



February 2010 vol<sup>12</sup> no<sup>2</sup>

INSIDE:  
WORD UP -  
WINNERS  
OF THE  
QWF  
LITERARY  
AWARDS  
2009



courtesy Véhicule Press

THE WORD BOOKSTORE, 1975

# Publishing for Smarties

A reference for  
the rest of you  
BY IRENE AGUZZI

*Vanity*  
SELF-PUBLISHING?  
Regional?  
Traditional?  
Print-On-Demand?  
SUBSIDY  
PRESS?

Are you ready for the 2010 publishing market? It's a rapidly changing entity, and you'll need insights into the options available to you.

At a recent workshop, Anita Purcell, interim executive director of the Canadian Authors Association, shared her wisdom on the matter. What she knows could save you sums of grief and inspire a better investment of your creative kernels.

Ms. Purcell launched her talk with astute warnings about vanity presses, often considered author puppy mills. "They're looking to make money off of people's egos and don't care whether your work can be greatly improved or not. Quality is not their driver. They produce at the writer's expense, publish without competitive selection, and do not do any professional editing." Also, what traditional publishers like Macmillan or Random House include in their contracts, a vanity press will charge you for at fees that will cost you more than if you self-published. "This may be a suitable option if you want to put out a family history for your children," Ms. Purcell remarks. "However, you won't be able to say your work was accepted for publication in your approach letter to a recognized publisher." These presses will also ask you to buy and sell copies of your book.

Self-publishing is another option, and more lucrative, as long as you're not producing fiction. Purcell is precise when discussing the pros and cons: "First off, you're not going to make a million dollars. And if you're going to go this route, take lessons in marketing. True self-publishing

*Continued on page 7...*

## QWF PRESIDENT

Elise Moser

# A stunning response

Last fall, more than half of you completed our membership survey. QWF member **Mélanie Grondin**, who serves on our Membership Committee, did the massive job of designing and administering the survey. I'd like to thank her personally, and on behalf of the entire membership, for tackling this Goliath with such efficiency and grace. For this issue of *Qwrite*, I've turned this space over to our expert so she can report to you directly.

— Elise Moser

In August and September 2009, the QWF Membership Committee sent QWF's more than 500 members an electronic survey. Its purpose was to find out what you liked and disliked about the QWF; which services you used, didn't use, or didn't even know existed. Most importantly, we wanted to know what you need. Just as the networking activities came out of the 2003 survey, we hope this survey will help us develop services and activities that meet your needs.

I developed the questions, which were then approved by the committee, then I designed the electronic survey and collected the responses—all 256 of them! “We had a stunning response,” says QWF President Elise Moser, “about half our membership. That's almost unheard of. It means we have a very engaged membership and people care about the choices we make together. It's exciting to have so much information about how we can improve and expand QWF's offerings.”

Thanks to these answers, we found out that our West Island members (10% of respondents) would like to have events and workshops closer to home, which the board hopes to be able to offer in the near future.

Furthermore, requests for workshops on technical and business writing were plentiful, as were requests for additional services for professional



writers. “The board is currently working on a service that would help professional writers find corporate writing jobs,” says Moser. “That plan includes technical writing workshops, but this is in its early development phase.”

A number of members also mentioned wanting to increase contact with the francophone writing community. A step in this direction was taken when Stanley Péan, president of the Union des écrivaines et des écrivains québécois, hosted the Gala. The board is now considering ways to expand these contacts.

These are some examples of actions the board is pursuing following the results of the survey. There were many other interesting ideas brought forth by the survey—summer workshops, retreats, mentors-for-hire, and so forth. Your answers will help the board satisfy your needs, whether you are an emerging writer (50% of respondents), an established writer (25% of respondents) or simply someone interested in knowing what the Quebec English writing community has to offer. Thank you for your participation!

*Mélanie Grondin is a writer and translator whose work has appeared in carte blanche, Soliloquies, Headlight Anthology, Room, Nashwaak Review and Montreal Review of Books. She is also Associate Editor and a regular contributor for Rover Arts.*

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# Vive le Québec Livre!

