

Malahat *lite*

Virtual Newsletter of *The Malahat Review*

Vol. 7, No. 3, Fall 2010

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1. Issue 172, Fall 2010 In the mail and on newsstands Nov. 2010!

Our Fall issue brings a bumper crop of crisp writing for your reading pleasure during the golden days and chilly nights. A featured highlight is **Darren Bifford's** "Wolf Hunter," the winner of the 2010 Far Horizons Award for Poetry as selected by judge Daryl Hine. Other fine poems by **George Amabile, Chris Banks, Shane Book, Asa Boxer, Elizabeth Brewster, Caroline Clark, Karen Enns, Timothy Liu, Steve Noyes, Ruth Roach Pierson, Lisa Richter, Karen Schmidt, and Patricia Young** top up a cornucopia of verse.

Fiction-istas are in for a treat as well. In **Dede Crane's** "The Fall of Langue d'Occ" a linguistics professor with a family of her own tries to gauge what's really going on with her elderly mother who lives alone (or does she?) in another city. A series of phone calls between them illustrate how real communication can fail when "...*words cease to convey meaning, their structural sounds derelict and hollow, an echo of themselves.*" Told with humour and tenderness, this story will touch anyone who's ever dealt with an aging parent. In "You Must Never Go Down to the End of Town," **Elisabeth Harvor's** narrator is on a trans-Atlantic flight of fancy as she shares a row of seats with Dillon, a man for whom she has a seemingly ambivalent attraction, and "La Dominatrix," an imperious but charming five-year-old girl travelling alone. "*But even as we were mocking her, I was convinced that I would be euphoric if I could someday have a little daughter exactly like her....*" Flying into the dark, muttered conversations and private thoughts mingle until they reveal a surprising hidden truth.

From planes to trains—**Aparna Sanyal's** non-fiction contribution, "Shadows on a Train," is a rumination that considers troubling concepts of "home," "place," and "belonging" against the colourful backdrop of a journey on India's Darjeeling Express. Sanyal's willingness to examine her own prejudice and confusion against what she perceives in others makes for a provocative essay.

And, as usual, we have a line-up of must-read reviews of recent Canadian poetry, fiction, and non-fiction. There's a windfall of good reading in this issue. We hope you enjoy every "leaf."

2. A Room we Enter: Darren Bifford in Conversation with Chelsea Rushton

Find out how this year's **Far Horizons Award for Poetry** winner, **Darren Bifford** was inspired by a moral revulsion to NFB documentaries to write his winning poem, "**Wolf Hunter**":

"...I doubt whether the speaker would be lead to change his mind about hunting. In fact I'm less interested in a poem making this moral point."

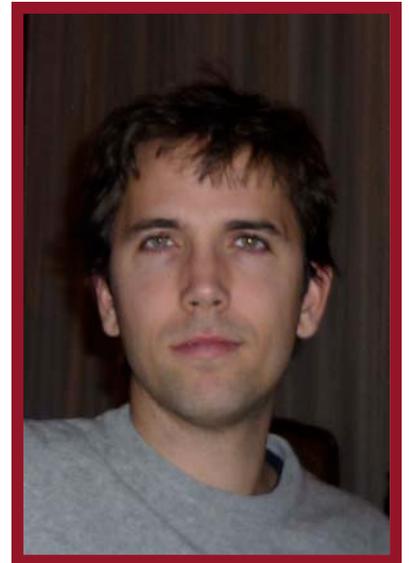
Darren's full conversation with *Malahat* volunteer **Chelsea Rushton** can be found on our website: [http://www.malahatreview.ca/announcements/farhorizons_2010_interview.html]

Chelsea Rushton:

What is the appeal of wolf hunting for the speaker? Is it the thrill of the catch? The trip? The scenery? The thought of a new coat? Is it all these things? Or does it go deeper than all these things?

Darren Bifford:

I think at a basic level the appeal of the hunt for this particular hunter is little more than the desire to kill a wolf. At least I didn't have much more than that in mind when I began to write this poem. I imagined the speaker both stupid and arrogant, but not terribly so. I was more interested in the fact of an aerial hunt and what might be the subjective experience of one who had paid a good deal of money to fly north in order to kill a wolf. The poem was motivated by several NFB documentaries I'd spent some time watching—one of which included some aerial-hunting footage.



If there's any deeper appeal or motivation it extends into irrational territory. In high school our class read "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." Our teacher asked why it is that the Mariner kills the Albatross. Students tried out various reasons, but a friend of mine said something that has stuck with me through the years: he had no reason. The bird was there so he killed it. No reason at all.

