



# The Nashwaak Review

## In this Issue

- Poetry Arno Bohlmeijer, Louise Carson, David Conrad, Chelsea Coupal, Johanna Donovan, Beth Goobie, Sean Howard, Kevin Irie, W.M. Herring, Jeff Kochan, Norma West Linder, Cam Maclean, Roger Nash, Pauline Peters, David Sapp, Luke Sawczak, Josh Stewart, Alessio Zanelli
- Fiction Scott Armstrong, Cyril Dabydeen, Morgan Duchesney, Jonathan Greenbaum, Earl Murphy, Lauro Palomba, Mark Phillips, Alex Pugsley, Liam Razzell, Phoebe Tsang
- Essays *Notes on Plato's Republic*, Lloyd W. Robertson; *My Journey Towards Indigeneity*, Michael J. Leeb
- Reviews Stewart Donovan on *Mike Davis's The Monster Enters, Covid 19, Avian Flu and the Plagues of Capitalism*; *Mike Davis and Jon Wiener, SET THE NIGHT ON FIRE L.A. IN THE SIXTIES*; *Andreas Malm and the Zetkin Collective, White Skin, Black Fuel: On the Danger of Fossil Fascism*. Trevor Sawler on *Best Canadian Essays: 2021 Edited by Bruce Whiteman*
- Travel Nunavut by Ashley Holloway  
The Storm by Keriann McGoogan
- Artwork Anna Whalen



CRU 194

40.00

Luke Sawczak

### Fire

The town's filtered through, entombed  
in sulphurous white fog, it's evening,  
it feels like Israel's thirty-five degrees.  
I'm coasting down back roads on my bike  
and singing the French lyrics of O Canada  
having forgotten the English:  
Canada has just exploded in the air  
above me, a hundred metres away,  
so close my field of vision glowed  
from end to end with whip-cracks, light  
glimmering or crackling like flames,  
falling like stars, and I was in it,  
slowly flying up from my bike seat  
and rising in the quaking air  
like seismic activity on the skull's  
sheet: j'ai la tête qui éclate :  
teach me to always see roots of fire  
in the navy soil of the sky! My eyes spark,  
and like the shadow of an angel  
or heat in the corner of my glasses  
that stopped my heart cold, once,  
holding the hose to the roses,  
someone sits down on the grass  
and birthday candles burn the cake of the sky.  
André Mathieu whirls like chemical energy  
in my ears, sparklers, the high keys,  
that melodyless hymn you can quote  
each note of without any words:  
catch, twist, and release, a concert  
for what we all are,  
an afterthought of history.

The town's filtered through, enshrined  
in sulphurous white fog, it's night,  
it feels like Israel's thirty-five degrees,

I'm flying up the sideroads on my bike  
and whistling the tune of O Canada  
not wanting to wake the neighbours:  
Canada has just been born  
and the ghost is gone, it's virgin land  
again and the applause rises up  
around us like the smoke of a prayer  
that each day be a little less  
like the day before.

### Little Candles

The little candles have a language  
each is set on the curve of the wooden earth  
spaced like points on a circle at any resolution —  
more lights, more darkness between.  
Isn't that how life is among all the faces; —  
will your love ever be enough, my friends?  
Gifts like snowflakes — pile up into one more blank canvas.  
Nobody ever really changes — it's like the earth,  
on which whatever grows dies, or petrifies.  
Shells of the old, shells of the new.  
What can we do in a short time?  
Simulate water, simulate leaves, simulate thought.  
The fallen trees and brush block up the river,  
and it becomes so still,  
wax tealight candles float on it  
and await the new year, the new me.