

Subject: Atlantic Book Awards winners
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Atlantic Book Award Winners 2005

With twenty-five different books shortlisted, the booktables in the Alderney Theatre lobby were spilling over with stock as a milling crowd buzzed excitement at the sixth annual Atlantic Book Awards Ceremony. From an initial six awards, the event now includes ten different book prizes plus the announcement of the Mayor,s Award for Cultural Achievement in Literature, and this year, coincident with a new mayoralty term, a welcome to Halifax Regional Municipality,s second Poet Laureate.

CBC Radio-One Maritime Noon host Costas Halavrezos called the capacity audience to order, presiding with panache over an array of writers, presenters and special guests including Mayor Peter Kelly and Dartmouth MP Mike Savage. Poet Laureate Sue MacLeod retired her laurels as the Ceremony began, introducing Halifax,s second **Poet Laureate, Lorri Neilsen Glenn**. Raised on the Prairies, Lorri and her family have lived in Halifax since 1983. A professor at Mount St. Vincent teaching writing and ethnography, Lorri is author and co-editor of a number of acclaimed books on research and literacy. Her first collection of poetry, *All the Perfect Disguises*, released by Broken Jaw Press in 2003, was winner of the Poet's Corner Award.

Jonathan Campbell was a two-time winner with his first novel, *Tarcadia*, released by Annapolis Valley publisher Gaspereau Press. *Tarcadia* was chosen for the **Dartmouth Book Award - Fiction** (\$1,500) and the **Margaret and John Savage First Book Award** (\$1,500). In presenting the latter, Mike Savage noted that an endowment is being established to fund this Award with assistance from Dalhousie Med School,s Music in Medicine program. A fundraising concert, Tuned to Words, featuring baritone Jonathan Brake and singers from the Music in Medicine program, opened Atlantic Book Festival 2005 and was a rousing success. Also shortlisted for the Dartmouth Book Award - Fiction were *Undone* by Sue Goyette (Brick Books) and *Ivor Johnson,s Neighbours* by Bruce Graham (Pottersfield Press). Leo Furey,s *The Long Run* (Key Porter) and Genevieve Lehr,s *The Sorrowing House* (Brick Books) were nominees for the Savage First Book Award. Gaspereau Press, which has been basking in a number of national award nominations this season, was elated to hear that **David Helwig** had won the

Atlantic Poetry Prize (\$1,000) for his long poem, *The Year One*. Also shortlisted were Sue Goyette for *Undone* (Brick Books) and John Smith for *Fireflies in the Magnolia Grove* (Acorn Press).

The **Best Atlantic Published Book** was presented to **Nimbus Publishing** and **Mora Dianne O'Neill** for

Paintings of Nova Scotia. Administered by the Atlantic Publishers, Marketing Association, the prize is adjudicated on a book's content, presentation, quality of design and production as well as its contribution to a broader understanding of Atlantic Canada. The winner's prize, which is sponsored by Friesens Corporation, presents the publisher with \$4,000 and the writer with \$1,000. The runners-up ~ Acorn Press for *The Brown of Dawn* by Catherine Edward and Killick Press for *Down to the Dirt* by Joel Hynes ~ were presented with \$1,000 printing credits for each publisher and \$250 for the authors by Hignell Book Printing.

Alistair MacLeod was greeted with a standing ovation as he accepted the **Booksellers, Choice Award** (\$1,000) for *To Everything There is A Season* (with illustrations by Peter Rankin) published by McClelland & Stewart.

Independent bookseller Mary Jo Anderson (Frog Hollow Books) noted that the book „was a bestseller before it hit the shelves...in anticipation. It was almost impossible for M&S to keep up with orders ~ what bookseller doesn't adore Alistair MacLeod?% Also shortlisted were Jacques Poitras for *The Right Fight* (Goose Lane Editions) and Beth Powning for *The Hatbox Letters* (Knopf Canada).

Denis Connor presented the award that bears his mother's name, the **Ann Connor Brimer Children's Literature Prize** (\$1,000) to **Alice Walsh** for *Pomiuk, Prince of the North* (Beach Holme). Maureen Hull and *Rainy Days With Bear* (Lobster Press) and Joanne Taylor and *There You Are* (Tundra) were also shortlisted for the Brimer.