Read the rest of the interview on our website!

[http://www.malahatreview.ca/announcements/farhorizons_2010_interview.html]

3. The Malahat Review's Fall Issue (#172) and Best Canadian Poetry in English 2010 Launch Party

Sunday, November 14th
3:00 p.m.
The Legacy Art Gallery
and Cafe, 630 Yates
FREE admission

Join us in launching both our Fall 2010 issue (#172) and *The Best Canadian Poetry in English 2010*.



Lorna Crozier will start things off by introducing *BCPIE 2010* and giving some

insight into her selection process.

We will then hear readings from *Best Canadian Poetry in English 2010* poets **John Donlan, Tim Lilburn, Melanie Siebert, and Anne Marie Turza**.

Patricia Young

will serve as the bridge between the book and our Fall issue; her poems having appeared in both. We will then hear from **Dede Crane, Karen Enns, and Steve Noyes** who were all published in our Fall issue.



On **November 8th**, from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m., tune into “Wild Orphans” on **CFUV 101.9 FM** to hear a pre-launch chat with **Lorna Crozier, Karen Enns,** and more of our launch readers.

4. Winner of our 2010 Creative Non-Fiction Prize: Eve Joseph

Congratulations to **Eve Joseph**, of Brentwood Bay, BC on winning our 2010 Creative Non-Fiction Prize! Her entry, “**Intimate Strangers**,” was chosen by this year’s judge, **David Leach**, out of 188 entries.

Leach commented that Joseph’s piece “is an *essay* in the most fundamental sense of that much-abused word: a spirited attempt to discern the unknowable, a brave sally into a dark thicket of our shared experience, and a careful sifting of the author’s travels through the land of the dying. In twelve compact “stanzas,” the essay illuminates one of the great mysteries of the human condition with a supple and often incandescent array of imagery, insight, allusion, even humour—and a daring lack of sentimentality. It’s a work of poetic prose that can rest comfortably alongside the classic writers of the genre, from Michel de Montaigne to Annie Dillard.”

EVE JOSEPH was born in 1953 and grew up in North Vancouver. Her first book of poetry *The Startled Heart* was published by Oolichan Press in 2004 and nominated for the Dorothy Livesay Award. Her second book, *The Secret Signature of Things* came out with Brick in the spring of 2010. Her work has been published in a wide number of Canadian and American journals and anthologies. Eve was awarded second place in the Great Blue Heron Contest sponsored by *The Antigonish Review* in 2007 and 2009. She was recently awarded the 2010 P. K. Page Founder’s Award for the best poem of the year in *The Malahat Review* and was shortlisted for the 2009 CBC Literary Awards in the creative non-fiction category. Her book, *The Secret Signature of Things* is on the shortlist for the 2010 Butler Book Prize.



“Intimate Strangers” will appear in our Winter, 2010 issue (#173). Look for an interview with Eve Joseph in *Malahat lite* and on our website in December, 2010.

Congratulations to this year’s finalists:

Shortlist: Tricia Dower, “Graceful”; Mark Jarman, “The Troubled English Bride”; Jay Brown, “Our Bear.”

Longlist: Gillian Bennett, “Dear Robin”; Marilyn Gear Pilling, “Doubletake”; Kevin Leenders, “Naval Diving Accident”; Jenna Spearing, “Sandbag Samurai”; Corey Van’t Haaff, “The Family Room.”

5. Our Summer issue (#171) launch: September 16th at UVic



On September 16th, we celebrated our Summer issue (better late than never!). Assistant Editor Rhonda Batchelor guided us through an evening of readings from **Maleea Acker** (who read “Red” from the issue, and more of her poetry), **Jay Ruzesky** (our longest-serving board member, reading from his Butler Book Prize nominated novel, *The Wolsenburg Clock*), **Kyeren Regehr** (who read “Mea Culpa” and “Found Objects” from the issue, and more of her poetry) and **Bill**



Stenson, who judged our 2010 Novella prize (reading from the winning novella, “Brains” by **Tony Tulathimutte**). Bill began by reading an introduction provided by Tony Tulathimutte, who was with us that evening, in spirit, from Iowa where he is currently studying.

... I'm of the opinion that literary quarterlies are the best remaining venues for the kind of writing that strives hardest to say something uncompromised, at the expense of ease and familiarity and salability. They have advertisers and subscribers, but do not genuflect to them. They are not dependent on hit-making and crowd pleasing, and as such are better able to support less prevalent but no-less-worthy forms such as the long poem and, of course, the novella. So thanks, readers and editors, for dignifying literature.



