

The Porcupine's Quill

<http://porcupinesquill.ca>

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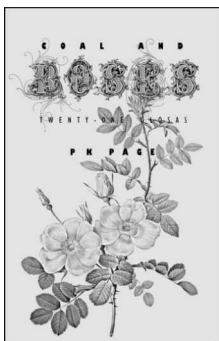
Fall 2010

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‘Pam’s Desk’ / Andy English

## Prize Winners!



### Griffin Poetry Prize

- *Coal and Roses: Twenty-One Glosas*  
P. K. Page (Finalist)

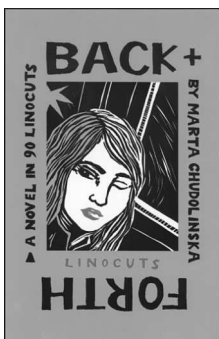
### Canadian Jewish Book Awards

- *What the Furies Bring*  
Kenneth Sherman (Finalist)



### ForeWord Magazine/Book of the Year Award

- *Welcome to Canada*  
David Carpenter (Finalist – Short Stories)
- *Back + Forth*  
Marta Chudolinska (Finalist – Graphic Novel)
- *The Essential James Reaney*  
James Reaney (Finalist – Poetry)
- *What the Furies Bring*  
Kenneth Sherman (Finalist – Essays)
- *A Is 4 Alice*  
George A. Walker (Finalist – Art)



### Doug Wright Awards

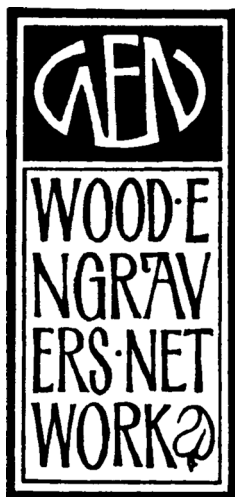
- *Back + Forth*  
Marta Chudolinska (Finalist – Best Book)

## A Calendar of Days (2011) Members of the Wood Engravers Network



*A Calendar of Days* includes fourteen reproductions of prints of wood engravings contributed by artists from the United States, United Kingdom and Canada, together with brief biographies of the contributors. The images have been proofed letterpress, then digitized and printed offset on the Heidelberg KORD at the Porcupine's Quill in Erin Village, Ontario. Contributors include Wesley Bates, Gerard Brender à Brandis, Anthony Drehfal, Andy English, Jim Horton, Rosemary Kilbourn, Abigail Rorer and Jim Westergard, among others.

Wood engraving is a relief printmaking process in which the raised surface of the block receives ink and prints directly onto paper. Other printing processes include planography and lithography, both of which are based on the repulsion of oil and water on a flat surface; intaglio, which involves cutting into the surface of a metal plate; and stencil methods such as the silk screen process. Wood engraving is a subtractive technique in which fibres are removed from the end-grain of a wood block; woodcut, alternatively, is made on the cross grain of a wood block. Wood engraving allows for a wide variety of cutting techniques and is extremely durable on a printing press, and so the medium lends itself well to illustration in publications as well as to limited edition printmaking. Wood engraving has a long, intricate and popular history, and is now often used as a contemporary fine art.



This is the first in what promises to be an on-going collaboration between the Wood Engravers Network (WEN) and the Porcupine's Quill. Formed in 1994, the Wood Engravers Network facilitates encouragement and education in this historic, yet contemporary relief medium. The organization maintains a lending library and publishes a resource catalogue and newsletter for members and other artists.

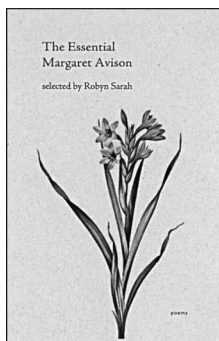
WEN currently supports over two hundred members from around the world.

