

Communiqué

Canada Council for the Arts announces finalists for the 2008 Governor General's Literary Awards

Toronto, October 21, 2008 – The Canada Council for the Arts today announced the finalists for the 2008 Governor General's Literary Awards. The finalists include authors from ages 28 to 77, several previous finalists and three first-time finalists who are journalists. The awards are in the categories of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, drama, children's literature (text and illustration) and translation.

A total of 1,469 books were nominated for this year's awards. Thirty-two of the 73 finalists are nominated for the first time. At least nine of the finalists are under the age of 35. The themes of mortality, war and place figure prominently in several of the books.

The names of the finalists and the titles of their works are listed below, together with the juries' citations for each work. The names of the members of the 14 juries (seven English and seven French) are listed at the conclusion of this release.

Canada Council for the Arts funds, administers and promotes the Governor General's Literary Awards. Each winner will receive \$25,000 and a specially-bound copy of the winning book. The publisher of each winning book will receive \$3,000 to support promotional activities. Non-winning finalists will each receive \$1,000 in recognition of their selection as finalists, bringing the total value of the Awards to approximately \$450,000.

The winners will be announced on **Tuesday, Nov. 18 at 10 a.m. EST** at the McCord Museum of Canadian History in Montreal.

BMO Financial Group has been the sponsor of the Governor General's Literary Awards since 1988. BMO's generous contribution has allowed the production of material aimed at promoting the finalists and winners.

Downloadable images of the shortlisted books, together with additional information about the 2008 GGs are available on the Canada Council website at www.canadacouncil.ca/prizes/ggla.

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English-language finalists

Fiction

Rivka Galchen, New York (New York), originally from Toronto, *Atmospheric Disturbances*.
(HarperCollins Publishers Ltd; distributed by HarperCollins Canada)
(ISBN 978-1-55468-054-2)

Atmospheric Disturbances is a poignant and very funny journey inside a mistaken mind. A writer with tremendous sympathy and psychological acuity, Rivka Galchen is possessed of a wonderfully sly, magnificently skewed sense of humour. A brilliant debut.

Rawi Hage, Montreal, *Cockroach*.
(House of Anansi Press; distributed by HarperCollins Canada)
(ISBN 978-0-88784-209-2)

Rawi Hage's *Cockroach* is a savagely intelligent examination of contemporary multicultural Canada. Humorous and heartbreaking, this novel shines a fierce, brilliant light on the immigrant experience in this country. A mad tour-de-force in a fresh and original voice.

Nino Ricci, Toronto, *The Origin of Species*.
(Doubleday Canada; distributed by Random House of Canada)
(ISBN 978-0-385-66360-1)

The young searching protagonist of Nino Ricci's *The Origin of Species* takes us into the now distant world of the post-Trudeau 1980s. Set mostly in Montreal, with an illuminating voyage to the Galápagos at its centre, this exquisite novel is both tough and tender and, in the end, confirms our belief in the resilience of the human heart.

David Adams Richards, Toronto, *The Lost Highway*.
(Doubleday Canada; distributed by Random House of Canada)
(ISBN 978-0-385-66496-7)

The Lost Highway is an intimate and compelling psychological portrait of a lost soul. David Adams Richards writes with an overarching humanity that points to our foibles with sympathy and humour. His open, honest and supple prose creates a world we at once recognize and see anew.

Fred Stenson, Cochrane (Alberta), *The Great Karoo*.
(Doubleday Canada; distributed by Random House of Canada)
(ISBN 978-0-385-66405-9)

No one writes about cowboys, horses, landscape and the military quite like Fred Stenson. Here is the humour, humanity and insight that can only come from an author who knows what he's talking about. A true-hearted book about Canadians caught up in the dark cause of the Boer War.

Poetry

Weyman Chan, Calgary, *Noise from the Laundry*.
(Talonbooks; distributed by Raincoast / Publishers Group Canada)
(ISBN 978-0-88922-578-7)

Chan's poetry takes us through a breathtaking range of encounters, filled with sly wit, sparkling linguistic turns, and an astonishing youthful clarity about the complexities of the contemporary human project.

A. F. Moritz, Toronto, *The Sentinel*.

(House of Anansi Press; distributed by HarperCollins Canada)

(ISBN 978-0-88784-790-5)

The circumstances of being fully human are the hallmark of Moritz's work – carried out with erudition and compassion for the human journey. Sources of many literatures combine in a unique voice that is both pan-American and global.

Sachiko Murakami, Vancouver, *The Invisibility Exhibit*.

