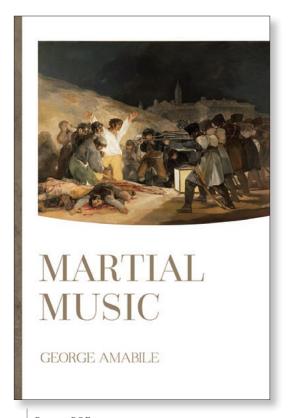
# Signature EDITIONS





POETRY, POE011000 978-1927426-82-1 \$14.95 CDN/US 84 PP, 6 X 9, PAPER APRIL 2016



#### « About the Author »

George Amabile has published ten books and has had work in over a hundred national and international publications, including *The New Yorker, Poetry* (Chicago), *American Poetry Review, Botteghe Oscure, The Globe and Mail, The Penguin Book of Canadian Verse, Saturday Night, Poetry Australia, Sur* (Buenos Aires), *Poetry Canada Review,* and *Canadian Literature.* He has won the CAA National Prize; placed third in the CBC Literary and Petra Kenney International Competitions; placed second in the MAC national poetry contest, "Friends"; received a National Magazine Award and is the subject of a special issue of *Prairie Fire.* His most recent publications are a long poem, *Dancing, with Mirrors* (Porcupine's Quill, 2011) and *Small Change* (Fiction, Libros Libertad, 2011) both of which won Bressani Awards.

# Martial Music George Amabile

« About the Book »

Martial Music, George Amabile's eleventh book and newest collection of poetry, explores the relationships between civilization, technology, empire and human violence, theatres of war, the collateral damage of military occupation, the machinations of power politics, oil spills, destruction of the environment, PTSD, and other characteristics of what we call "world events."

These are tough poems for tough times—our times—when the human cost of military conflict, environmental disaster and gun violence have become the daily staple of news headlines. Provocative, unflinching and at times raw with the poet's fury at unfathomable acts, Amabile's poems converge as an urgent libretto against the militaristic tendencies that surround us, inciting a march toward the creation of a more peaceful and sincere world.

In Martial Music, two long poems are based on the actual experience of soldiers in Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq. "Home Front" depicts the violent dynamics of a dysfunctional marital relationship, while "Retreat" and "Leaving It All Behind" describe failed attempts to escape the shadow of distant disasters we read about in the news. Several poems edge into the surreal to suggest the time-honoured cultural mindset that supports and preserves our addiction to violence. "Deposition: The New World Order" presents images of a deeply deranged reality in which both nature and human nature have reached a crisis, and the final poem, "Big Picture," suggests that, like no other mammalian species, our greatest natural enemy is ourselves.

#### STICKS AND STONES

The Museo has devoted an entire floor to the history of weapons. Out in the light the columned façade of a temple sacred once to Diana is pocked with bullet-holes from The Great War.

News stands are still selling posters: Benito's fat lips and thick neck, Adolf's cowlick and rat's eyes and clipped moustache, the first white rush at Los Alamos...

And there are books, more every day, explaining with restrained awe and subdued satisfaction that we've always had the know-how to develop improved ways and means, more compelling reasons, to kill: humans, animals, insects, weeds.

# Mood Swing, with Pear Sue MacLeod

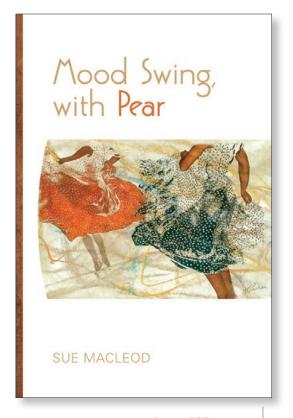
#### « About the Book »

In the title poem of her third collection of poetry, Mood Swing, with Pear, Sue McLeod writes: This pear I didn't eat—now I look //closely—has tiny black dots//like a five o'clock shadow on//a man I may have//waltzed with in a bar or//on a kitchen floor, offering a taste of the ironic twisting and wry humour the poet employs throughout this refreshing take on life, love and everything in between. Ranging from a tribute to iconic paintings by the late Canadian painter, Alex Colville, to poems constructed from how-to books and encyclopedias to a eulogy for an upstairs neighbour who is both an inspiration and an annoyance—McLeod illuminates, instructs and reminds us that sometimes the greatest insight is often found in the smallest corner of getting through the day.

