

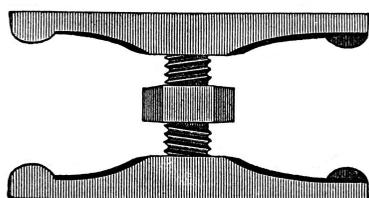


# *The Porcupine's Quill*

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*Spring 2021*



*The Porcupine's Quill*  
**Press sharply.**

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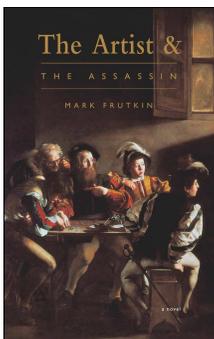
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- purchase directly at [store.porcupinesquill.ca](http://store.porcupinesquill.ca)
- or order through **Google Play**, which will facilitate international sales in any number of local currencies. Digital copies of the *Devil's Artisan* are also available from **Magzter**, and select PQL backlist may be available from **Ebsco**, **Gibson Library Services**, **ProQuest** and **Scribd**.

The collection features the poetry of P.K. Page, the wordless novels of George A. Walker and more than twenty titles from our Essential Poets series, showcasing work by Margaret Avison, Earle Birney, Don Coles, Daryl Hine, D.G. Jones, Jay Macpherson, P.K. Page, James Reaney and other luminaries.



As you may know if you're a blog follower and/or newsletter subscriber, we have been known to give away bits and bobs from our catalogue on occasion. This spring, in order to ease the uptake of such largesse (and with some gentle encouragement from Digital Main Street), we've begun the process of adding a curated selection of literary morsels to our PQL eStore as Free Downloads. As it stands the offer includes three categories—Catalogues, Broad­sides and Chapbooks—the latter intended to provide free 'bonus' content such as Tim Inkster's behind-the-scenes look at the challenges attached to the publication of Leon Rooke's novel *The House on Major Street*.



## The Artist & the Assassin

Mark Frutkin

MAY

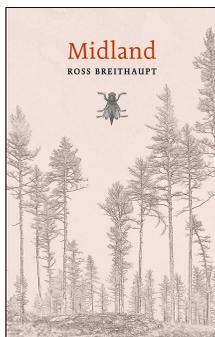
**The play of light and shadow defines Mark Frutkin's vibrant narrative based on the life of the seventeenth-century painter known as Caravaggio, whose revolutionary use of the chiaroscuro technique fuelled his dazzling success while his demons led him down a path to exile and, ultimately, assassination.**

Rome, 1600. In the shadowed cellars of Cardinal Del Monte's palazzo, a shaft of light illuminates the face of Luca Passarelli. Across the room, behind an enormous canvas, the mercurial artist Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio paints with sure brushstrokes Luca's likeness into a new masterpiece. Caravaggio is both revered and reviled by his patrons as well as his fellow artists. His innovative paintings and his blazing temper have made him powerful friends, but also powerful enemies—enemies who are determined to quench the flame of his talent. What Caravaggio does not know is that Luca is a professional assassin, a bitter and spiteful man who, in his dark past, has 'breathed in death' and has committed murder on multiple occasions. What the artist does not know is that when next they meet it will not be a canvas that brings them together, but rather revenge ... and death.

**Mark Frutkin** is the author of over a dozen books of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. His works include the Trillium Book Award-winning *Fabrizio's Return* (Vintage, 2006), which was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, and *Atmospheres Apollinaire* (The Porcupine's Quill, 1988), which was shortlisted for the Governor General's Award, the Trillium and the Ottawa Book Award. He lives in Ottawa.

\$19.95 • 224 pp • sewn, paperback • 8.75" x 5.56"

FICTION/Literary • 978-0-88984-880-1



## Midland

Ross Breithaupt

MAY

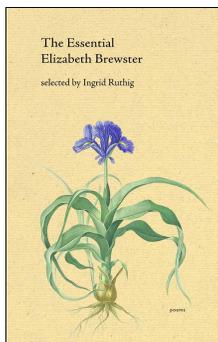
**A traumatized young man steps away from his protective family and embarks on a transformative two-month stint as a tree planter in Northern Ontario. There he seeks comfort and healing in new friends, a mix-tape and letters to his dead brother.**

It is the spring of 1987 and the blackflies are thick in the air. Twenty-year-old Rory Fleck joins a tree-planting brigade in Northern Ontario, camping out in a pup tent and whiling away the evenings writing letters to his dead brother. Haunted by dreams and plagued by gruesome visions from the past, Rory goes in search of the rhythm—in planting and in life—that leads to the mindless trance tree planters call ‘Freak Zero’. He takes comfort in a meaningful mix-tape named VOYAGER 1 (ten songs, one for each full year his older brother, Mike, has been gone) and he develops a camaraderie with his fellows in the camp: timid, meticulous planter Eddie; gruff, Shakespeare-spouting camp cook Jerry; and kind, vibrant, tempting Betina. But there are others whose motives are less than friendly. Crew boss Ty’s rampant jealousy threatens Rory and Betina’s budding relationship, and the mysterious Mr W’s calm detachment conceals a startling connection to Rory’s past. When his time as a tree planter comes to an abrupt and painful end, Rory must either keep running, or find out what it means to stop and face the music.