(Talonbooks; distributed by Raincoast / Publishers Group Canada)

(ISBN 978-0-88922-579-4)

Murakami's poems take us into the heart of Vancouver's Downtown East Side. Her words – eloquent, stark and bold – tackle the silences surrounding Vancouver's "missing women." This collection is a must read. Each poem harbours its own life.

Ruth Roach Pierson, Toronto, *Aide-Mémoire*.

(BuschekBooks; distributed by ListDistCo) (ISBN: 978-1-894543-43-9)

Aide-Mémoire is sophisticated, witty, tender, grieving, ironic, cunning, open-eyed, open-hearted. The poems take us through a lifetime of memories, reflections, and imaginative engagements, traversing several continents and ages, without ever losing their fierce, intimate, ecstatic connection to our common humanity and the living green world, close-up, and all at once, nested among wheeling stars.

Jacob Scheier, Toronto, *More to Keep Us Warm*.

(ECW Press; distributed by Jaguar) (ISBN 978-1-55022-794-9)

Scheier's young voice urgently questions every cultural convention, every truth. The poems are infused with humour, irony, intelligence, wit, grief, and above all, love.

Drama

Catherine Banks, Halifax, *Bone Cage*.

(Playwrights Canada Press; distributed by the publisher) (ISBN 978-0-88754-787-4)

A big play about tough lives in rural Nova Scotia. *Bone Cage* puts these lives under the microscope and scrutinizes them with piercing intelligence. The play resonates far beyond its rural setting to probe the struggles and hopes of people everywhere, particularly those trapped in dead-end jobs. At times it's a struggle to dream. This play spans history and is a play for today – tragic, funny, nuanced and poetic.

Ronnie Burkett, Toronto, *10 Days on Earth*.

(Playwrights Canada Press; distributed by the publisher) (ISBN 978-0-88754-737-9)

Ronnie Burkett's *10 Days on Earth* unsentimentally explores the ache of loneliness. A middle-aged, intellectually-challenged man continues to live with his dead mother, not realizing she has passed in her sleep. Amazingly, this play doesn't dip into sadness. Rather, it celebrates our ability to survive tragedy, touching readers with beautiful imagery and powerful poetry.

Paul Ciufo, Grand Bend (Ontario), *Reverend Jonah*.

(J. Gordon Shillingford Publishing / Scirocco Drama; distributed by University of Toronto Press)

(ISBN 978-1-897289-32-7)

When public opinion in rural Ontario drives a lesbian from the comfort and support of the church she loves, a young minister in his first pastoral charge must search his soul for honour, justice and truth. Paul Ciufo debates questions of faith and spirit in a secular, commerce-driven world. His power of observation is revealed in nuanced characters whose opposing, deeply-held values drive the play.

Marie Clements, Galiano Island (British Columbia), *Copper Thunderbird*.
(Talonbooks; distributed by Raincoast / Publishers Group Canada)
(ISBN 978-0-88922-568-8)

Marie Clements is a vibrant and important voice in Canadian theatre because of her imagination and command of language. Her theatre technique and imagery are surprising, brilliant and sometimes upsetting. The playwright portrays the art and life of Norval Morisseau, the “Father of Contemporary Native Art.” In *Copper Thunderbird*, images, lines and colours intermingle as if seen through the energy lines of his paintings. Often angry, never sentimental, this play deserves a wide audience.

Judith Thompson, Toronto, *Palace of the End*.

(Playwrights Canada Press; distributed by the publisher) (ISBN 978-0-88754-763-8)

Moving beyond the political, *Palace of the End* presents the lives of three people connected to present-day Iraq. This play uses specific, sensory details to create characters that are as complex as the country that haunts them. Judith Thompson is wise about universal truths and writes convincingly about a contemporary quagmire. The play’s wallop comes from its power to speak about pain.

Non-fiction

Christie Blatchford, Toronto, *Fifteen Days: Stories of Bravery, Friendship, Life and Death from Inside the New Canadian Army*.

(Doubleday Canada; distributed by Random House of Canada) (ISBN 978-0-385-66466-0)

The stories of the men and women who fight in wars are seldom told. This illuminating book ensures the soldiers serving and dying in Afghanistan are not reduced to mere numbers in the war of words that attends the most debated deployment in modern Canadian history.

Douglas Hunter, Port McNicoll (Ontario), *God’s Mercies. Rivalry, Betrayal and the Dream of Discovery*.

(Doubleday Canada; distributed by Random House of Canada) (ISBN 978-0-385-66058-7)

This original book takes the stuff of the exploration narrative, a tale many times told, and makes it new and compelling. By bringing 17th-century rivals Henry Hudson and Samuel de Champlain together onto the same canvas, Hunter creates a memorable, suspense-filled and elegantly-written drama.

