Poems written to poets
and the stories that inspired them

Edited by
Julie Roorda
and
Elana Wolff
Contents

A Poet-to-Poet Preface
by editors Julie Roorda and Elana Wolff 13

Rainbow
to Elizabeth Bishop, by Stephanie Bolster 17

Kin
to Margaret Atwood, by Yaqoob Ghaznavi 19

This poem is not just about sex
to Anne Sexton, by Lenore Rowntree 21

Proust
to Marcel Proust, by George Whipple 23

Runaway
to Mick Burrs, by Baila Ellenbogen 24

As Browning to Galuppi, The Poet to His Rob
to Robert Browning, by Tony Cosier 27

My Heart Draws Close to Fear
to Giacomo Leopardi, by Desi Di Nardo 28

Star in a Manboat
to Robert Frost, by Steven McCabe 30

Writing the Phoenix
to Allan Briesmaster, by Phoebe Tsang 33

Ode to Contact Lenses
to Pablo Neruda, by Catriona Wright 34

Copyright © 2012, the Editors, the Authors and Guernica Editions Inc.
All rights reserved. The use of any part of this publication, reproduced, transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise stored in a retrieval system, without the prior consent of the publisher is an infringement of the copyright law.

Julie Roorda & Elana Wolff, editors
Michael Mirolla, general editor
David Moratto, book design
Guernica Editions Inc.
P.O. Box 117, Station P, Toronto (ON), Canada M5S 2S6
2250 Military Road, Tonawanda, N.Y. 14150-6000 U.S.A.

Distributors:
University of Toronto Press Distribution,
5201 Dufferin Street, Toronto (ON), Canada M3H 5T8
Gazelle Book Services, White Cross Mills, High Town, Lancaster LA1 4XS U.K.
Small Press Distribution, 1341 Seventh St., Berkeley, CA 94710-1409 U.S.A.

First edition.
Printed in Canada.

Legal Deposit – Third Quarter
Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 2012938364
Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Poet to poet [electronic resource]: poems written to poets and the stories that inspired them / Julie Roorda, Elana Wolff, editors.

(Essential anthologies series)
Electronic monograph issued in multiple formats.
Also issued in print format.

I. Roorda, Julie II. Wolff, Elana III. Series: Essential anthologies series (Toronto, Ont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hallucinate Oblivion</td>
<td>to John Smith, by Henry Beissel</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words Are My Petunias</td>
<td>to George Bowering, by Rhonda Ganz</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Step This Side of Salvation</td>
<td>to David McFadden and Stuart Ross,</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>by George Bowering</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Oldest Rock in the World</td>
<td>to Irving Layton, by Russell Thornton</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting for Pigeons</td>
<td>to Ted Hughes, Frank O'Connor,</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and Elizabeth Bishop, by Ian LeTourneau</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You Are Beautiful</td>
<td>to Ted Hughes, by Stan Rogal</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Funereal Wishes</td>
<td>to Malca Litovitz, by Merle Nudelman</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Simmer Greens</td>
<td>to P.K. Page and Dorothy Molloy,</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>by Catherine Graham</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Fifteen</td>
<td>to Elizabeth Bachinsky, after Irving Layton,</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>by Jacob Scheier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wire</td>
<td>to Roo Borson, by John Donlan</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East to West Immigrant</td>
<td>to Seamus Heaney, by Kate Braid</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cold a Man Could Give Himself Up To</td>
<td>to Richard Outram, by Ingrid Ruthig</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back to Where It Ends</td>
<td>to Richard Brautigan, by Gary Clairman</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Pantoum for Whitman</td>
<td>to Walt Whitman, by Mark Lavorato</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Carl Sandburg</td>
<td>to Carl Sandburg, by Caroline Morgan Di Giovanni</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts</td>
<td>to John Thompson, by Margo Wheaton</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corresponding</td>
<td>to William Matthews, by Carole Langille</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senza Titolo</td>
<td>to Dionne Brand, by Mary Lou Soutar-Hynes</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song for the Song of the Aviary</td>
<td>to Don McKay, by Stephanie Bolster</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poetry Bird</td>
<td>to Milton Acorn, by Allan Safarik</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fourth Bear</td>
<td>to Goran Simic, by Julia McCarthy</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postscript: Gathering</td>
<td>to Pablo Neruda, by Tom Wayman</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter Road</td>
<td>to Claudio Duran, by David Clink</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bikeswept Veronica</td>
<td>David Clink, by Myna Wallin</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aubade to the Aubergine: Eggplants for David</td>
<td>David Zieroth, by Gillian Harding-Russell</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omelet</td>
<td>Carol Ann Duffy, by Fiona Tinwei Lam</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling From Beirut</td>
<td>John Mikhail Asfour, by Elee Kraljii Gardiner</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yvonne</td>
<td>Yvonne Blomer, by Wendy Morton</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Incarnation</td>
<td>Pier Giorgio di Cicco, by Marilyn Gear Pilling</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob</td>
<td>Luciano Iacobelli, by Domenico Capilongo</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luigi</td>
<td>Luigi Pirandello, by Salvatore Difalco</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire and Illness</td>
<td>Derek Jarman, by Keith Garebian</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sacred Lane</td>
<td>Antonio Porta, by Pasquale Verdicchio</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Light</td>
<td>Barry Callaghan, by David Sobelman</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kafka</td>
<td>Franz Kafka and Gerrit Achterberg, by Eleonore Schönmaier</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish Ghazals</td>
<td>Rumi, by Susan McCaslin</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Point of Relinquishment</td>
<td>Dean Young, by Christopher Willard</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Being Introduced to Irving Layton at a Literary Soirée</td>
<td>Irving Layton, by Len Gasparini</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women who cry when they drive</td>
<td>Sue Goyette, by Yi-Mei Tsing</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call and Response</td>
<td>Phil Hall, by rob mclennan</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Kerouac</td>
<td>Fred Wah, by Carolyn Hoople Creed</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suzanne Holds the Mirror</td>
<td>Leonard Cohen, by Stan Rogal</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O City</td>
<td>A.M. Klein, by Ruth Panofsky</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Last</td>
<td>Rainer Maria Rilke, by William Anselmi</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For a Poet Facing the End
to Gary Hyland, by Robert Currie ... 137

