

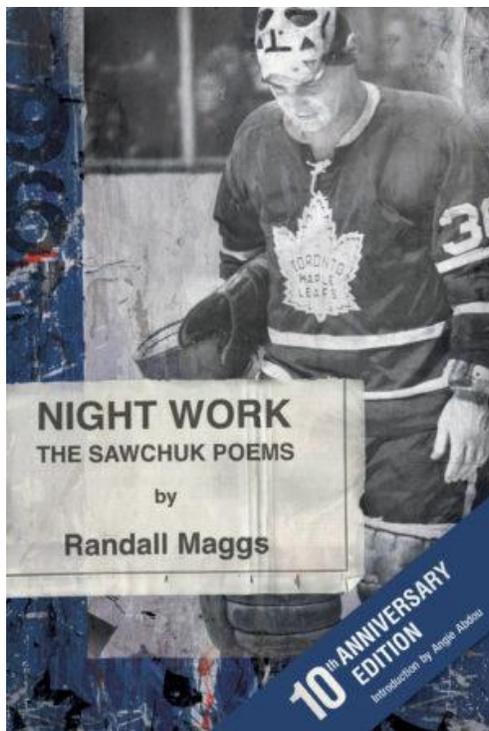
Spotlight

Friday, April 6, 2018

As the playoffs approach and National Poetry Month begins a book that gracefully and surprisingly combines these two loves comes to mind. *Night Work: The Sawchuk Poems* by Randall Maggs is one of the most unexpectedly moving accounts of dedication, love, pain (in all its forms), and hockey that I have ever encountered. Truthfully, it's the only one but I haven't read *The Game* by Ken Dryden yet so that might still make the short list.

Maggs is a Canadian poet and a professor of literature living and working in Newfoundland. His sharp and thoughtful style is perfectly suited to recreating the rowdy and wild days of Terry Sawchuk who played in the NHL from 1949 to 1970. Sawchuk remains the all-time leader in wins of any goaltender from the Original Six era. His legacy is complicated and bruised and Maggs' retelling of it shines a tender but unrelenting spotlight on the contradictions and terrible beauty of the early years of the NHL.

The book is full of stunning lines alongside archival pictures and posters from Sawchuk's playing days. It combines a love of deep love of hockey with a hard won understanding of the human condition and paints a portrait of sacrifice and loss that is unforgettable. I read this book for the first time over five years ago and it has remained with me. Rereading it now I am again startled, moved, and inspired to view hockey and the purpose of life (one in the same some might argue...) in a new light.



In celebration of National Poetry Month the Yellowknife Public Library has put together a poem-a-day newsletter. To receive hand-picked poems from your YPL staff for each day in April simply email library@yellowknife.ca with "poem a day" in the subject line.

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