



NEWS RELEASE
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All -Time Record Number of Entries Pared Down on the 2008 Saskatchewan Book Awards Shortlist !

Mystery and insight abound on the Saskatchewan Book Awards list of 2008 nominees. The answer to *Who Killed Jackie Bates?* is not what one might expect, according to historian and author Bill Waiser. Popular Regina writer Gail Bowen will engage readers all the way to a surprise ending with her latest mystery, *The Brutal Heart*.

Nominations paring the all time record breaking number of 113 titles totalling 261 entries down to a Shortlist of 54 titles and 80 nominations in 14 categories were announced today at simultaneous news conferences in Saskatoon and Regina. In total, there are 60 authors and editors and 29 publishers nominated for the 56 titles in the running.

First time author Pam Bustin is a finalist in three categories for her novel *Mostly Happy*. Also receiving three nominations each are veteran authors James Pitsula for *New World Dawning: The Sixties at Regina Campus*, Louise Bernice Halfe for *The Crooked Good*, Gary Hyland for *Love of Mirrors: Poems New and Selected*, and Arthur Slade for *Jolted: Newton Starker's Rules for Survival*. Prolific young adult author David Baudemont was nominated for two titles, *Le nouveau tracteur* and *Olga*, in the bi-annual Prix du livre français category.

While many titles capture the essence of Saskatchewan's landscape, the diverse experience of its residents is evident in many of the books on this year's list. Donna Caruso's *Journey Without A Map, Growing Up Italian* explores her personal history. In *My Mummy Couldn't Read*, a book for parents and children, Carey Rigby-Wilcox uses both words and her own illustrations to share her struggles with literacy. The Gabriel Dumont Institute has published several titles that beautifully illustrate and explain Métis traditions, including *The Story of the Rabbit Dance* by Jeanne Pelletier and *Medicines to Help Us: Traditional Métis Plant Use* by Christi Belcourt. In *Prairie Kaddish* Isa Milman explores Jewish history.

Regina publisher Coteau Books makes a very impressive showing on this year's shortlist, earning 14 nominations in total, including *Passchendaele: Canada's Triumph and Tragedy on the Fields of Flanders* by Norman Leach. Canadian Plains Research Center is second with 9 nominations. They also claim the most nominated publication of the year with *Our Towns: Saskatchewan Communities from Abbey to Zenon Park* by David McLennan.

The 16th Annual Awards Gala will take place on **Saturday, November 29** at Regina's **Conexus Arts Centre**, when the winners of all 14 awards will be announced. This year's guest speaker will be Maria Campbell, award-winning author and activist. Shortlisted authors will read at the **Regina Literary Saloon** on **November 7**, 7:30 p.m. at the Exchange, **Saskatoon Brunch** on **November 23**, 11:30 a.m. at the Delta Bessborough Hotel, **Humboldt Reading Event** at Bella Vista Inn on **November 6** at 7 p.m., and at the **Swift Current Reading Brunch** on **November 16**, 12 noon at the Days Inn. Radio-Canada will host the nominees for the Prix du livre français on **November 7** in **Saskatoon**, and a French-language reading will be held in **Bellevue** on **November 9**. Tickets for all SK Book Awards events can be purchased on-line at tickets@bookawards.sk.ca, or you may call 791-7744.

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For more information, call Glenda James, Executive Director, at 306-569-1585