BOUNDARY 2

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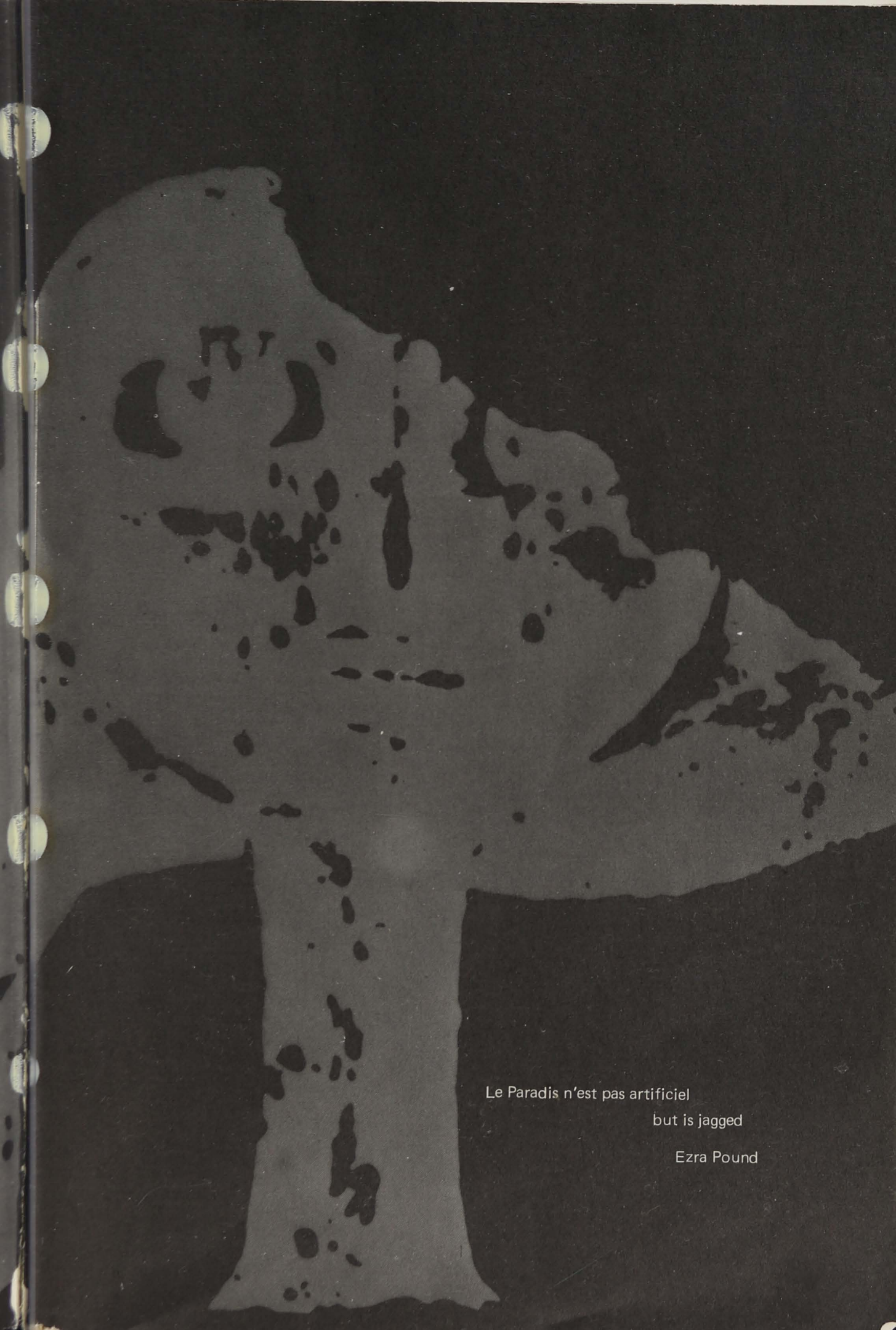
a journal of postmodern literature



