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THOMAS KING WINS THE 2014 RBC TAYLOR PRIZE FOR *THE INCONVENIENT INDIAN: A CURIOUS ACCOUNT OF NATIVE PEOPLE IN NORTH AMERICA*

THE WINNER OF the 2014 RBC Taylor Prize is Thomas King, author of *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People*, published by Doubleday Canada. The \$25,000 award was announced today in Toronto by Prize founder and chair, Noreen Taylor during a gala luncheon celebrating this year's Finalists. This was the 13th awarding of the country's most prestigious prize for literary non-fiction.

Of the book, the jury notes: "Histories of North America's Native Peoples abound, but few are as subversive, entertaining, well-researched, hilarious, enraging, and finally as hopeful as this very personal take on our long relationship with the "inconvenient" Indian. King dissects idealized myths (noble Hiawatha, servile Tonto, the Sixties nature guru) against the tragic backdrop of real Indians abused in mission schools, penned together on reserves, and bludgeoned by vicious or ham-fisted government policies. A sharp, informed eye is cast on Riel, Crazy Horse, and Sitting Bull, on the dark and tangled stories of Native land claims, on Alcatraz, Will Rogers (a Cherokee), and the maid on Land o' Lakes butter; on Batoche, on Wounded Knee. In this thoughtful, irascible account, and in characteristically tricksterish mode, King presents a provocative alternative version of Canada's heritage narrative."

Thomas King is a novelist, short-story writer, nonfiction author, screenwriter, and photographer. He was born in the US, the son of a Greek mother and a Cherokee father. Before immigrating to Canada, Thomas King worked as an administrator and teacher at Humboldt State University and the University of Utah (PhD 1986). He accepted a position in Native Studies at the University of Lethbridge and soon began writing serious fiction. Often described as one of the finest contemporary Native America writers, two of King's books have been nominated for Governor General's Awards. In 2003, King was the first

Native Canadian to deliver the Massey Lectures. The author currently teaches English and Theatre Studies at the University of Guelph.

The other finalists for the 2014 RBC Taylor Prize were Charlotte Gray for *The Massey Murder: A Maid, Her Master, And The Trial That Shocked A Country*; J.B. MacKinnon for *The Once And Future World: Nature As It Was, As It Is, As It Could Be*; Graeme Smith for *The Dogs Are Eating Them Now: Our War In Afghanistan* (winner of the 2013 Hilary Weston Writer's Trust Prize for Nonfiction); and David Stouck for *Arthur Erickson: An Architect's Life*. Each of these finalists receives \$2,000.00.

Presenting partner RBC Wealth Management will host Thomas King on a speaking tour of selected Canadian cities. He will also be invited to speak at the International Festival of Authors (IFOA) in Toronto in October.

The jurors for the 2014 RBC Taylor Prize are: British-based university professor and critic, Coral Ann Howells; editorial director, author and professor, James Polk; and author, English and creative writing instructor and former Charles Taylor Prize winner Andrew Westoll. Jurors



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selected this year's winner after thoughtful review of 124 books submitted by 45 publishers from around the world.

During her remarks Mrs. Taylor commented that, "this prize is a writers' prize for fellow writers", adding that this year's jury had an especially difficult decision to make due to the five outstanding finalists. "With the jury's choice of Thomas King as our winner, we are certainly guaranteed that a beacon of light will continue to shine on the excellence that is literary non-fiction in Canada."

New to the RBC Taylor Prize is the addition of the RBC Taylor Prize Emerging Writers Award, to be given to a promising Canadian author of non-fiction selected by the winner of the 2014 RBC Taylor Prize. The recipient of the Emerging Writers Award will receive \$10,000 and the opportunity to be mentored under the 2014 RBC Taylor Prize winner. The inaugural winner of the Emerging Writers Award will be announced on Monday, March 17th.

"On behalf of RBC, we congratulate Thomas King for winning this prestigious award," said Vijay Parmar, President RBC PH&N Investment Counsel, "RBC is deeply committed to supporting talented young writers and their passion for literary excellence in Canada. We are thrilled that, through the new Emerging Writers Award, we will be able to cultivate the talents of promising young writers in Canada."

Presented 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, the RBC Taylor Prize recognizes excellence in Canadian non-fiction writing and emphasizes the development of the careers of the authors it celebrates. Since its inception, the Prize has helped to engage Canadians in literary non-fiction and boost sales of the Finalists books.

The RBC Taylor Prize was founded to commemorate the life of the late Charles Taylor, one of Canada's foremost essayists and a prominent member of the Canadian literary community. Charles Taylor was a foreign correspondent with *The Globe and Mail* and the author of four books: *Radical Tories*; *Reporter in Red China*; *Six Journeys: A Canadian Pattern*; and *Snow Job*.

The Trustees of the Charles Taylor Prize Foundation are Michael Bradley (Toronto), David Staines (Ottawa), and Noreen Taylor (Toronto). The Foundation gratefully acknowledges the support of RBC Wealth Management as its presenting sponsor; along with its major sponsor Metropia; and greatly appreciates the support of its media sponsors *The Globe and Mail*; *Maclean's* magazine, CNW Group; *The Huffington Post Canada* and *Quill & Quire* magazine; and in-kind sponsors: Authors at Harbourfront Centre, Ben McNally Books, Event Source and The Omni King Edward Hotel.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION please visit: www.thecharlestaylorprize.ca

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TO DOWNLOAD high-resolution images related to the winner and the 2014 prize presentation, please visit: www.thecharlestaylorprize.ca/2014/photogallery_14.asp