Business
to Wallace Stevens, by Richard Norman ... 139

Grist Mill
to Al Purdy, by James Deahl ... 141

Not a November Love Poem
to Gwendolyn MacEwen, by Nanci Lee ... 143

Stellar
to Allan Briesmaster,
by Kate Marshall Flaherty ... 144

What Plantos Meant to Poets Trapped Within Socio-Economic Boundaries
to Ted Plantos, by I.B. Iskov ... 146

Death Fruit
to Pier Paolo Pasolini, by Sonia Di Placido ... 148

Whatever Were You Thinking About
to Sylvia Plath, by J.J. Steinfeld ... 150

Personals
to C.D. Wright, by Michael Fraser ... 152

For A.L.D.
to John Ashbery and Leonard Cohen,
by Daniel Scott Tysdal ... 153

Poet From a Young Age
to Ken Belford, by Anne Hopkinson ... 156

Canoeing Song
to Pauline Johnson, by Karen Shenfeld ... 158

Something Rare
to Randall Jarrell, by Gerard Beirne ... 161

Homage to Frank Stanford
to Frank Stanford, by Jason Heroux ... 163

On the Occasion of Visiting Auden's Grave
to W.H. Auden, by David Zieroth ... 164

Inanna on the Subway
to Malca Litovitz, by Ellen Jaffe ... 166

Leaping Over Fragments
to Sappho, Anne Carson, and H.D.,
by Elizabeth Greene ... 168
A Poet-to-Poet Preface

Elana Wolff
Former American poet laureate Robert Hass has called poetry “a very private kind of art.” I believe this. Poems come from and get to the deepest, most secret, most intimate interstices of the human predicament. That’s why they continue to be written, that’s why they continue to be read. Poems are other people’s pictures in which we see ourselves—image-to-image, private-mind to private-mind.

Julie Roorda
It’s a paradox that it is in our particular solitudes we most relate to each other, in our unique privacies that we find the most in common. Robert Hass might very well have said poetry is a very lonely art. People continue to write and read poetry because they are lonely. Is it surprising, then, that so much poetry arises from imagined, perhaps longed-for, conversations with other poets?

Elana: Writing is largely a solitary occupation. So yes, the poet is alone, often lonely, and the poem becomes a piece of crafted language in which he or she seeks to frame a face, a memory, a mood, a truth, a moment in time in which another can recognize himself or herself.

Julie: As we can see from the variety of forms one poet’s response to another takes, that personal identification is multifaceted. Often the recognition involves a concern with the creative process. A poet addresses another as teacher—sometimes reflecting an actual relationship, sometimes an imagined one. The lines of the perceived mentor’s poem trigger or provide a foundation for the growth of a new poem. Think of the glosa form, for example, or the thousands of poems prefaced by a poetic epigraph.

Elana: Also the poem written in the manner of the mentor, or the call and response poem.
Julie: Many poets respond to the poem of another simply as peer, as another of that tribe possessed by the peculiar inclination to celebrate, or condemn, the mundane events of daily life in poetic form. Sometimes poetic identification exists on an ideological basis, spawning conversations about history, politics and cultural identity, or voices joined in protest. Then, of course, there are the elegies. It’s a very natural impulse to turn to poetry for comfort or release when confronted with the transformational loss of someone loved or admired. But when a poet elegizes another poet, there’s something happening on another level. It’s as if there’s an assumption that the medium of poetry allows for conversation across the divide of death.

Elana: In addition to expressing lament, paying tribute to an oeuvre, honouring and reflecting on a life lived, the elegy seems to be a writer’s way of attempting to extend time with another writer. Graham Greene is reported to have said he couldn’t imagine how anyone could manage the shocks and confusions of life and death without the clarifying help of a pen. The elegiac poem renders a heartfelt message, represents a reaching for an understanding that couldn’t be achieved otherwise. Of the seventy-four poems chosen for this collection—submitted from all across Canada—at least twelve may be called elegies, and of these, three grapple with death by suicide.

Julie: The fact that these poets address the particular pain and alienation of suicide attests to poetry’s capacity for communication between two souls where they are at their most vulnerable and exposed.

Elana: Yes, most exposed, and probing. The idea for Poet to Poet was sparked in fall of 2010—at a Guernica launch in Toronto’s Little Italy. A young author had closed her reading with a moving poem about another poet, prefaced by an anecdote on how the piece had come into being. The audience was engaged and the response was particularly enthusiastic. As I stepped up to the stage to close the set, I thought: What a collection that could be—a book of poems written to, for, about, or after other poets, accompanied by short anecdotes, or back stories that would throw light on the provenance of the poems. Everyone who writes poetry has been inspired, influenced, or nurtured by other poets; every poet has dedicated poems to other writers. There’d be a wealth of material. Yet what would make the collection distinctive would be the partnering: poems with their back stories.

Julie: Including back stories alongside the poems injects something of the atmosphere of the poetry reading, workshop or class, in which poets emerge, temporarily, from their solitudes to celebrate and continue the dialogue, and to return to their private art with new insights, skills, and inspiration.

