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NUMBER 100 SPRING 2016 $7.95

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TERRA POIRIER

Zero Degree Dining
MANDELBROT

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Remembering The Ward
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Drake marries a sea captain in a pickup truck with Mennonites.

A man and his dog drive drunk on a skidoo to bring medicine to their snowed-in family.

A new immigrant transforms into a moose only to be beset by the spirits of their ancestors.

GEIST

Volume 27 • Number 100 • Spring 2016

The Blue Moose Turd Factory, Page 34

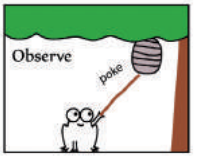
FEATURES

GEIST

The search continues

NOTES & DISPATCHES

FINDINGS



and more…

COLUMNS

DEPARTMENTS

COVER: *A woodcut of George Adamski, a Polish-American writer, best known for his claims that he had seen and photographed flying saucers. From* Oddballs, *a book of woodcuts by Jim Westergard. See more of Westgard's woodcuts on pages 28 and 29.*

Newly built tsunami escape tower, Ishinomaki, Japan.

Post-Tohoku

On March 11, 2011, Japan was shaken by a magnitude-9 earthquake. The ensuing tsunami killed nearly 16,000 people, rendered hundreds of thousands homeless and caused a meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. Thirteen months after the disaster, the photographer Michel Huneault went to Tohoku, the northeastern region of Japan that lies approximately 72 kilometres from the epicentre of the quake, to document the aftermath and to volunteer on rehabilitation projects. Over the course of three months, Huneault shot photographs of the destruction and recorded video and sound along 250 kilometres of coast from Fukushima to Kesennuma. The resulting documentary project, called *Post Tohoku*, explores the effects of large-scale catastrophes on collective and individual memory and confronts questions of how to understand trauma and mourning.

In late 2015, nearly four years after his initial visit, Huneault returned to the Tohoku region to photograph the reconstruction of the roads, concrete breakwaters, towns and villages damaged and destroyed by the waters. This second portion of the *Post Tohoku* project, with its images of expanses of bare earth or new concrete on a backdrop of calm sea, illustrates "the tension between an enduring population and the challenging coastal landscape it remains willing to live in."

Reconstruction projects are estimated to cost more than $300 billion and are scheduled to be complete in 2020. Five years after the tsunami, 230,000 people still live in temporary housing and more than 2,500 people are listed as still missing.

Post Tohoku will be exhibited from May 5 to June 12 at Campbell House Museum as part of the Contact Photography Festival in Toronto.

—AnnMarie MacKinnon

PHOTO: MICHEL HUNEAULT

LETTERS

READERS WRITE

WEARING OF THE RED

While I don't disagree with Stephen Osborne ("Last Steve Standing," *Geist* No. 99) that Stephen Harper is a moron and made poor decisions as our government leader, I do disagree with the choice to not wear a poppy in protest. Poppies aren't a symbol of government or war, but rather a reminder of the lives lost to protect the freedom of others. As a former officer in the Canadian Forces, I support anyone's choice to disapprove of war and the death and destruction that come with it, and with that said, I recognize that wearing the poppy is a personal choice too. But the reality is that veterans and soldiers died protecting others and serving their country, and wearing that symbolic reminder pays homage to their sacrifice, not to the bureaucrats who make the higher-level decisions. Soldiers do not choose the missions they are sent on, and Stephen Harper has nothing to do with remembrance.

—Kelly S. Thompson, Toronto

Stephen Osborne responds: Symbols are what we make of them. I took to wearing a poppy in remembrance of my grandfathers, both of whom survived the trenches in Belgium as privates during World War I. Each of them learned to despise the symbols of that slaughter: in particular, as I recall, the Anglican Church, the Prime Minister and the King. The memorial poppy was invented by a young woman in New York City who was greatly affected by the mellifluous verses of "In Flanders Fields," the poem by John McCrae that presents a bizarre image of the dead calling on the living (the undead) to join them in slaughter. The poppy is traditionally associated with slumber, dreams and easeful death: it brings us to memory, so to speak, just at the threshold of sleep. Stephen Harper's program of militarizing the culture made me unwilling to wear the poppy any longer; my not wearing the poppy, however, was less a protest than an act of private resistance. I just couldn't bring myself to put it on.

Read Stephen Osborne's "Last Steve Standing," in Geist *No. 99 or at geist.com*

I fully agree with Steven Osborne's "Last Steve Standing" (No. 99) However, I feel it is only fair to mention Mr. Harper's greatest accomplishment: he made former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and former Ontario Premier Mike Harris look good.

—Jim Langille, Belleville ON

I always stop by @CityLightsBooks when I'm in SF—but a nice Cdn #magazinemoment too w/ Brick, Brokenpencil & Geist

—Matthew Holmes (@semimatte) via Twitter

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LITERARY LION

I've been enjoying No. 99, particularly "Novelist, Playwright, Sex Machine," a sexual scorecard from Robertson Davies' diaries. Literary lion, indeed! One thing puzzles me, though: what does "h.t.d" mean? He uses these initials to refer to the sexual act. Highlight/Hump of the Day? Or is it short for something Latin?

—M.A.C. Farrant, Vancouver Island BC

BACK IN THE DAY

I suggest a further addition to your map "Sole Mates: The Footwear Map of Canada" (No. 99): Schumacher, Ontario, a suburb of Timmins. (Actually you couldn't tell when you left Timmins and entered Schumacher.)

In the late '40s/early '50s Schumacher was known for the MacIntyre Arena—a beautiful building constructed by the McIntyre mine people. It had a full size ice hockey rink and a separate rink about the same length as the hockey rink but located beneath the stands on one side of the arena. It was about thirty feet wide with full length mirrors from floor to ceiling for its entire length and was used by figure skaters—the ice was maintained all year round. Ice was also kept during the summer in the main arena so that the northern Ontario NHL players could work out regularly. I lived in nearby Kirkland Lake and I remember seeing Ted Lindsay of the Detroit Red Wings going to the arena three times a week with his two teammates, Gordie Howe and Nelson Podolsky, who also stayed in Kirkland Lake during the summer. The arena also had curling sheets (only for the winter curling season), as well as a top-notch restaurant. Everything was first class.

The 90-mile trip from Kirkland Lake to Schumacher was made in Ted Lindsay's Cadillac Coupe de Ville in less than 90 minutes, which was quite a feat in those days considering the road conditions. It was said General Motors gave Ted Lindsay a new Cadillac every year. It sure looked like it to us teenagers.

—Syd Moscoe, Thornhill ON

WRITE TO GEIST

✉ Thoughts, opinions, comments and queries are welcome and encouraged, and should be sent to:

The Editor, *Geist*
letters@geist.com
Snailmail:
#210 – 111 West Hastings St.
Vancouver BC v6B 1H4

Letters may be edited for clarity, brevity and decorum. Authors of published letters will receive a *Geist* map suitable for framing.

ARTISTS IN THIS ISSUE

Jeremy Bruneel's work has appeared in the *Globe and Mail*, the *Georgia Straight*, *Maclean's*, *Rolling Stone* and many other publications. He lives in London, ON.

Eve Corbel is a writer, illustrator, cartoonist, mom and grandma. Her writing and artwork have been published in numerous anthologies and periodicals, including *Geist*.

Valerian Mazataud is a Montreal documentary photographer. His work has appeared in *der Spiegel*, *Le Devoir* and *Walrus*, and has been exhibited in Toronto, Montreal and Arles, France. See more of his work at focuszero.com.

Nicola Winstanley is the author of two picture books, *Cinnamon Baby* and *The Pirate's Bed*; her third, *A Bed Time Yarn*, is forthcoming (2017). Her poetry for adults and children has been published in various magazines in Canada and the UK. She lives in Hamilton, ON.

Bonavista Peninsula, Newfoundland, courtesy of Stephen Smith

RANDY REPORTS

In 1962 my family moved from Port Alberni to Ucluelet for the summer so that my dad could be closer to the fishing grounds. We rented Doug Mack's house at Stewart Bay, in the Ucluelet Harbour.

There were only two families living on the Toquaht Reserve in Ucluelet that summer. There were several other houses there but they were falling apart.

My dad bought a cedar dugout canoe from Jimmy McKay, our neighbour. He also built a small skiff out of thin plywood. It leaked like a sieve and we constantly had to bail out water with a bucket. We used the skiff to travel around the harbour. The dugout canoe enabled us to row outside the harbour to collect seafoods and to fish.

Shortly after we moved in, Jimmy McKay brought our mom seven seagull eggs. Not surprisingly, he had collected them from Seagull Island where he was fishing. He said, "These will hatch any minute." To this day I wonder how he could have known they were about to hatch.

Our mom had been baking bread that day in the wood cook stove so it was still warm. She put the eggs in the oven and all the eggs hatched within a couple hours.

The seagulls gave us reason to go fishing every day, as they were voracious eaters. We would fish for salmon or cod or snapper for food for the family; we caught black bass, which was abundant at the time, for the seagulls. We did not eat bass ourselves. We would cut it into strips and throw it at the birds. They grew to be large and gray and ugly.

A cougar ate five of the birds. The two birds that survived we named Gordie and Skipsy. It was amazing how much fish those birds could eat.

We left Stewart Bay at the end of August so my siblings and I could return to school. We sailed through Barclay Sound and then up to the Somass River in Port Alberni. The ride lasted four and a half hours. Gordie and Skipsy followed us all the way to our house in Port Alberni.

At home, the birds became somewhat of a nuisance, as they would fly into shelves and walls. Their wingspan was nearly the width of our living room. We would shoo them out of the house but there were always dogs in our yard so the birds would fly up to the roof and roost there.

After a time they would not come lower than the roof. They would squawk at us and leave huge messes up there.

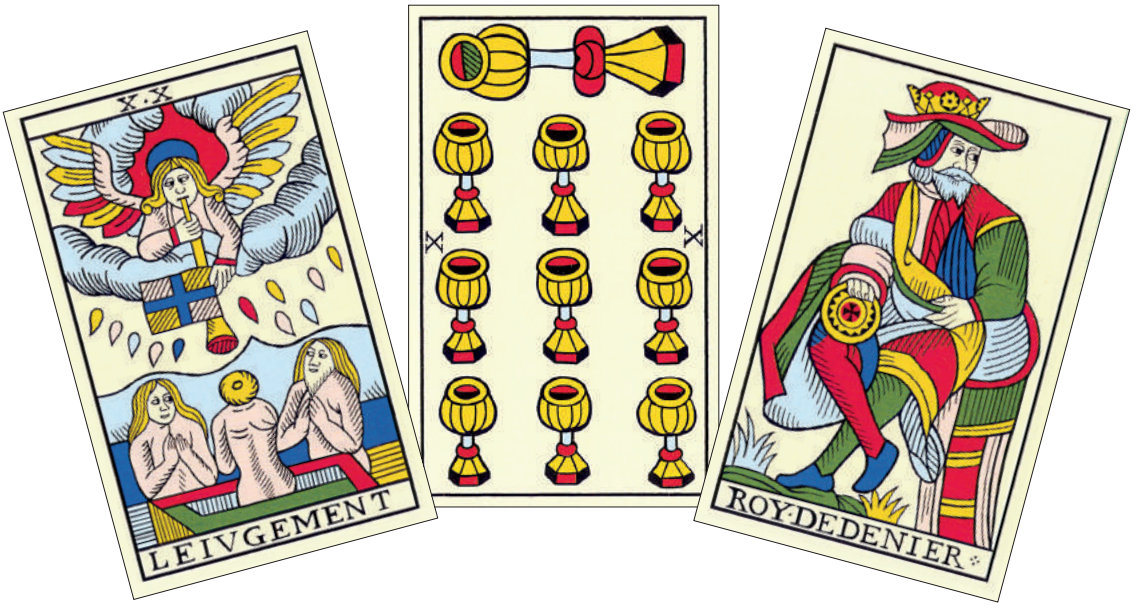
Gradually they stayed farther and farther away. By Christmas of that year we could hear them squawking way up high as they circled around. Then we hardly ever heard them again.

Randy Fred is a Nuu-Chah-Nulth Elder. He is the founder of Theytus Books, the first aboriginal-owned and operated book publishing house in Canada. He has worked in publishing and communications for forty years. He has won gold at the Canadian National Blind Lawn Bowling Championships five times. He lives in Nanaimo.

Be Careful What You Wish For

PHOEBE TSANG

A reading for John Franklin in 1841, Van Diemen's Land



Judgment reversed is the central card for this reading. You are on the verge of aligning with your life's purpose, but getting there won't be easy. On the far horizon are the mountains of Van Diemen's Land, suggesting that your calling will lead you away from your present position. Judgment is the twentieth card of the Major Arcana, indicating that you are nearing the end of a cycle. A rebirth will manifest on a physical or spiritual plane. Now is the time to let go of old beliefs, goals or relationships in order to move forward.

The Ten of Cups shows that you are a sympathetic and likeable leader who thrives on the goodwill of his people. However, your tendency to be led by emotion weakens your credibility in higher circles—beware of ridicule. The number ten brings opportunities for growth, but not without loss.

The King of Coins represents a risk-averse authority with whom your impulsive personality will clash. This authority has the wisdom to reflect fairly on the situation and act in your best interests. The suit of coins corresponds with the earth element, advising you to protect your resources and cultivate contentment. Consider all options before accepting new opportunities.

The overall message of the cards is one of caution. Ask yourself what you truly want and be careful what you wish for. Born under the sign of Aries, you are hot-headed by nature. Long-term planning isn't your strength. Though you may feel confident given your past achievements, be warned that the future holds challenges that will require you to evolve or die trying.

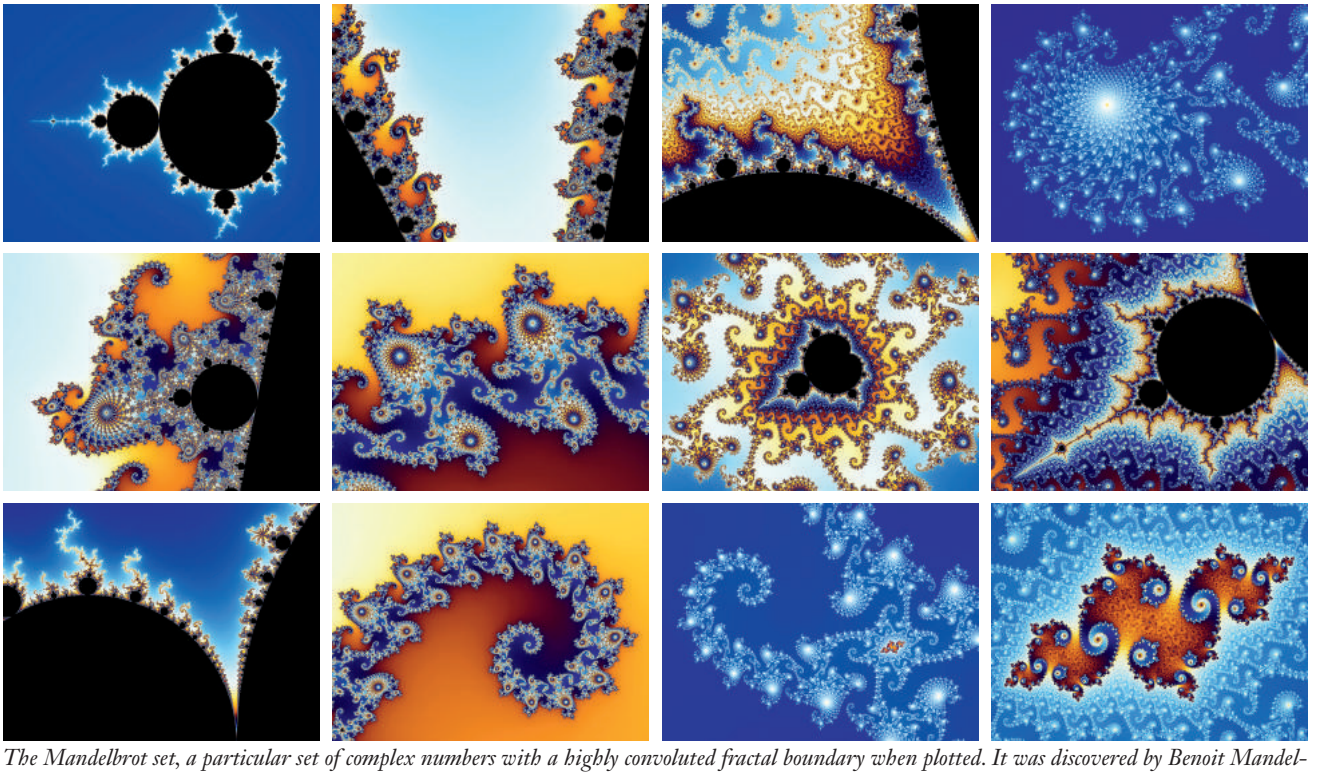
Phoebe Tsang is a British-Canadian poet, librettist, violinist, short story writer and tarot consultant. She is the author of the poetry collection Contents of a Mermaid's Purse *(Tightrope Books, 2009). She lives in Toronto and at TarotbyPhoebe.com.*

TAROT CARDS: JEAN NOBLET, RESTORED BY JEAN-CLAUDE FLORNOY, TAROT-HISTORY.COM

Fractal Life

MICHAŁ KOZŁOWSKI

According to Polish physicists, classic world literature consists of fractals and/or fractals of fractals



The Mandelbrot set, a particular set of complex numbers with a highly convoluted fractal boundary when plotted. It was discovered by Benoit Mandelbrot in 1978. Image 12 in this sequence is a detail of image 1 magnified 10 billion times. At that scale, image 1 has a diameter of 4 million kilometres.

In January 2016 the *Guardian* reported that fractal patterns had been discovered by physicists in Poland studying the sentence structure of hundreds of novels and other literary works. A team of researchers at the Institute of Nuclear Physics in Krakow, Poland—where my father worked as a physicist in the 1980s—described the complex "'fractal' patterning of sentences in literature" as resembling "ideal" mathematical forms seen in nature. Fractals, according to the *Guardian*, are mathematical objects "in which each fragment, when expanded, has a structure resembling the whole." Fractals in nature are found in the structure of snowflakes and galaxies. The Polish researchers made their discovery by counting the sentence lengths of more than one hundred well-known novels written in English, French, Italian, Russian, Spanish, German and Polish, by Balzac, Hobbes, Joyce, Woolf, Cortázar, Dos Passos, Eco, Beckett, Mann, Brontë, James, Dumas, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, García Márquez, Austen, Defoe and Gombrowicz, among other authors, as well as the Bible and two dozen plays by Shakespeare.

On their website, the Polish researchers explain that their work with fractals evolved from standard areas of research on standard topics in nuclear and high-energy physics in the 1990s to interdisciplinary topics in natural and social complex systems, including research on financial markets, natural language and fractal music.

I called up my father with this interesting news from his old institute. He said he couldn't understand why anyone there would want to spend their time counting sentences in great books rather than reading

them. When he worked at the Institute of Atomic Physics in Krakow, he built an MRI unit, likely the first in Eastern Europe (Magnetic Resonance Imaging uses magnetic fields and radio waves to scan tissue for medical diagnosis). Years later he tried and failed to develop an MRI technique that used fractal recognition to diagnose cancerous tumours.

According to the *Guardian*, some of the works analyzed "were more mathematically complex than others, with stream-of-consciousness narratives the most complex, comparable to multifractals, or fractals of fractals." The most fractally complex work was *Finnegans Wake*, James Joyce's monumental novel, which neither my father nor I have read in English or Polish. Other fractally complex novels include *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* by Dave Eggers, *The Waves* by Virginia Woolf (the only woman on the list), the USA Trilogy by John Dos Passos, *2666* by Roberto Bolaño, the second part of *Ulysses* by James Joyce and *Hopscotch* by Julio Cortázar—the novel that inspired my father to be a writer when he read it in Latin American literature class in high school; a few months after that he read the lectures of the physicist Richard Feynman and became convinced to take up physics rather than literature.

One of the least fractally complex of the novels analyzed at the institute is *In Search of Lost Time* by Marcel Proust, which my father read after high school and before he joined the institute, while he was doing his military service. He got the Proust from the military library, which he describes as a sad and empty place. As far as he could tell, volumes 2 through 7 had never been borrowed or even opened, nor had the works of Dylan Thomas. He said that he had plenty of time to read the Proust because shortly after he was conscripted, martial law was declared in Poland in reaction to the growing popularity of the Solidarity movement, and for months soldiers were forbidden to leave the base. The other source of literature at the base was the military newspaper, he said, hundreds of copies of which were delivered to the barracks, then were immediately cut into strips and used as toilet paper.

One of the least fractally complex of the novels analyzed is *In Search of Lost Time* by Marcel Proust, which my father read in the army

I realized while reading the article in the *Guardian* that I owned exactly one book on the list of 113 titles whose sentences had been counted for the study: the Polish classic *Ferdydurke*, by the great Polish writer Witold Gombrowicz, which I had not read either in English or Polish. I pulled it off the shelf, opened it at random and read:

> What's more, let us consider whether your work, this unique, outstanding, and elaborate work is merely a particle of some thirty thousand other works, equally unique, which make their appearance year in, year out and on the principle of "each year be sure to add, whether bad or good, a new *oeuvre* to your brood"? Oh, horrid parts! Is this why we construct a whole, so that a particle of a part of the reader will absorb a part of a particle of the work, only partly at that?

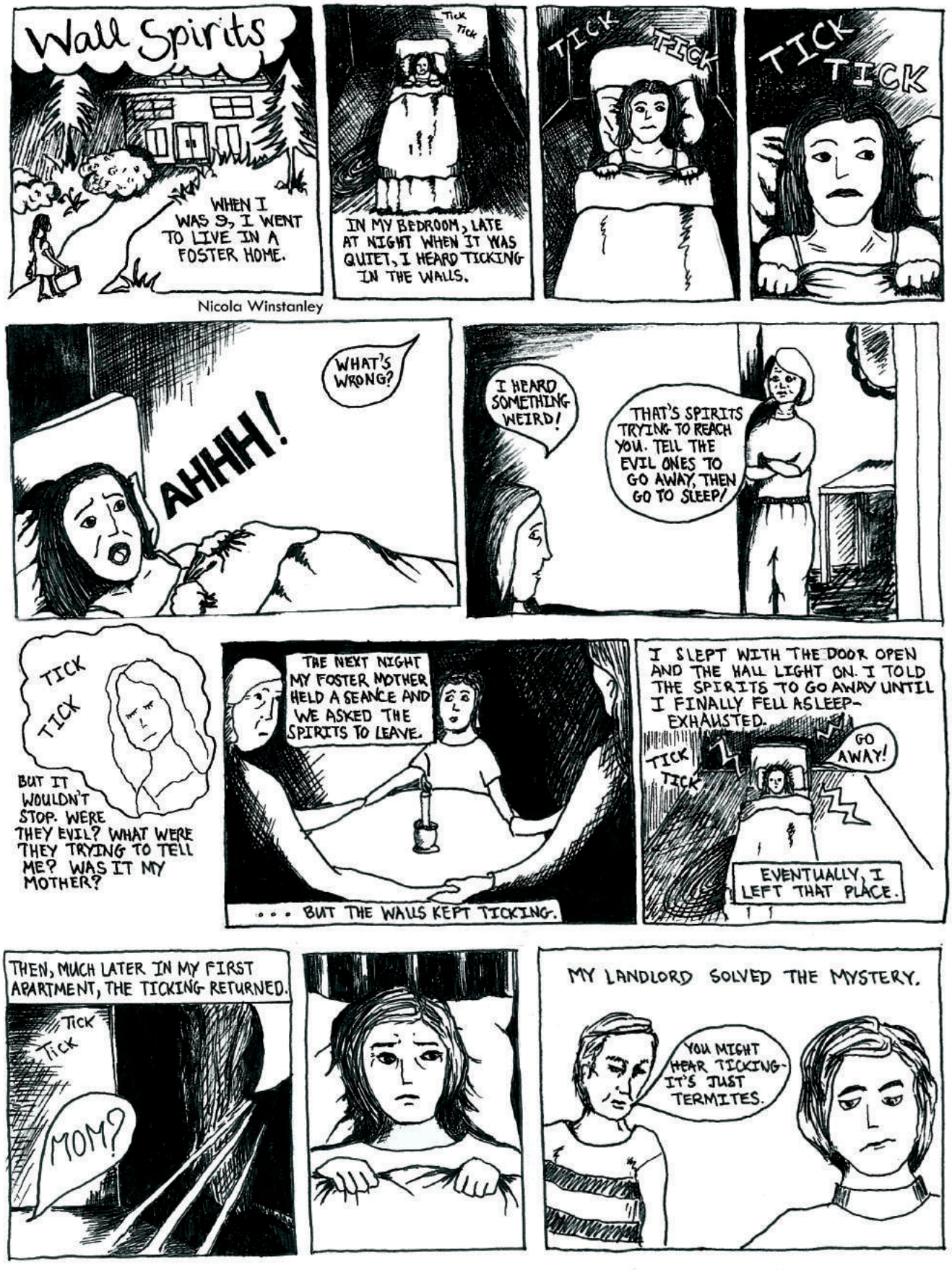
On the phone with my father I tried to explain what I thought the physicists in Poland were up to. They seemed to be saying that sentence lengths recur in patterns, and those patterns recur at the same ratio for sentences that are shorter or longer. My father said that was hard to believe. Entropy theory, he said, tells us that sentence length is dictated by the information contained in the sentence, so to me the study implies that these writers are always repeating themselves. He sounded disappointed. Later, after our conversation, I wanted

> to explain that writers are always repeating themselves, telling the same story, the story of how we see the world, or how we want to see the world, or how we want to be seen to see the world. Only the details change.
>
> When we moved to Canada in 1989, my father got a job as a physicist in Ottawa, at the National Research Council, the institution best known for supplying the CBC with the long dash following a period of silence indicating exactly 1:00 p.m. or 12:00 p.m. or 10:00 a.m. My father, who was then thirty-three years old, supervised MRI experiments alone on night shift. One night when he went out for a smoke he looked up and saw ribbons of green light streaming and swirling across the night sky. He was certain that he was seeing a UFO. Years later he realized that it was more likely he had seen the north ern lights, a phenomenon that rarely occurs in Poland, especially in southern Poland around Krakow.

