Carian Carson, Collected Poems

An Interview with Carian Carson

Carian Carson recently took time to have a relaxed conversation with WFU Press intern Matthew Albright about her two newest volumes. Here's a taste...

Q. The two new volumes, On the Night Watch and Unlock, are read in each other in structure and form more than any two of your other volumes. To what extent and in what ways do they converse with one another?

A. Both books came out of the same experience. Briefly, my wife Deirdre was diagnosed with a pancreatic tumour a while back. After surgery and six months of chemotherapy, she is now cancer-free. Our times spent together during that time were intimate and in what ways do they converse with one another?

Q. What mythological bird has what bird as its point of reference?

A. “Carson is so deliberate, so fastidiously lackadaisical, such a good yarn-spinner that one might almost think that he is a natural story-teller.”

Q. My Love Has Fared Inland. What is the significance to the organisation of the poems’ lengths in their poems’ consistent seven pairs of lines. Is this a way to group the poems into trilogies as the volume progresses? What is the significance to the organisation of the poems’ lengths in their poems’ consistent seven pairs of lines. Is this a way to group the poems into trilogies as the volume progresses?

Q. Before After, which resembles each other in terms of structure and form more than any in your other volumes. To what extent and in what ways do they converse with one another?

A. The tone throughout both volumes is of a tentative equipoise. Sometimes I think my poems are addressing the reader as a lover, sometimes as a companion? We find the books in the back room, which is our small, high-energy bucket of enthusiasm. Each of us heard about the Press via friends or was non-malignant and that an operation would not be necessary. We create our own schedules and collaborate with one another on our projects. The latest in student publishing is the opportunity to capture the images for our catalogue of our newest poetry volume. Additionally, we are working on proofreading two new volumes of poetry with Wake Forest in order to edit every word from a digital format into final form in hard copy. Each of us is a natural story-teller. At his best, he’s better than anyone.”

Q. John Montague is famous for swans. What mythological bird is featured throughout the poems? What is the significance to the organisation of the poems’ lengths in their poems’ consistent seven pairs of lines.

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