Elana: Right. And poetry is demonstrative. “Show, don’t tell,” goes the dictum. Back story is different. Story is telling. It’s the obverse. You can read a poem without a back story—that’s the way poems are generally read. But a back story has the attractiveness of providing a glimpse into the cauldron or ground on which the poem was founded and crafted. The two are complementary. Read the back story and you have an entry point into the poem. Read the poem and you’re intrigued to find out from whence it came.

Julie: At some point in his or her career, in an interview or at a question and answer session following a reading, every poet is asked that dreaded question: “Where do you get your ideas?” Dreaded, because it’s impossible to answer—as if poets have special access to a magic idea-bank. Every poem has its beginning in the experience or perceptions of the poet, but as the back stories here illustrate, these sources are complex and varied. The stories also give a glimpse of the process which cultivates the seed of an idea to fruition in a poem. It requires work, practice, and attention to what other poets have to teach.

Elana: We were looking for a personal touch in these pieces, and the array of what constitutes “the personal” is textured and rich. The back stories come in different lengths, styles, and voice—reflecting different notions and patterns of process. Yet all the pieces, in one way or another, bring the reader into a fuller, more nuanced
relationship with the writer and his or her “subjects”. In reading these pieces, I'm struck over and over by their warmth, humour, poignancy, insight, and variety. I could bring examples from any and all, but here’s one: In her brief back story on “Not a November Love Poem” for Gwendolyn MacEwen, Nanci Lee cites MacEwen's “rare ability to display passion without hyperbole, humour without self-consciousness and leaps without too much punch ... We trust her.” This last little sentence really reached me. And it resonates, in a wonky way, with a line Chilean writer Roberto Bolaño put into the mouth of one of the characters in his polyphonic novel 2666: “I used to read everything ... Now all I read is poetry. Poetry is the one thing that isn’t contaminated ... Only poetry ... some of it—is good for you, only poetry isn’t shit.” This sounds more than a little hyperbolic — the character is a colourful one. But it gets to the elements of authenticity and truthfulness — the kind of trust that Nanci Lee and others want and are willing to invest in poetry.

**Julie:** It’s a trust that exists despite poetry’s seeming futility to counter that wave of contamination that is, according to Bolaño, everything else. “Can art cancel ruin?” asks Stephanie Bolster in “Rainbow”—the first poem in this anthology. It is the most agonizing question that poets continue to ask themselves and each other. I don’t know the answer. I only know that the conversation, poet to poet, is ongoing ...

---

**Stephanie Bolster**

**Rainbow**

A photograph fans out the bright contents of the six-month plover’s gut: the last hundred things it ate, dead lighters, crushed glass, cigarettes until no room. We do wrong

and yet that reek of alley rot, puke, tunnel-pent air, I love because New York London Paris.

Five times the fish says yes to the hook, no to the tug, five times keeps what’s given, and so the poet lets it go (into wallpaper, similes, feathers) into the greasy rainbow. Can art cancel ruin? Who am I to gulp the world and live?
When discussing Elizabeth Bishop’s “The Fish” with an introductory creative writing class at Concordia University, I was surprised that, rather than praising the poem for its clarity and elegance, several of the students found Bishop’s metaphors (“the coarse white flesh / packed in like feathers”) showy and, more importantly, critiqued the speaker’s sense of having done good in releasing the fish as exaggerated to the point of hypocrisy. What did releasing one fish really mean in the grand scheme of things, especially when it was being released into water rainbowed with oil from the boat from which she fished. More insidious, they felt, was her appropriation of the creature to show off her poetic skill. Having long questioned my own “use” of material (was my having written a book of poems about Charles Dodgson’s transformation of Alice Liddell into Alice in Wonderland any nobler than his own undertaking?), I was shaken by this discussion and, some time later, moved to weave it into a poem about the power and the futility of art, and the problematic role of the artist. A poem like this would have existed without Bishop’s, but her sense of simplicity, frankness, artistry, and play helped it to find its form and focus.

Yaqoob Ghaznavi

Kin

Swaying up from coiled baskets
reptile and dragon
escape from ancient spacecraft
seduce Adam and Eve
like trees of the ancestral forest
they move as if to music
an illusion of aged limbs
remembering the hurricane
sound crescendos
tempt the meandering lava
but snakes cannot hear music
slither away from paradise
tigers in the jungle
waiting for rescue
not our rhythm, language, or kin
The time they keep is their own.

—Margaret Atwood, “Lies About Snakes”
**Back Story to “Kin”**

From the time I could recognize alphabets, I became a constant reader. I’m also a believer in immersing oneself in one’s country’s culture. The first book I read when we immigrated to Canada in 1972 was Margaret Atwood’s *Surfacing*. I’ve reread the book several times since, and I still feel it’s one of her most powerful books; the raw energy gets under your skin.

The first of her books of poetry to fall into my hands was *Power Politics*. Published a year before *Surfacing*, and an inspiration for it, *Power Politics* also hit me like a hammer. A collection of merciless images — like that of the famous “fish hook” in the “open eye” — were difficult to digest. Since then I’ve read her gentler poems. When I experimented with writing glosas, I read *Interlunar*. In “Kin” I’m grateful to pay a small tribute to a great Canadian writer.

---

**Lenore Rowntree**

*This poem is not just about sex*

I want to drink too much vodka, and have unbridled sex in Montauk, with a man, not my husband, just like Anne Sexton.

I want to be that good girl, standing in my black slip, all messy and wavery on the bottom stair, waiting to go up, and unleash.

I want to find a fresh beating flower just above my left wrist, cup it with affection, then stop myself, again and again, from slashing it.

I want to write lines that tear down the stars, that row toward God, turn sun into poison, and look gorgeous while reading them, just like Anne Sexton.

I want to be a reflection in a window, shaped like a book that draws parallels between orgasm and writing, and everything else.

