www.jonimurphy.com](http://www.jonimurphy.com).

## POETRY

### Buoyancy Control

Adrienne Gruber



*Buoyancy Control*, the latest collection of poems from Vancouver based poet Adrienne Gruber, explores themes of sexuality, sexual identity, and queerness, while confronting the feelings of loss and longing found in relationships, and the chance glimpse into a new life, while still recovering from a painfully failed connection.

Metaphors of oceans, lakes, and other bodies of water, as well as the creatures that inhabit those spaces, swim and swirl their way through Gruber's languid poems, which are divided into two evocative sections. Though distinguished by their own prologue poems, both sections reveal details of the narrator's examination of life, but from two different perspectives: Section 1, *Terra Firma*, is an exploration of place, of what we consider solid and secure, and how solidity can betray us. In contrast, Section 2, *A mari usque ad maria*, brings the reader into themes of water and the fluidity of identity, particularly sexual identity and queerness.

This is an honest, at times humorous, and revealing look inside the mind and body of a woman manoeuvring through experiences of longing, loss, and the fluidity of sexual identity, only to come out on the other side a more forgiving being from the journey.

Fans of Karen Solie's powerfully feminist and unapologetic poetic voice, as well as the playful sarcasm and grit of Alison Calder's *Wolf Tree*, will glory in Gruber's fascinating culmination of land and sea, mind and body, in *Buoyancy Control*.

#### Praise for *Buoyancy Control*:

"Densely, disturbingly erotic, Adrienne Gruber's *Buoyancy Control* is not a book for the faint of heart. Gruber's erotic reach encompasses the world entire, from undersea creatures to the human body of the beloved. No Hallmark sweetness in this collection—here is a fierce, wet, pulsing hunger, though there is an acute sensitivity in these observations, whether of childbirth, cold-water swimming, or other moments of convulsion and transformation so powerful that they transcend intellect. Here are poems that burst like fireworks, 'all thought blasted into the night sky.'"

—Rachel Rose, Poet Laureate of Vancouver

"The lust and loneliness that muscle us between open water and inky depth vie for power in *Buoyancy Control*. Gruber's poems consume aqua life, roadkill, citrus, hotel beds, and dock-edge gargoyles as fuel for 'spit-shined' words that surface as moans and as 'sharp, atomized shrieks.' Plaintive, ecstatic, carnal, these pieces often wonder whether we're 'complete on our own,' while veering between the urgency of self-pleasure, the defensiveness of self-containment, and the wound of self-reflexivity. Plumbing the digestive debris that skates the seafloor, Gruber's poems muck about with our equilibrium. We rise and sink lured by shadowscapes, pleasurelands, and the hunt for a healthy gravity."

—Brecken Hancock, author of *Broom Broom*, winner of the 2015 Trillium Book Award for Poetry

"Akin to the Indonesian mimic octopus, the poems in *Buoyancy Control* 'ascend from the ocean floor,' and proceed to evolve with an uncommon beauty. Both starkly sexual and aposematic, Adrienne Gruber's second book is remarkably controlled, framing the human condition in a world that's constantly shifting. *Buoyancy Control* is a fearless collection from one of Canada's best emerging poets."

—Jim Johnstone, author of *Dog Ear*

April 2016 | Poetry  
8x6 inches | 112 pages

Trade Paper: 9781771662222  
\$18.00

Author Hometown: Vancouver, BC

#### Also of Interest:



*CURIO:*  
*Grotesques and Satires*  
*From the Electronic Age*  
Poetry  
Elizabeth Bachinsky  
Trade Paper  
8x6 inches  
9781897388402  
\$20.00

from *Buoyancy Control*

**Prologue**

I hobble gingerly along stones to the second beach at Lake Superior.  
Fossilized imprints sketch the bottoms of my feet into Rorschachs.  
There is a cluster of rock formations soothed by the tide's pulse.  
Here, I lay down.

Warm breath against naked gleam.  
Flutter in my vulva, quiver in my groin.  
A lonely sun pounds against shoulders.  
I am ridged with contusions.

My fingers are beach hoppers, they skitter and quarry.  
A glacial flood baptizes my goose hair.  
The new world rushes in.  
*I peed when I came. Everything water.*

**Buoyancy Control**

*Studies show your demographic does well to take up hobbies.*  
—Karen Solie

Deflate. Weighted hips allow you to sink.  
Bubbles rise to the surface. Descent is an act

of control. Swallow. Move through metres of water  
and calculate. Swallow again. Stop here. Pinch your nose.

A forced drowning. Fins erect. I am not a fish. I am  
not equipped. Jaw jiggle. It's unnatural –

canned air. Drift up a few feet and settle. The birth  
of each breath is recycled. Dead air finds its way

through clefts in the lungs. The evidence trapped – bubble  
in the brain. Below, the surface direction is lost.