<http://www.woodengravers.net>

\$16.95 • 24 pp • Cerlox bound • 8"x 5"

ART/PRINTS • 978-0-88984-336-3 • **Available: September 2010**

## The Essential Margaret Avison selected by Robyn Sarah



The sixth volume of the Porcupine Quill's acclaimed series of 'Essential Poets', this collection provides an excellent introduction to prominent Canadian poet Margaret Avison and the evolution of her work. Robyn Sarah's selections amply celebrate Avison's diverse styles and forms, and reveal Avison's unique perspective on and response to her world. Here, one can experience Avison's dazzling diction ('a saucepantilt of water', 'birds clotted in big trees'), her metaphoric and tonal complexities, and her quiet examination of the world in which she lived.

*The Essential Margaret Avison* also traces her movement from skeptical intellectual to committed Christian. Robyn Sarah describes how Avison's work became 'more and more a poetry of inquiry, an inner pondering of her daily givens', in which her experience of the worldly and the transcendent are inextricably tied.

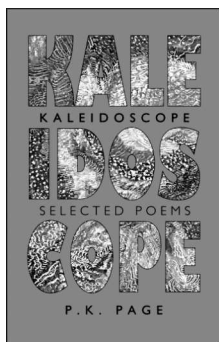
One of Canada's most respected poets, Margaret Avison was born in Ontario in 1918 and died in 2007. In a productive career that stretched back to the 1940s, she produced seven books of poems. Her first collection, *Winter Sun* (1960), assembled in Chicago while she was there on a Guggenheim Fellowship, won the Governor General's Award. *No Time*, a work that focussed on her interest in spiritual discovery and moral and religious values, also won the Governor General's Award for 1990. Avison's published poetry up to 2002 was gathered into *Always Now* and included *Concrete and Wild Carrot* which won the 2003 Griffin Prize. Her most recent poetry book was *Listening, Last Poems*. Margaret Avison was the recipient of many awards including the Order of Canada and three honorary doctorates. Her autobiography, *I Am Here and Not Not-There*, was published posthumously in 2009.



\$12.95 • 64 pp • sewn, paperback • 5.56" x 8.75"  
POEMS • 978-0-88984-333-2 • **Available: October 2010**

## Kaleidoscope: Selected Poems

P. K. Page



Selected by Zailig Pollock, the poetry in *Kaleidoscope: Selected Poems* is elegant and full of marvels, and the chronological presentation reveals Page's growth as a poet over her lifetime. This collection is more than a mere re-publishing of previous work; *Kaleidoscope* includes poetry hitherto unpublished, and Page involved herself in editing certain pieces until her death in January. *Kaleidoscope* is the first in a series of volumes to be published over the next ten years as a complement to an online hypermedia edition of the *Collected Works of P. K. Page*. The online edition is intended

for scholarly research, while *Kaleidoscope* offers a beautiful and inspiring text to be enjoyed by those who love and wonder at Page's achievement.

'Elegant, rigorous, fresh, P. K. Page's work sings with a voice of independent character and maenad conjecture. It is a creature that lives on its own terms and terrain. It is startling, authoritative, and anti-sentimental, able to bear cool as well as passionate gazing at our own species.... Her poems live by wit, wisdom, sass, suspense and a muscular lissome synapse and diction. They are daring in scope, meticulous in accomplishment, and boldly moral – with a lovely flavour of amoral verve!' – Griffin Prize Citation

P. K. Page has written some of the best poems published in Canada over the last five decades. In addition to winning the Governor General's award for poetry in 1957, she was appointed a Companion of the Order of Canada in 1999. She is the author of more than a dozen books, including ten volumes of poetry as well as a memoir in verse, *Hand Luggage*. P. K. Page was born in England and raised on the Canadian prairies. She died in January of 2010.

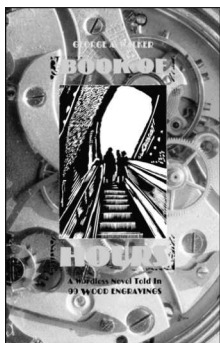


\$24.95 • 240 pp • sewn, paperback • 5.56" x 8.75"

POEMS • 978-0-88984-331-8 • **Available: September 2010**

## Book of Hours

George A. Walker



The *Book of Hours*, a wordless novel, draws us back through time and into the intimate routines of daily life in the hours before the onslaught of 9/11.