Sid Marty, Lundbreck (Alberta), *The Black Grizzly of Whiskey Creek*.

(McClelland & Stewart; distributed by Random House of Canada) (ISBN 978-0-7710-5699-4)

Sid Marty’s *The Black Grizzly of Whiskey Creek* is a profoundly moving story about ordinary people caught up in extraordinary circumstances. This meticulous reconstruction of real-world events nonetheless moves at the pace of a great crime novel. While the story of a single bear forms the heart of the narrative, the book also embraces complex ecological, economic and social dynamics.

James Orbinski, Toronto, *An Imperfect Offering: Humanitarian Action in the Twenty-first Century*.

(Doubleday Canada; distributed by Random House of Canada) (ISBN 978-0-385-66069-3)

This book offers a poignant first-hand perspective on modern humanitarian action. Based on Orbinski’s work with Médecins Sans Frontières, the book addresses the troubling questions that haunt those who dwell on the uneasy frontline where human misery intersects with global politics.

Chris Turner, Calgary, *The Geography of Hope: A Tour of the World We Need*

(Random House of Canada; distributed by the publisher) (ISBN 978-0-679-31465-3)

Chris Turner brings his perspective as a young parent to this vision of how the future might unfold if we pay attention to ingenuity, invention and audacity in design and urban planning. Turner’s exuberance and superb journalistic instincts make this book on climate change unique.

Children's Literature — Text

Alma Fullerton, Midland (Ontario), *Libertad*.

(Fitzhenry & Whiteside; distributed by the publisher) (ISBN 978-1-55455-106-4)

From the dumps in Guatemala, from the tragic death of a mother rise two boys: *Libertad* and his little brother, Julio. With only an address on a piece of paper, the boys embark on an incredible journey to find their father in America. Alma Fullerton weaves a story of warmth and caring, dogged determination and the generosity of strangers.

John Ibbitson, Washington (D.C.), formerly of Ottawa and Toronto, *The Landing*.

(Kids Can Press; distributed by University of Toronto Press)

(ISBN 978-1-55453-234-6 (bound) / 978-1-55453-238-4 (pbk))

Ben Mercer first experiences live classical music as a young boy sitting on his father's shoulders. From then on, he is hooked, bringing us along on his struggle to play violin. At times the instrument does not co-operate. There are too many notes on the music sheet. *The Landing* is a superbly-crafted story by a writer who understands the many stages of an artistic dream.

Dianne Linden, Edmonton, *Shimmerdogs*.

(ThistleDown Press; distributed by Fitzhenry and Whiteside) (ISBN 978-1-897235-37-9)

Mike Hopkins is a boy with his own way of dealing with the world around him – one not always understood or appreciated, even by those who love him dearly. Author Dianne Linden inhabits Mike's world in a story that is life-affirming without ever being sentimental, that is in equal measures tragic, funny and poignant.

Shenaaz Nanji, Calgary, *Child of Dandelions*.

(Second Story Press; distributed by University of Toronto Press) (ISBN 978-1-897187-50-0)

This is a gripping drama about a fascinating fragment of time in history – the expulsion of Indians from Uganda in 1972. Fifteen-year-old Sabine poignantly straddles two worlds – those of the landed Indian gentry and of the native Ugandans amid wrenching turmoil. Quietly and crisply written, all of Nanji's characters are beautifully realized, morally nuanced and compellingly crafted.

Mariko Tamaki, Toronto, *Skim*.

(Groundwood Books / House of Anansi Press; distributed by HarperCollins Canada)

(ISBN 978-0-88899-753-1)

Skim is an audacious and original graphic novel set in a girls' private school. Skim, a slightly lumpy Kimberly Cameron, stumbles around the edges of cliques, depression, sexuality, suicide, crushes and an aching ambiguous love. The story is heart-breakingly fresh and, in the end, a small celebration of life.

Children's Literature — Illustration

Isabelle Arsenault, Montreal, *My Letter to the World and Other Poems*, text by Emily Dickinson.

(Kids Can Press; distributed by University of Toronto Press)

(ISBN 978-1-55453-103-5 (bound) / 978-1-55453-339-8 (pbk))

Isabelle Arsenault's delicate illustrations and imaginative and confident use of tone, line and colour make it a joy to experience this retelling of Dickinson's poetry.

Josée Bisailon, Saint-Hubert (Quebec), *The Emperor's Second Hand Clothes*, text by Anne Millyard.

