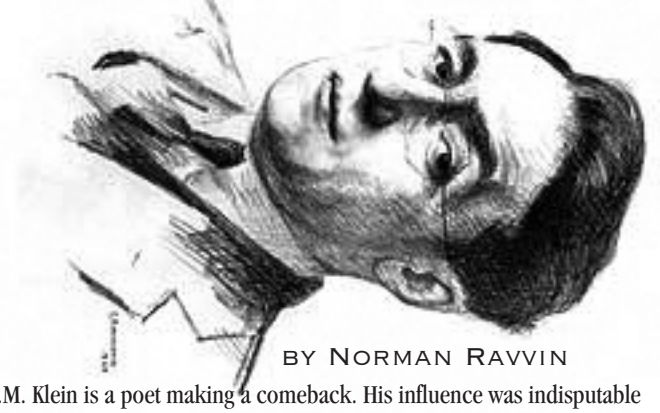
Write

November 2007 vol10 no1

Placing A.M. Klein on the Landscape:

A Montreal Conference and its Literary Accomplishment



BY NORMAN RAVVIN

A.M. Klein is a poet making a comeback. His influence was indisputable on younger Jewish writers such as Leonard Cohen, Mordecai Richler and Miriam Waddington. And he was part of the new modernist developments around figures like F.R. Scott and Louis Dudek in Montreal. His poetry collection *The Rocking Chair* won the 1948 Governor General's Award, and his 1951 novel *The Second Scroll* is arguably among the earliest and most interesting literary responses to postwar Holocaust culture. Important poems — including his "Portrait of the Poet as Landscape" and some of his intensely Jewish poems — continue to be routinely anthologized. Scholars have remained attentive, in particular the Klein Editorial Committee at the University of Toronto Press, who

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The 2007 QWF Awards

Hosted by CBC Television's Geeta Nadkarni

Wednesday November 21

7 p.m.

at the Lion d'Or

1676 Ontario E.

Montreal

Ticket and nominee info inside!

Presenting the 2007 QWF Award Nominees

Mavis Gallant Prize for Non-Fiction

Julie Barlow & Jean-Benoît Nadeau

The Story of French

Knopf Canada

Partners in life and in writing, Canadian journalist-authors **Jean-Benoît Nadeau and Julie Barlow** have spent the last decade writing extensively in both English and French. Award-winning contributors to *L'actualité*, they have written widely for Canadian magazines and have published articles in *The New York Times, The Christian Science Monitor, The International Herald Tribune* and the *Courrier international.* The couple's first book together, *Sixty Million Frenchmen Can't Be Wrong*, became an international bestseller translated into Chinese, French and Dutch. In the fall of 2006 they published their second book together, *The Story of French*, in Canada, the US and the UK. The Montreal *Gazette* called it "a mind-altering experience." Born in Sherbrooke, Quebec, in 1964, Jean-Benoît Nadeau has been the recipient of 30 journalism awards and is the author of five books. In 2001, he published a humorous travelogue, *Les français aussi ont un accent* (Payot, Paris). Born in Ancaster, Ontario in 1968, Julie Barlow is the author of three books and recently won four Honorary Mentions at the National Magazine Awards and the Quebec Magazine Awards. The couple lives in Montreal with their two daughters.

Photo: Marie France Coallier, The *Gazette*

Mavis Gallant Prize for Non-Fiction

Margaret Somerville

The Ethical Imagination

House of Anansi Press

Margaret Somerville is Samuel Gale Professor of Law, Professor in the Faculty of Medicine, and Founding Director of the Centre for Medicine, Ethics and Law at McGill University. She has an extensive national and international publishing and speaking record and is a frequent commentator in all forms of media. She authored *The Ethical Canary: Science, Society and the Human Spirit; Death Talk: The Case Against Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide;* and *The Ethical Imagination: Journeys of the Human Spirit,* the 2006 Massey Lectures, which were broadcast on CBC and Sirius Satellite Radio, ABC (Australia) and NZBC (New Zealand). Professor Somerville regularly consults to a wide variety of bodies including governments and NGOs (e.g. World Health Organization, UNAIDS, UNESCO and UNHCR), especially regarding ethics and public policy, and has served on many editorial boards, advisory boards and boards of directors. In 2003 she was chosen by an international jury as the first recipient of the UNESCO Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science.