Playful but never glib, MacLeod succeeds in getting us to look closer at everyday items in our lives we often take for granted. In the poem "Counting Down," in the section 4 Reasons For Gloves, she writes: because gloves has the word "love" in it, also the word "solve"// & so then, hand in hand. In another poem, "If I had my way with death," a witty yet frank revelation about fears surrounding death and dying, McLeod writes: The word "corpse" holds no appeal. // And I've always been embarrassed//by the burps and rumblings. Other themes include parenthood, aging and the ups and downs of romance. In tone and crafting this collection offers a innovative range of style and insight that continues to make any new work by Sue MacLeod an exceptional read.

#### GODS ARE PUSHING SWINGS IN THE MORNING LIGHT

Some of them wear bright lipstick and laugh among themselves. Some wear jeans as they walk among you. One grinds a cigarette butt under her heel. No one needs to tell you your gods are truer than the others. You know the great warm hands that lift you to his shoulders. You know the scent and pulse of his neck. You know the guaver in her voice when she sings about the little lambs. Wheee! she says, anticipating your pleasure, and props you on top of the slide. No one has told you even the best of them won't be around when you come to the bottom, at least not with their big arms open, wide.



POETRY, POE024000 978-1927426-83-8 \$14.95 CDN/US 80 PP, 6 x 9, PAPER APRIL 2016



#### « About the Author »

Sue MacLeod has lived in Halifax, where she was the city's inaugural poet laureate, in Toronto, and now in Montreal, but her roots are firmly in Cape Breton. Sue's poems have appeared in many journals, including *The Malahat Review, Grain, Event* and *Room of One's Own*, and anthologies including *Coastlines: The Poetry of Atlantic Canada, The Art of Poetic Inquiry* and *Desperately Seeking Susans*. Her work has won honours including *Arc's Poem of the Year Award; she has been invited to read in nine provinces, and has taught poetry at Dalhousie University and the Art Gallery of Ontario. Sue is also a fiction writer whose first YA novel, <i>Namesake*, appeared in 2013 to critical acclaim. In 2015, she was shortlisted for a national award for her work as a freelance editor. *Mood Swing, with Pear* is her third book of poems.

# TOUCH ANYWHERE TO BEGIN JIM NASON

POETRY, POE021000 978-1927426-85-2 \$14.95 CDN/US 76 PP, 6 x 9, PAPER APRIL 2016



#### 

Jim Nason is the author of four previous collections of poetry, most recently, *Music Garden*. He has also published two novels, *The Housekeeping Journals* and *I Thought I Would Be Happy*, as well as a collection of short fiction, *The Girl on the Escalator*. His award-winning poems, essays and stories have been published in literary journals across the United States and Canada, including *The Best Canadian Poetry in English* 2008, 2010 and 2014. He has been a finalist for the CBC Literary Award in both the fiction and poetry categories. Jim was born in Montreal and has lived in Calgary, Vancouver, and Syracuse. He has degrees from York, Ryerson and McGill Universities and presently lives in Toronto where he writes and teaches. He is the owner and publisher of Tightrope Books.

# Touch Anywhere to Begin Jim Nason

#### « About the Book »

In Touch Anywhere To Begin, Jim Nason's fifth collection of poetry, poems are set in a physical world where full-throttle desire commingles with love, loss and grief. Although death is ever present — death of a father, death of a friend — there is a life-affirming/mystical quality at the core of this book. Nason reminds us that the city is both real and surreal, a place of creatures and buildings, imagination and deep emotions. He celebrates demolition as enthusiastically as construction. The death of a child is no more or less significant than an elderly woman's sickly body or a young man's seductive powers. Finalist for the 2015 CBC poetry prize, the long poem "City With Animals," which celebrates one billion transformations in the body per second, is a tribute to Max Ernst.