(Smith, Bonappétit & Son; distributed by University of Toronto Press)

(ISBN 978-1-897118-07-8)

Josée Bisailon mixes techniques playfully to create very imaginative illustrations. Readers will find new joy in a story they may already know.

Matt James, Toronto, *Yellow Moon, Apple Moon*, text by Pamela Porter.
(Groundwood Books / House of Anansi Press; distributed by HarperCollins Canada)
(ISBN 978-0-88899-809-5)
Matt James's swirling, joyful and childlike illustrations add playful and limitless imagination to this delightful bedtime rhyme for young children. Strong yet gentle, they blend perfectly with the text.

Stéphane Jorisch, Montreal, *The Owl and the Pusycat*, text by Edward Lear.
(Kids Can Press; distributed by University of Toronto Press)
(ISBN 978-1-55337-828-0 (bound) / 978-1-55453-232-2 (pbk))
Stéphane Jorisch's fantastic and thought-provoking images interpret this classic poem in a new way. From the first to the last page, with or without text, his illustrations flow superbly, to the readers' delight.

Kim LaFave, Roberts Creek (British Columbia), *Shin-chi's Canoe*, text by Nicola I. Campbell.
(Groundwood Books / House of Anansi Press; distributed by HarperCollins Canada)
(ISBN 978-0-88899-857-6)
The use of deceptively simple scenes to evoke powerful emotions is one of the many techniques Kim LaFave uses to tell this poignant story. His strong illustrations, using line and subdued colours to best effect, help the reader to relate deeply with what takes place in the story.

Translation — French to English

Jo-Anne Elder, Fredericton (New Brunswick), *Beatitudes*.
(Goose Lane Editions; distributed by University of Toronto Press)
(ISBN 978-0-86492-486-5)
English translation of *Béatitudes* by Herménégilde Chiasson (Prise de Parole)
In translating Herménégilde Chiasson's *Béatitudes*, Jo-Anne Elder has met the challenges of both the emotionally-charged content of the original, and its specific literary form, the litany. She has movingly rendered the complexity expressed in this contemporary "sermon on the mount," while providing an English text rich with sensuality, rhythm and a sense of communion.

Liedewy Hawke, Toronto, *The Postman's Round*.
(Dundurn Press; distributed by University of Toronto Press) (ISBN 978-1-55002-785-3)
English translation of *Le facteur émotif* by Denis Thériault (XYZ éditeur)
Liedewy Hawke's translation of *The Postman's Round*, by Denis Thériault, provides a seamless, empathic version of a tragicomic love story set in daily life as well as in a reality driven by imagination and dreams. She has adroitly captured these nuances and dealt consistently well with the subtle, precise haiku that structure the novel's imaginary landscape.

Lazer Lederhendler, Montreal, *Nikolski*.
(Alfred A. Knopf Canada; distributed by Random House of Canada)
(ISBN 978-0-676-97879-7)
English translation of *Nikolski* by Nicolas Dickner (Éditions Alto)
As the English translator of Nicolas Dickner's novel *Nikolski*, Lazer Lederhendler captures the style and voice of the original's direct speech and descriptions. Lederhendler's skills and intuition are first-class, and his ear is well-tuned to the rhythm of Dickner's prose.

Paul Leduc Browne, Ottawa, and **Michelle Weinroth**, Ottawa, *The Making of the Nations and Cultures of the New World*.

(McGill-Queen's University Press; distributed by the publisher)

(ISBN 978-0-7735-3213-7 (bound) / 978-0-7735-3294-6 (pbk))

English translation of *Genèse des nations et cultures du Nouveau Monde* by Gérard Bouchard (Les Éditions du Boréal)

Through their vibrant, limpid translation, Leduc-Browne and Weinroth have made a monumental work about the origins of our society and culture accessible to all Canadians. The translators have accomplished the rare feat of keeping this dense and comprehensive work as alive in English as it is in French.

Fred A. Reed, Montreal, *Orfeo*.

(Véhicule Press; distributed by LitDistCo) (ISBN 978-1-55065-231-4)

English translation of *Orfeo* by Hans-Jürgen Greif (L'instant même)

Fred A. Reed's English version of Hans-Jürgen Greif's *Orfeo* is a well-orchestrated masterpiece. His elegant translation captures the unusual voice of this harmonious work. Reed beautifully brings to life the Italian piano teacher (La Signora), the narrator (Weber) and the intriguing castrato, Orfeo.

French-language finalists

Fiction

Jean-François Beauchemin, Sainte-Anne-des-Lacs (Quebec), *Ceci est mon corps*.

