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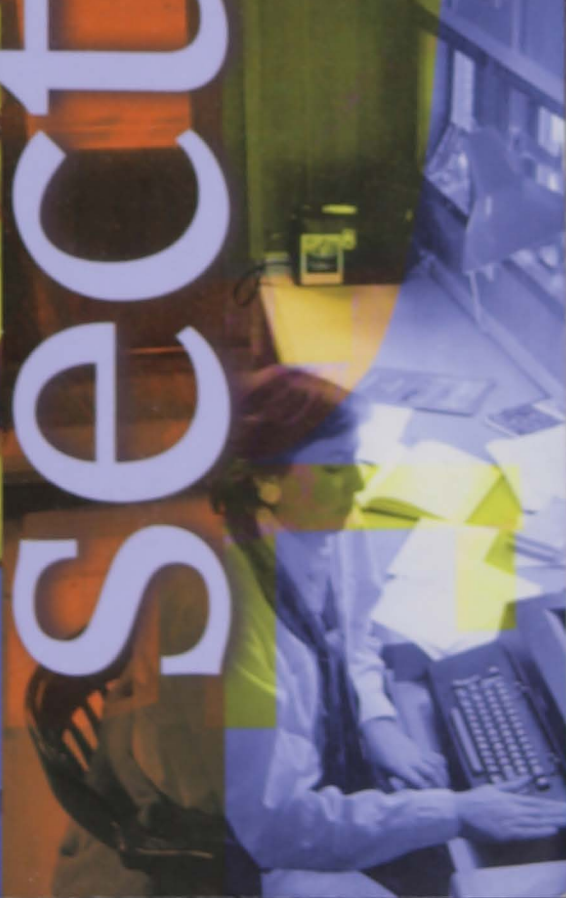
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Alford and
Rhea Tregobov

Fiction and Poetry from

Inter

*The Banff
Centre
for the Arts*

section



Edited by
Edna Alford and
Rhea Tregobov

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Intersections



THE BANFF CENTRE
PRESS

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THE BANFF CENTRE
FOR THE ARTS

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The Leighton & Studios

AT THE
BANFF CENTRE



In 1972, The Banff Centre began to consider founding an

artists' colony along the lines of MacDowell

Diamond Grill F R E D W A H

(excerpts)

I N T H E D I A M O N D , at the end of a long green vinyl aisle between booths of chrome, Naugahyde and Formica, are two large swinging wooden doors, each with a round hatch of face-sized window. Those kitchen doors can be kicked with such a slap they're heard all the way up to the soda fountain. On the other side of the doors, hardly audible to the customers, echoes a jargon of curses, jokes, and cryptic orders. Stack a hots! Half a dozen fry! Hot beef san! Fingers and tongues all over the place jibe and swear You mucka high!—Thloong you! And outside, running through and around the town, the creeks flow down to the lake with, maybe, a spring thaw. And the prairie sun over the mountains to the east, over my family's shoulders. The journal journey tilts tight-fisted through the gutter of the book, avoiding a place to start—or end. Maps don't have beginnings, just edges. Some frayed and hazy margin of possibility, absence, gap. Shouts in the kitchen. Fish an! Side a fries! Over easy! On brown! I pick up an order and turn, back through the doors, whap! My foot registers more than its own imprint, starts to read the stain of memory.

Thus: a kind of heterocellular recovery reverberates through the busy body, from the foot against that kitchen door on up the leg into the torso and hands, eyes thinking straight ahead, looking through doors and languages, skin recalling its own reconnaissance, cooked into the steamy food, replayed in the folds of elsewhere, always far away, tunnelling through the centre of the Earth, mouth saying can't forget, mouth saying what I want to know can feed me, what I don't can bleed me.



T H O S E doors take quite a beating. Brass sheet nailed across the bottom. *Whap!* What a way to announce your presence. You kind of explode, going through one door onto the customers, through the other onto the cooks. It's so nifty when I discover how they work: you're supposed to go through only on the right-hand side and that's how you don't get hit not looking when someone steamrollers through the other door at full clip with a load of dirty dishes or food spread out along their hands and arms. *Boom!* You'd think the glass portholes'd fall out of the doors, but they're built to take it. Inch-and-a-half varnished fir plywood with big spring hinges. When I first start working in the cafe I love to wallop that brass as hard as I can. But my dad warns me early to not make such a noise because that disturbs the customers, so I come up with a way of placing my heel close to the bottom and then rocking the foot forward to squeeze the door open in a silent rush of air as I come through on the fly. But when we get real busy, like at lunchtime, all the waiters and waitresses, including my dad, will let loose in the shape and cacophony of busy-ness, the kicker of desire hidden in the isochronous torso, a necessary dance, a vital percussion, a critical persuasion, a playful permission fast and loud, *WhapBamBoom!*—feels so good.



F A M O U S Chinese Restaurant is the name of a small, strip-mall Chinese cafe a friend of mine eats at once in a while. We laugh at the innocent pretentiousness of the name, Famous.