Friends of *The Malahat* in attendance entered their names into a draw for our door prize, and **Jim Johnston** was our lucky winner! (See section 9 of this newsletter for an interview with him.) Jim left with a \$20 gift certificate for Renaissance Books, a signed copy of Jay Ruzesky's novel, *The Wolsenburg Clock*, a signed copy of P. K. Page's “Filled Pen” CD, and a Silk Road gift package. Congratulations, Jim!

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped to make the evening possible: Jessie Jones, Lynne Van Luven, Garth Martens, Eliza Robertson, Jay Ruzesky, Denise Yeo, and an extra big thank you to Chelsea Rushton, our official launch photographer and illustrator.



6. Web Tribute to P. K. Page



On January 14, 2011, *The Malahat Review* will post a permanent tribute to P. K. Page on our website to coincide with the first anniversary of her passing. We're looking for short pieces (anecdotes, memories, appreciations) that are between 100 and 200 words long, and we may also feature a small selection of poems written in her honour. Photographs are also welcome.

Send in your submissions to malahat@uvic.ca by **October 22, 2010**. The lucky authors of those accepted will be notified the week of November 15, 2010. Successful Page "tributeers" will garner a one-year complimentary subscription for their efforts.

We will also hold a launch of the P. K. web tribute and our Winter 2010 issue (#173) in conjunction with Planet Earth Poetry (at The Black Stilt on Hillside) on **Friday, January 28th**. Stay tuned for more details.

7. Malahat/CBC Literary Awards Workshops

The Malahat Review is partnering with the CBC Literary Awards on a series of online literary workshops this October, and we'd like to invite you to partake in the exercise at home.

Award-winning writer André Alexis will offer expert advice to five anonymous participants on short excerpts of their work. The excerpts and the feedback will be posted on the Literary Awards' website (www.cbc.ca/literaryawards) the week of October 4th. Then, during the week of October 11th, revisions based on the feedback each writer received will be posted.

You can take part in the discussion by sharing any insights or opinions that you might have on the writing process on the CBC's website. Be sure to visit the site each day for a new posting and share your thoughts. All those who leave comments on the blog will be placed in a draw for a free subscription to *The Malahat Review*.

8. Malahat Authors' Award Wins and Nominations

2010 National Magazine Awards

We swept the poetry category at this summer's National Magazine Awards, with **Marion Quednau's** 2009 Long Poem Prize-winning "**Paradise, Later Years**" taking gold, and **P. K. Page's "Cullen in Old Age"** winning silver. We also picked up an honourable mention in fiction with **Anna Smith's** 2010 Jack Hodgins Founders' Award winning "**The Score Diary of Billy Bishop.**"

2010 Western Magazine Awards

Good luck to our three nominees for the Western Magazine Awards, which will be announced on October 15th in Vancouver. **Ben Lof's "When in the Field with Her at His Back"** (Spring 2009, #166) and **Bill Gaston's "Petterick"** (Winter 2009, #169) are nominated in the fiction category, and **Lindsay Cuff's "On Atrocity and Grace: A Contrapuntal Vision"** is nominated in the human experience category.

2010 Journey Prize

Congratulations to **Devon Code**, whose story "**Uncle Oscar**" has been named one of three finalists for the 2010 McClelland & Stewart / Writers' Trust Journey Prize. "Uncle Oscar" was published in our Fall 2009 issue (#168).



Devon Code is from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. His story collection, *In a Mist* (Invisible Publishing, 2007), was chosen by the *Globe and Mail* as a notable fiction debut of 2008.

Devon isn't the only *Malahat* author you'll find between the covers of the *2010 Journey Prize Stories*. **Eliza Robertson's "Ship's Log"** (Fall 2009, #168) and **Ben Lof's "When in the Field with Her at His Back"** (Spring 2009, #166) were also nominated for this year's Journey Prize.

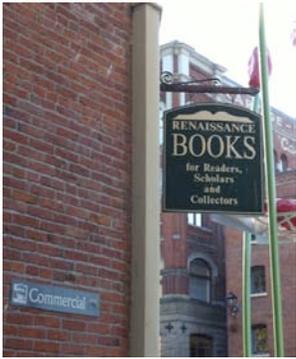
The winner of the \$10 000 prize will be announced on November 2nd in Toronto.

