

Welcome to the Anthropocene

Alice Major

**Poetry, science, ecological calamity, and human-driven climate change.
Where do we fit in the universe?**

*Now, welcome to the Anthropocene
you battered, tilting globe. Still you gleam,
a blue pearl on the necklace of the planets.*

*This home. Clouds, oceans, life forms span it
from pole to pole, within a peel of air
as thin as lace lapped round an apple. Fair
and fragile bounded sphere, yet strangely tough—
this world that life could never love enough.
And yet its loving-care has been entrusted
to a feckless species, more invested
in the partial, while the total goes unnoticed.*

— from “Welcome to the Anthropocene”

Alice Major continues her long engagement with science and math as means for finding significance in human life and in the universe. In these poems, she observes the comedy and the tragedy of this human-dominated moment on Earth. Major’s most persistent question—“Where do we fit in the universe?”—is made more urgent by the ecological calamity of human-driven climate change, and challenges us to find some humility in our overblown sense of our cosmic significance. These poems question human hierarchies, loyalties, and consciousness, and invite readers to join the conversation.

About the Poet

Alice Major, Edmonton’s first poet laureate, has published 11 books of poetry and essays, many of which explore her long-standing interest in the sciences. She is the recipient of the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta 2017 Distinguished Artist Award. Two of her recent publications are *Standard candles* (UAP) and *Intersecting Sets: A Poet Looks at Science* (UAP). You can find her online at www.alicemajor.com.



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