



# november poems

Joe Blades

*dusie kollektiv 8*

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DUSIE



BS Poetry Society

Kingston • RI • USA & Fredericton • NB • Canada

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*for art,  
on art's 1,000,052<sup>nd</sup> birthday,  
17 january 2015.  
long live art!!!*

*dusie kollektiv 8*  
rob mclennan, curator  
[www.dusie.org/issueeight.html](http://www.dusie.org/issueeight.html)

**dusie press**  
kingston ri  
usa

&

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## **november again**

sunlight feels wonderfully warm  
this first day of november 2009  
mostly yellow grasses by river  
hide some green blades within

ducks gulls but no geese on flooded  
fields feeding before more flying  
southward or to wolastoquey river  
wherever it is that they winter

bandy-legged be he on bagpipes  
in mahon's bay but no chicken  
as he helps commemorate  
citizens fallen in wwii

because of reportage on a rash  
of cape breton suspicious fires  
some are calling halloween eve  
devil night or maybe it is a trad?

sourdine is poet on this matter  
in darkness once again after  
too brief a span of daylight  
and an all-day writing spree

shaved bald men may be hiding  
something with their removed  
head hair—see them in cafés  
and stores—am decidedly not one

on this day in 1512 michelangelo's  
painting of high ceiling of  
sistine chapel was unveiled—  
saw it being cleaned in 1983

there are stars tiny and bright  
in too early evening sky and  
bill clinton in pristina kosovo  
ten years after nato bombings

with aim/goal of stopping  
aggression and ethnic cleansing ...  
and this attempt at a poem  
grinds to a checkpoint halt

### **hunter's moon**

hunter's moon finds poet  
pulling words from wind  
pounding best keys  
drinking peat bog water  
short and strong against cold  
more certain every day  
like popping underwater ears  
watery eyes not machine  
sick after flu shot  
perhaps because of?

hunter's moon after harvest  
moon and most do neither  
just buy and consume  
or some other unreality  
men of mass distraction  
in field or courts  
or many-armed in theatre zone  
while those dying at home  
die from neglect or abuse

## **interpretive dance**

call it playing chicken  
hands off wheel  
chronic fatigue dance

nothing on top but space  
antimatter chaos beyond  
bead counter justification

in history of modern—  
ahhh see it is a link to  
something modern—not jazz

while band leader  
takes a dump  
band plays on

expect president  
or world's next *titanic*  
to make its appearance

or disappearance  
something is bound  
to happen if we wait

## **sans title**

in cold room  
open windows let  
air flow naturally

overcrowded  
fred nanowrimo kick-  
off meeting room  
far too hot

coordinators  
chose to not use  
windows operating  
system available

i suffered so went  
into kitchen  
cooler and more open  
less multi-tasking  
and only one chat  
happening at a time

while inner editors  
were drawn and boxed  
for eleventh month

in frying pan  
a mix of chopped  
poetry and education  
a splash of red wine

smarts and ability  
not in question  
just sandwich  
maker's ability to

thicken plot  
with florida gators  
and a little something

### **here with me**

conference pencils smuggled into canada  
not declared wood or wood product  
food for some ... could be a home for ...  
insects they'd rather not admit  
don't want released or introduced  
to canada and things canadian

eating new brunswick apples  
and chunk of dartmouth-  
made polish-style pepperoni  
in aéroport de-paris-charles-de-gaulle  
where no one asked anything  
about whether carrying  
or importing ... unlike  
procedural query at f'ton airport  
about who packed bags  
and were there any firearms  
or explosives in them

ask everyone these questions  
as if in micro per cent  
of per cent that even handle  
or travel with things like that  
reminds of warning sign  
—think it was in de-gaulle—  
forbidding chainsaws from  
one's carry-on luggage  
and personal items

in courtyard of great  
mosque in sarajevo with  
a pictogram sign forbids  
machine guns skirts bare  
legs ice cream and more  
took a photograph  
and kept this undesirable  
moving through turkish  
market rich with jewellery  
textiles and men hammer  
into form small copper pots  
for making domestic coffee



**try to say *run***

there's a poem  
like life under frost  
melting as morning sun  
moves across body  
in no man's land  
ditch between properties  
not owned by poet

like a discarded bag  
of garbage or redeemable  
recyclable bottles and cans  
white with frost retreating  
as sun-induced melt  
line slides across me  
lumpen in weeds

don't yawn and stretch  
into sunlight like  
small lions in your home  
or wolf in your yard  
my time here is done  
do not make an emergency  
out of what has happened

out in tall grasses  
and flowers gone to seed  
with a summer's worth  
of new sucker growth  
on stumps surrounding  
body's slow decay  
into nothing at all

