



The Canadian Children's Book Centre

The 2022 Shortlists for the CCBC Book Awards Honour Excellence in Canadian Books for Young People

Featuring Two Inaugural Awards—the Arlene Barlin Award for Science Fiction and Fantasy and the David Booth Children's and Youth Poetry Award

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Toronto (September 8, 2022)—The Canadian Children's Book Centre (CCBC) is excited to announce the finalists for the following eight major awards celebrating Canadian books for young people:

- [TD Canadian Children's Literature Award \(\\$50,000\)](#)
- [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 \(\\$5,000\)](#)
- [Amy Mathers Teen Book Award \(\\$5,000\)](#)
- [Jean Little First-Novel Award \(\\$5,000\)](#)
- [Arlene Barlin Award for Science Fiction and Fantasy \(\\$5,000\)](#)
- [David Booth Children's and Youth Poetry Award \(\\$3,500\)](#)

The nominated titles represent the exceptional quality of the work by Canadian authors and illustrators from across the country. Each title nominated will capture the imaginations of Canadian young people and were chosen by our juries to represent the best in their category.

“Congratulations to all of the finalists for the 2022 CCBC Book Awards,” says Sarah Sahagian, Executive Director of the Canadian Children's Book Centre. This year's shortlisted titles reflect the dynamism and innovation of our country's weavers of tales, real and imagined, for young people. Through these books, Canadian book creators, from many cultural backgrounds, are sharing relevant, timely, and necessary narratives which will resonate with, inspire, and challenge today's readers.

This year's awards program features two inaugural awards: the Arlene Barlin Award for Science Fiction and Fantasy and the David Booth Children's and Youth Poetry Award.

Inspired by her sister's love of the fantasy and science fiction genres of books and film, Canadian children's book advocate, Elly Barlin-Daniels, is pleased to sponsor the Arlene Barlin Award for Science Fiction and Fantasy in memory of Arlene, who passed away from breast cancer in 2018. “My sister had a fascination with worlds where anything was possible,” says Elly Barlin-Daniels. “She was highly creative, open-minded, generous and brave, and made an impact on all who knew her. Arlene's legacy will continue with the naming of this award in her honour.”

Shelley Stagg Peterson is honoured to sponsor the David Booth Children's and Youth Poetry Award in memory of her friend and former colleague who passed away in December 2018. “The award honours David Booth, who was a dear friend, mentor and teacher to many around the world,” says Peterson. “David's own poetry has delighted and informed children of all ages with wisdom

captured in pithy rhymes and lyrical narrative poems. This award was created to celebrate David's life and legacy and to make a difference in the life of Canadian poets for young people."

"Congratulations to all nominees and the finalists of these literary awards, including the TD Canadian Children's Literature Award," says Uma Venkataramaiah, Senior Manager, Philanthropy (Canada), TD Bank Group. "We appreciate your creativity, passion and contributions to Canadian literature and towards helping young readers learn and fall in love with the power of reading. At TD, we believe that reading helps set the foundation in school and in life and we're proud to continue supporting the CCBC through the TD Ready Commitment."

The winners of the awards will be announced at an in-person event at Harbourfront Centre on Thursday, September 29 with host Garvia Bailey, presented in partnership with the Toronto International Festival of Authors (TIFA) as part of its TIFA Kids! Programming. ASL interpretation will be provided for this event. Tickets can be purchased through TIFA's box office at festivalofauthors.ca. Space is limited.

A live stream of the event will be free for all, with the ceremony available on our YouTube channel, Bibliovideo, afterwards. To register for the live stream, visit festivalofauthors.ca.

Leading up to the awards evening, the CCBC and TIFA will host **Let's Connect! An Exploration of Relationships in Picture Book and Graphic Novel Illustration**, an in-person panel discussion, featuring Julie Flett, Rosena Fung, David Namisato and moderator Audrey Hudson, on Tuesday, September 27 at 5 pm EDT. ASL interpretation will be provided for this event. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit festivalofauthors.ca.

Once again, we are partnering with our sister organization Communication-Jeunesse to organize our French-language award: the Prix TD de littérature canadienne pour l'enfance et la jeunesse. The shortlist for this prize will be released in October, with the winner being announced virtually in mid-November.

