

2019 Pat Lowther Memorial Award Shortlist

***Listen Before Transmit* by Dani Couture (Wolsak & Wynn)**

Dani Couture is the author of four collections of poetry and the novel *Algoma* (Invisible Publishing). Her work has been nominated for the Trillium Award for Poetry, received an honour of distinction from the Writers' Trust of Canada's Dayne Ogilvie Prize for Emerging LGBTQ Writers and won the ReLit Award for Poetry. Her most recent collection of poetry is *Listen Before Transmit* (Wolsak & Wynn, 2018).



From the Jurors: *Listen Before Transmit* is a sharp lyric text that evokes a sadness in the burden of having experienced so much, gleaned great knowledge, and yet feeling powerless in that knowledge. The precision of the language throughout captures well the struggle to connect and find coherence in our fragmented 21st century.

***Ekke* by Klara Du Plessis (Palimpsest Press)**

Klara du Plessis is a poet residing in Montreal. Her debut collection, *Ekke*, was released from Palimpsest Press in 2018; and her chapbook, *Wax Lyrical*—shortlisted for the bpNichol Chapbook Award—was published by Anstruther Press in 2015. Klara is the editor for *carte blanche* magazine, a PhD English Literature student at Concordia University, and currently expanding her curatorial practice to include experimental Deep Curation poetry reading events. Follow her @ToMakePoesis.



From the Jurors: An intelligent book constructed of long poems, *Ekke* reflects on the strange vagrancy of meaning and slippage of sounds between different languages. Both politically conscious and aesthetically beautiful, *Ekke* reads like a combination of the best parts of Lisa Robertson and M. Travis Lane: brainy and beautiful meditation with a beating lyric heart.

***Body Work* by Emilia Nielsen (Signature Editions)**

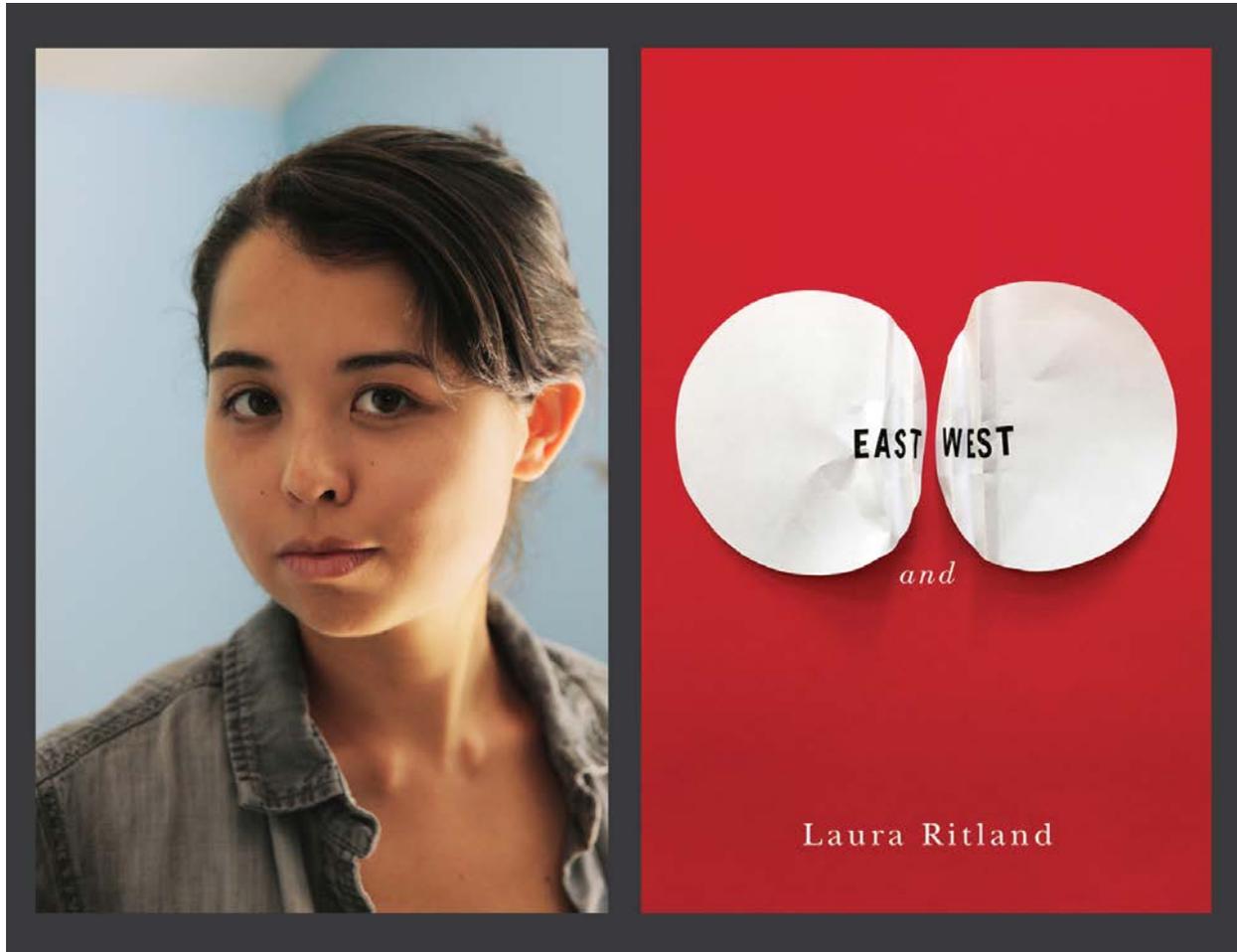
Emilia Nielsen is the author of two collections of poetry; most recently, *Body Work* (Signature Editions, 2018), a finalist for a Lambda Literary Award and the Pat Lowther Memorial Award. Her first book of poetry, *Surge Narrows* (Leaf Press, 2013), was a finalist for the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award. She is also the author of a scholarly text, *Disrupting Breast Cancer Narratives: Stories of Rage and Repair* (University of Toronto Press, 2019). Dr. Nielsen is an Assistant Professor of Arts, Medicine and Healing in York University's Department of Social Science, Health & Society Program.



