

2017 RBC BRONWEN WALLACE AWARD FOR EMERGING WRITERS

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RBC
Emerging Artists
Project

Winner (\$10,000)

Noor Naga for “The Mistress and the Ping” *page 3*

Finalists (\$2,500)

Tyler Engström for “after thoughts” *page 13*

Domenica Martinello for “All Day I Dream About Sirens” *page 19*

A jury of poets Adèle Barclay, Stuart Ross, and Moez Surani read 140 anonymous submissions to select the finalists.

About the Award

Bronwen Wallace (1945-1989) was a poet, short story writer, and mentor to many young writers as a creative writing instructor at Queen's University and St. Lawrence College in Kingston. This prize was established in her honour in 1994 by a group of friends and colleagues. Wallace felt that writers should have more opportunities for recognition early in their careers and so this annual award is given to a writer below the age of 35 who has published poetry or prose in literary magazines, journals, or anthologies but has not yet been published in book form.



The award is supported by the **RBC Emerging Artists Project**, which invests in developing artists to help build their professional careers. RBC supports a broad range of community initiatives through donations, sponsorships, and employee volunteer activities.

The Writers' Trust of Canada is a charitable organization that seeks to advance, nurture, and celebrate Canadian writers and writing through a portfolio of programs including literary awards, financial grants, scholarships, and a writers' retreat. Writers' Trust programming is designed to champion excellence in Canadian writing, to improve the status of writers, and to create connections between writers and readers.

The Mistress and the Ping

Noor Naga

Praying

That prayer must involve upward dialogue is a common misconception noontime
prayer = 4 x (standing + bowing + standing + prostrating + sitting + prostrating +
sitting) let's not get sentimental now some things are done in order not to not
do them the best place to hide from God is in the swing of His acrobatics I am a
proactive a compulsive acrobat when I discovered tuna is packed raw before being
cooked in its own tin I gave up swimming and coins of all sizes taxonomically
speaking figs are not fruits they are introverted flowers there is even one species of
wasp which lays eggs inside of them when I discovered this I stopped sleeping with
mouth open when I discovered that bacteria lived in my gut I introduced classroom
chalk to my diet freud who enjoyed cocaine for 13 years left in his will 153 boxes
of clinical notes and correspondence he left them to the us library of congress with
stipulations: some boxes were to be accessible at once to the public some boxes were to
be accessible in 2020 some in 2050 some in 2053 some in 2057 eight of the
boxes were never to be accessible to anyone at all what I'm trying to say is it's
possible to give a gift that is not there or even to give a gift that swallows what is.

Laughing

He said what are you doing? chemically speaking the fancy wings of a wasp are only eyelash and soap bubble when she crawls inside the fig her fancy is scratched off when she is stranded starved when she is digested live (curled valentine) her eggs hatch alone in a damp sweet groin this species of wasp like all plant forms is made up entirely of orphans inside the fig the males grow teeth but no wings the females grow wings but no teeth and when the joke becomes too much to bear they love each other purposefully then the males chew through fig skin and die then the females fly fly away in the morning the smell of my own body reminds me of him and it burns now when I pee I have always believed that eating the salty slugs inside my nose would give me synesthetic powers I have always believed that one's voice is thinner when one is naked the way water at every temperature has a different flavour he lay in the sheets we tangled with an arm above his head accompanying the volume of his voice there was the whine of canvas tearing an urn full of knuckles cracking in unison also the snort of a laughing boy he waited until I had finished praying before saying little fish little bird what are you doing?