I want to bed all comers, but make every one of them wait, while I arrange, and rearrange, my white silk, black mink, and blood rubies.
I need to write a poem that attacks
in the guts, casts a gnawing pestilential
shadow, yet embraces the rat within,
just like Anne Sexton.

But I don’t prefer suicide, I dress only in denim,
and I limp into poetry, so too often I find,
I’m out shopping for tomatoes and melons,
gone soft and on for half-price.

**Back Story to “This poem is not just about sex”**

I’m in love with Anne Sexton. I didn’t know it when I first wrote *This poem is not just about sex*. I thought then I was merely infatuated after reading the biography written by Diane Middlebrook. But I should have known better. I’d renewed the book so many times, the library recalled it. Then weeks later as I tried to re-borrow it, I nearly cried when told it had been discarded with no plans for repurchase. Especially since I was the one who had ratted the book, had shown the librarian how the yellowing, tissue-thin pages were falling out. I was naïve thinking the library would buy a new copy. I’d written down a stack of important quotes from Sexton, and because my life is such a mess of scraps I’d lost them. So I needed that book and thought it was only a consolation prize that I was able to take out her collection of essays *No Evil Star* (rats spelled backwards). I didn’t know I was in love with Anne Sexton until I was walking back up the hill away from the library, and the slim pink volume opened to a journal entry titled *Roses* from November 6, 1971. In less than 200 words Sexton had written a love poem, a lament for life, a shield from her abortions, and an anthem for women. It was then I started dying to write a good poem for her.

**George Whipple**

**Proust**

He liked to masturbate
while watching savage rats
eviserate each other.

At the end he lived
on Peach Melba, apples, beer
brought in from the Ritz.

He heard no angels singing when
he died — only gay aristocrats
discussing funeral wear.

Too weak to hold a pan
he left his corklined room
for a marble one

and is remembered for a Madeleine,
a cup of tea — the memories within.

**Back Story to “Proust”**

This poem is written in the French sonnet style of four tercets with a final couplet. It condenses four pages of a capsule biography into fourteen lines while maintaining the famous facts of Proust’s life, not forgetting his masturbation, which we can all relate to. I’ve always been puzzled as to why Henry James, who knew all the French authors of his day, never mentions Proust—his French counterpart for voluminous, involved, and nectarious prose.
Kate Marshall Flaherty

Stellar

Summer solstice in Pomona Park:
he pauses,
takes a breath,

walking in nature
he dips down
among buttercups loaded
with spittlebug spittle. He sprinkles
commas, those
gentle gasps,
creating tiny curved twigs
on which wings
can alight.

And like the planets
brighting around the sun,
gravity draws others
to his kind orbits ...
shaper of words supporter
of tiny star-specks,
He connects
the dots, gathers
bodies of energy —
voices and vectors,
elliptical lights.

And spaces too let
silence fill the
winter traces carved
in pale snow-shadows;

He can pare down the low-jutting stalks
in snowy sheets of words,
trim the winter fat,
polish up a chunk of ice
till it is perfect.

Back Story to “Stellar”

The beginning of this poem dates back more than a dozen years,
when I got a call from a soft-spoken man saying he was the director
of Toronto’s Art Bar, and that I had won an honourable mention in a
chapbook contest. Did I want to come read at the Art Bar? I shyly
agreed, having never entered a contest nor read my poetry in public,
and so began my mentorship with Allan Briesmaster. He was so
affirming and kind that first reading, it gave me confidence to
continue participating in open mics, contests, and readings. He even
asked me to join a writing workshop, and then to become a fellow
“Renaissance Conspirator” at which we became friends. Eventually,
his support and inspiration blossomed into keen-eyed and wise
editing of my first three books of poetry! We both spent many a
Thursday night writing a poetry prompt “Theme Challenge” at the
monthly Hot Sauced Words Reading Series, and I have been to many
of his wife Holly’s mesmerizing art exhibitions, where colours and
textures spread across fans like spring. I have been deeply influenced
and inspired by Allan’s lingering images of nature and haunting
images of the cosmos. So when his 60th birthday arrived, it was a joy
to celebrate this gentle mentor, keen-eyed editor, prolific poet and
dear friend with this tribute poem for the occasion.
I had tried to read Sappho many times before, but somehow she had always slipped through my fingers until I read Anne Carson’s If Not, Winter: Fragments of Sappho (Vintage, 2003). The Greek fragments (sometimes no more than a dative plural ending or a bit of a verb) facing Anne Carson’s careful translations made me realize the breathtaking contrast between the beauties of Sappho’s poetry and her vanished world, and the abysses of the disintegrating parchment that surround the surviving words.

Anne Carson’s translations sent me back to H.D.’s brief essay “Wise Sappho” and to her Collected Poems: 1912–1944. I could see how deeply Sappho had influenced her—and also how clearly she had seen the essence of the poetry through the fragments. H.D.’s poetry is one of my constant companions, and so I give her the last word (the conclusion to “Wise Sappho”) in my poem.

Acknowledgements

Reprinted with acknowledgement of the author and permission of the publisher:

“Rainbow” and “Song for the Song of the Aviary,” from Stephanie Bolster’s collection, A Page from the Wonders of Life on Earth (Brick Books, 2011).

“Proust” from George Whipple’s collection Collage (Ekstasis Editions, 2012).

“Green Funereal Wishes,” from Merle Nudelman’s collection The He We Knew (Guerinica, 2010).


“Corresponding,” from Carole Langille’s collection, In Cannon Cave (Brick Books, 1997).

“Poetry Bird,” from Allan Safarik’s collection, The Day is a Cold Grey Stone (Hagios Press, 2010).