A QUEBEC BOOK WORTH A SECOND LOOK



THIS ISSUE:  
CLAUDE LALUMIÈRE READS

## THE JAM: SUPER COOL COLOR-INJECTED TURBO ADVENTURE FROM HELL

BY BERNIE MIREAULT  
(COMICO, 1988)

wears a modified jogging suit and hangs out with his dog on the city's rooftops, pretending to be a superhero. During his fanciful romps he runs into various troubled people, and often his mere presence is enough to suggest a possible solution to their woes. Gordon's most defining trait: nothing can shake his infectious optimism and his exuberantly imaginative way of dealing with life and its obstacles.

In the *Super Cool Color-Injected Turbo Adventure from Hell*, we discover that the Devil is quite unhappy with Gordon's positive influence in the world. Throughout the story, the Devil does his best to break Gordon's spirit. He fails of course, because, while Gordon may not have any superpowers, he's a hero through and through: good to his dog, loving to his girlfriend, kind to strangers, and imaginatively courageous (and also courageously imaginative). The narration ends: "You're not afraid of Hell ... Hell's afraid of you. Let evil beware."

These final three words stayed with me. In 2002, I published a story called "Let Evil Beware!" that was in part inspired by Mireault's comics. But that wasn't the only time Mireault's work played muse to my imagination. My 2007 "Hochelega and Sons"—a multigenerational adventure about a Montreal superhero—is rife with homages to Mireault's *The Jam*. One of my big dreams: that one day Mireault will adapt those two stories into comics form.

**T**he *Jam: Super Cool Color-Injected Turbo Adventure from Hell* is one of my favourite comics of all time. The title alone is almost enough to make this publication an instant classic, and the content more than lives up to the name. Montreal cartoonist Bernie Mireault writes, illustrates, letters, and colours the whole story. The result is a comics masterpiece and a unique, surreal vision of life in Montreal.

This one-shot 1988 comics magazine wasn't the first episode of *The Jam*—the strip had appeared in a handful of comics from now-defunct Montreal publisher Matrix Graphic Series. But when the *Super Cool Color-Injected Turbo Adventure from Hell* was released, I hadn't yet seen those. Nor was it my first exposure to Mireault's work: the previous year I'd read a run of three issues he'd illustrated for Matt Wagner's *Grendel*. But this was my first exposure to Mireault's signature series. My unfamiliarity with *The Jam*'s publishing history did not hinder my enjoyment one bit. The *Super Cool Color-Injected Turbo Adventure from Hell* was entirely self-contained.

At the time, Mireault's work looked like nothing else on the comics shelves—without ever being pretentiously experimental. Mireault is master of his craft. His storytelling is crisp and vibrant. He deftly creates and sustains mood and suspense. He excels at fashioning an organic and sensual visual universe. His pages shimmer with excitement and originality.

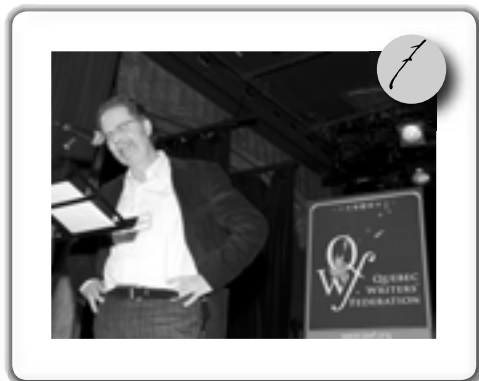
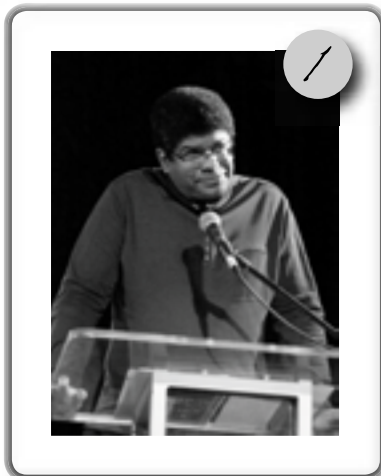
*The Jam* recounts the adventures of Gordon Kirby, a Montrealer who

*Claude Lalumière, a former Montreal bookseller, is the author of the story collection Objects of Worship and is the Fantastic Fiction columnist for the Montreal Gazette. He has edited eight anthologies and, with Rupert Bottenberg, is the co-creator of Lost Myths (lostmyths.net).*





# 2009 QWF Literary Awards



## THE PHOTOS

1. STANLEY PÉAN brings a welcome francophone flair to the proceedings.

2. Finalists MIKE SPRY (Poetry, *Jack*), GILLIAN SZE (First Book, *Fish Bones*) and 2007 Poetry finalist DAVID MCGIMPSEY.

