

# Book Awards 2022

## *Shortlist*

### **Raymond Souster Memorial Award**

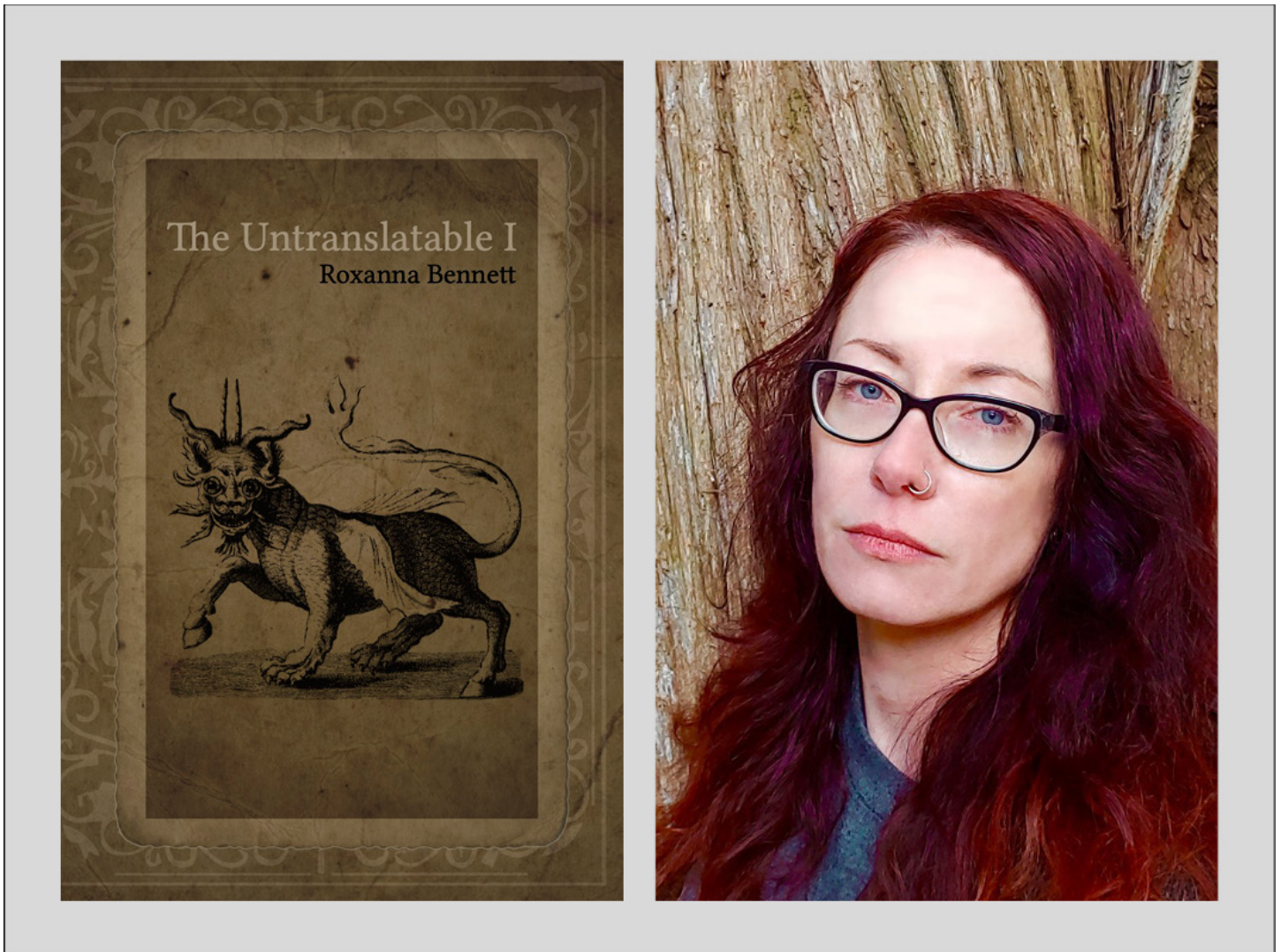
*for a book of poetry by a League member*

The Raymond Souster Award was started in 2013 to honour Raymond Souster, an early founder of the League of Canadian Poets. The award is presented annually for a book of poetry by a League member published in the preceding year. The award carries a \$2000 prize, and is sponsored by the LCP.