Killing

When my grandfather keeled over on the carpet of the mosque my grandmother went on picking cherries in her sleep when my grandmother soaked the cherries when she rolled minced lamb between both palms her name was already widow when a neighbour banged murder on the door she put the first kabob in my grandfather's mouth wiped her hands on his pajama collar she got out of bed God who describes Himself as Light upon Light said "whoever kills a soul—unless for a soul or corruption in the land—it is as if he has killed all of mankind" does this not beg the question what is the distinction between a volcano and a mosquito wing? what separates a mustard seed from a desert highway or a white blood cell from a duck pond? how about one fuck from many fucks? answer: there is none all things are the same things and the spaces between them are also same we put the small on the smaller than me we put the big on the bigger than me perspective is a trick of the sane a skinless God sees skinless people their sperm a liquid form of star their lungs caught like hopes (plastic bags) on stray door nails (winter branches) (nibs of lightning)(stimuli) am I sexy when I cry? I am preoccupied with this question.

Peeling

Though I am peeling carrots using the back of a spoon he will never watch me peel carrots using the back of a spoon I am not even allowed to phone him in some schools of psychology facial expression is strictly a means of communication so that a woman sitting alone or walking alone at night would never smile if I eat too many wet foods I have nightmares of accidentally sending nudes to nouf nudes to baba but otherwise this is not true as an extremist when not skipping down the street laughing terroristically I may be found privately writhing or else rimming a jar of bath salts every few days we take the same house in the east end and fall into each other like refugees I ask him what is the difference between walking and dancing? speaking and singing? what is the liveliest distance between any two points? he licks south from my mouth to my mouth I say in the months following spinal injuries or botox resulting in muscle paralysis patients report feeling less emotion they report difficulty deciphering emotions in the faces of others I say in the minutes following a duckling's birth anything it meets becomes its parent I try not to say if I eat too many salty foods I have dreams of your wife accidentally dying.

Naming

Study him: his thumbs are robbed of cuticle his nail beds reach too far inland his knees touch each other but vanity keeps his heels apart his eyes are wet his head is wet his penis wears a little hat his penis when it is woken curves like an arthritic finger like the lunula on the nail of an arthritic finger like the lunula which (without its pair cannot be called parenthetical this is how a new wholeness demands renaming of its parts two periods are no more elliptical than one if not for a wife alive somewhere they would not call me kept and other in english cow is not beef nor is sheep mutton until the hooves quit jerking his penis when it is happy thumps like a rabbit foot on his belly wags like a shaved dog-tail between his thighs I kiss the hat I study him I get down on my knees beg for detail: start with your mother and give me every woman since I want their names and blood types I want the sniff of their hair diameter of skull curvature of cornea were their nipples brown or were they pink? in arabic the word for me is ashiqua from the root a-sh-q (the plant commonly called lablaab because it twines upon trees and cleaves to them) meaning a desire that is excessive a desire that is diseased.

Springing

One day nouf puts a maple leaf directly into her mouth and chews with delicate rotations of the jaw and it is spring everywhere I turn singles are undressing couples pat each other down for handcuff keys they threaten to call the police or else grease their wrists with butter under the lewd light of the moon they slip outside they run at opposite ends of the lecture hall we synchronize our blinks like pros I perch in the highest corner while he gesticulates on the stage below and after fifteen minutes risky manoeuvring I slip my bra out through my sleeve like look! a victorian hanky! I wave my hanky above the heads of students goodbye! goodbye! his wet head is wetter his eyebrows diacritics in midsentence hand-in-pocket he dials my number PING PING all the heads in the room snap over their shoulders as I crash PING off my chair for a mistress it is always winter everything funny is also sad later in the house in the east end he comes coughing and does not stop for hours looking haggard looking hunted his ears and fingernails bleeding I kiss each of his fingertips let his phlegm slug down my throat in my arms he says I have to let go a little to hold onto you now I have to ration you my sweet oh no oh no.