Through images, artist George A. Walker expresses what is too horrific for words, and although the inhabitants of the *Book of Hours* can't imagine the tragedy about to befall them, the reader must dread the slow, uneven countdown that weaves between the pages. Through a careful, reverential representation of all the minor tasks that make up a day, the *Book of Hours* pays homage to the small rituals that grant our lives some stability and

meaning in the midst of terrible and incomprehensible events. Walker's art contributes to the great wood engraving tradition established by the likes of Frans Masereel, Lynd Ward and Otto Nückel, and shows the endless need to expose and question social and political injustice through art and narrative.

'The delicacy and intelligence of George Walker's print-making seems to have come to us from a bygone age. Fortunately, we have George with us now.'

– Neil Gaiman, author of *The Sandman*

George A. Walker is an award-winning wood engraver, book artist, teacher, author and illustrator. For over twenty years Walker has exhibited his wood engravings and limited edition books internationally. Among many book projects Walker has illustrated two hand-printed books written by novelist Neil Gaiman. Walker is also the illustrator of the first Canadian edition of Lewis Carroll's *Alice In Wonderland* and *Alice Through the Looking Glass* (Cheshire Cat Press). In 2002, George A. Walker was elected to the Royal Canadian Academy of Art for his contribution to the cultural area of Book Arts. He lives in Toronto where he is an Associate Professor at OCAD.

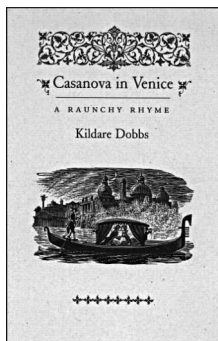


\$19.95 • 192 pp • sewn, paperback • 5.56" x 8.75"

GRAPHIC NOVEL • 978-0-88984-335-6 • **Available: September 2010**

## Casanova in Venice

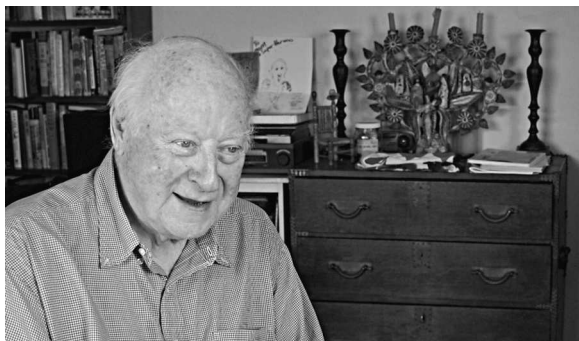
Kildare Dobbs



Imagine a twenty-first-century riposte to Lord Byron's *Don Juan*. *Casanova in Venice* leads the reader on a fast-paced, delightfully raunchy journey in pursuit of that infamous lover and liar, Giacomo Casanova. The rhythm gallops and the imagery bucks as Casanova grows out of innocence into the daring legend that has since become the subject of fascination, envy and art – and Kildare Dobbs reveals every tantalizing detail in rhyming couplets that beg for recitation – or rather, almost every detail. For the narrator of *Casanova in Venice* has a decidedly modern agenda: from complaints about

the excessive sanitation of modern women, to opinions on the Big Bang Theory, the lively banter between narrator, audience and Casanova himself turns this mock-heroic epic into an equally thoughtful commentary on contemporary life. The narrative is based loosely on Casanova's *Memoires* and uses the sort of eighteenth-century poetic conventions that Casanova himself might have used, so nymphs, gods, lyres and Muses all make the occasional appearance. Accompanied by suitably irreverent wood engravings by Wesley Bates, the result is a worthy contribution to modern mythology: 'Arthur, Cu, Scarface, move over, / make room for hero Casanova!'

Born in India, Kildare Dobbs is an award-winning writer and poet who has lived the world over. After serving in the Royal Navy during World War II and in East Africa, Dobbs migrated to Canada in 1952 and worked in journalism and publishing. His autobiography, *Running to Paradise* (1962), won a Governor-General's Award. He has published collections of short stories, novellas and poetry, including *The Great Fur Opera* (1970). In 2000, he was invested with the Order of Ontario. Kildare Dobbs lives and writes in Toronto.

