

THE CHARLES TAYLOR PRIZE FOR LITERARY NON-FICTION

THE WINNER of the inaugural Charles Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction is WAYNE JOHNSTON (Toronto, Ontario) for his book *BALTIMORE'S MANSION: A MEMOIR*, published by Knopf Canada. The prize of \$25,000 was awarded at a breakfast ceremony at the Four Seasons Hotel in Toronto.

THE CHARLES TAYLOR PRIZE FOR LITERARY NON-FICTION was founded to commemorate the life and work of the late Charles Taylor, one of Canada's foremost essayists and a prominent member of the Canadian literary community.

*BALTIMORE'S MANSION* is filled with heart-stopping description and a cast of stubborn, acerbic, yet utterly irresistible family members. Charlie Johnston is the blacksmith of Ferryland, a Catholic colony founded by Lord Baltimore in the 1620s on the Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland. For his forging prowess, he is considered as necessary as the parish priest at local weddings. But he must spend the first cold hours of every working day fishing at sea with his sons, one of whom, Arthur, vows that as an adult, he will never look to the sea for his livelihood. In the heady months leading up to the 1948 referendum that results in Newfoundland being "inducted in to Canada", Art leaves the island, parting on mysterious terms with his father. In the son's absence, the father dies and Newfoundland loses its status as a country. Years later, Wayne decides to leave the island at the very age his father was when he said good-bye, and old patterns threaten to repeat themselves.

Of the book, the jury said: "*BALTIMORE'S MANSION* is an absorbing evocation of time and place, elegantly and passionately written. In this memoir, a multi-generational story of a Newfoundland family born to the hardships of life on the eastern shore of the Avalon Peninsula, WAYNE JOHNSTON holds the very idea of what does and does not constitute a country up to a clear, remarkable light. *BALTIMORE'S MANSION* speaks eloquently of the loss of a way of life, and of many Newfoundlanders' failed, perhaps doomed, dreams of nationhood. It holds the reader's imagination with fabulous and beautifully wrought descriptions, with moments of high comedy and great poignance and, most importantly, with the magic of Johnston's story-telling."

WAYNE JOHNSTON has published five novels, including *The Story of Bobby O'Malley*, *The Colony of Unrequited Dreams*, and *The Divine Ryans*, the film adaptation of which was released in 1999. Born and raised in Newfoundland, WAYNE JOHNSTON now lives in Toronto.

THE JURORS for the inaugural prize are Neil Bissoondath (Quebec City), Eva-Marie Kroller (Vancouver), and David Macfarlane (Toronto). They selected *BALTIMORE'S MANSION* from among 149 books submitted by 42 publishers. Books in the genre of literary non-fiction, published between January 1, 1998 and December 31, 1999, were eligible if authored by a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant and widely available in Canada.



THE TRUSTEES of the Charles Taylor Foundation are Michael Bradley (Toronto), Robert Bringhurst (aVncouver), Judith Mappin (Montreal), David Staines (Ottawa) and Noreen Taylor (Toronto).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE WINNER OF THE INAUGURAL  
CHARLES TAYLOR PRIZE FOR LITERARY NON-FICTION:

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