poetry-prose sequence, won a Governor General's literary award for 1970 and was later adapted for theatre by the writer. There's a Trick with a Knife I'm Learning to Do, composed of poems written between 1963 and 1978, reveals Ondaatje's continued technical experimentation and strong tactile imagery. This work won the Governor General's award for 1979.

As part of the Canada/Australia award, each recipient is invited to visit the host country. The winner for 1978, Australian poet Thomas Shapcott will be visiting Canada this fall as a guest of the Department of External Affairs.