



NEWS RELEASE

The Frye Academy Award is launched! Young readers engage in a "battle of the books"

(Moncton, December 8th, 2009) - Let the battle of the books begin with the first edition of the Frye Academy Award! To continue stimulating a passion for words and further develop critical thinking amongst our youth, the Frye Festival has added a new component to its School Youth Program: a young readers' prize. A jury composed of grade 12 students from regional Anglophone and Francophone high schools will select a winning author from a selection of four Canadian novels, two English and two French.

The featured novels are *The Gum Thief* by Douglas Coupland (Vintage Canada - Random House), *Tarmac* by Nicolas Dickner (Éditions Alto), *Hadassa* by Myriam Beaudouin (Éditions Leméac), and the graphic novel *George Sprott (1894-1975)* by Seth (Drawn and Quarterly). The young readers will read the books, discuss, and debate in order to choose the winning author. The Canadian novels were selected by a committee last summer and will be read in the original language in which they were published.



The first Frye Academy Award meeting took place Tuesday, December 8th at the Aberdeen Cultural Centre in Moncton and the public was invited. Dano LeBlanc, author of *Acadieman*, spoke to participants about his creative process and the importance of reading for a writer.

“The Frye Festival has always tried to find innovative ways to help teenagers discover the fun of reading, that’s why we dedicate so much time and energy in our School Youth Program, explains Rachelle Dugas, Frye Festival Interim Executive

Director. After ten years, we are able to see the long-term effects and can appreciate the positive impact on our community. The Frye Academy Award will help our youth develop critical thinking skills while discovering Canadian authors, in both official languages.”

The jury for this first edition of the Frye Academy Award is composed of eighteen young readers. They are from Harrison Trimble, Moncton High, and Bernice MacNaughton in Moncton as well as from l’Odysée in Moncton, Mathieu-Martin in Dieppe, and Mgr-Marcel-François-Richard in Saint-Louis-de-Kent.

A battle of the books

In January and March 2010, the public is invited to witness a real battle of the books as young readers debate and discuss the books in a roundtable setting. Each event will feature two novels, one in French and one in English, and will be hosted by a local public personality. The public is encouraged to read the books and take part in the reflection process and the debates. The Frye Academy Award debates will be recorded and made available on the Frye Festival web site.

The winning author will be chosen after the second roundtable, in March 2010, when the jury will have to work together and come to a consensus. The winner will be announced at the Frye Festival closing ceremony in April. The author will then be invited by the Festival to come to Moncton to meet with the young readers and take part in a *Community Read* event in May or June of next year.

The Frye Festival School Youth Program

The Frye Festival School Youth Program is composed of four elements: Bell Aliant Young Writers where students of all ages are invited to share their literary creations with the public; Great-West Life/ London Life Writing Contest for students at the high school level; TD Canada Trust Writers in the Schools, where guest authors of the Frye Festival visit classrooms all over the province, and various family oriented activities held during the Frye Festival.

Further information on the Frye Academy Award and the Frye Festival is available at www.frye.ca.

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