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE QUEBEC WRITERS' FEDERATION

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Mavis Gallant Prize for Non-Fiction sponsored by Champlain, Dawson, Heritage, John Abbott, and Vanier Colleges

Mavis Gallant Prize for Non-Fiction

Vikki Stark

My Sister, My Self:

Understanding the Sibling Relationship that Shapes Our Lives, Our Loves and Ourselves

McGraw Hill/New York

Originally from New York City, psychotherapist and family counselor **Vikki Stark**, M.S.W., is co-founder of The Montreal Family Centre, a private counseling centre. She teaches therapists at The Argyle Institute of Human Relations and regularly presents workshops on parenting, divorce and sibling relationships for community organizations and schools. Stark is a familiar face on Montreal television. She appears monthly on Global television's *This Morning Live* where, as the resident family therapist since 2001, she explores pertinent issues related to mental health and family relationships. Stark is currently researching Wife Abandonment Syndrome in preparation for her next book, *Runaway Husbands: Making Sense and Bouncing Back from a Divorce You Didn't See Coming*. In her personal life, she sings lead in a woman's barbershop chorus and can be found at the dog run most mornings chasing after her crazy Jack Russell terrier puppy.

The 2007 QWF Awards Gala

Hosted by CBC Television's Geeta Nadkarni

Wednesday November 21

7 p.m.

at the Lion d'Or 1676 Ontario E., Montreal

Geeta Nadkarni, the host of this year's Gala, got her start in television through a QWF writers' workshop.

More information about the shortlisted authors, as well as photos and book summaries, are online at the QWF Literary Database, http://quebecbooks.qwf.org.

The winner of the honorary QWF Community Award will be announced in the coming weeks. The winners of the five $2,000 literary prizes will be announced at the annual QWF Literary Awards Gala at the Lion d'Or (1676 Ontario E.) on Wednesday, November 21 at 7 p.m. The Gala is open to the general public and will be hosted by television personality and writer Geeta Nadkarni, who got her start in television through a QWF writing workshop. Poet and illustrator Sherwin Tija will also be on hand to create several works of art based on three of this year's nominated books.

TICKETS

Tickets are $10 and are available at the following bookstores: Argo Books, Babar en ville, Bibliophile, Clio Bookstore, Paragraphe Bookstore, and The Word. Tickets are also available at the QWF office and at the door (space permitting). For ticket information, call (514) 933-0878.

Paragraphe Hugh MacLennan Prize for Fiction sponsored by Paragraphe Bookstore

Paragraphe Hugh MacLennan Prize for Fiction

Liam Durcan
García's Heart

McClelland & Stewart

Liam Durcan's book of short fiction, *A Short Journey by Car* (Véhicule Press) was named a top book of 2004 by the *Globe and Mail*. *Garcia's Heart*, his first novel, was published in April 2007 by McClelland & Stewart and will be released in the United States by St. Martin's Press in November 2007. His work has been shortlisted for the CBC National Literary Awards for the last three years. Born in Winnipeg, he lives in Montreal with his wife Florence and their two young children.

Paragraphe Hugh MacLennan Prize for Fiction

Heather O'Neill
Lullabies for Little Criminals

HarperCollins Publishers

Heather O'Neill's debut novel, *Lullabies for Little Criminals*, was a national bestseller and garnered rave reviews. It was the winner of the 2007 Canada Reads competition and is currently a finalist for the Governor General's Award. It was a Barnes and Noble Discover Great New Writers Selection, a *People* magazine Bookclub Pick, a *Globe and Mail* Best Book of the Year and was shortlisted for the Amazon.ca/Books in Canada First Novel Award. It will be published in Western and Eastern Europe next year.

Paragraphe Hugh MacLennan Prize for Fiction

Also nominated for the

McAuslan First Book Prize

Neil Smith
Bang Crunch

Knopf Canada

Neil Smith is the author of *Bang Crunch*, a story collection that became a national bestseller in 2007 and was chosen as a Heather's Pick at Indigo/Chapters. So far, the book has sold to five markets: Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Germany. Excerpts have also appeared in the Netherlands and Russia. Three of the stories in the book were nominated for the Journey Prize. Neil's writing has appeared in *Maisonneuve, The Malahat Review, The Fiddlehead, The New Quarterly* and *The Antigonish Review* and is upcoming in *Esquire*. Neil lives in Montreal, where he works as a freelance translator.

McAuslan First Book Prize sponsored by McAuslan Brewing Inc.

McAuslan First Book Prize

Angela Carr

Ropewalk

Snare Books

Angela Carr is a writer and editor living in Montreal. Her first book, *Ropewalk*, was published by Snare Books in 2006. Selections from a work in progress are forthcoming in the *Capilano Review* and *dANDelion*. She regularly contributes interviews to *Matrix* magazine.

