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DECEMBER 6, 2017 • TORONTO, ONTARIO: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## RBC TAYLOR PRIZE 2018 LONGLIST REVEALED

*The 2018 RBC Taylor Prize jury announces ten essential titles that should be on every Canadian's reading list this year*

RBC TAYLOR PRIZE 2018 JURORS CHRISTINE ELLIOTT, ANNE GIARDINI, and JAMES POLK today announced the longlist for the seventeenth awarding of Canada's most prestigious non-fiction prize.

Having read a record breaking 153 non-fiction books submitted by 110 Canadian and international publishers, the Jury noted that: "As veteran readers and jury members, we unanimously agree that we have never seen such overall excellence as in the one hundred and fifty-three RBC Taylor Prize submissions read this year. We have delighted in the range of topics, the depth of enquiry, the quality of the writing, and the many new voices and perspectives. Canada is very well served by its non-fiction writers."

[ See juror's statement attached. ]

### THE LONGLIST BOOKS FOR THE 2018 RBC TAYLOR PRIZE ARE:

1. *Island of the Blue Foxes: Disaster and Triumph on Bering's Great Voyage to Alaska* by STEPHEN R. BOWN (Canmore, AB), published by Douglas & McIntyre
2. *How to Fall in Love with Anyone* by MANDY LEN CATRON (Vancouver, BC), published by Simon & Schuster
3. *Yardwork: A Biography of an Urban Place* by DANIEL COLEMAN (Hamilton, ON), published by Wolsak and Wynn Publishers
4. *The Marriott Cell: An Epic Journey from Cairo's Scorpion Prison to Freedom* by MOHAMED FAHMY (Vancouver, BC) and CAROL SHABEN (Vancouver, BC), published by Random House Canada
5. *Solitude: A Singular Life in a Crowded World* by MICHAEL HARRIS (Vancouver, BC), published by Doubleday Canada
6. *Life on the Ground Floor: Letters From the Edge of Emergency Medicine* by JAMES MASKALYK (Toronto, ON), published by Doubleday Canada
7. *A History of Canada in Ten Maps: Epic Stories of Charting a Mysterious Land* by ADAM SHOALTS (Hamilton, ON), published by Allen Lane Canada / Penguin Random House Canada
8. *Seven Fallen Feathers: Racism, Death, and Hard Truths in a Northern City*, by TANYA TALAGA (Toronto, ON), published by House of Anansi Press
9. *In the Name of Humanity* by MAX WALLACE (Toronto, ON), published by Allen Lane Canada / Penguin Random House Canada
10. *Apron Strings: Navigating Food and Family in France, Italy, and China* by JAN WONG (Fredericton, NB), published by Goose Lane Edition

[ See citations attached. ]

NOREEN TAYLOR, chair of the Charles Taylor Foundation and founder of the Prize, commented: "The joy of this incredible list lies in the breadth of experience and expertise reflected in these ten titles. Canadian readers are definitely living in a Golden Age of



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non-fiction writing. We are all so fortunate to have this opportunity to explore so many different and diverse aspects of our national character as well as delve into the unique Canadian perspective on the world outside our borders.

Bravo to the publishers and their many distinct imprints for submitting a record number of titles and bravo to our jurors who performed the Herculean task of selecting this remarkable long list from amongst 153 titles”!

VIJAY PARMAR, president of RBC PH&N Investment Counsel, added: “This year’s longlist represents our collective Canadian identity and illustrates the rich diversity and vibrancy of Canada’s non-fiction literary landscape. Congratulations to the 2018 longlisted authors and sincere thanks to our distinguished jury for their careful deliberations”.

#### KEY DATES:

THE RBC TAYLOR PRIZE SHORTLIST will be announced at a news conference on Wednesday, January 10, 2018, and the winner revealed at a gala luncheon on Monday February 26, 2018.

#### ABOUT THE RBC TAYLOR PRIZE

ESTABLISHED IN 1998 by the trustees of the Charles Taylor Foundation and first awarded in 2000, 2018 marks the seventeenth awarding 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 \$30,000 for the winner and \$5,000 for each of the remaining finalists. All authors are presented with a custom leather bound version of their shortlisted book at the awards ceremony. All finalists receive promotional support for their nominated titles.

