

## Raymond Souster Award Shortlist 2013

The Raymond Souster Award is given for a book of poetry by a League of Canadian Poets member (all levels) published in the preceding year. The award honours Raymond Souster, an early founder of the League of Canadian Poets.

The award carries a \$1,000 prize. It is presented each year at the LCP Annual Poetry Festival and Conference in June, with the shortlist announced in April.

This year's shortlisted poets and books are:

*Hummingbird* by John Wall Barger (Palimpsest Press)

*the Flicker tree: Okanagan Poems* by Nancy Holmes (Ronsdale Press)

*Wayworn Wooden Floors* by Mark Lavorato (The Porcupine's Quill)

*Between Dusk and Night* by Emily McGiffin (Brick Books)

*The New Measures* by A.F. Moritz (House of Anansi Press Inc.)

*no ordinary place* by Pamela Porter (Ronsdale Press)

**2013 Jury:** David Day, Louise Bernice Halfe, Barry Dempster

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

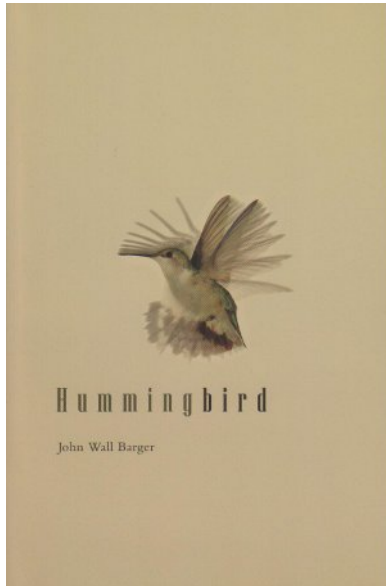
The winner of this award will be announced at the LCP Annual Poetry Festival and Conference in Toronto on June 8th, 2013.

For more information visit: [www.poets.ca](http://www.poets.ca)

## ***Hummingbird***

by John Wall Barger

(Palimpsest Press)



### **About the author:**



**John Wall Barger**

John Wall Barger's poems have appeared in many literary journals and anthologies, including The Best Canadian Poetry 2008 (Tightrope Books) and The Montreal Prize Global Poetry Anthology (Vehicule Press, 2012). His first book, *Pain-proof Man* (Palimpsest Press), was published in 2009. He lives in Halifax and teaches English at Saint Mary's University.

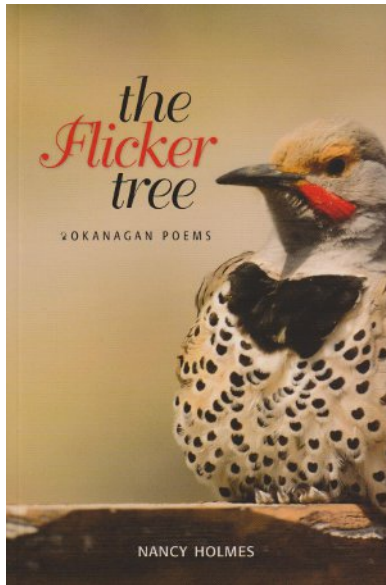
### **Judges' Comments:**

In John Wall Barger's HUMMINGBIRD, being alive sometimes seems like one flourish after another. But these are not mere embellishments or affectations. Barger has a truly innovative spirit and an eye for the unusual and unforgettable. These poems add up to a journey around the world, each step as intensely focused and daring as the one before. Prepare to have your senses exploded, your nerves tested, your love of high notes taken to breathtaking new spheres.

***the Flicker tree: Okanagan  
Poems***

by Nancy Holmes

(Ronsdale Press)



**About the author:**



**Nancy Holmes**

Nancy Holmes has published four collections of poetry, most recently *Mandorla* (Ronsdale Press, 2005). Her other books are: *The Adultery Poems* (Ronsdale press, 2002), *Down to the Golden Chersonese: Victorian Lady Travellers* (Sono Nis, 1991), and *Valancy and the New World* (Kalamalka Press, 1988). She is also the editor of *Open Wide a Wilderness: Canadian Nature Poems* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2009). For twenty years, she has lived in the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia where she teaches Creative Writing at the Okanagan campus of the University of British Columbia and organizes eco art projects throughout the valley. She lives in Kelowna, BC.

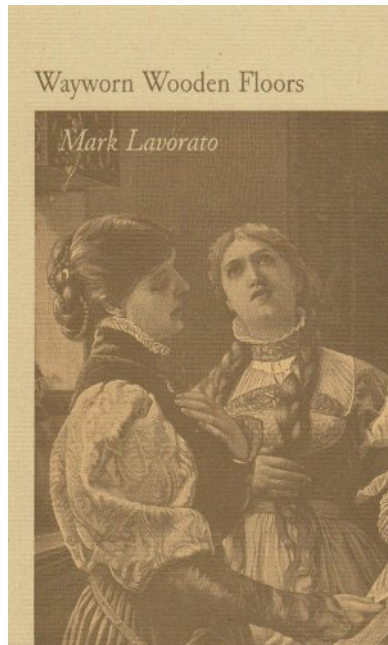
**Judges' Comments:**

Nancy Holmes has no need for labels in THE FLICKER TREE, OKANAGAN POEMS. She might best be described as a nature poet, but that barely gives you a taste of the richness of her relationship with the fragile ecosystems that sustain as well as inspire. She is also a singer of harmonies, a humble note taker, a seeker who loves the intricacies of place and the ways in which our lives can be bolstered by the joys and sorrows of honouring the planet.

