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MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2020 • TORONTO, ONTARIO: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## MARK BOURRIE WINS THE 2020 RBC TAYLOR PRIZE FOR *BUSH RUNNER*

THE WINNER OF the 2020, and final, RBC Taylor Prize for excellence in literary non-fiction is Mark Bourrie, (Ottawa, ON) for his book *Bush Runner: The Adventures of Pierre-Esprit Radisson*, published by Biblioasis.

The \$25,000 award was announced today by Prize founder and Chair Noreen Taylor during a gala luncheon celebrating this year's finalists at the Omni King Edward Hotel in downtown Toronto. In addition to the cash prize and the finalist's honorarium, Bourrie received a crystal trophy and a presentation-bound edition of his book.

Noreen Taylor, prize founder and chair of the Charles Taylor Foundation expressed her admiration, commenting: "Today we celebrated five of the most remarkable writers of our times and their compelling books — if there ever was a shortlist that defined every goal we had for the RBC Taylor Prize, this is it. Congratulations to the jury for their wisdom and above all heartiest congratulations to Mark Bourrie for his fascinating treatment of this compelling story.

Vijay Parmar, President of RBC PH&N Investment Counsel, added: "I am delighted to congratulate Mark Bourrie for winning the 2020 RBC Taylor Prize Award. This is an outstanding achievement and contribution to Canadian literature. RBC Wealth Management through the RBC Emerging Artists Project is very proud to have partnered with the Charles Taylor Foundation and played a part in elevating and advancing the profile of our country's non-fiction writers both at home and around the world."

IN ITS CITATION OF THE WINNING BOOK the jury notes: Readers of Mark Bourrie's *Bush Runner* might well wonder if Jonathan Swift at his edgiest has been at work. This over-the-top narrative connects Canadian fur traders with three European royal courts, mixes in Indigenous political intrigues and family alliances among the Five Nations and French settlers, and adds Jesuits, cannibalism, and the Great Fire of London. To top it off, there's the impact of the beaver hat and the buffalo on the entire Western world! In Bourrie's telling, the picaresque Pierre Radisson, a humane con artist of heroic stamina and fluid loyalties, was the fulcrum of four centuries of Canadian centrality in the forging of modern Western civilizations. Who knew?

ABOUT THE WINNER: Journalist/Historian Mark Bourrie has written numerous books including *Kill the Messengers: Stephen Harper's Assault on Your Right to Know*, a Globe and Mail Top 100 Book of 2015. He has been a staff reporter for the *Hamilton Spectator* and currently teaches history at Carleton University as well as Canadian Studies at University of Ottawa.

THE FOUR REMAINING finalists: *Had It Coming: What's Fair in the Age of #MeToo?* by Robyn Doolittle (Allen Lane); *Highway of Tears: A True Story of Racism, Indifference and the Pursuit of Justice for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*, by Jessica McDiarmid (Doubleday Canada); *The Reality Bubble: Blind Spots, Hidden Truths and the Dangerous Illusions that Shape Our World*, by Ziya Tong (Allen Lane); *The Mosquito: A Human History of Our Deadliest Predator*,



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by Timothy C. Winegard (Allen Lane) each received a \$5,000 honorarium, a presentation-bound version of their book, and extensive publicity.

THE JURORS for the 2020 RBC Taylor Prize are Margaret Atwood, Coral Ann Howells and Peter Theroux. They read and evaluated over 150 books written by Canadian authors to determine the winner for this, the 20th anniversary awarding of the prestigious prize.

SHARING A COMMITMENT TO EMERGING CANADIAN TALENT, the Charles Taylor Foundation and RBC will also grant the seventh annual RBC Taylor Prize Emerging Writers Award. Shortly after the announcement of the 2020 Prize, Bourrie will name their choice of emerging author to receive this \$10,000 award.

THE RBC TAYLOR PRIZE was established in 1998 by the trustees of the Charles Taylor Foundation, to commemorate Charles Taylor's pursuit of excellence in the field of literary non-fiction, and first awarded in 2000. The Prize has been 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. It was expanded in 2014 to include the Emerging Writers Award, and the RBC Taylor Prize Mentorship Program was introduced in 2018. Collectively, over 100 writers have been positively affected by the Prize. After 20 years, the Trustees of the Prize announced the conclusion of the Prize, confident that the RBC Taylor Prize has helped to create long-lasting change for the perception of literary non-fiction in Canada.

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

THE PRESENTING SPONSOR of the 2020 RBC Taylor Prize is RBC Wealth Management. The Prize's MEDIA SPONSORS are *The Globe and Mail* newspaper, *Quill & Quire* magazine, Cision, and CIUT-FM; CBC Books is a MEDIA PARTNER. Its IN-KIND SPONSORS are Ben McNally Books, Event Source, TIFA, and the Omni King Edward Hotel.

TO DOWNLOAD HIGH-RESOLUTION IMAGES of the winner and finalists and their book covers please go to: [www.rbctaylorprize.ca/2020/rbctp\\_2020\\_finalist\\_covers\\_and\\_authors.zip](http://www.rbctaylorprize.ca/2020/rbctp_2020_finalist_covers_and_authors.zip).

To download high-resolution images of the trustees and jurors please go to:

[www.rbctaylorprize.ca/2020/2020\\_trustees\\_and\\_jury.zip](http://www.rbctaylorprize.ca/2020/2020_trustees_and_jury.zip).

To download high-resolution images of the longlisted authors and their book covers please go to: [www.rbctaylorprize.ca/2020/rbctp\\_2020\\_longlist\\_covers\\_and\\_authors.zip](http://www.rbctaylorprize.ca/2020/rbctp_2020_longlist_covers_and_authors.zip).

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FOR GENERAL INFORMATION about the Prize please go to: [www.rbctaylorprize.ca](http://www.rbctaylorprize.ca).

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