After experiencing one season as a tree planter in Northern Ontario, **Ross Breithaupt** was a middle school teacher in suburban Toronto for twenty-two years. He has since spent his time writing his debut novel, *Midland*, as well as a series of essays for the *Globe and Mail*. He lives in Toronto.

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

FICTION/Literary • 978-0-88984-883-2



## The Essential Elizabeth Brewster

selected by Ingrid Ruthig

←  
APRIL

**Questioning, conversational poetry melds the private and the collective, exploring the challenges of constructing selfhood and voicing historically silenced female perspectives.**

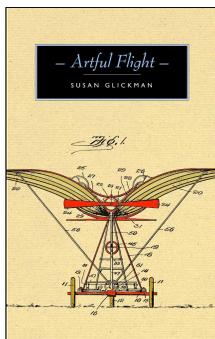
Despite an impressive post-secondary education and a body of work that spans more than twenty books and seven decades, Elizabeth Brewster's quiet humility in the face of 'all that tradition' of the Western literary canon belies her contribution to Canada's cultural history. Perhaps fittingly, her poems demonstrate a sense of isolation, a quest for selfhood, a desire to understand and to be understood. Often conversational in tone, her poems are direct and characterized by a deliberate economy of language and freedom from the restrictions of traditional form. Editor Ingrid Ruthig examines the aesthetic touchstones, stylistic shifts and thematic range in the poetry of a woman 'whose work is included in critical anthologies while her name is [oddly] missing from their introductions.'

The Essential Poets Series presents the works of Canada's most celebrated poets in a package that is beautiful, accessible and affordable. *The Essential Elizabeth Brewster* is the twenty-second volume in the popular series.

**Elizabeth Brewster** was part of a second wave of modernist poets who helped influence the national conversation about Canadian poetry. Born in Chipman, New Brunswick, Brewster eventually settled in Saskatoon where she taught literature and creative writing at the University of Saskatchewan from 1972 to 1990. Brewster died in December of 2012 in Saskatoon, at the age of 90.

\$14.95 • 64 pp • sewn, paperback • 8.75" x 5.56"

POETRY/Canadian • 978-0-88984-878-8



## Artful Flight

Susan Glickman

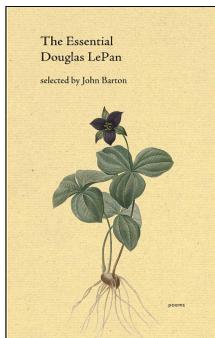
←  
APRIL

**Susan Glickman dives into poetry and prose, music and visual art in an effort to find the joy in creative work not as a path to the truth but as an end in itself.**

Susan Glickman muses that thoughtful literary criticism is not merely about ‘duelling with words, however full of flourishes and feints’. Rather it ‘means—or ought to mean—to evaluate something dispassionately, seeing not only its faults but its virtues.’ In *Artful Flight*, she does just that, writing respectfully but uncompromisingly about artistic topics from the ostensibly familiar (such as considerations of writers like Northrop Frye, Don Coles, Erín Moure and Bronwen Wallace) to the delightfully arcane (such as the etymological evolution of contronyms in Shakespeare and beyond). With keen intelligence and droll wit, Glickman explores a variety of artistic concerns, from the expectations of literary genre, the formalist hurdles of poetry and the tyranny of modern opinion to the magical history of the violin and the pleasure of creating visual art later in life. Her approach is unabashedly her own: feminist, supportive and drawing on a wide range of cultural and literary references. These well-reasoned essays prove that balanced criticism can be compelling, nuanced and sensitive to the motives and influences of artists.

**Susan Glickman’s** itinerant lifestyle has included the study of classical civilization in Athens, yoga in India and English literature at Oxford. She has enjoyed a varied career as an educator, editor and academic, and has written over a dozen books in a variety of genres. Her most recent publication is *What We Carry* (Vehicule, 2019). She lives in Toronto.