## **broken granite cross on green**

on remembrance day  
sunlight snuck through  
apartment and glowed  
very bright inside bathroom  
a mirage of mid-november  
candle and plant shadows  
on walls and this  
old manual typewriter  
working just fine

hand-killing fruit flies before breakfast  
coffee—so not a hindu—sorry shiva  
wearing army t-shirt black watch shirt  
and bush pilot's many-pocketed cargo  
pants found name tagged  
on a shirt in laundry wash  
—"u" a sticking typewriter key

november eyes grow  
not a good new brunswick  
potato unless in southern  
spring approaching summer  
hemisphere—mccain in australia  
and india—no soil under countertop  
just a collection of empty pots  
and pans and neighbouring  
bin of québécois oignons jaune

hand-killing kitchen  
fruit flies while a pizza  
passes time in oven  
and parents from out  
of province visit  
their son in university  
when he could already be  
retired from telephone  
company with grandchildren

## pressed glass bowls wrapped in newspaper

push against crowd surging  
in pay at turnstile  
then down hall to your right ...  
but push away upslope toward  
daylight and their entrance  
*my exit makes  
room for you*

hamstring pull or a lack  
of oxygen or water in night  
brain old injuries encased  
in nostalgia and lies  
neck twitches sharp flash  
from skull to right shoulder  
not warming up in bullpen  
like a pro player

two kids glom onto legs  
one lifts gun-long arm  
reaches out to stop and  
pull close like a hostage  
taker to take back  
gun and holster  
while saying *you  
cannot kill dead sheep*  
smiles and walks away

grandmother's furniture  
and dishes frame her  
grandson's living  
that she cannot know:  
over a year since she talked aloud  
in her last weeks alive becoming  
so small of body in nursing home bed  
with its view of halifax harbour  
that admitted her to canada

## **nothing but memory and reaction**

don't want more memory  
                                  or a joystick  
                          but hope to pass  
something forward

sometimes it scares to think  
not scars (but that too)  
what and how we lived scares:  
war-prepared foods  
have not stood down

so-called friendly canadians  
still stand guard

would like not just  
to live by but to love  
river as town goes by

town goes by  
with everyone magical  
pumped to trumpet  
and celebrant  
so in stalls  
and world on ice  
two left feet for gold  
and am so not  
going for that

## **fresh headcheese**

open-faced contender  
wannabe sandwich or pie  
gyro or hero or donair  
should be true donor  
this man with red scarf  
and black overcoat  
being flashed at market  
so not jolly man in red  
perhaps he is man from harvard?

wanting sleep is gangrenous  
semi-oblivion la la land  
with a phat backbeat and  
chrome twin-barrel exhaust  
rumbling at stop light  
while man on a bicycle  
beside you is fully-loaded  
with mountain expedition  
backpack of empties  
heading for redemption

why kick bags of leaves  
into oncoming traffic  
on college hill streets  
or rip small limbs  
off sidewalk trees  
or smash drunken bottles  
going to or coming from bars  
manifests stress you cannot  
relieve in public or residence

no one wants to know  
about it because they/we  
don't want terror(ists/ism)  
here but paranoia watches  
small provincial city  
with flying school for chinese  
students beside airport and  
largest military training base  
in british commonwealth  
so nearby it might not be  
coincidence but planned

### **nine of clubs**

tonight's volunteer  
thank you party postponed  
at least two weeks—almost  
winter solstice  
christmas kwanza yule  
well past warmth  
of shamash and samhain  
cauldron of shadows on table  
to dip something into

fingers spinning like crazy  
wound tight from shoulders  
down through muscled arms  
think of ones that cannot  
run from anything—trees  
rooted unless water washes  
away soil or wind topples them  
then pulls them out  
of ground permafrost

## **body ache blues**

this morning biked to campus  
this afternoon fingers went numb  
this evening head is fevered  
—have body ache blues

left knee barometer  
drops body like prayer  
for snow and rainy weather  
—have body ache blues

ache in heart wants  
to fly but doesn't have wings  
neither does body neither do worms  
—have body ache blues

last night treed a racoon  
today deer want to dance  
and bicycle brakes abruptly  
—have body ache blues

## **corner chang(es/ing)**

not just rhubarb patch—*come out!*  
*come out!* from under big poisonous leaves—  
maple tree and cedar overgrown  
with wild grapevine and grass—open  
space between parsonage (or whatever  
free-will baptists called their minister's  
residence) with gingerbread eaves and  
what little remained after 2 july 2009  
teardown and cleanup/removal  
of their ex-church at 200 york  
street fredericton new brunswick:  
completed in 1861 before con/  
federation (dominion of canada);

converted to apartments in 1970  
(with rainbows painted on  
original church mouldings  
and bird skeleton on wire  
in attic's mechanical space);  
burnt from top floor down  
in cold rainy night fire early  
morning tuesday 2 april 2009  
twenty-two tenants forced  
on to street then into temporary  
shelter—some taken by red  
cross to fredericton inn  
check-in before dawn—all  
of that and a little basement  
rubble removed and replaced  
by fresh-crushed rock with survey  
stakes to plot new building  
to situate it within where  
home of almost eleven years  
stood almost one hundred fifty  
years (witness streetside elm trees)  
and that corner is achanging  
like it hasn't changed since  
long long ago ...

