



The Canadian Children's Book Centre

Canadian Creators from Coast to Coast Are Celebrated in the 2019 Canadian Children's Book Centre Book Awards, Shortlists Announced

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Toronto (September 5, 2019) — The Canadian Children's Book Centre (CCBC) is thrilled to announce the finalists for the following eight major awards celebrating Canadian books for young people:

- TD Canadian Children's Literature Award (\$50,000)
- Prix TD de littérature canadienne pour l'enfance et la jeunesse (\$50,000)
- Marilyn Baillie Picture Book Award (\$20,000)
- Norma Fleck Award for Canadian Children's Non-Fiction (\$10,000)
- Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction for Young People (\$5,000)
- John Spray Mystery Award (\$5,000)
- Amy Mathers Teen Book Award (\$5,000)
- Prix Harry Black de l'album jeunesse (\$5,000)

The nominated titles represent some of the very best work by Canadian authors and illustrators from across the country. Every single title nominated has made a valuable contribution to Canadian children's literature.

"This year's award nominees represent the exceptional quality of books for young people being published in Canada each year," says Rose Vespa, Executive Director of the Canadian Children's Book Centre. "These books take readers to a small community in Nova Scotia in *Africville*, to a dystopian chapter of history in *The House of One Thousand Eyes*, on a journey through Indigenous history in *Go Show the World* and into the mind of a curious child in *They Say Blue*. The CCBC is proud to be able to elevate the original and vibrant books on this year's shortlist and the authors, illustrators and publishers who made them a reality."

"Congratulations to this year's nominees and the finalists of the TD Canadian Children's Literature Award. Your passion and talent for writing and illustration is helping to inspire young generations to read, explore and imagine," says Andrea Barrack, Global Head, Sustainability and Corporate Citizenship, TD Bank Group. "Each book a child reads when they're young can help them develop literacy skills that are critical for continued success throughout life. That is why supporting early learning and children's literature is an important part of TD's corporate citizenship platform, The Ready Commitment."

This year, TD and the Canadian Children's Book Centre are once again working with CBC/Radio-Canada to present the Fan Choice Award/Choix du public littérature jeunesse. Young readers are invited to choose their favourite book from the titles shortlisted for the TD Canadian Children's Literature Award and the Prix TD de littérature canadienne pour l'enfance et la jeunesse. Find out more at the CBC/Radio-Canada websites; the voting period will run from September 5 to October 3 for the [English contest](#) and September 8 to October 6 for the [French contest](#).

The winners of the English-language awards will be announced at an invitation-only gala event in the Bram and Bluma Appel Salon at the Toronto Reference Library on October 15, 2019. The winners of the French-language awards will be announced at an invitation-only gala event at L'Astral in Montreal on November 7, 2019. Overall, \$185,000 in prize monies will be awarded.

The Canadian Children's Book Centre is proud to share the nominated titles and the juries' notes. The finalists for each award are listed below.

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TD Canadian Children's Literature Award (\$50,000)

Sponsored by TD Bank Group

After Life: Ways We Think About Death

Written by Merrie-Ellen Wilcox (Victoria, BC)

Orca Book Publishers

for ages 9-12

"After Life bravely confronts the often-taboo subject of death by examining the way different cultures around the world deal with this inevitable and universal part of life... The information is well-organized into easily digestible chunks and sidebars, and visually appealing layouts and photos complement the excellent information presented... Accessible to both adults and children, this book sensitively broaches an extremely difficult topic."

Ebb & Flow

Written by Heather Smith (Waterloo, ON)

Kids Can Press

for ages 9-12

"A verse novel brings forth larger than life characters as a boy, overcome with self-recrimination, learns that unconditional love and forgiveness are gifts to be given as well as received... The lyrical text gradually reveals the story and gently flows from page to page... A marriage of simple and poignant imagery expresses Jett's journey through peer pressure, bullying, hope and redemption."

Mustafa

Written and illustrated by Marie-Louise Gay (Outremont, QC)

Groundwood Books

for ages 4-8

"Marie-Louise Gay presents a story that is both universal and achingly familiar... Mustafa is a heartwarming book that convincingly portrays the immigrant experience from a child's perspective... Through her illustrations, Gay sensitively touches on the trauma that children experience after living in a war zone... Ultimately, this story, of making a new friend in a new land, is touching and hopeful."