(Québec Amérique; distributed by Prologue) (ISBN 978-2-7644-0594-9)

Ceci est mon corps is a book of great beauty. The language is concise and poetic, and the development is meticulous. A deep serenity emerges from this account. Tackling a subject like this requires courage as well as confidence in one's own abilities. Jean-François Beauchemin succeeds, giving us a portrait of a human, modern Jesus.

Marie-Claire Blais, Westmount (Quebec), *Naissance de Rebecca à l'ère des tourments*.

(Les Éditions du Boréal; distributed by Diffusion Dimedia) (ISBN 978-2-7646-0578-3)

Marie-Claire Blais gives us a powerful song that overlays and complements the chaos of our time. Her keen observation of human beings shows that despite all evidence to the contrary, they still have the capacity for survival, modulation and the invention of a world that is learning to be. A wonderfully woven story that unfolds like the triumph of literature over the torments of our century.

Guillaume Corbeil, Montreal, *L'art de la fugue*.

(L'instant même; distributed by Diffusion Dimedia) (ISBN 978-2-89502-253-4)

Guillaume Corbeil's stories play out against a backdrop of their characters' uncertainties, the strangeness of their settings, and the sublime lightness of his writing. Together they carry us with the force and the rhythm of an ironic, spirited fugue that quite literally creates a world.

Monique Proulx, Montreal, *Champagne*.

(Les Éditions du Boréal; distributed by Diffusion Dimedia) (ISBN 978-2-7646-0581-3)

Champagne is a novel that brilliantly captures and holds our attention from start to finish. Human vicissitudes are interwoven with those of plants and animals to form a Laurentian landscape that is organic, magnificent and disturbing. The reader immerses himself with grateful delight.

Jean-Pierre Trépanier, Rawdon (Quebec), *Colomia*.

(Les Éditions Sémaphore; distributed by Les Éditions Sémaphore) (ISBN 978-2-923107-06-6)

Perhaps no one has ever scaled the walls of a prison with such clear-sighted compassion. In a tone that always rings true and a style that carries the reader along, *Colomia* is both a race against death and a subtle shift toward the rebuffed tenderness that lies at the heart of violence.

Poetry

Steve Auger, Montreal, *Le rosier incendiaire*.

(Éditions d'art Le Sabord; distributed by Prologue) (ISBN 978-2-922685-59-6)

With *Le rosier incendiaire*, poetry's newest pyromaniac has arrived. Between love and death, Steve Auger proposes a world filled with dreams and anguish in language that is rebellious and beautiful, straying far from the paths of convention. Electrifying and astonishing poetry.

François Charron, Montreal, *Nous aurons tout vécu*.

(Écrits des Forges; distributed by Prologue) (ISBN 978-2-89645-075-6)

In *Nous aurons tout vécu*, François Charron presents a deeply moving song borne by phrases that unfurl in vast waves of incantation, like lamentations gathered up and hurled into the absurdity of the world. With its profound and powerful breadth, this collection evokes emotions that are both intimate and universal.

Henri Chassé, Montreal, *Morceaux de tempête*.

(Écrits des Forges; distributed by Prologue) (ISBN 978-2-89645-082-4)

From solitude to love, this collection of questioning and quest takes us on a journey where images alternate between darkness and light. A renewed, concise language highlights the emotions the author evokes so skilfully. The style and poetic process of Henri Chassé culminate in a reflection that is akin to a rebirth.

Michel Pleau, Quebec City, *La lenteur du monde*.

(Les Éditions David; distributed by Prologue) (ISBN 978-2-89597-081-1)

With *La lenteur du monde*, Michel Pleau invites us to a celebration of the marvellous. In a collection brushed with nostalgia, he gently awakens us to the simple gestures of childhood. Attentive to his worlds, he invites us to go back to the essentials, to natural elements, innocence and light, in order to magnify the beauty of the universe.

Michel A. Thérien, Ottawa, *Du vertige et de l'espoir : Carnets africains*.

(Les Éditions David; distributed by Prologue) (ISBN 978-2-89597-086-6)

In limpid language, Michel A. Thérien invites us not only on an initiatory voyage to his mythical Africa, but also speaks to us of the Harmattan and of *métissage*, echoing Senghor and Césaire. When he takes on the airs of a musician, it is to sing to us the intoxicating promises of humanity.

Drama

Yvan Bienvenue, Montreal, *La vie continue*.

(Dramaturges Éditeurs; distributed by Diffusion Dimedia) (ISBN 978-2-92218-299-6)

A choral, political work, sensitive and human, of a truncated fatality that freezes time and goes straight to the essential.

