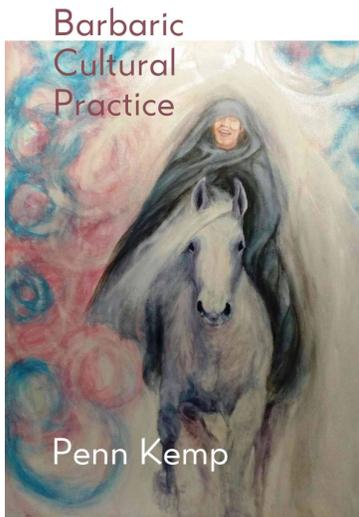


News from the Feminist Caucus, by Anne Burke

News from Penn Kemp, Nicole sent us a long and inclusive list of poets and their books entered this year for the Pat Lowther Memorial Award; also see [P.K. PAGE: 100 YEARS](#); Reviews of *Who Will Love the Crow*, by Miriam Dunn; *Shakespearean Blues, new poems*, by Shirley Graham; and *buoyancy control, poems*, by Adrienne Gruber; introducing new members Katherine Cope, Catherine J. Stewart, and Nan Williamson (and some of their poems).

From Penn Kemp: Here's my news for Dec. femin. caucus:



Do you review poetry? To request a review copy of Penn Kemp's BARBARIC CULTURAL PRACTICE, contact Quattro Books: info@quattrobooks.ca

The anthology, *Performing Women* (www.poets.ca/feministcaucus) in print from the League of Canadian Poets is also available in a digital edition: <http://www.playwrightsguild.ca/performing-women-playwrights-and-performance-poets>, on-line.

News about my forthcoming play, THE TRIUMPH OF TERESA HARRIS, is on <https://teresaharrisdreamlife.wordpress.com/>.

Thanks!
Penn

In late 2011, the League established the [P.K. Page Trust Fund](#), which accepts donations towards establishing a poetry mentorship program. In honour of what would have been P.K.'s 100th birthday this year, *The Malahat Review* organized a wonderful [fundraiser and reading event](#) in Victoria on her birthday, November 23rd. The reading, which was emceed by Victoria Poet Laureate Yvonne Blomer, was followed by a panel discussion about Page's life and work led by the University of Victoria's West Coast Literature specialist, Nicholas Bradley. Admission was by donation, and all proceeds were donated to the P.K. Page Trust.

[P.K. PAGE: 100 YEARS](#)

[2017 BOOK AWARD ENTRANTS](#)

2017 BOOK AWARD ENTRANTS



Thank you to all the [publishers](#) and poets who submitted their books for consideration in our 2017 books awards! Below, you'll find a complete list of submissions for the [Pat Lowther Memorial Award](#). The shortlists for all three awards will be announced in early April, 2017, with the winners announced and celebrated in June! Keep your eyes on [poets.ca/awards](#) for all the latest information.

PAT LOWTHER MEMORIAL AWARD Entries

Book Title

A Bedroom of Searchlights
Red with Living
The Largeness of Rescue
even this page is white
A Pillow Book
Looking for Light
Ceremony of Touching
Burning in this Midnight Dream
Look at Her
Blood Orange
Silent Sister
How We Fare
Winnows
The Back Channels
Mood Swing, with Pear
The After Party
Songs of Exile
Ukrainian Daughter's Dance
The Blomidon Logs
Slow States of Collapse
The Hideous Hidden
Leave-Taking
Magyarazni
Whelmed
Throaty Wipes
3 Summers
In on the Great Joke

Author

Joanna M. Weston
Diane Driedger
Eva Tihanyi
Vivek Shraya
Suzanne Buffam
Susan Ioannou
Karen Shklanka
Louise Bernice Halfe
Vanessa Shields
Heidi Garnett
Beth Everest
Mary Ann Mulhern
Maxianne Berger
Jennifer Houle
Sue MacLeod
Jana Prikryl
Banoo Zan
Marion Mutala
Deirdre Dwyer
Ashley-Elizabeth Best
Sylvia Legris
Marilyn Potter
Helen Hajnoczky
Nicole Markotic
Susan Holbrook
Lisa Robertson
Laura Broadbent

