

WHAT WE(A)RE ANTHOLOGIES IN CANADIAN POETRY?

Jim Johnstone's introduction to *The Next Wave: An Anthology of 21st Century Canadian Poetry* (2018) begins by envisioning the Canadian poetry scene as a gala in which the Atwoods, Ondaatjes, and Carsons of the form "monopoliz[e] the spotlight," in sharp contrast with "a younger, more anonymous crowd pushing at the margins, trying to bypass the guest list." The image of a social event acknowledges the organic nature of a poetry "scene," but the project of the anthologist seems to involve more layers of artifice than Johnstone's trope acknowledges. His introduction ends by shifting the image to a dancefloor, the spotlight having "turned into a strobe light, touching on a generation currently unsettling the formula for writing 'Canadian' poetry." The comparison is striking; nevertheless, questions remain about who's been told about the party, who cares, who would consider it a party in the first place, and what dancing even consists of.

Frog Hollow Press seeks contributors for an essay collection that probes some of the issues surrounding contemporary practices of anthologizing Canadian poetry. Intended for publication as part of the Literary Criticism Series, the anthology revolves around the larger question of what contemporary or future Canadian Poetry Anthologies may be building, and for whom. To what extent are anthologies ultimately inseparable from the academy? If poetry isn't being consumed according to market-based relations, i.e. by anyone other than enthusiasts or students or instructors, what work is an anthology doing? Are there layers of self-consciousness that haven't been adequately acknowledged in the critical conversation about anthologies? Can we imagine a future poetry culture that's ostensibly open to new readers, i.e. anyone outside the university? Conversely, in our neoliberal era, what will happen to poetry if the current university ecosystem is de-funded beyond recognition? In sum: what work is being done, and in what possible direction could future anthologists move?

While we wish to focus on Canadian poetry, contributors are also welcome to address larger contradictions in the genre or a range of related topics. Possibilities include:

- the anthology as ostensibly objective vs. the anthology as personal statement
- university presses vs. small presses
- canonicity and its contradictions
- demographic vs. formal or stylistic representation
- the (ir)relevance of notions of a national literature
- cosmopolitanism past and present
- the dynamic of contained or institutionalized transgression

Any engagement with these or related issues is invited. Potential contributors are invited to send a proposal of 200-300 words, along with a biographical statement of 50-100 words, to carlalanwatts@yahoo.com by July 31st, 2019. Invitations to submit complete essays of 4000-7000 words will be sent out within a month, along with a suggested deadline and estimated revision/publication timeline.