9. Friends of *The Malahat*

... for lovers of the written word. Our Friends group was launched in January, 2010 in order to bring together literary types in the Victoria area. For \$45, Friends receive a one-year subscription to the magazine and discounts at local bookstores, on subscriptions to other Canadian literary magazines, on Malahat-sponsored workshops, and more. In this edition of *Malahat lite*, you'll learn about:

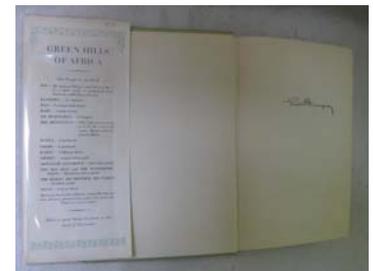
- **Renaissance Books**, a local bookstore that offers a %10 discount to all Friends of *The Malahat*
- **Jim Johnston**, a Friend of *The Malahat* who won the Friends-only door prize at our Summer issue launch in September.
- Our first ***Malahat*-sponsored workshop**: “Whither—or Wither—the Book Review? A Panel Discussion.”

Renaissance Books



Downtown, in the quaint plaza known as Bastion Square, amid the eateries, offices, attractions, and thriving outdoor tourist market, is a wonderful bookstore called Renaissance Books. Ample signage and even a guiding finger direct passersby and visitors from the beautiful heritage building's corner to the store's entrance in the narrow walkway called Commercial Alley.

Renaissance Books is not a big-box bookstore. There is no display of Oprah's or anyone else's picks, remainder bins, or bestseller shelves. One step inside reveals that Renaissance is a different kind of book-lover's paradise. The many floor-to-ceiling, wall-to-wall shelves are stacked and packed with some 30 000 used books. One can find mainstream gems as well as rare and hard-to-find volumes. It is a haven for poetry lovers, with Victoria's largest selection of poetry books.



The store's website [renaissancebooks.ca] describes Renaissance Books as “an eclectic bookshop.” I asked the charming owner, Peter Gray, how he interprets that phrase. His response is that he runs Renaissance Books as “a personal venture,” a social service of sorts. He loves books and loves being surrounded by them. There is always music playing, selections that Peter gets to choose and that add to the browsing ambiance.

Renaissance has much to offer tourists or locals exploring Bastion Square, but the gap that Peter's store seems to fill is with “readers, scholars, collectors, and people interested in poetry.” The quest for stock has him visiting estates, other shops, and garage sales. He notes, chuckling, that it seems he does this to buy not sell. Often people walk in off the street, both to buy and to sell and he gets visits from book scouts as well.

The website also shows the key categories in which Renaissance specializes, including art, books on books, poetry, illustrated books, first edition literature, and native studies, among



others. There is also a Collectibles section of the website, with illustrations of some of the more hard-to-find items, signed editions, and rare books in the Renaissance Books catalogue. In the shop itself, many of these collectibles are kept behind the counter or in a glass case, but, as collections can be as unique as the collector, other rarities can be found here and there among other books in their categories.

Renaissance Books is a labour of love for book lovers by a book lover. Oh, and yes, I left the store with my bag two books heavier and my wallet lighter—but only slightly lighter, after my %10 *Malahat* Friends discount.

Renaissance Books is located at 14 Bastion Square, in Commercial Alley, Victoria BC. Its home on the web is renaissancebooks.ca. The owner, Peter Gray, can be contacted at **250-381-6469** or by email at pgraybooks@shaw.ca.

~ written by Kim Nayer

A Conversation with a Friend: Jim Johnston

UVic creative writing student and Friend of *The Malahat*, Jim Johnston won the Friends' door prize at our Summer launch this September. *Malahat* volunteer Jay Morritt sat down with him on a bench outside the McPherson Library to discuss how he's enjoying the spoils of that victory, and to learn something about a fellow student writer.



Jay Morritt: You bagged some good stuff in this door prize— three Robin Skelton titles, Jay Ruzesky's novel *The Wolsenburg Clock*, a twenty dollar gift certificate from Renaissance Books—not bad, I'd say.

Jim Johnston: I used the gift certificate to get a couple Alice Munro books. But I haven't had time to read them yet—I'm too busy working on my writing. I spend sixty hours a week at it.

JM: Wow, that's great. You're really dedicated to your craft. You must be enjoying the writing program, then.

JJ: The profs in the department have been really supportive. Lorna Jackson has helped me a lot, Bill Gaston, Steven Price—they always encourage me to keep writing, keep working. I'm dyslexic, so my problem is I'm not organized, but they help me stay on the right track. It's like a second family for me up here.

JM: What are you working on right now?

JJ: My newest story is called "When E. T. met Larry: Two Sides." E. T. and Larry communicate psychically, over a beam of light, from the planet Stainless (laughs). And the one I'm working on now is titled "Sobering up in ChristianVille." I never write two

things the same, and I like to make people laugh. It makes me happy. I can be serious sometimes, but I'm just having so much fun in my senior years.