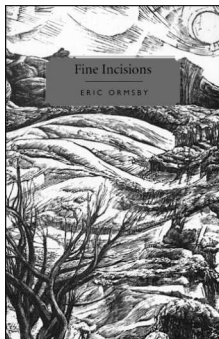


\$14.95 • 80 pp • sewn, paperback • 5.56" x 8.75"

POEMS • 978-0-88984-332-5 • **Available: October 2010**

## **Fine Incisions: Essays on Poetry and Place**

**Eric Ormsby**



Eric Ormsby, that gracious, intelligent and occasionally fractious poet, has produced another vigorous collection of essays to shake North American literary criticism from its lethargy. Opinionated and hilarious, Ormsby indulges his wide-ranging interests and discusses writers from Bob Dylan to S. D. Goitein, La Fontaine to Leo Tolstoy. *Fine Incisions* also draws connections between Ormsby's literary criticism and his travel writing; as his essay 'Shadow Language' notes, the music of another language can seep pleasurably into a writer's work (and, as Ormsby also notes, the lack of such linguistic overlap cheapens much of contemporary poetry!).

Although the topics vary widely, Ormsby's viewpoint remains sharp and uncompromising. His familiarity with North American, British and Arabic literary cultures informs each essay and leads to new and provocative reflection. Most of all, each essay is an expression of Ormsby's own romance with language, and his devotion is clear in his adamant insistence on all writers' very best.

Eric Ormsby's poetry has appeared in major journals in Canada, England and the U.S., including *The New Yorker*, *Parnassus* and *The Oxford American*. His first collection of poems, *Bavarian Shrine and other poems* (1990), won the QSpell Award of 1991. In the following year he received an Ingram Merrill Foundation Award for 'outstanding work as a poet'. His collection, *Coastlines* (1992), was a finalist for the QSpell Award of that year. A third collection, *For a Modest God: New and Selected Poems*, appeared in 1997 with Grove Press in New York. His work has been anthologized in *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* as well as in *The Norton Introduction to Literature*. Eric currently lives in London, England.

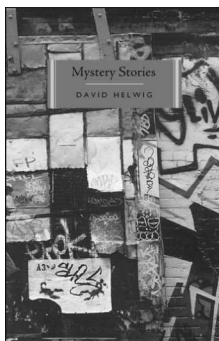


\$24.95 • 256 pp • sewn, paperback • 5.56" x 8.75"

ESSAYS • 978-0-88984-334-9 • **Available: November 2010**

## Mystery Stories

David Helwig



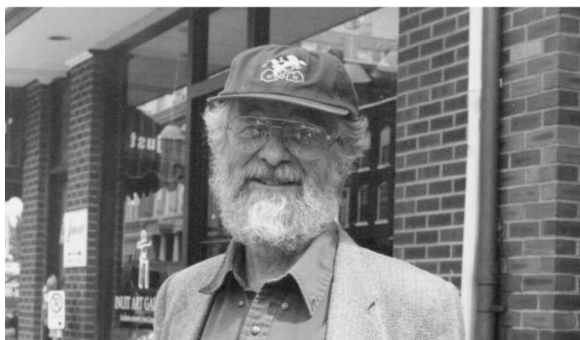
*Mystery Stories* is inhabited by absence: strange trauancies (with equally strange arrivals), missing friends, lost lovers. The survivors are left behind to navigate the pitfalls of memory while trying to make sense of lives built by people no longer present.

There is the young neighbour of Reuben Sachs, an artist, who shot himself only weeks after painting an image of a hanged man. There is Reverend Graham Lund who wonders about his family's future after visiting the deathbed of a hundred-year-old woman, a woman who once was a brazen war reporter. A man, blinded by war, revisits the beauty of Venice in

his dreams, and a snowbound criminal named Wicker cares for an old pony and a three-legged dog while remembering his childhood. Men and women, both faithful and unfaithful, reflect on the past in their creep towards mortality.

Each of these stories is a case study in loss and recovery. The characters and the times change but the mystery explored in each remains constant: What is this life that I have lived, and where have those people gone? *Mystery Stories* is an intricate addition to Helwig's already large canon of rich, thoughtful stories populated by densely real people.