\$24.95 • 208 pp • sewn, paperback • 8.75" x 5.56"  
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## The Essential Douglas LePan

selected by John Barton



NOW AVAILABLE

The 19th volume in the Essential Poets series presents the poetry of Douglas LePan in a wide-ranging collection—from tense verses on the fog of war to homoerotic love poems to lyrics in praise of the natural world—in celebration of the heart's blood 'that runs through and supports everything mankind has made'.

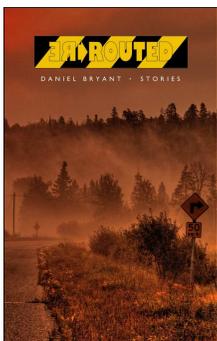
A veteran of the Second World War, Douglas LePan never forgot his experience of the horrors of battle. His bold, powerful verses often recall scenes of valour, tenacity and honour amid the 'festivals of savagery' that soldiers face at every turn. LePan not only lauded individual bravery; he counterbalanced his focus on combat with luminous moments of comradeship, vulnerability and candour. Whether writing about love, war or the natural world, LePan's work serves to 'Plunder the mind's aerial cages/Or the heart's deep catacombs', and to reveal the human capacity for courage.

The Essential Poets Series presents the works of Canada's most celebrated poets in a package that is beautiful, accessible and affordable.

Born in 1914, **Douglas LePan** served in Italy with the Canadian Army during the Second World War—an experience he never forgot, and one that informed much of his literary output. He served in the Canadian foreign service before taking up an academic life, teaching at Queen's University and at the University of Toronto. He won both the Governor General's Literary Award for Poetry (in 1953 for *The Net and the Sword*) and for Fiction (in 1964 for *The Deserter*). Douglas LePan died in Toronto in 1998.

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POETRY/Canadian • 978-0-88984-423-0



## Rerouted

Daniel Bryant

NOW AVAILABLE



**Expect the unexpected in Daniel Bryant's collection of linked short stories in which myth, mirth and mayhem are never far away.**

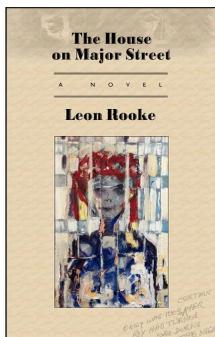
A postal worker confronts the supernatural after he is assigned a cursed route near an abandoned tannery. An attempted robbery goes awry when dimwitted thieves decide to knock off a coffee joint ... before it opens for business. Touring musicians experience uncomfortably close encounters while on the road in Northern Ontario. Serial killers and shape shifters are the least of their problems ... bad song writing—that's the real elephant in the room.

These and other stories form a linked narrative in which the mysterious Benny Tak appears and disappears. Is he a cipher? Some insidious background performer who shows up in everyone's personal narrative? Either way, he is ready for his close-up—with lines memorized. Eerie and at times otherworldly, the darkly comic tales in *Rerouted* take surprising detours, exploring what happens when plans change, things get weird, and fate is rerouted.

**Daniel Bryant** was born in Montreal and grew up in the small town of Aurora, Ontario. He graduated with an Honours B.A. in English from York University and received the Timothy Findley/William Whitehead Scholarship to attend the Humber School for Writers Correspondence Program. He has mentored with Paul Quarrington and Will Ferguson. *Rerouted* is his first collection of short stories. When not writing, Dan has worked many interesting jobs: at a large printing company, a tannery, a tart factory, and on a film crew. He currently works for Canada Post as a letter carrier. He lives in Toronto with his wife, Nancy.

\$19.95 • 204 pp • sewn, paperback • 8.75" x 5.56"

FICTION/Short Stories • 978-0-88984-421-6



## The House on Major Street

Leon Rooke

NOW AVAILABLE



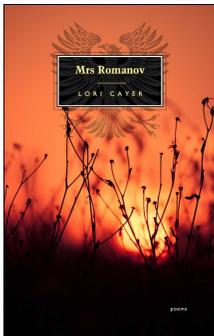
Populated by media personalities, literary characters, three-legged deer-like creatures and an array of idiosyncratic Toronto neighbours, Leon Rooke's latest extravaganza is an internal and external picaresque tale which begins with a dramatic bicycle accident and explores, along the way, the blurred boundaries between the stories we read, the stories we tell and the stories we live.

