

## **Open Field: 30 Contemporary Canadian Poets**

**Mairéad Byrne**

*Open Field*

Edited by Sina Queyras

Persea Books, NY

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Sina Queyras' *Open Field: 30 Contemporary Canadian Poets*, due out from Persea Books (NY) in April, is a total breath of fresh air, bursting with invention and exultation in language. Canadian poetry, as presented here, has huge range—a vigor and eclecticism Queyras celebrates in her stated intention of including the best poetry in Canada regardless of poetics. I don't know of any equivalent American anthology.

It is a thrilling book to read. With Margaret Atwood, Christian Bök, Anne Carson, Daphne Marlatt, Erin Mouré, bp nichol, Michael Ondaatje, Lisa Robertson, and plenty more, kicking up their heels together how could it not be? Queyras' selections are generous—the book is 272 pages in length. The explosion of talent among writers born in the 1960s is truly remarkable. While the work is diverse and wide-ranging, it also presents a strong sense of identity: a Canadian tradition of high-energy, linguistically rich, formally experimental poetry.

The only drawback to the anthology is that Sina Queyras, as editor, and a Canadian poet now living in Brooklyn and teaching at Rutgers, has not included her own work, from two volumes published to date: *Slip* (ECW Press 2001), *Teethmarks* (Nightwood 2004), and a third forthcoming.

*Open Field: 30 Contemporary Canadian Poets* is a vital anthology, refreshing and instructive, with powerful range and gusto. A tonic and a shot in the arm for poetry.