The drone of a motor occupies the space where gravity remains  
a trick question. Don't ask. Instead, note your surroundings.

Clear the mask and sing a stream of bubbles to the sky.  
The instrument used to stay alive constricts

your lungs. Swallow. Recycled air. Claustrophobic  
haze. Think possibilities. Running out of breath, gloom

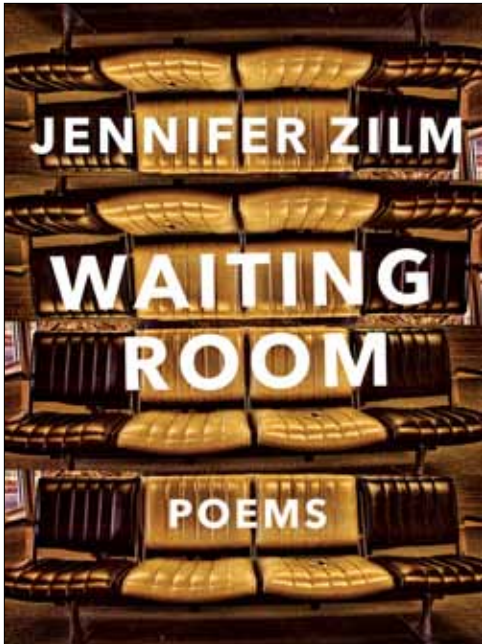
behind your eyes. You are hugged by equipment.  
This is all the love anyone needs.



photo: Adrienne Gruber

Adrienne Gruber is the author of the poetry collection *This is the Nightmare* (2008; shortlisted for the Robert Kroetsch Award for Innovative Poetry) and three chapbooks: *Intertidal Zones* (2014), *Mimic* (2012; winner of a bpNichol Chapbook Award), and *Everything Water* (2011). Her work has appeared in numerous literary magazines, including *Grain*, *Event*, *Arc Poetry Magazine*, *Poetry is Dead*, and *Plentitude*. She has been a finalist for the CBC Literary Awards in poetry, *Descant's* Winston Collins Best Canadian Poem Contest, and twice for *Arc's* Poem of the Year Contest. Her poem "Gestational Trail" was awarded first prize in *The Antigonish Review's* Great Blue Heron Poetry Contest in 2015. Gruber lives in Vancouver with her partner Dennis and their two daughters. Learn more at <http://adriennegruber.wordpress.com>.





## Waiting Room

Jennifer Zilm

You're welcome to take a seat in (the) *Waiting Room*, the first full-length collection of poetry from award-winning writer Jennifer Zilm. Featuring a mélange of styles and forms (sonnets, erasures, unsent emails, footnotes, session notes, CVs, tweets, and other disparate source materials), *Waiting Room* subverts, shares, and repurposes the vocabularies of psychiatry, dentistry, the Bible, and academia in a humorous investigation of the contained intimacy of appointments and therapeutic relationships. Ultimately interested in how we learn, the experimental and lyrical poems in *Waiting Room* seek lessons in what it means to wait, to be a patient and to be patient, to be a student and to be a teacher, to be a healer and to be healed.

In four unique sections, Zilm invites readers to investigate the curious boundaries of various therapeutic terrains—from an exploration of the esoteric world of graduate school, where the subject is religion, to a mash-up of Dante's vision of purgatory and Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES), to the improbable written intersections of van Gogh's doctors and Sylvia Plath's therapist.

Lovers of avant-garde and lyrical poetry will immediately connect with Zilm's engaging, observant, and probing work, as will readers familiar with the realms of Vancouver's neighbourhoods, in particular the DTES. And because of its many idiomatic forms (e.g., emails, tweets, recipes, etc.), its integration of a wide range of source materials, and its relatable settings and subject matter, *Waiting Room* could serve as a "gateway collection" for readers who don't always connect with poetry, but enjoy other forms of literature.

April 2016 | Poetry  
8x6 inches | 120 pages

Trade Paper: 9781771662147  
\$18.00

Author Hometown: Vancouver, BC

### Praise for *Waiting Room*:

"From dental work to theological discourse, *Waiting Room* enthralled me. Zilm's salient lines leap or spring with poignancy. She deeply attends to the urgency and meaning of the poem on every level and it's rare. Brava!"

—Betsy Warland, author of *Oscar of Between*

"Zilm's first collection of poetry is a layered experience; intelligent, stimulating, structurally precise, shot through with a slightly sardonic (but not embittered) sense of humour. Ranging from the language of the Dead Sea Scrolls to the language of Psychiatry (its own kind of religion), Zilm pushes text and textuality, exploring art, life, theory and mortality. What a virtuoso performance."

