

Biographical Note

As a poet, editor, anthologist, publisher, critic, translator, and professor, Louis Dudek was one of Canada's most important and influential cultural workers. Dudek was born in Montreal, February 6, 1918. He graduated from McGill University with a BA in English and History and, after working briefly as an advertising copywriter and freelance journalist, left for the United States to pursue graduate work at Columbia University, where he completed a PhD dissertation entitled "The Relations between Literature and the Press" (later published as *Literature and the Press*) and began a rigorous correspondence with Ezra Pound. In 1951, Dudek returned from New York to the city of his birth in order to take up a position as professor of English at McGill, where he became a renowned lecturer. His return to Canada marked the beginning of Dudek's efforts to revolutionize the Montreal poetry scene through little magazines and small-press publishing, providing alternatives to commercial presses for young poets. He became involved in several little magazines, including *First Statement* and *Contact* (with Raymond Souster), founded the little magazines *CIV/n* and *Delta* (1957–66), and in 1956 started *The McGill Poetry Series* (which gave a start to several young poets, including Leonard Cohen). He was also involved in founding Contact Press, Delta Canada, and DC Books.

Dudek's early poetry was published in *The McGill Daily*, the *Quebec Chronicle Telegraph*, *First Statement*, and *Northern Review*. His major volumes of poetry include *East of the City* (1946), *Twenty-four Poems* (1952), *The Searching Image* (1952), *Europe* (1954), *The Transparent Sea* (1956), *En México* (1958), *Laughing Stalks* (1958), *Atlantis* (1967), *Collected Poetry* (1971), *Selected Poems* (1979), *Poems from Atlantis* (1980), *Cross-Section* (1980), *Continuation I* (1981), *Zembla's Rocks* (1986), *Continuation II* (1990), *Small Perfect Things* (1991), *The Caged Tiger* (1997), and *The Surface of Time* (2000). Two important collections of Dudek's poetry have also been published: *The Poetry of Louis Dudek* (1998) and *Infinite Worlds* (1988), selected and edited by the poet Robin Blaser. A collection of essays commemorating Louis Dudek, *Eternal Conversations*, was published after his death in 2001.