3. QWF President ELISE MOSER, centre, is surrounded by KATE SHECKLER, runner-up in the Quebec Writing Competition and Kate's husband.

4. HELEN FOTOPULOS was nominated to the post of Executive Committee Member Responsible for Culture, Heritage and Women's Issues for Montreal the day of the Awards Gala; addressing our gathering was her first official act.

5. Former QWF President IAN FERRIER discovers ERIC SIBLIN and his *Cello Suites* wins not only for First Book, but also for Non-Fiction.

6. MONIQUE POLAK, winner of QWF Prize for Children's and Young Adult Literature, launches a roman fleuve with her mother.

7. LAZER LEDERHENDLER enjoys the view from up there as winner of the QWF Translation Prize for *Nikolski*.

8. PIERRE LANDRY of CBC Radio One, hosting the segment on the Quebec Writing Competition.

9. Quebec Writing Competition Prize winner KASIA JUNO VAN SCHAİK aglow under the spotlight.

# The Winners

## Mavis Gallant Prize for Non-Fiction

**Eric Siblin**

for *The Cello Suites*

Publisher, House of Anansi Press

Prize sponsored by Champlain, Dawson, Heritage,  
John Abbott, and Vanier Colleges

## QWF Prize for Children's and Young Adult Literature

**Monique Polak**

for *What World is Left*

Publisher, Orca Book Publishers

Prize sponsored by Babar Books

## Paragraphe Hugh MacLennan Prize for Fiction

**Colin McAdam**

for *Fall*

Publisher, Hamish Hamilton Canada (Penguin)

Prize sponsored by Paragraphe Bookstore

## A. M. Klein Prize for Poetry

**Carmine Starnino**

for *This Way Out*

Publisher, Gaspereau Press

Prize sponsored by Jacques Nolin

## McAuslan First Book Prize

**Eric Siblin**

for *The Cello Suites*

Publisher, House of Anansi Press

Prize sponsored by McAuslan Brewing Inc.

## Translation Prize

**Lazer Lederhendler**, for *Nikolski*

(Originally *Nikolski* by Nicolas Dickner, Editions Alto)

Publisher Knopf Canada

## Community Award

**Luci and Adrian King-Edwards**

The Word Bookstore, Montreal

## carte blanche Prize

**Julie Mahfood**

for "Changing Winter Tires"

## Quebec Writing Competition Prize

**Kasia Juno van Schaik** - First Prize

**Anna Leventhal** - Second Prize

**Karin Zuppiger** - Second Prize



JULIE MAHFOOD, *carte blanche* winner for "Changing Winter Tires," and friend liven up a November evening with bright colours and smiles.

THE QUEBEC WRITERS' FEDERATION HOLDS AN ANNUAL JURIED COMPETITION FOR PUBLISHED BOOKS BY QUEBEC AUTHORS IN SIX CATEGORIES.

ON NOVEMBER 17, 2009, QWF HELD ITS ANNUAL AWARDS GALA AT THE LION D'OR IN MONTREAL. THE EVENT WAS HOSTED BY STANLEY PÉAN, WRITER AND PRESIDENT OF THE UNION DES ÉCRIVAINES ET DES ÉCRIVAINES QUÉBÉCOIS (UNEQ).

SIX LITERARY PRIZES, A COMMUNITY AWARD, AND A CARTE BLANCHE PRIZE WERE PRESENTED. FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS YEAR, THE WINNERS AND RUNNERS-UP OF THE QUEBEC WRITING COMPETITION, SPONSORED BY QWF WITH PARTNERS CBC RADIO ONE, VÉHICULE PRESS, AND MAISONNEUVE MAGAZINE, WERE ALSO PRESENTED AT THE GALA.



