

**FREEHAND
BOOKS
SPRING
2022**



Message from the publisher

*“He listens. It’s what he used to be good at:
listening for the stories waiting to be told.”*

This line from [*Night in the World*](#) (one of this season’s new Freehand books) makes me think of our goal for Freehand — we look for the stories that are waiting to be told.

We have some rich stories to share with you this season. [*Wan*](#) is a slim and mesmerizing novel by Dawn Promislow about race and complicity. Farzana Doctor’s debut poetry collection, [*You Still Look the Same*](#), chronicles the ups and downs of her forties, including breakups, online dating, and confronting one’s past. And [*Night in the World*](#) by Sharon English is a novel that features mysterious moths, a crumbling Toronto Island house, and the intrinsic need to listen for stories.

We hope that these stories resonate with you as much as they did with us.

Kelsey Attard

Managing Editor, Freehand Books

MAY 2022

“Wan is a masterpiece. This beautiful, painterly, sublime, and sonically exquisite novel by Dawn Promislow is a work of utter genius.”

— Kathryn Kuitenbrouwer, author of *All the Broken Things*

Narrated in a completely distinctive and mesmerizing voice, *Wan* is the story of Jacqueline, a privileged artist in 1970s South Africa. After an anti-apartheid activist comes to hide in her garden house, Jacqueline’s carefully constructed life begins to unravel.

Written in gorgeous and spare prose, this exquisite debut novel grapples with questions of complicity and guilt, of privilege, and of the immeasurable value of art and of life.

“A stunning, compelling read, Dawn Promislow’s first novel belongs to the literature of witness — an eloquent portrayal of a white South African woman in the apartheid era, one which speaks with a universal voice to our present moment. The author captures Jacqueline’s quiet but acute unease, as she and her husband negotiate a perilous world, the courage it asks of them, and the catastrophe that follows. This is riveting work, courageous and honest.”

— Carole Giangrande, author of *The Tender Birds*

“The atmosphere in this powerful novel is the literary equivalent of the highly charged atmosphere you feel before a major storm. I couldn’t put this book down.

— Antanas Sileika, author of *Provisionally Yours*

DAWN PROMISLOW was born and raised in Johannesburg, South Africa, and has lived in Toronto since 1987. Her collection *Jewels and Other Stories* was published by Mawenzi House in 2010.



ISBN 978-1-988298-99-3

\$24.95 CDN

5.5 × 8 PAPERBACK

240 PAGES

WORLD RIGHTS

FIC044000 fiction / women

FIC019000 fiction / literary

FIC083030 fiction / world literature

/ africa / southern africa



9 781988 298993

MAY 2022

"These poems are clean, tight, wry, luscious, kvetchy and up-close-to-brown-skin."

— Sonnet L'Abbé, author of *Sonnet's Shakespeare*

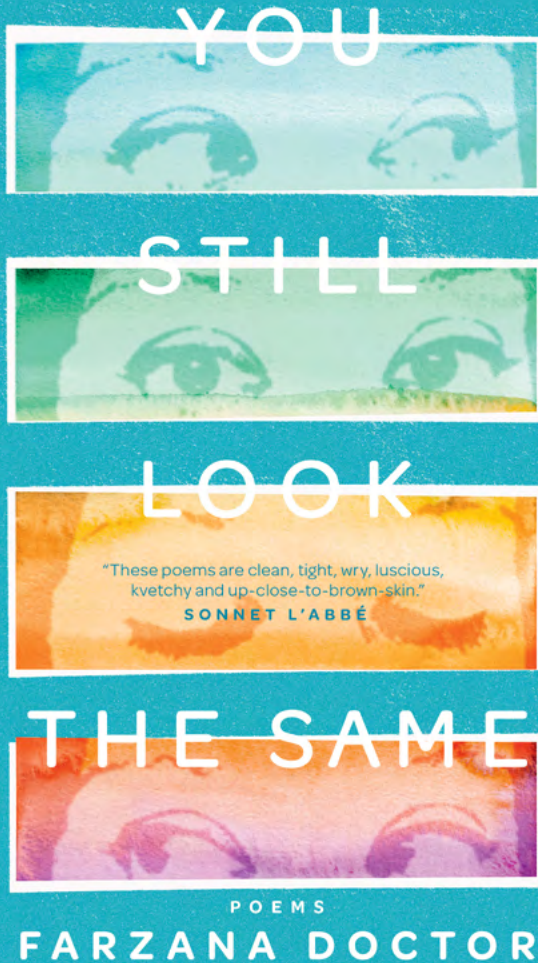
This debut poetry collection from acclaimed novelist Farzana Doctor is both an intimate deep dive and a humorous glance at the tumultuous decade of her forties. Through crisp and vivid language, Doctor explores mid-life breakups and dating, female genital cutting, imprints of racism and misogyny, and the oddness of sex and love, and urges us to take a second look at the ways in which human relationships are never what we expect them to be.