In *Touch Anywhere To Begin*, Nason pays homage to the poets he admires — John Ashbery, Elizabeth Bishop, Jane Hirshfield, Don Domanski and Elizabeth Philips — while asserting his unique poetic vision, which is steeped in chaos, beauty, despair and loss. This collection asks the reader to commit fully to a life that is both joyful and debilitating, insisting that the only wrong is an unexplored life; even its most frightening shadows must be entered and searched, revered for the truths they contain.

#### Touch Anywhere to Begin

Many men came to the windowless room. I was young, semi-conscious, drunk. The tentative man touched my ankle, then calf. For the aggressive one, for his leathery tongue, his knotted grip, I slept and woke. I sat, rolled over, licked his black boot, begged like a dog. A third man kissed me lovingly, on the lips, and I cried.

Mastercard put up a pop-up sales cave, an atmospheric detour off the subway path, concrete floor seductive, blue neon dim. We came by the thousands, the rush hour surge, through Union Station—for texture and wonderment, the warm, glowing screen. Touch Anywhere to Begin it said. Tap to Bobble. Swipe to Spin.

# The Back Channels Jennifer Houle

#### « About the Book »

Jennifer Houle's debut collection, The Back Channels, reflects the effort to build a meaningful life in a rapidly changing culture, in a region afflicted, as many are, with outmigration and an economy of anxiety and hard choices. Here, the past is "almost all there is," becoming "our only source of light" as she takes us to the backwoods where a discouraged woman walks, the shore beyond the fairgrounds, "tire swings, car lots and empty lodges ranged /in crude half-circles like small handfuls of thrown bones," and the parking lots where smokers gather to talk about layoffs or pay cuts. Her poems invite the reader to listen in on these moments and pause among these landscapes, never mistaking its often rural settings for places of retreat or escape. The largely Acadian culture depicted in these poems may still be influenced by the past, caught in its own reflected image, but it moves, as do the poems, to a steady, if moody, rhythm determined to find meaning and purpose in spite of difficulties, flux, and a seemingly pervasive cynicism. Reminiscent of Karen Solie's early work, Houle's brilliance as a poet is her mastery of language and keen sense of observation with which she draws the reader in. These poems come from a place of grappling, an attempt to find meaning, beauty and connection in the day-to-day, without being confined by it.



This is the shift of the heart's tumbled pin, the bloodshot eye and the haul: smokers trickle from the old boucanerie, converted now, one body, one bad lung, a rotting arctic char

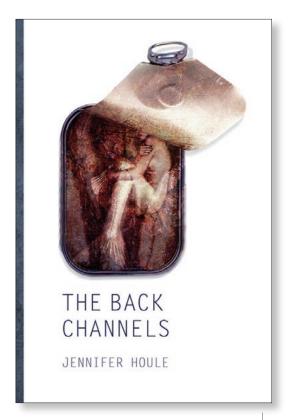
between them: web of sick, soft tissues. Nets of spittle, wry grins, unenviable shrewdness. Banned crab heaved into slatted wirebounds leaks into cynical chat. Dreaded things

are sure now, handed down, and trawling for a private place to die, they ring our darkest impulses and vex small acts of kindness with a nervous calculation, shy self-interest.

Now is not the time for talk of mermaids, questionable motives, far-fetched sentience, or the pain of others. Skepticism rears its double, whiskered chin, disarticulating

wonder with a grunt. Heavy snowfall is predicted, work is to be done. Everywhere we look, stock images: a hull shears cold, black water in dead silence. Nothing floats,

nor swims, to the surface. Only when you turn your back, a fin on the horizon. Excitations kin to the aurora borealis fumble and fail beautifully, trying something different.



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#### « About the Author »

Jennifer Houle's poems have appeared in numerous literary journals over the past ten years. Her work has won several awards, including The Writer's Federation of New Brunswick's Alfred G. Bailey Prize for best poetry manuscript, awarded for *The Back Channels*. A lifelong East Coaster, Jennifer grew up in Shediac, New Brunswick and now lives in Hanwell, just outside of Fredericton, with her husband and two sons.



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