When free-spirited teenager Zan sets out on her bike to buy kitty litter she has no idea she's about to send her neighbour and maybe-sort-of crush Tallis into a months-long coma, kicking off a series of events both real and surreal that will change everything and everyone on her Toronto Annex street. Metafictional appearances are made by characters as diverse as J. J. O'Molloy, Chekhov's Riabovitch, an infamous lapdog and the indignant Rebecca Whitehall, heroine of fictional Sheila Shott's steamy romance novels. As these and divers others interact with the peculiarly ordinary inhabitants and neighbours of 2X8 Major Street, friendships, dalliances and alliances are formed and re-formed with uncommon results. Politics and literary culture intrude by turns. Through it all two questions overarch: Will Tallis ever wake up? And what will that mean for Zan?

**Leon Rooke** is an energetic and prolific storyteller whose writing is characterized by inventive language, experimental form and an extreme range of characters with distinctive voices. *Shakespeare's Dog* won the Governor General's Award in 1983 and toured as a play as far afield as Barcelona and Edinburgh. *A Good Baby* was made into a feature film. Rooke founded the Eden Mills Writers' Festival in 1989. In 2007, he was made a member of the Order of Canada. He lives in Toronto.

\$19.95 • 224 pp • sewn, paperback • 8.75" x 5.56"

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## Mrs Romanov

Lori Cayer



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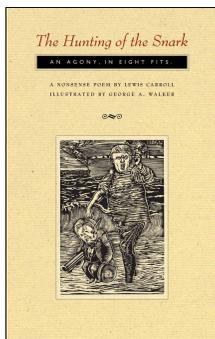
**Lori Cayer's fourth poetry collection reveals the unexpectedly quotidian concerns of Alexandra Feodorovna, the last tsarina of Imperial Russia.**

Tsarina Alexandra Feodorovna was many things. She was a granddaughter of Queen Victoria, a dedicated dupe of the notorious mystic Grigori Rasputin—and a loving wife of Tsar Nicholas II of Russia and mother to their five children. In her collection of poems, *Mrs Romanov*, Lori Cayer gives voice to the expectations and fears of the last tsarina of Imperial Russia. With great empathy and emotion, she presents a portrait of a woman whose concerns, even as she navigates the 'forest of eyes and gossiping teeth' of her unwelcoming adoptive country, prove startlingly domestic. Cayer captures Alexandra's devotion to her husband and her children, in particular her constant anxiety over her young, haemophiliac son: 'anyone who could see into this house / would see love / breathing itself like a tubercular lung / imprinting itself to life like a snapshot'. But in so doing, Cayer exposes another Alexandra, one whose attempts to bolster her politically inept husband caused Russia to veer sharply from autocracy to revolution, and her family from prosperity to fatal captivity.

**Lori Cayer** is the author of three previous poetry collections, including *Dopamine Blunder* (2016), *Attenuations of Force* (2010) and *Stealing Mercury* (2004). A winner of the John Hirsch Award and the Eileen McTavish Sykes Award, she is a former co-editor of *Contemporary Verse 2* and is co-founder of the Lansdowne Prize for Poetry. Her poetry is endlessly informed by her editorial work in scientific research publishing. She lives in Winnipeg.

\$16.95 • 112 pp • sewn, paperback • 8.75" x 5.56"

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## The Hunting of the Snark

Lewis Carroll / George A. Walker



NOW AVAILABLE

**Masterful wood engraver George A. Walker provides an uproarious reinterpretation of Lewis Carroll's classic poem as seen through the convex lens of contemporary American politics.**

Lewis Carroll's classic nonsense poem *The Hunting of the Snark* follows a band of misfits as they undertake an epic quest to catch a fantastical creature known as the Snark. Led by the bombastic and bewildering Bellman, the crew sets out with enthusiasm, a blank map—and no clear idea of what they're doing.

This newly illustrated edition contains all the delightful darkness and droll sarcasm of Carroll's original text; and yet, wood engraver George A. Walker cleverly reimagines the tale through his illustrations, drawing from the world of presidential politics to recast the story. In so doing, Walker creates an irresistible commentary on contemporary America, memorializing a baffling political climate and providing a sharp new way of looking at a familiar poem.

**George A. Walker** is an award-winning wood engraver, book artist, teacher, author and illustrator. He is Associate Professor at OCAD University in Toronto where he has taught popular courses in book arts and printmaking since 1985. Walker is also the illustrator of the first Canadian editions of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Alice Through the Looking-Glass*. Walker was elected to the Royal Canadian Academy of Art in 2002 for his contribution to the cultural area of Book Arts. He lives in Toronto.

**Lewis Carroll** (1832–98) was a British mathematician who was best known for his novels and poems for children in the genre of literary nonsense.

\$16.95 • 88 pp • sewn, paperback • 8.75" x 5.56"

ART/Canadian • 978-0-88984-430-8

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