“Omelet,” from Fiona Tinwei Lam’s collection Enter the Chrysanthemum (Caitlin Press, 2009).

“Boh,” from Domenico Capilongo’s collection hold the note (Quattro Books, 2010).

“Desire and Illness,” from Keith Garebian’s collection The Derek Jarman Poems (Signature Editions, 2008).

“The Sacred Lane,” from Pasquale Verdicchio’s collection This Nothing’s Place (Guernica Editions, 2008).

“Black Light,” from David Sobelman’s collection After the End (Guernica Editions, 2006).


“Call and Response” from rob mclennan’s 52 flowers (or, a perth edge) — an essay on Phil Hall (Koriyama Fukushima, Japan: obvious epiphanies press, 2011).

“Canoeing Song,” from Karen Shenfeld’s collection My Father’s Hands Spoke in Yiddish (Guernica Editions, 2011).


Reprinted with permission of the author:

“Snapshot,” by Jill Battson, from the anthology radiant danse uv being (Harbour Publishing, 2006).

“Yvonne,” from Wendy Morton’s collection Gumshoe (Black Moss Press, 2007).

“One Incarnation,” from Marilyn Gear Pilling’s collection The Life of the Four Stomachs (Black Moss Press, 2006).


“Personals” from Michael Fraser’s limited edition self-published chapbook A Choice of Sunsets.

“Homage to Frank Stanford,” by Jason Heroux, originally published in the online journal Barnstorm in 2009.


Contributors

William Anselmi is a professor at University of Alberta where he teaches Italian and Italian Canadian literature and culture. He researches and analyzes cinema and television in and outside of Italy; cyborgs, aliens, and utopia; posthumanism and the body; environments of technological communication and representation; poetics and narratives of displacement and migration in and outside of Italy; and cognitive capitalism.

Jill Battson is an internationally published poet and poetry activist and the Poet Laureate Emeritus of Cobourg, Ontario. Her first book, Hard Candy (Insomniac Press, 1997), was nominated for the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award. Her most recent collection of poems, The Ecstatic Torture of Gratitude, was published by Guernica Editions in 2011.

Gerard Beirne was born in Ireland and was New Irish Writer of the Year, 1996. His collection, Digging My Own Grave (Dedalus, 1996) was runner-up for the Patrick Kavanagh Poetry Award. He has published two novels, The Eskimo in the Net and Turtle, and his most recent collection of poetry is Games of Chance (Oberon Press, 2011).

Henry Beissel is an Ottawa poet, playwright, fiction writer, essayist, translator and editor with over thirty books published, including twenty collections of poetry. His most recent collections are Coming to Terms with a Child (Black Moss, 2011) and Seasons of Blood (Buschek Books, 2011). Fugitive Horizons (Guernica) is scheduled for publication in 2013.

Yvonne Blomer lives in Victoria, B.C., where she works as a poet, memoirist, writing teacher, event organizer and mom. Her first collection, a broken mirror, fallen leaf was shortlisted for The Gerald Lampert Memorial Award in 2007. In 2012 she will publish The Book of Places (Black Moss Press) and Bicycle Brand Journey (Jack Pine Press), in 2013 Stolen Beauty will be published with Palimpsest Press.

George Bowering is a native of the Okanagan Valley. He has published quite a lot of poetry over the last fifty years and in honour of his accomplishments he was named Canada’s First Poet Laureate in 2000. His most recent volume of poetry is *My Darling Nellie Grey* (Talonbooks, 2010). He lives in Vancouver with his wife Jean Baird.

Kate Braid has published five books of poetry and co-edited with Sandy Shreve the ground-breaking book of Canadian form poetry, *In Fine Form*. Her work has won or been short-listed for a number of awards and is widely anthologized. She has recently begun collaborating with musicians in her work.

Domenico Capilongo lives in Toronto where he teaches high school creative writing and karate. His first book of poetry, *I thought elvis was italian* (Wolsak and Wynn, 2008) was short-listed for the 2010 F.G. Bressani Literary Prize and his book of jazz-inspired poetry, *hold the note* (Quattro, 2010), was long-listed for the 2011 ReLit Award.

Writer and artist Jim Christy has published twenty-seven books and exhibited his work internationally. He has recorded his poems with various bands and had his songs recorded by others. His most recent collection, *Marimba Forever* (Guernica, 2010), was short-listed for the 2011 ReLit Award.

Gary Clairman is currently crafting corporate communication emails while living in Guelph with his wonderful family. He dabbles with the occasional notion of facing the blank screen again maybe someday but for now is reasonably unsatisfied mumbling the odd line into his iPhone while stuck in traffic on the 401.


Tony Cosier of Ottawa, the author of nine volumes of poetry, a novel, a book of stories and five plays, is widely published in literary journals internationally. His most recent publications are *Thunder River*, a West Coast novel with Margaret Woods Books (2009), and *The Spirit Dances*, a poetry collection from Penumbra Press (2005).

Carolyn Hoople Creed has published poems in journals across Canada, including *Prism, Dandelion, Harpweaver* and *Undertow*. Since receiving her PhD in English Literature in 1998, Dr. Creed has published poems in journals including *subTerrain, The Windsor Review* and *phati'tude* (NYC): as a university professor, she makes time for creative writing.

Robert Currie was Saskatchewan’s Poet Laureate from 2007-2010. His first book, *Diving into Fire* (1977) was short-listed for the Commonwealth Poetry Prize and his collection *Running in Darkness* was a finalist for the 2007 Acorn-Plantos People’s Poet Award. In 2009 Currie was awarded the Saskatchewan Lieutenant Governor’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

James Deahl was born and grew up in Pittsburgh, as well as in the Laurel Highlands of the Appalachian Mountains. He’s the author of nineteen literary titles, most recently *Opening The Stone Heart, No Star Is Lost* and *Rooms The Wind Makes* (Guernica 2012).

