

NEWS RELEASE



MARGARET
ATWOOD



CORAL ANN
HOWELLS



PETER
THEROUX

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RBC TAYLOR PRIZE ANNOUNCES NEW JURY FOR 2020

Canada's Most Prestigious Non-Fiction Prize

THE TRUSTEES OF the Charles Taylor Foundation are pleased to announce that the jurors for the 2020 RBC Taylor Prize are: MARGARET ATWOOD, CORAL ANN HOWELLS AND PETER THEROUX. All have been hard at work reading, since submissions opened last June.

MARGARET ATWOOD, whose work has been published in more than forty-five countries, is the author of more than fifty books of fiction, poetry, critical essays, and graphic novels. Last night the Canadian author was named the co-winner of the 2019 Booker Prize for her latest novel, *The Testaments*. It is the long-awaited sequel to *The Handmaid's Tale*, now an award-winning TV series. Her other works of fiction include *Cat's Eye*, finalist for the 1989 Booker Prize; *Alias Grace*, which won the Giller Prize in Canada and the Premio Mondello in Italy; *The Blind Assassin*, winner of the 2000 Booker Prize; The MaddAddam Trilogy; and *Hag-Seed*. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade, the Franz Kafka International Literary Prize, the PEN Center USA Lifetime Achievement Award, and the *Los Angeles Times* Innovator's Award. She lives in Toronto.

CORAL ANN HOWELLS is a British based professor and critic who is a specialist in English-Canadian literature and culture. A graduate of the University of Queensland, Australia, and with a PhD from the University of London, she taught for many years at the University of Reading and was Visiting Exchange Professor at the University of Guelph. Since then she has published extensively on contemporary Canadian women's fiction, and has held Visiting Professorships in Europe and India. Now a Professor Emerita, she is also a Senior Research Fellow, Institute of English Studies, University of London. Proudly she is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. She is co-editor of the final volume of *The Oxford History of the Novel in English* and co-editor with Eva-Marie Kroller of *The Cambridge History of Canadian Literature*. She lives in London, England.

PETER THEROUX, an American writer and translator with family origins in Yamaska, Québec, has translated numerous works of fiction by Egyptian, Iraqi, Israeli, and Lebanese authors, including the first Saudi Arabian and Nubian novels translated into English (*Cities of Salt* by Abdelrahman Munif and *Dongola* by Idris Ali), as well as *Children of the Alley*, the most controversial work by Egyptian Nobel laureate Naguib Mahfouz. He has also written articles and published books, *Sandstorms* and *Translating LA*, about his extensive travels in the Middle East and California.

NOREEN TAYLOR, PRIZE FOUNDER AND CHAIR of the Charles Taylor Foundation, remarked: "I am particularly thrilled to have Margaret Atwood on the jury for the 20th



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anniversary of the Prize, as she and her late partner, the dearly missed Graeme Gibson, were two of the first people I turned to when founding the prize. Joining her, Coral Ann returns as a juror, and as a British professor of Canadian Literature, brings an “offshore” perspective to the books submitted. Peter’s travels and writings, in so many ways similar to Charles’, bring a journalistic eye to the process. Our esteemed jurors will read well over 130 submissions and deliberate over which books to include in December’s longlist for the 2020 RBC Taylor Prize.”

KEY DATES: The Longlist will be shared on Wednesday, December 4, 2019; the Shortlist will be announced at a news conference on Wednesday, January 8, 2020; and the winner revealed at a gala luncheon on Monday March 2, 2020.

The RBC Taylor Prize recognizes excellence in Canadian non-fiction writing and emphasizes the development of the careers of the authors it celebrates.

ABOUT THE RBC TAYLOR PRIZE:

2020 marks the 20th anniversary of the RBC Taylor Prize, which commemorates Charles Taylor’s pursuit of excellence in the field of literary non-fiction. Awarded to the author whose book best combines a superb command of the English language, an elegance of style, and a subtlety of thought and perception, the Prize consists of \$5,000 for each finalist, and a further \$25,000 for the winner. All authors are presented with a custom leather-bound version of their shortlisted book at the awards ceremony.

The Prize provides all the finalists with promotional support to help all the nominated books to stand out in the media, bookstores, and libraries.

Earlier this year, KATE HARRIS won the 2019 RBC Taylor Prize for her book *Lands of Lost Borders: Out of Bounds on the Silk Road*, published by Knopf Canada.

Ms. Harris selected JESSICA J. LEE as the 2019 recipient of the RBC TAYLOR PRIZE EMERGING WRITER AWARD. This award, featuring a \$10,000 cash award, and mentorship from the naming author was established in 2013 to provide recognition and assistance to a Canadian published author who is working on a significant writing project in literary non-fiction.

Ms. Lee’s first book, *Turning*, which chronicles her journey swimming 52 lakes in a single year, was longlisted for the Frank Hegyi Award for Emerging Authors. She has a doctorate in environmental history and aesthetics. Originally from London, On, she now lives in Berlin, where she is editor of The Willowherb Review.

THE TRUSTEES of the Charles Taylor Foundation are Vijay Parmar, David Staines, Edward Taylor, Nadina Taylor, and Noreen Taylor. The Manager is Sheila Kay.

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