At the vin d'honneur pre-show, ANNA LEVENTHAL, Quebec Writing Competition Second Prize winner, warms up with JOHN HODGINS.

# Member News



Send your news to [info@qwf.org](mailto:info@qwf.org) (please keep to a 60-word limit) with "Member News" in the subject line—and you'll be entered in a draw to win a great book!

## THIS ISSUE:

Art of the Celts: 700 BC to AD 700  
A beautiful art book

This issue's winner is Daniel Allen Cox.

*Members of the Qwrite Editorial Board and staff are not eligible for the quarterly prizes.*

*Arctic Blue Death*, the fourth book in **R. J. Harlick's** Meg Harris mystery series was recently published. In this book, Meg Harris goes to Iqaluit in search of her father, whose plane went missing when she was a child. Neither he nor the plane were ever seen again. Recent evidence, however, in the form of Inuit drawings suggest he might have survived. This book is not only a journey into Meg's past, but it is also a journey into the land of the Inuit and the culture that has sustained them for thousands of years. Like the previous books, it was published by RendezVous Press.

**Barbara Florio Graham** has joined forces with publicist Randy Ray to create instructions for authors planning book signings. The entire document is at: [www.SimonTeakettle.com/book.signings.htm](http://www.SimonTeakettle.com/book.signings.htm)

Arsenal Pulp Press has acquired world rights to *Krakow Melt*, the second novel by **Daniel Allen Cox**. *Krakow Melt* is about pyromaniacs who fight homophobia and transphobia in a Polish city where nothing is fireproof, while unveiling a Pink Floyd conspiracy theory. The book will be available in trade paperback and on Amazon Kindle in Canada, US and UK in fall 2010.

**Coralie Del Roble Duchesne's** short story, "Person from a War Ravaged Land" appeared in the *Massachusetts Review* this January. Another story, "Bite", is scheduled to appear in the Spring/Summer edition of the Spanish/English literary magazine, *Hotel Abismo* (published in the USA).

Author **MaryAnn Hayatian** has published an online magazine for artists of many varieties, *Artystrea* magazine ([www.artystrea.ca](http://www.artystrea.ca)). If you want to contribute to this magazine, you can email her [artystrea@email.com](mailto:artystrea@email.com).

*The Drunkard's Walk: How Randomness Rules Our Lives*, by **Leonard Mlodinow** is now in Book Reviews at [www.elainezimbel.com/the-drunkard-s-walk](http://www.elainezimbel.com/the-drunkard-s-walk). "This man can keep you reading...you feel that he has

taken your hand and said, 'Come along, I'll explain it to you.' Explain what exactly? In his own words, 'the role of chance in the world around us and...how we may recognize it at work in human affairs.'"

**Ami Sands Brodoff** has been awarded a month's fellowship to The Virginia Center for the Creative Arts (VCCA) to work on her novel-in-progress *Faraway Nearby*. Belletrista.com, celebrating women writers around the world, chose *The White Space Between* as a notable book of the year. [http://www.belletrista.com/2010/issue3/nandn\\_5\\_us.php](http://www.belletrista.com/2010/issue3/nandn_5_us.php). New website: <http://amisandsbrodoff.com>; Blog: <http://chez-ami.blogspot.com>

This November, The Word Bookstore in Montreal celebrated **Stephen Morrissey's** eighth book and first in 11 years, *Girouard Avenue*, and **Ilona Martonfi's** first, *Blue Poppy*. Ilona Martonfi, the founder of the Yellow Door poetry series, was also featured in the November 24th issue of *The Link*, Concordia University's newspaper. Stephen Morrissey and Ilona Martonfi invite you to join them for a talk and sign Thursday, February 18, at 6:30 pm, Paragraphe Bookstore, 2220 McGill College Ave., Montreal.



