



Writers' Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador

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MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

SHORTLIST FOR 2015 NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR CREDIT UNION FRESH FISH AWARD FOR EMERGING WRITER ANNOUNCED

(October 9, 2015 - St. John's, NL) The shortlist for one of the country's most lucrative literary awards of its kind--the Newfoundland and Labrador Credit Union Fresh Fish Award for Emerging Writers--was announced today in St. John's.

The Award, generously sponsored by the Newfoundland and Labrador Credit Union, is for the best unpublished manuscript written by a resident of the province who has not published in book form. It is intended to serve as an incentive for emerging writers in the province by providing them with financial support and recognition for a book-length manuscript in any genre.

The winning author will receive: a cash prize of \$5,000; \$1,000 towards professional editing services; and a miniature replica of "Man Nailed to a Fish" by sculptor Jim Maunder. Runners-up each receive \$1,000. The biennial award is presented by the Literary Arts Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador in partnership with the Writers' Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The three finalists this year are (in alphabetical order):

Sharon Bala for her novel, *The Boat People*

Eva Crocker for her short story collection, *Barreling Forward and Other Stories*

Susie Taylor for her novel, *Dispelling Myths*

Their work was chosen from submissions of fiction, poetry and creative non-fiction.

Sharon Bala is a member of The Port Authority, a writing group in St. John's. Her short fiction has won three NL Arts & Letters Awards and has been published, or is forthcoming, in *Grain*, *The New Quarterly*, *Prism International*, *Room*, *Riddle Fence*, and a new collection called *Racket* (Breakwater Books, 2015).

Eva Crocker recently completed a Masters in English Literature at Memorial University. She has had stories published in *Riddle Fence*, *Paragon*, and *The Overcast*, as well as in three editions of The Telegram's *Cuffer Anthology*. She has read at Storytelling SouthEast in Ireland, and the Sparks Literary Festival. She lives in St. John's. **Susie Taylor** writes and lives in Harbour Grace. Born in England, she grew up in Ontario, and moved to Newfoundland and Labrador in 2002. Graduating with a B.A. in Fine Arts in 2000, she subsequently worked many, many retail jobs. She recently took an online writing course from George Brown College.

The 2015 nominees will read from their shortlisted works at Christina Parker Gallery in St. John's, on Monday, November 9, at 7 PM. The winner will be announced at the Awards Ceremony at Government House on Tuesday, November 10, hosted by The Honourable Frank F. Fagan, Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador and Her Honour Mrs. Patricia Fagan.

"Story-telling is a fundamental part of who are as Newfoundland and Labradorians." says Allison Chaytor-Loveys, Chief Executive Officer of the Newfoundland and Labrador Credit Union. "As a sponsor of the Newfoundland and Labrador Credit Union Fresh Fish Award we are honoured to provide the financial support to ensure the tradition flourishes by recognizing and rewarding the talented writers right here in our province."

What the judges said about the shortlist:

The reader is drawn into *The Boat People* and held captive from the first page... [It] is a precise reflection of a refugee's bid for immigrant status, his past jeopardizing that chance. The novel is skillfully layered and paced, seamlessly engaging stories of people connected through family to Sri Lanka and its turbulent history. Other characters come together to create for readers the question of how we define ourselves as human beings.

Barreling Forward and Other Stories: The materiality of a peculiar world is captured vividly in this collection as characters navigate yoga classes, restaurants, hospitals, and apartments. And also, notably, a

car trunk! The lucid world portrayed here is mostly the so-called “new” St. John’s, a cocktail of urban, rural and suburban modes of being... This is writing that brings to life the complexity of life today, holding up the mirror to the world, but holding it up askew, wondering, as the poet Bukowski put it, about being “born into this.”

Dispelling the Myths is a thoroughly engaging coming-of-age novel. Daisy’s journey through high school brings it all back with uncomfortable vividness: the profound social unease, the unpredictability of teen friendships, the unsettling sense of never really knowing who you are, the baffling unreasonableness of adult behaviour. That vividness could almost be unpleasant, only it’s not—it’s funny, witty, with a sophisticated control of tone that allows the author to balance the authenticity of the main character’s point of view with situations that will be understood differently by the reader.

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Established in 1987 to contribute to a supportive environment for writing in the province, the Writers’ Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador offers programs and services to professional and aspiring writers.