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BLUE METROPOLIS 2019 HIGHLIGHTS SOCIAL INEQUALITY, INDIGENOUS VOICES AND THE HEALTH OF OUR PLANET

Montreal, April 3, 2019 – The 21st edition of **Blue Metropolis Montreal International Literary Festival** takes place May 2 to 5, 2019. The planet is suffering. Inequality is an all too common reality in our society. Indigenous peoples grapple with trauma, reconciliation and cultural appropriation. Literature tackles all these issues, issues that provided inspiration for our 2019 programming. Blue Met 2019 presents a remarkable selection of writers and thinkers, from 20 countries, who are changing the world: novelists, poets, philosophers, economists and musicians coming together to discuss such powerfully evocative topics as the struggle against social inequality, Indigenous literatures worldwide, feminism and ecology.

The 2019 Festival will also highlight several important anniversaries, including Woodstock's 50th; one year since the death of the brilliant Israeli writer Amos Oz; UNESCO'S International Year of Indigenous Languages and the UN'S International Year of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

A sampling of the authors featured at Blue Met 2019...

On racism, British author and journalist **Reni-Eddo Lodge**, author of *Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race*, and **Esi Edugyan**, 2018 Giller Prize winner for her novel *Washington Black*.

On Indigenous literatures and voices, from Australia, slam champion **Melanie Mununggurr-Williams**, who performs in a mix of Yolnu-Matha and English, and author **Bruce Pascoe**, whose languages are Wathaurong and Yuin; from Turtle Island (North America) Innu poet **Joséphine Bacon**, memoirists **Terese Marie Mailhot**, of the Seabird Island Indian Band, and **Darrel J. McLeod**, Cree from Treaty 8 territory in Northern Alberta. Also poets **Shannon Webb-Campbell**, **Liz Howard**, **Arielle Twist**, and multidisciplinary Métis artist **Moe Clark**...

On worlds to be imagined, explored and changed, Canadian-Argentine writer **Alberto Manguel**; from Spain, **José Manuel Fajardo**; Israeli novelist **Orly Castel-Bloom**; Palestinian memoirist **Yousef Bashir**; and from Germany, novelist **Pierre Jarawan**.

Festival series:

Azul: Spanish ranks as the world's second international language. Come explore it, as mapped by **Ricardo Cayuela**, as presented in libraries by **Alberto Manguel**, as represented by the voices of Latinocanáda, and as it existed in the pre-Colombian times of Abya Ayala. This edition, La Mancha is Azul!

Violet – LGBTQ: This series looks at the impact the Stonewall riots had on Quebec literature;

highlights the legendary career of director, writer, and activist **John Greyson**; and celebrates a pillar of Canadian literature, **Dionne Brand**, whose work explores gender, race, sexuality and feminism.

Almemar: In this edition the series takes a multilingual turn, presenting events in English, French, Spanish and Hebrew. Featuring Israeli author **Orly Castel-Bloom**, three-time recipient of Israel's Prime Minister's Prize and winner of the 2016 Sapir Prize. "Jerusalem of the Mind", a round-table discussion sponsored by Gabriel Safdie, and dedicated to the memory of the great Israeli writer Amos Oz, takes a close look at efforts at rapprochement and relationships between Israelis and Palestinians.

The Concordia Effect at Blue Met: Contributions by Concordia students, professors and experts are woven into the fabric of this year's programming, with an Emily Dickinson breakfast, poetry performances, events on social justice, literary curation, the art and craft of writer-translators, and much more!

Literary Prizes

NEW: Anthony Atkinson Equality Prize: **Joseph E. Stiglitz** (USA)

Blue Metropolis International Literary Grand Prix: **Annie Proulx** (USA)

Premio Metropolis Azul: **Claudia Piñeiro** (Argentina)

Words to Change Prize: **Reni-Eddo Lodge** (UK)

Blue Metropolis First Peoples Literary Prize: **Terese Marie Mailhot** (Canada)

Blue Metropolis Violet Literary Prize presented by Air Canada: **Dionne Brand** (Canada)

Blue Metropolis /Conseil des arts de Montréal Diversity Prize: **Yara El-Ghadban** (Palestinian-Canadian)

For the complete program please consult our brochure or go online: www.bluemetropolis.org

The Festival's 2019 edition is a reminder that diversity is part of Blue Met's DNA. It also underlines the fact that writers are agents for social change, providing many opportunities for both reflection and enjoyment through their novels and works of non-fiction.

Blue Metropolis Festival in numbers

- **229 activities and events** – 104 for adults, 125 for children
- **268 participants** – 218 at the adult Festival and 49 at the Children's Festival, taking place in **17 languages**, from **20 countries**, including Canada, France, the UK, the US, Israel, Lebanon, Spain, Italy, Mexico, Brazil, Germany, Argentina, Australia, Morocco, Guadeloupe, Palestine.

Blue Metropolis at a glance

Blue Metropolis Foundation is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1997 that brings together people from different cultures to share the pleasures of reading and writing, and encourages creativity and intercultural understanding. The Foundation produces an **annual literary festival** of international calibre and offers a wide range of **educational and social programs** year-round, both in classrooms and online. These programs use reading and writing as therapeutic tools, to encourage academic perseverance, and fight against poverty and social isolation.

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MERCI AUX PARTENAIRES MAJEURS DE LA PROGRAMMATION POUR ADULTES DU FESTIVAL METROPOLIS BLEU 2019

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