### **post-sage advice**

recently a poet contacted  
on advice of a western  
practitioner of poetic craft/art  
wanting someone “chatty”

this poet—not to be named—  
suffers from irritable vowel  
syndrome an acute form impacted  
needing to remove himself



poke out written *i*  
to see poem differently  
to hear and feel them  
for themselves unencumbered

without body of you  
*a e i o u* (and sometimes *y*)  
free to wander fields  
of poesy outside walls

damn plato!  
damn ego and id!  
damn we undersigned!  
damn *i* singular in we!

poet misunderstood his *i*  
poetic obscuritides  
and bag of adjectives  
rejected at redemption centre

praise misunderstood  
blogspot page disappeared  
for a month of waiting  
to show to share

in conclusion: chair  
—empty of body;  
with too many coats  
on its back—fell over

### **not all pull tabs are similar**

different shapes and colours  
how will they come together?

look like a flattened glob  
of rock sugar on paper handle

in knit something—pouch or belt  
vest sweater toque? something else

windless leaden clouds sky  
absorb power plant exhaust

cacti in bloom since halloween  
—soon there will be snow

consider madawaska weavers' ties  
they could make jacket or skirt

in fallen darkness  
typewriter keys fumble

tonight's valley of fog would  
not glow if we didn't light it

chance meeting of asbestos batts  
and conflux of accidental elders

*survivor samoa* could get a tsunami  
*the office* makes TV more numbing

turn off all lights  
control only emptiness

usa national turkey day  
nuke a farmed-one sausage

hot sauce on honourable  
member from another rural riding

this writing device off grid  
like journals tearing shoulder

words a candle spits in wind  
an *up yours* south of poet's corner



cold grey rain  
ring of washed leaves  
barricades every drain  
so stiffly dull  
half turn body  
    to move head  
        to see along road  
        (both directions)  
please no unexpected car  
or truck mirror  
    to smash face

### **snow before dawn**

sirens of firefighter trucks  
on slippery snow-covered streets  
drivers and machines caught  
in pedagogy of winter  
psalm birds quiet inside cedars  
murder of crows elsewhere

if singing can sing snow  
to bough and ground  
if dance can dance  
happy for all children  
dragging mitts to clump  
season's first snowballs

in australia it is late spring  
december first this poem is not  
being written three weeks before summer  
solstice or maybe it is and by a better  
person/poet tomorrow than today

dream of impossible houses  
improbable mountain locations  
*rum eggs toast—help yourself*  
as more gals and guys gather  
in kitchen—one holds a skater's  
longboard—climbed forested slopes

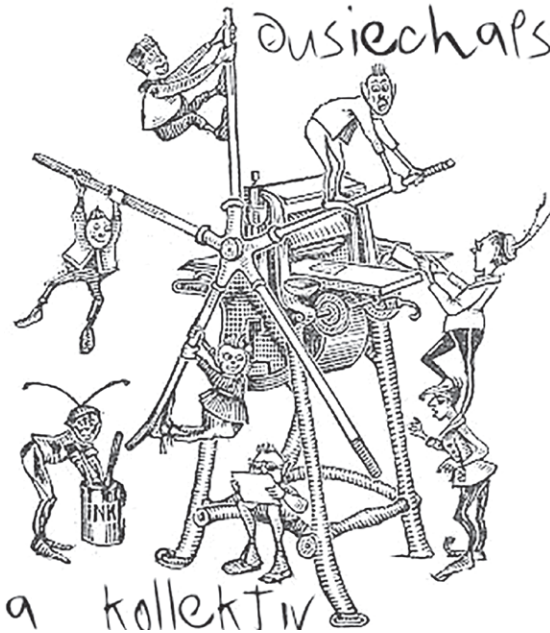
no eagles seen through clouds  
grey weaves between ancient trees  
snow and ice on green branches  
trail down is mud and slush slippery  
fighter jets scream under clouds  
turn sideways and roll over unseen

this rain is someone else's ice or snow  
don't know narrator voice behind  
twitching *z*: pachyderms strip all leaves  
within their trunks' reach for food  
as enslaved they haul rainforest logs

who can say how many have been saved  
simply by not being taken to landfill  
and buried without ceremony or respect?  
how many have been made awaiting use?  
how is bag bought to haul groceries home  
different from same bag garbage-filled?

Joe Blades lives in Fredericton, NB, Canada. He is a visual artist–writer, educator, publisher, and award-winning producer–host of the twenty-year-old *Ashes, Paper, & Beans: Fredericton’s Writing and Arts Show* weekly on CHSR 97.9 FM campus–community radio. He is also a Past President of both the League of Canadian Poets and the Atlantic Publishers Marketing Association. His most recent solo art exhibition was *Trail of Poems* in Galerie Charlotte Glencross Gallery in Fredericton. He is the editor of ten collections, and the author of over thirty chapbooks and hand-bound artist books plus seven poetry books including *Prison Songs and Storefront Poetry* (Ekstasis Editions, 2010) and *Casemate Poems (Collected)* (Chaudiere Books, 2011), with three of his books additionally published in Serbian translation including *Iz knjige koja se ne zatvara* (Art Print & Broken Jaw Press, 2012).

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