The **Dartmouth Book Award - Non-fiction** was presented to **Paul Erickson**, *Historic North End Halifax* (Nimbus). Also nominated for the Non-fiction prize were John Boileau, *Fastest in the World: The Saga of Canada's Revolutionary Hydrofoils* (Formac) and Harry Thurston for *A Place Between the Tides* (Douglas & McIntyre)

Norene Smiley presented **Mayor's Award for Excellence in Book Illustration** (\$1,500), on behalf of Peter Kelly, to **Frances Wolfe** for *One Wish* (Tundra Books). A resident of Portuguese Cove and for many years a favourite in the children's department at Spring Garden Road Library, Frances was commended for capturing such evocative images of her childhood, growing up on the shore just outside Halifax. The **Mayor's Award for Cultural Achievement in Literature** (\$1,500) went to **Carol McDougall** for an extraordinary 25 years of championing books for children, most recently as founding Director of the innovative IWK ŒRead to Me, program which presents books and literacy materials to every single new-born in Nova

Scotia.

The 28th **Evelyn Richardson Non-fiction Prize** (\$1,000), the longest running writing award in Atlantic Canada, was presented to **Marq de Villiers** and **Sheila Hirtle** for *A Dune Adrift: The Strange Origins and Curious History of Sable Island* (McClelland & Stewart). Marq has previously won this Award for his Governor General Award winning *Water* (Stoddart, 2000). Also nominated were David B. Flemming for *Explosion in Halifax Harbour: The Illustrated Account of a Disaster that Shook the World* (Formac) and Roger Marsters for *Bold Privateers: Terror, Plunder and Profit on Canada's Atlantic Coast* (Formac).

Alistair MacLeod presented the \$10,000 **Thomas Head Raddall Atlantic Fiction Prize** to **Edward Riche** for *The Nine Planets* (Viking Canada). Previously nominated for the Raddall for *Rare Birds*, Riche is known for the kind of irreverent humour that created a cult following for his work on CBC-Radio One, *The Great Eastern*. *Eyehill* by Kelly Cooper (Goose Lane Editions) and *The Big Why* by Michael Winter (House of Anansi) were also shortlisted for this prize.

The Atlantic Book Awards are presented by the Steering Committee of the Atlantic Book Festival, which is made up of representatives from the Atlantic Independent Booksellers, Association, Atlantic Publishers Marketing Association, Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Awards, Nova Scotia Library Association, Halifax Public Libraries, Halifax Regional Municipality, PEI Writers, Guild, Writers, Alliance of Newfoundland & Labrador and Writers, Federation of Nova Scotia. Nominees and winners are chosen by independent peer juries. The Steering Committee acknowledges the generous support that has made the Festival a reality from the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Canada Council for the Arts, CBC-Radio One, *The Chronicle Herald*, *The Telegram*, *The Buzz* and *Atlantic Books Today*.

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For further information, please contact:

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902-423-8116 See for more information and photographs of the 2005 winners.

Biographical Information/Book Descriptions

Atlantic Poetry Prize (administered by WFNS)

David Helwig, *The Year One*

Gaspereau Press ISBN 1-894031-84-9

In 12 long poems spanning January through December, David Helwig combines the gradually changing seasons with daily goings-on and memories. *The Year One* is a calendar populated with birds, Shakespeare, kitchen utensils, leaves, slugs, dead poets, neighbours, weather and friends. Within the cycle, David suspends immediate and remote, present and past, individual and collective in such a way that he opens an

unsuspected drawer and invites us to join him as he sorts.

Born in Toronto, David Helwig worked as literary manager for CBC-TV Drama and taught at Queen's University. He has been a full-time writer and editor since 1980 and has worked extensively with Oberon Press in Ottawa. He has published many books of poetry and fiction, most recently *The Stand-In* (2002), *Living Here* (2001) and *This Human Day* (2000). His *Catchpenny Poems* won the CBC poetry award in 1983. Today he lives on Prince Edward Island.

Best Atlantic Published Book (Administered by the Atlantic Publishers Marketing Association)

Mora Dianne O'Neill, *Paintings of Nova Scotia*

Nimbus Publishing ISBN 1-551095-06-8

Spanning over two centuries of art, *Paintings of Nova Scotia* pays homage to one hundred masterpieces depicting the splendours of the province. Chosen from the collection of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, the paintings reflect a range of aesthetic responses to Nova Scotia's most captivating and celebrated asset: her landscape. Ranging from Arthur Lismer to Alex Colville to Alice Reed, Mora Dianne O'Neill's insightful captions combine a biographer's detail with the knowledge of an art historian and the appreciation of an art lover.

