



THE GRIFFIN TRUST
For Excellence In Poetry

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Press Release

THE 2020 GRIFFIN POETRY PRIZE WINNERS

International

Time

Sarah Riggs, translated from the French written by Etel Adnan

and

Trustees Emeriti:

Margaret Atwood
Robert Hass
Michael Ondaatje
Robin Robertson
Colm Tóibín

Canadian

Magnetic Equator

by Kaie Kellough

TORONTO – Tuesday, May 19, 2020 – *Time* by Sarah Riggs, translated from the French written by Etel Adnan (Nightboat Books) and *Magnetic Equator* by Kaie Kellough (McClelland & Stewart) are the International and Canadian winners of the 2020 Griffin Poetry Prize, each receiving C\$65,000 in prize money. The other shortlist finalists will be awarded \$10,000 each.

The Griffin Poetry Prize was founded in 2000 to encourage and celebrate excellence in poetry. The prize is for first edition books of poetry written in, or translated into, English and submitted from anywhere in the world.

The judges for the 2020 Griffin Poetry Prize are Paula Meehan (Ireland), Kei Miller (Jamaica/UK) and Hoa Nguyen (Canada). These distinguished writers and poets each read 572 books of poetry, received from fourteen countries around the globe, including translations from eighteen different languages. The trustees of The Griffin Trust For Excellence In Poetry select the judges annually.



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The 2020 Griffin Poetry Prize Shortlist :

International

- Abigail Chabitnoy's *How to Dress a Fish*, published by Wesleyan University Press
- Sharon Olds' *Arias*, published by Jonathan Cape and Alfred A. Knopf
- Sarah Riggs' translation, from the French, of *Time* written by Etel Adnan, published by Nightboat Books
- Natalie Scenters-Zapico's *Lima :: Limón*, published by Copper Canyon Press

Canadian

- Chantal Gibson's *How She Read*, published by Caitlin Press
- Doyali Islam's *heft*, published by McClelland & Stewart
- Kaie Kellough's *Magnetic Equator*, published by McLelland & Stewart

NOTE TO BOOKSELLERS: Griffin Poetry Prize book stickers are supplied free of charge by The Griffin Trust. Please contact info@griffinpoetryprize.com to place an order. Winner book stickers will be available after May 19.



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Links:

Shortlisted Publishers' web sites:

Alfred A. Knopf: knopfdoubleday.com

Caitlin Press: caitlin-press.com

Copper Canyon Press: coppercanyonpress.org

Jonathan Cape: penguin.co.uk/company/publishers/vintage/jonathan-cape

McClelland & Stewart:

penguinrandomhouse.ca/imprints/mcclelland-stewart

Nightboat Books: nightboat.org

Wesleyan University Press: Wesleyan.edu/wespress

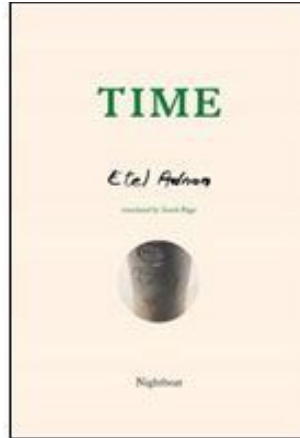
Downloadable photographs of the 2020 shortlisted poets:

<http://www.griffinpoetryprize.com/news-and-events/media-resources/>



THE GRIFFIN TRUST
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International



Time • Sarah Riggs, translated from the French written by Etel Adnan
Nightboat Books

Biography: Sarah Riggs is the author of five books of poetry in English: *Waterwork* (2007), *Chain of Miniscule Decisions in the Form of a Feeling* (2007), *60 Textos* (2010), *Autobiography of Envelopes* (2012), and *Pomme & Granite* (2015). She has translated and co-translated six books of contemporary French poetry into English, including most recently Oscarine Bosquet's *Present Participle*. Sarah Riggs lives in Brooklyn, NY.

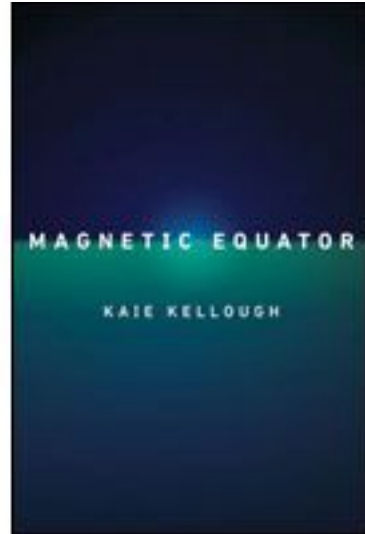
Etel Adnan was born in Beirut, Lebanon in 1925. She studied philosophy at the Sorbonne, U.C. Berkeley, and at Harvard, and taught at Dominican College in San Rafael, California. In 2014 she was awarded one of France's highest cultural honors: l'Ordre de Chevalier des Arts et Lettres and was a winner of the Lambda Literary Award for Lesbian Poetry, and the California Book Award for Poetry in 2013 for *Sea and Fog*. Her most recent books are *Night* (2016) and *Surge* (2018).

Judges' Citation: "I say that I'm not afraid/of dying because I haven't/ yet had the experience/ of death' writes Etel Adnan in the opening poem to *Time*. What is astonishing here is how she manages to give weariness its own relentless energy. We are pulled quickly through this collection – each poem, only a breath, a small measure of the time that Adnan is counting. Every breath is considered, measured, observant – perceiving even 'a crack in the/ texture of the day.' If Adnan is correct and 'writing comes from a dialogue/ with time' then this is a conversation the world should be leaning into, listening to a writer who has earned every right to be listened to."



THE GRIFFIN TRUST
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Canadian



Magnetic Equator • Kaie Kellough
McClelland & Stewart

Biography: Kaie Kellough is a novelist, poet, and sound performer. He was born in Vancouver, British Columbia, raised in Calgary, Alberta, and in 1998 moved to Montreal, Quebec where he now lives. He is the author of the novels *Dominoes at the Crossroads*, and *Accordéon*, which was a finalist for the Amazon.ca First Novel Award, two books of poetry, *Lettricity* and *Maple Leaf Rag*, and two albums, *Vox:Versus* and *Creole Continuum*. He has performed and published internationally.

Judges' Citation: "Speaking to Caribbean and hemispheric migrations, the poems in *Magnetic Equator* recall trouble, hybridity, steep falls, continuance, and elaboration. Taking on influence, place, and racialized diasporic experience as it draws language into geographic drifts and historic collisions, these are voicings that cascade and collect 'an accent adrift in its second language / over a b-side version of empire'. Singing of exile and scattering, the text negotiates survival and revolt as it moves with the surety and complexity of improvisation and collaboration. Sonic, visual, and intertextual, Kaie Kellough traces source and accumulation: 'our crossings of past, we depart / opposite, along the sentence that encircles the world'."