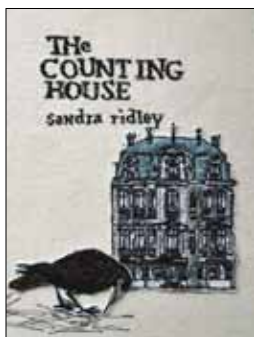
—Hiromi Goto, author of *Chorus of Mushrooms*

"Jennifer Zilm's *Waiting Room* is incantatory and incandescent. Like Brian Wilson's assertion of the song as a pocket symphony, Zilm's poetic lyrics are pocket epics. It is our collective ambivalence toward the transcendent that is her subject, whether the hope we hold onto comes in the form of luminous study or fluorescent pathology. These are the poems of our times and you will rise into the aether within them."

—Wayde Compton, author of *The Outer Harbour: Stories*

"Zilm impresses both intellectually and aesthetically, crafting work that refuses relegation to a single category. This poet espouses quirk, but only as path to devastating affect. An occasional sonnet glitters in a playful prose poem matrix; true Biblical scholarship becomes a moving reflection upon identity, love, and beauty; oh, and Vincent van Gogh goes mad. Disorder haunts *Waiting Room*, a cunningly ordered sequence that will be one of the most unique titles published in 2016." —Shane Neilson

### Also of Interest



*The Counting House*  
Poetry  
Sandra Ridley

Trade Paper  
8x6 inches  
9781927040843  
\$20.00

from *Waiting Room*

**Women's Residential Recovery**

*From the shore canto one*

now from the intersection let  
poetry wake again. Calliope

strain            colour            unclouded  
Vancouver    blue echo    Vancouver blue

sea            to            sky.

my newed eyes.

Rip My Eyes            How To:  
                                  Away.

Jodi flailing, that mix of up and down in her blood,  
before her detox intake, her taught body.  
(*If I am going to be locked up for ten days*  
*I need to dunk myself into the ocean.*)

Follow her north from the crux  
to the Secret of the City beach,  
skyline present yet remote, her urging  
—tanned, dirty hair, missing teeth,  
laughing— knee deep in it and

you place    a single    toe into the    edge, skin  
rimming    a red    painted nail    corroded pink  
by fall    water

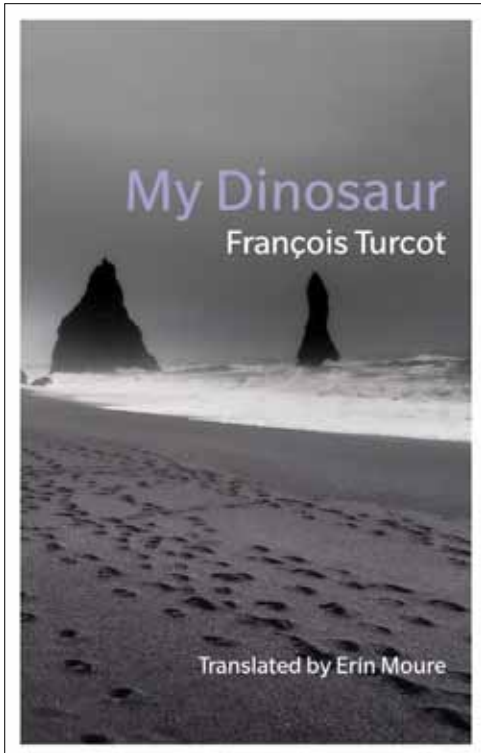
In a cab from Ocean Road to Van Detox she freewheels  
her own DSM, nine circles of recovered symptoms.



photo: Melina Sorenson

Vancouver-based Jennifer Zilm received a B.A. and an M.A. in Religious Studies from the University of British Columbia and was a doctoral fellow at McMaster University, where her (unfinished) dissertation focused on liturgical and poetic texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls. A graduate of Simon Fraser University's Writer's Studio and the Humber College School for Writers, Zilm's writing has been published in numerous journals, including *Prism International*, *Prairie Fire*, *Grain*, *CV2*, *The Antigonish Review*, *Vallum*, and *Women in Judaism and Poetry*. Zilm is the author of two chapbooks: *The whole and broken yellows* (2013) and *October Notebook* (2015). Zilm has been a finalist for many contests, including *The Malahat Review's Far Horizons Award* and *CV2's 2-Day Poem Contest*. A draft of *Waiting Room* was shortlisted for the 2014 Robert Kroetsch Award for Innovative Poetry. *Waiting Room* is her debut book of poetry. Learn more at [www.jenniferzilm.com](http://www.jenniferzilm.com).

COVER NOT FINAL



## My Dinosaur

François Turcot

Translated by Erin Moure

The figure of the father occupies a particularly significant place in Québécoise literature—there's a real fascination with fathers, and this recurring persona populates fiction, films, and the stories people tell of their families and themselves.

Thus, it's not surprising that, as he witnessed his own father's frailty, François Turcot—one of Québec's most celebrated young literary voices—would write his own dedication to his vanished father, entitled *My Dinosaur*. In this, his first collection of poems to be published in English (and translated by renowned poet Erin Moure), Turcot excavates, reconstructs, and pays tribute not just to the father, but also to the figure of the son, and to writing itself as key to story, emotion, memory, and history.

