

# Malahat *lite*

## Virtual Newsletter of *The Malahat Review*

Vol. 8, No. 5, June 2011

**CONTEST EDITION**

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[www.malahatreview.ca](http://www.malahatreview.ca)

### 1. 2011 Creative Nonfiction Prize

#### *The Malahat Review* Creative Non-Fiction Prize 2011

#### *Be Creative, Yet Real!*

Canada's premier literary magazine invites entries from everywhere to its creative non-fiction contest. Take a chance and write from both sides of your brain. Submit a personal essay, a memoir, literary journalism, or something so cutting edge no one's thought of it yet.

Prize: **\$1000**

Deadline: **August 1, 2011**

For complete guidelines  
go to: [malahatreview.ca](http://malahatreview.ca)  
Inquiries: [malahat@uvic.ca](mailto:malahat@uvic.ca)



**Deadline: August 1, 2011**

**Prize: \$1000**

**Entry fee:**

\$35 CAD for Canadians

\$40 USD for US entries

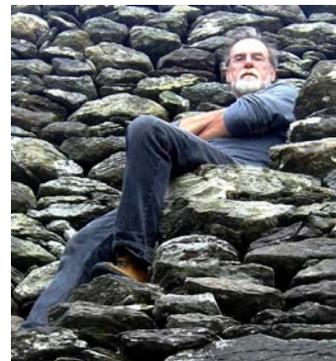
\$45 USD for entries from elsewhere

(entry fee includes a one-year subscription)

Enter one piece of creative nonfiction between 2000 and 3000 words in length. It could be memoir, personal essay, cultural criticism, nature writing, literary journalism, etc.

This year's judge is **Terry Glavin**.

Terry Glavin has worked as a reporter, columnist, and editor for the *Daily Columbian*, the *Georgia Straight*, *Vancouver Sun*, the *Globe and Mail*, and the online daily *The Tyee*. He is the author of six books and the co-author of three.



**How does Terry Glavin define a winning piece of creative nonfiction?**

"First and last, I expect writing that is not fiction. Writers in this field should borrow from the elements and the cunning of any genre they choose, but excellence in 'creative nonfiction' occurs in the works of writers who know the difference between fiction and nonfiction, and who mould the found materials of the known world into something approaching works of art. Less interpretive dance. More stonework."

## 2. 2010 Creative Nonfiction Prize Winner: “Intimate Strangers,” by Eve Joseph. Oh, the places it’s gone!

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The previous winner of our Creative Nonfiction Prize was **Eve Joseph**, for “**Intimate Strangers**” (published in Winter 2010, issue #173):

[excerpt]

In North America, we don’t quite know what to do with our dead. We plant trees and engrave the names of our loved ones on memorial benches overlooking the ocean; we gather as families to scatter the ashes but are not quite prepared for their weight and texture or for the way the wind doesn’t disperse them as we had imagined. In movies, human ashes seem more like stardust; the bright dust, in the night sky, we imagined as children.

The reality is somewhat different. When we scattered my mother’s ashes off the dock in front of the Cannery Seafood Restaurant on Burrard Inlet they didn’t lift in an ethereal manner; rather, they turned a luminescent green as they sank in the water and swirled downwards. It appeared as if my mother had turned into a fish and left us abruptly with a flash of her new emerald scales.

Some of us are more pragmatic than others. One woman, a potter, whose father died at hospice, mixed his ashes into wet clay and shaped him into a set of coffee mugs.

Our 2010 judge, David Leach, said this of Eve’s story: “[it] 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.”



Since winning our 2010 Creative Nonfiction prize, “Intimate Strangers” has gone on to receive these accolades:

- Won the Creative Nonfiction Collective’s 2011 Readers’ Choice Award.
- Nominated for the 2011 Western Magazine Awards’ Best Article BC/Yukon (winner to be announced June 17, 2011)
- Nominated for a 2011 National Magazine Award in the Essays category (winner to be announced June 10, 2011)

### 3. Winners of our 2011 Long Poem Prize

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Congratulations to **Julie Joosten** of Toronto, ON and **Maggie Schwed** of New York, NY, whose long poems “**The Sun Estate**” and “**The Constant Gardener**”, respectively, were chosen from 228 entries to win the \$1000 2011 Long Poem Prize.

#### Julie Joosten’s “The Sun Estate”

Judges Jeffery Donaldson, Barbara Colebrook Peace, and Elizabeth Philips had this to say about “The Sun Estate”: “A loss lives at [its] heart, which, while it alludes to Ben Jonson’s exemplary elegy ‘On my First Son’ (and offers what seems like a corresponding pun) strikes in its language and forms a different note, one that is both restless and resigned, plaintive and open. It plays with an order of words that, like the changing weather sketched here with a light pencil, is more than merely grammatical, less than constrained. As Yeats said, poetry’s high horse is riderless, or as the poet says here, unsaddled. The poems are tacit. The heart says nothing of what is gone, but goes about rebuilding itself out of excursions, little ones to nearby places. It leaves things where it finds them, and returns home with less than it had, lightened. It tinkers and threads. It goes seeking each time anew the elusive sun



and its receding, uninhabitable estate, and it says each time ‘I will take it AND leave it,’ I will grieve, I will come to know ‘remembering forgetting as an incomparable delight and calm.’”

