

Gerald Lampert Memorial Award Shortlist 2015

The Gerald Lampert Memorial Award is given in the memory of Gerald Lampert, an arts administrator who organized authors' tours and took a particular interest in the work of new writers.

The award recognizes the best first book of poetry published by a Canadian in the preceding year. The award carries a \$1,000 prize and is sponsored by the League of Canadian Poets.

This year's shortlisted poets and books are:

For Your Safety Please Hold On by Kayla Czaga (Nightwood Editions)

And I Alone Escaped to Tell You by Sylvia D. Hamilton (Gaspereau Press Ltd.)

ΛΛΛΛΛΛ ΛΛΛΛΛΛ ΛΛΛΛΛΛ ***[Sharps]*** by Stevie Howell (icehouse poetry)

Inheritance by Kerry-Lee Powell (Biblioasis)

Failure to Thrive by Suzannah Showler (ECW Press Ltd.)

The Quiet by Anne-Marie Turza (House of Anansi Press Inc.)

2015 Jury: Sonja Greckol, Charles Mountford, David Seymour

Congratulations to all of the authors for their fine work, and many thanks to the jurors for their dedication to this year's awards.

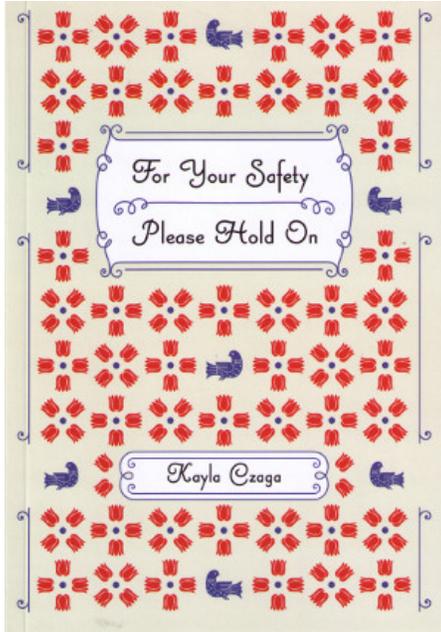
The winner of this award will be announced at the LCP Annual Poetry Festival and Conference in Winnipeg on May 30th, 2015.

For more information visit: www.poets.ca

For Your Safety Please Hold On

by Kayla Czaga

(Nightwood Editions)



About the author:



Kayla Czaga

Kayla Czaga grew up in Kitimat, BC, and currently lives in Vancouver, where she recently earned her MFA in Creative Writing at UBC. She won *The Malahat Review's* 2012 Far Horizons Award for Poetry and *The Fiddlehead's* 23rd Annual Ralph Gustafson Prize. *For Your Safety Please Hold On* is her first book.

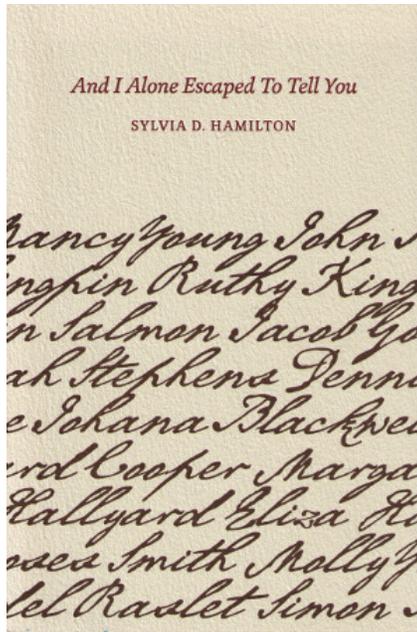
Judges' Comments:

Kayla Czaga's *For Your Safety Please Hold On* moves line by flawless line along an arc in | from broken bodies through re | construction into troubled and troubling metaphor. In this first collection, which offers the reader a growth project, a deeply embodied girl child and young woman meets her world (personal and literary) with sly and contemplative thought that experiments with itself. Czaga unfurls experience, observation and development with complexity and more than a little humour suspending a reader between this page's moment of assurance and the next moment's unsettling observation. This work is a thrill.