<i>Float</i>	Anne Carson
<i>Settler Education</i>	Laurie D. Graham
<i>100 Days</i>	Juliane Okot Bitek
<i>This Being</i>	Ingrid Ruthig
<i>Stomata</i>	Genevieve Lehr
<i>Selah</i>	Nora Gould
<i>Tell Them It Was Mozart</i>	Angeline Schellenberg
<i>Heaven's Thieves</i>	Sue Sinclair
<i>Off-Leash</i>	Dorothy Mahoney
<i>Lady Crawford</i>	Julie Cameron Gray
<i>Stranger</i>	Nyla Matuk
<i>Tomorrow's Bright White Light</i>	Jan Conn
<i>Tourist</i>	Lara Bozabalian
<i>Dopamine Blunder</i>	Lori Cayer
<i>Poemw</i>	Anne Fleming
<i>Silvija</i>	Sandra Ridley
<i>How to Draw a Rhinoceros</i>	Kate Sutherland
<i>Buoyancy Control</i>	Adrienne Gruber
<i>Waiting Room</i>	Jennifer Zilm
<i>Colour Theory</i>	Megan Mueller
<i>Tidal Wave</i>	Brenda Clews
<i>Love Is A Very Long Word</i>	Majlinda Bashllari
<i>Short Takes on the Apocalypse</i>	Patricia Young
<i>Metanoia</i>	Sharon McCartney
<i>Let the Empire Down</i>	Alexandra Oliver
<i>Wind Leaves Absence</i>	Mary Maxwell
<i>A Map in My Blood</i>	Carla Braidek
<i>Half Rock</i>	Robin Durnford
<i>In the Small Hours</i>	Erin Brubacher
<i>Acquired Community</i>	Jane Byers
<i>Eating Matters</i>	Kara-lee MacDonald
<i>Gloryland</i>	Carla Funk
<i>Never Mind</i>	Katherine Lawrence
<i>Tight Wire</i>	Kerry Gilbert
<i>House of Mystery</i>	Courtney Bates-Hardy
<i>Barbaric Cultural Practice</i>	Penn Kemp

<i>Painter, Poet, Mountain: After Cezanne</i>	Susan McCaslin
<i>Serpentine Loop</i>	Elee Kraljii Gardiner
<i>Kids in Triage</i>	Kilby Smith-McGregor
<i>The Description of the World</i>	Johanna Skibsrud
<i>Occasionally</i>	Suparna Ghosh
<i>Ghost Town</i>	Susan Telfer
<i>Tumour</i>	Evelyn Lau
<i>All the Gold Hurts My Mouth</i>	Katherine Leyton
<i>Dust of Fire</i>	Alyda Faber
<i>Small Fires</i>	Kelly Norah Drukker
<i>The Unlit Path Behind the House</i>	Margo Wheaton
<i>The Holy Nothing</i>	Jessica Hiemstra
<i>Hiroshima: A War Story</i>	conchetta principe
<i>Totem Poles and Railroads</i>	Janet Rogers
<i>Heart Mechanic</i>	Gisela Ruebsaat
<i>Shakespearean Blues</i>	Shirley Graham
<i>Settle</i>	Theresa Munoz

<http://poets.ca/2016/11/24/2017-book-award-entrants/>



Review of *Who Will Love the Crow*, by Miriam Dunn (North Hampton, NH: Winter Goose Publishing, 2016) 119 pp. paper

Deconstruction is de-centred and can show the indeterminate, unlike Western culture which is logo centric. According to *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, Seventh Edition, by M.H. Abrams (Toronto: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1999), Deconstruction questions and subverts or undermines the boundaries, coherence, or unity, and determinant meanings assumed of language in a literary text. In "Deconstruction of the Poet" Dunn shares secrets, disconnects meaning, buried syllables, with "a drift of words". She exchanges intent with the random or chaos. Her allusion to "intent" refers to Jacques Derrida's view that we always say more and otherwise than we intend to say.