***The Untranslatable I*** by Roxanna Bennett

Gordon Hill Press



*From the jurors:* Here, in a sequence of first-person lyric narratives, is pain built into powerful waves of stirring poetry. Signs of frailty and death are omnipresent, and the poet's inner self is untranslatable, but with documentary authenticity, sharp wit, bitter irony, tight verse, and a wide field of high and low cultural references, Roxanna Bennett's book is a triumph of art over duress. "Even the air tastes like pain." Honest about the fatigue of trying to survive in a world that is 'the sieve of [her] own misery,' this book vibrates with struggles of illness and isolation while creating its own disability poetics.

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Gratefully residing on aboriginal land, the disabled poem-making entity known as Roxanna Bennett is the author of *The Untranslatable I*, *Unmeaningable* (Gordon Hill Press) & other works.

***The Lost Time Accidents*** by Síle Englert

Goose Lane Editions



*From the jurors:* Whether it is childhood toys, household items, food, or Amelia Earhart's bones calling out from a dark drawer, and two satellites whispering to each other between stars, *The Lost Time Accidents* reframes common things and rare experiences in brilliant metaphors to explore complex issues, such as childhood, motherhood, objectification, sexuality, gender, and fantasy. Síle Englert's extraordinary debut poetry collection moves fluently in time and space, gathering human peculiarities and vulnerabilities, and eloquently mourning for parts of the world often ignored or passed over.

**Síle Englert** is a queer, Autistic writer and multi-disciplinary artist. She is the author of *The Lost Time Accidents* (2021), her debut poetry collection from icehouse press, and two chapbooks: *The Phobic's Handbook* (Anstruther Press, 2020) and *Threadbare* (Baseline Press, 2019). Síle's writing has placed Second in CV2's 2-Day Poem Contest and Freefall Magazine's Fiction Contest, and was shortlisted for Arc Poetry Magazine's Poem of the Year in 2020. Her writing has also appeared in *The Fiddlehead*, *Room*, *Canthius*, *The Dalhousie Review*, *Carousel*, and others. Síle's recent work can be found in *the way out is the way in*: an anthology of disabled poets from the League of Canadian Poets, and *I Found Myself in You*, a collaborative chapbook from Collusion Books.

***awâsis: kinky and dishevelled*** by Louise Bernice Halfe – Sky Dancer

Brick Books



*From the jurors:* Rambunctious and playful, these vibrant poem-stories laugh and reveal, disrupt and heal. Their language leaps, does backflips, blazes like a shooting star, sneaks up, announces itself with a belch. Wherever the sly, witty and wise Awâsis (the “illuminated child”) turns up, the heart of human experience appears in all its surprising complexity and absurdity. This is Louise B. Halfe – Sky Dancer at her most accomplished.

Louise Bernice Halfe – Sky Dancer was raised on Saddle Lake Reserve and attended Blue Quills Residential School. Louise is married, has two adult children and three grandsons. She graduated with a Bachelor of Social Work from the University of Regina. She also completed two years of Addictions Counselor Training at St. Albert’s Nechi Institute where she also facilitated the program. She served as Saskatchewan’s Poet Laureate for two years and has traveled extensively for her poetics and to present at numerous conferences. Her books include, *Bear Bones and Feathers*, *Blue Marrow*, *The Crooked Good*, *Burning In This Midnight Dream*, *Sohkey-ihta*, and *awâsis-kinky and dishevelled*. She has received numerous accolades and awards including honorary doctorates from Wilfred Laurier University, the University of Saskatchewan, and Mount Royal University. She currently serves as the national Parliamentary Library Poet Laureate. Louise also serves as an elder or knowledge keeper at the University of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Health Authority. She actively participates in cultural and ceremonial activities relevant to her Plains Cree culture.

***Moldovan Hotel*** by Leah Horlick

Brick Books



*From the jurors:* In the masterful work of *Moldovan Hotel*, Leah Horlick lives not only a lineage, but a host of familial ghosts, each holding up a lantern, whispering of loss and landscape, of war and typhus, transforming the speaker into all of it – and the reader, with her – in surreal, linguistic leaps. Haunting details of the past, made visceral by the speaker’s experience of the land her Jewish ancestors fled during World War II, become nightmare visions of the future as the jackboots of neo-fascism march ever forward and memories are confiscated by the CIA. Horlick’s poems, making meaning of history with unflinching honesty, resonate electrically with our time.