Flossing

Were there signs? there were signs there are always signs: one day he asked me if I was seeing anyone and because we were two birds holding our breath in a knot at the throat of a tree I brought my nose up to his nose saying in my fobbiest accent I am seeing one bald one-eyed man with hair on every toe! hello! and because we were two fish hiding from the sky at the bottom of a wishing well he tickled me till I warmed the water till I pleaded let me go! one day he said I am running as fast as I can to stand still with you these are two many lives for one me one day he waited for me to finish praying before saying what are you doing? that prayer following a transgression must involve some kind of apology is a common misconception it is possible to pray the way one dices an onion the way one touches each doorknob of a house in the morning for luck if there is reverence in flossing meat from between the upper and lower molars or beginning all symmetrical activities with the right side of the body it is possible when kneeling in worship to become aroused at the thought of another kneeling it is even easier to flex the kegel muscles in prostration but let's not get sentimental some things are done in order to be done.

Waiting

This is a practical religion there is a prayer at dawn (beginning when it is light enough outside for a black thread to be distinguishable from a white thread and ending at sunrise) there is a prayer at noon (beginning when my shadow is the driest puddle at my feet and ending when my shadow is as long as I am tall) there is a prayer at afternoon (beginning when my shadow is as long as I am tall and ending at sunset) there is a prayer at sunset (beginning when the sun sets and ending at dusk) there is a prayer at night (beginning at dusk and ending at dawn) these five are obligatory an app on my phone alerts me when the time for one has come there is also a morning prayer (between sunrise and noon) there is also a late prayer (in the third third of the night) there is a prayer for eid there is a prayer for rain there is a prayer for the dead there is a thanksgiving prayer and a prayer for guidance there is a prayer for greeting a mosque when one enters this is a practical religion there is no prayer for waiting for a married man to ping ping this religion is not sentimental is not a pretty feeling it is a code of law if you step outside the law this religion stops talking to you it is unclear how to proceed.

Waiting (2)

There are people to live for and people to die for I comfort myself: there are
people to sleep with and people to wake with there are fifty thousand years of
waiting between one ping and the next ping I am waiter I am worshipper of pings
a hundred times a day I text myself to hear the ping to make sure the phone is still
pinging I keep the phone on my body at all times I keep my body in the condo
where the wires and sockets are I cannot shower without the phone on a towel at
arm's reach I cannot sleep without the phone beneath my pillow where the pings
yank me from my dreams outside if I must be outside away from the sockets I—
but I never go outside there is no order to the waiting he pings I salivate instantly
thumbless dog that I am the joy in my bark is so sore is so severe it is almost wrath
I say hello this rationing is waterboarding please I need more air he says I breathe
into your lungs hello I say am I not enough or are you not enough? he says my
heart isn't a jar isn't a swimming pool the more love I have the more love I have I
comfort myself: she might know his morning smell but she doesn't know her own
fleeing she might know his morning smell but I know her name and mine.

About the Author

Noor Naga was born in Philadelphia, raised in Dubai, studied in Toronto, and currently lives in Alexandria, Egypt. Her fiction has appeared in *The Puritan*, *Hart House Review*, *Muftah*, and *The Sultan's Seal* and was shortlisted for *Room* magazine's 2015 Fiction Contest. She received a Canada Graduate Scholarship-Master's, and the Mary Coyne Rowell Jackman Graduate Scholarship and Avie Bennett Emerging Writers Scholarship from the University of Toronto, where she completed her MA in creative writing.



“The Mistress and the Ping” is constructed from exhilarating, mile-a-minute prose poems that are fresh, provocative, and often funny. These visceral pieces take surprising hairpin turns, pulling the reader through proclamations, inquiries, and bursts of self-doubt. Noor Naga achieves all this with a language that is rich and sensory, and a visually rigid structure that counter-intuitively unfolds to allow a multiplicity of pacing and play.

