

DANCING CAT BOOKS



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CORMORANT LAUNCHES NEW CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT IMPRINT

CORMORANT BOOKS is pleased to announce DANCING CAT BOOKS, its imprint dedicated to publishing author-driven literary fiction, non-fiction and poetry for the young adult and middle grades, as well as picture books.

Dancing Cat's Publisher, Gail Winskill, will direct the editorial vision. The imprint will have its own website, www.dancingcatbooks.com, designed by Bryan Ibeas, Cormorant's Marketing Coordinator.

Gail comes to Cormorant with more than 30 years of experience. Since 1998, she has initiated and developed a distinguished line of award-winning and nominated children's and young adult books. She has brought to print a long list of acclaimed authors, including Jill MacLean, Alma Fullerton, Deborah Ellis, Marsha Skrypuch, Eric Walters, Celia Godkin, Joanne Fitzgerald, Frieda Wishinsky, Maryann Kovalski and Rachna Gilmore.

"I'm absolutely thrilled," said Gail Winskill. "The team at Cormorant has embraced Dancing Cat Books and I'm delighted to find a home with a publisher whose reputation for high literary standards matches my own ambitions for this imprint. Some day, Dancing Cat readers may grow up to become Cormorant Book readers, and wouldn't that be wonderful?"

Gail's long-time colleague, freelance editor Ann Featherstone, will continue to provide her editorial expertise. For the past 21 years she has specialized in children's books, and since 2000 helped Gail bring out hundreds of children's and YA titles.

Assisting Gail in editorial will be Barry Jowett, who has worked with a number of YA authors, including k.c. dyer, Deborah Kerbel, Mahtab Narsimhan, Valerie Sherrard, Marsha Skrypuch, among many others. A graduate of the Centennial College Book and Magazine Publishing Program, Barry has worked in the industry since 1996.

The first titles scheduled for publication in Fall 2010 are:

Burn is a middle-grade free verse novel by Alma Fullerton, whose previous free-verse novel, *Libertad*, garnered an impressive list of fourteen honours and awards, including the 2009 Governor General's Literary Award for Children's Literature shortlist, the 2009 TD Canadian Children's Literature Award shortlist, and the 2010 Silver Birch Award shortlist; it won the 2009 Ruth & Sylvia Schwartz Children's Book Award, the 2009 CLA Book of the Year Award Honour, the Golden Oak Award, and the Once Upon a World Children's Book Award.

Home Truths is a young adult novel by Jill MacLean, author of *The Nine Lives of Travis Keating*, which won the 2009 Ann Connor Brimer Award and was shortlisted for the Canadian Library Association Book of the Year for Children, as well as the 2010 Hackmatack, Silver Birch and Diamond Willow awards. Her second novel for children, *The Present Tense of Prinnny Murphy*, has been shortlisted for the 2010 Ann Connor Brimer Award and is on Resource Links' Best Books of 2009 list.

Giraffe and Bird is the debut picture book by illustrator and designer Rebecca Bender.

Other authors joining Dancing Cat Books in 2011 include Deborah Ellis, Celia Godkin, Rob Laidlaw, Joni Mitchell and Brian Deines, Michelle Muir, Charles Pachter, Valerie Sherrard, Marsha Skrypuch and Kari-Lynn Winters.

The imprint is projected to publish eight titles in 2011 and ten titles in 2012.

“Establishing a children’s and YA imprint was a decision we made easily,” said Marc Côté, publisher of Cormorant. “The success of the two Charles Pachter children’s books — *M is for Moose* and *Canada Counts* — and the support shown us by the children’s booksellers, notably Mabel’s Fables and Vancouver Kids Books, got me thinking. When Barry Jowett joined Cormorant in the Fall of 2009, he brought with him his commitment to quality YA books and then, in December, Gail Winskill and I began to talk. Her enthusiasm, experience and previous successes made the decision to establish Dancing Cat very easy.”

Although Cormorant Books has been known for the quality fiction and first-time authors it publishes, the original vision of its founder, Gary Geddes, included children’s books.

Dancing Cat Books is a wholly owned imprint of Cormorant Books. Founded in 1986 and active in 1987, Cormorant Books has been nominated four times in the last five years for the Libris Award for Small Press Publisher of the Year, awarded by the Canadian Booksellers Association; it has received the award twice, in 2008 and 2009. The company is best known for the fiction authors whose first books it has published: Nino Ricci, Elizabeth Hay, and Joseph Boyden. In recent years, the company has widened its publishing program to include children’s illustrated books, such as the award-winning *M is for Moose: A Charles Pachter Alphabet*, biographies of Canadian women artists, and Toronto-specific books like *City of Words: Toronto Through Her Writers’ Eyes*.

PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED PAGES FOR MORE BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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To order Dancing Cat Books, please contact our sales representatives at Hornblower Books and Michael Reynolds & Associates, or you may contact our distributor, the University of Toronto Press.

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MORE INFO ON GAIL WINSKILL

Gail Winskill's career in publishing began more than thirty years ago when she took a position as assistant in the sales department at Methuen Publishing, the same year J.R.R. Tolkien's *Silmarillion* was published. She was immediately hooked by the book business and in those early days worked for a number of houses and sales groups. In the late eighties Gail took positions at Scholastic Canada and Penguin Books and in 1998 she joined Fitzhenry & Whiteside as Children's Publisher.

