

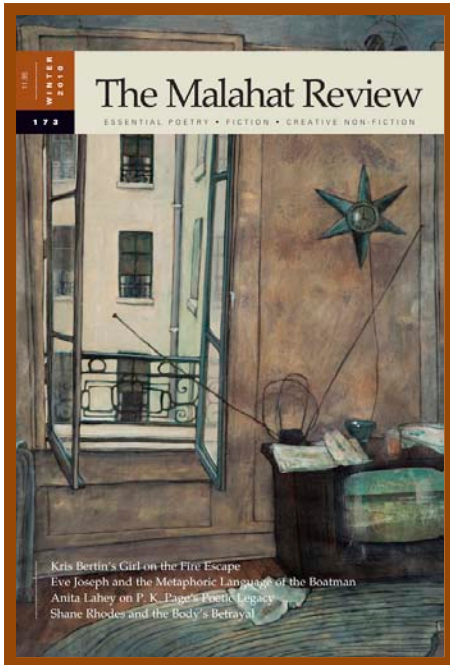
Malahat *lite*

Virtual Newsletter of *The Malahat Review*

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CONTEST EDITION

Contents

- 1 2011 Far Horizons Award for Short Fiction
- 2 2009 Far Horizons Winner: Eliza Robertson. Where is She Now?
- 3 Winners of the 2011 Open Season Awards



www.malahatreview.ca

1. 2011 Far Horizons Award for Short Fiction

The Malahat Review Far Horizons Award for Short Fiction 2011

Dare to dream!

Canada's premier literary magazine invites entries from everywhere to Canada's most far-reaching national contest for aspiring short-story writers who have yet to publish a book of their own. Submit your most winning story of up to 3,500 words in length.

Prize: **\$1000**

Deadline: **May 1, 2011**

For complete guidelines
go to: malahatreview.ca
Inquiries: malahat@uvic.ca



Deadline:
May 1, 2011

Prize: \$1000
Entry fee:
\$25 CAD for
Canadian entries
\$30 USD for US
entries
\$35 USD for entries
from elsewhere
(includes a one-year
subscription)

Emerging writers whose fiction is not yet published in book form are encouraged to enter their short fiction of up to 3500 words in length.

This year's judge is **Gerard Beirne**.

Gerard Beirne is an Irish author currently living in New Brunswick. He was appointed as Writer-In-Residence at the University of New Brunswick in 2008/2009. He is a director of the Writers' Federation of New Brunswick and is a fiction editor of *The Fiddlehead*. His novel *The Eskimo in the Net* was published by Marion Boyars in 2003 and was short-listed for the 2004 Kerry Group Irish Fiction Award.



2. 2009 Far Horizons Winner: Eliza Robertson. Where is She Now?

The previous winner of our Far Horizons Award for Short Fiction, was **Eliza Robertson**, for her story “**Ship’s Log**” (published in our Fall, 2009 issue #168):

[excerpt]

“Wednesday, April 19

0715

Pleasant Mermaidian breeze from east. Some clouds.

Wanted to dig another foot before Nan got up. Found her in the living room on the arm of Granddad’s button-back chair. She was leaning forward and her shadow made a falcon on the secretary and the fishbowl that sits on top of the secretary. The ribbon of her nightgown was untied and it dangled in the fishbowl but I don’t think she noticed. When she moved it glided across the surface like a Jesus bug.

I saw her breast. It was shaped like a triangle and hung over the pokey parts of her ribs. Then I noticed the slice of fruitcake in her lap and the cashew clenched between her index finger and thumb and the dried cherry floating above the fishbowl gravel. I asked if she slept. “With the fishes.” She laughed and her bones made a stepladder in her chest. I took the plate from her lap and said I’d feed Aquinas later. Made porridge like Granddad: simmer the oats in milk and vanilla until the oats plump and milk clings to each grain like melted wax. Nan declined a bowl. Left her with the swordtail.”

Our 2009 judge, Anne Simpson, said this of Eliza’s story: “Based on the premise of a child digging a hole to China, ‘Ship’s Log’ sets an imaginative vision against an ordinary, though complex, world. In evocative language that resonates with details, the writer develops a story of breadth and depth, one that reverberates beyond its pages.”



Since winning, Eliza Robertson has had a fruitful couple of years:

- She joined the fiction board of *The Malahat Review* as a student intern.
- She won first place in *The Fiddlehead’s* 2010 fiction contest (for “Worried Woman’s Guide”) and *PRISM International’s* 2010 fiction contest (for “Road Notes”). Both stories are also nominated for the 2011 Journey Prize.
- “Ship’s Log” was a finalist for the 2010 Journey Prize.
- She has stories published or forthcoming in *Vancouver Review*, *Prairie Fire*, and *The New Quarterly*.

Some Words on Writing Contests by Eliza Robertson

Before I burble on contests, I'd like to preface my enthusiasm with the disclaimer that writing competitions are fussy mechanisms that can bear only the wobbliest correspondence to what may be the "best" writing in any given entry pile. The most careful readers will still be influenced by personal taste and subjectivity: one judge's second-person love story is another judge's retrospective about masculinity and hunting ducks. We can only write what we write and hope for the best. A win or shortlist indicates a strong story, but if we *don't* place, it means zilch. Well: zilch and a new magazine subscription.