— 2017 RBC Bronwen Wallace Award jurors

after thoughts

Tyler Engström

japan copes with the disappearing eel

it was a headline in the new yorker
and i imagined how it must feel
to lose something so slowly
that you see every minute
each moment
of it happening

i turned the page
and looked over
at you
for a moment

american sentence – 03 16

I cried when the big ape dies at the end
but I've never cried for you.

low tide

you invited me to join you but i didn't bring anything to wear
so i sat with my jeans rolled up at the edge
and as you jumped in and made waves as big as the tide
all i saw was an ocean in that pool
and i watched you swim like you didn't give a damn about any of it
and i watched you swim like i wasn't even there
and i watched you like i wasn't
and when you came up for air and turned

i thought maybe you might just keep swimming away
but you smiled at me or at least you smiled towards me
and before i could smile back you dove in again.
i didn't think you'd see my smile anyway
i was stuck there on the edge of the shore
you were already too far out to sea.

for dorothy, posthumously

i placed the rest of your things
in an old Del Monte banana box
i felt it was kind of fitting since
my memories of you were kind of like old bananas
but it made me feel sort of guilty i guess
like maybe i should've put them in the freezer
or made a bread
even though you can't make a bread with memories
it's kind of like a metaphor
you know?
and i guess i just mean i should've done more
or come around once in a while
and anyways i guess i'm just writing this to tell you
that i'm sorry you were old bananas
and i know you wanted to be remembered just ripe
and i compared you to bananas in a way
but i know you kind of hated them
so i'm sorry about that too,
i'm sorry for everything.

late

i'm waiting on the platform for the last train
the one off Centre across from that bar you liked
and it's supposed to arrive at 12:57
and the smokers are outside smoking in t-shirts
while i stand here in that black jacket you bought me
freezing half to death
but i can't see my breath
even though i swear it's that cold
and i'm drunk and i'm a fool

and i'm sorry about all of it
but maybe more about how i left without saying sorry first
because you and i would never leave on a bad note
we always said that
didn't we?
but i don't think it's ever too late
is it?
and i'll explain myself properly, i promise
just as soon as i get back home
because there are some things you don't say on the phone
or maybe just as soon as i'm not so stupid
and wasted in the way you said you hated
and i look up at the time while i'm waiting for the train
and it's a quarter past one.

black-capped chickadee

i woke up
to the winterest wind
bangin on my windows
trying to pull em out
from their old chipped frames
that i swore to her
i'd paint two summers ago

and as i made my way
down the old wailin stairs
of that empty house
with only the wind
and my cigarette wheeze
howlin through it

somethin caught my eye
through the bay window,
just outside past
where she planted the seeds
of the peace lilies
that never did grow

i looked there to see
what i thought
was a black-capped chickadee
held up strong against the wind
and just for me
it seemed

and i stared for a minute
through swollen red eyes
and thought
about how beautiful
that little bird was
perched all by itself
just for me to see

and i thought about it
standing on the branch of the tree
that used to give a whole summer's worth
and i thought about how
i couldn't remember the last time
i picked even one peach

but when my eyes sorted themselves out
and got reacquainted with the sun
glaring off the snow
all i saw was an old leaf
torn and grey
whipping in the winter wind
bout to tear itself right apart

but despite that
even if just for a moment

that moment
just then

to me
it will always have been
a black-capped chickadee

June 20

instead of

the way your hair looked in the last of the summer sun

around ten on the longest day of the year

instead of

what you wore for the first time on the eve of graduation

and the last time three years later

instead of

the way you said "tiger" which sounded wrong to me

but you attributed to the accent you'd developed during your semester abroad

instead of

the way you looked at a piece of art and never said a word

until i spoke first

i remember the note you left,

that read

"i need you to call me"

which i didn't find until after

About the Author

Tyler Engström is a writer from Calgary, finishing his BA at Mount Royal University. Now a freelance copywriter and content creator, he was previously a music reviewer for local publications. He began writing poetry under the guidance of Micheline Maylor, the current poet laureate of Calgary. Engström has been published in *FreeFall* and *Freq Magazine*.



Abetted by a sly humour and with an irony that inflects phrases with levity or the pathos of missing grandeur, Tyler Engström’s “after thoughts” seizes on micro-events and renders them with a peculiar and delightful charisma. He successfully sidesteps inherited notions of what’s poetic, and lifts the communal material of language with personality, spirit, and insight.