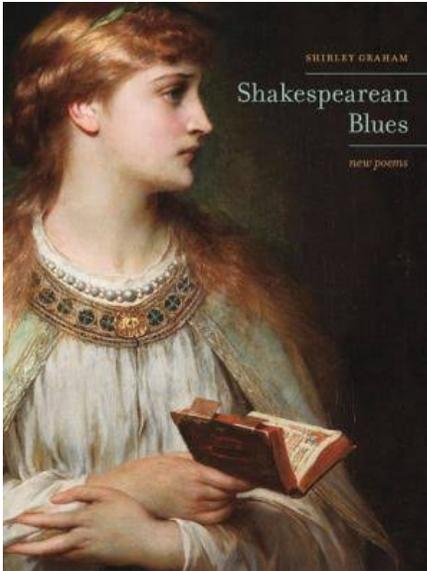
Each moment has motion ("crawl", "fall") and emotion. The forms are explored, from the haiku ("Quiet-tide", "Pilgrims", "Young Winds", "Angels", "Midnight", "Sacred"), to a geographical curve which is replete with similes ("Kenzieville Curve"). Her metaphors "flannel of my dreams" and "velvet crush of sleep" are vibrant. In "Spiral" the shape matters, compare with "Legs" wherein each word forms a line of poetry; while two words (the adjectival modifiers of nouns) operate in "Whistles Trickling". "Tears in Oceans" deals with words lost or tossed in something deeper (and by implication, greater) than themselves, like the plurality of oceans. The singular "A Word" drops sounds and sings ironically "while making not a sound". "These Soft Words" are part of the human condition, "in oceans born". "Old Words" were rediscovered in *billet doux*. "The Next Word" marks the juncture, with "angry adjectives" and "unruly nouns". However, "The Ocean is Too Big" presumably because it appears to divide the two earlier individual streams ("of our two crossing streams", in "These Soft Words").

Her "Metaphor is Meat" is a tour de force because it is self-aware of our basic tools, such as the stanza, metre, the tercet, allusion. "No Poetry" bemoans the negation of the known. "sTAGES" plays with upper and lower case, marking the iterations of sadness numerically. "The Space" anticipates the undone or the yet to be realized, for the lovers separated; and nostalgia for being "closer together", poised between the agents of the continent ("that was our heart") and the ocean (with, for practical purposes, little or no space between).

"Half Spooned" depicts the "uncurled" and "unfurled". "A Place" is a rhythmic narrative celebrating the solitary existence, while invoking another to join this "secret". Company needs to be conjured, similar with words, rhymes, rapping, singing, etc. "somewhen between" is a coined word for the interchange of day/night and the poet interchanges visual, tactile, olfactory, and auditory images, such as "the colour of singing" and "the cool sound of blue"; "dreaming" has a "scent." Similarly, "Still" in "Still, Dover Beach", refers to constancy in time as well as location. There is a rhyme scheme of a, b, c, b in stanzas one, three, (in four a half-rhyme), in five, six, seven, and eight. She has a turn of phrase in the truism of "The ebb and flow of time" but buttresses this with the tides which "retreat and then return" (similar to the military formation in battle); then "back to the moon-blached land" (an original adjectival modifier). She devises a binary in "This, That, and Another Thing" by introducing two players, "Zig" (he) and "Zag", (she) who are oppositional. It is reminiscent of a nursery rhyme such as Jack Spratt who could eat no fat, while his wife could eat no lean. Here we see their progeny: "Hum was thin but Haw was fat". The situation is adjudicated by "No One". The subjunctive "Red" introduces "If this were" in the conditional tense, a poem, a song, a painting, and finally "my heart", the paradox that a broken heart rendered "and nothing of me/ would remain".

Dunn lives and writes in Nova Scotia, where she teaches for the Cape Breton Victoria Regional Board, in Sydney, Nova Scotia. She holds a B.Ed. in Language Arts and Social Studies from Memorial University of Newfoundland and a B.A. in Community Studies, English Literature and research from Cape Breton University. She was a finalist in the Nathan Bransford First Paragraph Contest. This is her first full-length poetry collection.

Anne Burke



Review of *Shakespearean Blues, new poems*, by Shirley Graham (Salt Spring Island, B.C.: Mother Tongue Publishing, 2016) 89 pp. paper.

The poet produced the collection on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the bard's death, if "serendipitously". She follows through on her obsession with the colour "blue" in all its variegated phases, "it is my one word *Ars Poetica*" or the Art of Poetry. She combines the "Blues Soul" in riffs, monologues, notes, plotting, gaming cues. The orchestration of characters and plot remind me of the closet plays of Shakespeare or dramas of the mind for which nineteenth century Canadian narrative poets were known.

In "Sigh no more, ladies" Ophelia's drowning occurs with symbolic flowers, Gertrude a widowed queen who "wedded/bedded" and her son a spy; Juliet on a spring day transported to Washington Square; Romeo like a horse, his words, then she speaks. The "She", a Minoan princess, or Miranda. The reason why Troy was sacked. She contains the four elements. Indeed "Men were deceivers ever". Monogamy simply a word. There is treachery among other men. At the periphery is time, as blue as pearls, in each word.

