

Ice Breakup on the Lake

Written by

 Sargent's Bay, Lake Memphremagog, March 2011 (Photo: Louise Abbott)

Lake Memphremagog has long inspired artists. Among them is spoken word performer Kathy Fisher, whose family has inhabited the lakeshore around Ritchie Point and Gibraltar Point for several generations. Kathy's spoken word piece *ice ships*, which evokes ice breakup on the lake, won the Spring Fever Spoken Word Poetry competition sponsored by the Calgary International Spoken Word Festival and the *Calgary Herald* in 2010.

Listen to *ice ships* :

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 Kathy Fisher in performance (Photo: Jack Bawden)

If you're interested in hearing more of Kathy's work, you can purchase her CD *think of me naked* from Studio Georgeville (<http://www.studiogeorgeville.com>) or through us here at Rural Route Communications. Do you know of other painters, sculptors or

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writers who have found their muse in Lake Memphremagog or in the landscape around it? Please tell us about them! Our email address is louise@ruralroutecommunications.com

Below is the print version of Kathy Fisher's *ice ships*:

ice ships in the winter the wind died down to trees and drifts over the hard-skinned lake the water bound tethered held still no matter how wild the weather that skin started melting two weeks ago slushed up at the edges first then cracked and split in jagged lines she moaned and cried with otherworldly snaps and groans as she gave up her ghosts like Michelangelo's marble giving up its bodies the last evening of ice skin huge islands of chandelier crystals sailed by Ritchie Point where i stood the sound champagne and velvet crushed ice jostling with crushed ice cocktail party soldiers shouldering their way to the punch bowl i saw ice ships sail swiftly race in round shapes destined to crash up onto the opposite shore it was inland Titanic all beauty and blue notes dance and destiny the face of a final shoreline crush ice lemmings

i stood still transfixed by sound and the rose light caught on an apple-cheeked cloud darkness riding underwater currents the swish sound of ghost ships untethered untied it is their last night and they race with ballroom abandon unhinged ecstatic caught by their own beauty they echo looking-glass gasps as they fly by slide by mesmerized cut their death glide across the black surface perfect execution the next morning i wake up to open water wind whipped white-caps pound evenly on the broken ice edged shoreline winter has given up her whiteness and hardness to spring watch as the wind unwrinkles the water releases this lake's black body from three months of statue stillness in the waltzing wind white gives herself to grey

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