Salvatore Difalco lives and writes in Toronto. His most recent publication is *The Mountie At Niagara Falls* (Anvil Press, 2010), a collection of short fiction illustrated by Francesco Gallé. Salvatore traces his Italian roots to the town of Bompensiere, Sicily.
Caroline Morgan Di Giovanni came to Toronto from Philadelphia, PA, to study English literature at the University of Toronto, married a Canadian, and remained. She has edited two editions of Italian Canadian Voices (Mosaic Press: 1984; 2006). Her first book of poetry, Looking at Renaissance Paintings, was published by Quattro Books in 2008.

Desi Di Nardo’s work has been published in Canadian and international journals, featured on the TTC, and displayed in the Official Residences of Canada. She’s worked as a writer-in-residence, literacy facilitator, and English professor. Desi’s the author of The Plural of Some Things and The Cure Is a Forest, both published by Guernica. Desi lives in Toronto.

Sonia Di Placido is a playwright, writer, performer and artist currently completing the Creative Writing Optional Residency MFA at the University of British Columbia. She is a theatre graduate of Ryerson University (1996) and currently works in public relations. Her first collection of poems, Exaltation in Cadmium Red, was published by Guernica.

John Donlan is a poetry editor with Brick Books and a librarian at the Vancouver Public Library. His collections of poetry are Domestic Economy (Brick Books, 1990, reprinted 1997), Baysville (House of Anansi Press, 1993), Green Man (Ronsdale Press, 1999), and Spirit Engine (Brick Books, 2008).

Baila Ellenbogen is a poet and psychoeducational consultant who resides in Vaughan, Ontario with her family. Her book of poetry, Footsteps on the Ceiling, was published by Guernica in the First Poets series in 2010. Upcoming publications include two poems in a textbook for high school students being published by McGraw Hill Ryerson.

Kate Marshall Flaherty is published in journals such as Descant, CV2, Freefall, and The Windsor Review. She was short-listed for Nimrod’s Pablo Neruda Poetry Prize, the Malahat Review Long Poem and Descant’s Best Canadian Poem. She lives in Toronto, where she guides yoga/retreats/writing workshops.

Michael Fraser is a Toronto poet and novelist. His manuscript The Serenity of Stone won the 2007 Canadian Aid Literary Award Contest and was published in 2008 by Bookland Press. His poem “For Blanche” won the 2009 Poemata “poem of the year” contest. He is the creator and director of the Plasticine Poetry Series.

Rhonda Ganz has read her poetry on the CBC, at Word on the Street in Vancouver, and at the Galiano Literary Festival. She has been published in The Malahat Review, and her poem in Rocksalt: An Anthology of Contemporary BC Poetry was selected for Poetry in Transit 2010.

Elee Kraljii Gardiner directs Thursdays Writing Collective in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver. She is the editor and publisher of five chapbooks of the Collective’s work and the coeditor, with John Asfour, of V6A: Writing from Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside, an anthology forthcoming from Arsenal Pulp Press.

Keith Garebian is the award-winning author of eighteen books. His four books of poetry include Frida: Paint Me As A Volcano (Buschek, 2004), Blue: The Derek Jarman Poems (Signature, 2008), and Children of Ararat (Frontenac, 2010). His book of haiku is to be published by Guernica in 2013.

Len Gasparini was born in Windsor, Ontario, and now divides his time between Toronto and his hometown. He is the author of numerous books of poetry and five short story collections, including A Demon in My View (Guernica 2003), which was translated into French as Nouvelle noireur, and The Undertaker’s Wife (Guernica, 2007). In 1990, he was awarded the F.G. Bressani Literary Prize for poetry.

Yaqoob Ghaznavi started writing poetry in his sixties. Since then his poems have appeared in many magazines and anthologies, including Vallum, Carousel, The Toronto Quarterly, and The Whirlwind
Review (US). He has two wishes: to find a publisher for his first manuscript, and to be short-listed in the CBC poetry contest.

**Catherine Graham** is the author of four critically acclaimed poetry collections: *The Watch* (Abbey Press) and the poetry trilogy *Pupa, The Red Element* and *Winterkill* (Insomniac Press). She holds an MA in Creative Writing from Lancaster University (UK) and teaches creative writing at the University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies.

**Elizabeth Greene** has published two collections of poetry, *The Iron Shoes* and *Moving*. She taught English, including H.D.’s poetry, at Queen’s for many years, and H.D. remains one of her touchstones. She also edited and contributed to *We Who Can Fly: Poems, Essays and Memories in Honour of Adele Wiseman*.

**Gillian Harding-Russell** was raised in St. Jean Quebec, attended McGill, and completed her PhD at the University of Saskatchewan. Her third collection of poetry, *I forgot to tell you*, was published by Thistledown in 2007, and two chapbooks, *Maya: Poems for the Summer Solstice*, and *Stories of Snow*, were recently released.

**Jason Heroux** is the author of two poetry collections, *Memoirs of an Alias* (Mansfield Press) and *Emergency Hallelujah* (Mansfield Press), and the novella *Good Evening, Central Laundromat* (Quattro Books, shortlisted for the 2011 RELIT Novel Award). He lives with his wife in Kingston, Ontario.

**Anne Hopkinson** is a Vancouver writer living in Burnaby. She writes a regular column for the *Burnaby News Leader*, and fiction and poetry for adults and children. Her work appears in *Postscript Magazine*, and *Walk Myself Home*, by Caitlin Press, 2010. She has forthcoming work in *Vancouver V6A*, Arsenal Press, in 2012.

