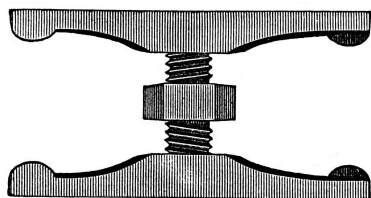




The Porcupine's Quill

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Spring 2022



The Porcupine's Quill
Press sharply.

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In recent years all of our frontlist and select backlist titles have become available in searchable PDF files designed primarily for use on tablets. Many of these quality digital productions have been recognized by the eLit awards programme administered by the Jenkins Group of Traverse City, MI.

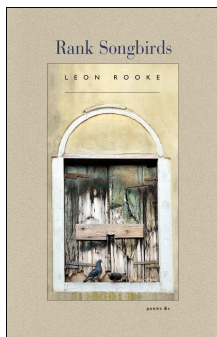
To date the collection includes more than 100 Porcupine's Quill titles as well as two dozen back issues of the *Devil's Artisan*. To explore the range:

- purchase directly at 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 four categories—Catalogues, Broad­sides, Bookmarks and Chapbooks—the latter intended to provide free 'bonus' content such as Tim Inkster's personal collections of *Dingbats*, *Ornaments & Fanciful Initials* and *Victorian Christmas Ornaments*.



Rank Songbirds

Leon Rooke

MARCH

Leon Rooke's latest collection delves into the drama and humour of love and desire, politics and the passing of time, celebrating humanity's resilience and its inherent frailty.

"Tonight / I'll serenade you / With kisses / Modestly dressed..."

In *Rank Songbirds*, Leon Rooke deploys his playful wit and slantwise perspective to explore the joys and the burdens, the hilarities and the surprises of life in its absurd, charming, tragic minutiae.

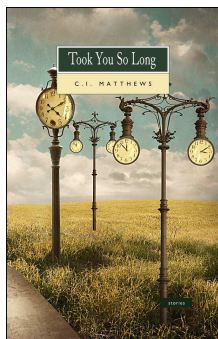
These are poems that revel in foibles, saucy verbal sparring and the possibilities of artistic expression while ever mindful of the fallibility of humanity, its voracious appetites, its complicit silences, its convulsive politics.

And though it may be that "Those angels serenading us through / Hazardous night were rank songbirds chirping away / Mindless of hawks zooming overhead," the poems remind us that today is not to be confused with last week's curse, that freedom is getting the high notes right and that, in a pinch, one may still aspire to 'apply love's bandage to the shattered heart / This minute pooling blood about your feet.'

Leon Rooke is an international reveller, skirt-chaser and former wastrel whose celebrated oeuvre may have been ghosted by his wicked half-sister, or maybe his mother, or an eighteenth-century 'Keeper of the Lamps'. But not this one. We may wonder why. Also, he's a raffish [ed. note: charming] bum.

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

POETRY/Canadian • 978-0-88984-448-3



Took You So Long

C.I. Matthews

MAY

A first collection that presents emotionally resonant stories about ultra-modern relationships and deeply flawed characters mired in the circumstances of their everyday lives.

Often out of sight and certainly out of mind, the characters in *Took You So Long* inhabit the largely unknown and certainly neglected landscape of the Saugeen watershed south of Owen Sound, in the lee of Lake Huron.

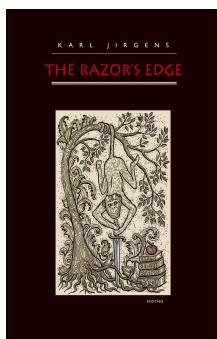
A morel-seeking gastronome falls into a gopher hole and must await rescue by her milquetoast neighbour. A donation bin picker is on the hunt for her next great find—and husband number four—despite cohabitating with three of her exes. A lonely widower discovers that his robotic full-service companion makes him lonelier than ever. A son's hunting trip with his father forces him to confront the terrible truth of physical decline.

Compassionate, honest and propelled by forceful emotion, Matthews's stories ask us to question who we are, where we belong, and how we move on in the face of adversity.

C.I. Matthews has variously worked as a chambermaid, potato peeler, data entry operator, teacher, and vice-principal of special education programs. Her writing has appeared in regular columns for the *Walkerton Herald-Times* and *SPOTLIGHT West Grey*, as well as in anthologies and literary magazines in Canada, the USA, the UK, Australia and South Africa. She lives and works on a large rural property near Chesley in Bruce County, Ontario.

