

175 Bloor Street East
South Tower, Suite 501,
Toronto, Ontario M4W 3R8
Telephone (416) 314-6858
Fax (416) 314-6876

175 rue Bloor est
Edifice sud, bureau 501,
Toronto, Ontario M4W 3R8
Téléphone (416) 314-6858
Télécopieur (416) 314-6876



Ontario
Ontario Media
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Corporation

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des médias
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News Release / Communiqué

April 25, 2006

19TH ANNUAL TRILLIUM BOOK AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

TORONTO — Winners of Ontario's foremost prize for literary excellence, the Trillium Book Award/Prix Trillium, were announced today by Ontario Minister of Culture, Caroline Di Cocco, and by Peter Steinmetz, acting Chair and Michel Frappier, Chief Executive Officer of the Ontario Media Development Corporation at a gala at the St. Lawrence Hall.

"Ontario is home to many of Canada's – and indeed the world's – most exceptional writers," said Minister of Culture Caroline Di Cocco. "On behalf of the people of Ontario, I would like to congratulate all the nominees and the recipients. You have distinguished yourselves by producing creative and high-quality works that are among the very best in Ontario's thriving book publishing industry."

Trillium Book Award English-language and French-language winners receive \$20,000. Their publishers receive \$2,500 towards their promotional costs. The winners of the Trillium Book Award for Poetry in each language receive \$10,000 and their winning publishers receive \$2,000. For the first time this year, all finalists receive a \$500 honorarium.

"We are fortunate that Ontario has such a wealth of literary talent to draw upon," stated Steinmetz. "Over 300 books were submitted this year for review by the English and French juries."

The winners are:

Trillium Book Award (English-language category)

Camilla Gibb – *Sweetness in The Belly* "This compelling first-person account of a white Muslim woman whose religious devotion proves the only constant in a life characterized by exile, offers scenes of both harrowing limbo and joyful uplift. The novel subtly engages topical questions of both politics and faith, but ultimately it is the author's sustained psychological acuity and uncanny empathy in detailing Lilly's life lessons that lend this book its vital depth, charm and staying power." *Trillium Jury*

Publisher: Doubleday Canada

Trillium Book Award (French-language category)

Jean Mohsen Fahmy – *L'Agonie des dieux* "The author takes us back to ancient Egypt in a tale of forbidden love, treachery, and struggles for power and religious dominance. This talented and prolific writer's passion for history is evident as his unflinching accurate pen takes us beyond historic events and upheavals. His book will capture the hearts of many readers." *Trillium Jury*

Publisher: Les Éditions L'Interligne

Trillium Book Award for Poetry (English-language category)

Kevin Connolly – *drift* "...what starts the heart stops the world"— anguish, mockery, the simple, searing truth of being and essence: these are some of the components of Kevin Connolly's astonishing and absolute poetry. *drift*, as its title suggests, wanders through the extremes of love and pain; negotiates these sites with disarming humour and piercing gravity. Heart-ache-making and perfectly arresting, these poems are what the Cyclone is to Coney Island; what poetry, at its thrilling, unsettling best, should be."

Trillium Jury

Publisher: House of Anansi Press

Trillium Book Award for Poetry (French-language category)

Éric Charlebois – *Centrifuge* "His poems contain not only very concentrated materials but also all of the ingredients needed to impart a substance and flavour that we could not have suspected was there. There is nothing trivial or insignificant about the way in which the author plays with words; the result of his play upon play is a poetic thread of undeniable beauty." *Trillium Jury*

Publisher: Les Éditions David

In its 19th year, the Trillium Book Award is among the most highly regarded national and international literary prizes. Previous winners have included world-renowned authors such as Margaret Atwood, Wayson Choy, Thomas King, Michael Ondaatje, Maurice Henri and Michèle Matteau.

Ontario's publishing industry employs more than 6,300 people directly and many thousands more indirectly, contributing \$1.7 billion to the province's economy each year.

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EDITORS' NOTE: BACKGROUNDER AVAILABLE AND DETAILED INFORMATION ON ALL FINALISTS POSTED ON OMDC WEBSITE WWW.OMDC.ON.CA

For further information or media inquiries please call:

For nominee information contact Trillium Publicist:

Daniel Paquette, DPR Communications Inc.

(416) 413-7714 E-mail: dp@dppr.ca

Contact for OMDC:

Sharon Wilson, Communications

(416) 642-6616

Contact for Minister Di Cocco:

Carole Drouin, Minister's Office

(416) 325-1676

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