That said, my Far Horizons win in 2009 was probably the most important thing to happen to me as a new writer. "Ship's Log" was my first publication—a momentous threshold to cross. Arts funding had just been cut, and I remember thinking, "what's the point: magazines are accepting less work now and I'm competing for space with professionals." I submitted to Far Horizons on a whim, partly because the contest was directed toward emerging writers, and whaddyaknow: the story won and its readership expanded beyond parents and workshop. And that's another bonus about contests—judges have deadlines. Until this summer, all of my stories accepted for publication had been submitted through contests, not the regular slush pile. When you enter a contest you hear back fast.

But we're all out to win, aren't we, and yes: encouragement from contest success has been the most significant payoff. Would I have paid for two more entry fees that year without luck with the first? Probably not. It's easy for any writer to lose confidence in this industry, but for an emerging writer, confidence is a nebulous concept in the first place. I feel very fortunate that my story found a home with such supportive editors. John Barton worked with me on the final tweaks while I was overseas in Tanzania, and later that year, he and Rhonda Batchelor nominated "Ship's Log" for the 2010 Journey Prize and National Magazine Awards. For me, this positive reinforcement has made the difference between law school and writing-as-a-conceivable-career-option. Contests are not bulletproof indicators of the "best" writing, and yes, they will always be somewhat capricious and arbitrary. But they give writers the thrust they need to plunge into this business headfirst, or for established authors, the energy to keep on truckin'.

Eliza Robertson is a very near graduate of the University of Victoria's creative writing program. In her downtime, she dances. Her favourite is when boys toss her in circles to hot inter-war America jazz.

Other Upcoming *Malahat* Contests

2011 Creative Non-Fiction Prize

Deadline: **August 1, 2011**

Prize: \$1000

Entry fee: \$35 CAD for Canadians

\$40 USD for entries from USA

\$45 USD for entries from elsewhere

(includes a one-year subscription)

Enter one piece of creative non-fiction between 2000 and 3000 words in length. No restrictions as to subject matter or approach apply.

2012 Open Season Awards

Deadline: **November 1, 2011**

Prize: \$1000 awarded in each of three genres

Entry fee: \$35 CAD for Canadians

\$40 USD for entries from USA

\$45 USD for entries from elsewhere

(includes a one-year subscription)

Enter either:

- up to three poems max 100 lines each
- one short story up to 2500 words in length
- one creative non-fiction story up to 2500 words

3. Winners of our 2011 Open Season Awards

POETRY

Congratulations to **Cynthia Woodman Kerkham** of Victoria, B.C., whose poem "**Late Summer in Frederick Arm**" won the \$1000 2011 Open Season Award for Poetry.

Judge **Tammy Armstrong** had this to say about the winning poem: "[it] is characterized with lyricism and fluidity, evoking a child's sense of meandering contemplation through its juxtaposition of naval hydrographer and picture book mouse. This poem's narrative meditation considers the cacophony and full run-down of British Columbia's dynamic terrain in all its motion and moments of tranquility, while reflecting our own ebbs and flows when confronted with a world fraught with possibility."



Cynthia Woodman Kerkham has published in many literary journals including *The Antigonish Review*, *CV2*, *Grain*, *The New Quarterly*, *Prairie Fire*, and *The Malahat Review*. Her poem "What we Cannot See" placed first in the 2009 B.C. Federation of Writers Literary Writes Competition. Her first book of poetry, *Good Holding Ground* will be published by Palimpsest Press in Spring 2011.

Congratulations also to our finalists in the poetry category: Jessica Hiemstra-van der Horst, Anne Armstrong, Patrick Friesen, Rhonda Ganz, Glenn Hayes, Kate Marshall Flaherty, Dale Matthews, Richard Osler, Judith Pond, Elizabeth Ross, Alison Touster-Reed, Susan Steudel, and Rhea Tregobov.

Where Being and Doing Merge: Kyeren Regehr in Conversation with Cynthia Woodman Kerkham

Kyeren Regehr: It was great to hear you read at Planet Earth Poetry, Cynthia. I'm eager to talk to you about your lovely glosa, "Late Summer in Frederick Arm," and its lines of inspiration.

Cynthia Woodman Kerkham: Did you find the D. H. Lawrence poem yet? I discovered it in Czeslaw Milosz's anthology *A Book of Luminous Things*. I decided to memorize some poems that summer and this was one of them. I love how it nails something so important to me—living with all the senses awake. That was the jumping off point of the poem "Late Summer in Frederick Arm" as an exploration of being and doing and how being is a crucial form of doing! The poem was also sparked by an infestation of mice we suffered while tied to this dilapidated dock—a marvellous concatenation of events, something that often sparks my poems!



Read the rest of this interview on our website: www.malahatreview.ca
Read Cynthia Woodman Kerkham's poem, "Late Summer in Frederick Arm" in our Spring 2011 issue (#174), due out in late April.