And I Alone Escaped to Tell You

by Sylvia D. Hamilton

(Gaspereau Press Ltd.)



About the author:



Sylvia D. Hamilton

Sylvia D. Hamilton is a filmmaker and writer whose awards include a Gemini and the Portia White Prize. Her poetry has been published in *The Dalhousie Review*, *West Coast Line*, *The Great Black North* and *Untying the Apron: Daughters Remember Mothers of the Fifties*. She was a contributor to, and co-editor of, *We're Rooted Here and They Can't Pull Us Up: Essays in African Canadian Women's History*. She lives in Grand Pre, Nova Scotia.

Judges' Comments:

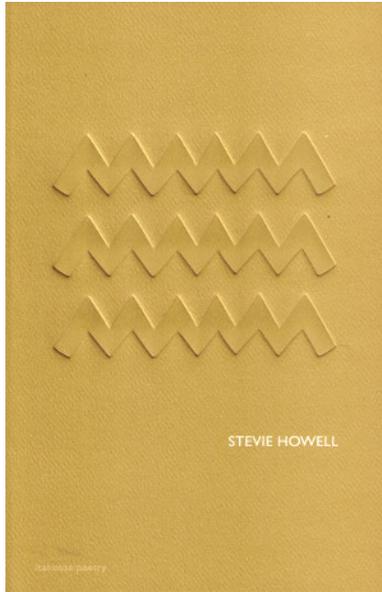
Sylvia D. Hamilton's *And I Alone Escaped To Tell You* is a necessity. Picking up this beautifully crafted and textured book object constitutes a first step into the visible and nameable world that had been rendered invisible. Then in each stunningly crafted container, Hamilton gifts the reader a piece of the history of African peoples moving through Nova Scotia recounting, reimagining and revealing a resilient community that survived and thrives in the shadows of the walls of racist, supremacist quotidian practices. Each poem reveals the tenacity needed to find the grips along this multiplex with few route marks.

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[Sharps]

by Stevie Howell

(icehouse poetry)



About the author:



Stevie Howell

Stevie Howell is a poet and critic from Toronto. In 2013 her work was shortlisted for the Montreal Poetry Prize, and in 2012 she was a finalist for the inaugural Walrus Poetry Prize. Her poetry and criticism have appeared in *The Walrus*, *Maisonneuve*, *Event*, the *Globe and Mail*, and the *National Post*, and in two chapbooks, *Royal* and *Ringsend*.

Judges' Comments:

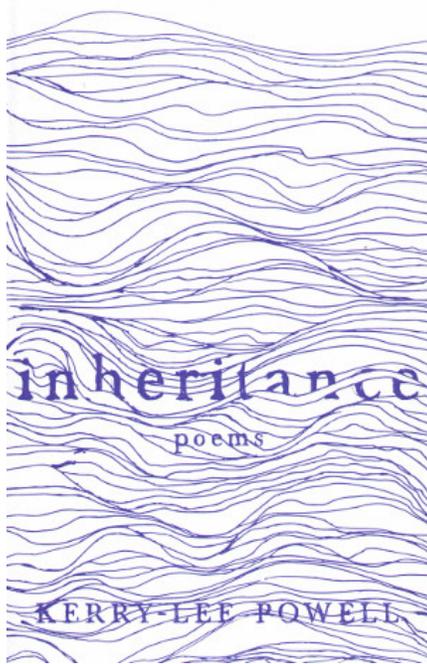
Stevie Howell's writing, in *Sharps*, has an inevitable quality, as though there is no other way to say what she wants to say. There is a wonderful mixture of high and low culture achieved with enormous skill. Her writing is original, skillful and quite often humorous without being self-consciously that way.

Howell is always asking questions and answering them in ways that are quite often totally unexpected. Her choice of words have implications that make a careful, considered reading necessary. She comfortably inhabits a poetic world of great depth and richness. She writes, "Anything can happen, and it will./ The question is, to whom."