In "O, I am fortune's fool", for "there is not end/ to the blue wants". Bear-bating, a man pursuing her, become "living theatre". Mirror or mask. A name is only a name. Secret sexual embrace, narcissus images, mortal or immortal. Star spelling language composed of phrase, scripted lines, applauding the words, mind unmasked.

In "There is nothing..." Hamlet replies "Words, words, words". The poet re-enters the worded world. The furniture in a room is rearranged after an argument but the

philosophical treatise is also an argument (homonyms). Anger yields to contemplation. Her torn volumes of Shakespeare. She is aware of her husband and “two much” son. The verbal chess match. the unsaid mid-sentence. indifference. the opening code. with or without. superfluous. Forgive me.

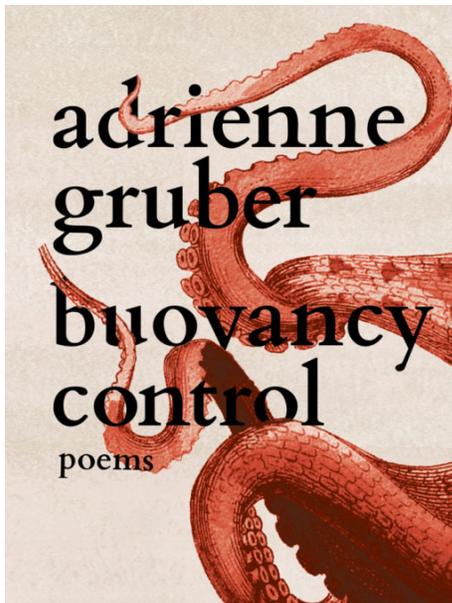
In “We are such stuff...” fog acts as a shape changer. anecdotes. speaking words. a ferry’s crossing as symbol. first day at school. translation. haikus as: “One Breath Poems: one, two, three, four, five, six., seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve.

In “The lights burn...” Lady Macbeth is “no more”, hubris “shine/crime?” The male of the species. Cordelia parented her father King Lear. She saved the husband and son, “from sharks and thieves”. The black robes died. That last syllable. ghosts. dead all around and in us. She writes an eight-part indwelling poem parsing Macbeth’s soliloquy. Prospero sends off ocean words. This moves to weaving, falling, hanging them, “letter by letter”, syllables. Ariel recommends magic.

There is a generous selection of notes which centre the allusions to Shakespeare’s plays. However, what is more interesting is how Graham has tilted the bard’s words in her own fashion to render insights, convey emotion, and layer the themes with dexterity and wit.

Graham’s earlier book include *Blue Notes* (also from Mother Tongue Press), *What Someone Wanted* (Black Moss Press), and *Book of Blue* (also Black Moss Press).

Anne Burke



Review of *buoyancy control, poems*, by Adrienne Gruber (Toronto: BookThug, 2016) 81 pp. paper.

The noun "buoyancy" means: 1. the power to float or rise in a fluid; relative lightness. 2. the power of supporting a body so that it floats; upward pressure exerted by the fluid in which a body is immersed. 3. lightness or resilience of spirit; cheerfulness. The counterweight is "control". (<http://www.dictionary.com/> Nov. 29, 2016).

This collection has two distinct sections "Terra Firma" and "A Mari Usque Ad Maria" (from Sea to Sea). The "Prologue" is a prose stream of consciousness. The setting is lush, tropical, but cacti sunsets. The diction is Spanish ("café con leche", palomas) at a local market and set in Montemorelos, near Monterrey, and, in spite of her efforts, the poet feels "I can't hold on to anything".

At the outset, in "Terra Firma", a tarot card would choose itself to represent "Indecision" ("The Hanged Woman"). The drive south from Kansas, Nebraska, to the border, of Mexico 's Monterrey, is a mission to her sister's wedding. The landmarks include a fountain with a sculpture of "the marbled woman/ water glazing her breasts". The longer poem "Proposal" begins with the bargaining "Let's make babies", which progressively leads to conception, labour, a placenta; in a poem with a refrain, phrase, line, or group of lines repeated at intervals throughout the poem, generally at the end of a stanza (English "Ghazals and Anti-Ghazals"). Some poems such as villanelles, demand a refrain as art of their definitions; with every line repeated, this is a pantoum.