The dinosaur of *My Dinosaur* is that of the distant father, sought in mourning by the son. With luminous and lucid writing, Turcot excavates the fossil gaze of his father in an elated elegy composed of poems both tensed and open, minimalist and talkative, serious and droll, alternating the voice and writings of the father with the fictions and assemblages of the son—reminding us that a man's story can only be told by assembling the shreds and bits that we've accumulated over the course of our lives. As prolonged metaphor for all disappearances and for the endurance of memory, Turcot's meticulous assembly in *My Dinosaur* is a tribute to all our Dads.

Turcot's surprisingly light and wryly humorous poems will resonate deeply with readers who are inquisitive about the role of family and memory in the construction of identity and self. Scholars who are exploring literary work on grief, and anyone who has lost a parent and felt grief but also curiosity about their lives will connect with Turcot's reflections in *My Dinosaur*. And finally, fans of the poetics and translation practice of Erin Moure will delight in this new work that has earned comparisons to Moure's own elegiac writing in *Kapusta* (2015).

### Praise for *My Dinosaur*:

"*Mon dinosaure* offers a strong reading experience, Borgesian in a way, where form, robust and demanding, combines with content both humble and sensitive, held up in an awareness of the volatility and memory of things."

—Sébastien Dulude, *Lettres québécoises*

"This kind of work is magnificent. Here's a well-constructed book that not only offers itself the pleasure of speaking of the life beyond death, but establishes a dialogue between lost loves." —Hugues Corriveau, *Le Devoir*

"Assembled using a variety of materials (prose, verse, letters), *Mon dinosaure* catalogues a sort of Father-constellation, fragmented into several utterances of memories filtered by a type of poetry which weighs up its effects and fears boastfulness more than anything.... More than just a book on the father figure, *Mon dinosaure* highlights the essential share of fiction that fuels and shapes memory." —Dominique Tardif, *Voir*

"François Turcot speaks of the death of the father in *Mon dinosaure*, a singular book that opts for a poetic approach which is both stimulating and original."

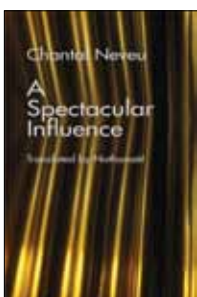
—Denise Brassard, *Voix et images*

March 2016 | Poetry  
7.75x 5 inches | 160 pages

Trade Paper: 9781771662307  
\$18.00

Author Hometown: Montreal, QC  
Translator Hometown: Montreal, QC

### Also of interest



*A Spectacular Influence*  
Poetry  
Chantal Neveu  
Translated by Nathanaël

Trade Paper  
8x4.25 inches  
9781771661768  
\$18.00



from *My Dinosaur*

Breaking winter open, the sun petrified time like a meteor.

Our voices crackled. It was the heart's muscle gone back to the womb of stones.

•

We might have guessed a man's head, hot, smoking.  
From its furrows, excavated light.

Its fossil gaze no longer holding.

•

All around, two metres of snow enclosed his tin-plate shadow.

Some simply saw this as outline. It was, rather, the contour of a body caved in, vanished, weighty as a truck.

•

Veined with black, he was no more the man for all seasons.

•

Cutaway. A hole in the ice. Hot mark of a tread that compresses the ground.

Yes, you might call it the negative outline of a man, perforated.

•

Tensed in my boots of cold, lugging the salt of others, I stepped backward.

Mechanically, I turned round. The future of the dinosaur was pending.

•

To rebuild a dinosaur, to wrest it from earth, is to speculate on its forgotten epoch, on its skin pigment or its feeding habits, is to insert small rods into its bones to stand it falsely upright, as if before the meteor, the end of time, its blinding shower of dust.



photo: Annie Lafleur



photo: Karis Shearer

Montréal-based poet and teacher François Turcot is the author of *Mon dinosaure* (2014; finalist for the Prix du Festival de la poésie de Montréal), *Cette maison n'est pas la mienne* (2009; winner of the Prix Émile-Nelligan), *Derrière les forêts* (2008; finalist for the Prix Émile-Nelligan), and *miniatures en pays perdu* (2006). His poems can be found in English and French in *New American Writing*, *Aufgabe*, *dANDelion*, *Action Yes*, *filling Station*, *Estuaire*, and *Exit*, and his articles in the *Cahiers littéraires Contre-jour*. His poetry has been translated into English, German, and Polish. *My Dinosaur* is his first book translated into English.

