



For immediate release — Wednesday, November 18, 2020

Bridge Prize Main Jury finalized for 2022 national literary competition

The Bridge Prize, Canada’s largest literary prize for post-secondary students, has finalized its jury for the 2022 competition — and it features some of the country’s most accomplished authors.

“We are delighted to announce that our 2022 Bridge Prize Main Jury includes some of Canada’s most beloved authors and emerging writers,” says Dr. Shelly Wismath, dean of the University of Lethbridge’s School of Liberal Education. “The jury includes award-winning authors who have won significant literary prizes across multiple genres of fiction.”

The jury consists of Joan Thomas, Bill Richardson, Lisa Moore, Waubgeshig Rice, Francesca Ekwuyasi and Sam Wiebe.

“We are especially pleased that the 2022 jury is truly pan-Canadian, with authors based in five different provinces from coast to coast,” adds Wismath. “We are grateful for their time, expertise and commitment to supporting the next generation of writers in Canada.”

The Bridge Prize is a biennial short story writing competition established in 2019 by the School of Liberal Education. The competition is open to any student attending a post-secondary institution in Canada. Sara de Waal, a graduate student at University of British Columbia, won the first Bridge Prize, including \$7,500 for her story *Cecilia and Richard*. A total of 340 stories representing 61 post-secondary institutions were entered in the inaugural competition.

“We are excited to announce our two partners, The Walrus and Munro’s Books of Victoria, are returning to sponsor the 2022 Bridge Prize,” says Terry Whitehead (BA ’94), Bridge Prize founder. “We are grateful for their ongoing support and their commitment to inspiring students to pursue their passion for writing.”

Submissions for the 2022 competition open March 30, 2021 and will close January 22, 2022. For more information on the Bridge Prize and to view the inaugural winning entries, visit: go.uleth.ca/thebridgeprize.

Following are short biographies of the jurors for the 2022 competition.

Joan Thomas

Joan Thomas's 2019 novel, *Five Wives*, won the Governor General's Award for fiction. Joan is the author of three previous novels: *The Opening Sky*, *Curiosity*, and *Reading by Lightning*. Her work has won the Amazon.ca First Novel Award, a Commonwealth Writers' Prize, and the McNally Robinson Prize, and has been nominated for the Giller Prize, the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award, and a previous Governor General's Award. In 2014, she was the recipient of the Writers' Trust Engel/Findley Prize for a writer in mid-career. She lives in Winnipeg.

Bill Richardson

Bill Richardson lives in Vancouver and in southwest Manitoba in the rural municipality of Louise. He writes for children and adults. *I Saw Three Ships: West End Stories*, was published by Talonbooks in 2019. Forthcoming from Running the Goat Books and BroadSides is *Hare B&B*, with illustrations by Bill Pechet. He is a past winner of the Stephen Leacock Medal for Humour for Bachelor Brothers' Bed and Breakfast.

Lisa Moore

Lisa Moore was born and raised in St. John's Newfoundland, Canada and currently teaches creative writing at Memorial University. She has written three collections of short stories, *Degrees of Nakedness* and *Open*, and *Something for Everyone*, and three novels, *Alligator*, *February* and *Caught*, and a young adult novel called *Flannery*.

Alligator and *Caught*, and her short story collection *Open* were nominated for the Scotiabank Giller Prize. Her novel *February* was long listed for the Man Booker Prize and won CBC Canada Reads in 2013.

Waubgeshig Rice

Waubgeshig Rice is an author and journalist from Wasauksing First Nation on Georgian Bay. He has written three fiction titles, and his short stories and essays have been published in numerous anthologies. His most recent novel, *Moon of the Crusted Snow*, was published in 2018 and became a national bestseller. He graduated from Ryerson

University's journalism program in 2002 and spent the bulk of his journalism career at CBC. He lives in Sudbury, Ontario with his wife and two sons.

Francesca Ekwuyasi

Francesca Ekwuyasi is a writer and multidisciplinary artist from Lagos, Nigeria. Her work explores themes of faith, family, queerness, consumption, loneliness, and belonging. francesca's writing has been published in *THIS Magazine*, *Winter Tangerine Review*, *Brittle Paper*, *Transition Magazine*, *the Malahat Review*, *Visual Art News, Vol. 1 Brooklyn*, and *GUTS Magazine*. Her story *Qrun is Heaven* was longlisted for the 2019 Journey Prize and debut novel, *Butter Honey Pig Bread* for the 2020 Scotia Bank Giller Prize. She currently lives in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Sam Wiebe

Sam Wiebe is the award-winning author of the Wakeland novels, one of the most authentic and acclaimed detective series in Canada, including *Invisible Dead* ("the definitive Vancouver crime novel") and *Cut You Down* ("successfully brings Raymond Chandler into the 21st century"). Wiebe's other books include *Never Going Back*, *Last of the Independents*, and the *Vancouver Noir* anthology, which he edited. Wiebe's work has won the Crime Writers of Canada award and the Kobo Emerging Writers prize, and been shortlisted for the Edgar, Hammett, Shamus, and City of Vancouver book prizes. His original film/tv projects have been optioned, and his short stories have appeared in *ThugLit*, *Spinetingler*, and *subTerrain*, as well as anthologies by Houghton-Mifflin and Image Comics.

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