Sweep: The Story of a Girl and Her Monster

Written by Jonathan Auxier (Pittsburgh, PA)

Puffin Canada

for ages 8-12

"Being swept into the lives of chimney sweeps from the Victorian era, master storyteller, Jonathan Auxier, has once again wowed us with his talent... Sweep is a marvellous fantasy, full of exciting adventure and wondrous magic... Auxier weaves fantasy around historical facts to explore themes of love and sacrifice... A deeply touching story that draws you in from the very first page."

They Say Blue

Written and illustrated by Jillian Tamaki (Toronto, ON)

Groundwood Books

for ages 3-7

“Told in the authentic voice of a child, Tamaki delves into the thoughts that run through a child’s mind in her exploration of colour... The illustrations, with their beautiful washes of colour, complement the quiet, thoughtful story, and create a mood that is both calming and playful... This is a book to be read over and over and over again!”

JURY MEMBERS: Betsy Fraser, Selector, Calgary Public Library; Sandra O’Brien, Editor, *Canadian Children’s Book News*, and former teacher; Arwen Rudolph, Rural Branch Manager, Palliser Regional Library.

Prix TD de littérature canadienne pour l'enfance et la jeunesse (\$50,000)

Sponsored by TD Bank Group

Anatole qui ne séchait jamais

Written by Stéphanie Boulay (Montreal, QC)

Illustrated by Agathe Bray-Bourret (Montreal, QC)

Éditions Fonfon

for ages 10 and up

“Boulay tackles the themes of accepting differences in a way that is just and compelling for Anatole, an inconsolable brother, and Régine, his sister, who wants to understand him and help him in his quest for self-identity. Boulay’s naïve style of writing, combined with Bray-Bourret’s magnificent illustrations, is a powerful work of great significance and sensitivity.”

Jules et Jim, frères d'armes

Written and illustrated by Jacques Goldstyn (Mont-Royal, QC)

Bayard Canada

for ages 9 and up

“Goldstyn deals with a heavy subject with delicacy and tenderness. The graphic style captures the horror and absurdity of the First World War, while the poetic text describes the strengths of the characters’ friendship as they endured the physical and psychological consequences of war. This picture book is a touching and sincere tribute to veterans.”

Moi, c'est Tantale

Written by André Marois (Montreal, QC)

Illustrated by Julien Castanié (Montreal, QC)

Éditions de l'Isatis

for ages 11 and up

“Narrated in the first person, this graphic novel follows the course of Tantalum, a rare and indispensable mineral used in the manufacturing of smartphones. This powerful narrative, enhanced with beautiful textured illustrations tinged with red, black and white, portrays the

delicate subject of child labour, the excessive exploitation of natural resources and overconsumption. It is impossible to be indifferent after reading this book — it challenges our values, forcing us to reflect upon our decisions.”

Nos héroïnes

Written by Anaïs Barbeau-Lavalette (Montreal, QC)

Illustrated by Mathilde Cinq-Mars (Trois-Rivières, QC)

Éditions Marchand de feuilles

for ages 9 and up

“Barbeau-Lavalette highlights the work of Quebec women who have shaped today’s society — all coming from different backgrounds. We (re)discover heroines sometimes forgotten through the beautiful illustrations of Cinq-Mars.”

Qui va bercer Zoé?

Written by Andrée Poulin (Gatineau, QC)

Illustrated by Mathieu Lampron (LaSalle, QC)

Éditions Les 400 coups

for ages 7 and up

“A death, a birth, an old unhappy man, a neighbour with a big heart... the stage is set for a story full of tenderness. Poulin elegantly weaves her text — the words are simple, the sentences rhythmic. Lampron does more than just illustrate — his illustrations intertwine with the text to awaken your emotions.”

JURY MEMBERS: Mathieu Arès, literary critic; Marika Brouillette-Drapeau, bookseller; Noë Crosopal, facilitator of children’s literature; Marie-Ève Guibord, children’s librarian; Sophie Michaud, lecturer, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières.