But then I think of the pride with which my father names the Diamond Grill. For him, the name is neither innocent nor pretentious. The Diamond, he proudly regales the banquet at the grand opening, is the most modern, up-to-date restaurant in the interior of B.C. The angled design of the booths matches the angles of a diamond, and the diamond itself stands for good luck. We hope this new restaurant will bring good luck for all our families and for this town. Eat! Drink! Have a good time!

Almost everything in Chinese stands for good luck, it seems. You're not supposed to use words that might bring bad luck. Auntie Ethel is very upset when we choose a white casket for my father's funeral. She says That no good! White mean death, bad luck!

So I understand something of the dynamics of naming and desire when I think of the names of some Chinese cafes in my family's history. The big one, of course, is the Elite, which we, with no disrespect for the Queen's English, always pronounce the eee-light. In fact, everyone in town pronounces it that way. My dad works in an Elite in Swift Current and that's what he names his cafe in Trail when we move out to B.C. Elite is a fairly common

Chinese cafe name in the early fifties, but not anymore. I see one still on Edmonton Trail in Calgary and I know of one in Revelstoke. I like the resonant undertone in the word, *elite*: the privilege to choose. In the face of being denied the right to vote up until 1949, I smile a little at the recognition by the Chinese that choice is, indeed, a privilege.

Other names also play on the margins of fantasy and longing. Grampa Wah owns the Regal in Swift Current, and just around the corner are the Venice and the Paris. Just as Chiang escapes to Taiwan, my father gets into the New Star in Nelson.

During the fifties and sixties, coincidental with the rise of Canadian nationalism, we find small-town cafes with names like the Canadian, Canada Chinese Takeout, and, in respect of *Hockey Night in Canada*, the All Star. Along the border: American-Canadian Cafe and the Ambassador.

One could read more recent trends such as Bamboo Terrace, Heaven's Gate, Pearl Seafood Restaurant, and the Mandarin as indicative of both the recognized exoticization in Orientalism as well as, possibly, a slight turn, a deference, pride and longing for the homeland.

Perhaps we might regard more concretely what resonates for us when we walk into places like White Dove Cafe and Hotel in Mossbank, Saskatchewan, or the even-now famous Disappearing Moon Cafe, 50 East Pender Street, Vancouver, B.C.



ON the edge of Centre. Just off Main. Chinatown. The cafes, yes, but farther back, almost hidden, the ubiquitous Chinese store—an unmoving stratus of smoke, dusky and quiet, clock ticking. Dark brown wood panelling, some porcelain planters on the windowsill, maybe some goldfish. Goldfish for Gold Mountain men. Not so far, then, from the red carp of their childhood ponds. Brown skin stringy salt-and-pepper beard polished bent knuckles and at least one super-long fingernail for picking. Alone and on the edge of their world, far from the centre, no women, no family. This kind of edge in race we only half suspect as edge. A gap, really. Hollow.

I wander to it, tagging along with my father or with a cousin, sent there to get a jar of some strange herb or balm from an old man who forces salted candies on us or digs for a piece of licorice dirtied with grains of tobacco from his pocket, the background of old men's voices sure and argumentative within this grotto. Dominoes clacking. This store, part of a geography, mysterious to most, a migrant haven edge of outpost, of gossip, bavardage, foreign tenacity. But always in itself, on the edge of some great fold.

In a room at the back of the Chinese store, or above, like a room fifteen feet over the street din in Vancouver Chinatown, you can hear, amplified through the window, the click-clacking of mah-jong pieces being shuffled

over the tabletops. The voices from up there or behind the curtain are hot-tempered, powerful, challenging, aggressive, bickering, accusatory, demeaning, bravado, superstitious, bluffing, gossipy, serious, goading, letting off steam, ticked off, fed up, hot under the collar, hungry for company, hungry for language, hungry for luck, edgy.



I hardly ever go into King's Family Restaurant because, when it comes to Chinese cafes and Chinatowns, I'd rather be transparent. Camouflaged enough so they know I'm there but can't see me, can't get to me. It's not safe. I need a clear coast for a getaway. Invisible. I don't know who I am in this territory and maybe don't want to. Yet I love to wander into Toronto's Chinatown and eat tofu and vegetables at my favourite barbecue joint and then meander indolently through the crowds, listening to the tones and watching the dark eyes, the black hair. Sometimes in a store, say, I'm picking up a pair of new kung-fu sandals and the guy checks my Mastercard as I sign and he says Wah! You Chinese? Heh heh heh! because he knows I'm not. Physically, I'm racially transpicuous and I've come to prefer that mode.

I want to be there but don't want to be seen being there. By the time I'm ten I'm only white. Until 1949 the few Chinese in my life are relatives and old men. Very few Chinese kids my age. After '49, when the Canadian government rescinds its Chinese Exclusion Act, a wave of young Chinese immigrate to Canada. Nelson's Chinese population visibly changes in the early fifties. In a few years there are enough teenage Chinese kids around to form not only an association, the Nelson Chinese Youth Association, but also a basketball team. And they're good, too. Fast, smart. I play on the junior high school team, and when the NCYA team comes to play us, I know a lot of the Chinese guys. But my buddies at school call them chinks and geeks and I feel a little embarrassed and don't talk much with the Chinese kids. I'm white enough to get away with it and that's what I do.