In the eleven plus years that followed, Gail established and produced an award-winning children's list, shepherding hundreds of books to print. She was responsible for introducing and revitalizing titles that have given what was almost exclusively an educational house a strong trade presence in Canada and a foothold in the U.S. market. She developed a graduated reading series, *First Flight*, as well as the highly acclaimed *Nature Babies* series.

Some of her more noteworthy titles include *A Screaming Kind of Day* by Rachna Gilmore, winner of the Governor General's Award; *Chicken Cat* by Stephanie Simpson McLellan and illustrated by Sean Cassidy, winner of both the Ruth and Sylvia Schwartz Award and Mr. Christie's Book Award; *Initiation* by Virginia Frances Schwartz, winner of the Silver Birch Award and Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction; *The Sower of Tales* by Rachna Gilmore, winner of the 2005 IODE Violet Downey Award and the Jane Addams Children's Book Award 2005; *The Baabaasheep Quartet* by Leslie Elizabeth Watts, winner of the 2006 Amelia Frances Howard-Gibbon Illustration Award; and *Daughter of War* by Marsha Skrypuch, OLA White Pine Award nominee and American Library Best Books for Young Adults 2008.

Gail acquired and published many titles with the popular award-winning author, Deborah Ellis. These six titles all received high critical acclaim and multiple honours and awards. The titles included: *A Company of Fools*, winner of the Mr. Christie Award and five other honours; *The Heaven Shop*, which received ten awards and nominations, most notably the 2005 Jane Addams Children's Book Award and the Ruth and Sylvia Schwartz Children's Book Award for 2005; *Our Stories, Our Songs*, which received eight awards and shortlists most notably the School Library Journal Best Book for 2005, the Norma Fleck Award for Children's Non-Fiction Honour book and the American Library Association Notable Book for 2006; *Jakeman*, which shortlisted on the Diamond Willow, Silver Birch and Hackmatack Awards as well as the CLA Book of the Year in 2008; *Bifocal*, co-authored with Eric Walters, which was a White Ravens' Outstanding New International Book for Young Adults 2008; and lastly *Lunch with Lenin*, which was shortlisted for both the OLA Golden Oak and Red Maple Awards.

More recently, Gail acquired first-time author Jill MacLean, whose novel *The Nine Lives of Travis Keating* won the Ann Connor Brimer Award for Children's Literature and was shortlisted for the Silver Birch Award, the Hackmatack Award and the CLA Book of the Year Award. A powerful free-verse novel, *Libertad*, written by Alma Fullerton landed on her desk in early 2008. Recognizing the importance of this powerful novel, she had it fast-tracked and in print within five months for the Fall season. *Libertad* was first shortlisted for the Governor General's Award in 2008 and then went on to win the Ruth and Sylvia Schwartz Award, followed by ten more awards, honours and shortlists.

Gail has served on the Board of Directors for the Canadian Children's Book Centre for six years.

MORE INFO ON BARRY JOWETT

Barry Jowett has been worked in the publishing industry since 1996. A graduate of Centennial College's Book and Magazine Publishing program, he worked at Dundurn Press for twelve years. During his time there, he acquired and edited fiction and non-fiction for the adult and young adult markets. He revitalized Dundurn's young adult fiction imprint (formerly known as Boardwalk Books), bringing in new and established authors and earning numerous awards and nominations.

In 2008, he moved to British Columbia and established Invermere Communications, a freelance writing, editing, and consulting business working with authors and publishers. In 2009 he returned to the Toronto area and began working at Cormorant Books in the fall.

He has acquired and edited award-winning and nominated books by such authors as Mahtab Narsimhan, Lesley Choyce, Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch, Valerie Sherrard, Elizabeth Ruth, Ann Ireland, John Miller, Heather Burt, Sylvia Maultash Warsh, Heidi Priesnitz and Kim Moritsugu.

Barry has made numerous public speaking appearances, and has served on the executive of the Book Publishers' Professional Association.

MORE INFO ON ANN FEATHERSTONE

Ann Featherstone has been in the book business for 35 years, first as a buyer in a major independent book store and for the past twenty-one years as a children's and young adult book editor.

In 1989 she joined Orca Book Publishers, initiating and developing a line of children's books. Three years later, based on their reputation for producing quality, award-winning children's titles, Orca was named Publisher of the Year by the Canadian Bookseller's Association. During her years at Orca, Ann acquired, edited, and art-directed over 60 titles. Her books were regularly shortlisted for regional, national and international awards and have won many prestigious awards, including the Governor General's Award, The Mr. Christie Book Award, The Amelia Frances Howard-Gibbon Illustrator's Award, The Ruth Schwartz Award, The Elizabeth Mrazik-Cleaver Award, the CLA Honour and the IODE Book Award.

In 2000, Ann joined Fitzhenry & Whiteside Publishers and worked with them almost exclusively until 2009. In collaboration with Gail Winskill, she has brought to print more than 200 titles for all ages, from board books for toddlers to picture books, nature books, chapter books, middle grade novels and non-fiction, and young adult novels. The books she has produced with Gail have been nominated for or have won countless awards, citations and honours both nationally and internationally.

In 2009, Ann returned to freelance editing and continues to work with aspiring and award-winning and nominated authors across Canada.