I continued with the Gombrowicz and found, a few pages later:

> Whatever you put down on paper dictates what comes next, because the work is not born of you—you want to write one thing, yet something entirely different comes out. Parts tend to wholeness, every part surreptitiously makes its way toward the whole, strives for roundness, and seeks fulfilment, it implores the rest to be created in its own image and likeness.

Michał Kozłowski is the publisher of Geist. *He lives in Vancouver. Read more of his work at geist.com.*


Wall Spirits
WHEN I WAS 9, I WENT TO LIVE IN A FOSTER HOME.
Tick Tick
IN MY BEDROOM, LATE AT NIGHT WHEN IT WAS QUIET, I HEARD TICKING IN THE WALLS.
TICK TICK
TICK TICK
Nicola Winstanley
AHHH!
WHAT'S WRONG?
I HEARD SOMETHING WEIRD!
THAT'S SPIRITS TRYING TO REACH YOU. TELL THE EVIL ONES TO GO AWAY, THEN GO TO SLEEP!
TICK TICK
BUT IT WOULDN'T STOP. WERE THEY EVIL? WHAT WERE THEY TRYING TO TELL ME? WAS IT MY MOTHER?
THE NEXT NIGHT MY FOSTER MOTHER HELD A SEANCE AND WE ASKED THE SPIRITS TO LEAVE.
. . . BUT THE WALLS KEPT TICKING.
I SLEPT WITH THE DOOR OPEN AND THE HALL LIGHT ON. I TOLD THE SPIRITS TO GO AWAY UNTIL I FINALLY FELL ASLEEP- EXHAUSTED.
TICK TICK
GO AWAY!
EVENTUALLY, I LEFT THAT PLACE.
THEN, MUCH LATER IN MY FIRST APARTMENT, THE TICKING RETURNED.
Tick Tick
MOM?
MY LANDLORD SOLVED THE MYSTERY.
YOU MIGHT HEAR TICKING- IT'S JUST TERMITES.

First World Problems A to Z

SUZANNE BUFFAM

Abstract art.

Blackout blinds.

Chemotherapy wigs.

Divorce court.

Existential philosophy.

Foreign rights.

Gap year blues.

Homebirth rallies.

Income tax.

Jet lag.

Kindergarteners carrying heavy wifi loads.

Lunch-truck fatigue.

Metacriticism.

Non-communicable, age-related cardio-pulmonary diseases.

Orthodontists.

Retro-modern décor ennui.

Second World problems.

Third World problems.

Under-enrolled inner-city charter schools.

Vanity publishing.

Weltshmertz.

Xfinity router outages.

Yoghurt packaging rage.

Zero money down.

Suzanne Buffam's work has appeared in international anthologies and publications. Her first book, Past Imperfect, *was the winner of the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award for Poetry. She lives in Chicago.*

Zero Degree Dining

MANDELBROT

The Kathmandu Café in multiple dimensions

Photographs are the pure expression of perspective, which is the technique of mapping three dimensions onto two. Drama in a photograph results from the optical relations of near to far defined from a single point in space. (You can see the perspective effect by looking at the world with one eye open.) Superimposing several perspectives in near alignment can render space in apparently more than three dimensions, as in this photograph of the Kathmandu Café in Vancouver. Walls, floor and ceiling are thrown open in projection, peeled away from their normal alignment, to create a kind of map, or chart, of the domain of the first proprietor of the Kathmandu Café, Abi Sharma, who stands here adjacent to rather than enclosed by the surfaces of his world.

The Kathmandu Café, a favourite dinner and meeting place for *Geist* friends and staff since it opened in 2005 under the proprietorship of Abi Sharma and then Pradeep Sharma (no relation), closed its doors on the first of March, 2016, for reasons of family. It was unique among restaurants in offering a kind of Degree Zero in dining (to steal a term from Roland Barthes): a handsome space devoid of embellishment, a menu devoid of ostentation, service devoid of

performance, an atmosphere of plain comfort devoid of polemic. These are elements that combined to make the Kathmandu *strange* in the full and exciting meaning of that word. We are told to watch for a new Kathmandu Café a year from now. Perhaps this image can serve as a map of what has been and what might be yet to come.

Mandelbrot is a photographer who has been writing about photography since 1990. In another life he is Stephen Osborne, co-founder and contributing publisher of Geist. *Read more of Mandelbrot's work at geist.com.*

Mavis in Montreal

SARAH POLLARD

Where Mavis Gallant hung out and wrote, I would hang out and write

The first time I travelled alone was on a pilgrimage of sorts to Montreal. I was a student and the city was a long way from the comfort of my parents' Vancouver Island home, but I was determined to be a writer and writers hit the road.

From the airport I went to a Tourism Montreal visitor centre and waited in line for an agent. I peered down at the new hiking boots that had chafed since breakfast. I was pleased I had persevered through gate changes and baggage claims and bus transfers and Métro stops to get to the birthplace of my literary hero: Mavis Gallant. I would explore the places that had inspired Mavis and I would be inspired. I would visit the haunts where she had written and I would write.

A teen with a name tag waved me forward. I eyed her stack of tourist maps and neat clutch of highlighters. "Hello there!" I chirped. "I'm on the trail of Mavis Gallant!" The girl across the counter stared. I plowed ahead, tapping out my wish list on my fingers: directions to the author's convent school, her former homes and her office at the *Standard*. The counter girl blinked. "Em, who?" Mavis. The Pied Piper of Montreal. Only the greatest short story writer of all time. Canada's most enviable literary export. The girl scrunched her face at me. "*Who*?"

Deflated, I left the visitor centre in search of the apartment that had been loaned to me by a friend-of-a-friend I hardly knew. With each step the blisters on my heels bloomed. In my mind, I was already shedding my bag in my new digs, flopping on the couch and reconstituting the pieces of myself that I'd flung into the world all day. The prospect of a cold drink and a shower buoyed my spirits. Refreshed, I would devise a new plan to find Mavis in Montreal.

I emerged from the Métro into an industrial neighbourhood southwest of the city. The sun beat down on a busy road and graffiti. Sweat trickled down my back. From the street it was clear the front door of the apartment was ajar; the friend-of-a-friend had not mentioned roommates. I pushed the door open with my boot. Inside, dust bunnies flitted across the hardwood without so much as a couch or a chair to impede them. I wondered if the place had been robbed and whether I should call the police, but there was no phone and I could not speak French. I avoided two stuffed garbage bags in the middle of the floor in case they contained food scraps or mismatched body parts. In the corner, a blanket and pillow were pressed into the window seat as if someone had just gone for cigarettes. "Hello?" I called into the emptiness. The floor beneath my hikers shifted. Through a broken window, I glimpsed a train hurtling past. Could I picture bedding down here for the night, possibly with strangers?

Back on the sidewalk, the heat rose. A truck pulsing with music crept by at close range. The driver and his passenger yelled something in my direction. It sounded impolite, but I had no way of telling. Peals of laughter pressed in. I determined that if I had to run, I wouldn't get far—my overstuffed pack was the equivalent of another human lashed to my spine. I considered collapsing in a heap on the sidewalk, resting my head on my

backpack and hoisting a white flag until someone took pity and came to the rescue. *Unless you died you were always bound to escape*. Mavis's words, not mine.

I spotted a pay phone box up ahead. I got caught in the door's accordion folds, unable to twist free. My backpack poked into the street. I battled my way inside and flipped through the remains of a tattered phone book. I dialled the number for a university and secured a residence room. I had no idea how far away it was, only that somewhere in the city someone was expecting me.

At the Université du Québec à Montréal I received a key to a door I was assured was secure. It swung inward to a space as blank as a jail cell: single cot, pillow flat as a stick of gum, one tiny window. I dropped my bag and collapsed on the bed. The smell of bleached sheets was comforting. I had no will to complain about a too-hard mattress and I was too shy to return to the information counter to ask where all the hungry students ate.

In my head I recorded the trials of the day—they seemed equivalent to crossing the Prairies on all fours. In fact, I had simply travelled to an unfamiliar city where plans had changed. I gazed at the ceiling, one arm dangling over the side of the bed, and wondered what Mavis would think. I was sure she would find inspiration in the institutional walls, the mottled orange carpet, and would use the scene to get words on the page. *Everything I start glides into print, in time, and becomes like a house once lived in*. Because Mavis would have savoured this moment, I would savour it.

Sarah Pollard is a writer and communications specialist. She lives in Victoria. Read more of her work at geist.com.

Fading Committee

VEN BEGAMUDRÉ

The photograph as gizmo, recipe, experiment, charm

1

On February 23, 1848, the *Pittsburgh Morning Post* reported the following tale from Mr. Edmund Ruffin of Petersburg, Virginia. In the summer of 1736, a ship's surgeon named Davis came ashore at York to visit a patient as a thunderstorm began. A lightning bolt passed through a pine tree, then through a window and struck the surgeon dead. A sad tale, it is true, and one with a curious twist, for on the surgeon's breast was discovered an imprint of that very same tree. In colour.

2

Before Leo XIII became pope, he wrote an ode to photography that contains the line, "*Novumque Monstrum!*" ("O new marvel!") After becoming pope, Leo sat for a carte-de-visite by the London Stereoscopic Company and thus became, perhaps, the first pope in stereoscope. Later, in 1884, he commissioned a painting for the Vatican's Galleria dei Candelabri. In the fresco's upper half, the Church herself blesses traditional arts: painting and sculpture. In the lower half she blesses the minor arts: photography, of course, and carpet weaving.

3

In 1855 the Photographic Society of London became so concerned with the problem of images fading that it established a Fading Committee. This was a subject much on people's minds. Eight years before the British weekly magazine *Punch* had cautioned

PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

readers about the ephemeral nature of both photography and love:

> Behold thy portrait—day by day,
> I've seen its features die;
> First the moustachios go away
> Then off the whiskers fly.
> . . . . . .
> Those speaking eyes, which made me trust
> In all you used to vow,
> Are like two little specks of dust—
> Alas! Where are they now?

4
From 1850 to the late 1880s, when albumen was used to coat paper, photographers found themselves rarely far from the kitchen. They added egg whites, separated from yolks, to a saline solution and beat this until frothy. The hen's diet affected the quality of the albumen. James Mudd, a Scot, preferred duck eggs. Some photochefs added honey to the froth; others treacle, malt, raspberry juice, ginger wine, beer, coffee or tea. Mudd proposed gin for its versatility. But what to do with all the yolks? The *British Journal of Photography* happened on a solution and, in its 1862 *Photographic Almanac*, published a recipe for Photographer's Cheesecake. Its ingredients include a quarter pound of butter, a quarter pound of sugar, three yolks, half a grated nutmeg and a pinch of salt. Add lemon juice and rind and bake for twenty minutes in a dish lined with puff pastry.

5
Electric lights in studios became common only at the end of the nineteenth century, so before then photographers had to be an ingenious lot. Take Dr. John Vansant, stationed at the United States Marine Hospital in St. Louis. In 1887 he put fireflies in a small glass bottle, covered its mouth with fine netting, and placed the bottle near his subject. He calculated that, since each firefly flash lingers roughly half a second, the exposure time required was the time it took twelve fireflies to make a total of fifty flashes. This should equal twenty-five seconds, but fireflies are an independent lot who take their sweet time recharging.

6
When the Photographic Society of London was established, Queen Victoria's consort, Albert, donated fifty pounds. He died in 1861 but would not fade. During her Diamond Jubilee thirty-six years later, Queen Victoria wore a bracelet that contained a photograph of Albert. She often wore stanhopes—photographs set in lockets or miniature spyglasses and magnified with a plano-convex lens. One American stanhope depicted a Civil War battlefield set in a Civil War bullet. As for the French, one could always find pornographic stanhopes in Paris.

7
Photographers compared their art with other marvels of the modern age, like the railroad. Neither photography nor the railroad amused Frederick Locker, a minor poet and friend of the great William Makepeace Thackeray. Locker wrote in his self-published, 1881 edition of *London Lyrics*:

> Where boys and girls pursued their sports
> A locomotive puffs and snorts,
> And gets my malediction;
> The turf is dust—the elves are fled—
> The ponds have shrunk—and tastes have spread
> To photograph and fiction.

After Heinz K. Henisch and Bridget A. Henisch, The Photographic Experience, 1839–1914: Images and Attitudes.

Ven Begamudré writes magical fiction, nonfiction and poetry. He lives in Regina.

South Side Malartic

ANTOINE DION-ORTEGA

People are getting sick, mad or both

Last September, the Montreal photographer Valerian Mazataud and I visited Malartic, a town of about 3300 residents near Val-d'Or, in the Abitibi region of Quebec, traditionally a major mining and logging region.

Malartic is home to Canadian Malartic, the largest gold mine in Canada. The mine operated from 1935 to 1965, when it shut down. It was reopened in 2008 as an open pit mine. Because the ore body lies beneath the southern part of the city (rumour has it that the biggest deposit lies under the church), Canadian Malartic moved more than 200 buildings and 500 people from the south to the north of the town to make room for mining activities.

Commercial production began in 2011. Now the south side of town is coated with mineral dust from the mine. Home foundations are cracking as a result of continual vibrations caused by the heavy machinery used in the mine. People are getting either sick or mad, or both. According to a recent study by the Abitibi health department, one-third of the inhabitants would leave town if they were given the opportunity and half of the 700 families who live in the south side of Malartic would sell their homes and move out right away if they could.

Only, they can't. Indeed, who would want to buy a house some 150 meters away from a two-kilometre-long, dusty and noisy pit? The people of the town feel trapped. They are demanding that the mine buy their homes at replacement value so that they can move and buy houses elsewhere.

Last February, Canadian Malartic made known their plans to extend the mining pit farther east. The expansion means that Highway 117, the only highway in the region, will be rerouted for four kilometres around the pit before reaching town. Canadian Malartic is also carrying out exploration drilling in different places in the area, including by a residential neighbourhood on the north side of town, where many families from the south were relocated during the construction of the mine seven or eight years ago.

Canadian Malartic is currently working on a "co-construction" approach, aimed at involving the community in the development process. But for citizens of the south side, the mine strategy will only divide the population and dilute their compensation claims by involving citizens from the less affected neighbourhoods on the north side of town.

Antoine Dion-Ortega is a Montreal freelance journalist. He specializes in covering the resource industry. Most of his work is written in French and has appeared in Le Devoir, Les Affaires, L'Actualité, Nouveau Projet *and other magazines and newspapers in Quebec and in Europe.*

PHOTOS: VALERIAN MAZATAUD (HANS LUCAS)

Displacement activity is weird compulsive behaviour that can occur when an animal is anxious. A hen whose food dispenser is blocked might preen frantically and scratch around her nest. A dog left alone too long might suddenly chew up a pillow. And a writer who *REALLY MUST* sit down at the desk *NOW* and *START WRITING* might engage in one or more of a gazillion…

AMAZING DISPLACEMENT ACTIVITIES OF WRITERS

by Eve Corbel

I suddenly realized that it was MY TURN to water the community garden.

I knew I'd have a lot more writing energy if I just played a quick game of online mah jongg

The baby birds outside my window were peeping like mad, and sure enough my cat had got at them. It was AWFUL- I got a migraine

I knew I'd have a lot more writing energy if I just had a little snack

For my novel set in 17th c. London, I googled bricklayers, which led me to sanitation & pollution, which led me to the plague of 1665, then the comet of 1664 (an omen), which led to

I knew I'd have a lot more writing energy if I just whipped up an inspiring playlist…

I was writing in a café and the couple at the next table were crying & negotiating custody of their beloved youngster, Zeugma, who would only live 2 more years! Then they mentioned her CAGE. Zeugma was a CHINCHILLA!

I knew I'd have a lot more writing energy if I just had a wee nap zzzzzzzzzz…

I opened an Alice Munro collection to remind myself how she handles dialogue. Before I knew it, the kids were home from school.

I knew I'd have a lot more energy if I just had a refreshing brewski

Because a Lot of Questions Are Complex

ROB KOVITZ

Begging the question of what can be defined as "form"

Elihu Vedder, Questioner of the Sphinx, 1875

How do you formulate the great questions? Research. Contrary to what your teacher told you in high school, there is such a thing as a stupid question, especially when conducting an interview for a celebrity profile.

Think about it. How many times does Norman Schwarzkopf want to answer how he began his career in the military? How often does Hillary want to narrate where she and Bill met? What is Harrison Ford going to think of you if you ask "What was your breakthrough role?" He's liable to look at you emphatically and say "Duh! Star Wars!"

Sheree Bykofsky and Jennifer Basye Sander, The Complete Idiot's Guide to Publishing Magazine Articles

Together they had traced the rumors across the solar system. The legends of an ancient humanoid race who had known the answer to all things, and who had built Answerer and departed.

"Think of it," Morran said. "The answer to everything!"

Robert Sheckley, Ask A Foolish Question

Hi Jerry, Do you like cilantro?

I do kind of like cilantro, but I don't know what it is.

Would you rather have a rhino sized hamster or a hamster sized rhino?

Oh my god, that's such an easy question! Who wouldn't want a hamster sized rhino? It would be one of the greatest things ever! You could put your hand down flat and just let him charge into it!

I just ran out of lunch meat, what kind should I get now?

More lunch meat? Why does it need to be more specific? It's meat, and they're telling you when to eat it.

Jerry Seinfeld, Jerry Seinfeld Loves Answering Questions! The Dumber, the Better. Now. (Interviewly)

I am very unfortunate if that is true. But suppose I ask you a question: Would you say that this also holds true in the case of horses?

Plato, Apology

In what ways are you different? In which the same? Why must that small boy wear leg braces? What is it that brings us each to destructive behavior? Remember when Sandoz still made acid? Remember Polio Summer? Where are you coming from? Does it make any difference? What if I was drunk? Just what do I fear about trust? Can you separate the inner from the outer? Why is this not form, but a process? Who is that witch? Is that my bus? What is a memory? Is that a hole in your shoe? How can you imagine that all these things exist? What if he understood that we all thought he was a closet case and were not threatened by that? Is it a question of a wager? Do not verbs collapse the real down to a single, simplified plane? At what point did you realize that you are capable of killing? Why is this not theater, not dance? Are words not ultimately puffy with misuse? Do phenothiazines scare you? What does this exemplify? Are not all truckers jerks? Do you believe that by balling or not balling you will be a better person? What if I told you these were only place holders and that it was you who was in question?

Ron Silliman, Sunset Debris

Why am I me? A stupid question … I am too stupid to answer this question. And to ask it, just stupid enough. What is the mechanism of such stupid questioning? I imagine a small organ, neither inside nor outside myself, like a polymelic phantom limb, a subtle psychic appendage implanted at birth behind my crown, during the moment of my coming to be, whenever that was. This organ (or appendix, or tumor), whose painful inflammation is despair—"despair is the paroxysm of individuation" (Cioran)—is like a strange supplementary bodily member, intimate and inessential, which I can feel yet not move, barely move yet without feeling. Stupid organ, organ of stupidity. It moves, is moved, like an inalienable shackle, only to reinforce its immobility. Am I to sever this organ, hemorrhage of haecceity, escape it? "[E]scape is the need to get out of oneself, that is, *to break that most radical and unalterably binding of chains, the fact that the I [moi] is oneself [soi-même]* (Levinas). Just who, then, would escape?" (Nicola Masciandaro, "Individuation: This Stupidity," *Postmedieval* 1 [2010], forthcoming). "The act whereby being—existence—is bestowed upon us is an *unbearable* surpassing of being" (Bataille).

Nicola Masciandaro, Anti-Cosmosis: Black Mahapralaya (Hideous Gnosis: Black Metal Theory Symposium 1)

It's understandable that someone would feel and think that way, especially when frustrated, but the truth is that these are lousy questions. They're negative and they don't solve any problems. Throughout the rest of the book we'll refer to questions like these as Incorrect Questions, or IQs …

John G. Miller, QBQ! The Question Behind the Question

The first time Donald Antrim's mind was exposed to wider scrutiny, that I can find, was more than 20 years ago during an interview he gave to *The New York Times*. It was the fall of 1993, so right after the publication of his first book, the novel "Elect Mr. Robinson for a Better World." The Q. and A. opened with this exchange:

Q. What inspired this book?
A. That kind of question is so hard to answer.

And it ended with this one:

Q. Do you answer "yes and no" to a lot of questions?
A. Sure, because a lot of questions are complex.

John Jeremiah Sullivan, Donald Antrim and the Art of Anxiety

This seems a very dubious assertion, besides begging the question of what can be defined as 'form'. Behind it one glimpses that old ghost which still haunts classical studies, however often right-minded scholars may exorcise it: the feeling that ancient authors achieved a perfection which somehow places them above common literary error, that they cannot be criticized, only explained and justified. *Tu nihil in magno doctus reprehendis Homero?* Horace asked—'Tell me, do you, a scholar, find nothing to cavil at in mighty Homer?'

Peter Green, Introduction to Juvenal, The Sixteen Satires

Blake: "Was that what you meant to say ?"
Leslie: "Isn't it enough to say what you mean, without being obliged to say what you meant?"
Blake: "Half a loaf is better than no bread; beggars mustn't be choosers."
Leslie: "Oh, if you put it so meekly as that you humiliate me. I must tell you now: I meant a question."
Blake: "What is it?"

William Dean Howells, Out of the Question: A Comedy

In the tragedy in question, for example, he found fault with the ideas but admired the style; he condemned the conception but applauded all the details; and he was incensed by the characters, though he raved about their speeches. When he read the great

passages, he was transported; but when he thought how the pulpiteers were profiting from it to sell their goods, he was grieved, and in this confusion of feelings in which he found himself entangled…

Gustave Flaubert, Madame Bovary

When I went to Lunnon town sirs, Too rul loo rul Too rul loo rul Wasn't I done very brown sirs? Too rul loo rul Too rul loo rul—still, in my desire to be wiser, I got this composition by heart with the utmost gravity; nor do I recollect that I questioned its merit, except that I thought (as I still do) the amount of Too rul somewhat in excess of the poetry. In my hunger for information, I made proposals to Mr. Wopsle to bestow some intellectual crumbs upon me, with which he kindly complied. As it turned out, however, that he only wanted me for a dramatic lay-figure, to be contradicted and embraced and wept over and bullied and clutched and stabbed and knocked about in a variety of ways, I soon declined that course of instruction; though not until Mr. Wopsle in his poetic fury had severely mauled me.

Charles Dickens, Great Expectations

Q. Why is this style called the Debased?
A. From the general inferiority of design compared with the style it succeeded, from the meagre and clumsy execution of sculptured and other ornamental work, from the intermixture of detail founded on an entirely different school of art, and the consequent subversion of the purity of style.

Matthew Holbeche Bloxam, The Principles of Gothic Ecclesiastical Architecture, Elucidated By Question and Answer

In the inevitable period of decomposition, those forms devised to transform the world turn in upon themselves and implode. The form, once world-historical, becomes its own subject. History stops; action is replaced by an endless series of repetitions. As the form decomposes, symbolically, so does the world—it becomes sterile, inaccessible, worthless, unreal. Any aesthetic form could illustrate the necessity, but the novel will do: we move from Fielding, where a story, a creative account of the world, is in question, to Joyce, where communication itself is in question. The result is the post-Joycean novel, which asks no questions and communicates nothing: it is merely a set of empty gestures, a dead commodity, a thing whose only use value is its exchange value. We move from eternity (Fielding is still read, and, as you read him, you still feel the world changing) to slime (to believe that the present-day novel will be read in a hundred years is not to praise the novel but to condemn the world).