THE TRUSTEES OF THE CHARLES TAYLOR FOUNDATION are: Vijay Parmar, David Staines, Edward Taylor, Nadina Taylor, and Noreen Taylor. The Executive Director is Su Hutchinson.

THE PRESENTING SPONSOR of the RBC Taylor Prize is RBC Wealth Management. Its media sponsors are *The Globe and Mail*, Cision, *The Huffington Post Canada*, *Maclean’s* magazine, *Quill & Quire* magazine; its in-kind sponsors are Ben McNally Books, Event Source, IFOA, The Omni King Edward Hotel, and the Toronto Public Library Board.

TO DOWNLOAD HIGH-RESOLUTION IMAGES of the longlisted authors and their book covers please go to: [www.rbctaylorprize.ca/2018/rbctp\\_2018\\_longlist\\_covers\\_and\\_authors.zip](http://www.rbctaylorprize.ca/2018/rbctp_2018_longlist_covers_and_authors.zip)  
TO DOWNLOAD HIGH-RESOLUTION IMAGES of the trustees and the jury please go to: [www.rbctaylorprize.ca/2018/2018\\_trustees\\_and\\_jury.zip](http://www.rbctaylorprize.ca/2018/2018_trustees_and_jury.zip)

FOR GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRIZE PLEASE GO TO: [www.rbctaylorprize.ca](http://www.rbctaylorprize.ca).  
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## RBC TAYLOR PRIZE 2018 LONGLIST

### JUROR'S STATEMENT

AS VETERAN READERS AND JURY MEMBERS, this year's jury is in agreement that we have never seen such overall excellence as in the one hundred and fifty-three RBC Taylor Prize submissions that we read this year. We have delighted in the range of topics, the depth of enquiry, the quality of the writing, and the many new voices and perspectives. Canada is very well served by its non-fiction writers.

The high quality of the submissions made for a crowded field for recognition. We read, savoured, debated, re-read, conferred and anguished over this long-list. Some favourites had to be left out as the list was pared and pared again, from thirty, to twenty, to fourteen, and now ten.

Along the way we were delighted to find many important books by indigenous writers and about the indigenous experience of Canada. Also notable are the many fine books that came to us about exploration and discovery, including several about the arctic in which the expertise and support of the Inuit made the difference between life and death, success and failure. We greatly enjoyed work by Canadians whose origins and subjects span the globe – Russia, Egypt, India, China, the Middle East, Ethiopia and many other countries – reflecting a rapidly changing, richer and more dynamic Canada. We are delighted also to see publishers, large and small, taking a chance on new voices, ensuring we see and hear and experience more of Canada.

The short-list is yet to be decided. Meanwhile, the jury members hope that as many readers as possible get and read every book on this long-list and come up with your own favourites. These books are exceptional. They have style. They are thoughtful. They will move you. They will make you better informed. Read them alone or with your book club. Loan them out or give them as gifts. Talk about them with your friends. Argue about them with your adversaries.

What an honour it is to help to celebrate the best of this nation's non-fiction literary achievement.



CHRISTINE  
ELLIOTT



ANNE  
GIARDINI

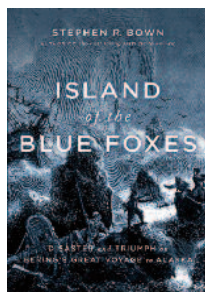


JAMES  
POLK

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## RBC TAYLOR PRIZE 2018 LONGLIST

### JURY CITATIONS

**STEPHEN R. BOWN**, *Island of the Blue Foxes: Disaster and Triumph on Bering's Great Voyage to Alaska*, published by Douglas & McIntyre

Of the book, the jury wrote: “Cartographer and explorer Vitus Bering ended his life on a barren Aleutian island while his shipwrecked crewmates fought off vicious blue foxes, the elements and scurvy. The hardships and privations of the explorers, scientists, labourers and horses sent across Russia by Peter the Great to seek a route to North America beggar the imagination. They built their own roads, ships and a new kind of social order, and made enduring discoveries, all in the teeth of monstrous winds, seas, storms, bureaucracy – and hungry little foxes.”