But downtown, working in the cafe, things are different. Some of the young guys start working at our cafe, and my dad's very involved with helping them all settle into their new circumstances. He acts as an interpreter for a lot of the legal negotiations. Everyone's trying to reunite with long-lost relatives. Anyway, I work alongside some of these new Chinese and become friends.

Shu brings his son over around 1953 and Lawrence is in the cafe business for the rest of his working life. Lawrence and I work together in the Diamond until I leave small-town Nelson for university at the coast. We're good friends. Even today, as aging men, we always exchange greetings whenever we meet on the street. But I hardly ever go into his cafe.

So now, standing across the street from King's Family Restaurant, I know I'd love to go in there and have a dish of beef and greens, but he would know me, he would have me clear in his sights, not Chinese but stained enough by genealogy to make a difference. When Lawrence and I work together, him just over from China, he's a boss's son and I'm a boss's son. His pure Chineseness and my impure Chineseness don't make any difference to us in the cafe. But I've assumed a dull and ambiguous edge of difference in myself; the hyphen always seems to demand negotiation.

I decide, finally, to cross the street. I push myself through the door, and his wife, Fay, catches me with the corner of her eye. She doesn't say anything and I wonder if she recognizes me. The white waitress takes my order and I ask if Lawrence is in the kitchen. He is, she says.

I go through Lawrence's kitchen door like I work there. I relish the little kick the door is built to take. He's happy to see me and stops slicing the chicken on the chopping block, wipes his hands on his apron, and shakes my hand. How's your mother? What are you doing here? How's Ernie and Donnie? Family, that's what it is. The politics of the family.

He says something to the cook, a young guy. Then he turns to me and says Hey, Freddy, did you know this is your cousin? He's from the same area near Canton. His name is Quong. Then in Chinese, he gives a quick explanation to Quong; no doubt my entire Chinese family history. Lawrence smiles at me like he used to when we were kids: he knows something I don't. I suffer the negative capability of camouflage.

How many cousins do I have, I wonder. Thousands maybe. How could we recognize one another? Names.

The food, the names, the geography, the family history—the filiated dendrita of myself displayed before me. I can't escape, and don't want to, for a moment. Lawrence's kitchen seems one of the surest places I know. But then after we've exchanged our mutual family news and I've eaten a wonderful dish of tofu and vegetables, back outside, on the street, all my ambivalence gets covered over, camouflaged by a safety net of class and colourlessness—the racism within me that makes and consumes that neutral (white) version of myself, that allows me the sad privilege of being, in this white white world, not the target but the gun.



Y O U never taught me how, but I remember your frown, particularly that, your frown, whenever you confronted something new in your world, like our basement, how to move around the furnace, or a gun, how to aim it, or logging, say, how Tak Mori's caulk boots sound on the running board of his deep green Fargo pickup, or, better still, your scowl of incredulity at how to

gulp quickly Granny Erickson's Christmas pickled herring while her beak-nosed challenge sat in the kitchen chair opposite your dark bird-eyed defiance (oof dah), or when Betty Goodman ordered stewed oysters for lunch and you got me to wait on her while you went to the can and puked, all those puzzled moments in the new world when your brown brow squinched up while you translated vectors or politesse or measurement or celebration or strange foods or weird Europeans or, through gold-rimmed reading glasses, the day's page 1 world wars, page 2 Baker Street, page 5 sports, *Nelson Daily News* spread out over the grey Formica tabletop in the back booth of the Diamond Grill, all these moments nothing but your river of truth, fiction, and history, nothing but the long nights of a Chinese winter waiting for the promised new/old world of mothers fathers brothers sisters, river of ocean, river of impossible passing, too large and formidable even later spinning your days out under Elephant Mountain, such encounters with possibility criss-crossed on your forehead, indeed, your whole body wired taut for daily brushes with what, the foreign, that jailed Juan de Fuca immigrant in your eyes as you looked, now look out to the sea this sentence makes; puzzled, cryptic, wild, bewildered, ex'd and perplexed thought so far away and other, but then your lower lip bites up under your teeth, hands, fingers, eyes, laughing, how, to ...

But then you by now, like everyone else in town, we've all, walked past the sign in the window of the Club Cafe—

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS DINNER

\$ 1.50

ALL THE TRIMMINGS

—the same Christmas dinner Sammy Wong has cooked every year since he bought the Club in 1938 from his cousin, who went back to China to find a girl. Sammy didn't. Never bought or brought a wife. Only girls he knows are his waitresses, and Edna has been there the longest; she's a steamboat and makes sure Sammy keeps the place tip-top. She pretty much runs the front of the cafe. So, even the sign—she probably made that, a few sprigs of holly coloured with a green wax crayon and "All the Trimmings" in red—sits now getting stained from the condensation running down the window in the heated steamy and smoky cafe. The only thing Edna doesn't like about his Christmas dinner, and she tells him, too, is that special cranberry sauce he makes every year. You're not gonna make that again, it's too tart, the jellied canned stuff is nicer, sweeter, darker. Sammy just glares at her over the stove. He thinks, Tart? All the time I make this—what's a matter with you?