Greil Marcus, Lipstick Traces: A Secret History of the Twentieth Century

He passed the *Irish Times*. There might be other answers lying there. Like to answer them all. Good system for criminals. Code. At their lunch now. Clerk with the glasses there doesn't know me. O, leave them there to simmer. Enough bother wading through forty-four of them. Wanted, smart lady typist to aid gentleman in literary work. I called you naughty darling because I do not like that other world. Please tell me what is the meaning. Please tell me what perfume does your wife. Tell me who made the world. The way they spring those questions on you. And the other one Lizzie Twigg. My literary efforts have had the good fortune to meet with the approval of the eminent poet A. E. (Mr Geo. Russell). No time to do her hair drinking sloppy tea with a book of poetry.

James Joyce, Ulysses

By contrast, the realistic attitude, inspired by positivism, from Saint Thomas Aquinas to Anatole France, clearly seems to me to be hostile to any intellectual or moral advancement. I loathe it, for it is made up of mediocrity, hate, and dull conceit. It is this attitude which today gives birth to these ridiculous books, these insulting plays. It constantly feeds on and derives strength from the newspapers and stultifies both science and art by assiduously flattering the lowest of tastes; clarity bordering on stupidity, a dog's life. The activity of the best minds feels the effects of it; the law of the lowest common denominator finally prevails upon them as it does upon the others. An amusing result of this state of affairs, in literature for example, is the generous supply of novels. Each person adds his personal little "observation" to the whole. As a cleansing antidote to all this, M. Paul Valéry recently suggested that an anthology be compiled in which the largest possible number of opening passages from novels be offered; the resulting insanity, he predicted, would be a source of considerable edification. The most famous authors would be included. Such a thought reflects great credit on Paul Valéry who, some time ago, speaking of novels, assured me that, so far as he was concerned, he would continue to refrain from writing: "The Marquise went out at five." But has he kept his word?

If the purely informative style, of which the sentence just quoted is a prime example, is virtually the rule rather than the exception in the novel form, it is because, in all fairness, the author's ambition is

severely circumscribed. The circumstantial, needlessly specific nature of each of their notations leads me to believe that they are perpetrating a joke at my expense. I am spared not even one of the character's slightest vacillations: will he be fairhaired? what will his name be? will we first meet him during the summer? So many questions resolved once and for all, as chance directs; the only discretionary power left me is to close the book, which I am careful to do somewhere in the vicinity of the first page.

André Breton, Manifesto of Surrealism

Ask a Spartan whether he had rather be a good orator or a good soldier: and if I was asked the same question, I would rather choose to be a good cook, had I not one already to serve me. My God! Madame, how should I hate such a recommendation of being a clever fellow at writing, and an ass and an inanity in everything else! Yet I had rather be a fool both here and there than to have made so ill a choice wherein to employ my talent. And I am so far from expecting to gain any new reputation by these follies, that I shall think I come off pretty well if I lose nothing by them of that little I had before.

Michel de Montaigne, Of The Resemblance of Children to Their Fathers (Essays)

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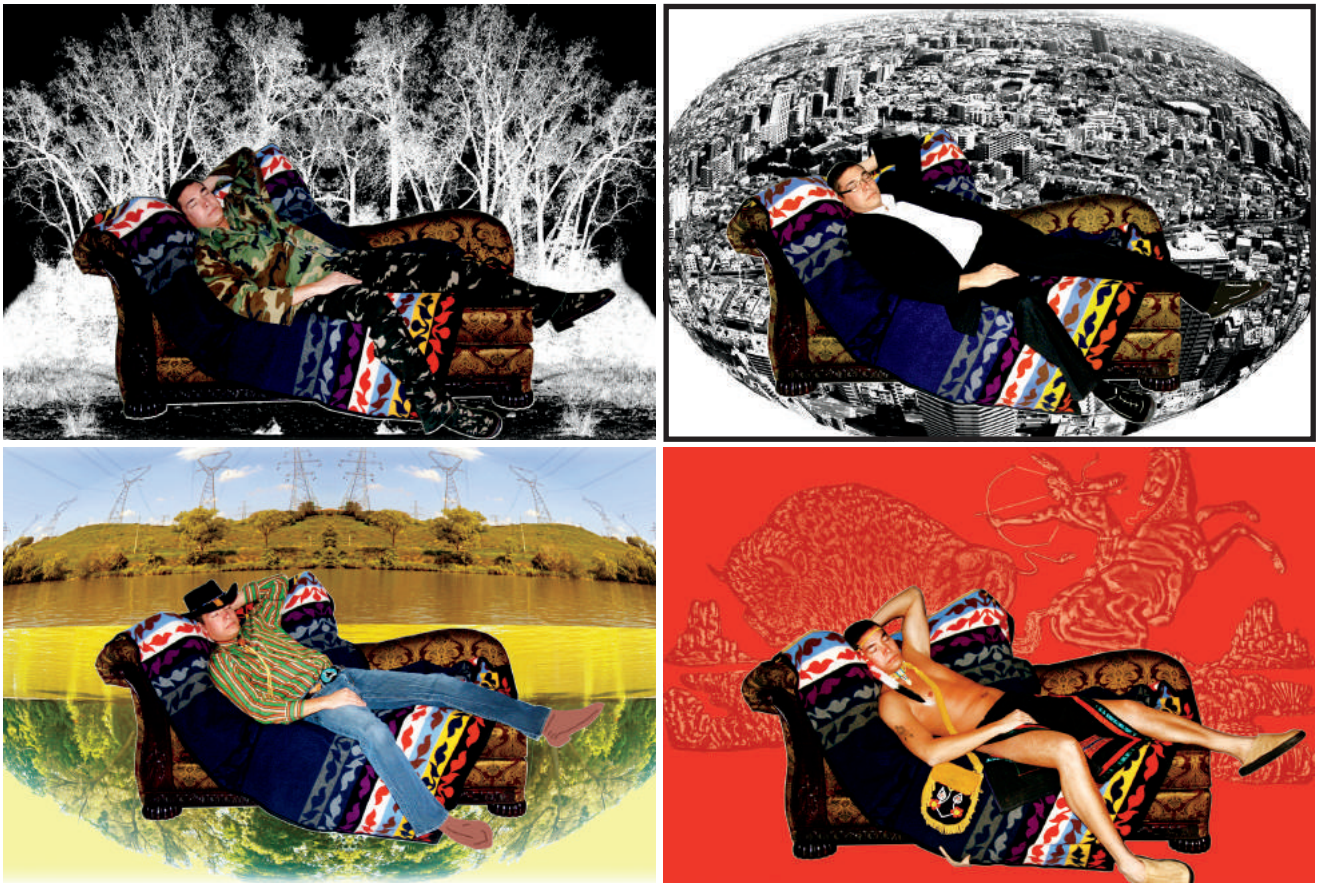

Sleeping Warrior (series of six digital photographs, 40"× 60") by Shelley Niro. Niro is a member of Six Nations Reserve, Bay of Quinte Mohawk, Turtle Clan. Her work features photography, painting, beadwork and film. She was the inaugural recipient of the

Rough Laborious Words

ALBERTO MANGUEL

From With Borges *by Alberto Manguel. Published by Thomas Allen in 2004. Alberto Manguel is the award-winning author of hundreds of works, most recently (in English)* Curiosity. *He lives in New York. In late 2015 Manguel was named director of the National Library of Argentina, a post held by Jorge Luis Borges from 1955 to 1973.*

For a man who called the universe a library, and who confessed that he had imagined Paradise "*bajo la forma de una biblioteca*," the size of his own library came as a disappointment perhaps because he knew, as he said in another poem, that language can only "imitate wisdom." Visitors expected a place overgrown with books, shelves bursting at the seams, piles of print blocking the doorways and protruding from every crevice, a jungle of ink and paper. Instead they would discover an apartment where books occupied a few unobtrusive corners. When the young Mario Vargas Llosa visited Borges sometime in the mid-fifties, he remarked on the quietly furnished surroundings and asked why the Master didn't live in a grander, more luxurious place. Borges took great offence to this remark. "Maybe that's how they do things in Lima," he said to the indiscreet Peruvian, but here in Buenos Aires we don't like to show off."

Aboriginal Arts Award presented through the Ontario Arts Council in 2012. She lives in Brantford, ON.

The few bookcases, however, contained the essence of Borges' reading, beginning with those that held the encyclopaedias and dictionaries, and were Borges' pride, "You know," he would say, "I like to pretend I'm not blind and I lust after books like a man who can see. I'm greedy for new encyclopaedias. I imagine I can follow the course of rivers on their maps and find wonderful things in the many entries." He liked to explain how, as a child, he would accompany his father to the National Library and, too timid to ask for a book, would simply take one of the volumes of the Britannica from the open shelves and read whatever article opened itself to his eyes. Sometimes he would be lucky, as when, he said, he chose volume *De–Dr* and learned about the Druids, the Druzes and Dryden. He never abandoned this custom of trusting himself to the ordered chance of an encyclopaedia, and he spent many hours leafing through, and asking to be read from, the volumes of the *Bompiani*, the *Brockhaus*, the *Meyer*, *Chambers*, the *Britannica* (the eleventh edition, with essays by De Quincey and Macaulay, which he had bought with the money of a second-place Municipal Prize he received in 1928) or Montaner and Simon's *Diccionario Enciclopédico Hispanoamericano*. I would look up for him an article on Schopenhauer or Shintoism, Juana la Loca or the Scottish *fetch*. Then he would ask for a particularly appealing fact to be recorded, with the page number, at the back of the revelatory volume.

Mysterious notations in a variety of hands sprinkled the end papers of his books.

The two low bookcases in the living-room held works by Stevenson, Chesterton, Henry James, Kipling. From here he took a small red, bound edition of *Stalky and Co.* with the head of the elephant god Ganesha and the Hindu swastika that Kipling had chosen as his emblem and which he removed during the War when the ancient symbol was co-opted by the Nazis; it was the copy Borges had bought in his adolescence in Geneva, the same copy he was to give me as a parting gift when I left Argentina in 1968. From here too he had me fetch the volumes of Chesterton's stories and Stevenson's essays, which we read over many nights and on which he commented with wonderful perspicacity and wit, not only sharing with me his passion for these great writers but also showing me how they worked by taking paragraphs apart with the amorous intensity of a clockmaker. Here too he kept J. W. Dunne's *An Experiment with Time*; several books by H. G. Wells; Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*; various novels by Eça de Queiroz in yellowing cardboard bindings; books by Lugones, Güiraldes and Groussac; Joyce's *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*; *Vies Imaginaires* by Marcel Schwob; detective novels by John Dickson Carr, Milward Kennedy and Richard Hull, Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi*; Enoch Bennett's *Buried Alive*; a small paperback edition of David Garnett's *Lady into Fox* and *The Man in the Zoo*, with delicate line illustrations; the more-or-less *Complete Works of Oscar Wilde* and the more-or-less *Complete Works of Lewis Carroll*; Spengler's *Der Untergang des Abend-landes*; the several volumes of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*; various books on mathematics and philosophy, including volumes by Swedenborg, Schopenhauer and Borges's beloved *Wörterbuch der Philosophie* by Fritz Mauthner. Several of these books had accompanied Borges since his adolescent days; others, the ones in English and German, carried the labels of the Buenos Aires bookstores where they had been bought, all now vanished: Mitchell's, Rodriguez, Pygmalion. He would tell visitors that Kipling's library (which he had visited) curiously held mainly non-fiction books, books on Asian history and travel, mainly on India. Borges concluded that Kipling had not wanted or needed the work of other poets or fiction writers, as if he had felt that his own creations sufficed for his own needs. Borges felt the contrary: he called himself above all a reader and it was the books of others that he wanted around him. He still had the large red, bound Garnier edition in which he had first read *Don Quixote* (a second copy, bought in his late twenties after the first one disappeared) but not the English translation of *Grimm's Fairy Tales*, the very first book he remembered reading.

The bookcases in his bedroom held volumes of poetry and one of the largest collections of Anglo-Saxon and Icelandic literature in Latin America. Here Borges kept the books he used to study what he called the rough laborious words:

CAPE BRETONISMS

By Frances Peck. From "Notes from Away: Cape Breton English." Published by The Editor's Weekly, *the blog of the Editor's Association of Canada. Peck is an editor, writer and instructor. She lives in Vancouver.*

How's she goin', b'y?: Literally, "How are things going, boy?" Not limited to boys. Arguably the best-known, most mimicked Cape Breton expression. Locally, used mostly in self-parody.

Right: Adverb meaning *very* or *so*. "Archie's right good on that fiddle."

Some: Equivalent to *right*. "That neighbour a yours is some strange, wha?"

Wha?: Interjection; the Cape Breton equivalent of *eh*.

Stunned: Dim-witted, obtuse. "Youse kids are some stunned."

Youse: Plural of you. Not unique to Cape Breton, but ubiquitous there.

Never'd: Did not, never did. "Hector says I went and ate all the oatcakes, but I never'd."

To be + after: To indicate past or habitual action. "Mary was after givin' him holy hell for them awful directions." "Toronto's so big, people are after getting lost there."

Dear: Term of address used for just about anyone, whether beloved or not. "See ya later, dear." "Look, dear, quit gawkin' and just give me an oatcake."

From away: Hailing from anywhere other than Cape Breton. From-away status can last a generation or more. "That stunned Peck girl's after moving here from away."

OVERUSED WORD ALERT ▶ *Google Alert results for "profound"*

SCIENTISTS ARE STILL ARGUING ABOUT THAT CHOPRA BULLSHIT STUDY: The actual title of a 2015 paper in the journal Judgment and Decision Making was "Reception and Detection of Pseudo-Profound Bullshit."

That with a mouth long turned to dust,
I used in the day of Northumberland
    and Mercia
Before becoming Borges or Haslam.

A few I knew because I had sold them to him at Pygmalion: Skeat's dictionary, an annotated version of *The Battle of Maldon*, Richard Meyer's *Altgermanische Religions Geschichte*. The other bookcase held the poems of Enrique Banchs, of Heine, of San Juan de la Cruz, and many commentaries on Dante: by Benedetto Croce, Francesco Torraca, Luigi Pietrobono, Guido Vitali.

Somewhere (perhaps in his mother's bedroom) was the Argentine literature that had accompanied the family on their voyage to Europe, shortly before World War I: Sarmiento's *Facundo*, *Siluetas militares* by Eduardo Gutiérrez, the two volumes of Argentine history by Vicente Fidel López, Mármol's *Amalia*, Eduardo Wilde's *Prometeo y Cia*, *Rosas y su tiempo* by Ramos Mejía, several volumes of poetry by Leopoldo Lugones. And the *Martín Fierro* by José Hernández, the Argentine national epic the adolescent Borges chose to take on board ship, a book Doña Leonor disapproved of because of its flashes of local colour and vulgar violence.

Absent from the apartment's bookshelves were his own books. He would proudly tell visitors who asked to see an early edition of one of his works that he didn't possess a single volume that carried his "eminently forgettable" name. Once, when I was visiting, the postman brought an large parcel containing a deluxe edition of his story "The Congress," published in Italy by Franco Maria Ricci. It was a huge book, bound and cased in black silk with gold-leaf lettering and printed on hand-made blue Fabriano paper, each illustration (the story had been illustrated with Tantric paintings) hand-tipped and each copy numbered. Borges asked me to describe it. He listened carefully and then exclaimed: "But that's not a book, that's a box of chocolates!" and proceeded to make a gift of it to the embarrassed postman.

Vanderhoof Girls

GILLIAN WIGMORE

From Orient. *Published by Brick Books in 2014. Gillian Wigmore is the author of three books of poetry, including* soft geography, *which won the 2008 ReLit Award. She lives in Prince George, BC.*

After Charles Lillard
sometimes you think of her and her shotgun wedding,
her dad dancing barefoot till his footsteps bled.
you think of her and you think of her sister,
who married a mormon elder when they were both fifteen
and she was the prettiest, smartest girl in the school
before she disappeared and before you thought seriously
of burning the whole thing down, then left instead.

you think of her giant farm truck and apples and peanut butter,
Simon and Garfunkel blaring from popped speakers,
the two of you singing and the road grass all burnt up and hopeless.
you think of her mum, who was quiet and worked with troubled youth,
and then you think of her with her eyes brimming,
the both of you standing dumb in the foyer of the friendship centre
holding eyes, not hands, because her mum was thrown from a horse, killed,
and you knew no other motherless child your same age.

you stop thinking because it hurts.
you've spent too much time and words on landscape.
you owe them more, you've been pretending you don't belong
but all along you've known: you're her,
no matter your travels, your schooling, your poems.
you know her too well—her and her and you.

it's self-preservation, all this writing, reminding yourself
where you're not, where you could be,
where you'll finally be: the plot of land above the hospital
your great-grandad bought in 1925 to house the whole ramshackle lot of you
when you die. You lie staring, wide eyes to the ceiling,
remembering, fearing falling to earth, succumbing to the current,
to some hometown boy, or some good old-fashioned home birth
in Vanderhoof, two miles from the family homestead.
cockeyed into the world's faulty wiring.

7 STEPS TO BECOMING A MORE PROFOUND LEADER: You can develop this trait in yourself as well to profoundly affect others. THIS BABOON BEING WOWED BY A MAGIC TRICK HINTS AT THE PROFOUND NATURE OF HUMOR: Humans aren't the only species with a sense of humor. 20 PROFOUND LIFE LESSONS YOU'LL

Not Really French

ANTONINE MAILLET

From La Sagouine. *Published by Goose Lane Editions in 2015. Translated from the French by Wayne Grady. Antonine Maillet is the author of novels, story collections and plays, as well as numerous radio and television scripts.* La Sagouine *is a collection of monologues by a cleaning lady who speaks in Chiac. La Sagouine has become a symbolic character in Acadian culture and in 1992 a tourist park, Le Pays de la Sagouine, was opened in Bouctouche, New Brunswick.*

Yeah, well, they came down here and did the census. We was all censursed, no problem. They censused Gapi, and they incensed la Sainte, and they censused me, too. It was a pretty big deal, take my word for it without a word of a lie. When they do a census like that, they got to cense everyone, even the chickens and pigs. We ain't got no chicken coop or pigsty at our place, so they censused the cats. They rummage around in your cupboard, too, and measure the size of your house. They even count the damn shingles on your roof. When they asked Gapi if they could see his bank book he told them they could go piss up a rope. He can't keep a civil tongue in his head, that man can't.

They ask you all kinds of questions. Some of them are hard to answer. What's your name? What names were you baptized with? Who's your father? What was your mother's maiden name? What did you have when you were last sick? When was it you were born? How many children dead? How many living? How much money do you make a year?

In Gapi's opinion, they were sticking their noses a bit too deep into his business, like when they asked him what his father did before he died, he looked right at them and said, 'Before he died?' he says, "Well, he stretched out his legs and went. 'Arghhh!'"

Like I say, they can ask some damn fool questions.

What it comes down to is, when you get censused you got to remember everything that happened to you your whole damn life. It's worse than confession, for Christ's sake! They wanted to know how much we spend on flour in a year. In a year no less! Now, is there anyone on God's green earth can tell you exactly how much money they spend in a year? We buy our flour by the pound, one small bag at a time, and whenever we run out, or when we got enough dough to pay for it, or more likely when they'll give it to us on credit, we go out and get some more. And us, we use flour to make bread with, or pancakes, not account books, that's what Gapi told the censors. And we don't keep tabs on every damn clam or quahog we sell, neither. All's we could tell the census was that we fish so we can sell, we sell so we can buy, and we buy so we can eat. And at the end of the year, we don't got any more fish in our bellies than we fished out of the bay. Down here, that's what we call ecunemics.

And they can ask even harder questions than that, too. Like when they asked la Cruche to explain what she did for a living, or when they asked

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Virgin #479

JANE EATON HAMILTON

From Love Will Burst into a Thousand Shapes. *Published by Caitlin Press in 2014. Hamilton is the author of eight books, including two volumes of poetry and two of short fiction.*

There are things you can do [to keep your purity], like layering, accessorizing…
—Rachel Lee Carter

If I conceive God's child my father
will get $500,000
My father instructs me to pray for this
fortune
he could open a second restaurant
a walk-in fridge

But the truth is that when
I am on my knees I do not pray for
God in my womb

There is a boy at school
who has a laugh like a drum
who is good at geography and Spanish

I am my father's biggest asset, he says
my purity his command

I drink water from the bottom rim of
the cup
I swallow twenty Rolaids
my friend says write I am a whore on
a piece of paper, crumple it
throw it out the window
I squirt Coca-Cola up myself

When I kneel before the priest at the
altar
all I ask for is blood

WISH YOU LEARNED YEARS AGO: New York Times bestselling author provides practical but inspirational life lessons to help others see the humor and underlying meaning in life's many twists and turns. ARTIST'S REMARKABLE TINY HOME TELLS A PROFOUND LIFE STORY: American artist Dominique Moody has designed

Boy-à-Polyte the names of all his children. Oh, they can come up with some real head-scratchers!

Then they ask you about your religion. Well, so you're all ready to answer that one and then you think. Okay, wait a minute, now. There's one or two things that need to get explained first. It ain't a simple matter of was you dipped in the font and confirmed by the archbishop himself when he came around on his tour. They want to know who's the patron saint of your home parish. Well, by home parish do they mean the one where you do your Easter duties on Trinity Sundays, or the one where your children was baptized, or what? What's a home parish? We didn't want them to think we was a bunch of Commies down here, so we just told them we was all Christians.

And that ain't the end of it, because the hardest question of all was still on their list. What's your nationality? Not even Gapi knew the answer to that one. Your citizenship and your nationality. Well. It's hard to say.

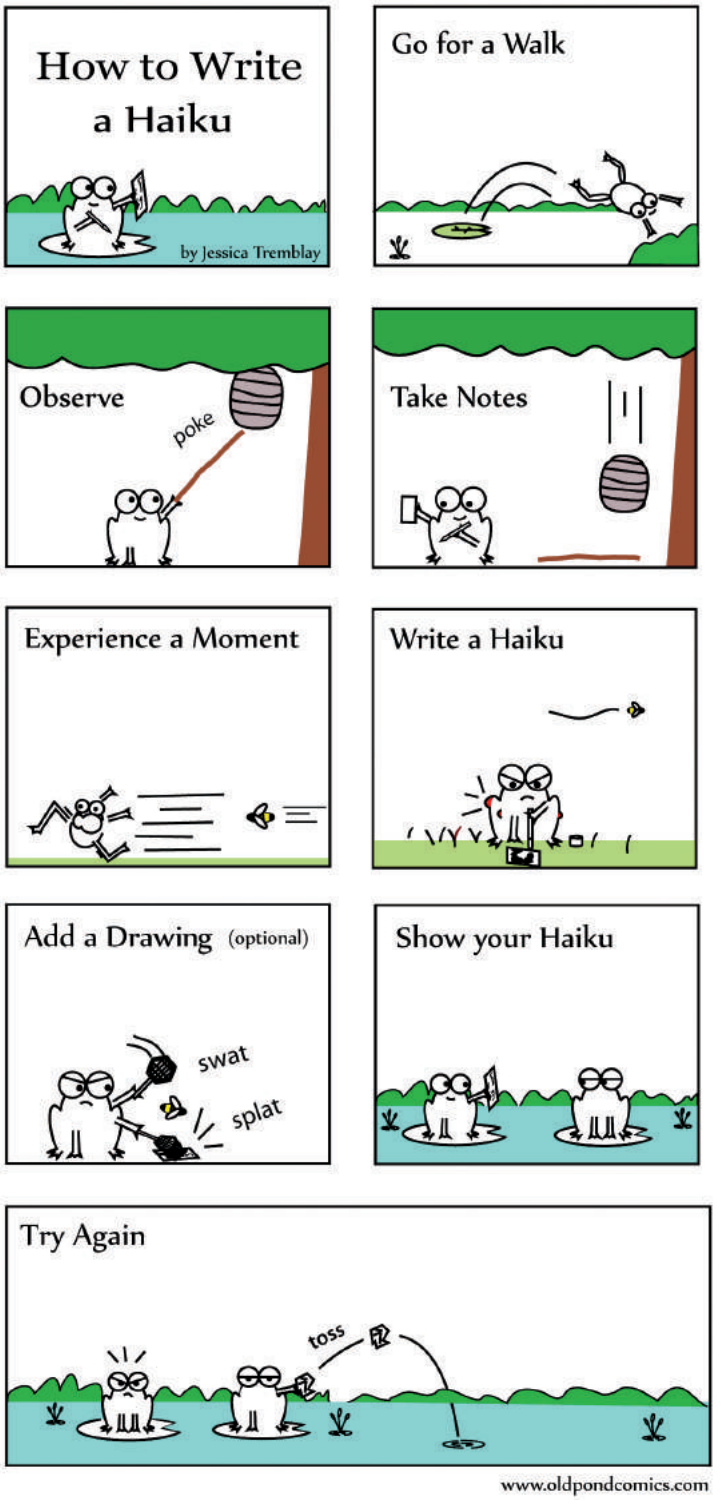
We live in America, but we ain't Americans. The Americans all work in shops in the States, and they come up here for their summer vacations and walk around wearing white shorts and speaking English. And they're all rich, them Americans, whereas we ain't. We live in Canada, so I guess that makes us Canadians. But that don't sound right, neither, because there's the Dysarts and the Carrolls and the Joneses who ain't the same as us, and they all live in Canada, too, so if they're Canadians then I guess we can't be. Because they're English, and we ain't. We're French, you see.