"In this collection, love, disappointment and possibility collide, at home and unhomed in spare, precise language."
— Larissa Lai, author of *Iron Goddess of Mercy*

"These poems travel across a range of experiences, but what pulls them together is the essential yearning for connection — in defiance of pain and grief, in spite of anger, fear, exclusion and sheer human blundering. The voices here are vulnerable, imperfect, but they are bolstered by their wry wit and an irrepressible desire to embrace life and love with all its complications."

— Adam Sol, author of *How a Poem Moves*

FARZANA DOCTOR is a celebrated and award-winning Canadian author and speaker. Her latest novel, *Seven*, appeared on many 2020 Best Books lists and was shortlisted for the Trillium and Evergreen Awards. *You Still Look the Same* is her first collection of poetry. Farzana lives in Etobicoke.



ISBN 978-1-990601-05-7

\$16.95 CDN

5.5 × 8.5 PAPERBACK

120 PAGES

NORTH AMERICA + UK RIGHTS

POE024000 poetry / women authors

POE023020 poetry / love & erotica

POE011000 poetry / canadian / general



9 781990 601057

MAY 2022

Night in the World

a novel

Sharon English

A tender ensemble novel about coming home to oneself and one's family through the beauty and soulfulness of Earth, even in an age of unravelling.

Brothers Justin and Oliver have never been close. Justin owns an iconic Toronto restaurant and lives with his wife and daughter in Baby Point. Oliver, a former environmental reporter, does admin for a local gym and rents an attic apartment. Yet both men know their worlds stand on the brink. With their mother's abrupt death, each sets out to set things right: Oliver to reclaim a beloved home, Justin to save one that's falling apart.

Intersecting Justin's and Oliver's journeys is Gabe: a budding biologist enchanted by the underappreciated beauty of moths, and conflicted by the demands of scientific scrutiny. As the brothers' pursuits take them from Toronto Island to the Humber River, from drugs and transgressive art to meetings with imperiled activists, Gabe stakes everything on a glimpse of a new possibility.

Sharon English has penned a tender and powerful novel about the claims places make on our hearts, and how journeys into darkness are sometimes necessary to see through catastrophe. *Night in the World* explores the need to end our separations from each other and from nature — coming home, at last, to a beleaguered yet still beautiful world.

ISBN 978-1-990601-02-6

\$24.95 CDN

6 × 9 PAPERBACK

350 PAGES

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FIC077000 fiction / nature & the environment

FIC019000 fiction / literary



SHARON ENGLISH has published two collections of short stories, *Uncomfortably Numb* and *Zero Gravity*, as well as stories and essays in numerous journals. *Zero Gravity* was longlisted for the Giller Prize and named a Globe and Mail Best Book. Originally from London, Ontario, Sharon lived for many years in Toronto and now makes her home in Nova Scotia.

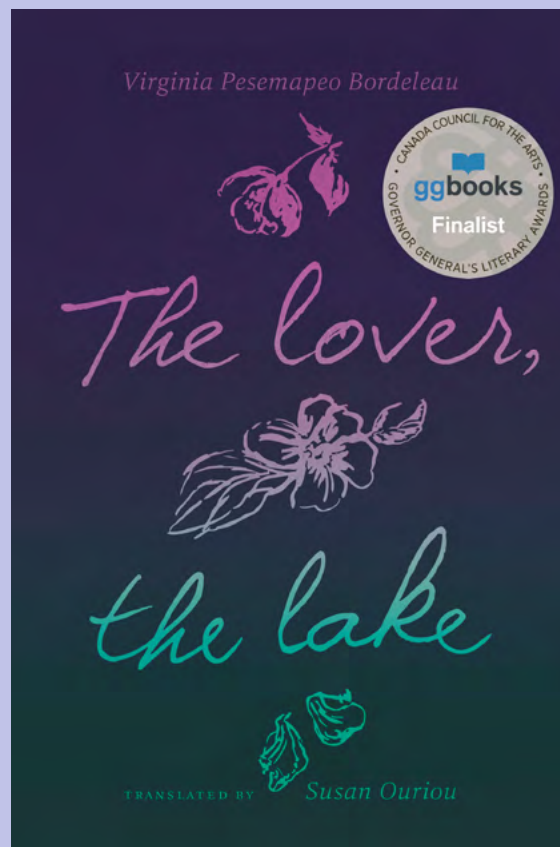
FEATURED TITLES



ISBN 978-1-988298-87-0 \$24.95 CDN

"It's a joy to watch the world open up for these characters, to see them heal and make discoveries about themselves, returning home stronger and more confident than when they left. . . . there are the moments of unapologetic Indigenous joy that Dumont writes lovingly and with such care: sharing meals and stories of heartache, swapping gifts and ceremony, finding common ground between nations."