Just across the street, the New Grand Hotel has a sprayed-icing window stencilled with "Season's Greetings." Its dining room will be closed Christmas Day, but for New Year's Eve the hotel is holding a gala banquet and dance. For this, hotel magnate Dominic Rissuti, the cigar-smoking

rotund president of the Columbo Lodge and local nickel Mafioso, has hired the Melodaires, who do mostly popular songs like "Mocking Bird Hill." (Their saxophonist, Lefty Black, regularly swoons a lot of the town's women with his lilting rendition of "Deep Purple.") For eight dollars a couple you get a sit-down dinner with a choice of ham, roast beef, or grilled salmon steak, a bar that opens at 6:30 (drinks three for a dollar), noise-makers, and a glass of special punch to welcome in the New Year. All this come-on appears on a big display ad that has bubbles rolling out of glasses on page 2 of the *Nelson Daily News*. The only problem Rissuti has run into is getting a liquor licence, because New Year's Eve falls on a Sunday this year. In Al's Barber Shop next door, he complains to some of the guys, That goddamned police chief says he won't sign the licence. What do I gotta do? Go to the mayor?

Eadie Petrella, the owner of the Shamrock Grill (gauze curtains, no jukebox), never could figure out how Lok Pon managed to get his turkey so moist (fifteen years cooking in logging camps), but what Lok remembers is that first Christmas he worked for Eadie she came into the kitchen and watched over him all morning garumphing around while he filled and trussed and basted, no smile, no talk, particularly the no talk, she usually talks non-stop, at least in the kitchen to the waitresses, always babbling something he can't understand anyway, so now, after six years of cooking at the Shamrock, he watches her cocked over his stove testing his gravy, smacking her lips, eyeing the three birds he's cooked racked over the warming oven, and her eyes pinch slightly with an *Mmmm* (he knows it's good) and she turns away with a haughty Better get those Brussels sprouts started! not to him but to his half-wit helper and dishwasher so he's left standing there by the steam table with lots to do yet and curses her under his breath—You mucka high!

Except, by the time the holidays are over, we've all, even at the Diamond Grill where the plum puddings with rum and maple sauce continue in high demand, we've had enough of turkey and ham and stuffing and mashed potatoes and know that the real gung hay fa choy Chinese New Year celebration sometime in January will bring on the Diamond's legendary Chinese banquet with local high muckamucks like the mayor, a few aldermen, the police chief and fire chief, steadies like the early-morning pensioners and CPR shift workers and cab drivers. Even the waitresses set places for their husbands or boyfriends in the booths disguised now with white tablecloths and dishes of quarters wrapped in red paper and lichee nuts, both chopsticks and cutlery, bottles of scotch and rye, this once-a-year feast tops the whole season as far as I'm concerned starting even with bird's nest soup and then the dishes come too fast, barbecue pork, chicken and almond chop suey (incredible washed down with Canada Dry ginger ale), beef and green pepper, snow peas, fried rice, steamed rice, deep-fried rock cod, abalone,

jumbo shrimp and black beans finished off with ice cream or Jell-O and lots of leftover Christmas cake and a few speeches, even the mayor's toast to the shy Chinese cooks who stand just outside the swinging kitchen doors in their dirty aprons, faces glazed with sweat. Shu Ling Mar the chief cook looks to you and says something in Chinese and you translate He says please come back again you're all welcome, lots more in the kitchen! Then somehow, all that mess disappears and the floors washed by six the next morning when you open up.

Then what is that taste, mulled memory, kitchen sediment. Your hands and body fill, pour, stir. Dark brown eyes the Aleutian land bridge over the stove—and dancing. How do I make your tangy sauce for seafood cocktail so good my mouth waters in this sentence saying ketchup horseradish lemon Tabasco, maybe a dash of soy. Something gave pure zip. Your shoulders. I thought the sharp red bottle in the top cupboard. Reach. Was crabmeat. Even something creamy crunchy celery tomatoed and all that spooned into short glasses, fluted, what I thought were like sundae dishes first lined with a lettuce leaf, a few dozen made up in advance and kept on a shelf in the walk-in cooler. I'd sneak one. Or two. Boston cream pie on a slack and snowy Sunday afternoon. Where did that taste for such zip Charlie-chim-chong-say-wong-lung-chung come to your mouth in a shot shout as you clicked your tongue, eyes sparkled if it was too hot, too much kick, they'd water a bit and you'd cut the sauce with what, HP, or maybe that other dark brown steak sauce, A-1, under the counters by the cutlery trays. Not cayenne. No, that was never your spice. Chili powder. Some say you looked more Mexican than Chinese and right here on this page fiction wouldn't be awry making you out Philippino. So, of course, chili or Tabasco. But of yours, something with more smack than gut, not pepper, further forward on the palate to match the sea brine but with bang, Oooo-Eee, the boot to begin every banquet and Chinese New Year. That now then is winter lingu-late imprint in December. Under the breath. Just outside. Massive dark hole swirl of Oriental nebulae, just outside. Or just next door, the mayor, the pool hall, anyone else, everyone else. And all time. What's a matter? You just smiled, laughed, and said Pretty good gung hey, eh, Freddy? Fa choy! That's how.