No, we're not really French, neither, that's not what I meant by

Haiku How-To

JESSICA TREMBLAY

From Old Pond Comics. Jessica Tremblay has been writing haiku for twenty years. Her two books of haiku, Le sourire de l'épouvantail *(2003) and* Les saisons de l'épouvantail *(2004), were published by Les Editions David in Ottawa.*



and built NOMAD, a truly remarkable tiny home. TWITTER HAS HAD A PROFOUND IMPACT ON THE SPORTS LANDSCAPE IN JUST 10 YEARS: Tyler Seguin isn't the first—or last—athlete who blamed unsavoury tweets on hackers. IRISH PET OWNERS DON'T KNOW THE PROFOUND HEALTH BENEFITS OF HAVING A DOG:

that. When you say you're French it means you come from France. And we're less French from France than we are Americans. So we're more like French Canadians, is how they put it to us.

Well, no, we ain't that, neither, because French Canadians, that's people who live in Quebec. They used to call themselves Canadians but now they're all Québécois. So how can we be Québécois if we don't live in Quebec? Well, for the love of all that's holy, where the hell do we live, then?

We live in Acadie, so we been told, and that means we're Acadiens. So that's what we put down under Nationality: Acadien. Because if there's one thing we know for sure, there ain't nobody else with that name. But the censors, they didn't want to write that on their list, because they said there's no such country as Acadie, and so Acadian can't be a nationality. There's no place in their jogger-free books.

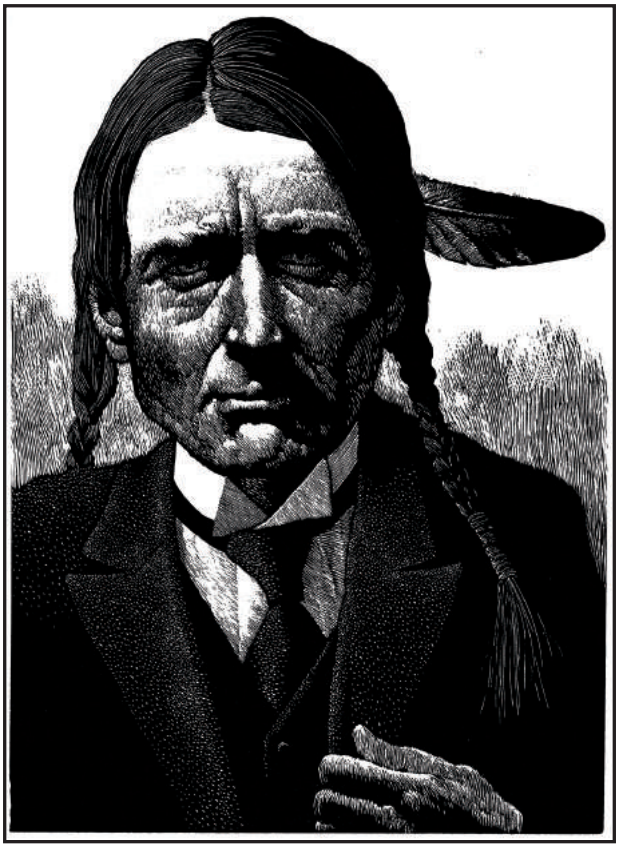
So after that we didn't know what else to tell them, so we just told them to give us whatever nationality they wanted. In the end I think they lumped us in with the Natives.

It ain't easy to make a life for yourself when you don't even have your own country to live it in, and you can't tell nobody what nationality you are. You end up not having the faintest idea who you are any more. You feel like kind of a fifth wheel, you know what I mean? Like nobody wants you around. It ain't them that makes you feel that way. They tell you you're a bondified citizen, but they can't tell you a citizen of what. You're part of a country, maybe, but you don't have no place in it. So sooner or later you got to leave to go find yourself a place, one of us after another.

Against the Grain

JIM WESTERGARD

From Oddballs, *a collection of woodcut portraits. Published by The Porcupine's Quill in 2015. Jim Westergard's first book-length collection of wood engravings,* Mother Goose Eggs, *won the 2006 Unisource Litho Award. He lives in Red Deer, Alberta.*



Archie Belaney, "Grey Owl"

Threat Multiplier

CLAUDIA CASPER

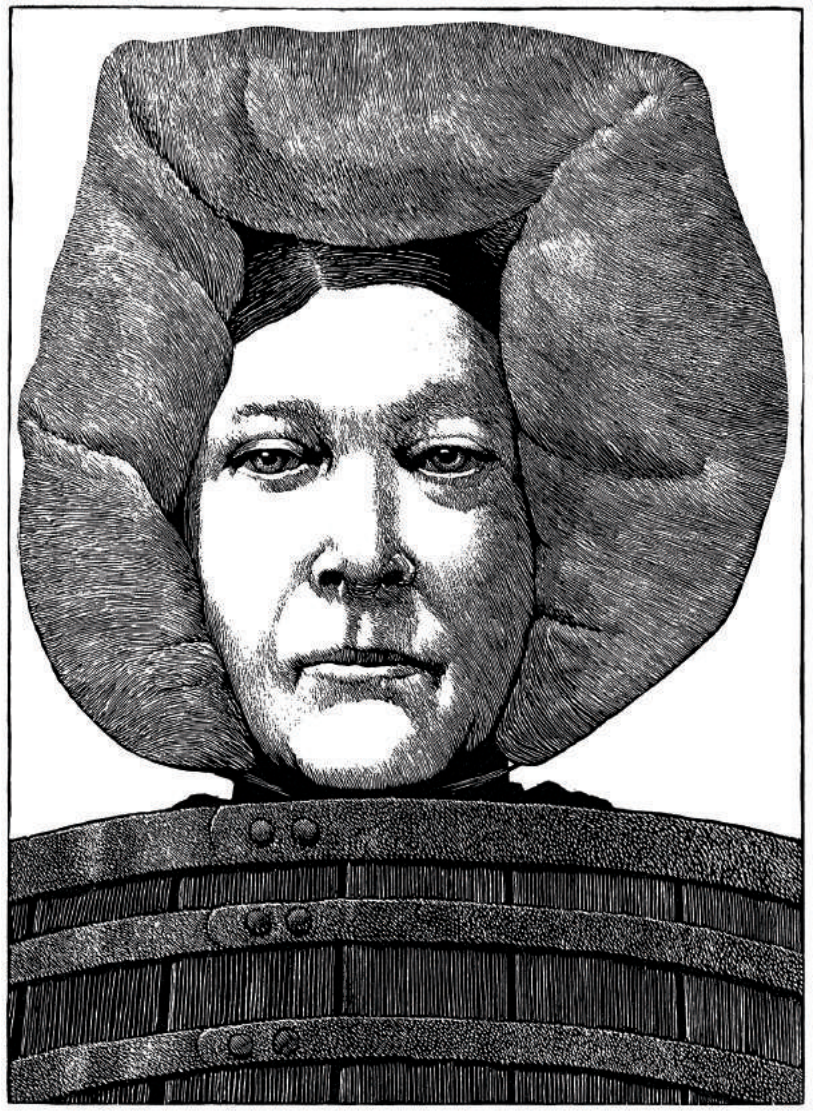
From The Mercy Journals. *Published by Arsenal Pulp Press in 2016. Claudia Casper's work has appeared in the* Globe and Mail, *the* Vancouver Sun, Event *and many others. She lives in Vancouver.*

MARCH 9, 2047

My name is Allen Levy Quincy. Age 58. Born May 6, 1989. Resident of Canton Number 3, formerly Seattle, Administrative Department of Cascadia.

This document, which may replace any will and testament made in the past, is the only intentional act of memory I have committed since the year 2029. I do not write because I am ill or because I leave much

Companionship for Irish pet owners is the overwhelming reason why those surveyed have a pet. PROFOUND PORTRAITS OF ONE-YEAR-OLD BABIES REVEAL THEIR LITTLE PERSONALITIES: Edward Mapplethorpe expertly captures the natures of babies in his photography series entitled *One*. BIZARRE CASE OF HULK V.



Annie Taylor, the first person to go over Niagra Falls in a barrel

behind. I own a hot plate, three goldfish, my mobile, my Callebaut light, my Beretta M9, the furniture in this apartment, and a small library of eleven books.

MARCH 10

I sit at my kitchenette island in this quasi-medieval, wired-by-ration, post nation-state world, my Beretta on my left. Bottle of R & R whiskey on my right, speaking to the transcription program on my mobile.

I was sober for so long. Eighteen years. I was sober through what seems to have been the worst of the die-off. Three and a half to four billion people, dead of starvation, thirst, illness, and war, all because of a change in the weather. The military called it a "threat multiplier."

You break it, you own it—the old shopkeepers rule. We broke our planet, so now we owned it, but the manual was only half written and way too complicated for anyone to understand. The winds, the floods, the droughts, the fires, the rising oceans, food shortages, new viruses, tanking economics, shrinking resources, wars, genocide each problem spawned a hundred new ones. We finally managed to get an international agreement with stringent carbon emissions rules and a coordinated plan to implement employ carbon capture technologies, but right from the beginning the technologies either weren't effective enough or caused new problems, each of which led to a network of others. Within a year, the signatories to the agreement, already under intense economic and political pressure, were disputing who was following the rules, who wasn't, and who had the ultimate authority to determine noncompliance and enforcement.

Despite disagreements, the international body made headway controlling the big things—coal generators, fossil fuel extraction, airplane emissions, reforestation, ocean acidification—but the small things got away from them—plankton, bacteria, viruses, soil nutrients, minute bio-chemical processes in the food chain. Banks and insurance companies failed almost daily; countries went bankrupt, treaties and trade agreements broke down, refugees flooded borders, war and genocide increased. Violent conflict broke out inside borders, yet most military forces refused to kill civilians. Nation-states collapsed almost as fast as species became extinct. Eventually the international agreement on climate change collapsed completely, and the superpowers retreated behind their borders and bunkered down. The situation was way past ten fingers, eleven holes; it was the chaos that ensues after people ruin three meals and realize there's no promise of a meal in the future.

Our dominion was over.

A group of leaders—politicians, scientists, economists, religious and ethnic leaders, even artists—people with

GAWKER COULD HAVE PROFOUND CONSEQUENCES FOR FREE SPEECH: The fight over a published sex tape shows that American law and the truth are getting more complicated. LABOUR PREDICTS 'PROFOUND DEFEATS' FOR GOVERNMENT OVER HOUSING BILL: More humiliation could be in store for the Government

a vision, called a secret conference with the remaining heads of state and emerged with an emergency global government, agreed-upon emergency laws and enforcement protocols. The new laws included a global one-child limit and a halt to all CO_2 emissions. The provision of food and health care to as many people as possible was prioritized, along with militarily enforced peace, severe power rations, and further development of renewable energy. The agreement was for one year; but it's been renewed every year for the past fifteen.

Why am I voicing all this? You already know it, I already know it, but I rehearse the events again and again, looking for what we could have done differently; there were so many things, so many ways we could have avoided most of the deaths, but really, were we ever going to act differently? I pour another drink. I drink it.

DRUNK FAMILY DOG TRIP

From canlitgenerator.com, a CanLit premise generator built by Adam Brady. The generator uses JavaScript to randomly output event, location and character combinations, drawn from a database of crowdsourced suggestions. At present, 900,000 premises are available.

- A troupe of French-Canadian clowns contemplates the meaning of Tim Horton's coffee to reconnect with the false, nostalgic simplicity of their youth.
- A dog drives drunk to make peace with the parents they never knew.
- A teenager drives drunk to reconnect with the false, nostalgic simplicity of their youth.
- A woman moves into an apartment Leonard Cohen once lived in but is also a robot.
- A woman goes to Frobisher Bay in 1897 only to have to kill a whale.
- A group of writers dry a teacup only to be killed by Vikings.
- A husband builds a small-town church to survive the harsh winter and their failing marriage.
- An orphan finally finds success growing hydrangeas to better know their withdrawn, uncommunicative father.
- An intramural soccer team conducts a maple syrup heist in a tall ship to make it to a funeral.
- Gordie Howe pursues a cold case murder but in a "Little Mosque on the Prairie" kind of way.

Please Do Not Flaunt Your Rights

LEANNE SIMPSON

From Islands of Decolonial Love. *Published by ARP Books in 2013. Leanne Simpson is the past director of Indigenous Environmental Studies at Trent University. She is a member of the gidigaa bzhiw dodem and a citizen of the Nishnaabeg Nation.*

after 89 years of eating squirrel, muskrat, groundhog and tomato macaroni wiener soup, my hunting and fishing rights have arrived back at the pleasure of the crown. the letter said as of october 29, you can hunt and fish the 1818 treaty area and please do not flaunt your rights in front of the ontario federation of hunters and anglers.

so me and my best kwe drove down to the ofha headquarters, set up our lawn chairs, built a bit of a shkode and nailed two signs into the ground that read: first we'll kill your animals and fish, then we'll fuck your wives (with their consent, of course). we stayed there for two days, until the cops came and told us we were trespassing and no one knew what our signs meant anyway. you cannot apparently write "fuck" on a sign in public and then just sit beside it smoking electronic cigarettes because we're trying to quit and eating sandwiches out of the cooler. you cannot just protest for no reason, you have to have some reason and come on, you're making your people look bad. they didn't send the regular cops though. they drove out and got the rez cop, and sent him over to talk us down. which i guess is an improvement because sometimes they just shoot. so garry comes over and is all "what's all this?" acting cop-like, and we're biting the insides of our cheeks saying "aaniin gookoosh," and garry's biting the insides of his cheeks too because we just learned that particular farm animal all together in language class on wednesday. then kwe says, "what the fuck took you so long? we've been here for two days, we're starting to run out of goddamn sandwiches." garry says we have to be gone by tomorrow or there's going to be charges.

so i leave ofha headquarters early, and i therefore get home early and i open the bedroom door and there's

after Labour warned it faces "quite profound defeats" over its flagship housing reforms. STUDY POINTS TO THE PROFOUND PLANETARY CONSEQUENCES OF EATING LESS MEAT: A striking new study looks at the benefits that might be achieved if the world shifted away from meat-based diets. TRUDEAU HAS PROFOUND

The Sexual Revolution Will Be Televised

JANET ROGERS

From Peace in Duress. *Published by Talon Books in 2014. Janet Rogers is a Mowhawk/Tuscarora writer from the Six Nations band in Ontario. She is the author of several collections of poetry and the host of* Native Waves Radio *on CFUV and* Tribal Clefs *on CBC Radio One.*

The politics of the erection
The religious obsession
With the rez-erection
Good girls don't want it
As much as bad boys do
The sexual revolution
Is ready for picking

The policy of the hard-on
The dogma of the ding-dong
The economy of the D-cup
The well-endowed and those
without

The bare-naked Brazilian (so indigenous)
The protocol of the raised pole
The constant negotiation of getting it on

"Why don't you come over"
"Uh, I don't know"
"I'll make it worth your while"
"Got any popcorn"
"I got the hot butter too"
"I just want the popcorn"
"Sure, I'll serve it up, however"
"Pay for my cab?"
"What?"

Make Trade – Not War
Inter-Indian Act
Mixed Race Dirty Talk
Fuck you, you dirty filthy squaw
There'll be bleeding in the teepee
Pounding on the ground
Sending primal sounds
Keeping the ancestors up
The sexual revolution will be televised

The sexual revolution is alive and well and
Kicking the shit out of constipated consternation
It's panting and breathing, moaning and
Moving to the rhythm of the new generation
Bumping and grinding, whining its way to exhaustion

Thought: incoming

The quality of the next generation
Is in direct relation
To the ecstasy of the fantasy of the future
Don't fuck it up!
Measuring pleasures in decibels with calipers
Deciding how far the gaps are between where
We've been and sin
Sounds like acoustic, agnostic Aquatic freaks
Keep your hands inside the boat

Put a life jacket on that thing

Let's collectively write the ode
To the adolescent hormone
The libretto to the fifty-year-old libido
The sad ballad of the reluctant stiffy
And the monologue to that master of solo sex
Master Bater

Hef said, "All the senses must be in play, boy."
Brain tissue too or
Thou Shalt Not
Rewriting new realities with moral authority
Imagine: we can have power over our own bodies
Imagine: we can have authority over our own skin
The sexual evolution will go forward
Follow

The pleasure principle is so individual
Mixed with current cultural keeps this red skin
Hot, we invented this dance
Or have you forgot?

OPPORTUNITY TO GALVANIZE FALTERING ECONOMY: There is no issue more critical to this generation the struggle to lessen global warming and protect against catastrophic climate change. COMING PROFOUND ALTERATIONS IN LIFESTYLE: The 2015 Paris climate pact necessitates "profound lifestyle changes," according to a

garry all missionary, pumping his shit stick into some 25-year-old college zhaganashikwe. i feel embarrassed for garry when our eyes meet. and yes, i feel contempt when my eyes meet hers imagining how impressive garry must seem when you can't see through his veneer and when you don't know enough to see he stopped self actualizing in 1998. when you can only see wild exotic savage lover.

his weakness is all splayed out before me in a lake and i can see 15 m to the bottom. it burns—the idea that me and her and her vacuous 25-year-old mind are equivalent.
"sorry."
"sorry for what?"
"i'm sorry you had to see that."
"me too."
"it doesn't mean anything."
"fuck who you want."
"you don't understand."
"i understand. i don't care who you fuck."
"you're just saying that because you're mad."
"i'm just saying that because i love you but i don't care who else you fuck."
"now what?"
"now what, what?"
"well i don't know what happens next."
"of course you don't."
"of course i don't?"
"of course you don't."
"you're sitting there, expecting me to freak, expecting me to be mad and cry and throw random objects at you and call you a loser and selfish and a cheater. and you're all ready to defend yourself and tell me it means nothing and tell me she means nothing and that it will never happen again. and that's all bullshit. you're trying to fill the gaping hole. white pussy filled it for ten minutes. now you're in the exact same position you were in this morning with your gaping hole. nothing's changed."
"no nothing's changed."
"fine."

The Unparalleled Imagination of a Bush Camp Nickname

MARVIN FRANCIS

From Bush Camp. *Published by Turnstone Press in 2008. Marvin Francis was born in Heart Lake First Nation in northern Alberta. His poetry has appeared in numerous journals, magazines and anthologies. He also wrote for stage and radio. He died in 2005.*

see that guy over there, leaning against the sheet
metal, that guy, you know, the skinny-tall one,
that one usually alone always chewing on something
his **s t r e t c h** nickname is

and that high rigger before, during, and after
work, our Casanova, sez he is from Quebec, we call
him

Frenchie

and way down over there, the hotshot, crazy-assed
welder from St. John's, his name is

Newfie

the ornery, forklift operator with the red hair?
that is

Red

new European Commission report. SURPRISE SUGAR TAX WILL HAVE PROFOUND WORLDWIDE IMPACT ON CHILDREN'S HEALTH: Celebrity chef Jamie Oliver has welcomed a tax on sugary drinks, saying it is a "profound move that will ripple around the world." NASA DISCOVERS PROFOUND EFFECTS ON MARS MAGNETIC

And, of course, any Native guy on site, usually the
laborer, it just may be the 1970s in this poem
after all, he can be playing hockey, cruising the
bar, slow walking down the street, or just
workin', his nickname, guaranFUCKINGteed, has gotta
be

←↑↓
chief

if you do anything that resembles
reading/righting/dreams you just may be called
perfessor

so then, if you were
sayyyyyyyyyyyy
a red-haired, skinny-tall dude, doing some writing,
and were the last of the Beothuks
you would be
stretch-red-perfessor-newfie-chief

much too complicated guys would beat you up for
that
keep it simple stupid
or you end up as the one holding the dumb end of
the measuring tape
or if you don't come from the same home town
always from outta town, different reference point
then not a popular mechanic
U get to clean up that diesel spill no rags
in sight and you find a way (quietly use the
mechanic's spare coveralls) your boots get no place
to dry maybe your gloves nailed to a wall
Or, traditionally to a tie this spiked leather
unfashionable

or maybe some biggish, older guy would send you to
the foreman with obvious sideways
glance

for sky hooks
or that construction classic
the board stretcher guys get too bored they
might
pick on you ask you goofy questions probe
for something to do
and that might become your name
few formal introductions on the gang

but
after a long, long time on the gang, say about a
month, everyone will gradually fit their notches
you know where to eat did some laundry
used
to sounds at night knew the pecking order

(He stood way back in his white hard hat, kodiak
leather confident on the outside wondering
who this woman is
all the way inside
trying to think of a nickname for her
otherwise
the bush camp balance would
mean less work done

he decides that a woman in a bush camp
any woman no matter what is called
Goddess)

I think.

I know.

FIELDS CAUSED BY COMET: A close encounter between the flyby of comet C/2013 A1 and Mars magnetic fields caused an overwhelming reaction to the planet's weak field. TRUMP CANDIDACY EXPOSES PROFOUND ANGER IN GOP POLITICS: Violence at candidate's rallies has Republican leaders accusing Trump of 'dividing the country.'

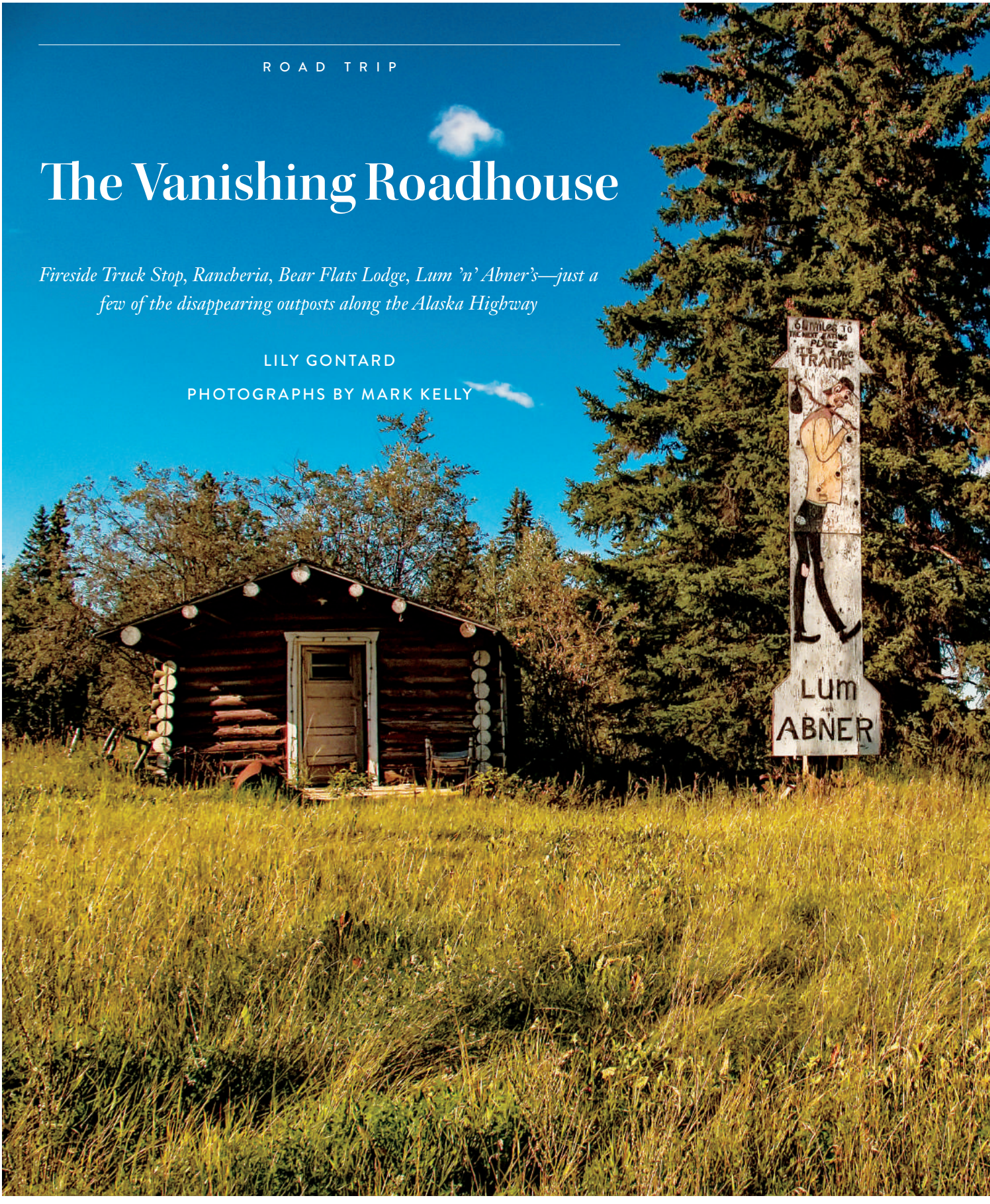
ROAD TRIP

The Vanishing Roadhouse

Fireside Truck Stop, Rancheria, Bear Flats Lodge, Lum 'n' Abner's—just a few of the disappearing outposts along the Alaska Highway

LILY GONTARD

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK KELLY



Lum 'n' Abner's, Historic Mile 233

Fireside Car/Truck Stop, Historic Mile 543

Silvertip, Rocky Mountain, Swift River, Silver Dollar, Pink Mountain, Steamboat, Prophet River, Toad River, Krak-R-Krik, Chickaloon: the names of roadhouses and lodges along the Alaska Highway read like fairy-tale place names.