Carole Fréchette, Montreal, *Serial Killer et autres pièces courtes*.

(Leméac Éditeur / Actes Sud; distributed by Prologue) (ISBN 978-2-7609-2758-2)

An exercise in style for four voices. An experiment in time and space that breaks from the codes of dramatic representation. A series of snapshots of the invisible.

Catherine Mavrikakis, Montreal, *Omaha Beach*.

(Éditions Hélotrope; distributed by Gallimard/Socadis) (ISBN 978-2-923511-10-8)

A hypnotic ballad for survivors in a military cemetery. Theatre for the dead, a ceremony of ghosts. The anthropology of the Apocalypse.

Wajdi Mouawad, Montreal, Ottawa, *Le soleil ni la mort ne peuvent se regarder en face*.

(Leméac Éditeur / Actes Sud; distributed by Prologue) (ISBN 978-2-7609-2783-4)

A text of a musically exceptional poetry, a veritable tragedy upon tragedy that visits the great myths: an agora of broken heroes, a labyrinth of errors.

Jennifer Tremblay, Sorel (Quebec), *La liste*.

(Les Éditions de la Bagnole; distributed by ERPI-Diffusion du Livre Mirabel)

(ISBN 978-2-923342-19-1)

A play that explodes in the mind. Theatre of the destruction of theatre, a new voice.

Non-fiction

Adèle Lauzon, Montreal, *Pas si tranquille*.

(Les Éditions du Boréal; distributed by Diffusion Dimedia) (ISBN 978-2-7646-0593-6)

This book is the difficult, solitary and moving account of a female journalist who worked in Quebec and internationally in the days of the Quiet Revolution and the Cuban and Algerian revolutions, before the emergence of feminism. The evocation of her meetings with the principal politicians and writers of the time, as well as the finesse of her analyses, reveal a major writer.

Georges Leroux, Montreal, *Partita pour Glenn Gould : musique et forme de vie*.

(Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal; distributed by Socadis) (ISBN 978-2-7606-2061-2)

Philosopher Georges Leroux combines his admiration for the art of Glenn Gould with his familiarity with biography and the precocious, single-minded devotion of Gould to his instrument and to music. This book invites the reader to an important reflection upon genius, the sovereignty of the artist, and a pianist who revolutionized the practice of music.

André Major, Montreal, *L'esprit vagabond*.

(Les Éditions du Boréal; distributed by Diffusion Dimedia) (ISBN 978-2-7646-0531-8)

Here is the work of a major figure in Quebec literature who strives for nothing less than absolute sincerity for himself and his readers. André Major shares his multiple, eclectic and perspicacious readings, his intimacy with nature, his annoyance with linguistic and intellectual laziness and the difficulty of living in the present.

Pierre Ouellet, Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu (Quebec), *Hors-temps : poétique de la posthistoire*.

(VLB éditeur; distributed by Les Messageries ADP) (ISBN 978-2-89649-037-0)

Hors-temps : poétique de la posthistoire by Pierre Ouellet is both a commentary on contemporary currents in poetry and a sharp analysis of their relationship with time, memory, history, identity and otherness. He reveals a profound and original way of thinking that uses literature as the point of departure and point of arrival.

Louise Warren, Saint-Alphonse-de-Rodriguez (Quebec), *La forme et le deuil : archives du lac*.

(L'Hexagone; distributed by Les Messageries ADP) (ISBN 978-2-89006-808-7)

La forme et le deuil is a work of great sensitivity. The author succeeds in touching us with the evocation of her memories and her observations on art and writing. Louise Warren strikes a universal chord in her descriptions that are filled with poetry and feeling.

Children's Literature – Text

Camille Bouchard, Saint-Marcel-de-l'Islet (Quebec), *Trente-neuf*.

(Les Éditions du Boréal; distributed by Diffusion Dimedia) (ISBN 978-2-7646-0590-5)

This novel vividly recreates the early days of Spain's colonization of the Americas. A poignant tale told by two voices, the confrontation of two worlds: a Spanish ship's boy and a young Amerindian. A powerful book of great historical authenticity that sheds fascinating light on this period.

Sylvie Desrosiers, Longueuil (Quebec), *Les trois lieues*.

(Les éditions de la courte échelle; distributed by Diffusion du livre Mirabel)

(ISBN 978-2-89651-067-2)

Les trois lieues is a rich and moving book. Seeking his father in the North, Tom discovers the full extent of his feelings for the man he had judged as a coward. A luminous and human novel that celebrates life.

Charlotte Gingras, Morin-Heights (Quebec), *Ophélie*.