— 2017 RBC Bronwen Wallace Award jurors

All Day I Dream About Sirens

Domenica Martinello

REFRAIN ON THE ROCKS

After Apollinaire

In the end you've had it with technology
with passwords and safewords and all the floors

quarried from the same little cliffside in Florence

when attention to detail is a luxury
when aluminum or cotton is
when something is so new it looks old it is a luxury too
that and plainspeak
when things are basic

who will act as chorus and will it be free

simple and streamlined
anodized or stonewashed

the luxury of thread counts
of picking up threads
of time

to stop and listen
to the sound of the sea which is made up
of an infinity of lesser sounds

sea I am like you
combed through with coloured glass

cicadas are so gentle and ugly do they have to be the chorus

I guess if they rub loudly enough

I combed Lake Erie for fossils
picked the shoreline littered by moulted shells
the grasses blew them down to the beach
what does it mean

you in Florence with the fine-grained Pietra Serena sandstone

you in the motel on rue St. Denis

how can I reconcile my poverty

poetry of a janitor's daughter
with an iPhone and a degree

grandmother cut off all her hair
so it wouldn't get caught in a factory machine
what luxury

to leap into the unknown is to leap into water
to leap into the twisted skein is to leap into sea
to leap into the mud is to leap into silkweed
to leap into the future is to leap through your screen

do you think you should be scuttling silently down there
do you think
do you
sing

cicadas like mythic land lobsters
they'll sing to you and everyone Tom
if for Pliny and Homer and Tumblr
why not you

every birthday spent at Red Lobster was a luxury

have you had it

with buzzwords and stopwords and epithets
the ubiquitous i, i, i,

you with the proof in the rock and in the rock's pathetic pining

you pay your fare pay your fond farewell

let the sun bleach the floor

BAIT SONG

—siren—noisy vice mag—harpy—new tab—turn to weather—
suicide girl snip snip—tab tab—undine—iodine—nixie: nokken:
nicor: neck—blighted bra-shells bite bite—nereides—twitter deity—
potamides—moisture-rich serum dab dab—limnad—splash!—
oceanid—salt pill—scylla—ashrays—thirsty mermaid—sob sob facial—rusalka—
foppish—selkie—fop news—charybdis—buzzardfeed—click click toilet—drippy drawl
caw caw!—melusine—double double yummy please—make a zine—makara—docu-
mocku-mentary—they're real!—milky milky koi—caveat—yacuruna—yoni steam—
fishy madams—jengu—caviar—beach hair—wet dream pinterest—because you
watched: lady of the lake—lorelei—a lie a lie—two thighs—two billion streams—
dumpy dam leak—skip skip skip—spotify—sighhhhhh—O sick! this ole tune again—

PARTHENOPE

O tactician
what great tact

you have while I
unshell my breasts

and sink, much
suffering stomach

churned lovesick
with avian flus.

My wetness
quenched Virgil

quelled Vesuvius
tears filled the sea

with pearls, voice
bleached the bones

my sisters gnashed
their teeth on.

Now humiliated
cities will be named

after me, me! who's sick
for thighs & seaweed slick

for a thick old
bone like you,

a slit of wind taunting
ankles ankles ankles.

Foreman of men, you've
domesticated me.

Swallow a strand
of my long black hair

& we can call it
monogamy.

MILK SONG

Sorry to burst thru your lyric sully
tude but I can procreate any mom
ent. Anything looking like sperm is sex
you all harkening back to your hot tad
pole days random erections or whatever
it's too bad when we grow out of our tails
into the poisonous frog army O
vary the pat-downs: still going to die
late like a hallway in heat sweaty pour
no mommy fluids aboard this aircraft
warty vixen maidens: Consume thy mom
my poem's pornographic docu-cult—
This is not very modern anymore.
Please delete your cervix.