Le Paradis n'est pas artificiel
but is jagged

Ezra Pound

BOUNDARY 2

A CANADIAN ISSUE

poetry selected by:
Margaret Atwood
Warren Tallman

criticism selected by:
Robert Kroetsch
Eli Mandel

general editor:
Robert Kroetsch

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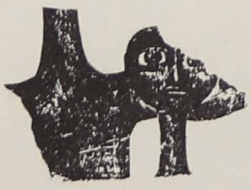

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A CANADIAN ISSUE

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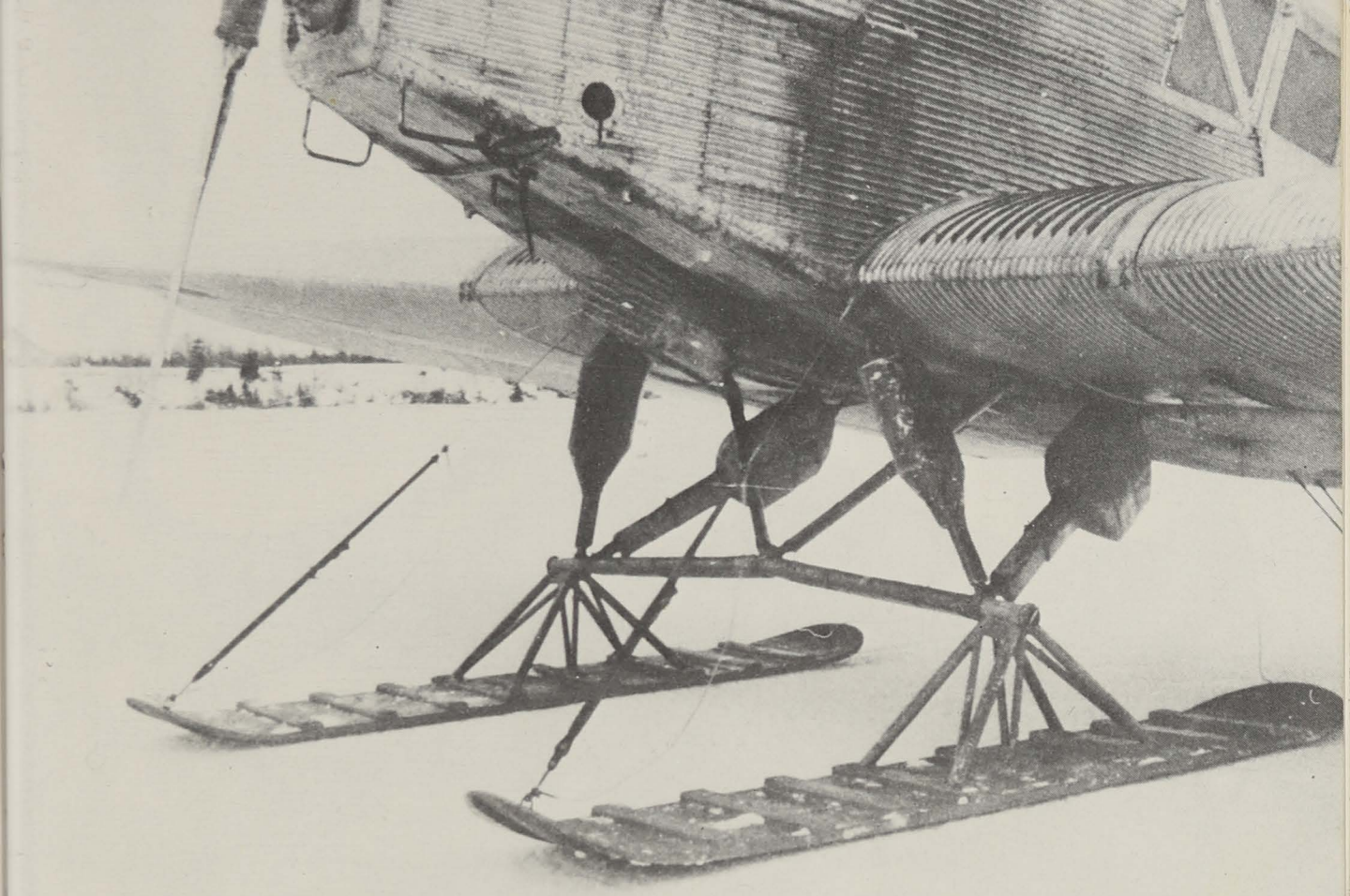