Author Biographies

CAROLINE ADDERSON resided in the Leighton Studio's boat for three snowy weeks in 1993, during which time she polished the manuscript for her first book, *Bad Imaginings* (Porcupine's Quill 1993), which was nominated for a 1993 Governor General's Literary Award and the 1994 Commonwealth Book Prize and won the 1994 Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize. Stories from this book have been widely anthologized and translated. Adderson has also written for film and for CBC Radio. Her first novel, *A History of Forgetting* (Key Porter/Patrick Crean Editions 1999), was nominated for the Writer's Trust Fiction Prize. Adderson lives in Vancouver.

VEN BEGAMUDRÉ worked at the Leighton Studios on a story collection, *Laterna Magika* (Oolichan Books 1997), and on two novels, including *Van de Graaff*

Days (Oolichan Books 1993). *Laterna Magika* was a best book finalist in the Canada-Caribbean region for the 1998 Commonwealth Writers Prize. Begamudré has been writer-in-residence in the University of Calgary's Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Programme, the University of Alberta's Department of English, and the Canada-Scotland Exchange.

MAUREEN BRADY's recent stories have been published in *Cabbage and Bones* (Henry Holt and Company 1997), *Mom* (Alyson 1998), and *Pillow Talk* (Alyson 1998). She has received grants and awards from the New York State Council on the Arts, the Barbara Deming Fund, the Ludwig Vogelstein Foundation, MacDowell, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Villa Montalvo, the Tyrone Guthrie Centre, and The Banff

Centre for the Arts. Brady teaches writing at NYU and the Writer's Voice and divides her time between New York City and the Catskills.

KAREN CONNELLY is the author of several books of poetry and non-fiction. She is the recipient of the Pat Lowther Memorial Award for poetry and the Governor General's Literary Award for non-fiction. She is currently working on a novel and a collection of essays about Burma. Connelly's most recent book of poetry is *The Border Surrounds Us* (McClelland & Stewart 2000). Connelly's other books include *Touch the Dragon: A Thai Journal* (Turnstone Press 1992), which won the Governor General's Literary Award for non-fiction and was a national bestseller, as well as *The Small Words in My Body* (Gutter Press 1995), *This Brighter Prison* (Brick Books 1993), *One Room in a Castle—Letters from Spain, France, and Greece* (Turnstone Press 1995) and *The Disorder of Love* (Gutter Press 1997). Connelly's books are published in the U.K., Australia, Germany, and Asia.

MARLENE COOKSHAW is the author of three collections of poems, most recently *Double Somersaults* (Brick Books 1999). Her chapbook of short prose, *Coupling*, was published by Outlaw Editions and reprinted in 1998. She was born in southern Alberta but has lived on the west coast of B.C. since 1979, currently on Pender Island. Cookshaw is the editor of the *Malahat Review* in Victoria.

JULIA DARLING is a playwright, poet, and short story writer

who lives in the north of England. Her stories have been published in many anthologies and collections and have won several awards. Her first novel is entitled *Crocodile Soup* (McArthur & Co. 1999), and she is currently working on a second novel, the first draft of which was written in the Leighton Studios.

MYRA DAVIES is a western Canadian writer and recording and performance artist. Since 1991, Davies has been working with Berlin electronica sound artist Gudrun Gut on a collaborative spoken word, recording, and performance project, *MIASMA*. Gut and Davies have released two *MIASMA* CDs and additional individual tracks. They have toured in Europe several times and maintain linked Web sites in Canada and Germany. Davies is writing a book about the Berlin underground music scene.

EMIL A. DRAITSER's stories have appeared (or are forthcoming) in the *Partisan Review*, *The Kenyon Review*, *The Literary Review*, *International Quarterly*, *Confrontation*, as well as on the Op-Ed pages of the *Los Angeles Times* and *San Francisco Chronicle*. He's a recipient of the New Jersey Council of the Arts Fellowship in Fiction and the City University of New York Grant for Creative Writing. Currently, Draitser teaches Russian at Hunter College in New York.

ALICE FRIMAN, born in New York City, is professor emerita of English and creative writing at the University of Indianapolis. Published in ten countries and anthologized widely, she has produced eight collections of

poetry, including *Inverted Fire* (BkMk 1997) and *Zoo* (Arkansas 1999), winner of the Ezra Pound Poetry Award. Among Friman's other awards are three prizes from Poetry Society of America and fellowships from the Arts Council of Indianapolis and the Indiana Arts Commission. Friman was at the Leighton Studios in February 1991.

TERRY JORDAN's short story collection, *It's a Hard Cow* (Thistle-down Press 1994), won a Saskatchewan Book Award and was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Writers Prize. He was the first Margaret Laurence Fellow at Trent University in 1996. His latest book, *Beneath that Starry Place* (HarperCollins 1999), was nominated for the 1999 Chapters/Books in Canada First Novel Award. His award-winning plays, *Reunion*, *Movie Dust*, and *Close Your Eyes* have been produced across the country. Jordan is currently working on a novel and teaches in the English department at Concordia University, Montreal.