(Les éditions de la courte échelle; distributed by Diffusion du livre Mirabel)

(ISBN 978-2-89021-957-1)

Charlotte Gingras, with sensitivity and pitch-perfect tone, gives voice to two young people who are different from the rest – misfits for whom school is all too often an unbearable environment. A novel full of hope where it is possible for the heroes, in their squatted studio, to be saved by dreams, art, writing and, in the end, by tenderness and love.

François Gravel, Montreal, *Sales crapands*.

(Québec Amérique; distributed by Prologue) (ISBN 978-2-7644-0598-7)

François Gravel's novel starts from a wonderful premise: four teenaged fans of the macabre challenge themselves to see who can write the most awful horror story. *Sales Crapands* is a reflection on the act and the pleasure of writing. Four highly effective, disturbingly humorous stories pay tribute to the power of the imagination.

Carole Tremblay, Montreal, *Fred Poulet enquête sur une chaussette*.

(Dominique et compagnie, a division of Éditions Héritage; distributed by Les Messageries ADP, groupe Sogides) (ISBN 978-2-89512-625-6)

This whodunit about the search for a lost sock is hilarious. A mini-graphic novel of remarkable precision and intelligence. "Theft, flight or kidnapping?" – Fred Poulet's outlandish theories capture, surprise and amuse us from the first to the final deduction. The rhythm and mastery of the storytelling are exceptional.

Children's Literature – Illustration

Philippe Béha, Montreal, *Les pays inventés*, text by Henriette Major.

(Les Éditions Hurtubise HMM; distributed by the publisher)

(ISBN 978-2-89647-009-9)

There are interior and exterior 'other lands', to be sure. But there are also 'other lands' that are made up of words and pictures brought to life through a child's laughter. Philippe Béha likes to have fun. He juggles with colours, forms and lines, exploring a host of different styles that are always recognizable as his own.

Stéphane Jorisch, Montreal, *Un cadeau pour Sophie*, text by Gilles Vigneault

(La Montagne secrète; distributed by Diffusion Dimedia) (ISBN 978-2-923163-38-3)

The drawings in *Un cadeau pour Sophie* give us appealing characters full of tenderness. With Stéphane Jorisch we get the sense that he has drawn them from life, like figures in an artist's sketchbook. The fine touches of watercolour and rich textures breathe life into the story, and are imbued with atmosphere, sensitivity and spontaneity.

Marie Lafrance, Montreal, *Le sorcier amoureux*, text by Mireille Levert.

(Dominique et compagnie, a division of Éditions Héritage; distributed by Les Messageries ADP, groupe Sogides) (ISBN 978-2-89512-570-6 (bound.) / 978-2-89512-570-9 (pbk))

He's fat, ugly and full of barbs. He can't stand the sound of a piano. Yet the lady in pink with the singing crimson smile has him transfixed with love. *Le sorcier amoureux* moves from darkness into the light thanks to Marie Lafrance's fluid, luminous illustrations.

Caroline Merola, Montreal, *Quand le chat est parti*, text by Caroline Merola.

(Les éditions de la courte échelle; distributed by Diffusion du livre Mirabel)

(ISBN 978-2-89021-942-7 (bound) / 978-2-89021-943-4 (pbk))

Quand le chat est parti draws us into a swirl of dazzling colours where the mice have as much fun as the readers. With her keen sense of movement and her luxurious texturing, Caroline Merola gives us a book that is full of life and laughter.

Janice Nadeau, Montreal, *Ma meilleure amie*, text by Gilles Tibo.

(Québec Amérique; distributed by Prologue) (ISBN 978-2-7644-0519-2)

Dressed all in black, Death accompanies, listens and comforts like a best friend. Janice Nadeau illustrates it with serenity. She uses a minimum of colours, sometimes blurred, sometimes lightly brushed. Each stroke is full of emotion, tenderness and poetry.

Translation – English to French

Dominique Bouchard, Ripon (Quebec), *Les grands lacs : histoire naturelle d'une région en perpétuelle mutation*.

(Éditions Fides; distributed by Socadis) (ISBN 978-2-7621-2802-4)

French translation of *The Great Lakes - The Natural History of a Changing Region* by Wayne Grady (Greystone Books, a division of Douglas and MacIntyre / David Suzuki Foundation)

Impeccable work from a terminological and scientific perspective. A translation that is so vast and diverse in its complexity cannot be accomplished without an enormous amount of research. This extensive work is all the more striking for the delicacy, elegance and quiet lyricism of the language.