Nimbus Publishing Ltd., based in Halifax, has been publishing local books for over 30 years. President John Marshall says „there are wonderful stories still to be written and we are ready to tell the world about them.‰ The largest book publisher in Atlantic Canada, Nimbus produces 30 to 35 titles each year, specializing in non-fiction. Nimbus recently has branched out to publish more children's books and literary fiction under a new fiction imprint, Vagrant Press.

Mora Dianne O'Neill is associate curator of historical prints and drawings at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia. She has prepared exhibitions of the Nova Scotia Society of Artists, Alan Syliboy and Nancy Edell. Among her most recent exhibitions are ŒAt the Great Harbour: 250 Years on the Halifax Waterfront, and ŒChoosing Their Own Path: Canadian Women Impressionists., She lives in Halifax.

Booksellers, Choice Award (administered by Atlantic Independent Booksellers, Association)

Alistair MacLeod, *To Everything There is A Season* (with illustrations by Peter Rankin), McClelland & Stewart ISBN 0-7710-5565-X

The story is simple, seen through the eyes of an eleven-year old boy. The time is the 1940s and the Cape Breton farm family eagerly awaits Neil, due home from the Lake Boats in Upper Canada on Christmas Eve. Some intriguing packages have arrived, but will Neil? The story is simple, short, sweet with not a word too many nor a word out of place. Matching and enhancing the story are 26 black and white illustrations from Mabou Cole

Mines artist/illustrator, Peter Rankin.

Born in Saskatchewan, Alistair MacLeod was raised in Cape Breton, where he still spends his summers writing. During the winter months, Dr. MacLeod maintains an office in the English Department at the University of Windsor. His first novel, *No Great Mischiefs* (1999), continues to be hugely acclaimed, winning Alistair the Dublin IMPAC Prize among many other kudos. His previous collections of short stories ~ *The Lost Salt Gift of Blood* and *As Birds Bring Forth the Sun* ~ have established themselves as Canadian classics.

Ann Connor Brimer Children's Literature Prize (Administered by Nova Scotia Library Association)

Alice Walsh, *Pomiuk*, Prince of the North, Beach Holme ISBN 0-88878-447-3
The year is 1893, the place is Chicago. The most fabulous fair ever seen becomes an unusual home for a young Labrador Inuit boy, dubbed Pomiuk, Prince of the North, who captures the hearts of millions. With help from Cree artist Jerry Whitehead's black and white illustrations, Walsh tells an enchanting tale based in history. Just as they did in 1893, Pomiuk's adventures enchant, charm and enthrall.

Alice Walsh was born and raised in Newfoundland. She is the author of three other children's books: *Heroes of Isle aux Morts* (2001), *Uncle Farley's False Teeth* (1998) and *Something Is Wrong With Kyla's Mother* (1992). Gaspereau Press is just releasing her history of Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia, *Mermaid: A Puppet Theatre in Motion*. A former preschool teacher, she lives in Lower Sackville where she is working on a novel.

Dartmouth Book Award - Fiction/Margaret & John Savage First Book Award (Administered by Dartmouth Book Awards Committee)

Jonathan Campbell, *Tarcadia*, Gaspereau Press ISBN 1-894031-94-6
The Chisholms are a rollicking, unpredictable family living in the north end of Sydney. At the start of the summer, fourteen-year-old Michael, his older brother Sid and two of their friends find a raft on the tar ponds. It seems the ideal start to the holidays but over the course of the summer Michael's family gradually stops making sense. This is a thrilling first novel, bristling with humorous encounters, witty family banter, camaraderie and a boy's response to overwhelming uncertainty and loss.

Jonathan Campbell is the author of a number of short stories, plays and television dramas. *Tarcadia* is his first novel. Born in Montreal, raised in Cape Breton, Jonathan earned a BA from Acadia and a Master's Degree in English from Dalhousie. He lives in the Annapolis Valley with his wife, painter Lindee Climo.