ADRIAN KING-EDWARDS AT THE WORD, 1975

courtesy Véhicule Press



## NOTICE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the  
Quebec Writers' Federation will be held

**DATE/TIME: Monday, March 29, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.**

**PLACE: Auditorium - Atwater Library, 1200 Atwater**

At the meeting, QWF President Elise Moser will talk about how QWF plans to address the issues you raised in our recent membership survey, and you'll have an opportunity to get more involved in the organization by signing up to volunteer. QWF Treasurer Leonard Eichel will present the financial report. An election will be held for the Board of Directors for 2010. If you wish to put your name forward, or to nominate someone else for a position on the board, please send in a completed nomination form (request a form from the QWF office) by Monday, March 15.

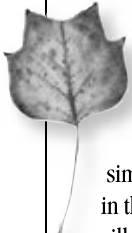
**Please note that you must be a paid member to be eligible to run for the board, nominate someone for the board or vote at the AGM.**

**Meet the QWF board at the Annual Meeting  
and bring your ideas!  
Refreshments will be served.**

**RSVP: (514) 933-0878, or [admin@qwf.org](mailto:admin@qwf.org)**

*carte blanche*, the online literary journal of QWF, has been invited to participate in the 2010 Writers' Trust of Canada/McClelland & Stewart Journey Prize (see [www.mcclelland.com/jps](http://www.mcclelland.com/jps)). "It's the first year that submissions from online publications are eligible for the prize," says editor Maria Schamis Turner. "We're really excited that the **fiction writers** we publish will have access to such a **prestigious** competition." *carte blanche* is looking for submissions for its **spring** issue. Send your poetry, fiction, nonfiction, literary translations, graphic fiction, and photo essays. See <http://www.carte-blanche.org/submissions.html> for complete submission guidelines. The **deadline** for the next issue is March 15, 2009.

## Qwrite goes green!



That's right, Qwrite is now available online! Everything you have grown to love about Qwrite can now be read on your computer. No more mail carrier delays. No more ink-stained fingers. No more filing it in the recycle bin. If you want to be part of the new movement toward a cleaner, greener society simply send a blank email to [julia@qwf.org](mailto:julia@qwf.org) with 'Digital Qwrite' in the subject line. The trees will thank you. The environmentalists will thank you. The Qwrite accountant will thank you. Do it NOW!

## Publishing for Smarties ...Continued from front page

is doing everything *yourself*!" This means handling the jacket cover design to getting your book's ISBN and copyright. It may be hard to get it onto Amazon for distribution, but they will likely take it on consignment. "Self-published works could be vastly improved by professional editing," notes Ms. Purcell, "but you can make a decent living out of it and land up getting published by a real publisher." Self-publishing is about 25% less expensive than going through a vanity press. You have complete control of what's in your book, but also suffer more sweat.

Hard labour is also a requirement in traditional publishing. "Traditional publishers will only accept your work if they think it will make them a profit," underscores Ms. Purcell, "so, what you submit has to be your best effort." The upside is that because traditional publishers are selective, you—the author—gain a lot more credibility. When attempting this path, it's important to be ready to sell yourself. For instance, being able to say that you were previously published in a literary journal is a definite asset.

Traditional publishers offer great benefits including the professional editing of your book, the management of your cash flow (for which you are personally responsible when self-publishing), and royalties which are backed up by printout summaries of what you've sold. "They sell and distribute your book, market and publicize it, plus get the rights for paperback versions and anthology excerpts," says Ms. Purcell. "Traditional publishers act as middlemen between you and the bookstores. They provide bookstores with a 40% discount off your book to make sure that they buy it and have it in stock." If a bookstore has to special order your book, the shopper will likely look elsewhere.

If none of these options sound right for you, don't despair. Some other possibilities do exist. Print on demand publishing (POD) is a cheaper way to go than a vanity press. Charges are kept to a minimum and you stand to make some money on your investment. They basically lay out and print your book. Digitally produced print books can, for instance, be realized through such sites as iUniverse.com, Trafford.com and Lulu.com. Subsidy presses take payments but provide some service in return such as a listing on their website or in a catalogue. These are services for which you are separately charged when going through a vanity press. Regional publishers deal with a specific geographical region, such as the Eastern Townships or a province. They won't market your work much beyond the region of interest, but they're an interesting option, particularly if you can encourage them to submit your book for awards with accredited organizations. The Canadian Authors Association, for instance, offers an award for history.

