



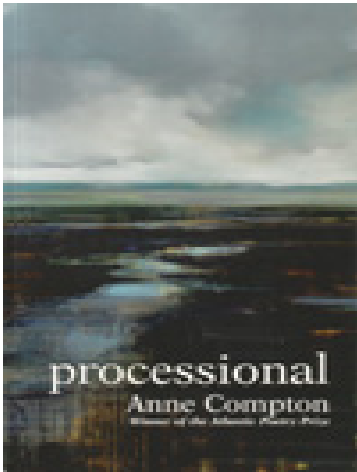
Pat Lowther Memorial Awards Shortlist 2006

The Pat Lowther Memorial Award is given for a book of poetry by a Canadian woman published in the preceding year, and is in memory of the late Pat Lowther, whose career was cut short by her untimely death in 1975. The award carries a \$1,000 prize. The winner will be announced at the League's 40th Annual General Meeting in Ottawa on June 10th, 2006.

Shortlisted Books & Authors:

Processional

By Anne Compton
Fitzhenry & Whiteside



About the author:



Anne Compton

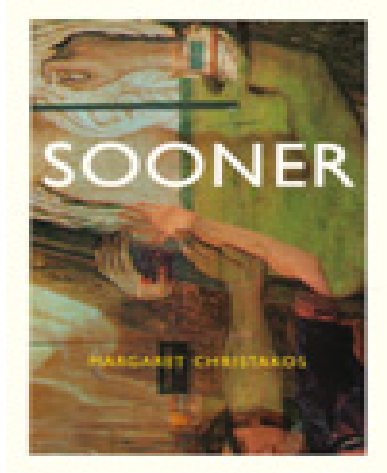
Anne Compton's first collection of poetry, *Opening the Island*, won the Atlantic Poetry Prize and was shortlisted for the Margaret and John Savage First Book Award. She is the author of *A.J.M. Smith: Canadian Metaphysical*, editor of *The Edge of Home: Milton Acorn from the Island*, and co-editor of *Coastlines: The Poetry of Atlantic Canada*. She teaches at the University of New Brunswick in Saint John.

Judges' Comments:

Processional is a journey to house and home, family, love, death, the "processions of the seasons." This "tug of the familiar," this play of words and poetic form, is the "map to go with/ the hairline fracture in [her] heart," a desire to discover the "roof of possibility," "the longevity of love." Playful, witty and wise, melancholy, or inquisitive, these poems help us to "read the hours slowly," to scull "the unsayable deep." A master of her craft, Compton is an enviable poet who can write anything, and write it exceptionally well.

Sooner

By Margaret Christakos
Coach House Books



About the author:



Margaret Christakos

Margaret Christakos is a poet and fiction writer living in Toronto whose work has shown consistent interest in recombinant poetics, process writing and seriality. She has published six collections of poetry and one novel, and has given readings and seminars from her work since 1989. Themes include subjectivity, gender, desire, technology, parenting, autobiographical narrative strategies and bisexuality.

Judges' Comments:

Margaret Christakos' *Sooner* compresses, collapses, and commingles a multi-narrative thread as a paean to and reflection of urban dystopia from an outsider's close observation. Through onomatopoeic prose poems, run-on couplets, columns, cadences, and concrete/typographical poetry, Christakos alchemizes a new genre perfectly honed for capturing the post-modern cityscape in all its diversity. As linguistic trailblazer, Christakos catalyzes the reader to consider poetic language beyond the traditional metaphor, cadence, and so on. Thus, we are inspired to question words' synonymous associations, spatial relationships, and potential for concealment/obfuscation. Christakos furthers John Ashbury's and Christian Bok's explorations while retaining her widely compassionate eye.

Nerve Squall
Sylvia Legris
Coach House Books



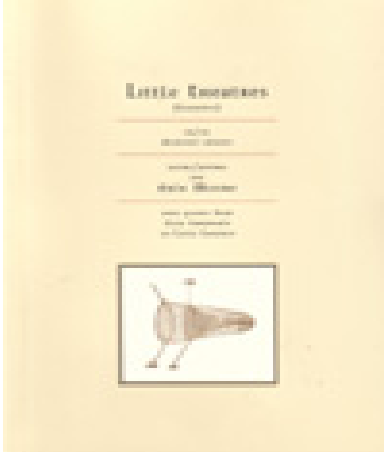
About the author:

Nerve Squall is Sylvia Legris's third book-length poetry collection; her previous books are *iridium seeds* and *circuitry of veins*. She has twice been nominated for a Pushcart Prize, in 2001 she won the *Malahat Review's* Long Poem Prize for 'Fishblood Sky,' and she received an Honorable Mention in the poetry category of the 2004 National Magazine Awards. She is currently a resident in the state of fidgety fretfulness.

Judges' Comments:

Sylvia Legris' *Nerve Squall* is a sprung song to the psyche's rampant and spastic synapses, the cacophony of a migraine, the whirling dervish of nerves. Incorporating the lexical intensity of meteorology and ornithology with a surreal splash of fish, this series of taut journeys inside the mind's obsessiveness turns the reader into an electrified listener at the perimeter between insanity and music. Weaving in allusions to fellow iconoclasts, from Dr. Seuss to Robinson Jeffers, Legris reinvigorates the cadences of the subconscious, from which all true poetry comes. A collection of intense whimsy and mellifluous angst, couched in the lexicon of the ecstatic.

