

Foreword

The Laurier Poetry Series was conceived in 2002 as a means to celebrate Canadian poetry and to introduce new readers to the richness and diversity of its poets. Rather than curate another large anthology that featured only a few poems by each poet, we thought it a good idea to suggest the real range of a poet's work by enlarging the selection. Our anthology would have to comprise many volumes. But why stick with a many-volumed anthology? Why not create a series of small and affordable "selected"s? Each volume could be introduced by a knowledgeable and reader- and poet-friendly critic in greater depth than in normal anthologies, and each could provide space for the poet to respond or participate in an additional way by contributing an afterword such as no standard anthology could offer.

Readers could pick and choose which poets they wanted to explore; instructors could also pick and choose combinations of volumes in a package for their students—and could change this selection from semester to semester. And the volumes could reach an international audience. Each would also have the potential to open out onto other books by the featured poet.

That was the blueprint. The Series was launched in 2004, with Catherine Hunter's selection of the poetry of Lorna Crozier, *Before the First Word*. There have been over thirty volumes since, offering introductions to a wide range of poets and poeties, and more are in the works. The Laurier Poetry Series is now the most comprehensive collection of Canadian poeties in print anywhere. Most volumes are also available as digital editions.

The consummate professionalism of the team at Wilfrid Laurier University Press, especially Managing Editor Rob Kohlmeier, has ensured that these sometimes technically tricky volumes are presented accurately and beautifully.

What continues to inspire us about the LPS is its reception across the country. The love and art and passion and intimacy that thirty-plus editors and thirty-plus poets have brought to their volumes; the innumerable hours and conversations and meetings, the thousands of emails between and among poets and editors and the staff at WLU Press; the generous reviews in the country's journals; the reception in classrooms and beyond: all of this eloquently speaks to the joyful proliferation of poetry in Canada today.

With each new volume, LPS hopes to continue to recognize the growing provenance of this wealth, the wide range of these riches. Our poets—and their readers—deserve nothing less.

—*Brian Henderson and Neil Besner*
General Editors