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colin valen

Colin Valen, born in Winnipeg in 1993, won high school Remembrance Day poetry contests several years in a row. After a hiatus, he picked up writing again three years ago on what he feels is a more mature basis. His life experience in the meantime included barn work and being a swamper (heavy lifter) for a moving company. "I have deliberately developed my style in a vacuum," says Colin, but he is influenced by his admiration for Dante along with Greek and Nordic myths, Tolkien, and what he calls the "dark romanticism" of H P Lovecraft and Edgar Allan Poe.

Colin says he emphasizes circularity of narrative, and uses rhyme "compulsively," all perhaps to echo the flavour of ancient sagas. His work, in a variety of challenging settings from the Old West to the northern tundra, ranges from short poems to some that run to 20 pages. Personal themes include longing, madness, despair, corruption, unrequited love, and the power of womanhood for both good and evil. Adds Colin, "Such themes can lead my poetry to reflect with demented glee upon human viciousness, violence, and the macabre – all of which can finally result in a break with traditional morality." While reflecting a measure of darkness in his poetry, Colin says he's protective of children and his friends in real life. "I'd like to be a buffer between them and the horrors of human experience."