Overall, \$116,000 in prize monies will be awarded on September 29. 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.

Visit our playlist on Bibliovideo, the CCBC's YouTube channel, to [watch the videos featuring our nominated titles](#).

[Read the online version of this press release here.](#)

For more information, please contact:



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

Sponsored by TD Bank Group

Borders

Written by Thomas King (Guelph, ON)

Illustrated by Natasha Donovan (Deming, WA)

HarperCollins Publishers

for ages 10-14

"Together, the author and illustrator create a visually compelling and striking story about identity and belonging... The concepts of colonial possessiveness, Indigenous dispossession, nationhood, sovereignty and self-determination are elucidated brilliantly by both the text and illustrations... Donovan's illustrations tell as much of the story as the words do... Borders explores the importance of acceptance and recognition, as well as the institutions which create obstacles for people who do not adhere to colonial notions of citizenship."

The Fabulous Zed Watson!

Written by Basil Sylvester and Kevin Sylvester (Toronto, ON)

Illustrated by Kevin Sylvester (Toronto, ON)

HarperCollins Publishers

for ages 8-12

"This smart, funny, and compelling narrative features Zed, a non-binary protagonist with a personality as bold as their outfits, and a cast of loveable secondary characters who bring out lots of drama and humour... Zed is funny, endearing and unapologetically fabulous... Kevin Sylvester's lively illustrations are the perfect addition as they capture the characters' uniqueness and personality... A fun and lively story of friendship, connection, identity and belonging. It draws the reader in as we learn how Zed and friends live their best life authentically."

Growing Up Trans: In Our Own Words

Edited by Dr. Lindsay Herriot (Victoria, BC) and Kate Fry (Vancouver, BC)

Orca Book Publishers

for ages 9-12

"This collection written by trans youth is so heartwarmingly, and sometimes heartbreakingly, eloquent and mature. Their voices are poetic and wise beyond their years... This innovative resource highlights a wide variety of ways that young trans people exist in the world, demonstrating their hopes, dreams, and even their resiliency in the face of a world that all too often fails to understand them... This curated collection is raw and honest, covering a variety of topics from a first-hand perspective... An essential read for creating empathy and understanding for non-trans readers."

A Kid Is a Kid Is a Kid

Written by Sara O'Leary (St. Martins, NB)

Illustrated by Qin Leng (Toronto, ON)

Groundwood Books

for ages 3-6

"This book tackles so many big playground (and real world) issues in such a small package... O'Leary's conversation about which questions kids are asked versus the questions they wish they were asked

reveals characters who are self aware with a zest for life... Leng's illustrations highlight a diverse cast of characters through skin tone and hair texture, and make the story come alive... All children will surely relate to this powerful and joyful tale, and will hopefully be encouraged to speak out about who they truly are when others try to put them in a box."

On the Trapline

Written by David A. Robertson (Winnipeg, MB)

Illustrated by Julie Flett (Vancouver, BC)

Tundra Books

for ages 4-8

"A quiet, yet powerful intergenerational story expressing love for the land, the water, all of the beings, and for each other... Readers will find much to learn beyond the main narrative as well, as Robertson incorporates various Swampy Cree words into the text and includes a glossary and pronunciation guide... Flett's illustrations reveal what is and what was along the journey to the trapline in sparse but heartfelt artwork... An important book for children and adults alike, On the Trapline promotes knowledge of the past while encouraging change in the future."

JURY MEMBERS: **Dr. Rob Bittner**, children's and YA specialist; **Ray Fernandes**, Youth Services Librarian/Consultant, Nova Scotia Provincial Library; **Colette Poitras**, Manager, Indigenous Public Library Outreach, Government of Alberta; **Amy Mathers**, reviewer and founder, Amy Mathers Teen Book Award; **Michelle Valdecantos**, teacher-librarian, Vancouver School Board.

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

Sponsored by A. Charles Baillie

Hare B&B

Written by Bill Richardson (Vancouver, BC)

Illustrated by Bill Pechet (Vancouver, BC)

Running the Goat Books & Broadsides

for ages 6-8

"A laugh-out-loud picture book that will delight readers of all ages... filled with gags, puns and witty artwork that will keep children and adults laughing and thinking about the book for a long time... Harry (aka Harriet) is a hare who outwits a coyote in this clever picture book... Witty wordplay from beginning to end, with detailed drawings that extend the fun, give readers reason to explore again and again."