In "This Summer I Was Her Hedonist", the persona of the poet is described as: "naked, guttural" a captive photographed, kaleidoscope-bound". "I lost footing or footing lost me" Her diction is hyperbole of "glacial tears" personification of "High tide weeps", which resources *Wikipedia* for "mimic" (an octopus which approximates the appearance and movements of fifteen other species.) The function of the poet as mimesis, this adaptation is freakish ("Circus"), and regenerative ("The Freak Show"), with tentacles ("The Sideshow"). The post-coitus ("The After Show"), harpooned and umbilical ("Fighting Preservation is Harlequin") structured with alternate discourses, she takes inventory ("We Are Considered Complete on our Own").

In "Prologue" (about halfway through the collection) she traces Lake Superior and Rorschachs, before the second section. Instinctual tension is expressed ("Oyster") in beach scenes of Torfino, Long Beach. She like the words will come. Darwinian devolution. Clarity "milky", cervix groans. "My body capsized. The raft hardly big enough for two." ("The Summer I Capsized You") a series of vignettes about summer vacation, in which there is self-revelation through water, especially birthing. "Dickie Lake" 1 and 2: a held breath, heart, thighs personified; then hip, pelvis, in the service of reproduction, creation. The acts of diving or descent are controlled and appear to be near-death experiences, forced drowning. The title poem a bubble in the brain, a trick, gloom. A prose poem on gravity, swallowing: a puffer fish. In "Rescue" she draws on a scuba diving accident. The poems are about swallowing, inhalation, the rhythmic "dichotomous acts". Trans-gendered sea animal (an anemone) is a paradigm for self-loathing. A conceit for bi-sexuality erupts into alternating: "Reasons to" and "Reasons not to" in a stunning hunting, "panting, silence and heat". In addition to octopus, starfish, seahorse, jellyfish, lionfish, blue angel, "feminist at heart". Indeed, what we can or can't do".

Some of the poems were previously published in *Everything Water*, a 2011 chapbook from Cactus Press, *Mimic* (a 2012 chapbook from Leaf Press which won the 2012 bpNichol Chapbook Award, "The Hanged Woman" shortlisted for the CBC Literary Awards. *This is the Nightmare* (2008) was shortlisted for the Robert Kroetsch Award for Innovative Poetry. *Intertidal Zones* (2014) is a third chapbook.

Anne Burke

also see:

<http://bookthug.ca/in-conversation-adrienne-gruber-discusses-buoyancy-control/>

Introduction to New Members:

The Trapper's Wife
--Catherine J. Stewart

She leans her forehead
against the window
breath fogging glass.

Steel traps rattling, he strides
away from the house,
snowshoes crushing
mesh prints into snow,
cutting into field
and frozen slough
before he dissolves like a mirage
of willow wood.

In two nights the cold
swirls frozen on the window,
and, heavy at the foot of her bed,
stone loses all memory of oven.

Four days in and the bucket clunks
on the ice sheet in the shallow well.
She makes water from snow, no alchemist's secret,
just the woodstove and a battered bucket
that rocks on the hot cast iron.

By dark the coyotes circle the cabin,
call. High pitch shudders
down her spine, curves
around the small of her back,
and settles in her womb.

By day she's searching the hills for smoke,
white wisps threading to the sky,
but there is no lightness rising from the dark
forests, only the silence of trees.

The seventh night black turns white.
For two days the snow erases her

as she walks
to the outhouse
to the barn
to the field.

Ten days now and the cow cloisters in the barn
summer in its hay-scented breath
steam in the milk her frigid hands
coax from its udder.
She leans her head against its side
and the calf's heartbeat taps on her forehead.

She returns often to the barn,
stands still shushed
for the faint rustle of breath
like white silk skirts at a wedding.

Catherine J. Stewart

Catherine J. Stewart is a Victoria-based poet and a graduate of the University of Victoria's writing program. She is currently completing an MFA in poetry at UBC. She has most recently been published in *Grain* and *untethered*.

