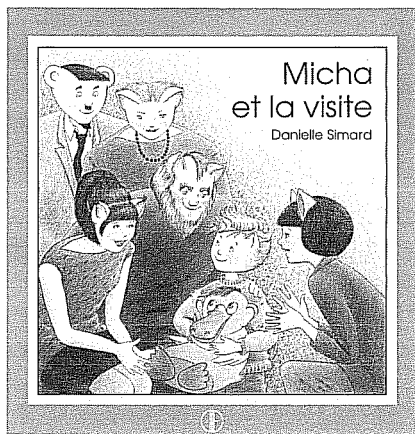


papa et renverse le seau d'eau; il dessine sagement pendant que ses parents fabriquent tartes et gâteaux. Il arrive, hélas! une chose inexplicable... Micha est envoyé dans sa chambre... "pour presque rien", dit-il.



Heureusement, les invités arrivent et toute la famille retrouve le sourire. Micha est gentil et fait tout son possible pour amuser les amis de ses parents. Les invités passent à table et... tout se gâche à nouveau. Une grande personne renverse un verre de vin. La belle nappe est tachée. Rassurez-vous, ce n'est pas grave, avec un peu de sel... C'en est trop pour Micha! Il se réfugie dans sa chambre et trouve soudainement plein de choses à faire... jusqu'à ce que maman le trouve. Micha *doit* dormir malgré tout

le bla-bla qui l'entoure. Réussira-t-il?

Les illustrations expriment tous les non-dits du texte: les tensions, les inquiétudes, les impatiences des parents quand ils préparent une réception; puis le changement radical d'expression, quand les invités franchissent le seuil de la porte; enfin l'atmosphère feutrée de la chambre-refuge de l'enfant qui ne comprend pas le monde des adultes. Ce portrait de famille est un clin d'oeil aux lecteurs qui devront répondre aux questions suivantes: pourquoi punit-on un enfant qui fait une bêtise et pourquoi ne punit-on pas la grande personne qui commet la même bêtise? Est-ce juste? Pourquoi Micha s'ennuie-t-il dans sa chambre quand il est en punition et pourquoi ne s'ennuie-t-il pas quand on oublie de lui dire qu'il est l'heure de dormir? Est-ce normal?

Micha au grand magasin m'avait amusée. Micha et la visite ma fait sourire et m'a rappelé des moments particuliers d'une enfance pas si lointaine... Un livre à regarder pour inventer une histoire à partir des illustrations; un livre à lire pour comprendre le point de vue de tous les petits Micha du monde!

Solange Boudreau, conseillère pédagogique en français
Commission scolaire Pointe-Lévy.

POEMS FOR KIDS?

I want to lasso time. George Swede. Simon and Pierre, 1991. 78 pp., \$11.95 paper. ISBN 007-88924-234-8; **My underwear's inside out: The care and feeding of younger poets.** Diane Dawber. Illus. Pat Wilkinson. Quarry Press, 1991. 64 pp., \$14.95, \$8.95 cloth, paper. ISBN 1-55082-010-9, 1-5505082-

011-7; **Classy cats**. Lola Sneyd. Illus. Doug Sneyd. Simon and Pierre, 1991. 72 pp., \$9.95 paper. ISBN 0-88924-209-7.

Introducer Emily Hearn credits George Swede with the "agility, drive, and...hyper-keen eye" of a tennis player. At their best, the poems in *I want to lasso time* illuminate through fresh perception, as in the haiku-like:

Caretaker
polishes
the cannon
until it
shows clouds (17)

Such perception of the external world extends to Swede's dramatization of inner states as in the subtle poem "Doubt.":

It seeps
under the door
of our
best intentions
or flutters
feverishly
around our
innermost light

And after
we perform
the exorcism
of scrubbing
the floor

Or of throwing
a moth
out the window
it will return (13)

Of the three books under review George Swede's is the most adult in its concerns. Many of the poems could be enjoyed by children, but poems like "Needle and Thread", for example, seem to me essentially adult poems:

