

Pat Lowther Memorial Award Shortlist 2013

The Pat Lowther Memorial Award is given for a book of poetry by a Canadian woman published in the preceding year, and is in memory of the late Pat Lowther, whose career was cut short by her untimely death in 1975.

The award carries a \$1,000 prize and is sponsored by the League of Canadian Poets.

This year's shortlisted poets and books are:

Soul Mouth by Marilyn Bowering (Exile Editions)

Monkey Ranch by Julie Bruck (Brick Books)

The Book of Marvels by Lorna Crozier (Greystone Books)

Slow Curve Out by Maureen Scott Harris (Pedlar Press)

A Grain of Rice by Evelyn Lau (Oolichan Books)

Song and Spectacle by Rachel Rose (Harbour Publishing)

2013 Jury: Kate Braid, Gay Allison, Marsha Barber

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

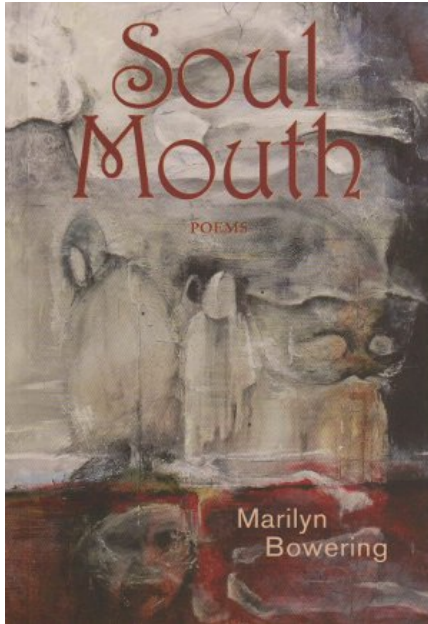
The winner of this award will be announced at the LCP Annual Poetry Festival and Conference in Toronto, ON, on June 8th, 2013.

For more information visit: www.poets.ca

Soul Mouth

by Marilyn Bowering

(Exile Editions)



About the author:



Marilyn Bowering

Marilyn Bowering of Sooke, BC has received many awards for her writing (both poetry and fiction) including the Pat Lowther Award, the Dorothy Livesay Prize and several National Magazine awards. Her work has been shortlisted for the Governor General's Award and for international awards including the Dublin Impac Award, the Orange Prize, the Sony Award and the Prix Italia. She was a 2008 Fulbright Scholar at New York University and currently teaches at Vancouver Island University. Her most recent books are *Green* (poetry, with Exile Editions) and *What It Takes to Be Human* (novel).

Judges' Comments:

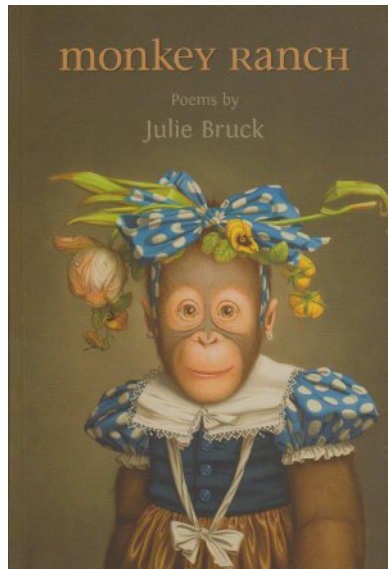
Fearless, these are poems in a mystic tradition that both loves and honours the physical world of mother, father, childhood, and that also tells us how to pay strict attention to what is going on in dreams and beyond, past the solid edges of a merely sensual world.

Interesting, otherworldly, haunting and dreamlike. These poems are like truffles—rich, it's only possible to read a few at once.

Monkey Ranch

by Julie Bruck

(Brick Books)



About the author:



Julie Bruck

Julie Bruck is the author of two previous books, both with Brick: *The End of Travel* (1999), and *The Woman Downstairs* (1993). Her recent work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Ploughshares*, and *The Walrus*, among other publications. A Montreal native, she lives in San Francisco with her husband and daughter. *Monkey Ranch* is her third poetry collection.

