

Paul Bowdring wins the 2013 BMO Winterset Award

March 20, 2014 (St. John's, NL) – Paul Bowdring is the winner of the 2013 BMO Winterset Award for his book *The Strangers' Gallery*. The award, which celebrates excellence in Newfoundland and Labrador writing, was presented today at a ceremony at Government House in St. John's.

The two other finalists were Carmelita McGrath for *Escape Velocity* (Icehouse Poetry [imprint of Goose Lane Editions], Fredericton, NB) and Lisa Moore for *Caught* (House of Anansi Press, Toronto, ON).

The BMO Winterset Award is composed of a partnership between the BMO Financial Group and those involved from the start - the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council and the project's founder, writer Richard Gwyn, OC. The prize awarded to the annual winner is \$10,000, while the finalists each receive \$2,500. It is Atlantic Canada's richest literary prize and one of the richest regional awards in Canada.

The Strangers' Gallery, (Vagrant Press [imprint of Nimbus Publishing], Halifax, NS) was one of 25 works by Newfoundland and Labrador authors (either native-born or resident) that were submitted by publishers from across the country. Books in any genre, published in 2013 were eligible. The jury consisted of Ruth Lawrence and Agnes Walsh.

The BMO Winterset Award honours the memory of Sandra Fraser Gwyn, St. John's-born social historian, prize-winning author, who did so much to promote a national awareness of the arts of this province. Her husband, journalist and author Richard Gwyn, OC, established the award in 2000. It is named after the historic house on Winter Avenue in St. John's where Sandra grew up.

Paul Bowdring was born on Bell Island, NL and is a founding member and past president of the Writers' Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador. He works as a full-time writer and editor, having served eight years as co-editor of *TickleAce* magazine and presently is an associate editor with *The Fiddlehead*. He is the author of two previous novels, *The Roncesvalles Pass* and *The Night Season*; the latter published to wide critical acclaim and broadcast nationally on CBCs *Between the Covers*. He has worked for many years as an English teacher and now lives in St. John's, NL.

The BMO Winterset Award is managed by the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council (NLAC).

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The NLAC is a non-profit Crown agency created in 1980 by The Arts Council Act. Its mission is to foster and promote the creation and enjoyment of the arts for the benefit of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. The Council is governed by a volunteer board of 13 appointed by government, reflecting regional representation of the province. This includes 10 professional artists who provide sectoral representation of the arts community; one community representative (with an interest in the arts); one business representative (with an interest in the arts); and one representative of the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation (non-voting). The NLAC receives an annual contribution of \$2.1 million from the Province to support a variety of granting programs, program delivery, office administration, and communications. It also seeks support from the public and private sector. It supports the following artistic disciplines: dance, film, multidiscipline, music, theatre, visual art, and writing.