Claire Chabalier, Notre-Dame-de-l'Île-Perrot (Quebec), and **Louise Chabalier**, Mascouche

(Quebec), *Tracey en mille morceaux*.

(Éditions Les Allusifs; distributed by Gallimard/Socadis) (ISBN 978-2-9228-6266-1)

French translation of *The Tracey Fragments* by Maureen Medved (House of Anansi)

Claire Chabalier and Louise Chabalier have taken on the immensely difficult challenge of translating the helpless confusion of an adolescent who expresses herself in choppy, breathless language. The result in French, including the title, is a tour de force in which readers discover, as they follow the short, percussive sentences, the inner journey and delirious ravings of an elusive heroine.

Jean Marc Dalpé, Montreal, *Roc & rail : Trains fantômes* suivi de *Slague : l'histoire d'un mineur*.

(Prise de parole; distributed by Prologue) (ISBN 978-2-89423-218-7)

French translation of *Roc'n Rail: Ghost Trains* and *Spitting Slag* by Mansel Robinson (Thistledown Press)

From a text that sings like an English ballad, the translator has drawn a dialogue created to be heard just as lyrically in French. Drama translation at its finest: words are only a fraction of the feat, as other talents come into play to make the work succeed.

Lori Saint-Martin, Montreal, and **Paul Gagné**, Montreal, *Big Bang*.

(Éditions Les Allusifs; distributed by Gallimard/Socadis) (ISBN 978-2-9228-6865-4)

French translation of *Bang Crunch* by Neil Smith (Alfred A. Knopf Canada, a division de Random House of Canada)

This translation is a charming and natural rendition of the humour, irony and sarcasm of the original stories. The author's intent shines through in all its spontaneity – convincingly and effortlessly. A captivating theme and surprising style combine to produce a work that is strong and altogether French.

Sophie Voillot, Montreal, *Logogryphe*.

(Éditions Alto; distributed by Socadis) (ISBN 978-2-023550-12-8)

French translation of *The Logogryph* by Thomas Wharton (Gaspereau Press)

Logogryphe is a work imbued with nostalgia, rendered in subtle and nuanced language, that reflects quite wonderfully the poetic surrealism of the book – an object raised by the author to the ranks of cultural monument. The translator adopts a tone that brings out the haunting impression left by the evanescent characters.

The juries

The finalists of the Governor General's Literary Awards are chosen by independent juries (seven English and seven French categories) appointed by the Canada Council. The juries, which meet separately, consider all eligible books published between September 1, 2007 and September 30, 2008 for English-language books and between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008 for French-language books. This year, a total of 906 titles in the English-language categories and 563 titles in the French-language categories, were submitted.

English-language juries

Fiction: Shauna Singh Baldwin (Milwaukee, Wisconsin), Greg Hollingshead (Edmonton), Jane Urquhart (Stratford)

Poetry: Di Brandt (Brandon, MB), Pier Giorgio Di Cicco (Toronto), Connie Fife (Nanaimo, B.C.)

Drama: Margaret Hollingsworth (Toronto), Sunil Kuruvilla (Waterloo), Kent Stetson (Montreal)

Non-fiction: Marian Botsford Fraser (Toronto), Terry Glavin (Victoria), Chantal Hébert (Montreal)

Children's Literature – Text: Michael Kusugak (Rankin Inlet, NU), Kevin Major (St. John's, NL), Teresa Toten (Toronto)

Children's Literature – Illustration: Victor Bosson (Victoria), Jirina Marton (Colborne, ON), Janie Jaehyun Park (Toronto)

Translation: Lorin Card (Kelowna), Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood (Verdun), John Van Burek (Toronto)

French-language juries

Fiction: Lise Bissonnette (Montreal), Ying Chen (Vancouver), Robert Lalonde (Montreal)

Poetry: Franz Benjamin (Montreal), Martine Jacquot (Waterville, NB), Pauline Michel (Montreal)

Drama: Michel Marc Bouchard (Montreal), Royds Fuentes-Imbert (Montreal), Geneviève Pineault (Sudbury)

Non-fiction: Hervé Fischer (Montreal), Monique LaRue (Montreal), Victor Teboul (Montreal)

Children's Literature – Text: Ginette Anfousse (Rivière-Rouge, QC), Édith Bourget (Saint-Jacques, NB), Michel Noël (Saint-Damien, QC)

Children's Literature – Illustration: Jean-Paul Eid (Montreal), Joanne Ouellet (Lac Beauport, QC), Christine Sioui (Montreal)

Translation: Pierre Ancil (Ottawa), Émile Martel (Montreal), Paule Noyart (Bromont, QC)

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