Lala's Words

Written and illustrated by Gracey Zhang (Brooklyn, NY)

Orchard Books

for ages 4-8

"Lala's Words offers a valuable message of the power of kindness and caring... [Lala] skips across the pages and through her neighbourhood (depicted in blacks and greys) and literally brightens the world around her... Zhang's bold paint and ink strokes propel the story's action across double-page

spreads... The striking illustrations beautifully enhance and embellish the storyline... A remarkably effective blending of text and artwork."

On the Trapline

Written by David A. Robertson (Winnipeg, MB)

Illustrated by Julie Flett (Vancouver, BC)

Tundra Books

for ages 4-8

"This quietly told tale, enhanced by spare illustrations in muted colours, allows young readers to share a young boy's memorable experience with his grandfather... It is more than reconciliation—it's a story about reconnecting... Earth-toned images and heartfelt prose, enhanced by Cree translations, create a touching account of the keen hurt of having a cultural heritage within reach, yet gone forever... Superbly done, On the Trapline is an important book, a gift for this generation of young readers and those to follow."

Time is a Flower

Written and illustrated by Julie Morstad (Vancouver, BC)

Tundra Books

for ages 3-7

"When picking up this book, it may evoke memories of a time gone by but once you open the book, you are brought quickly to the present... Morstad's illustrations are fluid and vibrant; her words resonant and spare... What may be a simple understanding of time, eventually the reader will discover that time depends on perspective and moves slowly and quickly depending on the moment... Engaging, innovative, thought-provoking."

We All Play / kimêtawânaw

Written and illustrated by Julie Flett (Vancouver, BC)

Greystone Kids

for ages 3-5

"This fun and playful book will have readers smiling with the pictures of the animals... Memorable alliterative language delightfully slips from the tongue and impels small children to mimic the movements of the featured animals... The simple text of English and Cree words make this book accessible for the youngest readers... A rollicking romp of a read that not only engages young readers but also acts as a reminder of the interconnectedness of all living things."

JURY MEMBERS: **Fatma Faraj**, Junior School Teacher-Librarian, Branksome Hall; **Bonnie Farmer**, author and teacher, English Montreal School Board; **Janis Nostbakken**, children's media specialist.

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

Sponsored by the Fleck Family Foundation

Boy from Buchenwald: The True Story of a Holocaust Survivor

Written by Robbie Waisman (Vancouver, BC) with Susan McClelland (Toronto, ON)

Bloomsbury Children's Books

for ages 11-14

"An important book about Jewish boys known as the Buchenwald Boys who survived the Holocaust... Waisman shares an unfamiliar and heartbreaking tale, presenting the devastation to survivors' lives after he was released from a concentration camp... It's an honour and privilege to hear this authentic account of the aftermath of the Holocaust, especially from an 89-year-old survivor. Heartbreaking, hopeful and hard to put down, this is a reminder that there is goodness in people, and the human spirit is astonishingly resilient."

The Girl Who Loved Giraffes and Became the World's First Giraffologist

Written by Kathy Stinson (Rockwood, ON)

Illustrated by François Thisdale (Carignan, QC)

Fitzhenry & Whiteside

for ages 8-12

"Stinson presents an enticing picture book biography of an interesting woman determined not only to prove how strong women are but also to fight for unique animals, showing readers just how remarkable they are... The book uses a rich method of storytelling and seamlessly embeds non-fiction elements throughout... Readers intrigued by the subject will find a list of further resources by and about Anne Innis Dagg and giraffes... A unique biography that will resonate with animal lovers and readers who love stories about persistence and strong females."

Growing Up Trans: In Our Own Words

Edited by Dr. Lindsay Herriot (Victoria, BC) and Kate Fry (Vancouver, BC)

Orca Book Publishers

for ages 9-12

"A must-have book that centres the voices of transgender youth... The editors, concerned that titles about transgendered teens were being written by cisgender adults, created several workshops to mentor teens. The result... a non-fiction anthology with powerful, emotional pieces by teens that includes not only essays but also poetry, art and stories, each of which speaks directly to the audience and reflects the authors' own experiences... A beautiful addition to all book collections!"