Distance on the Alaska Highway is marked by two types of mileposts: a "historic" milepost—a white metal post tipped in black—marks the original mileage; modern-day distance is declared by narrow vertical metal stakes. From Mile 0 at Dawson Creek, British Columbia, to Mile 1422, the northern terminus at Delta Junction, Alaska, many roadhouses, monuments to road travel, dot the side of the highway. But sometimes you have to pull over and stop the car, open the door and walk past the trees and shrubs that creep toward the soft shoulder and border the ditch. What hides from view is the slow degeneration of generations of roadhouse culture. A log or frame structure partially demolished, paint peeling from walls, the vinyl seating and wood panelling of 1960s or '70s decor. Caribbean blue. Smartie purple. Seafoam. Sloppy and expanding smears of garbage.

The Alaska Highway was constructed in response to the Imperial Japanese Navy bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and the growing threat of World War II encroaching from the East. In March, following the Pearl Harbor attack, United States Army Corps of Engineers troops from the lower forty-eight

Kluane Park Inn, Mile 1016

Summit Lodge, Historic Mile 392

Rancheria Lodge, Historic Mile 710

Steamboat Mountain Lodge, Historic Mile 351

Liard River Lodge, Historic Mile 496

states started arriving in northern Canada and Alaska to begin building the road. The highway was a winding pioneer road surveyed north from BC to the Yukon Territory and then northwest ending in Big Delta, Alaska, linking a couple of short wagon roads along the way. Initial construction was completed on October 29, 1942, but even at that time the highway was barely drivable and contractors working for the Public Roads Administration had to regrade and reroute the highway. Construction camps were established to house the workers and then roadhouses sprouted up to provide meals, services and accommodations to workers and travellers. Over the years, the highway has been shortened and straightened and the total distance has changed, and now it stands at 2,233 kilometres. The official end point has also changed and can now be found in Delta Junction, 14 kilometres south of Big Delta. However, the common misperception is that the end lies 155 kilometres farther northwest, at Fairbanks.

Since the highway opened to the public in 1948, roadhouses have opened, closed and re-opened: Mile 233, Lum 'n' Abner's; Mile 351, Steamboat Mountain Lodge; Mile 392, Summit Lake; Mile 496, Liard Hotsprings Lodge; Mile 543, Fireside Car/Truck Stop; Mile 710, Rancheria Lodge; Mile 836, Johnson's Crossing; Mile 1167, Bear Flats Lodge. The roadhouses and lodges were built for the convenience of highway travellers, and sold or abandoned by their owners when times got tough or it was simply time to move on.

In the 1955 edition of *The Milepost*, an annual guidebook first published in 1949 and considered the Alaska Highway travel bible, services were said to be available every 40 kilometres. The 2014 edition of the guidebook advised travellers to keep an eye on the fuel gauge as services are sometimes 160 to 190 kilometres apart.

Since the construction of the Alaska Highway, the roadhouse community has provided local knowledge, conversation and provisions along a remote stretch of road. The accommodations can be slightly dated, the sheets a bit worn, but you can usually get a tire patched and a tank filled with gas. On a roadhouse menu there's usually a breakfast fry-up of eggs and a side of bacon, sausage or ham, home baking, soup made from scratch, along

Mile 0 of the Alaska Highway, Dawson Creek, BC

with diner fare such as deep-fried offerings, burgers, iceberg lettuce salad dressed with chopped pale tomatoes, and watery-weak or turpentine-strong coffee. And often, there's a generous slice of fresh bumbleberry pie.

The pioneer road of the 1940s was paved from one end to the other long ago. The trip from Dawson Creek to Delta Junction that used to take two weeks (or more) to drive and cost several blown-out tires can easily be driven in three days. Today the driving challenges are limited to wildlife, an annual crop of potholes, frost heaves and the seemingly continuous road maintenance in the Yukon close to the US/Canada border. Occasional acts of nature—flooding, mudslides and rockslides—remind people of the importance of a roadhouse oasis in the middle of nowhere.

Several factors have caused the decline of the Alaska Highway roadhouse community: fewer tourists, a decade or more of high fuel costs, self-sufficient RV travellers, post-9/11 passport requirements for US citizens, cheaper flights from the North to the "outside." It is probably a combination of all of these factors, but the result is that there are fewer people stopping in at the roadhouses and less demand for the services, which means more roadhouses are forced to close down for the winter or for good.

However, there is a glimmer of hope. Several non-profit and municipal groups are collaborating on the Alaska Highway Heritage Project, and have submitted an application for National Historic Site of Canada designation for the Alaska Highway corridor. If the project succeeds, the histories of the Alaska Highway roadhouses and their proprietors, who provided essential services, will be preserved in some form, even if, as is traditional in roadhouse culture, the owners change, or the landscape slowly overtakes the abandoned buildings along one of the most mythical highways in the world.

Lily Gontard is a writer whose fiction, poetry and nonfiction have appeared in magazines including The Puritan, Cirque *and* Event. *She lives in Whitehorse. Mark Kelly is a photographer and therapist. He lives in Whitehorse.*

Summit Lodge, Historic Mile 392

Rancheria Lodge, Historic Mile 710

Fireside Car/Truck Stop, Historic Mile 543

Summit Lodge, Historic Mile 392

THE HAND OF FRANKLIN

Sir John's Lost Diaries

STEPHEN SMITH

The wind blows. The sun dwindles. The ice waits.

ILLUSTRATIONS: JEREMY BRUNEEL

OFF KING WILLIAM ISLAND, SUMMER, 1846

Sir John Franklin is in a marrying mood that second summer. By the middle of June, he's made matches for most of the Royal Marines; come July, he turns his attention to the men of *Terror*'s foretop. Rumours flurry: there's to be a mass wedding on St. Swithin's Day, followed by honeymoons for all—staggered through the fall, of course, in order to keep the ships manned. Franklin is said to be taking care of the floral arrangements himself, not to mention working on personalized vows for each couple. If his object is to distract the men from the Arctic's white monotony, well then, yes, good job. And this, too, is true, the men agree: it's been months since they've seen Sir John so cheery.

But while, to a man, the Marines are flattered by their commander's attentions, even those who are long since well and fully married, the foretopmen take a pricklier view. The last thing they want after a long day high up in the shrouds is to be worrying about wooing wives.

Henry Sait: "It's very approoshiated but I'm wedded to my career."

Samuel Crispe: "Tell you some truth, I have an idea of waiting 'til I have some savings put away. Plus mother would have to meet her."

George Kinnaird: "Grrrr."

Harry Peglar: "Someone should say something."

When the Marines hear the grumbling, they take it personally, as Marines so often do. Sergeant Solomon Tozer, bristling: "You lot don't know how to take a compliment. Think of the trouble he's taking, finding us all fiancées. You think he does it for another hobby?"

The wind blows. The sun dwindles. The ice waits. Winter has already begun to close the lit summer days in the lee of King William's accursed island. Soon *Terror* and *Erebus* will be locked again in winter's long blindness. After summer

LUKE SMITH IS THE ONLY ONE WHO ACTUALLY BOTHERS

weeks free of worry the men, whose big concern is the blood slowly freezing in their veins, ask again, how likely is that? "Not very, I don't think," Mr. Goodsir, the Assistant Surgeon, tells them, "but let me get back to you."

"What about a guitar?" says Captain Fitzjames, when the talk turns again to what to get Sir John for his birthday. Captain Crozier nods. "We'll put it on the list." Although, of course, they've already *discussed* guitars, and banjoes, guitar lessons, Van Morrison tickets, ruling them all out for one good reason and another. *Guitar*, Crozier writes anyway. "More ideas. What else?"

You never see the headhunters. You hear them, sometimes, a bump, snow crunch, sneezes. Rarely. They lurk in the gloom. Orders are shoot them if you have to, catch one if you can. Sir John promises a sovereign to any man who can hold one, bind him, keep him.

Sir John still worries. The seals may be beaten, cowed even, but the headhunters—he has a feeling the headhunters are coming back. It's more than a feeling: he *knows* they will be.

"Cowing the seals," he tells himself, "is twice the work of sealing the cows."

He lights a new cigarette from old, lapses into gangster dreams starring Humphrey Bogart, Peter Lorre. Pretending a Tommy gun with cradling hands, he massacres the cabin with a raw laugh from a sore throat.

The ache of loneliness. The asthma of responsibility. The arthritis of command. The whooping cough of… actual whooping cough. Dr. Stanley suggests a cigarette cure. "Let's try that," he says. "Can't hurt."

"Righty-o," says Sir John. "Can I put on my shirt?"

The Men Who Stop Looking at the Sky don't tell anybody they've stopped looking at the sky: that's important to say.

AUTUMN, 1846

Michaelmas. The summer light dissolves. Snow starts, black-eyed flakes that fall like the shreds of somebody's newspaper. The sea fastens. When the ships are bound, beset, all of a piece with the north, white of the whiteness in the dark of the nightness, working parties raise the deck-tents, rope lines across from *Terror* to *Erebus*.

There's supposed to be a process in place governing the selection of the expedition play but nobody seems to know what it is. A lot of them in the *Godspell* camp swear that they voted at the same time, on the same ballot, when they elected not to send out a rescue party. *Not so*, says William Wentzall, acting spokesman for the successful *Three Sisters* bid: "If you didn't tick the box to opt out of Chekhov's beloved classic when you signed your muster papers, then too bad for you."

So there's resentment. The blacksmiths feel especially aggrieved due to the lack of metallurgical roles in Chekhov's oeuvre generally, and there's talk among them of how they want to go about making their point. A go-slow, work-to-rule, wildcat strike? No. It's the same old story; they end up having to feed their frustrations into smashing a hammer on an anvil.

Able Seaman John Morfin, tabbed to direct, has to put this behind him. He can't have it in front of him. He's a controversial choice for some because, well, what are his theatrical bona fides? Nobody knows. The fact that he's the one with the clipboard and the fierce opinions on how to stage an intimate production without losing sight of the universality of the provincial Prozorovs, is that not enough? For him, he feels this is the work that his career as a naval rating has been leading up to. He's easily miffed by questions, questioning looks, unfriendly blinking. It does seem like he's already cast the production

TO LOOK FOR PASSAGES, NORTHWEST OR OTHERWISE.

ahead of the auditions and if so, that's not fair. At the first read-through, another surprise: he's renovated the script, rearranged and, to a certain extent, rewritten the play, including shifting many of the lines originally allocated to the Andrey Sergeyevich Prozorov (Boatswain Thomas Terry) to a new character, the Stage Manager (Caulker's Mate Francis Dunn), borrowed more or less wholesale from Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*. "Yes, yes, I know," John Morfin says, addressing cast and crew in the actor's lounge, "everybody's got an opinion. Let's just give me a chance. Why not?"

Petty Officer Luke Smith is the only one who actually bothers to look for passages, Northwest or otherwise. "I'll take the first one I can find," he tells Edwin Work, who's as much of a friend as he has on the expedition. "Any one will do." Smith dons oilskins, hobnailed boots, astrakhan hat, monster mittens. Checks his satchel: candles, cord, whistle. Okay. Good. Scoops from a pocketed bag of trail mix, offers a laden hand to Edwin Work. "Do you eat Brazil nuts?"

No, thanks. Edwin Work watches as his forlorn friend trudges out into the Arctic gloaming. He doesn't have the heart to stop waving until Smith's lantern finds the horizon, blinks out, gone.

As Election Day approaches, Sir John faces hard questions on the campaign trail, including *Am I really better off today than I was five years ago?* and *What ever happened to us all getting married?* He's the listener, the look-you-in-the-eye candidate, champion of I-know-the-middle-class-is-struggling, let's-you-and-me-do-something-about-that. "No new taxes," he says. At his rallies he boasts: when no one else was willing to deal with the threat posed by the Men Who've Stopped Looking at the Sky, he didn't hesitate.

When Thomas Jopson recalls the day in Portsmouth when the installers came, he thinks of Mrs. Franklin, such a lovely woman, asking after his family, joking that he was her only rival in Sir John's affections, which could have been awkward, and maybe should have been, but wasn't—at all.

She wouldn't come aboard. Wouldn't take Sir John's kiss or the card he'd made, slapped his reaching hand away—playfully? When she'd gone, Sir John supervised the work of the telephone men, hovering, a question at each new tool they produced. *What's this red wire for, the blue?* When he said, "Let's just keep this between us, yes?" Thomas Jopson wasn't a hundred per cent sure whether that included him, too.

Nobody knows what Sir John is working on in his little lab—some kind of formula that smells of licorice. There are rumours, of course—of a time machine; of laser-spectacles; some kind of amphibious robot, now in his last wiring, named Barrow. The smart money is on Purser Orme's notion that Sir John is brewing a cure for curiosity: only when they lose all interest in what he's up to will they know that he's succeeded.

Gouts and gobbets of snow fall. Snow clumps and clots. It heaps as only snow can: high. It plays tricks, shows off, provides its own ice. Sifts, salts. It foothills and mountains. It builds its own snowmen, mobs of snowmen between the two ships, masses them there, before vanishing them with a few blasts of winds. Snow flours and baking sodas.

Oftentimes, while the men are busy with play practice, art class, Mathletics, Sir John continues his hasty searches through their personal effects. Back in his cabin, he forces himself to read every line of every confiscated resumé and cover letter as though *he's* the one who's hiring. There's no denying it: this really is a fantastic crew he's got here.

At Executive Council, Monday morning, first o'clock, Sir John calls on Fitzjames to walk them through the fall calendar. Fashion Week, Gold

SIR JOHN WAS IN FULL REAR-ADMIRAL KIT NOW,

Rush Days, Día de los Muertos, Spa Monday. He works quickly through the list while Sir John takes notes. He writes hastily, dashing his pen across the page, but it's not enough to keep him from drowsing. Captain Crozier, for his part, lets his attention drift. He wishes *he* could stop looking at the sky. *What I wouldn't give*, he thinks.

Looking for a bit of peace between watches, a quiet corner, the comfort of poems, sanctuary in a story, the men slip down to the library whenever the opportunity arises—only to find Lemuel Blanky scowling at them by the door. In his regular work as Master's Mate he's friendly as a cat, quick with a joke, eager to lend his hand. At the business centre, too—just very professional. It's a whole other story at the library, a nasty one that makes the men wonder whether it's better just to steer clear.

He sits there at the little desk with the tiny globe and the mini date stamper, the diminutive *In* and *Out* boxes, the wee gavel. Why, he'd like to know, is everything so fecking small? Not to mention *new*. As Master's Mate he's used to worn down old tools, ancient stinking ropes, decrepitude and brown rot—the newness of the library is what offends his own denuded, calloused, limping self. The books, all those gleaming newborns clad in morocco and gold. When no one's there he prowls the cabin, cracking spines for spite before he turns to the reshelving.

"I'm as surprised as anyone," Sir John is heard to say not long after declaring that he's lost interest in the laboratory. "I don't have anything to hide," he says in his press release, "and no regrets. I'll look back on this as a special time in my life."

Thomas Jopson cleans up. Test tubes strewn amid dirty beakers, crumpled periodic tables, the dry, white stains on tabletops, the chemical crystals, unstopped tinctures, like the tomb of a lost civilization of sloppy alchemists.

Sir John, with helpful intent and even kindness: "Why must you say *I've been to shopping*?"

Captain Crozier: "I'm sorry?"

Sir John: "You always say *I've been to shopping*."

Captain Crozier: "Well, I don't—I've been to *the* shopping?"

Sir John: "No, no: *I've been shopping*. That's what you say. There's no *to*. No need for it."

Captain Crozier: "*I've been to—I've been shopping*. I see."

The Men Who Hear Churchbells hear them clearly, as though they were themselves standing in the churchyard, strolling up for evensong. They don't hear them every hour or even every day; they do always end up weeping.

The Birthday Board comes to a decision: this year, they're taking Sir John out for supper to celebrate. "What's his favourite restaurant?" says Crozier, who never knows these things. "Beg a pardon?" says Fitzjames, who generally does. What they both understand is that their commander's troubled restaurant history can't be ignored. Something about Sir John in a restaurant—as every King William bistro and brasserie has learned, all the steakhouses and bodegas, the little sushi huts with the icicle lights adorning their awnings—he can't just sit there and enjoy his supper like a normal person. The boisterous ordering, crying out commands to the kitchen, inspecting the cutlery, blizzarding his food with salt. The captains are divided on what it reflects; delight or boorishness, maybe a brew of the both?

What about Giancarlo's? He's opening up a new location in the new hotel—may be already open. Everybody loves the old chef, not to mention his wife/sommelier Magda, a famous beauty who may also be the nicest person in the whole of the eastern Arctic. Plus, it's been a while since Crozier had a good scallopini. "And you know,"

SWORD AND SPYGLASS, SEXTANT IN ITS HOLSTER.

he tells Fitzjames, "how I do enjoy a scallopini."

Nobody speaks of the Seal War, but seal dread still wakes the men up and their screams split the night. Oh, yes. Even though the seals have not returned since the day of their defeat. That's the deal for the seals—you lose the war, you get the hell out of these parts, fairness and squareness.

John Morfin's actors are a muttering bunch, a clutch of whisperers, a band of trying-to-remember tappers of fingers to lips. Out beyond the bounds of rehearsal, they work on their lines, on tone, rhythm, intensity, as they go about their duties. What begins as a wrestle with an angry stranger becomes a conversation with your soul. That's John Morfin talking; that's what he tells them. As the actors grow more confident with their parts some of them seem to be diving so deep into their characters that they don't have any room to be themselves. "I don't mind," John Morfin tells John Cowie (Anfisa). "I'm not saying it's the healthiest, but it's not going to kill you, either."

The men who take it upon themselves to get at chopping the ships out of the ice enjoy Sir John's wholehearted support. They tell him they're making progress. They show him the ice they've got piled up astern *Erebus*. "Poor idiots," Sir John tells Fitzjames. "But hey—whatever floats your boat, right?"

The Men Who Hear the Thwock of Tennis Balls take no pleasure in… well, any of it. The idea that somewhere nearby there may be a tennis game underway that they can hear but not see is, to them, not as charming as it might be to someone who's not condemned to what feels like a life sentence in a frozen prison hulk. They never wonder what the score is. Memories of Wimbledon heroes do not leap to mind. They spend no time trying to chase the source of the thwocking. Doesn't interest them.

The Men Who Hear Churchbells honestly believe that their moral superiority is beyond dispute. They think churchbells reflect on the lives they've lived and are living and show God's good opinion of them. Not saying it's wrong to hear the *thwock* of tennis balls but it's not exactly *dignified*. Not saying it's evil but come on, be honest: doesn't it kind of seem a bit like a report card on your character?

The wind is a big election issue, as is the grub. A lot of the electorate who show up to take a ride on Sir John's horse want to talk about tax cuts. What's he offering there? "Careful, now," Sir John tells them. "Rangoon tends to be a bit of a biter."

Mutiny looks like one of the big ballot box questions. Asked about his stance, Sir John crowds his eyebrows together. The key here is not to give away too much before you know exactly where the voter stands. "It's a scourge," he says, "a scurvy. Have you heard, by the way, about our tough-on-scurvy agenda?"

At Steering Committee, they speak of victualling and cordage, coopering, of leakages, oakum, fresh water, morale. There's almost no discussion at all of actual steering—stuck fast, they hold off on navigation talk. They do focus on fleet security: any sightings by sentries of seals or headhunters? *No and no*. Fitzjames allows himself a grin. "By the Lord Harry," he says. "Who would have thunk it?"

"To go back to Moscow," says Giles McBean, Second Master (Irina). "To sell the house, to make an end to everything here, and off to Moscow…"

It's accepted as a matter of faith among the men that they will live forever. *Forevermore* is what some of them say to themselves. Also: *foreveryever*. There are different conventions regarding the rules by which this promise of eternity is governed. Some talk of a deal having been struck with an agent of the Devil, often identified as Roger Verrecky, Ice Master. Most believe that if you talk about everybody's immortality you'll annul the whole deal. *For everybody or just yourself?* Nobody's too clear

MAGDA STOOD BY THE DOOR IN A LONG, MAGNIFICENT

on this, so nobody dares to take a chance by asking the question, or any question.

To a man, the *Terror* crew believes that the big walrus that likes to sun itself on the ice off the port bow is if not God himself at least on God's payroll, keeping an eye. On *Erebus* they think the same of the cheeky fulmar who perches each morning on the ship's bell to squawk for mutton. Terry, they call him, and let him feed straight from the tin. He rewards them with skies a blue mile high and everlasting ice.

Sir John hears the *thwock* of tennis balls. To him, they sound like first serves. It never occurs to him that they might not be in.

P.O. Smith drags himself over one more hummock. His heart is full. His head is heavy. It's been an hour already since he caught sight of the ships but all the trudging he's doing doesn't seem to be bring him any closer to home. He's not himself. He knows that. It doesn't matter: so long as he can deliver his message to Sir John Whathishooley, that's what matters. It's another hour before he finally reaches *Terror*'s side. It's not easy, with a frozen head, to get himself aboard. It gets worse when it starts to thaw. It's hard to speak and to think what he might have to say. He waits for words, then for his voice, which sounds bottled. "Found it," Smith finally says, pointing, "over there, that way."

The first time Thomas Jopson answers the telephone, he keeps his eyes closed. A woman's voice says, "Not now doesn't mean not never."

Without a war, the War Council struggles to find energy and focus. Smoking their cigarillos in Crozier's cabin, drinking their claret, playing another hand of Whist, they eventually have to concede that none of them actually knows the rules of Whist. "Not even a single rule," says Fitzjames, who's as amazed as the rest of them. "Not a man jack of us." But even as they're all sharing a good laugh, no one wants to be the first to throw down his cards.

Sundays there's divine service, followed by Sir John opening up the floor to discussion. "FAQ," he'll often say, even when the Q in question isn't FA, or even (for that matter) a Q at all. The Men Who've Stopped Looking at the Sky aren't invited: once they've said their prayers Marines march them away.

Sir John smiles. "FAQ: how we all doing today?"

"Pass the word," says one of the mates, Hornby, and the word passes: "Anyone know how to play Whist?"

When the Marines bring up the Men Who've Stopped Looking at the Sky, the rest of the men make a close study of how it might be possible to avoid the looking. With the sky right there and all it just seems like you'd have to be working *very* hard to keep from making eye contact. Captain Fitzjames is about to crack his knuckles when he remembers that he hurts himself whenever he cracks his knuckles. He must be doing it wrong. "You can't force a man to look at the sky," he tells Lieutenant Fairholme, "but that doesn't mean you shouldn't try."

A seaman presents himself. They bring him in to see Captain Crozier. *What about Cutthroat Whist? Will Cutthroat Whist do?*

WINTER, 1846

The second time the telephone rings, Thomas Jopson stands at attention. The ringing is more of a rattling. He waits until it stops before he sits back down.

Parents' Night is a bust.

Sunday afternoon, while the men are enjoying the big Grey Cup party, the Marines form up on deck under Sir John's watchful eye before marching to *Terror*'s business centre amidships. A corporal secures the photocopier. One of the privates puts his bayonet through a ream of paper and has

TURTLENECK DRESS ADORNED WITH TINY MIRRORS.

to be spoken to about exuberance.