Getting published and making a career as a recognized writer most frequently boils down to two factors: your work being topnotch and your research being complete. But when setting out, you'll want to be clear about one more issue—your motivation. Whether your objective is literary credibility, a personalized family history, or a specific financial return on your investment, knowing your objective will help you settle on the publishing option that's best for you.

*Irene Aguzzi is a Montreal communications professional and former Director of Communications and Marketing for Centaur Theatre Company. She is currently working on a book of short stories.*

# THE QMUNITY COLUMN

BY CAROL KATZ

It all started when two men of different backgrounds had the same dream and vision. *Les contes à rendre*, a web-radio show was the result. David J. Cox is the co-founder and producer of the English-language section. Marc-Andre Lavoie is the director and producer of the French-language section. The station is located in a room at Université du Québec à Montréal on the first floor. UQAM accepted their proposal to develop a radio program on the student-run station, CHOQ-FM, and gave them a studio. Both Cox and Lavoie realized their goal of giving emerging and professional artists a chance to perform to listeners all over the world. The community of *Les contes à rendre* consists of a group of hosts of a variety of ages, backgrounds and ethnicities. Each host brings in a new guest every week.



MARC-ANDRE LAVOIE IN ACTION

On December 10 I witnessed Lavoie in action. He interviewed nine participants. Each person performed original compositions; that evening it was mostly spoken word, at times accompanied by background music. Each participant talked about the work and its background. I immediately felt part of this collective community of sounds, words, and show. All showered me with warmth, interest and eagerness to answer my questions. Sitting at the table in front of the mike and wearing earphones, I felt like I was in another world—a world where one is given an outlet and a voice for one's creative imagination. The camaraderie among the nine participants was evident as they offered constructive and positive remarks on each other's work.

The following week I had the pleasure of interviewing David J. Cox, producer of the English-language segment of the show. “[*Les contes à rendre*] is a unique variety show and a place for freedom of expression, such as off-the-cuff slam poetry and rap.” According to Cox, he and Lavoie came up with the name “because we are graced with a society that gives us a great array of rights, and we take a lot for granted—we have to give back to the community. *Les contes* [means] stories, *à rendre*, to offer, to give back.” The show is in its third year of production.

UQAM provides the room for the recording studio and students in journalism, media, communications, or radio production are part of the administration, interning for professional experience and course credit. The show's music director is Ariane Gruet-Pelchat, a journalism student at UQAM.



DAVID J. COX (CENTRE) WITH GUESTS AFTER PROGRAM

During our interview, as an aside, I mentioned that I'd enjoyed attending a spoken word workshop—led by Alicia Sometimes of Australia—given by the Quebec Writers' Federation. It had been a fun-filled afternoon. I'd been thrilled to learn how to perform my original poem, both speaking it and putting it to music. Cox was interested in my coming on the show with the CD that Alicia Sometimes had made of all ten participants—just one example of the creative community-building that the two producers of *Les contes à rendre* do so very well.

*Les contes à rendre* airs every Thursday, 6:30-8:00 PM. You can listen to it by accessing the website at: [www.choq.fm/contesarendre.html](http://www.choq.fm/contesarendre.html). This site contains background information as well as archived shows.

How does one get on the show? Contact either: David J. Cox [angloonthears@yahoo.com](mailto:angloonthears@yahoo.com), or [david\\_jcox@yahoo.com](mailto:david_jcox@yahoo.com); or Marc-Andre Lavoie, [lespectateur1@hotmail.fr](mailto:lespectateur1@hotmail.fr).

*Carol Katz is an emerging Montreal writer, with several publications to her name. Her book reviews for the Institute for Poetic Medicine have been added to their website at [www.poeticmedicine.com](http://www.poeticmedicine.com). A number of her poems, short stories and essays were published in various anthologies. Carol is an archivist by profession and a guitarist, artist, writer, singer and dancer by creation. She and her husband Sol have two children.*



CAROL KATZ AND GUEST ON PROGRAM

PHOTOS COURTESY CAROL KATZ AND DAVID J. COX