Mad for Ads: How Advertising Gets (and Stays) in Our Heads

Written by Erica Fyvie (Toronto, ON)

Illustrated by Ian Turner (Hamilton, ON)

Kids Can Press

for ages 10-12

"A comprehensive, accessible and fun book about advertisements and how young people can become aware of the messages they are surrounded with... Accessible and appealing on so many levels... The illustrations and text provide fun information and a good springboard for many discussions... Readers

will find lots to think about in this engaging and fresh look at how we are influenced every day... [Mad for Ads contains] lots of important information around the issues of representation and the importance of being yourself!"

The Power of Style: How Fashion and Beauty Are Being Used to Reclaim Cultures

Written by Christian Allaire (New York, NY)

Illustrated by Jacqueline Li (Vancouver, BC)

Annick Press

for ages 12 and up

"This book beautifully centres the voices of many diverse and intersectional individuals as they use fashion and beauty to honour, respect, celebrate and reclaim their cultures and traditions... All topics are highlighted by high-quality, fashion-forward photographs that vary from samples to full-page spreads, allowing readers to reflect and enjoy each... A much-needed book that presents a modern and more authentic and inclusive representation of beauty... This book shares the powerful message of being fearlessly unapologetically and authentically yourself!"

JURY MEMBERS: **Betsy Fraser**, Selector, Calgary Public Library and author of *Young Adult Nonfiction: A Readers' Advisory and Collection Development Guide* (Libraries Unlimited); **Rabia Khokhar**, teacher, Toronto District School Board; **Maria Martella**, owner of Tinlids Inc., a wholesaler of children's and teen books for schools and libraries.

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

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

Dear Peter, Dear Ulla

Written by Barbara Nickel (Yarrow, BC)

Thistledown Press

for ages 8-12

"An intricate and engaging story that seems worlds apart brought together by Peter's and Ulla's experiences via letters to each other... Nickel's novel is beautifully written, with a seamless and absorbing plot... Readers are taken on a journey toward ultimately choosing love and kindness in the face of stunning prejudice... With engaging characters, playing out in Saskatchewan and Danzig, this is a beautifully crafted middle-grade historical story."

Elvis, Me, and the Lemonade Stand Summer

Written by Leslie Gentile (Brentwood Bay, BC)

DCB Young Readers

for ages 9-12

"A refreshingly positive, nurturing portrayal of First Nations culture and people... Gentile creates amazing characters through which she addresses neglect and dysfunctional families, as well as issues of micro aggressions and discrimination against Indigenous peoples... An engaging and layered story of identity and determination... [that] captures what it's like to live on reserve and what it is to have people who genuinely care about you."

Second Chances

Written by Harriet Zaidman (Winnipeg, MB)

Red Deer Press

for ages 12 and up

“Zaidman writes an intriguing blend of well-researched fact and fiction on the experiences of people in Rooster Town, Winnipeg, during the 1950s polio epidemic... Dale’s story takes readers on a journey of perseverance and determination... A must-read on polio awareness, adjusting to disability, the importance of vaccines for protection against disease, the dangers of misinformation, and the devaluation of Métis lives.”

Stealing Home

Written by J. Torres (Whitby, ON)

Illustrated by David Namisato (Toronto, ON)

Kids Can Press

for ages 9-12

“Stealing Home addresses difficult subject matter through an absorbing story and equally emotional, strategic and impactful art... Giving young readers a window into the Japanese internment during WWII is a powerful way to examine the far-reaching consequences of racism, injustice, discrimination and fear... This graphic novel tackles this sensitive topic with accuracy and heart. The perfect blend of illustrations and text successfully convey the turmoil and horrors experienced by Japanese-Canadians... A beautiful mosaic of love, compassion and resilience.”

Traitors Among Us

Written by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch (Brantford, ON)

Scholastic Press

for ages 8-12

“A gripping and timely story of compassion and family... The story sheds light on a part of WWII history that isn’t widely known... Dealing with the aftermath of WWII, sisters, Maria and Krystia trade one fascist regime for a tyrannical one... The resilience of the novel’s main and secondary characters is striking... The characters and plot are well developed and the plot is engaging as the horrors of wartime are explored.”

