

The  
Collected Poems  
of Al Purdy

*Edited by*  
Russell Brown

MCClelland and Stewart

## CONTENTS

xv To See the Shore: A Preface, by Al Purdy

3 Homer's Poem

### THE FORTIES AND FIFTIES

7 Rattlesnake (from *The Canadian Forum*, 1949)

*Pressed on Sand* (1955)

7 Chiaroscuro

*Emu, Remember!* (1956)

8 Postscript

8 Elegy for a Grandfather

*The Crafte So Long to Lerne* (1959)

9 At Evergreen Cemetery

10 After the Rats

11 From the Chin P'ing Mei

11 On the Decipherment of "Linear B"

12 Whoever You Are

13 Where the Moment Is

14 Love Song

14 Passport

15 Palimpsest

15 Gilgamesh and Friend

16 At Roblin Lake

### THE SIXTIES

*Poems for All the Annettes* (1962)

21 Poem for One of the Annettes

22 Postscript

23 Archeology of Snow

26 The Listeners

28 For Norma in Lieu of an Orgasm

29 Spring Song

31 The Quarrel

32 O Recruiting Sergeants!

33 Evergreen Cemetery

34 Mind Process re a Faucet

- 35 Rural Henhouse at Night
- 36 Indian Summer
- 36 Remains of an Indian Village

*The Blur in Between* (1962)

- 38 Night Song for a Woman
- 39 Pause
- 39 The Old Woman and the Mayflowers
- 40 The Machines
- 41 Winter Walking

*The Cariboo Horses* (1965)

- 42 The Cariboo Horses
- 43 Thank God I'm Normal
- 44 Percy Lawson
- 45 Song of the Impermanent Husband
- 47 Mountain Lions in Stanley Park
- 48 Mice in the House
- 48 Lu Yu
- 49 Winter at Roblin Lake
- 49 In Sickness
- 50 Sestina on a Train
- 51 Necropsy of Love
- 52 Complaint Lodged with LCBO by a Citizen of  
Upper Rumbelow
- 53 Old Alex
- 54 Hockey Players
- 56 Home-Made Beer
- 57 One Rural Winter
- 59 Roblin's Mills
- 61 The Country North of Belleville
- 63 Country Snowplow
- 64 What It Was –
- 65 The Viper's Muse
- 66 Homo Canadensis
- 67 Death of John F. Kennedy
- 69 Fidel Castro in Revolutionary Square
- 71 Late Rising at Roblin Lake
- 71 Peonies beside the Lake
- 72 Helping My Wife Get Supper
- 72 My Grandfather Talking – 30 Years Ago
- 74 Method for Calling Up Ghosts
- 75 The Old Girl Friend
- 76 Postscript
- 77 Transient

*North of Summer* (1967)

- 79 The North West Passage
- 81 Arctic Rhododendrons
- 82 Eskimo Graveyard
- 84 Trees at the Arctic Circle
- 86 Metrics
- 88 Tent Rings
- 90 Still Life in a Tent
- 93 When I Sat Down To Play the Piano
- 95 What Can't Be Said
- 96 Dead Seal
- 97 HBC Post
- 98 The Sculptors
- 100 At the Movies
- 101 Washday
- 103 What Do the Birds Think?
- 105 The Country of the Young

*Poems for All the Annettes*, Revised Edition (1968)

- 106 News Reports at Ameliasburg
- 107 House Guest
- 109 At the Quinte Hotel
- 110 Notes on a Fictional Character

*Wild Grape Wine* (1968)

- 112 The Winemaker's Beat-Étude
- 113 Detail
- 114 The Beach at Varadero
- 115 Dream of Havana
- 116 Hombre
- 118 Shoeshine Boys on the Avenida Juarez
- 121 Watching Trains
- 122 Shopping at Loblaws
- 124 Poem for Eda
- 124 Further Deponent Saith Not
- 126 Attempt
- 126 Love at Roblin Lake
- 127 Dark Landscape
- 129 Interruption
- 130 My '48 Pontiac
- 132 Roblin's Mills [II]
- 133 Wilderness Gothic
- 134 Boundaries
- 135 Lament for the Dorsets

- 137 The Runners
- 139 The Road to Newfoundland
- 140 Over the Hills in the Rain, My Dear
- 142 Private Property
- 143 About Being a Member of Our Armed Forces
- 144 Sergeant Jackson
- 145 Autumn
- 146 My Grandfather's Country
- 148 Skeleton by an Old Cedar
- 149 "Old Man Mad About Painting"
- 150 Death of a Young Poet
- 151 The Drunk Tank
- 153 Joe Barr

#### THE SEVENTIES

##### *Love in a Burning Building* (1970)

- 157 Poem ["You are ill"]
- 157 Married Man's Song
- 158 Idiot's Song
- 159 Joint Account