Born in Toronto, David Helwig attended the University of Toronto and the University of Liverpool. He went on to teach at Queen's University, and in 1980 he became a full-time freelance writer. Helwig is the founder and long-time editor of the *Best Canadian Stories* annual, and in 2009, he was appointed to the Order of Canada. He is the author of more than thirty books, mostly fiction and poetry. *Catchpenny Poems* won the CBC Poetry Award in 1983, and in 2004, his long poem, *The Year One*, won the Atlantic Poetry Award. David Helwig lives in the village of Eldon on Prince Edward Island.

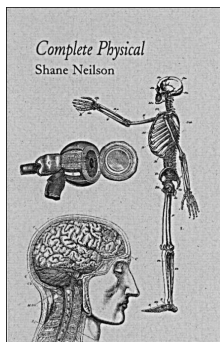


\$27.95 • 288 pp • sewn, paperback • 5.56" x 8.75"

STORIES • 978-0-88984-337-0 • **Available: October 2010**

## Complete Physical

Shane Neilson



Shane Neilson's accustomed fascination with the two great subjects, love and death, has taken a purely professional interest: he has written poetry that fuses his typical poetic concerns with those of his profession as a physician. The poems in *Complete Physical* are primarily lyrics, but there is the occasional villanelle and sestina amidst a squalid sea of punchy narrative; all of the poems ponder what it means to be ill, and some of them celebrate what it means to recover. Some poems even consider the tragic point at which illness becomes identity. In every poem the poet's 'patients' come alive, but the

main character is that of the observant doctor, chiding, cheerleading, and sometimes just drawing his pay.

'... Doctors share one important thing with poets: an obsession with death. Shane Neilson has turned that obsession – and the special deathwatching vantage of his medical trade – into a collection of poems as beguiling and as brave as any I have recently read. In a clinical universe where suffering is distanced by language, *Complete Physical* becomes a kind of extraordinary talking cure. The human predicament has rarely found itself in such good hands.' – Carmine Starnino

The poems in *Complete Physical* address the most important question that the physical begs: How are we to live in this world? Neilson writes, 'The poems make that question tangential, they throw in details to make the poem fastenable ... but they are always answering in earnest.' Neilson is a family physician. He has written numerous books of poetry, and all of his writing shows fealty to his rural New Brunswick origins. He lives in Guelph.



\$14.95 • 64 pp • sewn, paperback • 5.56" x 8.75"  
POEMS • 978-0-88984-325-7 • **Available: June 2010**

## My Other Women

Pauline Carey



In *My Other Women*, Pauline Carey takes a sidelong, sardonic look at the institution of marriage through the eyes of a young woman who wants no part of it. Andrea Dermot is a gifted, determined young actress who creates a life and career for herself in the wave of theatrical innovation that erupted in Toronto in the 1960s. Believing that an artist with ambition must need to guard her independence, Andrea chooses to avoid marriage, but she can't ignore love: the arrival of the contraceptive pill to Canada, nudity to Toronto stages and Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* all point to an age of revolutionary freedom for women, men and Canadian theatre.

There are intriguing parallels between Andrea's exploration of her work in the theatre and exploration of her sexuality. The three main loves of Andrea's life are three married men, each of whom works in the arts. And three times, after the love affairs and the marriages fall apart, Andrea finds a friend and co-worker in her ex-lover's wife. (Do the wives know? Perhaps.) The examination of love and friendship in *My Other Women* adds a deeper emotional colour and truth to the story, while Carey's portrait of a time of rebellion and change is sharp, insightful and entertaining.

Pauline Carey, currently living in Toronto, is a former actor and ongoing writer of plays about Pauline Johnson, Anna Jameson, Emily Murphy, Mary Shelley and her parents Mary Wollstonecraft and William Godwin, and a musical about four obstreperous bugs. She is also the author of two children's picture books, a children's novel, and various short fiction and song lyrics. *My Other Women* is her debut novel.



\$22.95 • 208 pp • sewn, paperback • 5.56" x 8.75"

FICTION/NOVEL • 978-0-88984-327-1 • **Available: June 2010**

## Books in Print

This is a partial list of recent titles. For a complete listing of all Porcupine's Quill backlist currently in print please visit our new website: <http://porcupinesquill.ca>

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