**I.B. (Bunny) Iskov** is the Founder of The Ontario Poetry Society. Her work has appeared in literary journals and anthologies, and she has published chapbooks and two collections of poems. She is the recipient of the 2009 Inaugural RAVE Award (Recognizing Arts Vaughan Excellence) in recognition of her contribution to arts and culture in the City of Vaughan.

**Ellen Jaffe** grew up in New York City, came to Canada in 1979, and lives in Hamilton, Ontario. Ellen has been writing since childhood. She has also worked in radio and theatre, been a teacher and psychotherapist, and studied Shamanic healing. Her collection *Skinny-dipping with the Muse* is forthcoming from Guernica.

**Fiona Tinwei Lam** is the author of *Intimate Distances* (finalist for the City of Vancouver Book Prize) and most recently, *Enter the Chrysanthemum*. Her work has appeared in many anthologies, including *The Best Canadian Poetry in English*, 2010. She is the editor of *The Bright Well*, a collection of contemporary Canadian poems about facing cancer.


**Mark Lavorato**’s first novel was *Veracity* (2007, Rain Publishing), and his second, *Believing Cedric* (2011, Brindle & Glass). His debut poetry collection, *Wayworn Wooden Floors* (2012), is published by the Porcupine’s Quill. “A Pantoum for Whitman” is taken from the collection that he’s currently working on, titled *Blowing Grass Empire*.

**Nanci Lee**’s poems have been published in various Canadian journals including the *Antigonish Review, Fiddlehead, Matrix Magazine* and *ditchpoetry.com*. Her awards include the Halifax CBC poetry face-off, the Wallace Stegner Award and the Unpublished Manuscript Award for Poetry from the Writers’ Federation of Nova Scotia.

**Ian LeTourneau**’s first book of poems, *Terminal Moraine*, was published in 2008 by Thistledown. His work has been featured in many magazines and anthologies, and on CBC radio. He is currently...
a poetry editor with *The Fiddlehead* and with Goose Lane Editions. He lives with his family in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

**Steven McCabe** is a poet, visual artist and filmmaker. He was born in Kansas City, Missouri and resides in Toronto. He is the author of four books of poetry, most recently *Hierarchy of Loss* (Ekstasis Editions 2007). His short visual poetry films have screened internationally and he regularly exhibits paintings and fine-line ink drawings.

**Julia McCarthy**, originally from Toronto, is the author of two poetry collections: *Stormthrower* (Wolsak & Wynn, 2002) and *Return from Erebus* (Brick Books, 2010) which received the Canadian Authors Association Poetry Award. She now lives in rural Nova Scotia, freelance edits, and is at work on a new collection.


**Wendy Morton** has five books of poetry, and a memoir, *Six Impossible Things Before Breakfast* (AbeBooks, 2006). She is the founder of Canada’s Random Acts of Poetry, the recipient of the 2010 Spirit Bear Award, Golden Beret Award, and was made an Honorary Citizen of Victoria in 2011. She lives in Sooke, BC.

**Richard Norman** lives in Halifax. He has recently published poetry in *The Malahat Review*, *CV2*, and *The Puritan*. His first collection of poetry is forthcoming from Biblioasis.

**Merle Nudelman** is a lawyer and author of three poetry collections with Guernica. Her first book, *Borrowed Light* (2003), won the 2004 Canadian Jewish Book Award for Poetry. Merle currently teaches memoir writing, gives workshops on growth through writing, and is poetry editor of *Parchment, Contemporary Jewish Canadian Writing*.

**Ruth Panofsky** was born and raised in Montreal. Currently, she lives in Toronto where she teaches Canadian Literature and Culture at Ryerson University. She is the author of two books of poetry, *Lifeline* (Guernica, 2001) and *Laike and Nahum: A Poem in Two Voices* (Inanna, 2007), which won the 2008 Canadian Jewish Book Award for Poetry.

**Marilyn Gear Pilling** lives in Hamilton, Ontario and is the author of six books—short fiction and poetry. Most recently, she’s been published in Best Canadian Poetry 2010 and in Rattle. In 2009, her poem “Billy Collins Interviewed On Stage at Chautauqua” won Descant’s Winston Collins “Best Canadian Poem” contest.

**Stan Rogal** was born in Vancouver and now resides in Toronto. His work has appeared in numerous magazines and anthologies in Canada, the US and Europe. He is the author of 17 books, most recently: *Bloodline*, a novel, and a selected poems titled: *Dance, Monster!* both with Insomniac Press in 2011.

**Julie Roorda** is the author of three volumes of poetry, most recently *Floating Bodies* (2010), all published by Guernica Editions. She has also published a collection of short stories entitled *Naked in the Sanctuary* (Guernica, 2004) and *Wings of a Bee* (Sumach, 2007), a novel for young adults. She lives in Toronto.

**Lenore Rowntree**’s work has been published in several Canadian journals. Her poetry is included in the anthology *Best Canadian Poetry 2010* (Tightrope Books), and her play *The Woods at Tender Creek* was produced in Vancouver in 2010. She is co-editor and contributor to the essay anthology *Side Effects* (Brindle & Glass, 2012).
Ingrid Ruthig is a writer, editor, visual artist, and former architect who lives near Toronto. Her award-winning work has appeared across Canada and abroad in numerous publications, anthologies, and chapbooks. Recent books are *Slipstream* (Arkitexwerks, 2011) and *Richard Outram: Essays on His Works* (Guerinica Editions, 2011).

Born in Vancouver, Allan Safarik was raised in a fishing family in North Burnaby. He currently resides in Dundurn, Saskatchewan and teaches Imaginative Writing at St. Peter’s College. He is the author of twenty books. Safarik received the Saskatchewan Book Award for Poetry for *When Light Falls from the Sun* (Hagios Press, 2005).