FICTION

Congratulations to **Philip Huynh** of Richmond B.C., whose short story, “**The Investment on Dumfries Street**” won the \$1000 Open Season Award for Fiction.

Judge **Katherine Govier** said of his story: “It's a simple story, well told. It's poignant without being sentimental. The subject matter is fresh and I like the language—a little stately, somehow, but also colloquial. And it draws two characters with a minimum of judgement. It doesn't feel ambitious but it accomplishes a lot.”



Philip Huynh studied English literature at UBC and at UC Berkeley, but dropped out to go to law school. After, he wrote fiction in New York City and Toronto while moonlighting as a lawyer. He is now back home in the Vancouver area. He has previously been published in now-defunct journals operating out of Berkeley and New York City.

“The Investment on Dumfries Street” is his first publication in a major literary review. When he is not writing or lawyering, Philip raises his twin daughters with his wife and takes the occasional catnap.

Congratulations to our finalists in the fiction category: Judy LeBlanc, Sasha Semienchuk, Delan Hamasoor, Robert James Hicks, Sasha Lange, Cheryl Runke, and Paul Taylor.

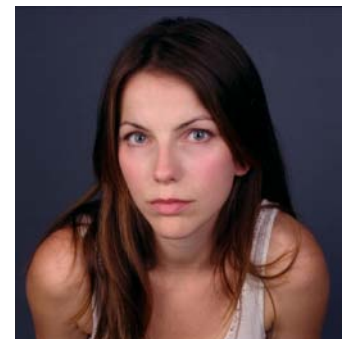
East Van Boy: Danielle Janess in conversation with Philip Huynh

Danielle Janess: The story is told from the perspective of a retrospective narrator. How does memory interact with your work?

Philip Huynh: This story is about painful memories. The narrator was a witness to some bad stuff his father did. The father had painful memories too, but for different reasons; his memories bring into sharp relief his happier past versus his present circumstances.

In retrospect, the distance between the narrator and the things that happened to him can, of course, distort. This can have a healing effect. A painful event can sometimes be retold more easily after time, perhaps because the hard truth of the event has been worn away. Events that are traumatic may actually appear funny in hindsight.

But distance can also clarify and sharpen. The narrator in this story distilled his past into its essence. Left in the story were only moments that cut him raw: things his father said to him, the father's odd splurging, the house on Dumfries Street, the moment he found Sonny at the house. It's hard to maintain a sense of levity in those circumstances.



Read the rest of this interview on our website: www.malahatreview.ca

Read Philip Huynh's story, “The Investment on Dumfries Street” in our Spring 2011 issue (#174), due out in late April.

CREATIVE NON- FICTION

Congratulations to **Jessica Hiemstra- van der Horst** of Australia, whose story “**How to bury a yellow toque**” won the \$1000 Open Season Award for Creative Non-Fiction.

Judge **Stephen Hume** said of her work: “This is a lovely, luminous, lyrical meditation upon the nature of loss and the possibility of redemption through the creative process. It contemplates the mysterious unity of the physical and the metaphysical, of nature and art, of living and dying and the paradox of life and love prevailing within the grim parentheses of death, even as the dark flower blooms in midst of life. The essay operates at multiple levels, offering a series of palimpsests in which older narratives slowly surface through more recent glossing, yet despite the complexity and depth it never loses its ability to engage.”



Jessica Hiemstra- van der Horst is the author of two small books of poetry, *Excerpts from Gerald God and the Chickens* (Frog Hollow Press) and *Anatomy for the Artist* (Greenboathouse Press). Her poems have appeared in a number of Canada’s literary journals. Her first full length collection, *Apologetic for Joy*, is forthcoming with Goose Lane Editions in Autumn, 2011. Jessica is also a visual artist. Her work can be viewed in the virtual world at hiemstra-vanderhorst.com.

Congratulations to our finalists in the creative non-fiction category: Mark Anthony Jarman, Laurie Block, Jon Eben Field, Carol Lazare, and Jenny Vester.

A Stabbing Out Of the Darkness: Jay Morrith in Conversation with Jessica Hiemstra- van der Horst

Jay Morrith: In addition to writing CNF, you are a poet and a painter. How do you balance your several disciplines? How do they inform each other?

Jessica Hiemstra- van der Horst: I make an effort to resist building fences between my poetry, visual art, and prose—and instead tend to think of them as different mediums. In my experience, some propositions work better with line breaks and others work better with paint or string or an HB pencil. Maybe it’s like singing, talking, humming—one voice, one person—but different sounds for different circumstances. There’s a Marc Chagall quote: “I work in whatever medium likes me at the moment.” That makes a lot of sense to me. Maybe it makes more sense to say that I don’t balance the mediums but rather balance myself through them.



How do they inform each other? I tend to work simultaneously on my different writing and visual art projects. I suppose that if each medium is a different expression of the same voice, when they’re in conversation, interesting things get said.

Read the rest of this interview and view Jessica’s visual art from which the story was named on our website: www.malahatreview.ca

Read Jessica Hiemstra- van der Horst’s CNF story, “How to bury a yellow toque” in our Spring 2011 issue (#174) due out in late April.