— *Quill and Quire*

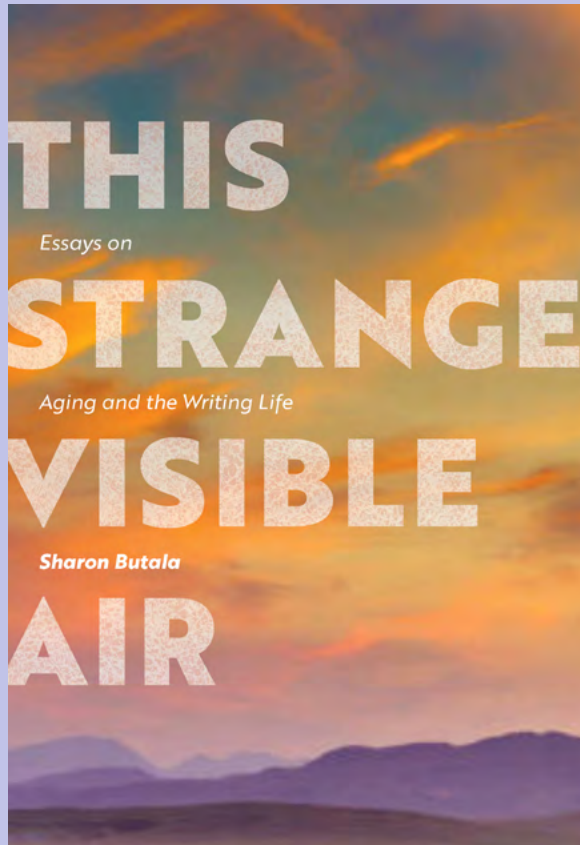


ISBN 978-1-988298-84-9 \$21.95 CDN

★ *Finalist for the 2021 Governor General's Literary Award*

"*The Lover, the Lake* follows a sensual and sensuous account of the relationship between Gabriel, a Métis poet, artist, and trapper, and the healer Wabougouni, of Algonquin and white origins. . . . poignant, erotic, and tender."

— *Montreal Review of Books*



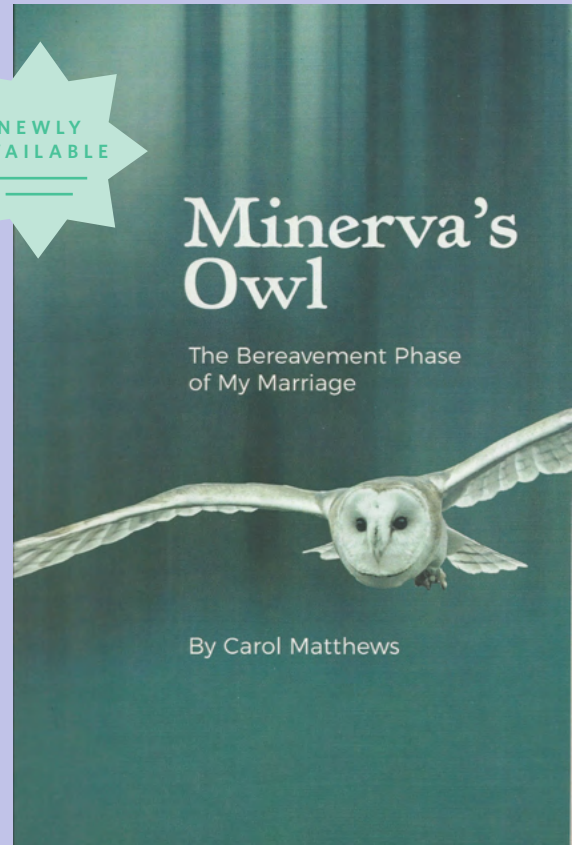
ISBN 978-1-988298-96-2 \$24.95 CDN

“A timely manifesto about old age, which Sharon Butala shows us is far more interesting than is commonly understood. Butala is a talented and original author who writes with lyric grace and a tantalizing touch of mysticism.”

— Susan Swan, author of *The Dead Celebrities Club*

“The insight embodied in this book doesn’t come free with age, but as the payoff for decades of fine attention, of impassioned curiosity. There’s a candour and authenticity here of which one only hopes to be worthy.”