Judges' Comments:

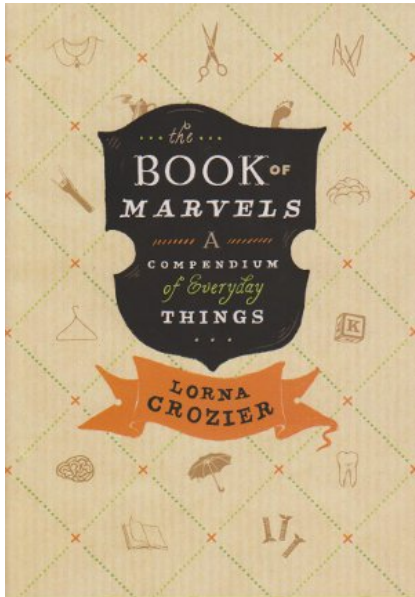
Bruck asks, "What does it mean to love the life we've been given?" And answers. She has an amazing ability to set even the most mundane object/event/person into a compassionate context so that where once I might have felt annoyed or passed over it, now I suddenly see meaning, and how precious "the mundane" is to me.

A polished and precise book of crafted poems which capture the essence and drama of ordinary family life placed within a larger world context. Bruck's cinematic eye infuses *Monkey Ranch* with a finely textured tapestry, and insights that are deceptively simple. Her work is disciplined and consistent and has a clarity that is welcoming.

The Book of Marvels

by Lorna Crozier

(Greystone Books)



About the author:



Lorna Crozier

Lorna Crozier, one of Canada's most celebrated poets, has read from her work on every continent. She has received numerous awards, including the Governor General's Award, for her fifteen books of poetry, which include *Small Mechanics*, *The Blue Hour of the Day*, *What Living Won't Let Go* and *Everything Arrives at the Light*, and her memoir, *Small beneath the Sky*. She has also edited several anthologies, among them *Desire in Seven Voices* and, with Patrick Lane, *Addicted: Notes from the Belly of the Beast*. She lives on Vancouver Island and is a Distinguished Professor at the University of Victoria.

Judges' Comments:

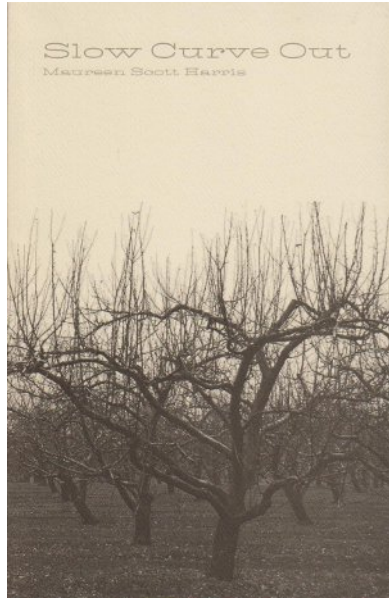
This is a fabulous book: a philosophical and imaginative journey into the mystery & joy of ordinary "things." *The Book of Marvels* is a playful, yet serious, poetic contemplation which is witty & wise & wonderful. Crozier has written accomplished and mature prose poems filled with curiosity and creativity. She has an amazing love of the world and delights in the truth and details in all of its creations. A perceptive and enthusiastic work of art that reveals an inner connection between all "things".

Following in the tradition of French poet Francis Ponge, there is not a misstep in this book of prose meditations on ordinary objects. From bobby pin to crowbar to jell-o to vagina, Crozier gently opens our eyes. Did you ever think the crowbar could allow you "the opening of a joke: two crows walk into a bar..."?

Slow Curve Out

By Maureen Scott Harris

(Pedlar Press)



About the author:



Maureen Scott Harris

Poet and essayist Maureen Scott Harris was born in Prince Rupert, grew up in Winnipeg and lives in Toronto. She has published two previous collections of poems: *A Possible Landscape* (Brick Books, 1993) and *Drowning Lessons* (Pedlar press, 2004). *Drowning Lessons* won the 2005 Trillium Book Award for Poetry, and in 2012 was voted one of four favorite Trillium winners in Open Book's "Favorite Titles from the Past 24 Years" contest. Harris' essays have won the Prairie Fire Creative Nonfiction Prize (2006), the Sparrow Prize for Prose (2008) and the WildCare Tasmania Nature Writing Prize (2009).