McAuslan First Book Prize

Nairne Holtz

The Skin Beneath

Insomniac Press

Nairne Holtz is a Montreal-based fiction writer. *The Skin Beneath* is her first novel. She is the co-editor of *No Margins: writing canadian fiction in lesbian* (QPress, 2006), which was a finalist for a Lambda Literary Award. She has also reviewed close to one hundred books on her annotated bibliography of Canadian literature with lesbian content on her website at www.canadianlesbianliterature.ca

A. M. Klein Prize for Poetry sponsored by Jacques Nolin

A. M. Klein Prize for Poetry

David McGimpsey

Sitcom

Coach House Books

David McGimpsey is the author of four collections of poetry (*Lardcake, Dogboy, Hamburger Valley, California* and *Sitcom*) and one collection of short stories (*Certifiable*). David has a PhD in English Literature and is the author of the critically-acclaimed and award-winning study *Imagining Baseball: America's Pastime and Popular Culture*. He is a songwriter and performer – he is a member of the rock band Puggy Hammer as well as a local stand-up comedian. His travel writings frequently appear in the *Globe and Mail* and he writes the "Sandwich of the Month" column for *EnRoute* magazine. David McGimpsey currently lives in Montreal and teaches at Concordia University.

A. M. Klein Prize for Poetry

Erín Moure
O Cadoiro

House of Anansi Press

Erín Moure is a Montreal poet and translator from Galician, Portuguese, French and Spanish. *O Cadoiro* is her most recent book. *Little Theatres* was shortlisted for the Griffin Prize, Pat Lowther Memorial Award, Governor General's Award, won the A. M. Klein Prize, and made the Globe 100 for 2005. Other recent books: *O Cidadán* (2002), and *Sheep's Vigil by a Fervent Person* (2001), a transelation from the Portuguese of Alberto Caeiro/Fernando Pessoa. Moure has also translated, with Robert Majzels, Nicole Brossard's *Installations* (2000), *Museum of Bone and Water* (2003), and *Notebook of Roses and Civilization* (2007). Her translation of Galician poet Chus Pato's *Charenton* just came out from Shearsman Books in the UK and BuschekBooks in Ottawa. Moure is currently translating Chus Pato's *Hordas de Escritura* and is working on a new book of poetry, *O Resplandor*, with Elisa Sampedrín, and on a long collaborative work with Oana Avasilichioaei.

A. M. Klein Prize for Poetry welcomes new sponsor

Jacques Nolin, B.Sc and MBA, is senior partner and portfolio manager at Jarislowsky Fraser, one of Canada's leading investment firms, and also a lover of the arts. As a businessman, he understands the importance of regular, consistent funding for arts programs, especially in these times of uncertainty over government grants. He and his wife have generously supported the Anne Szumigalski Lecture Series of the League of Canadian Poets, held at their Annual General Meeting, since 2004. He is also a Friend of the McGill Jazz School, and a musician himself in his 'off hours'. Jacques is proud to add the Quebec Writers' Federation to the list of arts organizations he supports, and hopes the association with the A.M. Klein Prize for Poetry will be a long and fruitful one.

Photo: Rob Taussig

A. M. Klein Prize for Poetry

David Solway
Reaching for Clear: The Poetry of Rhys Savarin

Véhicule Press

David Solway's previous book of poetry, *Franklin's Passage* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), was awarded Le Grand Prix du Livre de Montréal. His latest volume of literary criticism is *Director's Cut* (The Porcupine's Quill, 2003) and a political study, *The Big Lie: On Terror, Antisemitism, and Identity*, appeared in 2007 with Lester, Mason & Begg/Random House. Appointed poet-in-residence at Concordia University for 1999-2000, he is currently an associate editor with *Books in Canada*.

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TRANSLATION PRIZE - FRENCH TO ENGLISH

PHYLLIS ARONOFF & HOWARD SCOTT

MY NAME IS BOSNIA

TALONBOOKS/KARL SIEGLER

MADELEINE GAGNON

JE M'APPELLE BOSNIA

VLB ÉDITEUR

Phyllis Aronoff and **Howard Scott** translate, separately and together, fiction and non-fiction from Quebec and France. In the past fifteen years, they have published some dozen co-translations, including *Women in a World at War,* by Madeleine Gagnon, *Two Solicitudes,* conversations between Victor-Lévy Beaulieu and Margaret Atwood, and *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701*, by Gilles Havard, which received the 2001 QWF Translation Award. Phyllis Aronoff has also translated fiction and non-fiction by Régine Robin and stories by Naïm Kattan. *The Wanderer,* her translation of Robin's *La Québécoite,* received a Jewish Literary Award for fiction. Howard Scott also translates poetry and science fiction, including works by Élisabeth Vonarburg. He won the Governor General's Award for Translation in 1997 for *The Euguelion,* by Louky Bersianik. He has a black belt in the Japanese martial art, aikido. Phyllis Aronoff is currently president of the Literary Translators' Association of Canada.