— John Gould, author of *The End of Me*



ISBN 978-0-88982-325-9 \$17.95 CDN

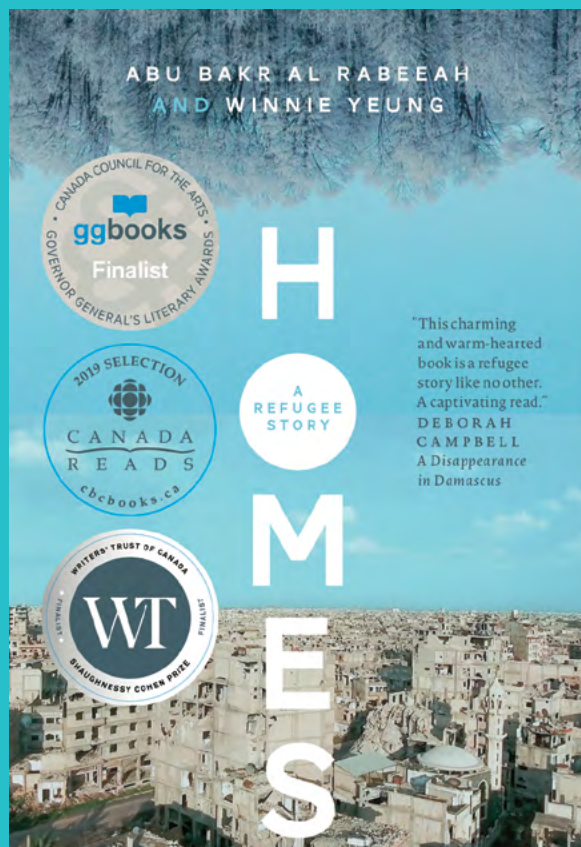
“Of the numerous books that have been written about loss, Matthews has given us an original, startling and deeply thought-provoking work. . . . What we are left with is a sense of peace — the kind that comes with the knowledge that, even in the darkest places, we are not alone.”

— Eve Joseph, author of *In the Slender Margin*

“*Minerva's Owl* is more than a tender handbook for the grieving; a brimming saga of a courtship and marriage, it reminds us to attend well to the art of living.”

— Alison Watt, author of *Dazzle Patterns*

FEATURED TITLES



ISBN 978-1-988298-28-8 \$19.95 CDN/US

- ★ Audience choice winner of Canada Reads, 2019
- ★ OverDrive's Big Library Read selection—April, 2019
- ★ Finalist for the 2018 Governor General's Literary Award for Non-Fiction
- ★ Finalist for the 2019 Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing
- ★ Winner of the 2019 Wilfred Eggleston Award for Non-Fiction
- ★ Winner of the Alberta Book of the Year Award, Trade Non-Fiction

"This extraordinary story is about the resilience of family in the face of profound terror; Yeung writes with a deceptively simple, meticulously observing eye and novelistic attention to plot and character."

— 2018 Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing Jury (André Picard, Angela Sterritt, and Chris Turner)



ISBN 978-1-988298-104-5 \$16.95 CDN

- ★ Finalist for the Griffin Poetry Prize

"[Williams] blends personal emotion with historical tension, tradition and modernity, ordinary and magical so seamlessly. When he pulls the strings of contractions: light and heavy, hilarious and serious, I can't help but dance like a happy puppet in the masterful hands. I'm so happy to find another shining star above Canada's poetry horizon!"

— Wang Ping



ISBN 978-1-988298-90-0 \$22.95 CDN

"Enchanting short stories of astonishing breadth."

— *Publishers Weekly*

"Endearingly human. There is humour in these stories, pathos, and great yarn telling. Remarkable narrative gifts."

— *Toronto Star*

"Each story contains the emotional resonance of a novel. The best of what short fiction can do."

— *Event*



ISBN 978-1-988298-93-1 \$22.95 CDN

"Georgina Beaty is a gifted writer with a deft sense of timing and a wonderfully jabbing sense of humour. Her stories are vivid, explicit yet mysterious, and altogether original."

— Elizabeth Hay, author of *Late Nights on Air*

"I always think I'm prepared for a Georgina Beaty story, but I never am. She writes the kind of book where you end up knowing more about strange corners of the world than you did before. Her characters devour themselves by their own zeal. Environmental collapse looms in the background while they go on busying themselves, the way we do. Perhaps more threatening than the damage we do to our earth is the damage we do to each other. Beaty's world is global, endangered, dangerous."

— Ian Williams, author of *Disorientation and Reproduction*

THE COMPLETE LIST

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