Erín Moure is a Montréal poet and translator curious about what's active in the poetry of others. Moure's most recent books are *Kapusta* (2015) and *Insecession*, a biotranspoetics published in one volume with her translation from Galician of Chus Pato's biopoetics, *Secession* (BookThug, 2014). Other recent translations include *White Piano* (2013) by Nicole Brossard, translated with Robert Majzels from the French, and *Galician Songs* (2013) by Rosalía de Castro, translated from the Galician.

COVER NOT FINAL



March 2016 | Poetry  
7.5x5 inches | 136 pages

Trade Paper: 9781771662000  
\$22.00

Editor Hometown: Wilmington, NC

### Also of Interest:



*Tender Buttons*  
100th Anniversary Edition  
Gertrude Stein

Trade Paper  
8x6 inches  
9781897388259  
\$15.00

## Poems by Gerard Legro

Jerrold Levy and Richard Negro  
Edited with an Introduction by Alessandro Porco

In the spring and summer of 1949, Jerrold Levy and Richard Negro—two teenage pranksters with the right mix of bad attitude and artistic ingenuity—composed, circulated, and performed a collection of poems on the campus of Black Mountain College, an experimental school located just outside Asheville, North Carolina.

Now, BookThug is bringing this previously unpublished work to light for the first time in *Poems by Gerard Legro*, edited with annotations by noted Canadian poet and scholar Alessandro Porco.

Porco's insightful work (including a critical introduction, explanatory notes, and rare photographs sourced from archival documents and historical materials) offers an enlightening exploration of a side of the Black Mountain College canon that's rarely seen. Rich with aleatory compositional methods and found materials, and replete with scatological puns, doggerel rhymes, and surreal imagery, *Poems by Gerard Legro* was meant to be a critique of the 'obscurity' of modernist poetry from two disaffected teens in post-war America who were desperate to fight back against aesthetic and moral codes of maturity, propriety, and sophistication.

This unique and timely addition to the canon of Black Mountain College will appeal to poetry and art enthusiasts and students—especially those interested in twentieth-century American poetry and literature, the work of Black Mountain College scholars, and major art figures like Salvador Dali, Frida Khalo, Julien Levy, Ilya Bolotowsky, Herbert Bayer, and Josef Albers.

### Praise for *Poems by Gerard Legro*:

"Beautiful Gerard Legro is alive. At Black Mountain College two students rebelled against their teachers, Josef Albers and Charles Olson, to create a mythic figure—part hoax, part avatar of disenchanted youth—who is entirely their own.... These poems are a vital addition to the history of the extraordinary educational experiment that was Black Mountain." —Kaplan Harris, co-editor of *The Selected Poems of Robert Creeley*

"The literary history of Black Mountain College has received a useful amplification and illumination in the form of *Poems by Gerard Legro*.... Through his detailed and insightful introduction, and in his careful annotation of both the poems and the circumstances of their composition and (non-)dissemination, Alessandro Porco equips the contemporary reader not just to get the joke(s), but also to appreciate the significance of a fascinating project, equal parts homage and satire, that has too long languished in archival storage. A valuable recovery."

—Steve Evans, coordinator of the New Writing Series at the University of Maine

from *Poems by Gerard Legro*

INTRODUCTION

Beautiful Gerard Legro is dead. The precisions of his mind are preserved clear in memory and may be found lingering about the halls of the Carnegie Institute of Technology.

The creative heart of him ceased to be in that moment when, turning to look behind after the take off from Lydda Airport, it saw the early morning mists descend upon Mount Carmel and saw that mountain of clarity hidden from sight for the last time.

Circling low over the Acropolis was no remedy. The classics, alas, were also dead.

Consumed by fever, Legro was unaffected by the panorama of Paris by night as seen from the heavens.

The creative heart never succeeded in reaching the mind's precisions. The revivifying union was fated not to be. The schizophrenic character so remarkably revealed by the poems in this book was left divided against itself until the very end.

"A wandering, a search unfinished, vague longings of the divided and creeping, seeping, lingering remnants of youth scattered through New York's alleys and avenues." (G.L. from "A Sleeping Creeping Fragment" 1950)

In spite of the sudden arrival of death, G.L. had been foresighted enough to have prepared his epitaph in advance, which luckily escaped the fate of his great novel, "used as toilet tissue in a place where toilet tissues were unobtainable." (G.L. Diary, Israel 1951)

"The exigencies of life and their products being more pressing than the creative urge and its products, though these may easily be confused." (G.L. Journals, Israel 1951)

The epitaph is probably G.L.'s most sincere piece for in it he reveals the basis from which he worked. He once was heard to say that, "the one fact this modern artist can rely on is the logical ignorance of most people."

The epitaph reads: "Great works of art are often not understood, therefore the work of art which is not understood is often considered a great work of art." G.L.