The first Lemuel Blanky learns of it is when he finds a sentry on the door. Why should H.M.'s Navy be helping men who are trying to leave her? That's what Sir John wants to know. It's been a long time since his ire was stirred like this, the thought of all this Navy paper, the printer cartridges, used up for resumés, the damned *gall* of the thing. He makes a fist. It's not the first time he's chewed all the way through a cigarette, probably not the last.

Out on the stump, Sir John says, "I'd appreciate your vote" and "Vote!" People are telling him they're tired of the old politics, the old way of *doing* politics. They want a new way, a new do. "Me too," Sir John says. "Why the hell not?"

In his cabin, in front of the not-big-enough mirror Sir John tries on costume after costume: the Robin Hood, the Horatio Nelson, the Jane Austen. He smokes his cigarillo, sips his double espresso. In wistful moments he thinks of what it would mean to have been born a hundred years earlier, or two. Would he have been a good knight? A king? What about a bowman in green fringes, champion of the people, hero of the leafy woods? Maidenly Marian waiting for him in the secret place by the secret river, lying with long legs and sleepy smile on the forest floor with her plentiful picnic. Though if the river itself were secret, would it really be necessary to keep the place by it—the rendezvous—so very hush-hush, too? The words *her plentiful picnic* make him laugh. His imagination drifts henceforward to the decks of searching ships, with helicopters and speedy Zodiacs, side-scanning sonar; he really would have been a great searcher in the northy north, wearing his big red Canada Goose and polarized sunglasses, scouring the shores of Erebus Bay, and heading for Victory Point on a snow machine, think of that, a machine made of snow! And introducing Marian to Peter Mansbridge, who's clearly wowed, and telling him *I think we're close* and then waiting for the Prime Minister to come and to be shaking everybody's hand and saying, *yes*, *it was a great moment when we realized we had the bastard beneath us*, *gave us the shivers*, *Your Grace*, *hard to sit still*, and giving the PM a look at the beautiful brassy sonar images saying—lying—*oh*, *no*, *your eminence*, *we don't yet know which ship of them she is*.

John Morfin knows exactly, down to the minute, when his cast is ready to go: when they actually go. "No, I'm not really surprised," he tells Crozier when it's discovered that all of them—Olga, Masha, Irina, all the Army officers—have departed. For Moscow? John Morfin nods. "I assume. I *hope* so." His smile is rueful. "I think I always knew this is how it was going to end. A part of me knew."

Crozier: "In some ways, it's a great triumph. I bet Chekhov would have said so."

At the secret trial of the Men Who've Stopped Looking at the Sky, Sir John argues both for and against the accused and why, if it please the court, the sky must *always* be looked at as well as, if a man chooses to cease regarding it, what does that matter to sky or man? "Are we not free to decide," he thunders, "as well as duty bound never to stray from the path we're walking down?"

Thomas Jopson pleads innocence to the last. "This is a mistake," he says. He doesn't hear bells or balls, shirks from nothing. "I *look*. Please. Ask anyone. That's pretty much *all* I do."

Sir John leaves the court exhausted. His calves ache and while he can see his hands he can't feel them. In his cabin he banks the ashes in the stove. He thinks of suppering but falls asleep instead, without undressing, drooling like an infant, never once shifting his weight the whole night through. In the morning he wakes up sore, knowing what he has to do. He takes his boots off and puts them back on, touches the tassel on his sabre and stokes the stove before going out to the fo'c'sle to gulp

the caustic air. In the moment that the execution party takes aim and fires, Sir John condemns and pardons the doomed exonerated dead men. Some of them use their last words to appeal to Terry, others to curse his feathers.

Exit polls point to a slender win for Sir John but when all the votes are counted, a surprise: he's running second behind the Netsilik moderate In-nook-poo-zhe-jook. "It's disappointing," he tells his campaign workers, "but those fellers ran one hell of a campaign. Thank you all for your hard work." In private to Crozier, he can only shake his head. "No use raking the ashes," he says. "I hope they know what they've voted for. I hope they realize what's at stake here."

✦

KING WILLIAM ISLAND, SPRING, 1847

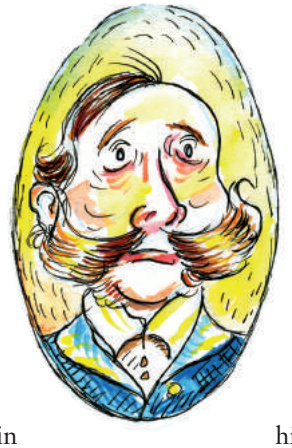
We don't know how they lured Sir John to the Oceanview: the history of the ruse is simply permanently lost. Whatever Sir John did or didn't suspect, we know that it was the clerk at reception who ruined the surprise as he checked Sir John in, and that the clerk's name was Carl, and that he was the one to frown over a problem with Sir John's credit card. We know that Sir John was disappointed to discover that the Oceanview wasn't a hotel made entirely of ice, as he'd read somewhere. We know, too, that when he laid his palms on the front desk, he felt the names of previous guests and their spilled impatience soaking up from the cool creamy marble into his hands.

We have it on good authority that Sir John was pleased with his room, a Strait-view junior suite on the fifth floor—*thrilled*. We know that he went around opening closets and drawers and that his enthusiasm was such that it infected the bellman, Emilio, and possibly even made his day. It was from Emilio that Sir John learned that the seventh floor was indeed made entirely of ice, but that you had to book it months in advance. "That makes sense," he said. We know that Sir John's first act once Emilio had closed the door was to check out the expensive snacks in the mini-bar. Without ruling out helping himself later, he turned to what seemed like more of a priority: transferring all gratis soaps, shampoos, sewing kits, and stationery to his suitcase.

It's not out of the question that clerk Carl, seeing Sir John leaving the elevator on his return to the lobby, felt the need to bustle over to explain that the trouble wasn't so much to do with Sir John's credit card as it was that sometimes, if somebody was sending a fax at the same time as someone else was trying to process a payment, the machine crapped out. Sir John was in full rear-admiral kit now, sword and spyglass, sextant in its holster. The headhunters he saw chatting on the big lobby couches were, he assumed, off the clock. Finding his way to the conference level by way of the mezzanine, he paid cash for an early-bird pass to the job fair and took a turn through the aisles of booths carrying his hat. He saw that while there were good jobs to be had—guides, waiters, tree-planters, animateurs, English-as-a-second-language teachers—they were largely seasonal jobs. We know that he signed up for a Friday Interviewing Skills Session and that in every case in which brochures, flyers, coupons or catalogues were made available by exhibitors, he took them and clutched them to his medals.

It's possible that as the sailors from *Terror* and *Erebus* filed into the back room at Pepaiola, the sense was strong in the air that this was a night to which historians would return in years to study, recreating it in colourful detail as the standard opening scene in their books about the Franklin Expedition, without mentioning that the

BALLS TAKE NO PLEASURE IN… WELL, ANY OF IT.



prevailing smell was that of bruschetta. We can say with the confidence of eyewitnesses that the room itself was done up as a convincing jungle. Palm trees curved up from swales of exotic fern. A monkey screeched as the steamy mist parted to reveal a thick stand of bamboo, over by the rough village in the corner. Magda stood by the door in a long, magnificent turtleneck dress adorned with what seemed to be tiny mirrors, so that the men, even as they ogled her, found their own nasty faces leering back at them, thousandified—very off-putting. Because there wasn't enough room in the back for all the sailors, Magda acted as gatekeeper/bouncer. *You*, *you and you*, she said, *not you*, *you*. No one disputed her, argued. They waited on her word, staring at themselves in her shoulder while she decided their fates.

We do have several accounts of the surprise that Sir John feigned even as he felt none. We know that when Magda stopped by to say hello and happy birthday, she held Sir John's elbow lightly in her hand as they talked. He thanked her and said that as an explorer, he was obliged to ask her where she'd found all this jungle stuff here in the Arctic, the succulents and Mayan ruins, the plaster ocelots.

At nine, just before the presents, Sir John slipped away. Nobody saw. The light in the lobby was bright underwater light, everything a little larger than life-size and trembling. It's possible that as he passed by the elevators he assumed the slightest of limps but if so, who's to say why? He took a picture with a handsome family of French tourists and the mother said *what about one with your sword drawn* and Sir John said he wasn't really allowed to do that but what the hey, and then after that he took another one with a little boy who made a truly terrible face at his father's camera that kind of set the tone for the rest of his life, though no one could have known that at the time.

We can't guess what was on Sir John's mind as he took a stool in the hotel bar. There was a ball game on the radio and he asked what the score was and the bartender opened his mouth to say but paused, smiled, as though catching himself about to lie. He said he'd find out but then never did or forgot. Sir John ordered a half-litre of Australian shiraz. For the bartender's benefit he pretended, as you do, to consider its qualities. He was still looking through the bar menu when the bartender came back and said Sir John had a phone call. The bartender produced a ready phone from under the bar different from the one he must have first answered and with one hand deftly guided the cord and the bell vibrated in the phone when he put it down. When he lifted the receiver for Sir John, Sir John made a face, mostly with his eyebrows, to confirm *For me?* and the bartender responded with *his* eyebrows, *uh-huh*, *yep*, encouraging, even hope-filled, and Sir John stretched his mouth wide as if it had been a long time since he'd talked to anyone and he needed to limber up to make sure he could speak and then he was leaning forward, elbows on the bar and his eyes went up to where the recommended wines were written on the chalkboard amid drawings of corkscrews and he waited while whoever was on the other end waited, too, and then Sir John Franklin said, "Yes, hello. Hello there. Go ahead."

Stephen Smith has written for the Globe and Mail, Toronto Life, Canadian Geographic, Outside, Quill & Quire *and the* New York Times Magazine. *He lives in Toronto and at puckstruck.com.*

Erasure

The pinhole diary project of Terra Poirier

The images here are selected from Terra Poirier's pinhole photography diary project, for which Poirier photographed her daily routine for three weeks using a pinhole camera, similar to how one might keep a written diary. Pinhole cameras—much like the first cameras of the nineteenth century—require long exposure times, minutes or even hours; anything that moves in the frame is blurred or erased entirely. For one of the photos featured here, Poirier photographed a forty-five-minute long haircut session: Poirier can be seen sitting in a chair; her stylist, who moved around, is missing from the photo. In other photos, crowded spaces—Costco, Value Village, a diner, the dentist's office—appear empty. "Most people don't seem to register that I'm taking a photograph. I'll set up my little tripod, get down on the ground to adjust the angle and release the shutter, and then I have to hang around while the film is exposed," Poirier says. "I'm always thinking about whether I'll get asked to move by security."

Pinhole photographs, she writes, are unreliable in the same way diaries are: both record and distort moments and leave a selective record of events. Poirier uses this slow form of photography in the age when hundreds of billions of photographs are generated every year using smartphones. During her three-week project Poirier captured 72 exposures. April 26 is National Pinhole Photography Day.

Terra Poirier is a photographer who lives in Vancouver and at terrapoirier.ca.

—Roni Simunovic


EPSI

NO OVER

The Waking Comes Late

STEVEN HEIGHTON

HUMANITARIAN WAR FUGUE

We killed with the best of intentions.
The goals that we died for were sound.
The notions we killed for were sterling,
our motives the sort that one mentions,
frankly, with pride.
Quit scrupling,
quibbling, lying down and
lay this down:
Bad guys by the graveful we gunned down so
girls, little girls
by the classful, could go to school. Girls, too, busing to school,
we slew so girls could go to school unharmed, in error
we slew them, with better intentions, bad eggs however we harmed
to win hearts, warm cockles, gain guts and livers and limbs and minds
with decent intentions, good eggs we even armed (only good eggs
armed)—the rest we smashed, truncated,
atomized until the doves among us
buckled, seldom seeing dead men un-
dismantled, while heads of this and that kept touting,
hawking our cause like crack,
our crystal intentions, motives one mentions
especially when aim is less than exact
and friendlies get fried…

With downsized intentions we killed and we strafed
and we mortared and missiled and mined,
sniped too, droned too,
till we wilted to haunts in OSI wards, nightly
wading tarns and tar-ponds incarnadine,
and they dosed and discharged and forsook us,
but on we kept killing with credible reasons
in a lush neural loop of gibbering visions
from hovering gunships, maniacally hooting,
culling the groundlings with motives forgotten
to a playlist of metal eternally cycling…

Of course, looking back, you would like to reboot
and start over, but there is no over—
this spraying and shredding forever recursive—
this Gatling drum always ample with ammo—
and papa and papa our weapons keep bleating—
a ceaseless returning and endless rehearsing—
you're killing with the best of
with the best of them
killing with the best of
with the best of them, killing,

CORONACH, POST-KANDAHAR

1

The damaged individual is invited to seek treatment,
albeit at some future date

Lance-corporal, here—
this comfort song, or (if prayer
is the protocol you prefer)
this prayer.

When you visit the clinic
we'll cook up a cure
for your sadness and panic.

Meanwhile pills,
meanwhile prayer.

Even to an atheist
God's the Omega
of a shotgun's business end.

2

The patient, still on a waiting list, suffers a major
coronary, for which he is promptly treated

His ribcage we cracked
and his heart we drew clear
like a red, writhing newborn
pulled from the rubble.

They said that in public
his punchlining brilliance
disguised desperation.

Take this, if you're manic—
come visit the clinic—
we've an opening
early next March.

Even to an atheist
God's the cold ordnance
of a twelve-gauge applied to the heart.

3

In which an appointment, of kinds, is finally found
for our patient

At the wake
(closed casket)

the piper
was drunk

but managed
a coronach.

CLINICAL NOTES OF THE BIPOLAR THERAPIST

1 The Calvados by lamplight is an oily gold, a liquor pressed from bullion. Taste the essence of Norman summers—the fruit-sweetening sun, salt-bearing breezes of the English Channel, flotillas of cloud cooling the coastline. Proustian autumns, mellow and rich; the windless weeks of the apple harvest. Your snifter, brimming with brandy, exhales the scent of ancient orchards.

2 With your patient you are driving a dog-sled over a frozen sea under a sky trembling with a red aurora, blood pouring down a dark face. Your patient yells and whips the team onward. A bitch is whelping as she runs, dropping raw, mouse-sized pups onto the ice. The other dogs scoop them up and swallow them without breaking pace. You hurtle north toward that sky and, you are certain, open water.

3 The drink's mission is to italicize the effect of several dozen tranquilizers while masking their aftertaste. You arrange the Celestanox (7.5 mg) on the edge of your desk, in neat formation, like a cycle of birth control pills. This really ought to do it. You chase them with another full snifter and taste again those schoolboy summers at Grand-papa's orchard near St-Valentin.

4 The ones coming back from the war are the worst. You listen and prescribe—rest cure, work cure, drugs. You'd rather not prescribe them but you must. Even dust degrades to finer dust. We find you slumped at your desk in a pool of your own fluids and we revive you, pump your stomach, and your body survives. Bodies are made to, minds not so much. The ones that come back from the war, et cetera. Even dust falls to finer dust.

5 Your patient grew up in northern Quebec, son of a white trapper and Inuit mother. At twenty, Pete saw the war as a way out. And so it was. Up there everyone knew how to use a shotgun, he said, because of the fucking bears, though he never had to kill one. He did waste a guy in Panjwai with his C7 and it wasn't like online. Wasn't even a man—wouldn't a man over there have a beard?
"Yes, I fear so."
Doctor, feel but don't overfeel.

6 Above all, don't get too involved! You can care but you must not love! Up north, when a big tide went out, they could crawl and then walk under the ice and it was alcohol blue and they could hear the sea in the far off and Sorels treading above. Pete kept coming back to that, curled like a glove in his chair. Many came home like him, but not all kept shotguns ready. When the tide returns, man, you gotta move fast!
Doctor, I order you not to love.

Steven Heighton's fiction and poetry have received four gold National Magazine Awards and have appeared in the LRB, Poetry, Best American Poetry, Best English Stories *and* Tin House. *His new poetry collection,* The Waking Comes Late, *will be published this spring by Anansi.*

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Treason of the Librarians

STEPHEN HENIGHAN

On the screen, only the image—not the word—can become the world

The Long Room of the Old Library at Trinity College Dublin

Behind every lifelong reader is a librarian. In my case it was a crusty Scotswoman who was known in our village as Mrs. Bunty. Though I once visited her home, where she and her husband sat chain-smoking in sagging armchairs, I never learned Mrs. Bunty's real name. Her thick accent was uncompromising. She had her own ideas about what people were called. When I was nine or ten, she decided my name was Mark, and continued calling me Mark for as long as I knew her. After hesitant efforts to correct her, I accepted that in my reading identity I was Mark. The change of name was a small price to pay to get my hands on the books she set aside for me.

Even had I not met Mrs. Bunty, I would have been a reader. The two homes I shuttled between were full of books. My childhood among bookshelves made me familiar with names and places; the shelves' organization gave me an idea of different types of knowledge and the trajectory of history. Long before I read their work, I knew that C.G. Jung was psychology, Will Durant was history, D.H. Lawrence was literature and Tolstoy was Russian. By browsing, I absorbed differences between the Elizabethans, the Victorians, the Second World War and the Brautigans and Vonneguts. Leather-bound classics versus contemporary hardback novels; serious Penguins versus lighter Pans or Fontanas: these pairings limned in my understanding of the world. Mrs. Bunty validated the reading tastes of my early adolescence; for children who came from homes without books, it was the idea of books as an entry into life that was validated by the Mrs. Buntys.

A forty-two country study published in 2014 concluded that perusing bookshelves is one of the best learning experiences a child can have. Regardless of income level, homes in which at least one hundred books were present produced better students. Children brought up with books imbibed a vision of the contours of the world that gave them an advantage. In poor neighbourhoods in the United States that have well-stocked libraries, students perform at almost the same academic level as those from economically privileged homes. In spite of this evidence, university librarians, who serve students at the most advanced level of their education, are mounting an assault on the printed book.

In contrast to the Mrs. Buntys, most university librarians have a Master of Library and Information Science degree. It may be that some of them were always more enamoured of computers than books; it is certain that the policies they enforce (and, in most cases, endorse) impoverish students' learning. When I arrived at the university where I now teach, the chief librarian was a man known to the faculty as Tonnage, because that was how he referred to books. Tonnage ordered the destruction of historic journals as soon as access to digital facsimiles was obtained. He set a direction that the university pursues under slogans such as "21st-century learning." Recently, I tried to read a chapter of a book in our catalogue. But no book was in the library; we had access, it transpired, to an ebook. When the ebook refused to upload onto the screen of my office computer, six visits to the library over two days were required to obtain the chapter. All but one of the librarians I spoke to effused about "the digital library" with the glaze-eyed stares of converts to a cult, while shrugging off the fact that digital technology had failed to give me access to the book. Only after I complained loudly did they give me the chapter—by printing it off and handing me a pile of loose pages.

It could be worse. I could be at a large Canadian university I visited recently—let's call it Dystopia U.—where print books are held hostage in an off-campus repository. It takes two to three days to truck in a book. The repository is allowed to buy a book only if an ebook can be purchased simultaneously, censoring points of view from the majority of the world's countries, where ebooks

PHOTO: DAVID ILIFF, 2015

are uncommon. Dystopia U.'s library replicates the bare walls of homes that produce disadvantaged learners in a sumptuous building in the centre of campus. The university bookstore was abolished and students now read via the digital library. In 2015, Dystopia U.'s system crashed in the middle of the semester and nobody read anything from the library for over a week. On its website, Dystopia U., naturally, promises "21st-century learning."

Universities educate humanities students by duplicating the experience of the fortunate child: probing bookshelves and absorbing how subjects fit together. Today's librarians ensure that most students will never know the researcher's moment of epiphany of hunting for a book and stumbling on another, unknown book, a book that reveals a world, shelved nearby. Online searches, by contrast, are compartmentalized and ahistorical. The more they work online, the more students' sense of historical development erodes. When all texts look the same, who can situate Lady Murasaki relative to Lady Gaga? Words guarded behind a screen are remote. They never become yours; they encourage skimming. The screen is a realm where only the image, not the word, can become the world. To hold a book in your hands is to be plunged into history by an awareness of the book's shape, feel, smell, provenance and age; it is to assimilate the cultural chronologies of the centuries that preceded ours. Of the university students in four countries surveyed by Naomi Baron of American University, 92% said that they concentrated best when reading print books; most research indicates that, outside the university, ereaders are relegated to lighter reading, of the kind that can be skimmed. Yet, ruling an ivory tower of their own ideological fantasies, Tonnage and his ilk, supported by university administrators, force students to engage with the most demanding texts they may encounter in their lives, at a pivotal stage of their personal development, in the eye-wearying, perpetually distracted, ahistorical, no-name glare of the screen. The result is students who lack a capacity for sustained concentration, or a sense of chronology, and find reading joyless. The profession that inspired decades of self-motivated learners has betrayed its vocation by becoming the shock troops that separate reading from history.

Stephen Henighan's latest novel is The Path of the Jaguar *(Thistledown Press, 2016). Read more of his work at geist.com and stephenhenighan.com. Follow him on Twitter @StephenHenighan. Stephen Henighan lives in Guelph.*

Miquel Barceló Restores Our Sight

ALBERTO MANGUEL

Earth, water, fire and air are the materials by which we are able to represent all our worldly experience

In the nineteenth century, John Ruskin defined the relationship we intuit between our physical landscapes and our emotional states as a "pathetic fallacy." Seeing in the world around us a mirror of what we feel, a sympathetic universe dark as our pain and sunny as our bliss, was for Ruskin an artistic device that, however powerful, had to be misleading. In spite of his caveat the illusion persists, and it is tempting to recognize such a consolatory fantasy in the associations provoked by the features of the mountainous, sea-beaten island of Majorca and the imaginations of its artists and writers, from the mathematical constellations of the philosopher and alchemist Ramon Lull in the thirteenth century to the earthy creations of Miquel Barceló in ours.

Miquel Barceló is one of the greatest Spanish artists of our time and has worked with every conceivable substance, from paper left to be partly devoured by termites in the Dogon country in Africa to splatters of clay on the wall of the cathedral in his native Majorca. Barceló's art is elemental, in the sense that the ancient alchemists understood the word, and his working materials are the four basic elements from which, according to the eighth-century Arab alchemist Jabir Ibn Hayyan, everything is created: earth, water, fire and air. These four, according to Jabir, provide the world with a system of numinous letters and words (or signs and symbols) through which we are able to represent all our worldly experience. The alchemists called this system "our clay, by which we reflect back the earth to itself." Accordingly, the twelfth-century Sufi alchemist Ahmad al-Būnī instructed his followers: "Know that the secrets of God and the objects of His science, the subtle realities and the dense realities, the things of above and the things from below, belong to two categories: there are numbers and there are letters. The secrets of the letters are in the numbers, and the epiphanies of the numbers are in the letters." Lull's combinatory art, the equivalent of a primitive computer, was the incarnation of these hopeful alchemical elucidations and was presented physically as a series of lettered disks that, spinning in opposite directions, came to rest on an assortment of words that suggested associative concepts. The disks were cut out of sturdy paper and held together with a piece of string, a rudimentary tool for combining concepts and elucidating contents.

As a young man, in the service of the King of Majorca (as Lull himself tells us), he led a carefree life, writing love poems and songs in the style of the Catalan troubadours. One night, when he was sitting by his bed about to compose a new song, he looked to his right and saw Christ on the cross, as if suspended in mid-air, staring down on him. The vision effected a deep change in Lull and from then on his goal was to seek enlightenment for himself and for others; to this purpose he developed his complex philosophical machines.

Lull's machines are manuscript artifacts that serve as a kind of compendium of philosophical and religious thought, an instrument to inspire meditation and hopefully lead to the conversion of the unbelievers. Above all, his combinatory art was intended as a way to create new propositions, even to the extent of abolishing ordinary language altogether and replacing it with a system of ineffable signs that allude to, but do not name, the components of reality. Lull's books are machines of pure thought.

Barceló's work develops, through a combinatory art comparable to Lull's, a script of sorts (neither exactly letters nor exactly numbers) made out of clay, water, light and air, producing a text in which the argument is both hidden and revelatory. Barceló's creations are collaborative palimpsests, the result of a staged performance, sometimes in front of a public, most of the time private; of his use of light and shadow, and the ongoing vocabulary that these produce together; of the ceramist's techniques learned from the artisans of Catalonia, Andalusia and the Dogon country; of his trust in the contributions of the external world (the scorchings of soot and charcoal, the splatterings from his own brushes and other instruments, the corrosive substances he uses to paint, the interventions of other living creatures such as tunnelling termites, bats and birds). An avid reader, Barceló creates through his work an ongoing narrative that we are compelled to decipher.