JANICE KULYK KEEFER has twice been nominated for a Governor General's Literary Award, is a two-time winner of the CBC Radio Literary Competition, and was awarded the 1999 Marian Engel Award. Kulyk Keefer is the author of numerous works of fiction, poetry, and literary criticism. *Anna's Goat* (Orca 2000) is her first book for children. Kulyk Keefer teaches at the University of Guelph and lives in Toronto.

ROBERT KROETSCH is a novelist, poet, and essayist who was born in Alberta in 1927 and first

attended the Banff Summer School for the Arts in 1947. His nine novels include *The Words of My Roaring* (Macmillan of Canada 1966; University of Alberta Press 2000), *The Studhorse Man* (Simon & Schuster 1969; Random House 1988), *Badlands* (General Publishing 1975; Stoddart 2000), and *What the Crow Said* (General Publishing 1978; University of Alberta Press 1998). His longer poems are collected in *Completed Field Notes* (McClelland & Stewart 1989; University of Alberta Press 2000). Kroetsch is currently at work on something but has so far been unable to determine what it might be.

DON MCKAY has published eight books of poetry, including *Birding, or desire* (McClelland & Stewart 1983); *Night Field* (McClelland & Stewart 1991), which received the Governor General's Literary Award; *Apparatus* (McClelland & Stewart 1997); and *Another Gravity* (McClelland & Stewart 2000). His work has also received the National Magazine Award and the Canadian Authors Association Award. Since 1975, McKay has served as editor and publisher with Brick Books. He taught creative writing and English literature at the University of Western Ontario and the University of New Brunswick for twenty-seven years before resigning to write and edit poetry full-time. From 1991 to 1996, McKay edited *The Fiddlehead*, and he has also served as a faculty resource person at the Sage Hill Writing Experience and The Banff Centre for the Arts.

JUDY MICHAELS is a poet in the schools for the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation and artist-in-

residence at Princeton Day School in Princeton, New Jersey. Her book *Risking Intensity* (The National Council of Teachers of English 1999) is about reading and writing poetry with high school students. Her next book, *Dancing with Words*, is to be published in spring 2001. Michaels' poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Poetry*, *Woman's Review of Books*, and other journals, and she has published book reviews in *America Book Review*.

KAREN MULHALLEN is editor-in-chief of *Descant*, which she has edited for most of its three decades. She has published seven volumes of poetry—*Sheba and Solomon* (Eleftheria 1984), *Modern Love* (Black Moss Press 1990), *War Surgery* (Black Moss Press 1996), *A Sentimental Dialogue* (Paseloup 1996), *The Caverns of Ely* (Paseloup 1997), *Herm on Tour* (Paseloup 1998), and *The Grace of Private Passage* (Black Moss Press 2000). She co-edited *Tasks of Passion: Dennis Lee at Mid-Career* (Descant Editions 1982) and edited *Views from the North: A Travel Anthology* (Porcupine's Quill 1984), as well as *Paper Guitar: Twenty-Seven Writers Celebrate 25 Years of Descant Magazine* (HarperCollins 1995). She is also the author of the prose travel-fiction-memoir *In the Era of Acid Rain* (Black Moss Press 1993). Mulhallen is the author of numerous articles and reviews on the arts, and her essays on literature and culture have appeared both in Canada and abroad. She is the former arts features editor of the *Canadian Forum*, on which she worked for fourteen years, and her column on Canada, "Canadian Diary," appeared in the *Literary*

Review (London and Edinburgh). Mulhallen teaches English in Toronto at Ryerson Polytechnic University. She is working on a new book of poetry set on or near water.

ROSEMARY NIXON has published two works of fiction, *Mostly Country* (NeWest Press 1993) and *The Cock's Egg* (NeWest Press 1994), the latter of which won the Howard O'Hagan Award for Short Fiction in 1994. Nixon has published in literary magazines and anthologies across Canada. In the fall of 1996, she was awarded a grant to write for five weeks at the Leighton Studios. Nixon was the 1996-97 Canadian writer-in-residence in the Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Programme.

HELEN FOGWILL PORTER was born and grew up in St. John's, Newfoundland, where she still lives. She has been writing professionally for thirty-five years and has published across Canada and overseas. She writes fiction, non-fiction, poetry, humour, drama, and criticism. Most of Porter's work is set in St. John's; she is keenly interested in regional speech. Porter is completing her second novel, *Finishing School*. Her first poetry collection, *Blood and Water*, is now with her publisher, Breakwater Books. Porter's published books include *Below the Bridge* (Breakwater Books 1980), *January, February, June or July* (Breakwater Books 1988) and *A Long and Lonely Ride* (Breakwater Books 1991). *January, February, June or July* was shortlisted for the W. H. Smith/Books in Canada First Novel Award in 1989 and won the Young Adult Canadian Book Award,

presented by the Canadian Library Association.

