

Author Biography

Ann Elizabeth Carson, poet, writer, artist, feminist and psychotherapist, was selected as one of Toronto's Mille Femme at the 2008 Luminato Festival, which paid tribute to women who have made a contribution to the arts. Her latest book, *The Risks of Remembrance*, (Words Indeed) distills a life's experience in poetry and visual images.

Born in 1929 in Toronto, Ann began writing and publishing in high school, continued during her undergraduate university years and while raising a family. In 1970 she earned a Master's in Adult Education and Counselling at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and worked for many years as a counsellor, supervisor and instructor at York University.

In 1988 Ann explored art as a therapeutic discipline in a two-year course at Arscura Art School, and expanded her private practice to include various forms of expressive therapies — a happy convergence of artistic and therapeutic worlds.

Ann published *Shadows Light* (Longboat Alliance, 2005), a collection of early and new poems illustrated with colour photographs of her sculptures, reviewed by American poet Jan Bailey as “Earthy and elegant . . . confronting the silences through poignant images grounded in daily life we fall wholly into uncensored emotion.” In 2006, she published *My Grandmother's Hair* (Edgar Kent), a social memoir in prose, poetry and visual images — a story of how we are shaped by family and social contexts, noted by Marion Woodman as an “autobiography told with alarming authenticity . . . in the connecting power of myth and of her own painting, poetry and sculpture.”

Carson has recently completed *We All Become Stories: Aging and the Changing Experiences of Memory*, twelve profiles of older people recounting their experience of memory over their lifetimes and highlighting the extraordinary changes they made that enabled them to find a place in societies that seldom welcome or respect old age.

Selections and reviews of Ann's books have appeared from Maine to Manitoulin Island and Vancouver, most recently in *Herizons* magazine (2008), *Canadian Woman Studies/les cahier de la femme* (2008/09), *Celebrating Poets over 70*, McMaster University Centre for Gerontological Studies and the Tower Poetry Society (2010) and *Monhegan Memo #6* (2010).

Popular on the reading circuit, Ann's interactive readings are multimedia events, spoken word accompanied by projected images of her drawings, paintings and sculptures, often with music, drumming and dance. She leads a variety of workshops such as *What's the Difference: Exploring Poetry and Poetic Prose*, and *Solutions in Your Hands* — how the arts can create a new perspective on how we see ourselves and our world, which Margo Little of the *Manitoulin Expositor* found “opens up new approaches to our work and how we problem solve professionally and in our personal lives.”

At eighty one, Ann continues to write, sculpt and read from her work at various venues

and to lead workshops. She also maintains a part-time private psychotherapy practice, participates in a study group on international affairs, two book clubs and the Older Women's Network. She is an active member of the Heliconian Club for women living in the arts, in the Literature and Humanities sections, and keeps fit with circuit training and walks on the Beaches boardwalk. She enjoys music, theatre, her garden, the company of her three children, six grandchildren and a wide circle of extended family and friends.