Marilyn Baillie Picture Book Award (\$20,000)

Sponsored by A. Charles Baillie

Africville

Written by Shauntay Grant (Halifax, NS)

Illustrated by Eva Campbell (Victoria, BC)

Groundwood Books

for ages 4-7

“A dreamy depiction of childhood memories in a long-ago community brought to life through lyrical text and warm and inviting illustrations... Grant’s poetic text and Campbell’s illustrations capture the essence of Africville and will entertain and educate forever.”

The Funeral

Written and illustrated by Matt James (Toronto, ON)

Groundwood Books

for ages 4-7

“A funeral as seen through the eyes of a child becomes a wonderfully rich experience that is both delightful and thought-provoking for young readers... James brings his unique illustrations and story into this beautiful book... The childlike text and bold, attention-grabbing illustrations work wonderfully well together with startling effect... A remarkable book.”

Mustafa

Written and illustrated by Marie-Louise Gay (Outremont, QC)

Groundwood Books

for ages 4-8

“This timely tale offers insight into the journey of a young immigrant child from loneliness and fear to acceptance and friendship... A sensitively told story enhanced by playful illustrations with lots of detail to draw in readers... This is an important book with a valuable message that will resonate with children everywhere.”

Seb and the Sun

Written and illustrated by Jami Gigot (Vancouver, BC)

Ripple Grove Press

for ages 4-7

“Out of the darkness of long winter days in the far north comes a bright and shining, and perhaps unlikely hero, little Seb... This tale of a young boy who finds a surprising way to bring light and warmth to his friends and neighbours unfolds in an exquisitely crafted book... Seb’s mission to capture the sun will warm the imaginations of the readers... A story of optimism, empowerment, sharing and triumph that warms the heart.”

They Say Blue

Written and illustrated by Jillian Tamaki (Toronto, ON)

Groundwood Books

for ages 3-7

“A little girl explores the world around her and questions, marvels, wonders at what she experiences... Tamaki captures the voice of a young child who expresses her inner thoughts about her world through the use of colour... The pictures and illustrations flow fluidly throughout the book and really tap into the way the character feels... A very special book to keep and cherish.”

JURY MEMBERS: **Jim Martella**, principal, Toronto District School Board, and former teacher-librarian and literacy coach; **Janis Nostbakken**, children’s media specialist; **Itah Sadu**, author, storyteller and owner, A Different Booklist.

Norma Fleck Award for Canadian Children's Non-Fiction (\$10,000)

Sponsored by the Fleck Family Foundation

After Life: Ways We Think About Death

Written by Merrie-Ellen Wilcox (Victoria, BC)

Orca Book Publishers

for ages 9-12

"After Life is a book that explains rituals and the ways we look at death around the world in a way that is accessible to everyone... What may seem to be a challenging topic is dealt with honourably in this book, arranged in six chapters featuring a range of intriguing photographs and colourful illustrations."

Bat Citizen: Defending the Ninjas of the Night

Written by Rob Laidlaw (Toronto, ON)

Pajama Press

for ages 8-12

"Informative and engaging, Laidlaw uses facts, pictures and stories to tell the reader about bats and the work that people have done to protect these amazing creatures... This is a gem of a non-fiction book that invites readers to dip into pages that catch their attention, and a complete photo album that depicts the life of bats..."

Go Show the World: A Celebration of Indigenous Heroes

Written by Wab Kinew (Winnipeg, MB)

Illustrated by Joe Morse (Toronto, ON)

Tundra Books

for ages 5-9

"Presenting information in rap format makes this picture book a unique non-fiction title... Interesting information about Indigenous North American heroes is well balanced by powerful illustrations that further illuminate the accompanying text on each spread."

Trash Revolution: Breaking the Waste Cycle

Written by Erica Fyvie (Toronto, ON)

Illustrated by Bill Slavin (Millbrook, ON)

Kids Can Press

for ages 8-12

"Informative, engaging and relevant to the ways garbage has been piling up... Information about recycling is highly accessible and Slavin's art enhances the verbal text succinctly and, moreover, with a sense of humour... The graphics in this book show the progression of how different types of garbage is dealt with (and not dealt with) in our disposable society."