MODEST GLITZ

Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman without discretion.
—Proverbs 11:22

maybe a fish never happens once & is finished

certainly if you bring the gun the gun comes back

certainly we've names & weapons licked in the envelope

certainly weave clues

maybe a bait

maybe a shamed

certainly a shape or a vow

maybe the velvet-grass breath of a sensitive cow

maybe a void the hot mammalian meat

maybe a void the hot human stomachs

maybe the apple's a lemon an abattoir

certainly bodies break to tape up again

certainly some new conjugals

maybe her flaming jugs I mean tongues

maybe congrats on trying the devil's nail polish

maybe if you introduce a motive a motive sticks

certainly a swim's never swum once

certainly a gun & not a gash

maybe drink vinegar

maybe gall & myrrh today & forever

maybe a swipe of lipstick on these bristly boar lips

maybe jugular

certainly knives

SUMMER IN CAPRI

Holy water of the monastery
& toilet water of the prison
& swimhole of the rich.

There's less pressure
on your boats
& joints
if you float
you stupid
bobbing apples.

Hey Leucosia
Hey Ligeia
Hey Parthenope
what did you gals really
do to Marco Polo?

MERCY MERCY

But when you pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.
—Matthew 6:6

Thank god for days dreaded they last forever

Thank god for the fact of your skin

Thank god you didn't crush the scent out

What a blessing to be kept all night by a body so true

Thank god for the midnight sprinkler timer true as dogs

Thank god for fingers more or less

Thank god for the boulder rolled away from my opening

Thank god for your hung collarbones

What a blessing the death control pills

What a blessing grass lurid after heavy rain

What a blessing to be Pavlov

Thank god I'm dumb

Thank god I'm drooling

Thank god for sexless flowering

What a blessing to be a cold orchid

Thank god the cube melts slow

Thank god for implements to spruce the wilting

Thank god for the capacity to lie

Thank god it is truly a blessing

What a blessing to be broken and showing

REFRAIN ON THE ROCKS

after Robert Creeley

There is no happiness
wet or decent enough.

About the Author

Domenica Martinello, from Montreal, is the author of the poetry chapbook *Interzones*. She is also an interviews editor for CWILA (Canadian Women in the Literary Arts). Recent poems, reviews, and essays have appeared or are forthcoming in *Vallum*, *carte blanche*, *PRISM international*, *CV2*, *The Winnipeg Review*, and *Cosmonauts Avenue*. Martinello is completing an MFA in poetry at the Iowa Writers' Workshop and lives in Toronto.



“All Day I Dream About Sirens” is a shrewd epic that shimmies up and down the scales from highbrow to lowbrow. Domenica Martinello sharpens her teeth on tradition, wields tone like an axe, and carves space for unheard voices to emerge from the chorus. This poet harnesses the ethereal quality of digital and classical realms while her poems explode with fury and grace.

— 2017 RBC Bronwen Wallace Award jurors

About the Jury

Adèle Barclay's writing has appeared in *The Fiddlehead*, *The Puritan*, *PRISM international*, *The Literary Review of Canada*, and elsewhere. She is the recipient of the 2016 Lit POP Award for Poetry and the 2016 *Walrus* Readers' Choice Award for Poetry, and has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. Her debut poetry collection, *If I Were in a Cage I'd Reach Out for You*, is a 2017 finalist for the Dorothy Livesay Poetry Award. She is the interviews editor at *The Rusty Toque*, a poetry ambassador for Vancouver's Poet Laureate Rachel Rose, and the 2017 critic-in-residence for CWILA (Canadian Women in the Literary Arts). She lives in Vancouver.