JURY MEMBERS: **Tina Athaide**, author and educator; **Christina Minaki**, author, librarian, social justice educator and disability advocate; **Brandon Mitchell**, author, illustrator and founder of Birch Bark Comics; **Gail de Vos (chair)**, author, storyteller and Adjunct (Associate) Professor, School of Library and Information Studies, University of Alberta.

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

Sponsored by the Canadian Children's Book Centre

Blood Like Magic

Written by Liselle Sambury (Timmins, ON)

Margaret K. McElderry Books

for ages 12 and up

“Disguised as a book about witches, Blood Like Magic is a dizzying dystopian dive into the forces of classism, generational trauma, and the bonds of family... Sambury has written a unique urban fantasy that balances magic, a sci-fi futuristic Toronto and ties it back to Black history in North America... Teens are lucky to have such a rich world to get lost in and encouraged to go beyond the limits of genre... A book with an ending so impossible to predict it’s spellbinding.”

If I Tell You the Truth

Written by Jasmin Kaur (Abbotsford, BC)

HarperCollins Publishers

for ages 12 and up

“Written with a mix of poetry and prose, the story is seamlessly told through two voices in chronological order, giving the reader a unique perspective the mother and daughter will never have... It addresses the painful topic of sexual assault, as well as the two different coming-of-age experiences in Canada as South Asian women... Incredibly moving and heart wrenching, this is a book everyone should read.”

Iron Widow

Written by Xiran Jay Zhao (Burnaby, BC)

Penguin Teen Canada

for ages 14 and up

“Inspired by history, infused with a violent undercurrent of injustice, and immersed in futuristic sci-fi world-building, Iron Widow is a revenge story that doesn’t pull any punches... Zhao does a wonderful job showcasing institutional oppression while blending Chinese history with a futuristic setting and giant robots. After the last page, readers will be asking for more.”

Misfit in Love

Written by S.K. Ali (Toronto, ON)

Salaam Reads

for ages 14 and up

“Telling the story of a young woman in the transitional time between high school and college and set against the drama of a family wedding, Misfit in Love has love—both the capriciousness of romantic love and the steadiness of familial love—at its core... Ali surprises her readers by imbedding serious themes, including racism, into what initially appears to be a lighthearted story... Ali deftly balances the lightness with tougher issues while also showing Janna, a girl who had lost her voice, as someone who can speak up against something wrong.”

The Project

Written by Courtney Summers (Tweed, ON)

Wednesday Books

for ages 13 and up

“Exploring the world of secretive cults and the lengths people will go to protect their family, Summers weaves grief and loss through a tension-filled thriller that will have you on the edge of your seat... Many of us don’t believe we’d be caught up in a cult but in The Project, Summers does a masterful job underlining the reasons some folks do... A gripping, suspenseful story... The Project will make your heart pound before breaking it into a thousand pieces.”

JURY MEMBERS: **Dr. Dave Jenkinson**, Editor, *CM: Canadian Review of Materials* and Professor Emeritus, Children’s & YA Literature, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba; **Ardo Omer**, writer, podcast host and Kids Coordinator, Festival of Literary Diversity; **Joel A. Sutherland**, Silver Birch Award-winning author and Manager of Client Experience, Pickering Public Library.

Jean Little First-Novel Award (\$5,000)

Sponsored by the Canadian Children's Book Centre

Elvis, Me, and the Lemonade Stand Summer

Written by Leslie Gentile (Brentwood Bay, BC)

DCB Young Readers

for ages 9-12

“With its leisurely pace, this novel feels exactly like a child’s summer... Gentile’s characters are richly realized, and the story takes on challenging material—abuse, identity, racism and more—in ways that respect its audience... The story is approachable and good-natured, wearing its subversive subtext lightly as it presents an unredeemed bad mother, a plot detail that involves questioning the Indian Act and an upending of the white saviour trope... A middle-grade summer story that plays with the genre in ways both satisfyingly familiar and refreshingly new.”