"... and this misconception allows the modern artist to exist." (G.L. posthumous statement)

Richard Negro  
Jerrold Levy

the editors

CAN YOU CANT THE CANTO Final Opus

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*Cant you cant the canto*

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or is it  
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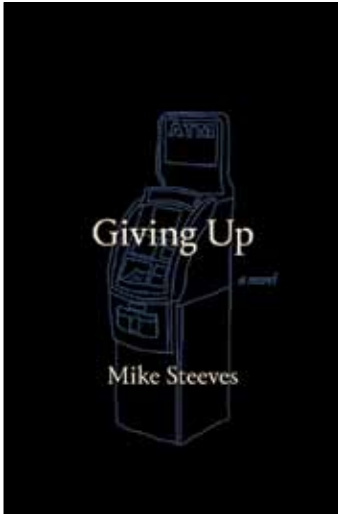
photo: Rory Laverty

Alessandro Porco is a poet, critic, and scholar from Toronto, Canada. He earned his Ph.D. from the State University of New York at Buffalo. His research focuses on twentieth-century poetry and poetics. Porco lives in Wilmington North Carolina, where he is an Assistant Professor of English at UNCW.

Jerrold Levy (1930–2002) was born and raised in New York City. He is the grandson of poet Mina Loy and the son of art dealer Julien Levy. He attended Black Mountain College from 1947 to 1950, and studied under Ilya Bolotowsky, Merce Cunningham, and Charles Olson. In 1959, Levy received his Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Chicago.

Richard Negro (b. 1929–unknown) grew up in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, a suburb located twenty-five miles outside of New York City. He attended Black Mountain College from 1947 to 1950 and was a star pupil of physicist Natasha Goldowski and poet M.C. Richards. He later studied physics at the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

# NOTABLE TITLES



FINALIST FOR THE QUEBEC WRITERS' FEDERATION 2015 CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY FIRST BOOK AWARD

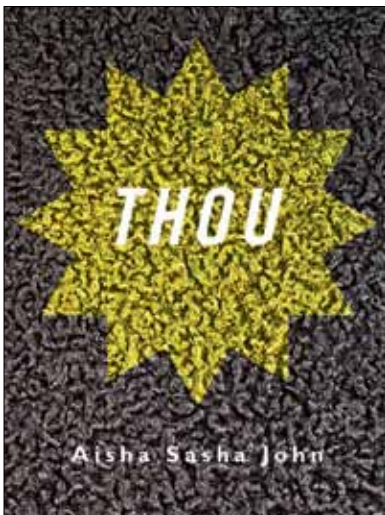
*Giving Up* by Mike Steeves  
9781771660914 \$20.00

"Mike Steeves is a brilliant, singular voice in Can Lit: funny and fresh and fast! *Giving Up* burns and glows with the intensity of a blue flame and all the pathos and obsessiveness and truth and absurdity of modern coupledness."

—Miriam Toews, author of *All My Puny Sorrows* and *A Complicated Kindness*

"Few first novels in recent memory are as consistently charming, smart, entertaining, and incisive as *Giving Up*. Somehow Mike Steeves has written a page-turner about stray cats and trips to the bank, and a story that treads through the stuff of everyday life with such precision to cast each detail, every gesture and object and silence, with great meaning."

—Pasha Malla, author of *People Park* and *The Withdrawal Method*



FINALIST FOR THE 2015 TRILLIUM BOOK AWARD FOR POETRY

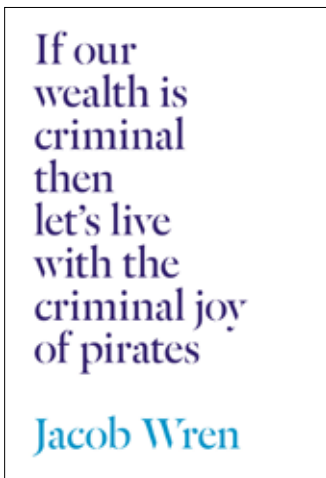
*THOU* by Aisha Sasha John  
9781771660334 \$18.00

"An act of deep attention to the physical self, to the positioning of bodies in the world, Aisha Sasha John's *THOU* takes us on a journey through power and society, hatred and love, anger and healing, offering an intimate, clear-eyed look at our shared humanity. Original, funny, sensual; at once profound and unpretentious, John's lines are a pleasure and a revelation."

—Jury comment, Trillium Book Award for Poetry

"John is brilliant at communicating. She's also really funny. Poems don't get more direct and precise and unforgettable than this." —*National Post*

"A truly beautiful book and a rare gift" —*Broken Pencil*



A CELEBRATION OF INDIE BOOKSELLERS

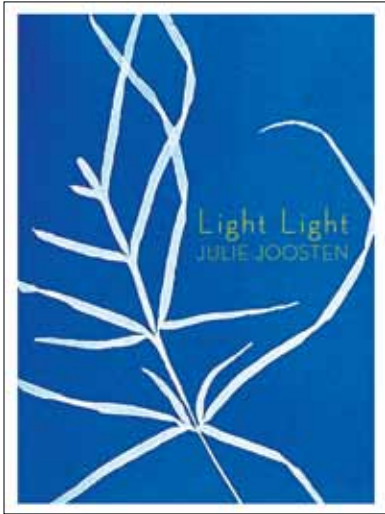
*If our wealth is criminal then let's live with the criminal joy of pirates* by Jacob Wren  
9781771661843 48PAGES 6.125x4.25 \$10.00

Originally produced specifically for the first Authors for Indies Day in Toronto, this small and delightful book containing two stories and an essay is a must-have for fans of the author of *Poly-amorous Love Song*.