**Julie Joosten** is a graduate student at Cornell University. She lives in Toronto, ON and has poems forthcoming in *The Fiddlehead* and a review soon to be published in *Jacket 2*.

#### A Radical Openness:

##### Alicia Lawrence in Conversation with Julie Joosten

**A. L.:** Can you tell us about the significance of “estate” in the title of your poem, “The Sun Estate”?

**J. J.:** Throughout working on the poem, I was interested in the way that a landscape can be a subject that, in concert with the poem’s “I,” forms an environment. This environment is comprised of perception and relationship. In the middle of writing “The Sun Estate,” I found myself drawn to elegies and elegiac writing that engages these environments, and I became particularly absorbed in Emerson’s “Experience.” In “Experience,” Emerson writes: “In the death of my son, now more than two years ago, I seem to have lost a beautiful estate—no more.” His use of “estate” allows several of the word’s definitions to resonate at once, even contradictorily. Most compellingly to me, Emerson alludes both to a literal, landed home and landscape, and to a way of being in the world—and he loses both “estates” in surprising ways. He asserts that “grief is shallow” and the loss of his son is, in its shallowness, no more devastating than losing a “beautiful estate,” but this realization also entails the loss of a “beautiful estate” in the form of Emerson’s ideal that souls “touch their objects.” In titling the poem, in a way, after Emerson’s grief, I wanted to engage his conception of loss while also offering a different possibility for relation.



Read the rest of this interview on our website: [www.malahatreview.ca](http://www.malahatreview.ca)

Read Julie Joosten’s poem, “The Sun Estate” in our Summer 2011 issue (#175), due out in early August.

## Maggie Schwed's "The Constant Gardener"

Judges Jeffery Donaldson, Barbara Colebrook Peace, and Elizabeth Philips had this to say about "The Constant Gardener": "[the poem] moves back and forth between mythical time and ordinary time as it meditates on mortality, grief, and filial love. The seasonal challenges in the garden, and the last, difficult season in a man's life, are central to this earthy and wise sequence of poems. The poet portrays a beloved father working delightedly in the garden in his final year, interweaving a parallel story of the old king Laertes, working in his garden as he waits for his son Odysseus' seemingly impossible return. The enfolding of one story within the other is what gives this remarkable poem its great depth, the two worlds linked by natural imagery and by the recurring themes of waiting, labour, conflict, evidence, proof, and recognition. In the end, this poem is itself a returning, to our deepest sense of connection with the earth, where 'the utterly bent roses call.'"



**Maggie Schwed's** poems have appeared in *Western Humanities Review*, *Witness*, *Raritan*, *Commonweal*, *Pleiades*, *Barrow Street*, and other magazines, on-line publications, and anthologies. She was a finalist for the 2006 and 2009 Morton Marr Poetry Prize (*Southwest Review*) and for the 2008 Erskine J. Poetry Prize (*Smartish Pace*). Her chapbook, *Out of Season*, was published in 2008 by Finishing Line Press. She reviews for *Pleiades*, *Blackbird*, and *Smartish Pace*. Her master's degree is from the University of Chicago's Committee on Social Thought. She lives with her husband in New York City, where she taught highschool English and adult literacy while her children were growing up. For the past five years, she has been learning to farm and is a farm assistant in livestock with the Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture in New York.

### **To Convert that Terrible Fact into Beauty: Allison Blythe in conversation with Maggie Schwed**

**A. B.:** Where, physically, did you write this poem from?

**M. S.:** I work very much out loud, moving back and forth between my computer screen where I see the lines growing, and my voice, getting the words to fit my breath, my thought, my ear. Of course, it was a period of great sadness that lasted for a couple of years, so perhaps some of it was located in the eyes (tears; the effort to see with clarity what was happening) and a lot in my throat (the voice). Because my father was dying, I was trying to convert that terrible fact into beauty.

Read the rest of this interview on our website:  
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Read Maggie Schwed's poem, "The Constant Gardener" in our Summer 2011 issue (#175), due out in early August.

Congratulations to the finalists for the 2011 Long Poem Prize: Jane Munro, Steve Noyes, Patricia Young, Ian Williams, Kate Marshall Flaherty, Bren Simmers, Laurie D Graham, Anita Lahey, Al Kizuk, Susan Steudel, Heather Duff, Jill Margo, Marjorie Stelmach, Berwyn Moore, and Sina Queyras.