##### *The Quest for Ouzo* (1971)

- 160 At the Athenian Market

##### *Hiroshima Poems* (1972)

- 161 Remembering Hiroshima

##### *Sex & Death* (1973)

- 162 Tourist Itinerary
- 163 Melodrama
- 164 Flying over Africa
- 167 The Jackhammer Syndrome
- 168 Depression in Namu, B.C.
- 169 Arctic Romance
- 169 Eastbound from Vancouver
- 171 A Graceful Little Verse
- 171 For Her in Sunlight
- 173 Dead March for Sergeant MacLeod
- 174 Wartime Air Base
- 175 Picture Layout in *Life* Magazine
- 176 The Horseman of Agawa

- 177 Temporizing in the Eternal City
- 180 Hands
- 181 In the Caves
- 184 Flat Tire in the Desert
- 185 The Battlefield at Batoche
- 188 The Beavers of Renfrew
- 190 Wilf McKenzie
- 191 Excess of Having
- 192 The Time of Your Life
- 195 The Peaceable Kingdom
- 197 Intruder
- 198 For Robert Kennedy
- 199 Power Failure in Disneyland

*In Search of Owen Roblin (1974)*

- 202 Gateway
- 203 Jib at Roblin's Mills

*Sundance at Dusk (1976)*

- 205 Lament
- 206 Kerameikos Cemetery
- 206 The Hunting Camp
- 208 Inside the Mill
- 209 Pre-School
- 210 The Children
- 212 Transvestite
- 213 Deprivations
- 214 In the Darkness of Cities
- 216 Alive or Not
- 217 Ritual
- 219 Antenna
- 220 Paper Mate
- 221 Subject/Object
- 223 The Colour of Reality
- 223 Borderlands
- 224 Separation
- 225 Who Killed D'Arcy McGee?
- 227 Night Summer
- 228 Place of Fire
- 230 Ten Thousand Pianos
- 231 Shall We Gather at the River
- 232 "I Am Searching for You"
- 234 Rodeo
- 235 Homage to Ree-Shard

*At Marsport Drugstore* (1977)

238 Pour

*A Handful of Earth* (1977)

- 240 The Death Mask
- 241 Along the Ionian Coast
- 242 Funeral
- 243 In the Dream of Myself
- 244 Starlings
- 245 A Handful of Earth
- 247 Prince Edward County

*Being Alive* (1978)

- 249 Monastery of the Caves
- 249 On Realizing He Has Written Some Bad Poems
- 251 Obit for Angus
- 252 After Rain

THE EIGHTIES

*The Stone Bird* (1981)

- 257 Journey to the Sea
- 258 On the Hellas Express
- 259 Bestiary
- 261 D.H. Lawrence at Lake Chapala
- 263 In the Garden
- 264 Birdwatching at the Equator
- 265 Moses at Darwin Station
- 268 Darwin's Theology?
- 268 Moonspell
- 269 Near Tofino, Vancouver Island
- 271 Shot Glass Made from a Bull's Horn
- 271 Red Fox on Highway 500
- 274 The Nurselog
- 275 Spinning
- 276 May 23, 1980
- 277 The Darkness
- 279 Arctic Places
- 279 Fathers
- 280 Inside Gus
- 281 Near Pátzcuaro
- 282 Mantis

*Bursting into Song* (1982)

- 283 Thomas Morton
- 286 Orpheus in Limbo

*Piling Blood* (1984)

- 287 Piling Blood
- 289 Menelaus and Helen
- 292 At Mycenae
- 293 Voltaire
- 295 Lost in the Badlands
- 299 In the Beginning Was the Word
- 301 Seal People
- 302 Iguana
- 303 Adam and No Eve
- 305 Birds and Beasts
- 306 Dog Song 2
- 307 A Typical Day in Winnipeg
- 309 Vancouver
- 311 Names
- 312 Man without a Country
- 315 The Blue City
- 316 Double Focus
- 317 Time Past/Time Now
- 318 Gondwanaland
- 321 Victoria, B.C.
- 321 Death of DHL
- 324 Lawrence's Pictures
- 326 Bestiary [II]
- 328 Machines
- 331 Museum Piece
- 332 My Cousin Don
- 334 The Boy Accused of Stealing
- 336 The Strangers
- 338 Story
- 340 The Son of Someone Loved –
- 341 Choices
- 342 In Cabbagetown
- 344 The Tarahumara Women
- 346 The Uses of History
- 348 In the Early Cretaceous
- 350 How a Dog Feels To Be Old
- 351 Birds Here and Now

*New poems* (1986)

- 352 Purely Internal Music
- 353 " – Great Flowers Bar the Roads"
- 355 Orchestra
- 356 Yes and No
- 358 This from Herodotus
- 359 On First Looking into Avison's "Neverness"
- 360 Home Thoughts
- 361 Elegy for a Grandfather
- 363 For Steve McIntyre
- 364 Caesar at Troy
- 366 The Smell of Rotten Eggs
- 367 Pre-Mortem
  
- 369 The Dead Poet
  
- 371 The Poetry of Al Purdy: An Afterword, by Dennis Lee
- 393 Index of Titles
- 396 Editor's Note