Confronted with a piece by Barceló, it might be useful to bear in mind the instructions that Lull put forward for his readers: "My idea is to present in a single book everything that can be thought… as well as everything that can be said… From

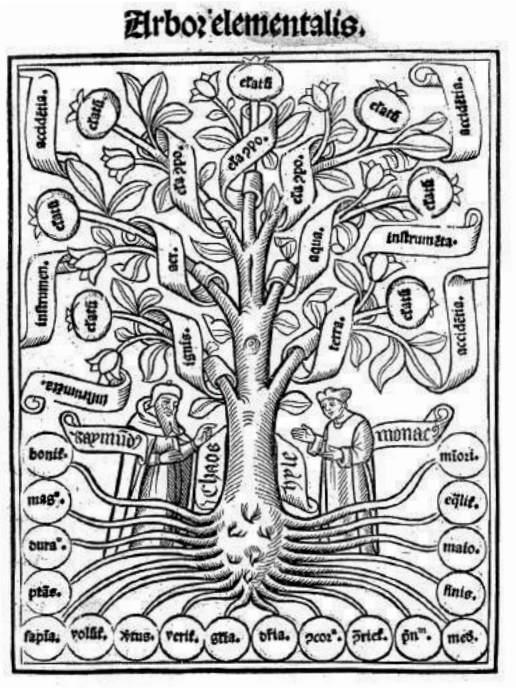
the binary combination of terms in this universal grammar, conceived as general principles, it would be possible to find a solution to any question the human mind can pose. As an art of questioning and getting answers to a variety of matters, it is applicable to all the sciences." The same can be said of Barceló's combinatory art that brings the four elements into relation with one another.

Earth, the clay or dust we scoop in the hand, is our beginning. The Arabic word *sulala*, used in the Qur'an (23:12) to describe the matter from which man was created, denotes a representative example, the essence of something—in this case, the essence of clay. Clay is also our end, the dust to which we return.

Water, its opposite, runs through our fingers and lends earth its life, testing the craftsman's skill. The Babylonian Talmud tells the story of the rabbi's daughter who asked: "In our town there are two potters: one who fashions pots from water, the other who fashions them from clay. Who of the two is most praiseworthy?" "He who fashions them from water," was the answer, "because if he can fashion them from water, he can surely fashion them from clay." For Barceló, however, there are no hierarchies among the materials. This is what Barceló means when he says that "pottery is painting."

Fire is praised, both in Islam and Judaism, for possessing the double quality of burning and giving light. Fire that burns purifies water and hardens clay "immobilizes" matter, in Barceló's words. The light of the fire, however, lends them material presence, and a new movement. According to the alchemists, light carries in itself the qualities of the things it illuminates.

Air is the breath that bestows life, as in the creation of glass. Certain Talmudic scholars argued that the Creator's power can be deduced from glassware: if glassware, made by the breath of human beings, can be repaired when broken, "then how much more so man, created by the breath of the Holy One." Air lends matter visibility through its essential transparency. It also brings forth the memory of matter: Barceló tells of how his own pottery preserves the imperfections and traces of the clay's history, and how, for example, in some of his clay work, traces appear as the negatives of the drops of excrement that the owls let fall on his pots from the beams of his workshop. In these visible absences Barceló sees the contribution of chance to his deliberate creative gestures, an artistic undermining of his own conscious intentions, a collaborative process that lends his work "a new meaning."



Arbor scientiae by Ramon Lull, 1515.

This is also true in the case of Lull. The use of chance to attain creative understanding lies at the root of Lull's systems of thought, which in turn can be seen as the source for most of the combinatory and logic theories in practice today. And yet, however universal Lull's ideas became, they remain essentially emblematic of Majorcan culture (as are Barceló's), a culture in which the local geographical and metaphysical elements combine, reflect and act upon one another: sea and thought, thought and light, light and earth, earth and sea. In this combinatory art, the four elementary constituents of the world interact and produce, in a constant movement of change, the vocabulary by which we are allowed to read the world. Such a reading is never conclusive, creating a continuum of ideas that is at the same time logical and intuitive, what we see and what we imagine, interwoven in a fluid and ever-changing text. This is what Borges once defined as "the imminence of a revelation that does not occur."

There is a parable in the gospels that illustrates this relationship between our eyes and the outside world. Jesus, according to Mark, bestowed sight on a blind man with his saliva; the man, upon opening his eyes, saw "men walking about like trees," a vision that reveals the communality of all created things. But according to John, in his own account of the miracle, it was not saliva that Jesus applied to the blind man's eyes, but clay. Because he performed the miracle on the Sabbath, the people called Jesus a sinner. To which the man who had been blind replied: "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." Clay restores sight.

Alberto Manguel is the award-winning author of hundreds of works, most recently (in English) Curiosity, All Men Are Liars *and* A History of Reading. He lives in New York. *Read more of his work at alberto.manguel.com and geist.com.*

ILLUSTRATION: WELLCOME COLLECTION

Remembering The Ward

DANIEL FRANCIS

The Ward was a working-class immigrant neighbourhood in downtown Toronto that seemed to encapsulate all the social problems of the modern city at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the 1950s, reformers "renewed" it out of existence.

In the summer of 1897, William Lyon Mackenzie King was a twenty-three-year-old university student with a summer job at the Toronto *Mail and Empire* newspaper. King took advantage of his opportunity to write a series of articles about the city's burgeoning working-class neighbourhoods and in particular The Ward, a downtown precinct that was gaining increasing notoriety as an urban slum. The future prime minister noted that certain sections of the city occupied by "foreigners" suffered from overcrowding, poverty and high rates of disease. In one article he described conditions in the sweatshops associated with the garment industry, though he had to censor himself, he noted, because some details were "too hideous to admit of publication."

King's investigations brought positive results for some residents of The Ward and for himself. Many of the worst sweatshops were producing uniforms for government workers, and as a result of his revelations an embarrassed federal government soon took steps to improve wages and working conditions. Meanwhile, King went on to attend Harvard University that fall; three years later he parlayed the contacts he had made during his study into a job in the Canadian public service, the first stepping stone in a long, successful career in politics.

King's summer in the sweatshops is the subject of an essay by Myer Siemiatycki in a new collection, **The Ward: The Life and Loss of Toronto's First Immigrant Neighbourhood**, beautifully produced by Coach House Books. The book offers a kaleidoscopic history of the area, using more than sixty contributions from a diverse collection of authors to touch on subjects as varied as Chinese cafés, Jewish peddlers, street photography, public baths, urban renewal, prostitution, vaudeville, public health and much more. An array of evocative black and white archival photographs illustrate the text.

The Ward, or St. John's Ward to give it its proper name, was a downtown neighbourhood bounded by College Street, Queen Street, Yonge Street and University Avenue. It was the first stop for many immigrant groups when they arrived in the city, as so many did during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, an explosive period in the city's growth. Until the 1880s it was, writes Karolyn Smardz Frost, "the heart and soul of African Canadian Toronto," a refuge for Blacks fleeing the United States in search of freedom. Later they were joined by Italian, Chinese and Jewish newcomers. The Ward was home not just to an army of garment workers but also to the people who built the streets, laid the railway tracks, owned the market stalls, collected scrap and peddled their wares off the back of horse-drawn wagons; in other words, the city's immigrant working class.

Being home to so many "foreigners," The Ward naturally attracted the attention of members of Toronto's British Protestant elite who looked down their noses at the newcomers and condemned the neighbourhood as a cesspool of poverty, disease and vice (when, that is, they were not visiting to take advantage of one of its blind pigs, brothels or bohemian nightspots). "A festering sore," one Protestant clergyman called it. Even sympathetic observers were alarmed at living conditions in The Ward. Medical Health Officer Charles Hastings reported in 1911: "What we have read of with disgust as having happened in the cities of Europe in the Middle Ages, happens in Toronto now before our very eyes." Houses were overcrowded and child labour prevalent; backyards were a mess and parks were almost non-existent. Many social reformers were followers of the eugenics movement, believing that southern and eastern Europeans were importing feeble-mindedness and sexual promiscuity into Canada and were threatening to "outbreed" the better stock of citizen.

For years reformers studied The Ward and debated whether to clean it up, redevelop it or eradicate it altogether. Faced with endemic social problems, city government eventually bulldozed much of it in the 1950s to make way for a new City Hall and civic square. Today it is, in the words of Shawn Micallef, another of the book's contributors, "a disembodied notion, found more in memory than in physical form."

The destruction of The Ward was an act of urban renewal common to many North American cities in the last century. The book is particularly interesting to someone like myself who lives in Vancouver, a city that in the 1960s went through its own flirtation with the "creative destruction" approach to urban regeneration before a protest movement derailed the planning

process and preserved much of the downtown from the wrecker's ball. The story of The Ward also has contemporary relevance here on the West Coast. Vancouver struggles to come to terms with its own urban "slum," the notorious Downtown Eastside, and doubtless there are many who would like to send in the bulldozers and "renew" it out of existence. For a Vancouverite, *The Ward* feels not like history at all, but present politics.

Is it my imagination or is *The Ward* symptomatic of a new vitality in the historical writing about Canadian cities? I am thinking of another book, **Vancouver Confidential** (Anvil Press), also an entertaining collection of essays published recently, about the disreputable side of urban life; that is, sex, showbiz, crime and corruption in the Terminal City. Do these books succeed in spite of, or because of, the fact that neither is produced by historians? *The Ward* is edited by John Lorinc, a journalist, Michael McClelland, an architect, and Ellen Scheinberg and Tatum Taylor, a pair of heritage consultants. The Vancouver book, although edited by the academic historian John Belshaw, consists of essays by a disparate collection of journalists, musicians, heritage advocates, curators and bloggers. "On any given day, there are more people learning about Vancouver's history from the contributors to this book than there are in every undergraduate British Columbia history class in the world combined," Belshaw boasts. In his own essay on the street photographer James Crookall, Belshaw suggests that the essence of street photography is "the pairing of public spaces and people in unposed and unguarded situations," and in a sense this is the attraction of both books. They present urban life as it was lived in the streets by all the diverse members of the community. It is not City Hall that preoccupies their contributors but brothels and hobo jungles; not the Anglo elite in their west side mansions but Jewish rag merchants, east side gangsters and seamstresses in the sweatshops. "History is everywhere," Michael McClelland, one of the editors of *The Ward*, reminds us, "and it exists in all communities" and in all the "undocumented and unrecognized lives" of the people who lived in them.

The success of *The Ward* and *Vancouver Confidential* at evoking the "street history" of their communities suggests that for the time being at least the academic historians have ceded the field to the amateurs, which on the evidence is no bad thing.

Daniel Francis is a writer and historian who lives in North Vancouver. He is the author of two dozen books including, most recently, Closing Time: Prohibition, Rum-runners and Border Wars *(Douglas & McIntyre). Read more of his work at geist.com and danielfrancis.ca.*

ENDNOTES

REVIEWS, COMMENTS, CURIOSA

CONDITIONALLY PARIS

In the opening sentence of Patrick Modiano's **Paris Nocturne** (Yale University Press) the narrator is

crossing the Place des Pyramides in Paris on the way to the Place de la Concorde. In the last paragraph: a lift is climbing slowly to a terrace, where the narrator has been promised "a view overlooking the whole of Paris." There are many things to recommend *Paris Nocturne*. A taciturn, unnamed narrator outlines a mystery that unfolds on a winter's night. There's a car accident, the driver, wearing a smile and a fur coat, now missing. Somewhere in the background is his nameless, faceless father, a crook, "whose only education was the street." But what struck me more in this slim volume was the most important player in the story: Paris itself. The locations are all named: the police van driving along Quai des Tuileries, the hotels, bars, restaurants and cafés identified by name and location (Les Calcanques: it's at 4 rue de la Coutellerie). The number 21 bus is boarded at Porte de Gentilly. We often say that place is as much a character as any of the people in a story. But Paris is not a character in *Paris Nocturne;* it's a condition. It's an obstacle and an enabler. It's the narrator's alter ego. It asks questions and then refuses answers. I couldn't help wondering: is there another city in the world where a writer could intricately weave the geography into every page and expect the reader to not only endure this, but be pulled willingly into the mist? I've visited Paris, yes, more than once, but I know few of these places. I was not on familiar ground in *Paris Nocturne*. But by the end I could accept the enigma posed by deserted places so carefully described. I was anxious to embrace the view overlooking the whole of Paris. —*Thad McIlroy*

NATIONAL POETRY DAZE

This year the mavens of *As It Happens* on CBC Radio celebrated National Poetry Day on the 22nd of March (the second day of spring) by reading aloud a "poem about spring" written in 1916 by Bliss Carman, the poetaster whose not-nearly-enough-forgotten oeuvre has been the bane of five generations of schoolchildren. I happened to be eating a bowl of chili and reading Earle Birney's literary memoir, **Spreading Time**, when the bubbly phrasings of Carman's "The Soul of April" tripped or pranced or tinkled through the air of my kitchen:

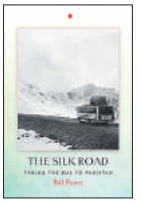
> Over the wintry threshold
> Who comes with joy to-day,
> So frail, yet so enduring,
> To triumph o'er dismay?

Earle Birney was twenty-one years old, a literature student and poetry editor of the student paper at UBC when Bliss Carman appeared on campus in the fall of 1925, an event noted by Birney in the memoir that I was reading with the radio turned on, on National Poetry Day. Birney describes Carman in a trailing overcoat, a very long white scarf and a battered Stetson hat as he strides theatrically into the bush, where he remained lost until rescued (by Birney). Carman was a man of "pompous, condescending manner," whose poems "sounded slick and verbose," filled with echoes of the Victorians whose influence infected the High Culture of the day (and apparently still does at the CBC). "Was there anyone alive and young and coming up?" wonders the young Earle Birney: "Would there ever be anyone to write the Canadian poetry that waited in the air?" For the next seventy years (forty-five of which are covered in this volume), the young and then the older Earle Birney searched out the new poets, publishing them in magazines for which he worked such as *Canadian Poetry*, *Canadian Forum* and *Northern Review*, fostering them in the creative writing programs that he invented; he worked for a lifetime to provide Canadian alternatives to the ready-made formulas of Bliss Carman and his gang of versifiers. Birney's life was a fight against vapourizing. *Spreading Time* (Véhicule Press, 1980) is an eyewitness account of the formative years of Canadian literature from 1904 to 1949. It includes Birney's review of *Sarah Binks* by Paul Hiebert, the hilarious burlesque of Canadian poetry, culture and criticism; his title *Spreading Time* is taken from a Binksean effusion on the joy of manure spreading on the farm. "Sarah Binks should be required reading," Birney wrote in 1948, "for all English professors, reviewers and members of the Canadian Authors Association." Today he would have included creative writing teachers on that list. Copies of *Spreading Time* can be found on the internet, available for $6.00 and up. —*Stephen Osborne*

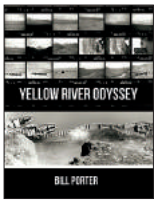
FOLLOWING WIND, FOLLOWING WATER

In Daniel Canty's **The United States of Wind: A Travelogue** (translated by Oana Avasilichioaei, Talon) we accompany Canty and fellow air-onaut Patrick Beaulieu on a wind-blown odyssey through the American midwest, part of a project named Ventury: A Trans-Frontier Odyssey Trailing American Winds, which was originally conceived in Montreal by Beaulieu. Each day their destination is to be determined by an interpretation of signs: "a weathervane and a retractable wind cone" mounted onto the roof of "the Blue Rider, a venerable midnight-blue Ford Ranger." Appropriately, the Blue Rider's travels began in Chicago, the "Windy City"; a map of their peregrinations resembles Brownian motion: a blue scrawl on the book's white cover. *The United States of Wind* presents Canty's take on this elemental adventure, and a sense of his poetic perspective can be obtained from this small sample of subheadings: "The Key of Dreams," "Augury Birds," "Zoetrope Horses," "Cheshire Socks," "The Invisible Chateau"; and from this vow—a kind of secular consecration—on the eve of their departure: "Trust the wind. Only it. Like we trust ourselves. And if airborne currents push us seaward, we would find a way to float." Beaulieu's website presents an overview of the journey at patrickbeaulieu.ca/en/ventury.

Bill Porter is an itinerant writer, now living in Port Townsend, whose enthusiasms recall the Beat writers of mid-century: the primacy of poetry, a fascination with Eastern thought (Buddhism in particular), the lure of the open road. For several years in the early 1990s Porter lived in Taiwan and Hong Kong, where he produced a series of radio broadcasts based on his extensive travels through mainland China. Porter (known also for his translations of classical Chinese poetry under the pen name Red Pine) certainly knows his stuff, and his accounts of those travels—recently transformed into book form—make surprisingly compelling reading, earning Porter a cult following in China. They recall a time when travelling in China was still an adventure, and Westerners a curiosity. In **The Silk Road: Taking the Bus to Pakistan** (Counterpoint), Porter (accompanied by an old friend and a plastic bottle of whiskey) ventures along the ancient Silk Road route from Sian (also known as Xi'an) to Islamabad, by way of the Khunjerab Pass and Shangri-la. In **Yellow River Odyssey**



(Chin Music), Porter attempts to travel from the mouth of the river known as "the cradle of Chinese civilization" to its source, high in the Bayan Har Mountains of western China. In the final chapter, Porter, his hired driver and two Tibetan guides follow a dirt track as far as they can, and then (spoiler alert) trudge across snowy tundra in thin air and fading light until Porter becomes—possibly—the first Caucasian to reach the Yellow River's source. **Finding Them Gone: Visiting China's Poets of the Past** (Copper Canyon Press) describes a "fast-paced pilgrimage" through present-day China, during which Porter "pays homage to dozens of China's greatest poets by visiting their graves—or trying to—and performing idiosyncratic rituals with small cups of Kentucky whiskey." By my count Porter has had five books published in the last two years, from three different publishers; not bad for a seventy-year-old, whiskey-drinking Buddhist poet-sage!

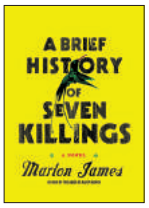


—*Michael Hayward*

JAMAICA ON ICE

I brought Marlon James's novel **A Brief History of Seven Killings** (Riverhead Books) on vacation to Mexico, although it is a bit hefty for a carry-on bag let alone a beach bag. I only made it through 314 pages before returning to Vancouver and putting it in the freezer: according to Internet research, it takes a minimum of five days at minus five degrees Celsius (the temperature of the average household freezer) to kill any bedbugs and their eggs; depending on where you live in Canada, it may be cold enough in March that leaving your luggage outside for a day or two would do it. I kept my copy of *Seven Killings* in the freezer for one full week and have now returned, worry-free, to the partly fictionalized ghettos of 1970s Jamaica. At the centre of the story, Bob Marley has just survived a shooting four days before he's to play the Smile Jamaica concert and less than a week before a national election that has everyone on edge. And I've just been introduced to Kim Clarke, a Jamaican who swears she'll leave Jamaica "whether on a plane or in a box." She's one of the fifteen or so characters—including CIA agents, gangsters, drug dealers and even a ghost—who take turns narrating chapters of this story about a post-independent Jamaica at its most violent. The intricate plot

takes you back and forth between tricky Jamaican dialects and American accents, giving each character a distinct voice, and with a whopping cast of about seventy-five characters, the novel demands more attention than you can realistically give after several margaritas. It's just as well that I'll be enjoying the last 374 pages on weekends in between the sobering reality of forty-hour workweeks.



—Jennesia Pedri

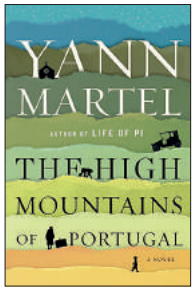
AMERICAN DOPPELGÄNGER

It's well documented that Hollywood films use Canada to stand in for the US, including *Brokeback Mountain*, *Good Will Hunting*, the *Twilight* series, Rambo's *First Blood* and many, many more blockbusters. A recent addition is Alejandro González Iñárritu's *The Revenant*, set in 1823 in northern Louisiana territory, a huge chunk of North America that stretched from Louisiana all the way up to Alberta and Saskatchewan. Parts of *The Revenant* were filmed in Calgary and Squamish; Argentina was used last minute for snowy scenes because Canada's winter was unseasonably warm. Squamish has stood in for the US, often as Alaska, in at least a dozen Hollywood films as is the case in *Insomnia*, starring Al Pacino and Robin Williams, and *Double Jeopardy*, starring Ashley Judd. In Robert Altman's classic *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* the mountains around Squamish stand in for Washington State. The fight scene between Bob Barker and Adam Sandler in *Happy Gilmore* was filmed at Squamish's Furry Creek golf course. I'm still waiting for a Hollywood blockbuster set in Squamish.

—Rebekah Chotem

MARTEL'S MOUNTAINS

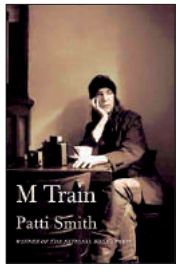
In **The High Mountains of Portugal** (Knopf), Yann Martel returns to magic realism in three interwoven stories about lost love and journeys taken to reclaim the past. In 1904, Tomás, grieving for his dead lover, son and father, sets out in a car he doesn't know how to drive to find a long-lost religious artifact in rural Portugal. Three decades later, a woman from the same rural village takes her husband's corpse to Dr. Lozora, a pathologist, in the middle of the night, where an autopsy reveals a surprise as to how the man lived. Fifty years after that, a Canadian senator named Peter Tovy adopts a chimpanzee and moves to the Portuguese mountains after the death of his wife. In each of these stories, grief manifests itself in the loss of language: Tomás struggles to learn the mechanical tongue of the automobile; Dr. Lozora fails to communicate the medical procedure of the autopsy and Peter faces the double language barrier of Portuguese and Odo the chimpanzee. All three must turn away from the past to discover a new way of life. As in his previous novels, Martel uses animals to ponder larger topics, this time Christianity, where the chimpanzee represents, by turns, a crucified Christ, rebirth and God itself. I enjoyed this novel more than I was expecting (like others, I was wary after *Beatrice and Virgil*): the elements of magic realism are used well, most memorably in the story of Dr. Lozora. While there are stronger religious metaphors in this book, my favourite is the extended comparison of Jesus's life to an Agatha Christie murder mystery. This is a novel that has grown in my mind since I finished it, walking its way backwards into the peaks of my thoughts.



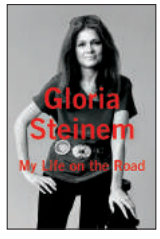
—*Kelsea O'Connor*

TIME-TESTED

A couple of days after I began to read my copy of **M Train**, a memoir by Patti Smith (Knopf Canada), the library notified me that I was next in line to borrow Gloria Steinem's memoir **My Life on the Road** (Random House). I took it as a sign that I should read them both at the same time. Smith, age seventy, prolific in writing, photography, music and visual art, takes a seemingly random wander through her days and nights, reading, writing, making notes in her journal, sipping coffee after black coffee at "her" table in a café in Greenwich Village. And travelling: to Mexico to speak at Frida Kahlo's home and resting place, to Berlin to speak at the convention of the Continental Drift Club, to London to visit the grave of Sylvia Plath, to Japan (where strong black coffee is hard to find), to visit the graves of the filmmakers Akira Kurosawa, Yasujiro Ozu and Osamu Dazai, and the writer Ryunosuke Akutagawa. At home and away she watches television, mostly Dr. Who (but only the David Tennant Dr. Who) and fictional detectives: Jane Tennison, Kurt Wallander, Lennie Briscoe, "Fitz" Fitzgerald, Linden and Holder. She falls in love with a down-at-heel bungalow on Rockaway Beach in New York: "Close to the sea, though I cannot swim. Close to the train, as I cannot drive." She buys it, just before Hurricane Sandy blows down the boardwalk and some neighbours' homes and the café that was to be her hangout. *M Train* is the record of an artist at work every minute, making connections and pondering the process and meaning of art and of life itself, all shot through with dreams, memories, mirages, pilgrimages and an overwhelming sense of loss, especially for her beloved husband Fred "Sonic" Smith, who died suddenly at age forty-five. And she remembers her children's small hands, her last visit with Paul Bowles when he was too sick to write and felt "empty," her beloved moth-eaten black coat. Yet she persists with curiosity and clarity, not as a fighter but as a lover of art and life. The book ends with a dream (I think) in which she has no one and nothing left and walks out into a desert alone, "but I paid no mind. I was my own lucky hand of solitaire."