Turtle Pond

Written by James Gladstone (Toronto, ON)

Illustrated by Karen Reczuch (Lake Country, BC)

Groundwood Books

for ages 4-7

“This picture book masterfully expands the notion of the non-fiction genre... Information is presented through narrative, lyrical free-verse text, and through stunning visual images that extend the verbal text and make the world of turtles come alive for the reader... The book leads the reader to use their imagination as they wonder about the turtles that live there.”

JURY MEMBERS: **Fatma Faraj**, Junior School Teacher-Librarian, Branksome Hall; **Erin Grittani**, Children and Youth Consultant, Glad Day Bookshop; **Larry Swartz**, literacy and arts instructor, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), and author of *Take Me to Your Readers* and *“This is a Great Book!”*.

Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction for Young People (\$5,000)

Sponsored by the Canadian Children’s Book Centre’s Bilson Endowment Fund

Don't Tell the Enemy

Written by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch (Brantford, ON)

Scholastic Canada

for ages 10-14

“A gripping tale of the Ukrainian resistance and a challenging coming-of-age novel filled with loss and grief, but also perseverance... Skrypuch’s frank prose celebrates the strength of family ties particularly in dire straits and showcases the unflinching courage of Ukrainian resistance workers during World War II.”

The Journey of Little Charlie

Written by Christopher Paul Curtis (Windsor, ON)

Scholastic Canada

for ages 9-12

“A beautifully written and powerful text with connections to the contemporary plights of refugees of many cultures fleeing persecution, and the ethical choices of those who help or hinder their flight... Tackles old themes from the 1860s US south (racism, slavery, injustice, poverty, violence) that are still relevant today... Curtis continues his run of outstanding historical fiction.”

Miles to Go

Written by Beryl Young (Vancouver, BC)

Wandering Fox Books

for ages 10-14

“A truly Canadian story with a lot of heart, despite its challenging elements of loss, regret, disillusionment... Pulling no punches on the post-war prairie experience, told with lots of authentic period details and a richly evoked setting... This coming-of-age story of two girls is a poignant exploration of the themes of love, loyalty, loss and letting go.”

Piper

Written by Jacqueline Halsey (Dartmouth, NS)

Nimbus Publishing

for ages 10-12

“A fascinating story of a unique part of Canada’s history... This story draws readers into the plight of those fleeing economic and political persecution... The story cleverly weaves in authentic details about Scottish heritage and life aboard ship, and makes the tragic, yet hopeful transatlantic voyage deeply, richly personal.”

The Sound of Freedom

(Heroes Quartet, Book 1)

Written by Kathy Kacer (Toronto, ON)

Annick Press

for ages 9-12

“Another important story with plenty of historical details that will appeal to those looking for follow-ups to other Holocaust and World War II narratives... Kacer's Holocaust narrative conveys the power of music to fuel a family's hope and furthermore offer it the opportunity to escape to safety and freedom.”

JURY MEMBERS: **Ray Fernandes**, Youth Services Librarian/Consultant, Nova Scotia Provincial Library; **Carol-Ann Hoyte**, children’s poet and librarian, Selwyn House School; **Dr. Eric M. Meyers**, Associate Professor, School of Library, Archival and Information Studies, University of British Columbia; **Gail de Vos (chair)**, author, storyteller and Professor, School of Library and Information Studies, University of Alberta.

John Spray Mystery Award (\$5,000)

Sponsored by John Spray

Aftermath

Written by Kelley Armstrong (Aylmer, ON)

Penguin Teen Canada

for ages 12 and up

“As school shootings continue to capture the media’s attention, Armstrong’s book considers what happens to the school and the community after such a terrible event... In a gloriously suspenseful story filled with complex characters, plot twists and red herrings, Armstrong keeps readers guessing about the truth until the very end... A fast-paced and interesting book that will appeal to [teen] readers.”

Call of the Wraith

(The Blackthorn Key, Book 4)

Written by Kevin Sands (London, ON)

Aladdin

for ages 10-14

“The fourth Blackthorn Key book does not disappoint... Part historical and part fantastical, the novel is full of curious characters and mysteries to unravel... An intense stand-alone story rife with pirates, ghosts, witches and witch trials, speaking to the fears in all of us about being separated from family and not knowing who we are... Kevin Sands nails it every single time.”