Stuart Ross is a writer, editor, teacher, and small press activist living in Cobourg, Ontario. He is the prize-winning author of 20 books of poetry, fiction, and essays, most recently the poetry collection *A Sparrow Came Down Resplendent*. His novel in prose poems, *Pockets*, will be published by ECW Press this fall. Ross has given readings and taught writing workshops across the country, and was the 2010 writer-in-residence at Queen's University. He won the 2017 Battle of the Bards at the Harbourfront Centre. Ross blogs at bloggamooga.blogspot.ca.

Moez Surani's poetry has been published widely in Canada and abroad, including in *Harper's Magazine*, *The Walrus*, *Best American Experimental Writing*, and *Best Canadian Poetry* (2013 and 2014). He is the author of three poetry books: *Reticent Bodies*, *Floating Life*, and most recently, *Operations*, a globe-spanning inventory of the contemporary rhetoric of violence. Surani is the recipient of a 2017 Académie de la Vie Littéraire Prize, the 2010 *Antigonish Review's* Great Blue Heron Poetry Prize, and a 2008 Chalmers Arts Fellowship from the Ontario Arts Council. He lives in Toronto.

Award History

2017 (poetry)

Winner: Noor Naga

Finalists: Tyler Engström, Domenica Martinello

2016 (short fiction)

Winner: Brendan Bowles

Finalists: Allegra McKenzie, Hannah Rahimi

2015 (poetry)

Winner: Alessandra Naccarato

Finalists: Irfan Ali, Chuqiao Yang

2014 (short fiction)

Winner: Erin Frances Fisher

Finalists: Leah Jane Esau, Jakub Stachurski

2013 (poetry)

Winner: Laura Clarke

Finalists: Laura Matwichuk, Suzannah Showler

2012 (short fiction)

Winner: Jen Neale

Finalists: Dina Del Bucchia, Kathy Friedman

2011 (poetry)

Winner: Garth Martens

Finalists: Raoul Fernandes, Anne-Marie Turza

2010 (short fiction)

Winner: Kilby Smith-McGregor

Finalists: Shashi Bhat, Claire Tacon

2009 (poetry)

Winner: Emily McGiffin

Finalists: Michael Johnson, Jeff Latosik

2008* (short fiction)

Winner: Marjorie Celona

Finalists: Ben Lof, Grace O'Connell

2006 (poetry)

Winner: Jeremy Dodds

Finalists: Michael Reynolds, Bren Simmers

2005 (short fiction)

Winner: Nicole Dixon

Finalists: Amy Jones, Angela Long

2004 (poetry)

Winner: Alison Calder

Finalists: Elizabeth Bachinsky, Suzanne Hancock, David Hickey, Anna Swanson

2003 (short fiction)

Winner: Gillian Best

Finalists: Kelly Dignan, Nathan Whitlock

2002 (poetry)

Winner: Alison Pick

Finalists: Alison Calder, Seema Goel

2001 (short fiction)

Winner: Valerie Stetson

Finalists: Melanie Jessica Little, Robert McGill, Tanis Rideout, Padma Viswanathan

*In 2007, the prize presentation was moved from the fall to the following spring, explaining why no award is listed for 2007.

2000 (poetry)

Winner: Sonnet L'Abbé

Finalists: Ceiran Bishop, Erina Harris, Anita Lahey

1999 (short fiction)

Winner: Alissa York

Finalists: Elaine O'Connor, Madeleine Thien

1998 (poetry)

Winner: Talya Rubin

Finalists: Sarah de Leeuw, Astrid van der Pol

1997 (short fiction)

Winner: Rachel Rose

Finalists: Gail Andrews, Alan Levin, Oscar Martens, Elizabeth Moret Ross, Tanya Palmer

1996 (poetry)

Winner: Stephanie Bolster

Finalists: Jacqueline Larson, Shannon Stewart

1995 (short fiction)

Winner: Adele Megann

Finalists: Natalee Caple, Denise Ryan

1994 (poetry)

Winner: Michael Crummey

Finalists: Nancy Cullen, Tonja Gunvaldsen Klaassen, Noah Leznoff

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