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THE CHARLES TAYLOR PRIZE FOR LITERARY NON-FICTION ANNOUNCES ITS 2009 SHORTLIST

THIS MORNING, AT A PRESS CONFERENCE at Toronto's Le Meridien King Edward Hotel, Noreen Taylor, prize founder and chair of the Charles Taylor Foundation, announced that the jury – composed of author and previous finalist Warren Cariou (Winnipeg), author and journalist Jeffrey Simpson (Ottawa), and noted arts expert Shirley Thomson (Ottawa) – read 135 Canadian-authored books, submitted by 43 publishers from all across Canada. Mrs. Taylor went on to introduce Mr. Simpson who made the following announcement before an audience of publishers, media, and booksellers:

THE FINALISTS FOR THE 2009 CHARLES TAYLOR PRIZE FOR LITERARY NON-FICTION ARE:

ELIZABETH ABBOTT for *Sugar: A Bittersweet History*, published by Penguin Group (Canada).

The jury notes, "This panoramic narrative vividly evokes the pleasure and the extraordinary suffering wrought by the desire for sugar from the Middle Ages to the present. The author, whose great-great-grandfather was a bit-player in the colonial sugar industry, shows how Europe's addiction to sweetness contributed to the formation of global empires, the enslavement of entire peoples, the creation of diasporas, and the destruction of the environment. The result is a consummate work of synthesis that powerfully reveals how past inequities continue to resonate in the present."

TIM COOK for *Shock Troops: Canadians Fighting the Great War, 1917 - 1918, Volume Two*, published by Viking Canada.

The jury notes, "With tremendous detail and almost unstoppable narrative momentum, this book gives a harrowing account of a pivotal moment in world history that would transform Canada's idea of itself. By shifting focus between grand strategy and on-the-ground struggle, Tim Cook creates a kaleidoscopic story that reveals the difficult relationships that formed among politicians, commanders, and ordinary soldiers in their attempts to prepare for, and execute, a series of near-impossible missions. Through these stories of horror and heroism, what shines through most brilliantly is the complex humanity of the characters."



ANA SILJAK for *Angel of Vengeance: The "Girl Assassin," the Governor of St. Petersburg, and Russia's Revolutionary World*, published by St. Martin's Press.

The jury notes, "Ranging from the courts of St. Petersburg to peasant huts, this meticulously researched book tells the dramatic and little-known story of one woman's act of political desperation and her very public trial. It is also a much broader portrait of ideological struggles in nineteenth-century Russia, revealing the devastating conflict between a society that could not find a way to change and those who demanded that it must. The author provides added contemporary resonance to the story by masterfully penetrating the minds of terrorists."

THE PRESTIGIOUS Charles Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction recognizes excellence in Canadian non-fiction writing. Since its inception the prize has fostered a growing interest in non-fiction, engaged Canadians in the genre of literary non-fiction, and boosted sales of the winning authors' books.

FOUNDED IN COMMEMORATION of the late Charles Taylor, one of Canada's foremost essayists and a prominent member of the Canadian literary community, the prize is awarded annually to the author whose book best combines a superb command of the English language, an elegance of style, and a subtlety of thought and perception.

ALL OF THE 2009 PRIZE FINALISTS will be in Toronto on Sunday, February 8, 2009, at Le Meridien King Edward Hotel to speak about their writing at a special instalment of the Globe and Mail/Ben McNally Books brunch series event. They will subsequently be honoured at a Gala Luncheon and Awards Ceremony the following day.

THE WINNER of the 2009 Charles Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction will be announced on Monday, February 9, 2009, as part of a two-hour live broadcast of CBC Radio One's *Ontario Today* with host Rita Celli, beginning at 12:00 noon. To listen via the internet go to www.cbc.ca/ontariotoday and click on "Listen Live."

THE PRIZE CONSISTS OF \$25,000 for the winning author and \$2,000 for each of the runners-up, as well as promotional and publicity support to help all of the shortlisted books stand out in the national media, bookstores, and libraries.

THE CHARLES TAYLOR PRIZE for Literary Non-Fiction is presented by the Charles Taylor Foundation with the generous support of its partners: AVFX, Ben McNally Books, Bravo! and Book Television, Canada Newswire (CNW), CBC Radio One, Le Meridien King Edward Hotel, Quill & Quire, *The Globe and Mail*, and Windfields Farm.

TO DOWNLOAD HIGH-RESOLUTION IMAGES OF THE JURY, FINALISTS, AND SHORTLISTED TITLES, PLEASE GO TO:

http://www.thecharlestaylorprize.ca/2009/photogallery_09.asp

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT: www.thecharlestaylorprize.ca