Correspondence (act again alice)

act again alice although always another
anything art between body certain
character come course does else
even everything experience first form
gertrude get give go going great
having hemingway herself however kind
know let life little lives living
look looking love makes making may mean
might must nothing now object often
others own painting part people perhaps
picasso place play point portrait question

quite rather read reading really
relation right say see seems sense
simply sister something sort space
stein story take tell things
think three time toklas two understand upon
want woman women words work
world writes writing yes

NOTE

Correspondance (act again alic) is a found poem, a cento generated by a word counting and assessment program that Amazon.uk ran through the text of my book, *Passionate Collaborations: Learning to Live with Gertrude Stein* (2005) when it first came out. The words that appear here are the 100 most frequently used words in the book. I arranged the piece in lines of four, five and six words because, as you can see here, and as Stein found in her own manuscript writing, and commemorated in her 1930 poem, "Five Words in a Line," five words tend to comprise a typical functional phrase in English.

Karen Cope

Rose and rows of roses

First rose

No one knows the use of him and her;

one is not one for one but two.

Of course it was a love story. They almost always are.

Second rose

I could say what nobody thought;

I could carry no one in between;

I do not think it ends well.

Third rose

Like a moth in love and months

we three fluttered and snagged in flame.

Damage or delight but which?

She—and thee—

would say deceit.

Fourth rose

I would say,

oh what would I say?

Shame should not be for fountains.

Remove everything but the arabesques.

(Another rows in.)

--On the contrary I must replace the planks.

Moving was a mistake.

Water runs through our house and across its crooked floor.

And if a floor is precious

so is not a door.

NOTE

Italicized phrases in **Rose and rows of roses** are taken from the middle of Gertrude Stein's 1932 cryptic book-length meditation on love and loss, *Stanzas in Meditation*, and rearranged so that I may tell my own story with them. The line in the Sea section, "If you are under water be under water somewhere sweet," I owe to Nikolai Meador.

Karen Cope

Karin Cope is a poet, professor, sailor, photographer, scholar, rural activist and blogger. Her publications include *Passionate Collaborations: Learning to Live with Gertrude Stein* (2015), *What we're doing to stay afloat* (poems) (2015), and since 2009, an ongoing blog entitled *Visible Poetry: Aesthetic Acts in Progress*. She lives in Nova Scotia.

everyone knows

Everyone knows it's unsettling
yellow blooms in a tall blue glass
chimes ringing under twisted trees
nine golden elephants ears silver-tipped
keep time with swinging trunks
under a moon edged in green

a rough-tongued gargoyle mutters low
no clowns allowed
but the nude in the doorway
smuggles them in disguised
as peddlers offering blue apples

you see their footprints in the dust

no one plays the piano
the nude licks her lips
tips her flute to the sky
nine clowns shuffle
flat feet in a slow motion dance
under midnight chandeliers

smoothed by long fingers your eyelids
grow heavy a violet voice
punctuates the dark sky chants for elephants
clowns fools and the tall black man
juggles his torches in time with the flute

everyone knows the best dreams slip in as clouds

Nan Williamson

midnight carnival

Under an emerald moon
the midnight carnival's
green tornado spins.

One hundred sycamores tremble.

Yellow lights
dance on the hill.

The lion whispers
to a sleeping gypsy,
*I never eat a lady
on the edge of dreaming.*

Inside tall houses
tangled voices
murmur.

A trapeze artist waves
from a window
at the red horse
flying to the moon.

I take the dream
for what it is, a jumble
of mimosa clouds.

The midnight carnival
presents
a curious Japanese lady:
she holds the emerald moon
on a long blue string.

No trace of friends
or lions, but sly lips
insinuate dark questions,
voices, talking too much.

Inside the houses, tired sandals
wait for the morning dance.

Nan Williamson

bastet

1.
curled in languorous sun,
sleek, black, dreams
of the other Egypt, burning myrrh
at sunset, and her father Ra.
Yawns, back arched, stretches,
pads on soft paws, rubs my calf,
purrs. Then, ears twitch,
head turns, she tongues
her fur, slouches off
to an unseen world.

2.
Bastet
now Artemis of Greece,
moon creature,
sits upright, presides,
eyes dilated, shine. She
watches tangled bodies
fondle soft flesh, feast
on apples, wine, curl exhausted
from their play or rise,
swaying to her faint retreating
music, dying on the wind.

3.
In holy feline form,
she crouches, guards her queen –
frail sign of that bright world
where poets sang,
and virgins danced in praise.
There is no shrine,
no trace of temple rites,
but, stained with tawny red and gold,
Bastet remains,
on crumbling walls in Nefertari's tomb.