NANCY POTTER has taught for many years at the University of Rhode Island in Kingston, Rhode Island, where she lives. Her two collections of short stories are *We Have Seen the Best of Our Times* (Alfred A. Knopf 1970) and *Legacies* (University of Illinois 1987). Potter has been a Fulbright teacher of American Studies in Argentina, Chile, and New Zealand, and has been a volunteer worker in Greece, Poland, and Mexico.

TOM POW held the 1992-93 Scottish/Canadian Fellowship based at the University of Alberta. During that time, he travelled from Vancouver to the Yukon, from Cape Breton to Baffin Island. He wrote some of the poems in *Red Letter Day* (Bloodaxe Books 1996) in the Leighton Studios and began work on two radio plays set in Canada for the BBC: *Wilderness Dreams* and *Aglooka: John Rae and the Lost Navigators*. Pow teaches Creative and Cultural Studies at the Crichton Campus of the University of Glasgow in Dumfries.

DARLENE BARRY QUAIFFE's novel *Bone Bird* (Turnstone Press 1989) won a Commonwealth Writers Prize. Her novel *Days & Nights on the Amazon* (Turnstone Press 1995) was voted a "Book for Everybody" by the Canadian Booksellers Association. In fall 2000, QuaiFFE's third novel, *Polar Circus* (Turnstone Press), was published. Also to her credit is a book of popular culture on a ubiquitous theme, *Death Writes: A Curious Notebook* (Arsenal Pulp Press 1997).

As a freelance writer, QuaiFFE has contributed to newspapers, magazines, and journals. She has also had some success as a playwright for radio and stage. In addition, QuaiFFE is a founding director of PanCanadian WordFest: The Banff—Calgary International Writers Festival and a past president of the Writers Guild of Alberta.

JAY RUZESKY's poems and stories have appeared in Canadian and American journals such as *Caliban*, *Prism international*, *Canadian Literature*, *Event*, *Saturday Night*, *Descant*, *Border Crossings*, and *Poetry Northwest*. His books include *Writing on the Wall* (Outlaw Editions 1996), *Painting the Yellow House Blue* (House of Anansi Press 1994), and *Am I Glad to See You* (Thistledown Press 1992). He is on the editorial board of the *Malahat Review* and teaches at Malaspina University-College.

BARBARA SAPERGIA writes fiction—including *South Hill Girls* (Fifth House Publishers 1992) and the recent novel, *Secrets in Water* (Coteau Books 1999)—and drama. Her seven stage productions include *Matty & Rose*, *Lokkinen* (Playwrights Canada Press 1984) and *Roundup* (Coteau Books 1992). Her radio dramas have been broadcast on *Morningside*, *Stereodrama*, and the Australian Broadcasting Commission. Sapergia has written several episodes of the *Prairie Berry Pie* children's television series and is currently writing a feature film script for Minds Eye Pictures and Dovzhenko Studios based on her novel *Foreigners* (Coteau Books 1984).

CARMINE SARRACINO grew up in the immigrant neighbourhood of Federal Hill in Providence, Rhode Island, as a second-generation Italian-American. He attended Rhode Island College and the University of Michigan, where he earned a Ph.D. He has published widely on Walt Whitman and is currently putting together a collection of his own poems for a first book, entitled *This Day*. Residing in Pennsylvania, Sarracino is the R. W. Schlosser Professor of English at Elizabethtown College.

GLORIA SAWAI lives in Edmonton. Her first collection of short fiction, *Song for Nettie Johnson*, will be published in spring 2001 by Coteau Books.

LAYLE SILBERT has published more than one hundred stories in literary magazines, as well as poetry and several personal essays. Some of her work is represented in a handful of anthologies. Of the five books she has published, one is a book of poems, three are short stories; the most recent, *The Free Thinkers* (Seven Stories Press 2000), consists of two novellas. Silbert is also known as a photographer of writers.

DOROTHY SPEAK grew up in southern Ontario. She has written two story collections, *The Counsel of the Moon* (Random House 1990) and *Object of Your Love* (Somerville House 1996). Her recently completed novel, of which this excerpt is from an early draft, will be published by Random House in spring 2001. Speak lives in Ottawa.

Born in Flin Flon, Manitoba, BIRK SPROXTON now writes and edits in Red Deer, Alberta. His novel *The Red-Headed Woman with the Black Black Heart* (Turnstone Press 1997) won an award for historical fiction. He is the author of *Headframe*: (Turnstone Press 1985), a long poem, and editor of *Trace: Prairie Writers on Writing* (Turnstone Press 1997) and *Great Stories from the Prairies* (Red Deer Press 2000). Sproxton is the founding editor of an online magazine called "Taking Place: Canadian Prairie Writing."