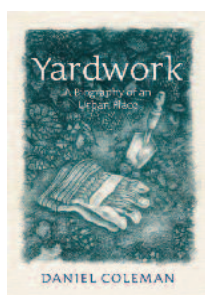
<http://www.douglas-mcintyre.com/book/island-of-the-blue-foxes>



**MANDY LEN CATRON**, *How to Fall in Love with Anyone*, published by Simon & Schuster

Of the book, the jury wrote: “This is a book about our fundamental drive to love and be loved. Catron set out to write a book about the mysterious art of making love last, but her objective shifted in the writing to something deeper, richer and more enduring – like the best kind of marriage. This is a deft, light story about the many forms that love takes, about how to live a full and happy life albeit with fewer expectations about love, and about the ways in which love ‘is continually warped and renewed’.”

<http://www.simonandschuster.ca/books/How-to-Fall-in-Love-with-Anyone/Mandy-Len-Catron/9781501137440>



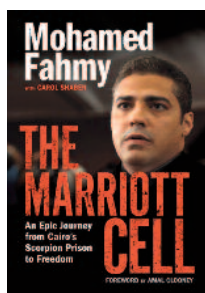
**DANIEL COLEMAN**, *Yard Work: A Biography of an Urban Place*, published by Wolsak & Wynn Publishers

Of the book, the jury wrote: “Daniel Coleman explores the world from a small patch of land at the back of his house, a mini-empire between Coote’s Paradise Marsh and Hamilton Harbour. In vivid, exacting prose, Coleman tells us of the moods and beauty of the Niagara Escarpment, the paths of local animals, the wayward tricks of the water table, the rich indigenous history of the area, and of our modern inroads into the environment – highways, houses, slag and built culture. This is a masterpiece of nature writing, reimagining civics and possibilities as Coleman surveys what he understands is ‘a holy land right here’ behind his house and beneath his feet.”

<http://wolsakandwynn.ca/books/170-yardwork-a-biography-of-an-urban-place>



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## RBC TAYLOR PRIZE 2018 LONGLIST

### JURY CITATIONS (CONTINUED)

**MOHAMMED FAHMY WITH CAROL SHABEN**, *The Marriott Cell: An Epic Journey From Cairo's Scorpion Prison to Freedom*, published by Random House Canada

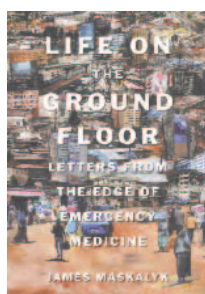
Of the book, the jury wrote: “In December 2013, Egyptian security raided the Marriott Hotel and tossed journalist Mohammed Fahmy and his colleagues into Cairo’s dreaded Scorpion Prison. The trumped-up charge was terrorism. Courageous efforts to free Fahmy were led by his wife and friends (including legal counsel Amal Clooney) in an account that reads like a John le Carré novel, but Fahmy and Shaben go further, delving into the causes of Egypt’s political upheaval, the wishes and needs of everyday citizens, and the harsh reality of threats to journalists, activists and others. In the midst of terror and pain, Fahmy never fails to notice the humanity of his jailers, cellmates, police and others. This book sheds light on tyranny everywhere.”

<https://penguinrandomhouse.ca/books/533186/marriott-cell#9780345816351>

**MICHAEL HARRIS**, *Solitude*, published by Doubleday Canada

Of the book, the jury wrote: “In this beautifully wrought and engrossing meditation, Michael Harris observes how hard it is to find solitude in our buzzing, interconnected world. Silence can nourish mind and soul. Solitude is the provenance of seers and saints, and stillness a requirement for creative achievement. Harris cuts himself off for a week at a remote cabin and after a period of fear and boredom sees anew how truly we are shackled by ‘all that clicking and sharing and liking and posting.’ His return to the noisy world is softened by wisdom and love.”