Gloria Steinem, age eighty-two, began her career as a writer activist organizer shit-disturber with a two-year stay in India, just after university. There she travelled in a third-class women-only railway car, learning to eat, dress, talk and sing with Indian women. To this day Steinem doesn't drive; her chapter devoted to not-driving is rich with piquant anecdotes of exchanges with fellow transit passengers, flight attendants and taxi drivers (the famous quip "Honey, if men could get pregnant, abortion would be a sacrament!" came from a woman taxi driver in New York). In India, Steinem ended up in a rural area torn by violent caste riots. The traumatized residents gathered each night to talk and to listen, a process that informed the next sixty years of Steinem's work. In the late 1960s, amid talk about civil rights and *The Feminine Mystique* and the war in Vietnam and gay and lesbian issues and Native American rights, Steinem and the African-American activists Margaret Sloan and Florynce Kennedy began speaking on feminism to university students and community groups. Steinem then worked as one of the organizers of the pivotal National Women's Conference in Houston in 1977, a massive policy and strategy meeting attended by two thousand state and territory

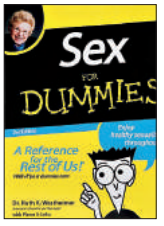


delegates—caucuses of African-American, Asian and Pacific American, Hispanic and Native American women (amid cries of feminism being a "whitemiddleclass" movement)—and eighteen thousand observers. Steinem has also campaigned for politicians from Bella Abzug to Hillary Clinton, and continues to speak to university students and other groups, each event reinforcing her belief in the power of people talking together in a room. "The miraculous but impersonal Internet," she writes in *My Life on the Road*, "is not enough." In early March 2016, as I wrap this endnote, Patti Smith has an art show opening in New York and can fill any concert hall in the world. Gloria Steinem has provoked a boycott by anti-choice Lands' End shoppers, who were enraged to find a short interview with her in the spring catalogue. Lands' End caved, inciting a boycott among its feminist customers. And the beat goes on…

—Mary Schendlinger

TELEDILDONICS

Sex for Dummies (IDG Books), the "Fun and Easy Way to Have Great Sex in the '90s," sat in the window of my neighbourhood bookstore and I bought it because, as a twenty-three-year-old, I was curious about what sex was like before my time. In *Sex for Dummies*, the author, Dr. Ruth K. Westheimer, writes that lovers in the '90s who want to keep things fresh should give each other a sponge bath in the kitchen, clean the bathroom together naked, re-enact their first date, watch TV without channel-surfing, feed each other spaghetti with sauce (naked), go rollerblading, clean out each other's belly buttons and play onion ring toss with an erect penis as the target. The book contains an entire section called "Cybersex: Sex and the Computer," which talks about "e-mail ecstasy, wicked World Wide Web, naughty newsgroups and frenzied file transfers." In the book, Dr. Ruth claims that the future of virtual sex, which in the '90s was apparently known as *teledildonics*, will require special headsets, clinging penis holders and vaginal prods.



Sex for Dummies taught me a lot about having sex pre-Y2K, but I am disappointed that I have to file teledildonics away under "things that the twenty-first century has yet to deliver," alongside the robot maids from *The Jetsons* and the hoverboards from *Back to the Future*.

—Roni Simunovic

OFF THE SHELF

Concerns over missing knives arise in *Injun* by **Jordan Abel** (Talon); Elgar steals cacti from literati in *Sonosyntactics* by **Gary Barwin** (Wilfrid Laurier Press). **Kyra Ling** slings chicken wings at Hooters in *AlliterAsian*, edited by **Julia Lin, Allan Cho** and **Jim Wong-Chu** (Arsenal); Richard digs holes and demolishes houses and Gene mounts truck gates and hucks bags in *Bad Things Happen* by **Kris Bertin** (Biblioasis); Margaretha Geertruida Zelle waits with her hands on her hips in *Rogues*, *Rascals*, *and Scalawags Too* by **Jim Christy** (Anvil Press). A "large, heterogeneously enhanced mass" stands in for the Big C in *Wait Time* by **Kenneth Sherman** (Wilfrid Laurier Press); a samurai's sword compels the foe to face the man in *Twenty Seven Stings* by **Julie Emerson** (New Star); pincurls sag from the heat in *Last Stop*, *Lonesome Town* by **Tara Azzopardi** (Mansfield Press). Roman's brother's body washes ashore in *The Best Canadian Poetry 2015* (Tightrope), edited by **Jacob McArthur Mooney**, **Molly Peacock** and **Anita Lahey**; Luigi clocks his old man in *Mean Season* by **Salvatore Difalco** (Mansfield Press); **Ashley-Elizabeth Best**'s brother keeps jawin' on in *Slow States of Collapse* (ECW). Proust receives a letter regarding yoga for capitalists in *Corked* by **Catriona Strang** (Talon); Dusko escapes his captors and fights deportation in *The Midnight Games* by **David Neil Lee** (Wolsak & Wynn); Betsy's poop turns blue in *Bearskin Diary* by **Carol Daniels** (Harbour); the walls of the nursing home get painted drunk-tank pink in *He Wants* by **Alison Moore** (Biblioasis). Chuck feels grateful for the distraction of chicken cordon bleu in *Ledger of the Open Hand* by **Leslie Vryenhoek** (Breakwater Books); Monsieur's reign of terror horrifies in *Stroppy* by **Marc Bell** (Drawn & Quarterly); Drippy chugs a brew and the enemy pulls out in *The Red Drip of Courage* by **Julian Lawrence** (Conundrum). Inspiration arises from the Messiah's management methods in *Human Resources* by **Rachel Zolf** (Coach House) and the Virgin materializes in *You Can't Bury Them All* by **Patrick Woodcock** (ECW). May-December lovers roam Rome in *Illicit Sonnets* by **George Elliott Clarke** (Exile Editions); Payvand and Ragusa survey the wreckage caused by war in *Amity* by **Nasreen Pejvak** (Inanna); **Jon Evans** may duel to the death or he may get hitched on a bus to Thessaloniki in *No Fixed Address* (Porcupine's Quill); Jeeves locks his eyes on Morrissey's swaying hips in *Asthmatica* by **Jon Paul Fiorentino** (Insomniac). **Eve Lazarus** researches unsolved mysteries in *Cold Case Vancouver* (Arsenal); Mr. van der Lem sobs and exposes a sewn-up forearm in *The Society of Experience* by **Matt Cahill** (Wolsak & Wynn); Whitey vanishes, the Gipper grimaces and a young priest clenches a rifle in his cold fist in **Laura Trunkey**'s *Double Dutch* (Astoria). Mie Tha fears the jungle and the crashing rain and Ka Law cheers for democracy in *Flight and Freedom*, by **Ratna Omidvar** and **Dana Wagner** (Between the Lines); cannons and guns powder the night, flowers never arrive and the trees mimic the sounds of the sea in *Guano* by **Louis Carmain** (Coach House); Murdoch Burnett's Gaelic upper body plunges into **Lee Maracle**'s air space in *Talking to the Diaspora* (ARP); minerals grate and teeth wear in **Chantal Neveu**'s *A Spectacular Influence* (BookThug). Salmonella death rays beam from freshly shredded lettuce in *Decline of the Animal Kingdom* by **Laura Clarke** (ECW); Andromeda and the Milky Way collide and merge in *The Pet Radish*, *Shrunken* by **Pearl Pirie** (BookThug); the object of your affection throws a dozen rotten pears and pees their pants a little bit in *Rom Com* by **Dina Del Bucchia** and **Daniel Zomparelli** (Talon).

NOTED ELSEWHERE

Just in time for National Poetry Month, *Quill and Quire* says of **Steven Heighton**'s *The Waking Comes Late* (Anansi): "There is too much space devoted to the often boring topic of poets and poetry." *Georgia Straight* says "Hide the knives. Lock up the guns. But don't flush those antidepressants down the toilet—you might need them once you've finished reading *Trees on Mars: Our Obsession with the Future*" by **Hal Niedzviecki** (Seven Stories). *Quill and Quire* says the author instructs us to "abandon hope." *The Mercy Journals* by **Claudia Casper** (Arsenal) is "tightly constructed if not especially groundbreaking" according to *Publishers Weekly*, and not "that far away or fantastical" according to the *Vancouver Sun*. Susan on Eco-fiction.com says it is "amazingly insightful." *Maclean's* calls **Irina Kovalyova**'s *Specimen* (Astoria) "almost too intelligent for its own good"; the *Star* says it is "not too clever, yet playful enough to be enjoyed"; the *Globe and Mail* says it "come[s] off as a kind of MFA writing-class exercise"; *Now Toronto* says "great things are coming from this writer"; *Georgia Straight* says the book "deserves further testing." The *Winnipeg Review* says *According to Plan* by **Rob Kovitz** (Treyf) "is a massive, madly ambitious super-cut of a book"; PrintedMatter.org says it is "funny, disquieting, and thought-provoking" and PortlandBookReview.com says it is "a hodgepodge."

CONGRATULATIONS

To *Geist* authors **Caroline Adderson**, **Raoul Fernandes**, **Irina Kovalyova** and **Anakana Schofield**, who are all finalists for the BC Book Prizes, and to **Carellin Brooks,** who is a finalist for a Publishing Triangle Award.

The GEIST Cryptic Crossword

Prepared by Meandricus

Send copy of completed puzzle with name and address to:

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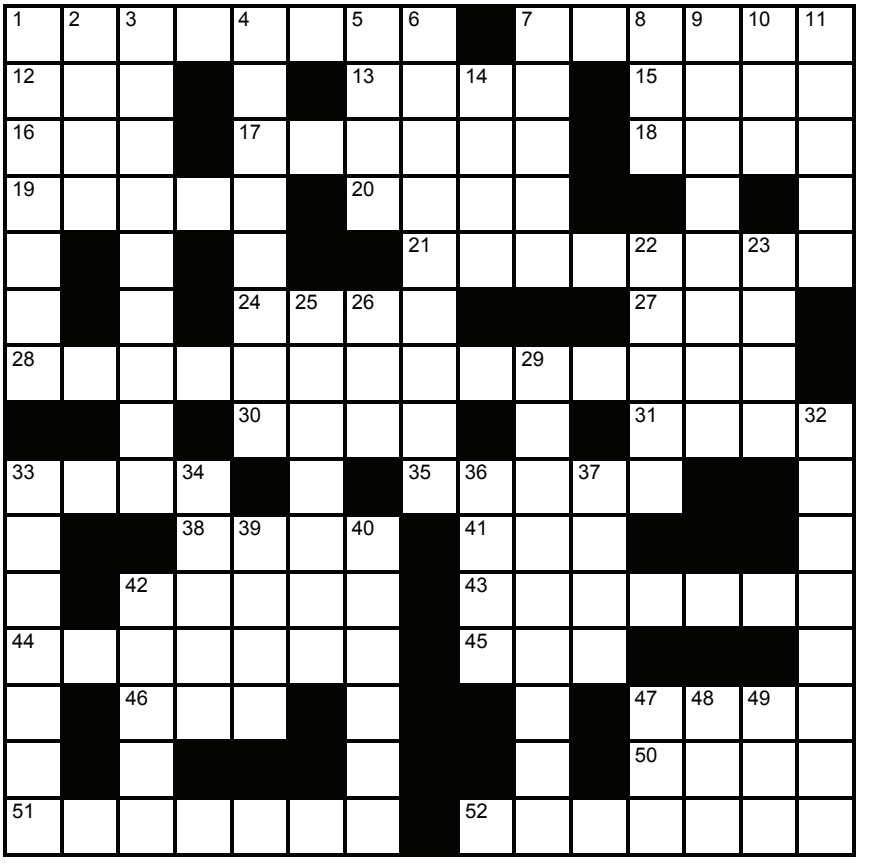
The winner will be selected at random from correct solutions received and will be awarded a one-year subscription to *Geist* or—if already a subscriber—a *Geist* keychain. Good luck!



ACROSS

1 When your dog brain fills with snow it's time to get on
7 Only the blackest water has access to the plain
12 Things really took off when he was delivered above ground (abbrev)
13 The third of the 50th is a warm gathering place
15 The littlest one was a real bum
16 Are you in possession of that violent and addictive TV match?
17 Take a second out to giggle about those characters
18 Take the road that goest to the mouth
19 Oddly, Steve was the type who thought that family matters
20 In a plane full of bubbles the Brits ate chocolate
21 On our scale, kids go around with a lot of baggage
24 Under the Huggies things can erupt with imprudence
27 Gladly, this day will come back to you a lot (abbrev)
28 Can you extemporize on that scene so that you look like you're feeling something? (2)
30 Why are all those long poems about men?
31 That clergyman always copies me, plus he's got flexible hands!
33 Remember to slip me one but if it hurts, go back
35 Don't check out the booth but be sure to get your pass
38 His specialization was square feet
41 My Latin lover gave nothing by mouth (abbrev)
42 There were a million tens but I was followed by seven zeros
43 Don't pitch that down there before you take the bag out of the front pocket (2)
44 The reel ran right around the assimilator
45 Check your back muscle before you start on that creamy drink
46 To start, it was my fault the airline didn't go west of the centre (abbrev)
47 When the Scot was down by 11, he could have used some modern British footage
50 You'll have no difficulty if you shorten those grandma pants for more comfort
51 You could save money if you paid attention to that coy omen
52 At 32, she stayed to eat oval rye slices

DOWN

1 Just in case, carry your stuff there
2 Oh, Beauregard, Reid sounds twice as penetrating!
3 When those wild beasts are not asleep or horny, they chew over everything
4 Yet Freud must have been exempt because he didn't feel obligated to drink that
5 NATO, pay attention!
6 Leaving your bag at the garden entrance can be very complimentary (2)
7 There's evidence that person swears a lot and can be quite judgmental
8 In spite of the silent letter drop
9 Her main occupation is to buy stuff at the pork show and then rehearse it
10 Sounds like a Swedish hair shirt
11 Conan really mixed it up when he registered to sing all over the mountains
14 Was the queen jealous or was he just being Juno?
22 Did you get the skinny on the northern boat?
23 Sounds like the crematorium bird was called René
25 Can you get around to reshape it so it's not so three-dimensional? (2)
26 Pepper loves that place in the gulf before spring (abbrev)
29 Don't get lost in that cult in the Ohio gap, ma. They dont know how to cook.
32 Don't keep going or lie under here when it gets boring
33 At YVR, get off at the leap end
34 That author's favourite character was Johnny the Square
36 Is that old truck stuck between two countries? (abbrev)
37 Mix up that little morsel and then put everything in order
39 When her leader felt blue she bought hardware
40 Watch out, it's going to vaporize in a fiery furnace
42 The celebrity briefly carved out a role for herself
47 The main administrator looks good in a uniform (abbrev)
48 Those riders fought against the black hole (abbrev)
49 In Hogtown they keep changing in the yard (abbrev)

There was no winner for Puzzle *99*.

I	C	E	M	A	P	S	■	C	A	L	O	R	I	C
N	■	■	I	■	■	C	F	O	■	O	■	O	■	H
D	O	L	L	■	■	A	R	K	■	O	B	E	S	E
U	■	■	K	■	■	P	I	E	■	K	■	■	■	R
L	E	I	S	U	R	E	■	F	L	I	E	S	■	R
G	■	■	H	■	■	■	■	L	■	N	■	U	N	Y
E	A	T	A	B	L	E	■	O	R	G	A	N	I	C
■	S	■	K	■	■	S	D	A	■	G	■	D	U	O
S	W	E	E	T	■	P	O	T	■	L	■	A	■	K
E	O	N	■	E	■	■	U	■	M	A	N	E	G	E
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U	■	L	■	L	T	R	■	■	I	S	E	U	L	T
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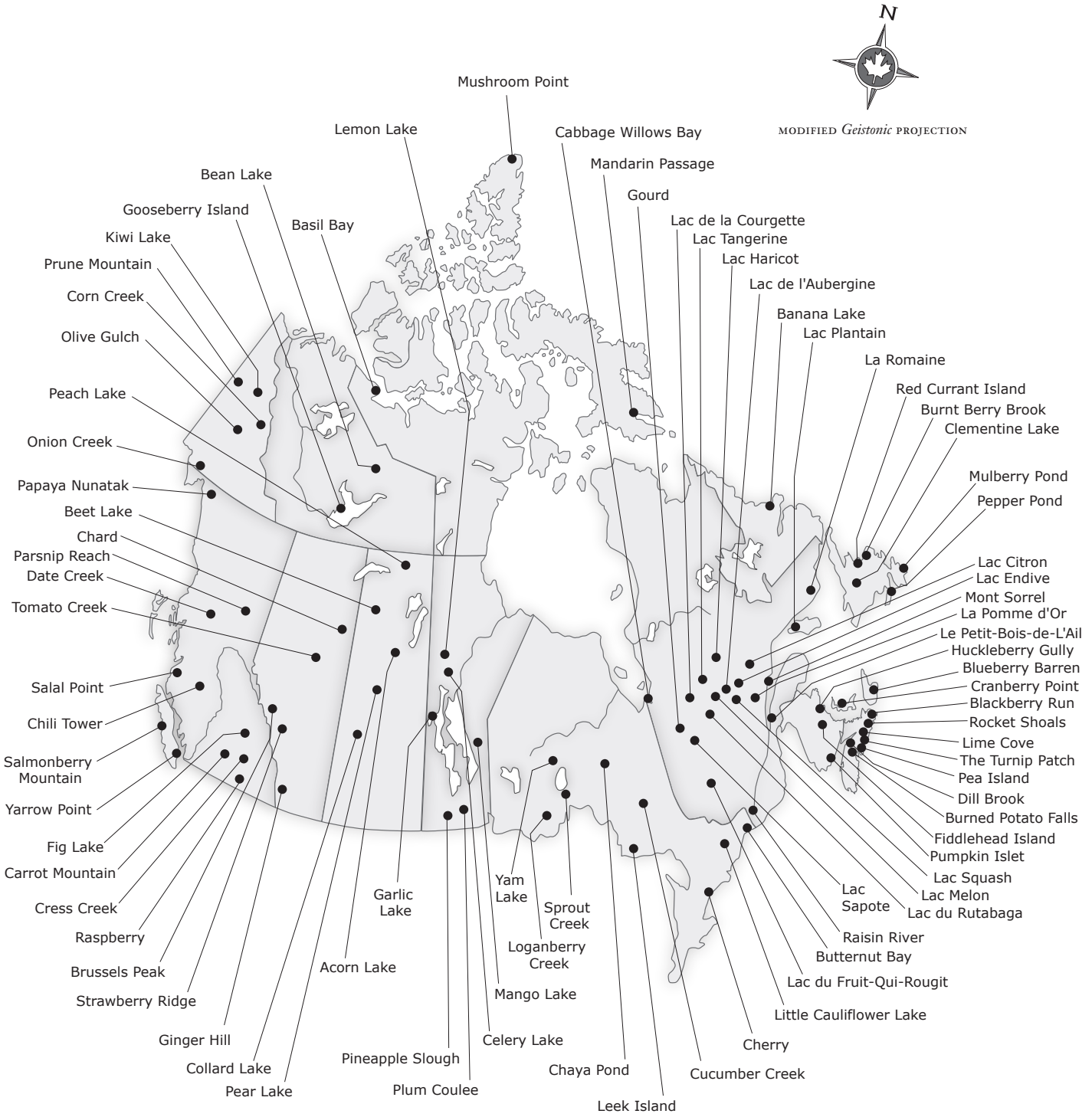
Eat Your Greens

The Fruit and Vegetable Map of Canada

by Cassia Streb



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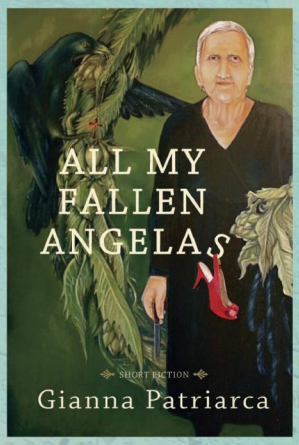

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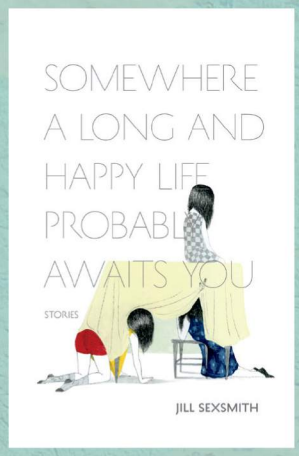

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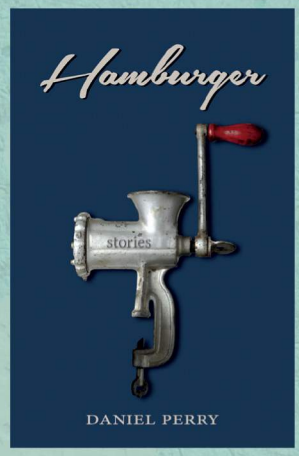

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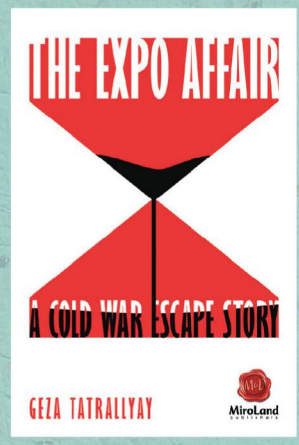

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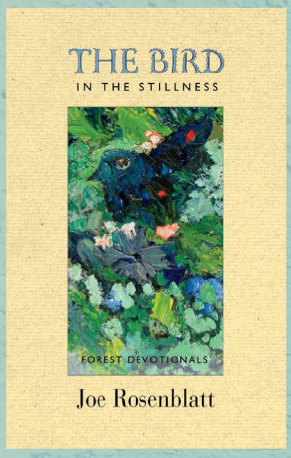

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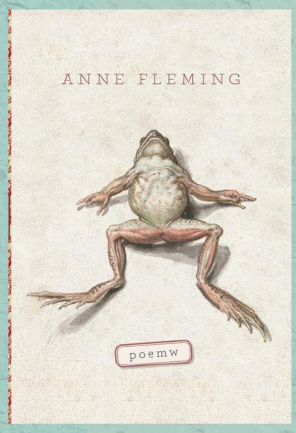

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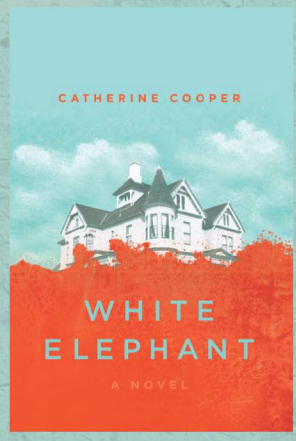

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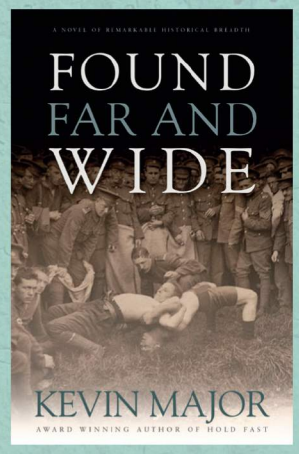

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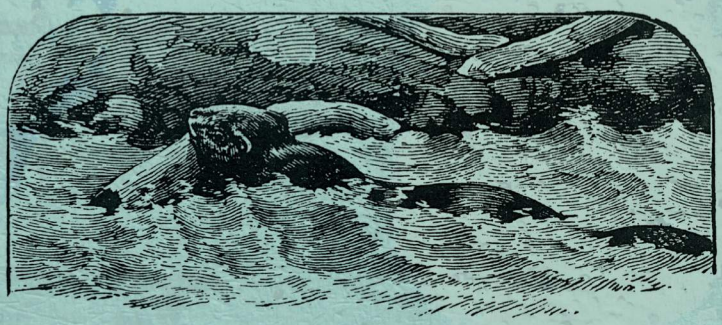

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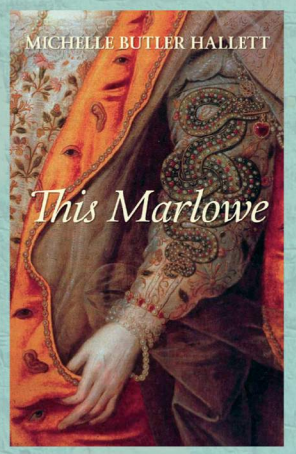

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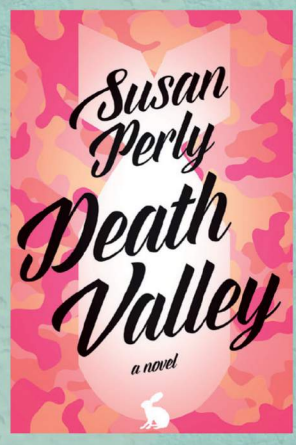

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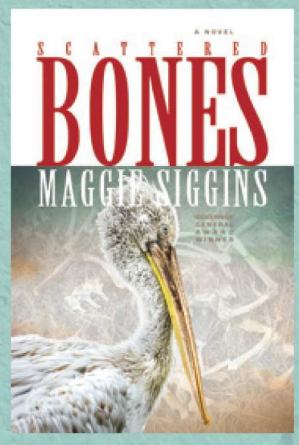

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