

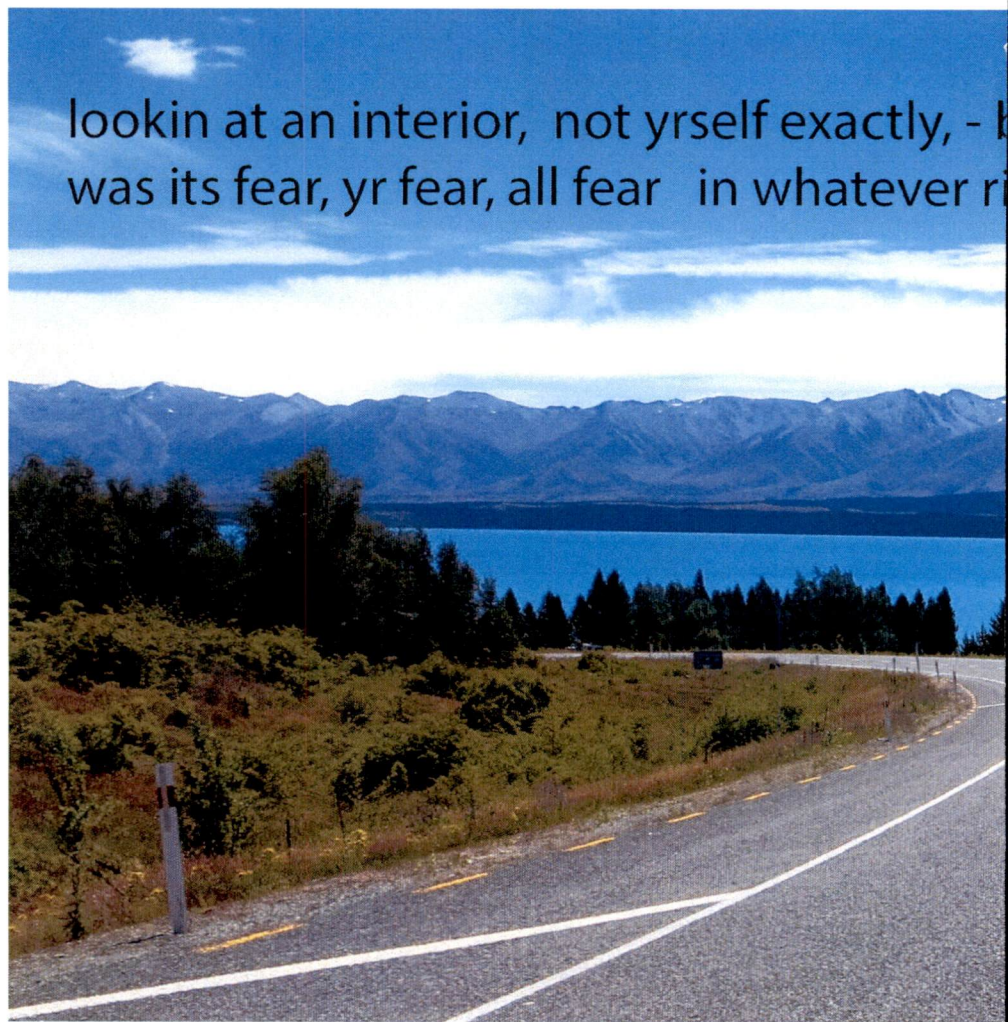
by : Shane Darroch

THE BARRY MCKINNON CHAP

The 9th annual Barry McKinnon Chapbook Awards was held on April 12 at the Twisted Cork. The event was hosted and organized by Andrew Kenway with help from Matt Partyka. The crowd, although small, was comprised of dedicated poetry aficionados. The readers at this event included longtime fan favorites as well as new and upcoming writers. The poems were well read, the drinks flowed liberally, and a good time was had by all.

The night started with the very caucasian Kenway busting out some sick rhymes in his rendition of Biz Markie's "Just a Friend" with Ryan White accompanying him on the keyboard; the musical number was then followed by Kenway's opening statement. The first poet to read was Ryan White; his poem "Cariboo" had a wonderfully melancholy tone and spoke of conflicting emotions while journeying through Mexico and upon returning to Prince George. The next reader, Shane Darroch, continued upon the theme of travel; his poems articulated a message of isolation and detachment despite being surrounded by people.

In quite possibly his last reading in Prince George, at least for a while, Garrett Svensen read a set of three



poems from two chapbooks. His poem "Empiricism" opened with a powerful image: "Modern mental colonialism/ Plants a flag in your mind", and left us with a hopeful message, "the truth/ That is yours and yours alone./ Your perfect observable reality." At her first reading, Shannon Hornick, made us all laugh with her innuendo laden poem "Nice Ride" about a Harley Davison.

Paul Stricklend also delivered a powerful performance. His strong political message reminds us that we must struggle to keep our humanity in a world that seems to only value our labor. The last person to read was Penny Douglas; her poem "Leather Jacket" provided a darkly humorous insight into the male gaze.

Before the winners were announced, Matt Partyka delivered his keynote address. A loving tribute to the man, Barry McKinnon, who has labored tirelessly to foster a poetry culture in Prince George: "What