## ***Wayworn Wooden Floors***

by Mark Lavorato

(The Porcupine's Quill)



### **About the author:**



**Mark Lavorato**

The multi-talented Mark Lavorato was raised on the Canadian Prairies, but has spent most of his adult life living, working, and writing on his travels throughout Central and North America, the Caribbean and, Europe. He was inspired to write while living in the Austrian Alps, reflecting on unsettling true stories he'd heard in the jungles of Guatemala. Aside from his writing, Mark is also a photographer and composer. He currently lives in Montreal.

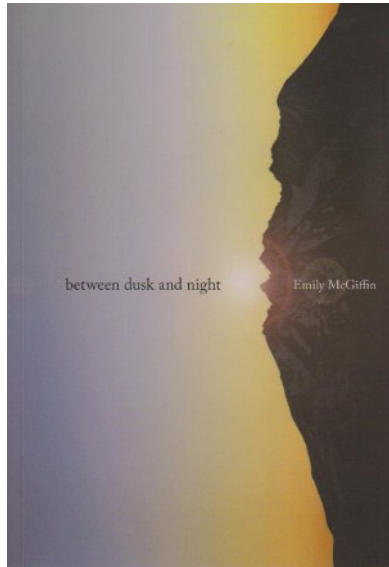
### **Judges' Comments:**

Mark Lavarato's WAYWORN WOODEN FLOORS demonstrates that, in the right hands, anecdote and memory can be the ingredients of deeply resonant poetry. Lavarato is a born storyteller, using striking language and vivid imagery to bring the past back to life. These poems bestow ordinary life with poignancy and brand new colours.

## ***Between Dusk and Night***

by Emily McGiffin

(Brick Books)



### **About the author:**



**Emily McGiffin**

Emily McGiffin's poetry was awarded the 2008 Bronwen Wallace Award for Emerging Writers from the Writers' Trust of Canada and was a finalist for the CBC Literary Awards in 2004 and 2005. She lives in northwest BC.

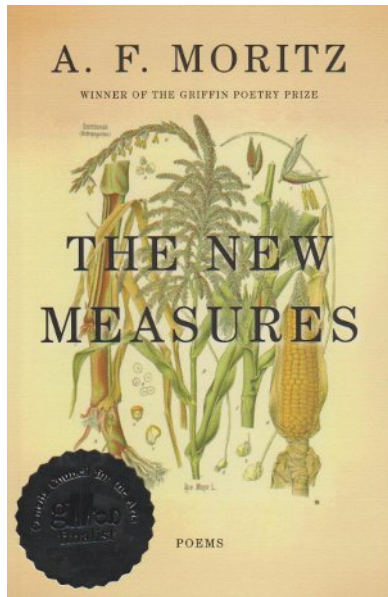
### **Judges' Comments:**

Emily McGiffin begins one of her poems in BETWEEN DUSK AND NIGHT, "There is a language roots write through the soil." McGiffin work often celebrates the environment, but always through the details and descriptions of her relationship with the earth. Although she has grand things to say at times, she delves into them one pebble at a time. She inhabits her poems with a fullness verging on wonder.

***The New Measures***

by A.F. Moritz

(House of Anansi Press Inc.)



**About the author:**



**A.F. Moritz**

A.F. Moritz has written sixteen books of poetry, and has received the Guggenheim Fellowship, the Award in Literature of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, and the Ingram Merrill Fellowship. His collection *The Sentinel* won the 2009 Griffin Poetry Prize, was a finalist for the Governor General's Literary Award, and was a Globe and Mail Top 100 Books of the Year. He lives in Toronto.

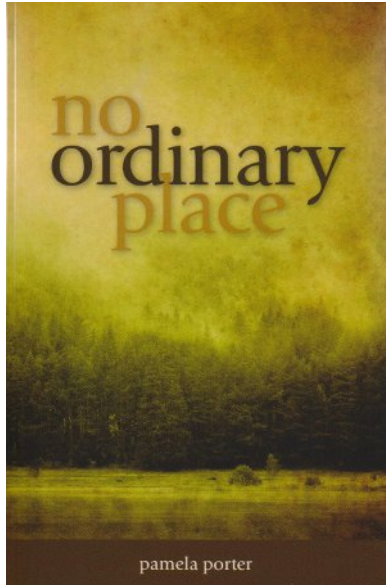
**Judges' Comments:**

Albert Moritz's *THE NEW MEASURES* is filled with both ruin and creation and their domination of our recurring dreams, our flow in and out of apocalypse, our faith in the Word in all its forms. There is such fierceness here, voices rung from both steel and stars; praises embedded in even the darkest of lamentations. Moritz's tenderness sits side by side with his rage in these poems as if he still believes in paradise, as if poetry might be a way of achieving it.

***no ordinary place***

by Pamela Porter

(Ronsdale Press)



**About the author:**



**Pamela Porter**

Pamela Porter is the author of three previous collections of poetry: *Cathedral*, *The Intelligence of Animals*, and *Stones Call Out*. Her poems have garnered many accolades, including the 2010 Vallum Magazine Award for Poetry, the 2011 Prism International Poetry Prize, the Pat Lowther Memorial Award shortlist, and have been featured on Garrison Keillor's *The Writer's Almanac*. Her novel in verse, *The Crazy Man*, won the 2005 Governor General's Award, the Canadian Library Association Book of the Year for Children Award, the TD Canadian Children's Literature Award, and other prizes. She lives on Vancouver Island with her family and a menagerie of rescued horses, dogs, and cats.

**Judges' Comments:**

Pamela Porter's NO ORDINARY PLACE makes a blissful assortment of heavenly noise, her language chiseled one minute, billowy the next, whatever suits the emotional connection she makes with both subject matter and reader. The poems about her father are unforgettable, but her work goes way beyond personal memories into deeply metaphysical dimensions as well.