Translation Prize Sponsored by Pierre Lapointe

TRANSLATION PRIZE - FRENCH TO ENGLISH

LAZER LEDERHENDLER

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

HOUSE OF ANANSI PRESS

GAÉTAN SOUCY

L'IMMACULÉE CONCEPTION

LES ÉDITIONS DU BORÉAL

Lazer Lederhendler has been nominated three times for the Governor General's Literary Award for Translation: In 1999 for *The Sparrow Has Cut the Day in Half* by Claire Dé (Exile Editions), in 2002 for *Larry Volt* by Pierre Tourangeau (XYZ éditeur), and in 2006 for *The Immaculate Conception* by Gaétan Soucy (House of Anansi), which was a finalist as well for the 2006 Scotiabank Giller Prize. Mr. Lederhendler has also published poetry, short fiction, and non-fiction in various Canadian and Québecois journals. After living for a number of years in the Maritimes and the Ottawa region, he now makes his home in Montreal, where he was born. He holds Arts degrees from the University of Ottawa and Concordia University and teaches English at the Collège international des Marcellines in Westmount, Québec.

TRANSLATION PRIZE - FRENCH TO ENGLISH

ROBERT MAJZELS & ERÍN MOURE

NOTEBOOK OF ROSES AND CIVILIZATION

COACH HOUSE BOOKS

NICOLE BROSSARD

CAHIER DE ROSES ET DE CIVILISATION

ÉDITIONS D'ART LE SABORD

Robert Majzels is a novelist, playwright, poet and translator. In 2007, the special edition of his novel, *Apikoros Sleuth* won the Alcuin Society Prize for Excellence in Book Design. His play, *This Night the Kapo,* was produced at Toronto's Berkley Street Theatre in 2004. He won the Governor General's Award of Canada for his translation of France Daigle's *Just Fine* in 2000. With Erín Moure, Robert Majzels has translated three books of poetry by Nicole Brossard. His fourth novel, *The Humbugs Diet,* will be released in November 2007.

Erín Moure, a Governor General's Award winning poet and author of twelve books, has worked to develop innovative translation practices with her acclaimed transelation of Fernando Pessoa in *Sheep's Vigil by a Fervent Person*. She has also translated Chilean poet Andrés Ajens (*Quasi Flanders, Quasi Extramadura,* La Mano Izquierda, 2007) and Galician poet Chus Pato (*Charenton*, Shearsman Books, UK; BuschekBooks, Ottawa, 2007). With Robert Majzels, she has translated three books by Nicole Brossard. Her most recent book of her own poetry is *O Cadoiro*, 2007.

A. M. KLEIN CONTINUED...

have brought out important volumes of his collected works. But it's arguable, too, that recent generations of readers of Canadian literature have thought little of Klein's work and influence. This month's conference at Concordia University, entitled "The Poet as Landscape: A Portrait of A.M. Klein Today," confirmed that Klein's work and life are reasserting themselves in the imagination of writers and the average Canadian reader. With talks given by Montrealers, as well as speakers from across the country, the conference considered Klein's modernist tendencies, his Jewish affiliations, his influence on figures like Richler, and the scope of his relevance for coming generations.

The latter concern was addressed most directly by a literary night, co-sponsored by the Quebec Writers' Federation and hosted by poet and professor Jason Camlot. Four poets of various age and style, alongside a translator of Klein's poetry, read Klein in both French and English, and then read their own creative work alongside that of their influential literary ancestor. Marie Frankland read her new translations of the *Rocking Chair* poems. David McGimpsey paired his own comic Montreal poetry with Klein's lyrical take on the city. David Solway took aim at the role of the prophet, and then read from a variety of translations of the Hebrew poet Chaim Nachman Bialik, some of which were done by Klein. Carmine Starnino set a striking reflection between his poetic take on a junkyard's complicated shapes and Klein's image of a diving swimmer. Robyn Sarah read personal reflections on the neighbourhood where both she and Klein devised a poetic world. The outcome was clear: Klein's voice echoes clearly through the poetic landscape of Montreal today.

The evening, too, was a rare case of true collaboration between scholars, poets and writers' advocates, constituencies who are not always in open dialogue.