"Wren routinely prods at a series of very large and human questions on just how it is we should and could be moving through the world in a positive and productive way, highlighting just how complicated such uncomplicatedness actually is." —rob mclennan's blog



# NOTABLE TITLES



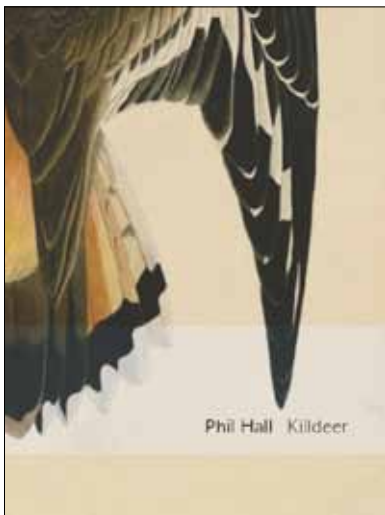
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FINALIST FOR THE 2014 GERALD LAMPERT MEMORIAL AWARD  
FINALIST FOR THE GOLDEN CROWN LITERARY AWARD FOR POETRY

*Light Light* by Julie Joosten  
9781927040836 \$18.00

"The 19th-century Romantic poets rhapsodized about nature as separate from humankind; in this era of climate change, Joosten reminds us there is no separation."

—Barbara Carey, *The Toronto Star*

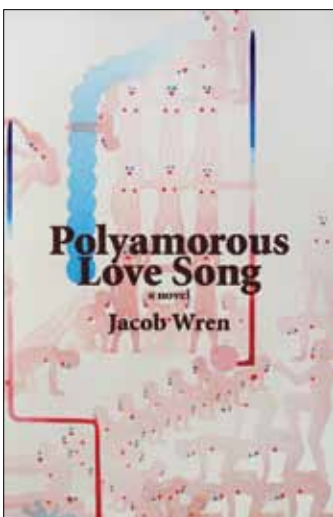
"These poems read like very educated sermons from a service for a religion we have yet to discover." —Michael Dennis



WINNER OF THE 2011 GOVERNOR GENERAL'S LITERARY AWARD FOR POETRY  
WINNER OF THE 2012 TRILLIUM BOOK PRIZE  
WINNER OF A 2012 ALCUIN SOCIETY AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN BOOK DESIGN  
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*Killdeer: Essay Poems* by Phil Hall  
9781897388815 \$18.00

"Hall manages to rescue the lyrical essay from its recondite excesses and turn it into something that's as adventurous as it is readable. This book charts [Hall's] development as a writer, but it also demonstrates and furthers that development." —Paul Vermeersch, *The Globe and Mail*



A GLOBE & MAIL TOP 100 BOOK OF 2014

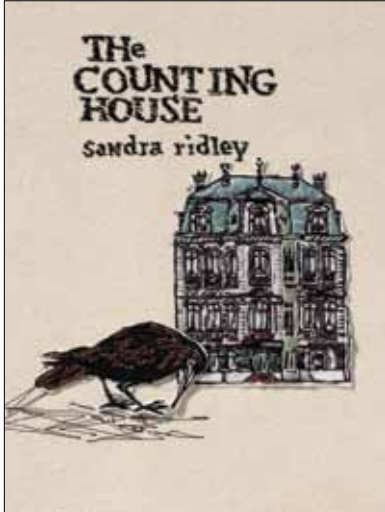
*Polyamorous Love Song* by Jacob Wren  
9781771660303 \$23.00

"The book of your dreams."  
—*The Globe and Mail*

"At once thoughtful, thrilling, terrifying, comedic and disturbing."  
—*Cult MTL*

"*Polyamorous Love Song* is a fine dystopic vision of a future already here."  
—*Nomadic Press*