Nan Williamson

weathers

a cold clear night
visible stars crowd the sky
snow crystals dance in the lamplight
inside candles wash us amber
blue barmaids sing to a lady in red
and her tall black man with a pipe

in the park maple shadows frame
silver patches lit by the snow moon
gusts of lake wind numb our faces to masks
never mind that your kiss sparks a flame
but tomorrow's forecast is snow squalls
fog before dawn and you
with your head in the clouds you'll be gone

Nan Williamson

unconsoled

In a white milk jug,
mirrored in the lacquered oak,
pure white peonies wait,
buds stir, lean into blowsy sisters, listen.

Two men sway, shuffle,
hold each other in darkstreets,
lean into a doorway. A crumbled treble voice
sings out, *Jesus' blood never failed me yet.*
Buds cry, a shadow bends in forced submission.

three white peonies
float by the window, in three blue bowls.
Small puffs of wind stir.
Blooms sway, unconsoled
by the spare and gentle heartsongs of Satie.

Nan Williamson

against the night

1.

It's late:
things glow and burn
lit by crimson canopies
of dripping trees.
Leaves cluster, wet. Gold
layers gleam against dark stone.
Burnt-orange apples
hang from flowering crab.
Robins rustle in,
gorge while they can.
Virginia Creeper, still-green
veins pulsing, clings to brick,
burns hectic red.

2.

In a Munch painting,
he with ringed eyes,
hollowed out and haunted,
flees
the house.
Red Virginia Creeper drips
from the empty windows; shroud-like
shapes and headstones
block the door.

3.

One night in San Miguel,
we watched Pilar Lopez
ignite the stage,
old head held high,
smiling defiantly, red-mouthed,
dance the *bulería*
with lightning turns, toes and heels
thunder over the sound of clapping *palmas*.
Duende has her, dancing in a sea of fire;
Whirling faster, she fans it
with her flickering skirt.
Flashing her *mantón*,
she taunts the night.

Nan Williamson

city song

called to a thousand times I never looked back
made my way to the unreal city
stirred by uncountable facets of glass and stone

In the fractal city
students scuffle yellow leaves
scent of sausages frying onions
from Giovanni's cart at the Museum
the insistent jackhammer
rudely cracking concrete slabs
clang and scrape of metals
snap of wood demolition workers in the city's core
screech of brakes blare of horns sirens stop traffic
streetcars rumble plague of billboards flashes
pushing Cartier or Vuitton
voices jumble heels tap pavement
elevators rise to the eighteenth floor
hum of boardrooms loops and grids of sidewalks
suited folk of Bay Street men arm-in-arm
in Rainbow Village shoppers at the Eaton Centre
and the buskers and the beggars
compel our coins

capricious kaleidoscope
diffracting order made of change
a hundred fleeting movements
multitude solitude
art form of the city
ballet of the street
teases city lovers
to move to the buzz
embrace the mad dance

In the violet hour when the human engine moves
in shadow, before the lights go on
the fallen angel shuffles past the corner
past the open chapel door where sometimes we can hear
the choirboys' pure soprano
carried to the evening street to stop us in our tracks
and raise our heads to see
summer stars ignite the wild sky

Nan Williamson

georgian bay meditation

Rosy granite, dark-veined
feldspar flecked black,
gleaming splash of milky quartz,
angular stones drawn by glaciers,
fractured and scraped,
rounded by sand and waves,
rocky abstractions milled from the Shield.

I choose your birthday token
from this gritty northern shore,
place in your veined hand
a ruddy gold-streaked story-
older than language, than love.
Dark green bands of igneous rock,
orange lichen dropped like paint.
Jack pines clutch at crevices,
jagged branches growing all one way.

In the bay, shifting hues: cobalt,
steel grey, and thin, bitter spume
snap at the scudding sky;
Waves slap against the stones,
retreat, return; the rhythm lasts
all afternoon - or our whole lives.
What's left is little time
to understand it all, beginning
with these ancient traces on the shore.

Nan Williamson

heard in the shell

For D. after breast cancer diagnosis

sea waves rise and crash
inside my keepsake conch
dark panic swells
no mere intimations but chaos
roaring in my ear
prophetic shell my skull's blood
rushes out of control
this primal trumpet echoes fear

let me suck black seeds glistening caviar
crush papaya soft flesh in my mouth
don't tell the kids or sisters mother
this soft ripe globe hold in your palm
cup the bruised apple
circle areola with your thumb
crush it in your lips before the dawn

waking beside you sun
on the morning bed I dreamed
you saved me from the drowning waves
lift up the conch again maybe
there'll be new music in the shell
and you will hold it let me hear
today's green song

Nan Williamson

the night's not long enough

I'm not going to tell you
about cures.
You already know
I'm not one for painkillers
to treat cankers of the soul:
that's not the problem here.