Little Theatres
By Erin Moure
House of Anansi Press



About the author:



Erin Moure

Erin Moure, winner of the Governor General's Award for *Furious* and the Pat Lowther Memorial Award for *Domestic Fuel*, has published twelve books of poetry, including *A Frame of the Book*, which was co-published in the U.S. by Sun and Moon Press, and three books of poetry in translation, including *Sheep's Vigil by a Fervent Person*, shortlisted for the 2002 Griffin Poetry Prize and the 2002 City of Toronto Book Prize. Moure lives in Montreal.

Judges' Comments:

Erin Moure's *Little Theatres* continues to engage in and elaborate on the fruitful fusion of music, surrealism and theory at the core of Moure's revolutionary poetics. A collaboration with the Portuguese writer, Elisa Sampedrin, these spare poems, in both Galician and English, are interspersed with haunting statements from Sampedrin on the delicate and fierce space that is the little theatre. Whether in an homage to the mineral of cabbage or the intricate communities of the Latin tongue, Moure breaks us of our addiction to the literal and monolingual, inventing a singing dialect of the real.

Satie's Sad Piano

By Carolyn Marie Souaid
Signature Editions



About the Author:



Carolyn Marie Souaid

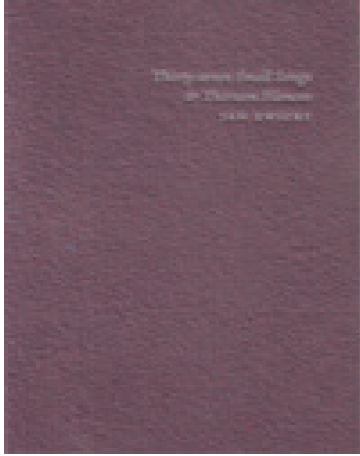
Carolyn Marie Souaid is the author of three previous collections of poetry— *Swimming into the Light*, *October*, and *Snow Formations*, all from Signature Editions. Her work has been produced for CBC-Radio, and has been published nationally and internationally. She has been a guest on Global TV, CBC-Radio (This Morning, Art Talks, Home Run) and on TVO's More To Life, and has participated in numerous literary festivals across Canada.

Judges' Comments:

Carolyn Marie Souaid's book-length poem, *Satie's Sad Piano*, revivifies Trudeau's Montreal 1968 and that of millennial 2000, the year of Trudeau's death. She accomplishes this through a novel cast of characters, including a free-wheeling Apostle and Mont Royal "a mountain with a view". Her poetry rings of Eric Satie's music in its avant-garde inventions and in its symphonic love chronicles, whose Maggie-Pierre and Venus-Lover pairs echo composer Satie's own tumultuous liason. Souaid's long poem is a masterpiece of consistently heightened, jazzy, and passionate language. It dares risk, in poetry and in life.

***Thirty-seven Small Songs
and Thirteen Silences***

by Jan Zwicky
Gaspereau Press



About the author:



Jan Zwicky

Jan Zwicky grew up on the prairies. She has lived in Edmonton, Fredericton and on Vancouver Island, where she teaches philosophy at the University of Victoria. She received the Governor General's Award for Poetry in 1999 for *Songs for Relinquishing the Earth* (the first edition of which she had printed and bound herself). In 2004, Zwicky was nominated for Governor General's Awards in both poetry and non-fiction for *Robinson's Crossing* and *Wisdom & Metaphor* respectively. These were followed by her sixth collection of poems, *Thirty-Seven Small Songs & Thirteen Silences* (2005).

Judges' Comments:

Like entering an artist's studio, Zwicky's *Thirty-seven Small Songs and Thirteen Silences* help us bridge two worlds: the one we know, and hers, a world of wonder and astonishment. Romantic musings, they help us recognize the philosophy of stone and teach us to "be [our] own weight/and anonymous." Zwicky's songs, silences, and studies, sensualize the familiar and acknowledge all that glitters is not gold, sometimes it glitters "alight with emptiness." Humbling, unadorned, at times minimalist, these poems allow us to see into the life of things. If beauty can be put into words, this is it.

PAT LOWTHER AWARD JURY 2006

First, heartfelt thanks to nominator Marja Jacobs and the League of Canadian Poets for the incomparable honour of serving on the Lowther Prize Jury. Chairing the Lowther has been a fabulous force-feed in savouring at depth the illustrious talent of female creativity in 2005. What a succulent food fair of delectable fusions, unusual ingredients, and blue-ribbon specialties.

After sampling and partaking of yet again the 69 flavours available, I ruminated on two culinary approaches. Should we reward previous cordon-bleu winners or spring forward into the new fusion? Shall we simmer the broth into absolute consensus or pursue the organic route of each juror selecting two favourites, albeit from complementary gardens? Two dishes surfaced on every menu; others shared space in two out of three. Each jurist will present her two picks before the winner is announced.

I give full-bodied thanks to my sister jurors, the oysters florentine of aficionados, Catherine Owen, and the filet mignon of canonizers, Kath MacLean. We've journeyed on illuminating and pleasurable gustatory excursions. Finally, like a foodie overwhelmed by the cornucopia of wonders, I regret having to leave several sumptuous true-blues and one novel exploration off the menu in my personal gravitation toward nouvelle cuisine.

Katerina Fretwell,
Lowther Jury Chair

January 25, 2006

2006 Jury : Katerina Fretwell, Kath MacLean, Catherine Owen

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