Living with Viola

Written and illustrated by Rosena Fung (Toronto, ON)

Annick Press

for ages 9-12

“In Living with Viola, art and text interact in fresh and exciting ways that make full and original use of the graphic-novel form... Livi’s pre-teen world aches with the pain and loneliness of the social anxiety that is represented by her alter ego, Viola... Fung creates a fully-rounded portrait of an anxious character and weaves in the details of middle-grade life in a context of cultural specificity. Convincing, warm, emotionally intense and engaging.”

Thanks a Lot, Universe

Written by Chad Lucas (Beaver Bank, NS)

Amulet Books

for ages 10-14

"In Thanks a Lot, Universe, Lucas tackles sexuality, anxiety and the challenges of foster care without restraining his characters, and he stays in the middle-grade realm while he does it.... Serious issues on the rocky road to adolescence are wrapped up in a winning package of middle-grade quips, coded emails, sports talk and snappy dialogue... Lucas makes accomplished use of a dual point of view to present a nuanced portrait of male friendship, a family in crisis and questions of sexuality... A meticulously written, honest and tender depiction of the growing love between two boys."

JURY MEMBERS: Maggie de Vries, author; Sarah Ellis, author; Kit Pearson, author.

Arlene Barlin Award for Science Fiction and Fantasy (\$5,000)

Sponsored by Elly Barlin-Daniels

Blood Like Magic

Written by Liselle Sambury (Timmins, ON)

Margaret K. McElderry Books

for ages 12 and up

"An inspired blending of science fiction and fantasy, Blood Like Magic richly imagines near-future Toronto that is home to both advanced genetics services and a society of witches... The characters are authentic and well fleshed out, and the high stakes that Voya and her family face will keep readers engaged... Sambury gives [Voya] a marvellously endearing, messy and loving family, and she continually surprises the reader with her bravery and sensitivity... Filled with love, magic and expert world-building, this unforgettable debut is a fresh and exciting twist on the genre."

Hunting by Stars: A Marrow Thieves Novel

Written by Cherie Dimaline (Midland, ON)

Penguin Teen Canada

for ages 12 and up

"Dimaline has brought us back to the world of the Marrow Thieves in [this] companion novel, which cleverly weaves together the perspectives of multiple characters, bringing us information from the past, present and future... Through the dystopian setting, Dimaline brilliantly parallels a future world with history, including a portrayal of residential schools that is equally as nightmarish and horrifying as the real world schools... Deftly written, lyrical, defiant in its politics, Hunting By Stars absorbs the reader and dares us to confront our history and our prejudices."

Iron Widow

Written by Xiran Jay Zhao (Burnaby, BC)

Penguin Teen Canada

for ages 14 and up

"Powerful, unapologetic and fierce from start to finish... Iron Widow is a white-knuckle, edge of your seat science fiction adventure that seamlessly weaves in Chinese culture and history and reimagines real historical figures in a futuristic world... This book, like its heroine, defies expectations and conventions in a futuristic society with ancient customs. A trailblazing book that honours the past while questioning its foundation."

Sisters of the Snake

Written by Sarena Nanua and Sasha Nanua (Mississauga, ON)

HarperTeen

for ages 13 and up

“Magical and captivating, Sisters of the Snake invites readers to join an adventure that will have them both anxiously turning pages and laughing out loud... Filled with adventure, suspense and tension, the exotic setting and the interspersing of Indian culture blend to create an immersive and exciting fantasy... The Nanua sisters weave a tale of captivating magic, characters, history and adventure that leaves the reader wishing for more.”

Spell Sweeper

Written by Lee Edward Födi (Vancouver, BC)

HarperCollins Publishers

for ages 8-12

“A wonderfully fresh and inventive take on the wizard school story, with clever and surprising world-building, and delightfully spirited writing... Skilfully created, flawed characters entertain and remind readers that society doesn't determine your worth... Cara Moone is a courageous, determined, brash, and vulnerable heroine who enthralls the reader, as does the story she tells.”

JURY MEMBERS: **Michael Johnstone**, author, reviewer and lecturer, Department of English, University of Toronto; **Rachel Seigel**, author, reviewer and Fiction Product Manager (Juvenile to Adult), Library Services Centre; **Tara Truscott**, teacher-librarian, York Region District School Board.