From the Jurors: Nielsen's poetic representations of the body problematize an easy essentialism of parts. When theme and sonic ability are coupled with formal variability – *Body Work* features short lyrics heavy on repetition, list-like amalgams of parts, mobius strips, and weird footnoting wildness – and emotion to boot, one realizes Nielsen has created a jangling, energized series of body nodes meant to expand what poetry can do.

***East and West* by Laura Ritland (Véhicule Press)**

Laura Ritland's poems have appeared in magazines across Canada, including *The Walrus*, *CNQ*, *Maisonneuve*, *Arc Poetry Magazine*, *The Fiddlehead*, and *The Malahat Review*. She is the author of the chapbook *Marine Science* (Anstruther 2016) and recipient of the 2014 Malahat Far Horizons Award for Poetry. Born in Toronto and raised in Vancouver, she currently divides her time along the west coast between Vancouver and the San Francisco Bay Area where she is a PhD candidate in English at the University of California, Berkeley. Her debut collection *East and West* was published with Véhicule Press in spring 2018.



From the Jurors: Laura Ritland's *East and West* is a feast of inventive image. Demonstrating the askew point of view all good poetry has, these poems take the familiar moments and objects in our daily lives and turns them on their heads all the while creating a sustained sense of place and being in the world.

***Reunion* by Deanna Young (Brick Books)**

Deanna Young was born and grew up in Middlesex County, Ontario. Her books of poetry include *Drunkard's Path* (2001) and *House Dreams* (2014), which was nominated for the Trillium Book Award for Poetry, the Ottawa Book Award, the Archibald Lampman Award, and the ReLit Award. *Reunion* is her fourth book. She lives in Ottawa, where she works as an editor and teaches poetry. In 2019 she was named Ottawa's English Poet Laureate for a two-year term.



From the Jurors: Deanna Young's *Reunion* marries sustained narrative tension with precision of voice and point of view. It startles in topic and in imagery. Controlled form harnesses the power of the emotional narrative through lyric and echoes of fairy tale nursery rhymes. This book reaches far into the what-is of the human heart.

***The Missing Field* by Jennifer Zilm (Guernica Editions)**

Jennifer Zilm is the author of *Waiting Room* (Book*hug, 2016) and *The Missing Field* (Guernica, 2018). She lives in Vancouver and works in public libraries. She is a failed Bible scholar and still sometimes thinks about joining a cult. In 2014 her favourite words were fragment, soft, threshold, girl, room and turning.



From the Jurors: *The Missing Field* captures the joy of observation, the observer yielding to the vastness that is this world with wonder. The poems travel far afield and yet manage to spin around the central axis of a Vancouver curled at the edges with both despair and love. Through both humour and pathos Zilm captures the sometimes absurd beauty of the quotidian.