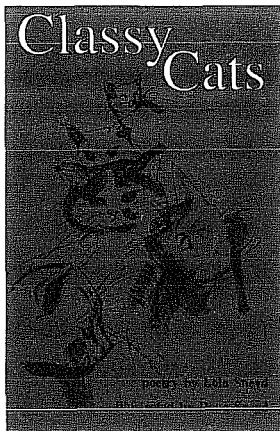
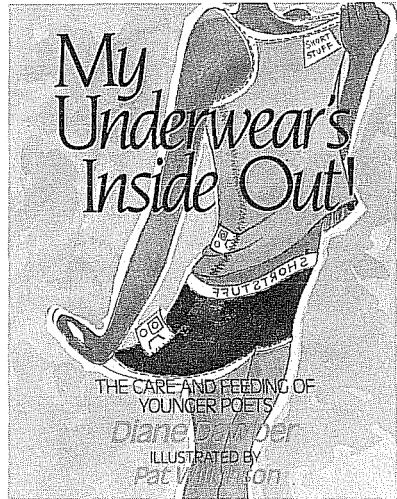
With this pen
the needle
and these words
the thread

every day
I mend

the new holes
I find in my head. (40)

Diane Dawber's *My underwear's inside out: The care and feeding of younger poets* is, as its sub-title suggests, the book most fully directed to helping young poets with their poetry. Also, with its colour illustrations it is the most visually exciting of the three books. Pat Wilkinson's illustrations are beautifully wedded to Dawber's text, as in the illustrations to "Bikes need bug screens" and "How to ruin a good chew."

As well as providing examples of poems in a variety of forms including ballad, concrete poem, diamante and cinquain, Dawber explains the forms to the young poet and offers background information about her own poems. Also, she provides perceptive comments and helpful advice to the young poet. For example, "Poets and other writers are like scientists in that they are always trying to find out things and wondering about things. Every poem is an experiment!" (48); "...make sure your rhyming words make sense and are important to your idea. Never be satisfied with a rhyme that doesn't help your idea" (60); or "whatever form of poem you try, it is like a puzzle, finding just the right words to fit the pattern, to make sense and sound interesting" (61). Of the three books discussed here, *My underwear's inside out*, with its colour illustrations and helpful advice, is the most attractively presented for children. Probably it would be the most useful of the three books in the classroom.



Lola Sneyd's *Classy cats*, like Diane Dawber's *My underwear's inside out*, contains a fine marriage of text and illustration (especially in the illustration that accompanies the poem "Tongue terrific"). *Classy cats* is impressive in its unity, in its entire concentration upon cats. This would help the younger poet to see from how many points of view a single subject can be approached, how rewarding it can be to follow a single subject through every phase of its activity.

"My anchor," for instance, shows how Lola Sneyd sees the cat as an essential link to nature:

You are
my link with nature,
with sanity.

You are
my oasis
my refuge from
the outside,
the technological world.

You are
my anchor with reality. (62)

"My Singular Cat," on the other hand, looks at feline independence:

I pamper and praise you,
keep your days free from strife...
But still you ignore me
And lead your own life. (64)

Each of the three books has something to offer the young poet and the older poet too. Diane Dawber's book is best for its attractive combination of text, illustration and helpful suggestion, Lola Sneyd's for its unity of subject and George Swede's for its shifts from inner to outer observation.

John Ferns is a professor of English at McMaster University. He has published *A.J.M. Smith (1979)*, *Lytton Strachey (1988)* and co-edited *George Whalley's Studies in literature and the humanities (1985)* and *The poetry of Lucy Maud Montgomery (1987)*. Also, he has published five volumes of poetry.

LA POÉSIE POUR ADOLESCENTS

Des mots pour rêver. Anthologie de poésie québécoise. Louise Blouin. Montréal, Pierre Tisseyre, 1990. 169 pp. 7,95\$ broché. ISBN 2-89051-403-X.

Louise Blouin, directrice de la production aux Écrits des Forges, nous a donné, dans cette coédition avec les Éditions Pierre Tisseyre, une anthologie de poésie québécoise pour la jeunesse: entreprise risquée s'il faut en croire le communiqué de presse qui annonce la publication du livre se vantant de son audace. Mais que faut-il entendre par ce mot? De quelle audace s'agit-il en l'occurrence? Intellectuelle, esthétique, idéologique? Un examen rapide de l'avant-propos révèle que l'audace de ce petit volume semble résider dans le fait même de vouloir publier, à la fin du vingtième siècle, une anthologie de poésie pour adolescents. L'audace serait donc avant tout commerciale, le projet une espèce de