The Case of the Firebane Folly

(Tank & Fizz, Book 4)

Written by Liam O’Donnell (London, ON)

Illustrated by Mike Deas (Salt Spring Island, BC)

Orca Book Publishers

for ages 9-12

“This quirky book, suitable for middle-grade readers, incorporates aspects of a graphic novel with a satisfying and complex mystery... It’s a story of epic lava proportions and spider web stickiness that will delight young readers with a taste for a fun mystery spiced with quiriness...”

Sadie

Written by Courtney Summers (Tweed, ON)

St. Martin’s Press

for ages 13 and up

“A podcast, a murder, and revenge-fuelled cross-country trip... Employing the device of the ever-popular true crime podcast, this novel provides readers with a complicated and tragic mystery to follow... Summers tells a gut-wrenching story of neglect, abuse, grief and a search for justice.”

Wolfe in Shepherd's Clothing

(A Shepherd & Wolfe Mystery, Book 3)

Written by Angie Counios and David Gane (Regina, SK)

Your Nickel’s Worth Publishing

for ages 15 and up

“In a fast-moving plot filled with psychological complexity and relationship drama, Wolfe in Shepherd’s Clothing demonstrates that the guilty are not always so obvious... [A] fast-paced thriller, reminiscent of the Noir genre... Readers will enjoy the short chapters, clever writing and engrossing mystery.”

JURY MEMBERS: Nancy Cooper, First Nations Consultant, Southern Ontario Library Service; Diana Krawczyk, Manager, Children, Youth and Popular Collections, Central Library, Mississauga Library; Helen Kubiw, writer, teacher-librarian and blogger at [CanLit for Little Canadians](http://CanLitforLittleCanadians.com).

Amy Mathers Teen Book Award (\$5,000)

Sponsored by Sylvan Learning

Aftermath

Written by Kelley Armstrong (Aylmer, ON)

Penguin Teen Canada

for ages 12 and up

“A suspenseful mystery with plenty of sharp twists, this novel provides an insightful examination of the different ways people respond to trauma and grief, school bullying... Aftermath paints a picture of a girl trying to pick up the pieces of a life that has been torn apart by a school shooting — a school shooting committed by her brother. Smart and engaging, this is a book about finding your way back to yourself.”

Easy Prey

Written by Catherine Lo (Mississauga, ON)

Amulet Books

for ages 14 and up

“Easy Prey takes its readers on a journey with whip-smart writing and a compelling narrative... Lo adeptly weaves themes of privacy, betrayal and revenge into a fast-paced mystery... and created complicated, authentic characters who will resonate with readers... Brilliantly written, the destination is completely unknown until the very end and Jenna Bradley is the protagonist that every generation needs.”

A Girl Like That

Written by Tanaz Bhathena (Mississauga, ON)

Farrar, Straus & Giroux Books for Young Readers

for ages 14 and up

“Intricately woven and breathtakingly beautiful, Bhathena’s A Girl Like That is inspirational, compelling and enriching. With writing that makes the setting feel like its own character, this book introduces a place that may be unfamiliar to some but whose characters are instantly relatable to anyone living under the weight of other’s expectations... Painful and honest, this story will stay with readers long after the book is finished.”

The House of One Thousand Eyes

Written by Michelle Barker (Vancouver, BC)

Annick Press

for ages 14 and up

“Barker’s The House of One Thousand Eyes feels dystopian and other-worldly but is a searing portrait of post-war Berlin... A provocative and timely book about defiance, courage and the refusal to give in regardless of the consequences... Fascinating and disturbing, Lena’s story, her difficult choices in an insurmountable situation, will thoroughly engross readers.”

Learning to Breathe

Written by Janice Lynn Mather (Delta, BC)

Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers

for ages 14 and up

“Learning to Breathe is a beautiful book about taking up space, identity, resilience, and in the end, hope... With sensitivity and poignancy, Mather has weaved the difficult subject matter of [this novel] with the heartbreaking world of protagonist Indy... Readers will root for Indy as she

struggles to forge her own identity and not let the past define her... Hard-hitting and powerful, this is fiction that doesn't feel like fiction and a testament to the resilience and strength of girls."