LINDA SVENDSEN is a fiction writer and screenwriter. *Marine Life* (HarperCollins 1992), her collection of linked stories, was recently made into a film. "White Shoulders" has been anthologized in the *Penguin Anthology of Stories by Canadian Women* (Viking Penguin 1997) and *The Oxford Book of Stories by Canadian Women in English* (Oxford University Press 2000). Her stories have been published in the *Atlantic*, *Saturday Night*, and *Prairie Schooner*, and she has appeared three times in the O. Henry Awards' *Prize Stories* (Doubleday & Company) and *Best Canadian Stories* (Oberon Press), and has won NEA and Canada Council grants. Svendsen also adapted *The Diviners* and *The Sue Rodriguez Story* for television. She lives with her family in Vancouver and teaches in the Creative Writing Program at the University of British Columbia.

ROYSTON TESTER was born in England's industrial "Black Country" and grew up in Birmingham. Before coming to

Canada in 1979, he lived in Barcelona and Australia. His work has appeared in *Rip-rap* (Banff Centre Press 1999), *Malahat Review*, *Quickies 2*, *Prism international*, *Quarry*, *The Globe and Mail*, *B&A New Writing*, *Church-Wellesley Review*, and *Queen Street Quarterly*. *hands over the body* is his first story collection; "First Steps First" is an excerpt from *Enoch Jones*, a first novel-in-progress. Tester lives in Toronto.

GEOFFREY URSELL is an award-winning writer, composer, publisher, and television producer. His first novel, *Perdue* (Gage Educational Publishing Company 1984), won the Books in Canada Award for First Novels. He has written extensively for stage, radio, and television, most recently creating a children's series, *Prairie Berry Pie*. He has also composed songs for stage and radio. Ursell is a founder and current president of the literary press, Coteau Books, where he has edited many anthologies and single-author titles.

FRED WAH has published poetry, prose-poems, biofiction, and criticism and teaches creative writing and poetics at the University of Calgary. His book of prose-poems, *Waiting for Saskatchewan* (Turnstone Press 1985), received the Governor General's Literary Award in 1986, and *So Far* (Talonbooks 1991) was awarded the Stephanson Award for Poetry in 1992. *Diamond Grill* (NeWest Press 1996), a biofiction about hybridity and growing up in a small-town Chinese-Canadian café, won the Howard O'Hagan Award for Short Fiction.

CHRISTOPHER WISEMAN joined the University of Calgary in 1969 and founded the Creative Writing Program there in 1973. His award-winning work has appeared in many journals and anthologies, and he has published eight books of poetry, the most recent being *Crossing the Salt Flats* (Porcupine's Quill 1999). He has taught writing in many places, including Banff, and has spent time every year since 1986 working in the Leighton Studios. Wiseman lives in Calgary.

RACHEL WYATT was for many years Program Director (Writing) at The Banff Centre for the Arts. Her most recent novel is *Mona Lisa Smiled a Little* (Oolichan Books 1999). Her stage plays include *Crackpot* (Playwrights Canada Press 1995), which was first produced at Alberta Theatre Projects (ATP), Calgary, in 1996. It has also been performed in Winnipeg, Victoria, Philadelphia, and London, England. *Knock Knock* (Playwrights Union of Canada Play Service 2000), her latest play, also premiered at ATP, in January 2000. Wyatt has also written extensively for radio.

BETTY JANE WYLIE was a published poet before anything else, published in the early '60s in such publications as *Fiddlehead* and *Canadian Forum*; then a playwright of puppet plays, produced first in Winnipeg, then in North America by the Puppeteers of America; then a playwright for both children and adults with productions in Canada at the Manitoba Theatre Centre, St. Lawrence Centre, National Arts Centre, Stratford Third Stage, and Stratford New Play Workshop.

When her husband died in 1973, Wylie turned to journalism and non-fiction for income to finish rearing her four children. She has published thirty-five books, including biography, self-help, financial planning, inspiration, cookbooks, children's plays and puppet plays, belles lettres and poetry (two volumes), and some three dozen plays that have been produced in theatres in Canada, the U.S., Britain, and New Zealand—but no fiction.

JAN ZWICKY's books include *Wittgenstein Elegies* (Brick Books 1986), *The New Room* (Coach House Books 1989), *Lyric*

Philosophy (University of Toronto Press 1992), and *Songs for Relinquishing the Earth* (Cashion 1996; Brick Books 1998). She has also published widely as an essayist on issues in music, poetry, and philosophy. Zwicky has taught creative writing at the University of New Brunswick, led a number of workshops, and taught in the Writing Program at The Banff Centre for the Arts. Since 1986, she has edited poetry for Brick Books. A native of Alberta, Zwicky is currently living on Vancouver Island, where she teaches in the Philosophy Department at the University of Victoria.

Since 1984, writers from around the world have spent time in the Leighton Studios, the artist studios at The Banff Centre for the Arts. This collection of fiction and poetry from thirty-four of those writers gathers the threads of this unique creative community, bringing together remarkable intersections of setting, story, tone, and character.

Introduction by ROBERT KROETSCH

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TERRY JORDAN
JANICE KULYK KEEFER
DON MCKAY
JUDY MICHAELS
KAREN MULHALLEN
ROSEMARY NIXON

"To write is at once to enter into isolation from community and to enter community. This double experience is acted out quite literally by the writers who become guests of the Leighton Studios." —ROBERT KROETSCH

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