



For immediate release — Thursday, January 12, 2023

Main jury identified for 2024 Bridge Prize national short story competition

The main jury for Canada’s largest literary prize for post-secondary students has been chosen — and it features influential literary voices from across the country.

The University of Lethbridge’s biennial Bridge Prize short story competition, presented by the School of Liberal Education, is now entering its third competitive cycle. Following highly successful competitions in 2020 and 2022 that have established the Bridge Prize as a significant national literary event, the 2024 edition has attracted another esteemed group of jurors.



“It’s exciting to announce another stellar national jury who will adjudicate the 2024 installment of the Bridge Prize,” says Dr. Shelly Wismath, dean of the School of Liberal Education. “The main jury includes award-winning authors of international renown and new and emerging literary voices representing different literary genres and regions across Canada. This is truly a national literary endeavour, and we are grateful for the jurors’ commitment to supporting post-secondary students and the next generation of Canadian literary artists.”

The jury consists of Michelle Good (Saskatchewan), Nicholas Herring (Prince Edward Island), Sheena Kamal (Quebec), George Murray (Newfoundland & Labrador), Danny Ramadan (British Columbia) and Madeleine Thien (Quebec).

The Bridge Prize, initiated by ULethbridge alumnus Terry Whitehead (BA ’94), has elicited more than 500 short story entries over the first two competitions. The first prize winner earns \$7,500, while three additional finalists garner \$1,000 apiece, making it the largest cash prize for any student writing competition in Canada. Munro’s Books, based in Victoria, B.C., is the returning major sponsor, and hands out \$200 gift cards to all four winners. The winner also has their short story edited by Shirarose Wilensky, an editor with the House of Anansi Press.

University of Toronto graduate student Chido Muchemwa won the 2022 Bridge Prize and was recently awarded a scholarship from the prestigious Miles Morland Foundation in the United Kingdom. The grant supports first-time novelists as they embark on writing their first novel. In addition, Muchemwa is presently in discussions with a Canadian publisher to publish a collection of her short stories.

"Winning the Bridge Prize gave me the confidence to pursue opportunities that I had previously felt I wasn't ready for yet. I am so grateful to the Bridge Prize for taking student writers seriously and I encourage anyone eligible to apply. It really could be you," says Muchemwa.

Submissions for the 2024 competition open January 23, 2023, and will close January 22, 2024. For more information, visit [The Bridge Prize web page](#).

Following are short biographies of the jurors for the 2024 competition.

Michelle Good

Michelle Good is a Cree writer and member of the Red Pheasant Cree Nation in Saskatchewan. After working for Indigenous organizations for 25 years, she obtained a law degree and advocated for residential school survivors. She earned a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing at the University of British Columbia while managing her own law firm. Her poems, short stories and essays have been published in magazines and anthologies across Canada, and her poetry was included on two lists of the best Canadian poetry in 2016 and 2017. *Five Little Indians*, her first novel, won the HarperCollins/UBC Best New Fiction Prize, the Amazon First Novel Award, the Governor General's Literary Award, the Rakuten Kobo Emerging Writer Award, the Evergreen Award, the City of Vancouver Book of the Year Award and Canada Reads 2022. It was also longlisted for the Scotiabank Giller Prize and a finalist for the Writer's Trust Award, the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize and the Jim Deva Prize for Writing that Provokes.

Nicholas Herring

Nicholas Herring is a carpenter and writer whose work has appeared in *The Puritan* and *The Fiddlehead*. He graduated from St. Jerome's University in Ontario with an Honours in English Literature and attended the University of Toronto where he completed a Master of Arts in Creative Writing. He received the Atwood Gibson Writers' Trust Fiction Prize in 2022 for his debut novel, *Some Hellish*. Herring lives in Murray Harbour, Prince Edward Island.

Sheena Kamal

Sheena Kamal is the author of four novels. She holds an Honours Bachelor of Arts (HBA) in Political Science from the University of Toronto and was awarded a TD Canada Trust scholarship for community leadership and activism around the issue of homelessness. Her debut novel, *The Lost Ones (US)/Eyes Like Mine (UK)*, won the 2018 Kobo Emerging

Writer Prize, a Strand Magazine Critics Award and Macavity Award for Best First Novel. It has been sold in 15 countries and was a *Globe and Mail* Bestseller, a *Time Magazine* Recommended Read, an iBooks Best Book, a Bustle Best Book and a Powell's Pick. Her debut YA novel, *Fight Like a Girl*, was shortlisted for the White Pine Award. Kamal lives in Montreal.

George Murray

George Murray is the author of 10 books, including seven books of poetry, two best-selling books of aphorisms and a book for children — his latest being *Problematica: New and Selected Poems, 1995 – 2020*. His work has been widely anthologized and published in magazines, journals and newspapers all over Canada, as well as internationally, including: *The Drunken Boat*, *Granta*, *Iowa Review*, *Jacket*, *London Magazine*, *Mid-American Review*, *New American Writing*, *New Welsh Review*, *The Puritan*, *Radical Society* and *The Walrus*. Raised in rural Ontario, Murray currently lives in St. John's, Newfoundland.

Danny Ramadan

Danny Ramadan is a Syrian-Canadian author and advocate for LGBTQ+ refugees. His debut novel, *The Clothesline Swing*, was shortlisted for the Lambda Literary Award, longlisted for Canada Reads and named a Best Book of the Year by the *Globe and Mail* and *Toronto Star*. Danny's children's book, *Salma the Syrian Chef*, won the Nautilus Book Award, The Middle East Book Award and was named a Best Book by both *Kirkus* and *School Library Journal*. His latest novel, *The Foghorn Echoes*, was released in 2022. His upcoming memoir, *Crooked Teeth*, will be released by Penguin Random House in 2024. Danny has an MFA in Creative Writing from UBC. In 2020, he was a finalist for the inaugural Bridge Prize award for his short story *On the Miraculous Return of Khalid from the Dead*. Ramadan lives in Vancouver.

Madeleine Thien

Madeleine Thien was born in Vancouver. She is the author of four books of fiction, including *Dogs at the Perimeter* and *Do Not Say We Have Nothing*, which received the 2016 Giller Prize and The Governor-General's Literary Award for Fiction. Her books have been shortlisted for The Booker Prize, The Women's Prize for Fiction, and The Folio Prize, longlisted for a Carnegie Medal and translated into more than 25 languages. Madeleine's essays and stories can be found in *The New Yorker*, *Granta*, *Brick*, *The Guardian*, *The Times Literary Supplement* and *The New York Review of Books*. She has taught literature and fiction in Canada, China, Germany, Nigeria, the United States, Zimbabwe, Singapore and Japan and currently teaches writing and literature at the City University of New York.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/main-jury-identified-2024-bridge-prize-national-short-story-competition>

Contact:

Trevor Kenney, News & Information Manager

403-329-2710

403-360-7639 (cell)

trevor.kenney@uleth.ca

@ULethbridge

Our University's Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.