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**Leah Horlick** is a writer and poet who grew up as a settler on Treaty Six territory & the homelands of the Métis in Saskatoon. Her first book, *Riot Lung* (Thistledown Press, 2012), was shortlisted for a 2013 ReLit Award and a Saskatchewan Book Award. In 2016, Leah was awarded the Dayne Ogilvie Prize for LGBT Emerging Writers. That same year, her second collection, *For Your Own Good* (Caitlin Press, 2015), was named a 2016 Stonewall Honor Title by the American Library Association. In 2018, her piece “You Are My Hiding Place” was named *Arc Poetry Magazine*’s Poem of the Year, and was shortlisted for inclusion in the 44th Pushcart Prize by the Pushcart Board of Editors. She lives on Treaty Seven Territory & Region 3 of the Métis Nation in Calgary. *Moldovan Hotel* (Brick Books, 2021) is her third book.

***Bearmen Descend Upon Gimli*** by D.A. Lockhart

Frontenac House



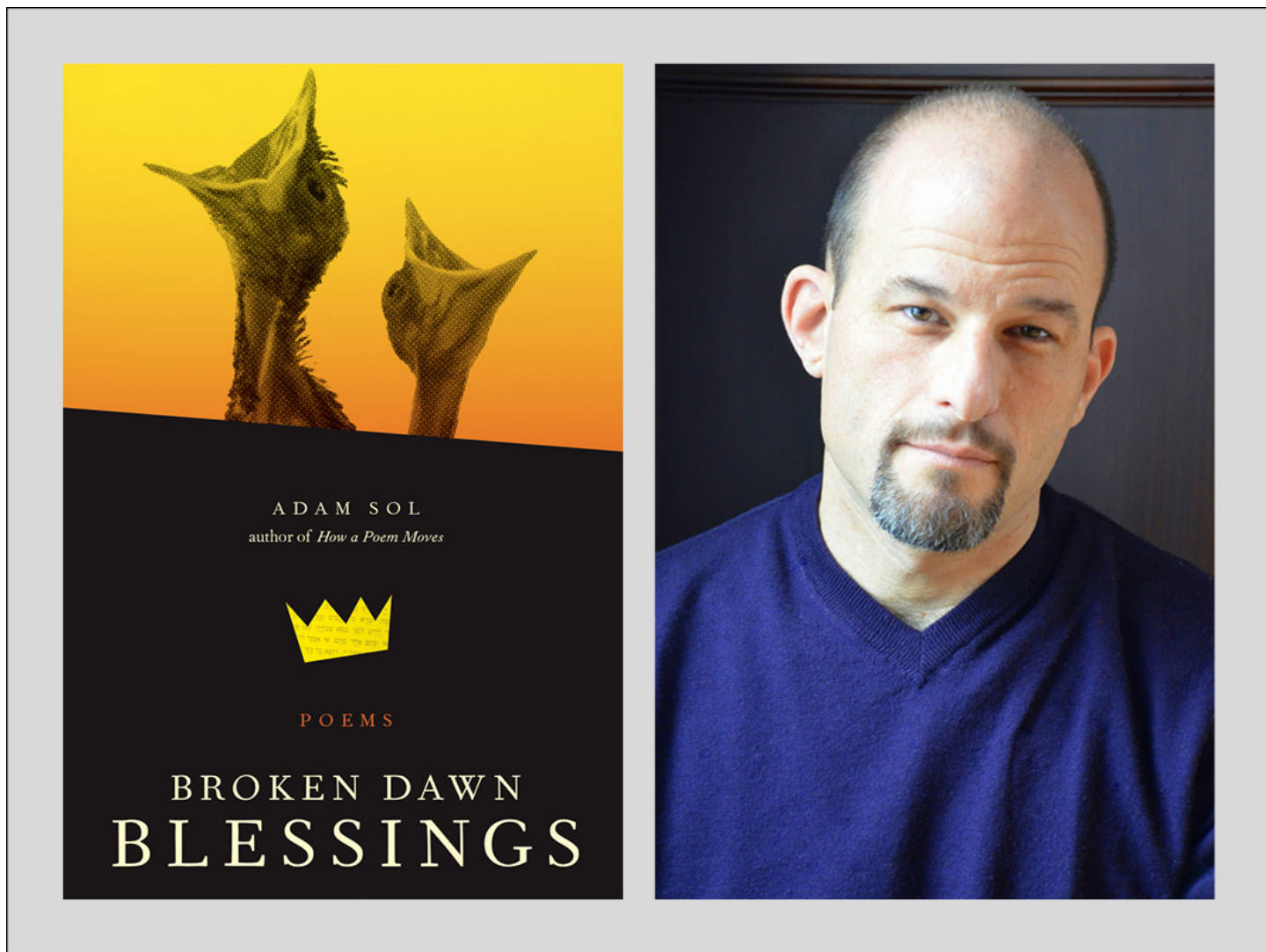
*From the jurors:* D.A. Lockhart's cinematic novel-in-verse, *Bearmen Descend Upon Gimli*, features Northwind, our protagonist from the mighty shores of Lake Winnipeg, who throws granite for the glory of Creator and ancestors to a soundtrack of Gordon Lightfoot and The Tragically Hip, and sweeps up double-double cups, snakes, the mastodons of colonialism, and the jokers that he left behind with plenty of humorous allusions to land it in the house. Lockhart hurries hard and wins the ends in this enjoyable and important allegory about Indigeneity and white supremacy, the human spirit faced with dubious odds, and nature's home club advantage.