# NOTABLE TITLES

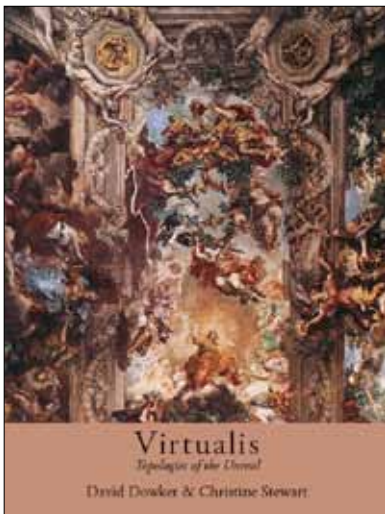


FINALIST FOR THE 2014 ARCHIBALD LAMPMAN AWARD FOR POETRY

*The Counting House* by Sandra Ridley  
9781927040843 \$20.00

“The diversity of language is marvellous, and Ridley’s deeper humanistic concerns—about devalued subjects crashing forward into a condition of self-declaration—emerge through these poetic sequences intensely, and bravely.” —Margaret Christakos

“Ridley means business, and her fierce application of lyrical craft and formal innovation to her subject render all of her books as stirringly evocative and cohesive works. Her most recent collection *The Counting House* is no exception.” —*Jacket2*



FINALIST FOR THE 2014 STEPHAN G. STEPHANSSON AWARD FOR POETRY

*Virtualis: Topologies of the Unreal* by David Dowker & Christine Stewart  
9781927040621 \$18.00

“This book weaves a kind of lexical magic as threads of stunning lyricism and metaphysical fantasia so vibrant it feels like a synesthetic dream.” —Chris Moran, *HTML Giant*

“In their collaborative blend of ideas and language, the poems in *Virtualis: Topologies of the Unreal* work through the abstract, deliberately ungrounded, embracing sound.” —rob mclennan



FINALIST FOR THE 2014 A.M. KLEIN PRIZE FOR POETRY

*Here in There* by Angela Carr  
9781771660327 \$20.00

“Carr constructs a delicate tower of a book, one that sways and seems fragile but never topples.” —*Winnipeg Free Press*

“These texts are remarkable.”  
—ERÍN MOURE



# R E C E N T T I T L E S



*Pauls* by Jess Taylor  
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"A magical and penetrating collection of strange, mundane, traumatized and ecstatic people who are all named Paul. Its simple sentences are little atoms of wonder." —Heather O'Neill



*Grand Menteur* by Jean Marc Ah-Sen  
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"What a strange and extraordinary book—it reads like a magic trick no one's ever done before or a myth of a myth—it's too mysterious, too original, too funny, too pure, too profound to be the work of a mortal being." —Lee Henderson



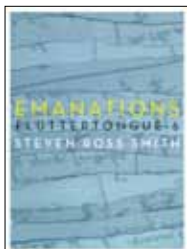
*The Plotline Bomber of Innisfree* by Josh Massey  
9781771661263 \$20.00

"Massey catches his stories from a source far removed from the espresso bars of the Information Age. He understands both these worlds, and as a satirist he unifies them, has us thinking not of others but as one." —Michael Turner



*No Work Finished Here: Rewriting Andy Warhol*  
by Liz Worth  
9781771661645 \$20.00

"Liz Worth's collection of poems is a testament to both her artistry and daily discipline."  
—Heath Allen



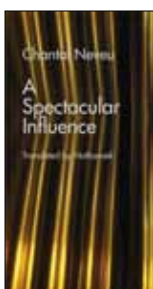
*Emanations: fluttertongue 6*  
by Steven Ross Smith  
9781771661522 \$18.00

"*Emanations: fluttertongue 6* is a book that will reward rereading, yet offers so much on first perusal."  
—Eclectic Ruckus



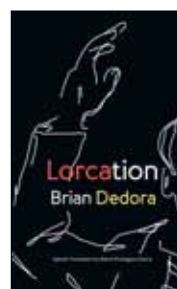
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"Shannon Maguire's *Myrmurs* experiments on a culture of experimentation. The result is a diffractive study of bodies of noise—in all their queer, incorrigible biological and linguistic volumes."  
—Adam Dickinson



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Translated from the French by Nathanaël  
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"In this book, magnificent with density, the most external events are retranslated into intimate events." —Alexis Lussier



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"Exciting, moving, a gift for us, a gift for Lorca. Dedora traces an under-the-skin map of both poets' physical and emotional landscapes."  
—Laura García-Lorca



*The Relativistic Empire* by Samuel Andreyev  
9781771661720 \$18.00

"Whistling the orchestration of a beautiful 'teflon ballet,' Andreyev makes the poem march to clockwork and despair." —derek beaulieu



*Hucklberry Finn* by Martí Sales  
Translated from the Catalan by Elisabet Ràfols and Ona Bantjes-Ràfols  
9781771662017 \$20.00

"This excellent translation....will move all who read it to see Catalan poetry in a different light."  
—Beatriz Hausner



SPRING 2016

## R E C E N T T I T L E S



*Book of Knots* by Jay Gamble

9781771661997 112 pages 8.5x5.5 inches \$20.00

Think of *Book of Knots* as a kind of Seinfeld of poetry: at its centre is nothing, and its playful approach to critical negation results in puzzles and riddles that may yield no answers, but are richer from the asking.

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## B A C K L I S T

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