

auditorium at the end of the concert, he showed great joy throughout most of the musical excursion.

What Cameron helped me discover is that I had missed the whole point of Bandurina's book. *Voices of Our Children* is not about spectators or performers. In fact, it is about the "interest" my two-year old son displayed at the concert. Cameron showed a deep interest in music which Bandurina discusses in great detail. As she states in her introduction, "the genesis of this book was prompted by my strong belief that a child's interest in music is the key to success in music education" (7). The stories told in conversational dialogue throughout Bandurina's book illustrate this concept. Readers are given numerous insightful tips to generate, maintain, and nourish the musical abilities of children.

Jessica, the leading voice throughout the book (and proud mother of Alexandra), seeks out the expertise of music school director Elizabeth McDonald, whom she meets on a playground one warm June day. In her quest for musical knowledge, guided by McDonald in conversations concerning musical nannies to forbidden fruit, Jessica discusses different musical figures. Motivating, uplifting, positive, and sometimes sad, the themes that emerge from the people met on this musical journey showcase the importance of parents in the musical lives of their children.

A former principal of a music school, Tatiana Bandurina's expertise in the field of musical training is evident throughout her work. Her inner strength and passion for music shape this important book.

Loving the Alien

Laurie Kruk.

Sudbury: Your Scrivener Press, 2006.

Reviewed by Sally Dear-Healey

In *Loving the Alien*, poet Laurie Kruk invites readers to both find and lose themselves in the paradoxical character of living and loss, nature and technology, the mundane and the magical.

The volume is divided into six sections: Loving the Alien, Vaudevillians of Time, Iceberg Rider, When Her Thighs Were Perfect, Personal Effects, and the Mother Robe. Each section offers a wide range of poems sure to appeal to the novice critic and poetry connoisseur alike. Kruk's ability to ground the reader in daily experience is uncanny. I identified with her feelings for a new lover, laughed outright at her comic rendering of a tube of toothpaste, shed a tear at "the sound of you, forgetting me," and dreamt wistfully of what it

might have been like to have a grandmother—or grandfather—to sit a spell at the local donut shop, to be able to go home again to indulge in “meatloaf and mashed.”

Kruk’s haunting memories of yesterday and the stark realities of life are passionately evoked. Her insights into human behaviour and detailed descriptions of events include traipsing through soil laden with moose dung and foraging through basements that smell of mold. Hers is an authentically fresh perspective.

Readers are treated to richly descriptive verse that shows us how much we miss if we do not pay attention to life’s details, both small and large: toothbrushes and divorce, power interruptions and funerals, bikini stomachs and birth. We are reminded that “Weaving destiny from a web of tangled blood threads, / [we] already harbour the seeds of [our] own interior ocean”—that is, we are at once self and alien.