You didn't show up,
or call. Spiteful lips
whispered of your coldness-
seminars and galas,
duties always somewhere else.

I want to tell you many things
but the night's not long enough
to explore regret's dull ache,
shame's deeper gash or
the paralysis to come.

When the moon splinters,
when the wind whips you upward,
whirling, wild, I'll pour
drops of healing lavender,
smooth it with warm fingers on your skin.

I'd like to bring you gifts
of snowdrops and stars,
dancers in love with the music,
bright eyes meeting ours,
and laughter,
 way more laughter.

Nan Williamson

bouleversée/turned upside down

days go by
when I lose hold of wonder
when last night's quarrel
or fresh reported slaughters
shove and push for my attention
crowd out the lions and holy fools

but they come back
and I'm ambushed by

bluesy words
jazz-dancing down the syncopated page

fragile stars
frozen lace on winter windowpanes

a revel of nasturtiums
oranges scarlets yellows
reflected in a shining copper pot

the whole damn glorious dazzle

Nan Williamson

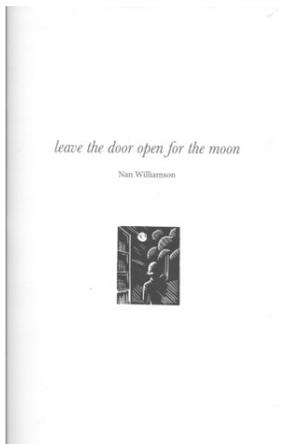


Short Biography

- born in Toronto but now live and work as an artist and writer in Peterborough, Ontario
- graduate of the Humber College School of Creative Writing (in poetry), 2013.
with mentor Karen Connelly ([The Lizard Cage](#), etc.) 2013
- completed poetry writing courses with American poet and provocateur, Judyth Hill, San Miguel de Allende, Mexico 2011, 2012. I was one of six featured poets in "Poets in Concert: a San Miguel Literary Sala Reading"

March 17th 2011. Judyth also worked with me fine-tuning my chapbook, Feb/Mar 2014.

- author of numerous published articles in educational journals
- co-author – consultant, Multi-Source Series (Language Arts texts and Teacher Guides), 1992-1993, Prentice Hall.
- published author: Science Teacher's Choice: research activities that work, Broadview Press, 1989.
- editor of *The Reviewing Librarian*, OSLA 1978-1984
- member of League of Canadian Poets, The Ontario Poetry Society , Canadian Federation of Poets,
- innovative leader of numerous workshops (including poetry) at teacher conferences
- Honours BA in English Language and Literature, U of T
- successful teacher of high school English
- visual artist: my paintings have been chosen for many juried shows and sold mainly in Southern Ontario
- industrious marketer of my earlier book at Ontario Library Association conferences, selling more than 1500 copies in the first year



Bibliography

<http://www.jacksoncreekpress.com/jacksoncreekpress/Home.html>

Chapbook

leave the door open for the moon, Jackson Creek Press, 2015

Individual poems published

- *bastet*, Three Drops in a Cauldron Journal, (U.K.) 2016
- *heard in the shell*, The Steel Chisel, (on-line), 2016
- *You have a Right*, The Link (Summer Solstice), 2015
- *Georgian Bay Meditation*, Thinking With My Hands; a companion to Dry Stone Walling Across Canada, 2015

- *heard in the shell, Against the Night, The Night's Not Long Enough, Mindshadows; a Canadian anthology of poetry*, A Beret Days Book, The Ontario Poetry Society, 2015
- *heard in the shell, Arborealis*, annual juried anthology, The Ontario Poetry Society, 2014
- *autumn and georgian bay meditation, Room* magazine, (vol.37.1), March/April 2014
- *reflected in the copper pot, The Steel Chisel* (On-line), November 2013,
- *I wanted to stay, Song of the City*, juried anthology, Arborealis, 2012
- *Bastet*, Arborealis 2010;
- *Forty Years of Drinking Red Wine, Arborealis*,2008,

https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/31311501-leave-the-door-open-for-the-moon#other_reviews