\$18.95 • 160 pp • sewn, paperback • 8.75" x 5.56"

FICTION/Short Stories • 978-0-88984-446-9



The Razor's Edge

Karl Jirgens

MARCH

A collection of linked short stories that hopscotches between time and space to explore the haunting hunger that reaches beyond the physical and into the spiritual—for love, for understanding and for truth.

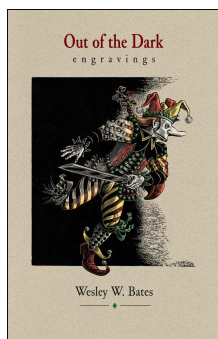
‘Unwillingly, I’ve become part of the story. Questions lie when reconstructing incomplete facts, half-truths, enigmas. What remains is incompleteness, interruption. Only the dead know what happened.’

In *The Razor's Edge*, Karl Jirgens presents a collection of interlinked fictions that inhabit half-way worlds between past and present, dream and actuality, science and divination. Ordinary daily activities and events lead to unexpected slides into lucid dreams and flirtations with the edge of madness. Drawing on literature and pop culture (from Cinderella and Hamlet to Vladimir Mayakovsky and Anthony Bourdain) as well as the history of twentieth-century genocides (including the Holocaust and the Gulag), these complex, magic realist stories suggest that what seems separate is really interconnected, that the distinction between past, present and future is illusion, and that we may all die of the truth if the truth were truly known.

Karl Jirgens is an author and editor whose books include the short story collections *Strappado* (Coach House Press, 1985) and *A Measure of Time* (Mercury Press, 1995), as well as several works of literary criticism. From 1979 to 2016, he edited and published the international journal of art, writing and theory, *Rampike*. He is also a grandmaster of the Korean martial art of TaeKwonDo (8th degree black belt). He lives in Windsor, Ontario.

\$18.95 • 144 pp • sewn, paperback • 8.75" x 5.56"

FICTION/Short Stories • 978-0-88984-450-6



Out of the Dark

Wesley W. Bates

APRIL

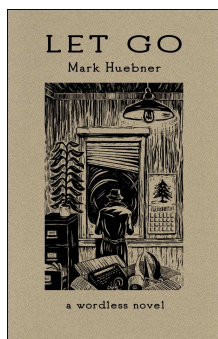
A compilation of wood engravings that bring to life exquisite landscapes and arresting theatrical scenes, all rendered simply but powerfully in the deep back and stark white of the storied artistic discipline.

The exacting art of wood engraving is defined by presence and absence, shadow and light, black and white. An arduous yet rewarding art form, it requires an artistic eye and a dedication to technique in order to imbue each image with its own visual narrative. Wood engraver Wesley W. Bates, the artist behind the acclaimed *The Point of the Graver*, demonstrates the power and precision of the form in his new collection *Out of the Dark*. Bates brings to bear decades of experience, deftly wielding his graver to coax vibrant and lifelike images from solid blocks of endgrain wood. In so doing, he frees each likeness not only from the blocks that hold them captive but also from the nether reaches of his prodigious imagination.

Wesley W. Bates was born in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. One of Canada's best-known engravers, Bates has ventured into book illustration (W.O. Mitchell's *The Black Bonspiel of Willie MacCrimmon*), film (*Look and See: A Portrait of Wendell Berry*), commercial art (the voyageur motif for Upper Canada Brewery), letterpress publishing (through his West Meadow Press) and acoustic country—played, naturally, on a bouzouki. A collection of his work, *The Point of the Graver*, was published to great acclaim in 1994. A retrospective *In Black and White* was published by Bird & Bull in 2005, with a revised edition released by Gaspereau in 2008. Wesley maintains a studio, which is open to the public, in a nineteenth-century storefront on the main street of Clifford, Ontario.

\$21.95 • 192 pp • sewn, paperback • 8.75" x 5.56"

GRAPHIC ART/Canadian • 978-0-88984-444-5



Let Go

Mark Huebner

NOW AVAILABLE

A story of travail and triumph, Mark Huebner's wordless novel follows a laid-off ad man struggling to carry the deadweight of his past as he labours through a blizzard toward an uncertain future.

After being fired from his job, a veteran ad man is escorted from the office carrying a cardboard box packed with mementos of his career. He steps out into a blinding blizzard, burdened by the weight of his achievements.

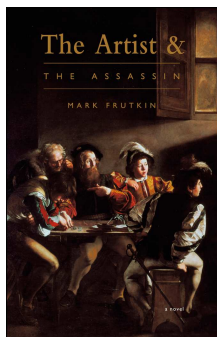
Each object tells a story, and evokes memories from his past: former colleagues, an award-winning campaign, a lost love. But faced with the demands of the present—and the very real danger of the snow-bound city streets—he must decide whether to hold on to the objects of his past, or to let go in the hopes of surviving the night.