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D.A. Lockhart is the author of multiple collections of poetry and short fiction. His most recent work includes *Bearmen Descend Upon Gimli* (Frontenac House, 2021), *Go Down Odawa Way* (Kegedonce Press, 2021), and *Breaking Right: Stories* (Porcupine's Quill, 2021). His work has appeared widely throughout Turtle Island including *Best Canadian Poetry 2019*, *The Malahat Review*, *Grain*, *CV2*, *TriQuarterly*, *The Fiddlehead*, *ARC Poetry Magazine*, and *Belt*. Along the way his work has garnered numerous Pushcart Prize nominations, National Magazine Award nominations, and Best of the Net nominations. He is a graduate of the Indiana University – Bloomington MFA in Creative Writing program where he held a Neal-Marshall Graduate Fellowship in Fiction. He is pùkuwànkòamimèns of the Moravian of the Thames First Nation. Lockhart currently resides at Waawiiyaatanong and Pelee Island where he is the publisher at Urban Farmhouse Press and poetry editor at *The Windsor Review*.

**Broken Dawn Blessings** by Adam Sol

ECW Press



*From the jurors:* Through the framework of a beloved's illness and a city's violence, these poems meet head-on forces both private and public that threaten vitality and well-being. They are offerings at the doorway of pain, insights of ferocious tenderness given with committed attention to the extraordinary and the everyday. Deeply felt and rendered with care, Adam Sol's poem-blessings are honest, risky, and necessary.

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**Adam Sol's** latest collection is *Broken Dawn Blessings*, published in 2021 by ECW Press. He has published four other books of poetry, and one collection of essays, *How a Poem Moves: A Field Guide for Readers of Poetry*. He is the Coordinator of the Creative Expression & Society Program at the University of Toronto's Victoria College. He lives in Toronto.

***Resurrection Fail*** by John Wall Barger

Spuyten Duyvil Press



*From the jurors:* Demonstrating the author's sharp eye, tender heart, compassionate spirit, and expert distillations of form, *Resurrection Fail* represents John Wall Barger at a new peak of gestural intimacy. His poems often begin with vignette and anecdote before opening into wider explorations of his enthusiasms and sorrows. Barger's facility with subtle tropes in exploring the will to resurrect ourselves, even in the face of failure, can lead to surprising revelations of a human mosaic, vividly alive with metaphor, succinct language, and stunning feeling.

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**John Wall Barger** is the author of five collections of poetry. He's a contract editor with Frontenac House, and teaches in the BFA Program for Creative Writing at The University of the Arts in Philadelphia.