

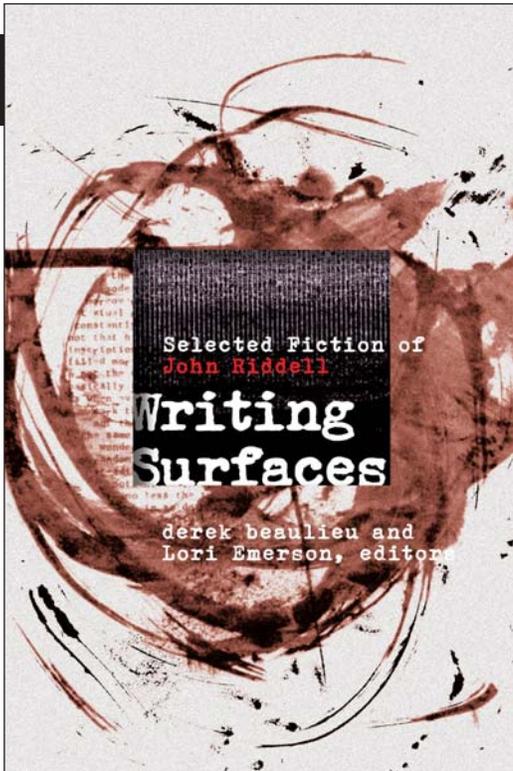
## New from Wilfrid Laurier University Press

### Writing Surfaces

#### Selected Fiction of John Riddell

derek beaulieu and Lori Emerson, editors

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A timely and compelling presentation of graphical writings whose archaeological media specificity reminds us of the ways literary works engage generatively with the material conditions of their production. Hints of early conceptualism, the writing-under-constraint techniques of Oulipo, features of concrete poetics, and procedural aesthetics are all in play in/on/across these pages. beaulieu and Emerson have done a real service in bringing John Riddell's work back into view so that it may get the critical recognition and discussion it deserves. Riddell's synthesis of movements and tendencies exemplifies the rich activity of Canadian poetics in the late 20th century while demonstrating a distinctly original sensibility.

– **Johanna Drucker**, Breslauer Professor of Bibliographical Studies, UCLA,  
author of *The Visible Word*, *Stochastic Poetics*, etc.

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John Riddell is best known for “H” and “Pope Leo, El ELoPE,” a pair of graphic fictions written in collaboration with, or dedicated to, bpNichol, but his work moves well beyond comic strips into a series of radical fictions. In *Writing Surfaces*, derek beaulieu and Lori Emerson present “Pope Leo, El ELoPE” and many other works in a collection that showcases Riddell’s remarkable mix of largely typewriter-based concrete poetry mixed with fiction and drawings.

Riddell’s work embraces game play, unreadability and illegibility, procedural work, non-representational narrative, photocopy degeneration, collage, handwritten texts, and gestural work. His self-aware and meta-textual short fiction challenges the limits of machine-based composition and his reception as a media-based poet.

Riddell’s oeuvre fell out of popular attention, but it has recently garnered interest among poets and critics engaged in media studies (especially studies of the typewriter) and experimental writing. As media studies increasingly turns to “media archaeology” and the reading and study of antiquated, analogue-based modes of composition (typified by the photocopier and the fax machine as well as the typewriter), Riddell is a perfect candidate for renewed appreciation and study by new generations of readers, authors, and scholars.

**derek beaulieu** is the author of five books of poetry, three volumes of conceptual fiction, and over 150 chapbooks. beaulieu teaches at the Alberta College of Art + Design and Mount Royal University.

**Lori Emerson** is an assistant professor in the Department of English at the University of Colorado at Boulder. She writes about and teaches electronic literature (especially digital poetry), experimental American and Canadian poetry, the history of computing, and media theory. She is co-editor, with Darren Wershler, of *The Alphabet Game: A bpNichol Reader* (2007).

**John Riddell** is the author of *Criss-Cross* (Coach House, 1977) and numerous other volumes of visual poetry and prose. An early editor of *grOnk*, *Ganglia*, and *Phenomenon Press*, he has published in magazines like *Kontakte*, *Descant*, and *Ganglia* from the 1960s to the present.



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