The bold, honest linocuts in Mark Huebner's *Let Go* form an evocative narrative that distills over twenty years of memories into a single night of intense struggle against nature both meteorological and human.

Mark Huebner is a Canadian advertising copywriter and commercial illustrator. After studying film directing and screenwriting at New York University, Oral Roberts University and University of Winnipeg, Mark started his career in film production before discovering that copywriting provided a broader channel for his compelling narratives. He is the author of *Sports Bloopers: All-Star Flubs and Fumbles* (Firefly Books, 2003), a YALSA Quick Pick for Reluctant Young Adult Readers. He lives in Toronto.

\$26.95 • 288 pp • sewn, paperback • 8.75" x 5.56"

GRAPHIC ART/Canadian • 978-0-88984-439-1



The Artist & the Assassin

Mark Frutkin

NOW AVAILABLE

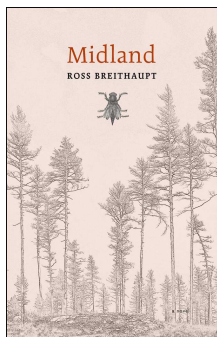
The play of light and shadow defines Mark Frutkin's vibrant narrative based on the life of the seventeenth-century painter known as Caravaggio, whose revolutionary use of the chiaroscuro technique fuelled his dazzling success while his demons led him down the path of exile and, ultimately, assassination.

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 • 216 pp • sewn, paperback • 8.75" x 5.56"

FICTION/Literary • 978-0-88984-880-1



Midland

Ross Breithaupt

NOW AVAILABLE

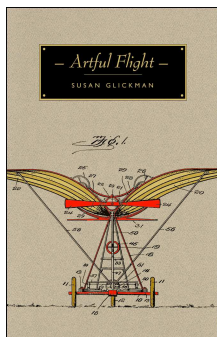
A traumatized young man steps away from his protective family and embarks on a transformative two-month stint as a tree planter in Northern Ontario. There he seeks comfort and healing in new friends, a mix-tape and letters to his dead brother.

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 • 176 pp • sewn, paperback • 8.75" x 5.56"

FICTION/Literary • 978-0-88984-883-2



Artful Flight

Susan Glickman

NOW AVAILABLE

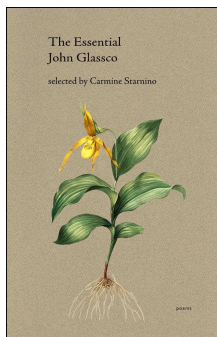
Susan Glickman dives into poetry and prose, music and visual art in an effort to find the joy in creative work not as a path to the truth but as an end in itself.

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 contranymy 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 • 256 pp • sewn, paperback • 8.75" x 5.56"

ESSAYS/Canadian • 978-0-88984-879-5



The Essential John Glassco

selected by Carmine Starnino

NOW AVAILABLE

A collection of the poetic achievements of John Glassco, a Montreal Group poet whose technical giftedness and unimpeachable wordplay brought music and flair to poems characterized by darkness and decay.

Despite his reputation as Canada's dandy-poet and his approach to writing as 'a challenge best overcome by panache', John Glassco's poems demonstrate a seemingly incongruous preoccupation with rural life and an intense interest in decline, dilapidation and despair. Plagued by chronic self-doubt and the fear of wasting literary effort, Glassco explored, through his poems, 'graveyards minding their business', buildings 'long in standing, longer still in falling', and the toil of 'hope battered into habit, and a habit / Running to weariness'. The result is a selection of work that features syntactic daring, a somewhat anachronistic pleasure in constructedness and a compulsion to turn feelings of unsuitability into art.

John Glassco was a Canadian writer known for his reputation as a dandy as well as for his sophisticated poetry and prose. Born in 1909 to a wealthy family in Montreal, he attended McGill University where he became part of the Montreal Group of modernist writers. He later abandoned his studies to head to Paris, where he encountered many luminaries of the 1920s expatriate community, several of whom appear in his fictionalized *Memoirs of Montparnasse*. Glassco returned to Canada in the 1930s, settling in Foster in Quebec's Eastern Townships. He went on to publish a wide variety of writings, from critical essays and book reviews to short stories and pornographic novels. His *Selected Poems* won the Governor General's Award in 1971. Glassco died in 1981.

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

POETRY/Canadian • 978-0-88984-442-1

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