

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Pauline Holdstock and Julie McLaughlin Win Victoria Book Prizes

VICTORIA, BC — The Victoria Book Prize Society is pleased to announce author Pauline Holdstock as the winner of the City of Victoria Butler Book Prize for *Confessions with Keith* and illustrator Julie McLaughlin as the winner of the City of Victoria Children's Book Prize for *Little Pine Cone: Wildfires and the Natural World*.

Mayor Marianne Alto and co-sponsor Brian Butler announced the winners at the 20th annual Victoria Book Prize Gala last night at the Union Club of British Columbia. Both winners received \$5,000 prizes.

"It's a pleasure to recognize outstanding literary achievement. I'd like to thank both recipients for sharing their creative talents within our community and enriching our artistic landscape. We are truly fortunate to have such remarkable storytellers in Victoria," said Mayor Marianne Alto.

Two-time winner Pauline Holdstock's *Confessions with Keith* (Biblioasis) is an outrageously comic fiction novel that documents a middle-aged writer and mother grappling with mid-life crisis – her husband's and her own.

Holdstock is the author of seven novels, including *Into the Heart of the Country*, long listed for the 2012 Giller Prize; *Beyond Measure*, winner of the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize and shortlisted for the 2004 Giller Prize; as well as *The Hunter and the Wild Girl* that won the City of Victoria Butler Book Prize in 2016.

"The Victoria Book Prize Society is extra-excited about this year's prizewinners, on the occasion of our twentieth anniversary," says President Lynne Van Luven. "The gala celebrates writing excellence in our community and also the huge level of support we receive from sponsors, jurors and readers."

Julie McLaughlin's *Little Pine Cone: Wildfires and the Natural World* (Orca Book Publishers) features beautifully detailed illustrations that integrate science with storytelling. Children will enjoy finding new bits of information with every read.

An award-winning freelance illustrator, Julie McLaughlin currently resides on Vancouver Island. She graduated from the Alberta College of Art and Design with a Bachelor of Design in 2006 and has since worked for a variety of editorial, advertising and publishing clients from around the world.

Established in 2004, the City of Victoria Butler Book Prize is a partnership between the City of Victoria and Brian Butler of Butler Brothers Supplies. It is awarded to a Greater Victoria author for the best book published in the categories of fiction, non-fiction or poetry.

The City of Victoria Children's Book Prize recognizes and celebrates exceptional literature for children and young adults and is awarded to a Greater Victoria author or illustrator for the best children's book. The prize was established in 2008 by the late Mel Bolen of Bolen Books.

Additional sponsors include the Union Club of British Columbia, Friesens Corporation, Munro's Books, Russell Books, CBC Radio, the Greater Victoria Public Library, Chateau Victoria Hotel and Suites and Magnolia Hotel and Spa. CBC's Gregor Craigie hosted the event. Special thanks to twentieth anniversary supporters Orca Book Publishers, Touchwood Editions and Harbour Publishing for helping make this milestone special.

The Victoria Book Prize Society establishes the policy and criteria for the prizes, appoints the juries and administers the competitions.

For more information, visit victoriabookprizes.ca.

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