

I may be the oldest person to have received this award. I think of the award as appropriately given to younger writers who are reaching full stride. This makes me feel doubly honoured. I am thrilled.

My heartfelt thanks to the judges, and to the sponsors of the award. The other nominees are equally deserving. Despite this, I thank them for not winning!

This award has extra resonance for me because Barrie Nichol was a friend. He collaborated in publications with my late wife, the painter Barbara Caruso. I value my continuing friendship with his widow Eleanor Nichol.

Barrie and I were both small pressers in the 1960s and 70s— he with Ganglia Press and grOnk and me with Weed/Flower Press. We co-published books by David McFadden and Gerry Gilbert, and we published each other's poems.

There is an end note about the Campbell Trail poem in my chapbook and in my book, *Chewing Water*, that hints at the shock that Barbara and I, and so many of his friends, felt on learning of Barrie's death.

My thanks to Cameron Anstee, the publisher of Apt. 9 books. His books are gorgeous. He has published two of mine. I hope that there will be more in the future. That there are three Apt. 9 books on the shortlist this year is a wonderful endorsement of what Cameron produces as an editor and publisher.

Thank you all for your support of this event. You "write and print kids" are an antidote to the bland uniformity of the market economy. You are essential to the world.

Nelson Ball

Oct 7,8, 10, 11, 13, 27, 2016