David Booth Children's and Youth Poetry Award (\$3,500)

Sponsored by Shelley Stagg Peterson

The Book of Selkie

Written and illustrated by Briana Corr Scott (Dartmouth, NS)

Nimbus Publishing

for ages 4-8

“Through short quatrains, which are lilting like the sea, Scott casts seal folk in the spotlight. Her poems, awash with lyricism, bring the centuries-old tale of this mythological creature to younger generations... With an understated, quiet tone, the author infuses these poems with a dream-like mystical quality... Scott's artistry with words helps paint vivid pictures of the life and habits of a selkie and her vivid oil paintings evoke the life of a girl spending half her days as a human and the other half a seal.”

A Great Big Night

Written by Kate Inglis (Riverport, NS)

Illustrated by Josée Bisailon (St-Hubert, QC)

Nimbus Publishing

for ages 4-8

“A raucous celebration of music and sound that carries the reader into the secret heart of the forest. With deft rhythmic language and onomatopoeic words, the author brings the story to life, letting the reader experience the wonderful chaos of the animals’ party... Inglis’s joyous words skip off the page, dazzle the tongue and delight the ear.”

I Talk Like a River

Written by Jordan Scott (Royston, BC)
Illustrated by Sydney Smith (Halifax, NS)
Neal Porter Books
for ages 6-12

“An astonishing picture book that melds prose and poetry, personal narrative and imagination... With this poignant first-person narrative, Scott sheds light on stuttering—a rare terrain tackled in picture books... The narrative is strong, characterized by clear prose augmented with poetic language and devices... Scott’s writing is filled with rich emotion, inspiring readers to feel the boy’s journey with his physical challenge. Masterful artwork by Smith are poetry images unto themselves.”

Our Corner Store

Written by Robert Heidbreder (Vancouver, BC)
Illustrated by Chelsea O’Byrne (Vancouver, BC)
Groundwood Books
for ages 6-9

“This nostalgic collection harkens back to a time when the corner store was the heart of the neighbourhood... The free verse poems race across the pages like the children in the book: eager, curious, and brimming with life... Each poem presents a vivid memory of the sights, sounds and people of my corner store, your corner store, our corner store, guaranteed to inspire connections for readers of all ages.”

Summer Feet

Written by Sheree Fitch (River John, NS)
Illustrated by Carolyn Fisher (Calgary, AB)
Nimbus Publishing
for ages 4-8

“Fitch’s aestival ode to feet features bouncy rhythms and serves up delicious language that is also inventive at times... These poems dance joyfully across the page and embody a wonderful sense of play. The author creates unique word-combinations to describe familiar experiences while conveying a cohesive narrative... Fitch’s words and Fisher’s paintings provide a celebration of summer days, of bare feet and happy times... A delightful, rollicking good romp of a read.”

Welcome to the Cypher

Written by Khodi Dill (Vanscoy, SK)
Illustrated by Awuradwoa Afful (Toronto, ON)
Annick Press
for ages 4-7

“This book beckons the readers to step into another world, one of sound and poetry, and makes them feel welcome... Dill reminds readers of the power of language as an act of self-identification, and encourages them to find their voices and speak out... This is a shout out to rap music and recognizes

the positivity [that] lies within the art form... The rhythms and beats of Dill's poem is an inciting, exciting musical riot, celebrating the hip-hop hug soul of modern poetry."

JURY MEMBERS: **Carol-Ann Hoyte**, librarian and poet; **Paula Jane Remlinger**, children's writer, editor and poet, author of *This Hole Called January* (Thistledown Press); **Larry Swartz**, Instructor, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto and co-author of *The Poetry Experience* (Pembroke Publishers).

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 bookcentre.ca.

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.

About the Toronto International Festival of Authors

The Toronto International Festival of Authors (TIFA) is Canada's longest-running literary festival, a charitable, non-for-profit cultural organization. It presents the finest of Canadian and international writers, artists and thinkers across the range of literary genres from fiction to non-fiction, poetry to plays, graphic novelists and illustrators. It enables audiences access and empowerment to meet, hear and learn from the finest contemporary writers and thinkers of our time. For more information, visit festivalofauthors.ca.