Judges' Comments:

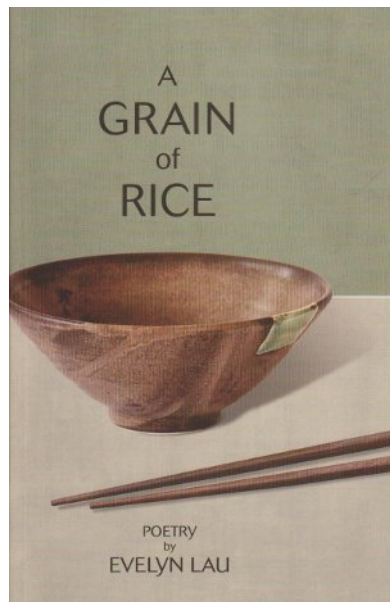
I loved this book! It's solid & mature & philosophical and reveals an inner wisdom running like a river. Scott Harris is an imaginative nature poet with a deep & abiding love for an expansive world. *Slow Curve Out* is an enlightened meditation on our world: a longing to understand it, but knowing that we can never truly accomplish this. Her strong rhythmic cadences, combined with beautiful images and arresting thoughts, draw you in mysteriously, wanting more.

Harris's poems move effortlessly between the personal and the philosophical, across perspectives. Almost every poem called me to read it again, to pay more attention. Though we "pave over land and differences," she takes her own advice and does not despair but is "astonished" at the world and its wild life.

A Grain of Rice

by Evelyn Lau

(Oolichan Books)



About the author:



Evelyn Lau

Evelyn Lau was born in Vancouver in 1971. She is the author of five previous volumes of poetry, two short story collections, two works of non-fiction, and a novel. *Runaway: Diary of a Street Kid*, published when she was 18, was made into a CBC movie. Lau's prose books have been translated into a dozen languages worldwide. Her poetry has been selected for inclusion in the *Best American Poetry* and *Best Canadian Poetry* anthologies, as well as receiving a *National Magazine Award*. *You Are Not Who You Claim* won the Milton Acorn People's Poet Award, *Oedipal Dreams* was nominated for the Governor General's Award, and *Living Under Plastic* won the Pat Lowther Memorial Award for best book of poetry by a woman in Canada. Evelyn is the 2011-2014 Poet Laureate for the City of Vancouver.

Judges' Comments:

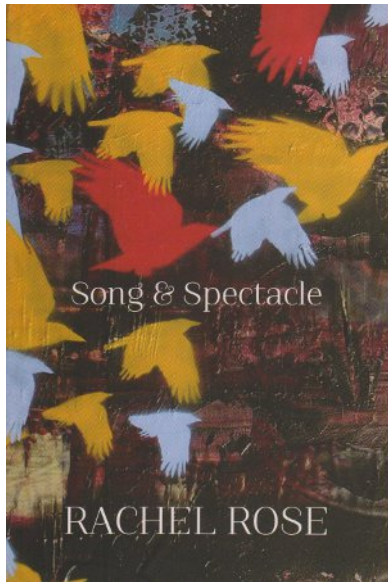
A well-crafted, moving book of poems that is engrossing and insightful. Lau's seamless weave of personal and political issues are direct and thought-provoking. *A Grain of Rice* is darkly beautiful, filled with loss and longing and a deep sense of family ties. Her spiritual quest is open and wide, memorable in its honesty.

Urgent, powerful, hard to put down. Had to read it in one sitting. This book moved me with its craft and with its honesty.

Song and Spectacle

by Rachel Rose

(Harbour Publishing)



About the author:



Rachel Rose

Rachel Rose is a writer whose work has appeared in journals in Canada, the US, New Zealand and Japan. Her first book, *Giving Body to Science* (McGill/Queen's University Press, 1999) was a finalist for the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award, the Pat Lowther Memorial Award and the Grand Prix du Livre de Montreal, and won the Quebec Writers' Federation A.M. Klein Award. Her second book, *Notes of Arrival and Departure*, was published by McClelland & Stewart in 2005. Winner of the Peterson Memorial Prize for poetry and the Bronwen Wallace Award for fiction, she holds a BA in English from McGill University and an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of British Columbia. She lives in Vancouver, BC.

Judges' Comments:

I fell in love with this book...it made me weep. *Song & Spectacle* is a mature & moving exploration of what it truly means to be human. A compassionate & passionate mother's touch: an authentic and truthful plea for a better world. Rose's poetry is lyrical with a narrative impulse, combined with a startling honesty and wisdom that is both humbling and deeply felt. This is a strong and inspirational book.

Using traditional form, rhythm and rhyme when she wants to, and with a sparkle and sweet sense of humour that are uniquely her own, Rose is a storyteller. She lures you to come closer as she talks about anything, everything – from rain to death to breastfeeding – and you come away feeling somehow wiser, and lighter.

Spectacular. Took off the top of my head. Powerful imagery, rich language, a fierce appeal to both the heart and the mind.