JM: I've heard you have a little dog, a dachshund that you carry around with you sometimes.

JJ: I call him Koko Kokopuff. People ask me sometimes where I get the ideas for my stories, and I tell them I talk to my dog. I think that, to be a writer, you need to have a warped personality.

JM: Ha! Yeah, you're probably right about that. But, warped personality aside, you seem to be a really sweet and sincere guy. When we were emailing each other to set up this interview, you tagged one of your messages with a lovely quote—do you remember it?

JJ: “May all your sunrises be bright in front of you, and the shadows of darkness behind you.” One day I was talking with Lorna Crozier, and she said, “My mornings go good, but my afternoons aren't so good.” So I wrote that little saying for her.

JM: Well it's definitely brightened my day to spend a bit of time talking with you, Jim. Thanks for meeting with me, and enjoy all those books you won—if you ever get away from your own writing long enough to read them, that is. Hope to see you around again sometime soon.

JJ: Yeah, if they don't lock me up first!

***Malahat*-Sponsored Workshop:
Whither—or Wither—the Book Review? A Panel Discussion**

Saturday, November 20th

2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

The Oak Bay Library meeting room
(on main floor, past periodicals)
1442 Monterey Avenue, Victoria

Admission:

\$10 general

\$5 Friends of *The Malahat* / students

Refreshments will be served

Enrollment is limited to 30 people.

Register in advance via
email (malahat@uvic.ca) or
phone (250-721-8524)

More info:

[http://malahatreview.ca/friends/
bookreviewpanel.html](http://malahatreview.ca/friends/bookreviewpanel.html)

Join moderator **Lynne Van Luven** and guest panelists **Jamie Dopp**, **David Kosub**, **Ruth Linka**, and **Amy Reiswig** as they take the pulse of book reviewing in Canada. Are critical reviews still relevant? Have they become mere marketing tools? Are there enough venues for reviews? Are reviewers paid fairly? Panelists will offer opinions on these questions and more as they speak from uniquely qualified perspectives. They'll also discuss the essential features of a good review, as well as elements that should be avoided. Audience members will have an opportunity to comment, ask questions, and even to write a review of the presentation for the chance to win a *Malahat* subscription.

Become a Friend of *The Malahat*!

For a mere \$45, why not enjoy:

- a one-year subscription to *The Malahat Review*
- a %10 discount to Renaissance Books
- one free coffee, tea, or cookie at The Overleaf Cafe's Saturday Salons
- half-price admission at our biannual writing workshops
- discounted subscriptions to other literary magazines (*Arc Poetry*, *The Fiddlehead*, and *EVENT*)
- and more!

I want to be a Friend of *The Malahat*!

Name:

Address:

City:

Postal Code:

Phone Number:

Email address:

Visa / MasterCard:

Expiry:

{Please make \$45 cheques payable to *The Malahat Review*}

Mail to:

The Malahat Review
Friends of *The Malahat*
The University of Victoria
PO Box 1700, Stn CSC
Victoria BC V8W 2Y2

10. Upcoming *Malahat* Contests

2011 Open Season Awards

Enter your best poetry, fiction, or creative non-fiction for this contest: it's open season!

Deadline: **November 1, 2010**

Enter up to three poems (100 lines max. each),
one short story (2500 words max.)
OR one piece of creative non-fiction (2500 words max.)

*multiple entries are welcome, but entry fee must be paid per entry

Entry fee: \$35 CAD for Canadian entries
\$40 USD for American entries
\$45 USD for entries from elsewhere
(entry fee includes a one-year subscription)

Prize: **\$1000** will be awarded in each category

More info: http://www.malahatreview.ca/open_season/info.html

2011 Long Poem Prize

Deadline: **February 1, 2011**

Enter a single long poem or cycle of poems between 10 - 20 published pages (up to 32 lines/page).

Entry fee: \$35 CAD for Canadian entries
\$40 USD for American entries
\$45 USD for entries from elsewhere
(entry fee includes a one-year subscription)

Prize: two **\$1000** prizes will be awarded

More info: http://www.malahatreview.ca/long_poem_prize/info.html

2011 Far Horizons Award for Short Fiction

Deadline: **May 1, 2011**

Writers who have yet to publish their fiction in book format are welcomed to enter one short story under 3500 words.

Entry fee: \$25 CAD for Canadian entries
\$30 USD for American entries
\$35 USD for entries from elsewhere
(entry fee includes a one-year subscription)

Prize: **\$1000**

More info: http://www.malahatreview.ca/far_horizons_fiction/info.html