



GRIFFIN POETRY PRIZE

Press Release

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2025 CANADIAN FIRST BOOK PRIZE WINNER

Northerny • Dawn Macdonald

University of Alberta Press

TORONTO – May 21, 2025 – The international Griffin Poetry Prize is pleased to announce that **Dawn Macdonald**, author of *Northerny*, is the winner of the 2025 Canadian First Book Prize. She will receive C\$10,000 in prize money together with a six-week residency in Italy, in partnership with the Civitella Ranieri Foundation.

Dawn Macdonald will be invited to participate in the 2025 Griffin Poetry Prize Readings, to read from her winning book *Northerny*.

Trustees Emeriti:

Margaret Atwood
Robert Hass
Michael Ondaatje
Robin Robertson
Jo Shapcott
Colm Tóibín
David Young

The Readings will be held at Koerner Hall on Wednesday, June 4 and the evening will include a conversation with Margaret Atwood and Carolyn Forché, and readings by the 2025 shortlisted poets, Aaron Coleman, Durs Grünbein, Brian Henry, Karen Leeder, Carl Phillips, and Diane Seuss. The event will also feature a recitation by one of the 2025 Finalists of Poetry in Voice/Les voix de la poésie, a Canada-wide school recitation competition.

The international Griffin Poetry Prize winner will be announced at the Readings and will be awarded \$130,000. The other finalists will each be awarded \$10,000 for their participation.

Tickets are now on sale and can be purchased at the box office of Koerner Hall, 273 Bloor Street West, or online at <https://www.rcmusic.com/events-andperformances/2025-griffin-poetry-prize-readings>

General Admission, with 2025 Anthology – \$30.00
Senior/Student, with 2025 Anthology – \$25.00

The Griffin Poetry Prize was founded in 2000 to encourage and celebrate excellence in poetry.

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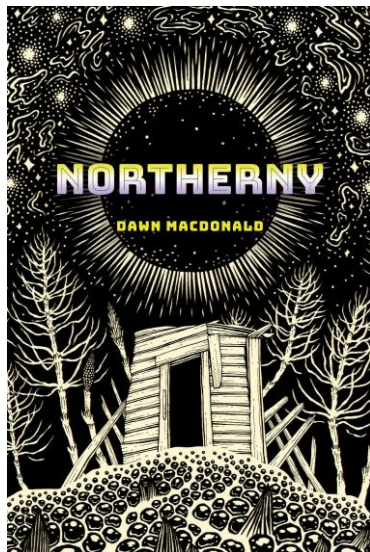
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Sean Pond (Dawn Macdonald)



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Biography: Dawn Macdonald lives in Whitehorse, Yukon, where she grew up in a cabin down a dirt road without electricity or running water. She studied applied mathematics and physics at university, and went to her scholarship interview wearing shoes she had found at the dump. Her summer student projects in space physics involved numerical modeling of the northern lights. Her poetry appears in magazines such as *The Antigonish Review*, *Asimov's Science Fiction*, *Canadian Literature*, *The Fiddlehead*, *FOLIO*, *Grain*, *Literary Review of Canada*, *The Malahat Review*, *Nat. Brut*, *OxMag*, *Strange Horizons*, and *Vallum*, among others. *Northerny* is her first book.

Judges' Citation: Dawn Macdonald's *Northerny* is a blast of crisp Yukon air. Funny and fresh, unexpected and daring, it understands "the personal is heretical," and glories in that fact. It's a rush, a relief, and remakes with impishness the notion of what a poem can be.