JURY MEMBERS: **Roxanne Deans**, Director of Inventory, Outreach & Communications, The Children's Book Bank; **Tracey Schindler**, reviewer and former teacher; **Joel A. Sutherland**, Silver Birch Award-winning author and Manager of Client Experience, Pickering Public Library.

Prix Harry Black de l'album jeunesse (\$5,000)

Sponsored by Mary Macchiusi

Mémé à la plage

Written by Rhéa Dufresne (Laval, QC)

Illustrated by Aurélie Grand (Montreal, QC)

Éditions Les 400 coups

for ages 5 and up

"With humour, this book addresses a moment in the life of a multi-generational family. Grand's expressive illustrations blend perfectly with Dufresne's short text... The surprise ending is undoubtedly funny. As soon as the book is closed, you will want to read it again to laugh a little longer."

Mon lit de rêve

Written by Gilles Tibo (Montreal, QC)

Illustrated by Mathilde Cinq-Mars (Trois-Rivières, QC)

Éditions de l'Isatis

for ages 4 and up

"This collection of poetry is an ode to tenderness... Tibo ingeniously succeeds in capturing the attention of his audience with small poems imbued with softness on the theme of bedtime. Children will learn numbers from one to ten, the days of the week and some phases of sleep. Cinq-Mars' anthropomorphic animals are full of sweetness. Above all, the illustrations are perfectly in sync with Tibo's text. Every detail, whether in the text or the illustrations, creates a dreamy atmosphere."

On a un problème avec Lilou la loutre

Written and illustrated by Orbie (Cap d'Espoir, QC)

Éditions Fonfon

for ages 5 and up

"Orbie introduces us to an extraordinary character. Lilou the otter is untenable and so impertinent that she becomes adorable. Obsessed with sliding on everything, the carefree Lilou has little respect for anything or anyone. Succinct text and illustrations blend to relay a series of wacky situations... This hilarious picture book provokes laughter, but also encourages readers to reflect and discuss different aspects of living together."

Le pelleteur de nuages

Written by Simon Boulerice (Montreal, QC)

Illustrated by Josée Bisailon (St-Hubert, QC)

Groupe d'édition la courte échelle

for ages 5 and up

"Boulerice creates a tender and poetic tale. Elliot has a passion for clouds, which he describes poetically, hence his nickname "pelleteur de nuages," given by his father. Elliot initially dislikes the white spots that appear on his hands, caused by vitiligo, until the day his shame turns into pride. Fantasy subtly springs from Bisailon's evocative illustrations."

Qui va bercer Zoé?

Written by Andrée Poulin (Gatineau, QC)

Illustrated by Mathieu Lampron (LaSalle, QC)

Éditions Les 400 coups

for ages 7 and up

"Poulin sensitively portrays an unlikely encounter between a grandfather, grieving after the death of his wife, and a desperate baby, longing to be comforted. At first reluctant, he eventually feels empathy for the child, whose parents were victims of an accident. From the moment he agrees to rock Zoe, his universe lights up again. Lampron's drawings paint the characters in broad strokes, from black and white to colour."

JURY MEMBERS: **Raymond Bertin**, cultural journalist; **Danièle Courchesne**, teacher; **Sophie Kurler**, librarian.

About the Canadian Children's Book Centre

The Canadian Children's Book Centre is a national, not-for-profit organization founded in 1976. We are dedicated to encouraging, promoting and supporting the reading, writing and illustrating of Canadian books for young readers. Our programs, publications, and resources help teachers, librarians, booksellers and parents select the very best for young readers. For more information, please visit our [website](#).

About TD Global Corporate Citizenship

TD has a long-standing commitment to enriching the lives of its customers, colleagues and communities. As part of its corporate citizenship platform, The Ready Commitment, TD is targeting CDN \$1 billion (US \$775 million) in total by 2030 towards community giving in four areas critical to opening doors for a more inclusive and sustainable tomorrow – Financial Security, Vibrant Planet, Connected Communities and Better Health. Through The Ready Commitment, TD aspires to link its business, philanthropy and human capital to help people feel more confident - not just about their finances, but also in their ability to achieve their personal goals in a changing world. For further information, visit td.com/thereadycommitment.