Dartmouth Book Award - Non-fiction

Paul Erickson, *Historic North End Halifax*
Nimbus ISBN 1-55109-498-3

North End Halifax has changed dramatically over the past 250 years. Once a

thriving community defined by military forts, a naval presence and heavy industry, the area was devastated by the Halifax Explosion in 1917. Though subsequent decades of revitalisation, especially in the Hydrostone neighbourhood, and destruction, most tragically in the forced evacuation of Africville, the North End has always been a fascinating and unique neighbourhood. With photographs of Gottingen Street as a bustling shopping district, pre-Explosion Richmond and Africville-before, Historic North End Halifax is a comprehensive, engaging and fitting tribute to the North End.

Paul Erickson has lived in the North End since 1978. From there, it's an easy commute to work where he is a professor of anthropology at Saint Mary's University. He has written a number of publications including *Halifax's North End: An Anthropologist Looks at the City* (1986) and *Halifax's Other Hill: Fort Needham from Earliest Times* (1984). Since 1996, he has participated in the Little Dutch Church archaeology project which involves the discovery, excavation, analysis and reburial of 18th century human skeletal remains beneath the second oldest building in Halifax.

Mayor's Award for Excellence in Book Illustration (Administered by Halifax Regional Municipality, Tourism, Culture and Heritage Department)
Frances Wolfe, *One Wish*, Tundra Books ISBN 0-88776-662-5

At the seaside, where the narrator of *One Wish* lives, there sits a cottage in „a fragrant field of Queen Anne's lace.‰ There is a porch to sunbathe on, a beach full of treasures waiting to be discovered, sandcastles are conquered by the incoming tide, and a young girl's wish - to live by the seashore - comes true.

Frances Wolfe's love of the sea is in her blood. Her home is on the Nova Scotia shore, where her grandfather once fished, and where her family has lived for more than a century. Although she has been drawing all her life, she has no formal art training. Frances worked for more than 30 years in a library setting. Her first book, *Where I Live*, was published to critical acclaim and was the winner of the Amelia Frances Howard-Gibbon Award for illustration and the Ann Connor Brimer Award.

Thomas Head Raddall Atlantic Fiction Prize (Administered by WFNS)

Edward Riche, *The Nine Planets*, Viking Canada ISBN 0-670-04456-3
Savaging the pieties of our days, *The Nine Planets* is a satire about family, love, greed, desire and the strange business of education. Hilarious and poignant, it is a novel that gleefully punctures the hot-air balloons of small-town corruption, intellectual pretension and political correctness. With rapier wit, Riche skewers the social face of private schools, urban development, hip culture and the arts community. His irreverent humour is bracingly honest, muscular and aggressive and ultimately profoundly compassionate.

Edward Riche is a novelist, playwright, screenwriter and radio writer. He wrote the screenplay adaptation of his novel *Rare Birds* which was directed

by Sturla Gunnarsson and featured William Hurt, Andy Jones and Molly Parker. He has written frequently for the television comedy *Made in Canada* and is, along with Glen Tilley, Mack Furlong, Steven Palmer, responsible for the glorious lunacy of CBC Radio,s *The Great Eastern* and last summer,s *Summer Days and Night*. He lives in St. John,s.

Evelyn Richardson Non-fiction Prize (Administered by WFNS)

Marq de Villiers and Sheila Hirtle, *A Dune Adrift*, McClelland & Stewart ISBN 0- 7710-2642-0

Sable Island lies off our coast. A shape-shifting ghost of an island, it is in fact more a sandbar adrift in the Atlantic, pushed now east, now west in the storms that so frequently batter it, sometimes shrinking, sometimes growing, its wanderings taking it perilously close to the edge of the continental shelf. Sable is a fascinating place, the product of many forces, both natural and historical, that have shaped it ~ sometimes literally ~ and continue to do so. Marq de Villiers and Sheila Hirtle have done it justice in this informative, entertaining and frequently lyrical book.

Born in South Africa, Marq de Villiers is the author of eight books on exploration, history, politics and travel, including *Water: The Fate of Our Most Precious Resource* (winner of the Governor General,s Award and the Richardson Non-fiction Prize 1999) and *Down the Volga*. He and his partner, Sheila Hirtle, have collaborated on *Into Africa: A Journey through the Ancient Empires* as well as *Sahara: A Natural History*. They live near Port Medway.