

EDITORIAL

LOVE IS A SPINY CREATURE—a coiled, prickled, and sometimes monstrous thing. Love and intimacy are rarely frictionless, and this is as much the case across species lines as within them. Our autumn issue features a special section on the theme of biophilia or the love of non-human life, and the material included in this section includes wide-ranging interpretations of what biophilia might mean.

The poetry is a treasure trove of surprising encounters, opening with shalan joudry's exploration of a hurt land "singing itself back." Deborah Banks treads winter ice and mines the "damn beautiful ache of it all." Margo Wheaton's ghazal sequence finds uneasy consolation in the crow bones and "collapsing / rushes" of daily walks along a beach. Like Wheaton, Jim Johnstone uses the ghazal, conjuring creatures bleakly and leaving us to wonder why this form should be "answered." Jada Ach tracks the terror of Rush Limbaugh and scents the mythos of vanilla. Tom Cull shits tinfoil through spray foam deer and cites Matthew McConaughey on the gouging of trees. Likewise saw-drawn, Laurie D. Graham feels with birches and buckthorn, figuring tree-flesh as animate and suffering. Trees, too, populate Thomas Sorensen's come-hither provocation and Catriona Wright's playful exploration of botched arboreal metaphors. Phillip Crymble contemplates death and migration, fatherhood and Loyalist history. Shane Neilson submits a biochemical hypothesis and peels origami petals from Norman Rockwell's Americana.

Biophilia, of course, is a slippery fish. Island-bound, Daze Jefferies eats the ashes of a lover and contemplates a "sunken world of trans-species knots." Lise Gaston meets despair in the gaze of a frozen rock fish. Cassidy McFadzean probes the membrane between aquatic sex and consumption. E. Martin Nolan sings deadpan of a dammed river.

Here you'll find delightful menageries and creepshow vitrines. Kevin Shaw hovers close to a wrestler-roommate, a burnt squirrel singing the hinge of eros. Elana Wolff confronts a tiger's spray. Anthony Purdy sorts a

mnemonics of bird bones. Síle Englert becomes a vegetarian with a rabbit carcass and fancies pigeons with Darwin. Michael Goodfellow arranges intimacy in an unusual bibliography. Kate Cayley marvels at and dissects the innocence of science centres. Madeline Bassnett trains a poetic microscope on a “pointillist canvas” of diatoms. Gary Barwin reckons David Foster Wallace in the form of a fish. Blair Trewartha filters human intimacy through E. O. Wilson’s half-earth hypothesis. Anushka Sen weeps for Godzilla and fears the forests of *Jumanji* (1995).

This section also features two stirring works of short fiction. In Elizabeth Falcon’s “Artemis in Waiting,” a charged encounter with a deer carcass shocks a woman into fleeing her home. Erica McKeen’s “Surfacing” melds motherhood, sickness, and a mutated fish in a liquid-lyric evocation of the creaturely uncanny.

Three pieces of non-fiction, greatly varied in form and approach, pivot around scenes of intimacy. Kim TallBear’s critical polyamorist shares five short scenes of fleshly entanglement, which are described as profound communions of erotic encounter. In Brian Bartlett’s *plein air* experiment, a wandering mind rambles Cole Harbour’s Salt Marsh Trail, encountering birds and mosquitoes, pondering trains and causeways, and contemplating the lichen-tree bond. In the essay that closes this special section, novelist Catherine Bush considers the creation of her celebrated recent work, *Blaze Island* (2020), in the context of the emergent literary genre of the biophilic novel.

Our autumn issue also features an interview with Canadian poet and playwright shalan joudry, who discusses how her work is informed by and promotes Indigenous ways of knowing. The issue concludes with two new chronicles: Jerry White’s review of Spike Lee’s concert film *American Utopia* (2020) and the Irish-Canadian co-productions featured at this year’s Calgary International Film Festival as well as Chris Elson’s review of several recent jazz albums, including Keith Jarrett’s *Budapest Concert* (2020), which may be his final recorded performance.