



THE GRIFFIN TRUST
For Excellence In Poetry

Trustees:

Margaret Atwood

Scott Griffin

Robert Hass

Michael Ondaatje

Robin Robertson

David Young

Press Release

**THE GRIFFIN TRUST FOR EXCELLENCE IN POETRY
ANNOUNCES THE JUDGES FOR THE 2004 GRIFFIN POETRY PRIZE**

TORONTO, September 25, 2003 – Distinguished poets Billy Collins (U.S. Poet Laureate 2001-2003), Bill Manhire (New Zealand's inaugural poet laureate) and Governor General Award-winner Phyllis Webb (Canada) have agreed to judge entries submitted by publishers around the world for the 2004 Griffin Poetry Prize, it was announced today by Scott Griffin, Chairman of the Griffin Trust for Excellence in Poetry.

The judges are selected annually by the Trustees: Margaret Atwood, Robert Hass, Michael Ondaatje, Robin Robertson and David Young. Collins, Manhire and Webb will be judging books of poetry published in the 2003 calendar year. The shortlist will be announced in New York on April 1st, 2004. The C\$80,000 Griffin Poetry Prize, divided between the International and Canadian winners, will be presented at the awards event in Toronto on June 3rd, 2004, following the shortlisted poets' reading on June 2nd.

The Griffin Trust was created to serve and encourage excellence in poetry written in English anywhere in the world. Eligible collections of poetry, which includes translations, must be submitted by publishers in the calendar year of their publication.

Billy Collins was appointed United States Poet Laureate 2001-2003. His work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Paris Review* and *The American Scholar*, and he is a Guggenheim fellow and New York Public Library "Literary Lion." Collin has published seven collections of poetry, including *Questions About Angels*, *The Art of Drowning*, and *Picnic, Lightning*. In May 2000, Picador in the UK published his collection of poems, *Taking Off Emily Dickinson's Clothes*. In September 2001, Random House published his collection of poems, *Sailing Around the Room: New & Selected Poems*. In the fall of 2002, Random House published his new collection of poems, *Nine Horses*, and in the spring 2003, Random House published an anthology of poems selected with an introduction by Billy Collins, *Poetry 180: A Turning Back to Poetry*. He is a professor of English at Lehman College of the City University of New York.



THE GRIFFIN TRUST
For Excellence In Poetry

Bill Manhire was New Zealand's inaugural Poet Laureate, and is a four-time winner of the New Zealand Book Award for poetry. His *Collected Poems* (2001) are published by Carcanet in the UK and by Victoria University Press in New Zealand, while a collection of short fiction, *South Pacific* aka *Songs of My Life*, is also in print. He recently published a short memoir, *Under the Influence*; a collection of essays and interviews, *Doubtful Sounds*, appeared in 2000. He is also well known for such anthologies as *100 New Zealand Poems*, *Six by Six*, *Some Other Country*, and *Soho Square IV*. He founded the creative writing programme at Victoria University of Wellington, where he is currently director of the International Institute of Modern Letters, and inaugurated the electronic annual, *Best New Zealand Poems*. He is currently compiling an anthology of imaginative writing about Antarctica, *The Wide White Page*.

Phyllis Webb won the Governor General's Award for Poetry for *The Vision Tree* in 1982, and was appointed an officer of the Order of Canada in 1992, among other honours. Her publications include *Trio* (with Gael Turnbull and Eli Mandel), Contact Press, (1954); *Even Your Right Eye*, McClelland & Stewart, (1956); *The Sea is Also a Garden*, Ryerson Press (1962); *Naked Poems*, Periwinkle Press (1965); *Selected Poems 1954-65*, edited by John Hulcoop, Talonbooks (1971); *Wilson's Bowl*, The Coach House Press (1980); the essays *Talking*, Quadrant (1982); *The Vision Tree: Selected Poems*, edited by Sharon Thesen, Talonbooks, (1982); *Sunday Water: Thirteen Anti-Ghazals*, Island Writing Series (1982); *Water and Light: Ghazals and Anti-Ghazals*, The Coach House Press (1984); *Hanging Fire*, The Coach House Press (1990) and *Nothing But Brush Strokes, Selected Prose*, NeWest Press (1995).

- 30 -

Press and Publicity:

Prudence Emery, Publicity Director
Email:
press@griffinpoetryprize.com

General Inquiries:

Ruth Smith, Manager
Email: info@griffinpoetryprize.com

Website: www.griffinpoetryprize.com