Jacob Scheier’s debut poetry collection, *More to Keep us Warm* (ECW Press) won the 2008 Governor General’s Award. He is also the co-winner of a New York Community Media Alliance Award for best feature article in an independent publication. Jacob’s poems, articles and essays have appeared in publications across North America.

Eleonore Schönmaier’s writing has won numerous awards including the Alfred G. Bailey Prize and the Earle Birney Prize. Her poem “Weightless” appeared in *The Best Canadian Poetry in English* 2010, and her collection *Treading Fast Rivers* (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1999) was a finalist for the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award.

Karen Shenfeld is a poet, journalist, editor and filmmaker living in Toronto. She has published three books of poetry with Guernica Editions, the most recent of which is *My Father’s Hands Spoke in Yiddish* (2010). She is currently working on a new poetry manuscript and two documentary films.

David Sobelman is a Gemini Award winning documentary writer, director, and story editor of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and academic texts. He has worked on over forty film projects, has published literary essays and one book of poems, *After the End* (Guerinica, 2006). Currently, he is working on his memoir, *The Boy on the White Suitcase.*

Mary Lou Soutar-Hynes is a Jamaican-Canadian poet, educator, and former nun. Her publications include *Travelling Light* (2006), long-listed for the 2007 ReLit Poetry Award, and *The Fires of Naming* (2001), both from Seraphim Editions. A Hawthorden Fellow in 2009, her third collection is forthcoming with Inanna Press.

J.J. Steinfeld lives on Prince Edward Island, where he is patiently awaiting Godot’s arrival and a phone call from Kafka. He has published fourteen books—ten short story collections, two novels, and two poetry collections—most recently *Misshapennes* (Ekstasis Editions, 2009) and *A Glass Shard and Memory* (Recliner Books, 2010).

Russell Thornton’s books are *The Fifth Window, A Tunisian Notebook, House Built of Rain,* shortlisted for a ReLit Award and BC Book Prize, and *The Human Shore.* He has won the League of Canadian Poets National Contest and *The Fiddlehead’s* Ralph Gustafson Prize. He lives in North Vancouver, BC.

Phoebe Tsang is a violinist, librettist, short story writer and the author of a collection of poems titled *Contents of a Mermaid’s Purse* (Tightrope Books, 2009). Her work finds resonance in her practice as a professional musician. Being able to wake up every morning, breathe, and live the life of an artist, fills her with gratitude and awe.

Yi-Mei Tsang is the author of *Sweet Devilry* (Oolichan Books) which won the 2012 Gerald Lampert Memorial Award, as well as the picture books *A Flock of Shoes and Dogs Don’t Eat Jam and Other Things Big Kids Know.*

Daniel Scott Tysdal is the author of *The Mourner’s Book of Albums* (Tightrope 2010) and *Predicting the Next Big Advertising Breakthrough Using a Potentially Dangerous Method* (Coteau 2006). *Predicting* received the ReLit Award for Poetry (2007) and the Anne Szumigalski Poetry Award (2006). He teaches at the University of Toronto Scarborough.
Pasquale Verdicchio teaches literature and film in the department of literature at the University of California-San Diego. The author of numerous poetry collections, Verdicchio won the 2010 Bressani Prize for Poetry for *This Nothing’s Place*, published by Guernica. Verdicchio is also a prolific translator of Italian poetry including Andrea Zanzotto’s *Fosfeni* (2010).

Myra Wallin is the author of *A Thousand Profane Pieces* and *Confessions of a Reluctant Cougar* (Tightrope Books, 2006 and 2010). She has co-edited two anthologies and edited three individual poetry collections, all with Tightrope. Myra received Honourable Mention in Descant’s 2010 Winston Collins Prize for Best Canadian Poem.


Margo Wheaton’s poetry has appeared in various publications including CV2, *The Fiddlehead*, *The Antigonish Review*, *Prairie Fire*, and in the anthology *Undercurrents: New Voices in Canadian Poetry* (Cormorant). She also received the 2007 Alfred G. Bailey award from the Writers’ Federation of New Brunswick for best poetry manuscript.

George Whipple has published fourteen books of poetry, most recently *Collage* with Ekstasis (2012). He has designed several of his own covers and his sketches appear in various collections, either as supplements to his poems or as stand-alone works. Originally from Saint John, New Brunswick, he now lives in Burnaby, British Columbia.

Christopher Willard is the author of *Sundre* (Vehicule Press, 2009) and *Garbage Head* (Vehicule Press, 2005). He recently he completed a book length poem titled *round round pond*, and currently lives in Calgary, Alberta where his writing is often interrupted by his two cats Twinkle and Squeaky.

Elana Wolff’s poems have appeared in journals and anthologies in Canada, the US, and the UK. Her suite, “Meridian,” garnered First Prize in the 2011 GritLit Literary Competition and her third collection, *You Speak to Me in Trees*, (Guernica, 2006), was awarded the 2008 F.G. Bressani Prize for Poetry. Elana currently divides her working time between writing, editing, and developing and facilitating therapeutic community art.

Catriona Wright is a Toronto-based poet and fiction writer. She holds an MA in Creative Writing from the University of Toronto, and her work has appeared in publications such as *The Dalhousie Review*, *Contemporary Verse 2*, *Room*, and *The New Quarterly*.

David Zieroth’s latest publications include *The Fly in Autumn* (Harbour, 2009), which won the 2009 Governor General’s Award for Poetry, and two chapbooks: *Berlin Album* (Rubicon, 2009) and *Hay Day Canticle* (Leaf Press, 2010). In 2008 he founded The Alfred Gustav Press, a micro press for publishing poetry. He lives in North Vancouver, BC.