



THE GRIFFIN TRUST
For Excellence In Poetry

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**ANNE SIMPSON'S LOOP AND
AUGUST KLEINZAHLER'S *THE STRANGE HOURS TRAVELERS KEEP*
WIN THE 2004 GRIFFIN POETRY PRIZE**

TORONTO, June 3, 2004 – The Canadian and International winners of the 2004 Griffin Poetry Prize are **Anne Simpson's *Loop*** and **August Kleinzahler's *The Strange Hours Travelers Keep***, it was announced tonight at the fourth annual awards event. The C\$80,000 Griffin Poetry Prize is the most lucrative award for books of poetry from any country in the world. The Prize is awarded annually for the two best books of poetry (including translations) published in English the previous year.

The celebratory evening was hosted by Scott Griffin, the founder of the Prize, with judges Billy Collins (US Poet Laureate 2001-2003) as Emcee, and Bill Manhire (New Zealand's inaugural Poet Laureate) and Canadian Governor-General Award winner Phyllis Webb announcing the Canadian and International winners for 2004.

The judges read a record-breaking 423 books, nearly 100 more than the preceding year, from 15 different countries translated from 17 different languages. Submitted books for 2004 are being donated to various institutions: The Poets House in New York; International Institute of Modern Letters in Wellington, New Zealand; the Gulf Island Secondary School on Salt Spring Island, British Columbia and Corrections Canada for distribution to the prisons' literary programmes.

Preceding the awards event, held at Toronto's heritage Stone Distillery, the seven short listed poets (three Canadian and four International) read excerpts from the books at the MacMillan Theatre on June 2, attended by 600 poetry aficionados. The Canadian shortlist includes Di Brandt's *Now You Care*; Leslie Greentree's *go-go dancing for Elvis*; and Anne Simpson's *Loop*. The International shortlist includes Suji Kwock Kim's *Notes from the Divided Country*; David Kirby's *The Ha-Ha*; August Kleinzahler's *The Strange Hours Travelers Keep* and Louis Simpson's *The Owner of the House*.

The winners, who each receive C\$40,000, will be invited to read at Poetry International 2004 at the Royal Festival Hall in London on October 28 at 7.30 p.m. They will be joined by Trustee Margaret Atwood, Anne Carson (Griffin Poetry Prize Canadian winner 2001) and Robert Bringhurst (Shortlist 2001). In addition, Bringhurst will be leading a workshop on his heroic translations of Haida oral poetry, with Margaret Atwood and chaired by Erica Wagner, Literary Editor of The Times, on the afternoon of October 28.

The Griffin Trust is pleased to announce its association with The Times Literary Supplement, which has agreed to promote the Prize through publishing the poems of the shortlist candidates, and at various events in the UK and throughout the world. In addition, the TLS is offering 1,000 Griffin Poetry Prize Anthologies as a reward to new subscribers.

The Griffin Poetry Prize Anthology: A Selection of the 2004 Shortlist, edited by Phyllis Webb, has been published by House of Anansi Press Inc. and is available on their website, www.anansi.ca. Royalties from the Anthology are donated to UNESCO's World Poetry Day.

The Griffin Trust is also pleased to announce that the eminent American poet Carolyn Forché has agreed to become a Trustee, joining the initial Trustees Margaret Atwood, Scott Griffin, Robert Hass, Michael Ondaatje, Robin Robertson and David Young who launched the Prize in September, 2000. Forché was a judge in the inaugural year of the Prize.

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

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