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Poets of the Sixties/Vancouver

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poems selected and arranged by Warren Tallman,
assembled by Angela Bowering

George Bowering
John Newlove
Fred Wah
Frank Davey
Daphne Marlatt
David Bromige
Robert Hogg
Lionel Kearns
Gladys Hindmarch
Roy Kiyooka
David Cull
Stan Persky
Barry McKinnon
David Phillips
Pierre Coupey
bill bissett
Judith Copithorne
Gerry Gilbert
Maxine Gadd
Jim Brown
Scott Lawrence
Jorj Hayman
Chuck Carlson
Brian Fawcett
David Dawson
Colin Stuart
John Pass
Robin Blaser

Don't Cut Me Down

I don't want any of this tree poetry shit from you. You don't know what a fuckin tree is. If ya think its only in yer head yer full a shit. Trees is trees and the only thing they're good for is lumber so don't give me any crap about them bein sumpin else. Fer chrys sake you think the rest of us don't know sweet fuck all compared to you. Well you don't know nuthin till ya go out there and bust yer back on em. Settin chokers'd break yer ass so fast ya wouldn't even wanna look at a goddamned tree let alone write about em. Then ya'd know what a tree wuz, steda yappin about it.

Fred Wah
Spring, 1972

this is a hard language to work out
the images keep interrupting the talking
trees keep being pictures of themselves
my words keep meaning pictures
of words meaning tree
and its not easy
to find myself in the picture
except there is a strange familiarity
I remember something which is not a dream
and surely it isn't only in the mind
when I step out into the forest
even think it
not before
there is a distinct signal
of a condition or presence
I and the trees are there
in tune with it
call it a quietness
I see trees around me
or I am looking at a tree
the actual shape of such appearances
are home
and I fall into them in a flash
I recognize it now as Love
that's what goes on

Fred Wah
Spring, 1972

Tree of colored textured brain
bathed in twisted neural headlights
twined trunk of cedar bark all shaggy
woman man tree
underpits which root me to the image
like a root is
moving through the darkness of the soil
nerves and soul (like baling wire
a line of thought
taut shoots in screaming hot blood leaps
of pool pool pool
of a tree
soft flow of dancer slowing air
O dream of tree
you dream of me
O branch of itself you are a synapse
of that line
and think me
clear brain loops
the turning rings of yourself are of me
our tissues cross
I always hoped you'd give me heart rings
in your dream

dear birch across from me we face
the quiet pool of ourselves
face each other
return
we
look that way

Fred Wah
Spring, 1972

Poem for Turning

Move down zigzag
through switchback
through sideways
move down there
move side right
move left
keep right angles
head front-wise
cleft earth hold
the fall-line
fall to trees
keep incline
be degrees
go corner
move side move
jut out

in boots road pick-up sidewise wide three ruts
wheel ridge grass switch eyes move in boots

in
heel
knee
cut side-hill
ditch run-off
move down
ricochet track
line shove
spin out fall
back fall side
saw the forest
clear the creek rock
split the sky
open roll dig
cover burn
fill the fill
and cross the bridge
turn up
turn into turn
at it

Fred Wah
1965

Contributors

Margaret Atwood is the author of two novels and six books of poems, including *The Circle Game,* which received the Governor General's Award for Poetry in 1966. Her critical book, *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature,* appeared in 1972.

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