Inheritance

by Kerry-Lee Powell

(Biblioasis)



About the author:



Kerry-Lee Powell

Born in Montreal, Kerry-Lee Powell has lived in Australia, Antigua, and the United Kingdom, where she studied Medieval and Renaissance literature at Cardiff University and directed a literature promotion agency. Her work has appeared in journals and anthologies throughout the United Kingdom and North America. In 2013, she won *The Boston Review* fiction contest, *The Malahat Review's* Far Horizons Award for short fiction, and the Alfred G. Bailey Prize. *Inheritance* is her first book.

Judges' Comments:

When you read this book you sense you are always in the middle of it, wherever you may be. The poems poise eloquently then capsize on line, image, story, but maintain the keel enough to allow you to feel you're participating in the ongoing discovery of something essential about the human condition. It's as though the poems galvanize to create between them the emotional force of a novel. *Inheritance* is like an invitation to a field party where Powell begins to relate enthralling, candid, heartbreaking stories you weren't ready to hear. The atmosphere was more than you were prepared for. But while you pause to process this new air to breathe, Powell's grown restless and wandered off to throw more pallets onto the bonfire.

Failure to Thrive

by Suzannah Showler

(ECW Press Ltd.)



About the author:



Suzannah Showler

Suzannah Showler's writing had appeared places, including *The Walrus*, *Maisonneuve*, *Hazlitt*, and *Joyland*. She was a finalist for the 2013 RBC Bronwen Wallace Award for Emerging Writers and winner of the 2012 Matrix LitPOP Award for Poetry. This is her first book.

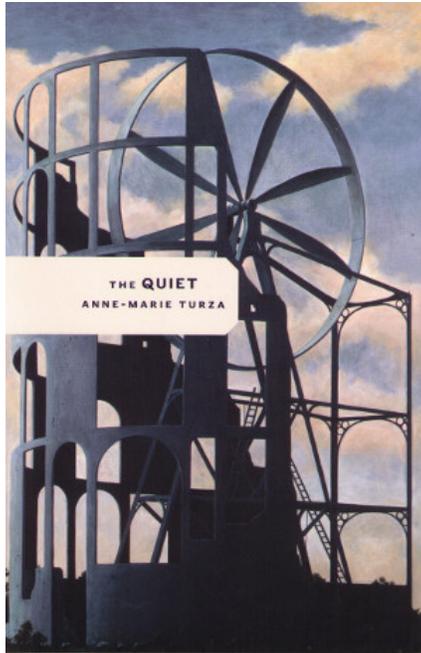
Judges' Comments:

The message of this book would be immediately acceptable if we would only admit how easy it is to lie to ourselves about a cultural ill-health. Then, in double turn, while we're reading and still deciding, Showler proceeds with craft and intellectual acumen from our collective lie and asks that we please don't read anything as diagnostic, but prognostic. Poem to poem, without recovery time, Showler presents these alternative prognoses with an infectious dark gleefulness; the book is a resource of potential conditions under which we can offer ourselves a renewed, more difficult honesty.

The Quiet

by Anne-Marie Turza

(House of Anansi Press Inc.)



About the author:



Anne-Marie Turza

Anne-Marie Turza's work has appeared in *Arc Poetry Magazine*, *The Malahat Review*, and the anthology *The Best Canadian Poetry in English 2010*, among others. Her home is Victoria, British Columbia.

Judges' Comments:

In *The Quiet* Anne-Marie Turza displays an admirable ability to create an unusual, surreal universe which is quite believable despite its strangeness. There are surprises everywhere in this book, which encapsulates the life and history of the world, sometimes in as few as three lines. Much more is implied than is stated directly. The book is so well written and in such a unique and risky way that reading it is like discovering poetry for the first time.

Turza has created a strong and appealing book in which she uses myth, history and science to achieve her poetic goals.