<https://penguinrandomhouse.ca/books/533824/solitude#9780385686051>

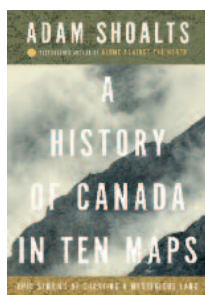


**JAMES MASKALYK**, *Life on the Ground Floor: Letters from the Edge of Emergency Medicine*, published by Doubleday Canada

Of the book, the jury wrote: “Starting with A is for Airway, physician and humanitarian James Maskalyk leads us through the many ways in which our bodies sustain and fail us, and how we become better able to tend — and attend — to each other. This book is a study in contrasts. Medicine as practiced in a world-class Toronto hospital — and at bare bones clinics in Sudan and Ethiopia. Maskalyk’s busy life as a healer in a Canadian city and in Africa — and his grandfather’s quiet work on a farm and trapline. For Maskalyk, ‘Medicine is life caring for itself’ and is ‘the greatest story.’”

<https://penguinrandomhouse.ca/books/108744/life-ground-floor#9780385674034>

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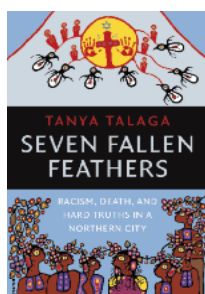
## RBC TAYLOR PRIZE 2018 LONGLIST

### JURY CITATIONS (CONTINUED)

**ADAM SHOALTS**, *A History in Canada in Ten Maps: Epic Stories of Charting A Mysterious Land*, published by Allen Lane

Of the book, the jury wrote: “This book helps us answer Northrop Frye’s famous question about Canada: ‘Where is here?’ From a 16th Century Viking chart of Canada’s East Coast; to Champlain’s detailed drawings of New France including peaceful indigenous villages; to wishful visions of yet-to-be-discovered lakes, mountains and the elusive northern passage, this is a fresh approach to some of the many ways in which the brave, foolish, reckless and hopeful have tried to place Canada on the map.”

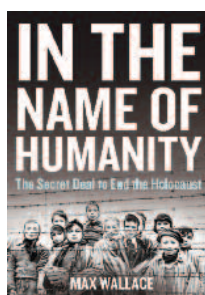
<https://penguinrandomhouse.ca/books/417549/history-canada-ten-maps#9780143194002>



**TANYA TALAGA**, *Seven Fallen Feathers: Racism, Death, And Hard Truths in A Northern City*, published by House of Anansi Press

Of the book, the jury wrote: “Talaga has written Canada’s J’Accuse, an open letter to the rest of us about the many ways we contribute — through act or inaction — to suicides and damaged existences in Canada’s indigenous communities. Tanya Talaga’s account of teen lives and deaths in and near Thunder Bay is detailed, balanced and heart-rending. Talaga describes gaps in the system large enough for beloved children and adults to fall through, endemic indifference, casual racism and a persistent lack of resources. It is impossible to read this book and come away unchanged.”

<https://houseofanansi.com/products/seven-fallen-feathers>



**MAX WALLACE**, *In the Name of Humanity: The Secret Deal to End the Holocaust*, published by Allen Lane

Of the book, the jury wrote: “As World War II drew to an end, Hitler intended further mass slaughter while other Nazi leaders scrambled to cover up evidence of genocide. Max Wallace’s gripping account of the tense endgame of the Nazi nightmare is told in meticulous detail and with great compassion, culminating in the astonishing story of a Jewish freedom fighter bargaining for the salvation of the survivors with the devil himself, the architect of the killing camps, Heinrich Himmler.”

<https://penguinrandomhouse.ca/books/417562/name-humanity#9780143194934>



**JAN WONG**, *Apron Strings: Navigating Food and Family in France, Italy and China*, published by Goose Lane

Of the book, the jury wrote: “Jan Wong proves in this book that the old adage ‘you are what you eat’ needs expanding. We are what we eat, *and* who we make it with, *and* who we eat it with, *and* what ingredients we use, *and* what recipes we follow, *and* where in the world our table is located. In this book Jan Wong focuses her laser beam scrutiny on domestic life and comestibles in three different countries, and delivers shrewd home truths on how we sustain and nourish ourselves.”

<https://gooselane.com/products/apron-strings>