Author Jack Hodgins and Illustrator Kristi Bridgeman
Win Victoria Book Prize Awards

Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2011

VICTORIA, BC — A Greater Victoria author and an illustrator were recognized for their literary achievements this evening at the 2011 Victoria Book Prize Awards Gala. Jack Hodgins, author of The Master of Happy Endings, was named the winner of the 8th Annual City of Victoria Butler Book Prize; and Kristi Bridgeman, illustrator of Uirapurú (pronounced oor-a-pur-ú), was named the winner of the 4th Annual Bolen Books Children's Book Prize.

Mayor Dean Fortin and event sponsor Brian H. Butler presented Jack Hodgins with a $5,000 cheque for his award-winning novel published by Thomas Allen Publishers, for best book published in the preceding year in the categories of fiction, literary non-fiction and poetry.


The Master of Happy Endings tells the wonderful and timely tale of what happens when a retired teacher posts an ad in the newspaper asking to be adopted by a family in need of a tutor. Axel Thorstad hopes that returning to the teaching of his beloved English literature might be a way out of the malaise that has enveloped him since his wife passed away. This powerful novel is about memory, belonging, and helping others. It is also a compelling story about how a man in his late seventies manages to conjure one more great adventure for himself.

Jack Hodgins was raised on Vancouver Island and until recently taught fiction writing at the University of Victoria. He has written seven novels and three story collections. Hodgins’ fiction has won the Governor General’s Award, the Canada-Australia Prize, the Commonwealth Prize and the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize. In 2009, he was appointed to the Order of Canada. Jack Hodgins and his wife Dianne reside in Victoria, British Columbia.

Uirapurú is a story based on a Brazilian legend about a songbird reputed to sing the most beautiful song in the world. In P.K. Page’s retelling of this legend, a group of mischievous boys set off into the forest to catch the bird and meet an old man with a flute who has spent his life trying to mimic the Uirapurú’s song, and a maiden of the moon surrounded by all the creatures of the night. This tale is magically illustrated by Kristi Bridgeman, who takes the reader on a warm and richly-layered, visual adventure through the exotic flora and fauna of the Brazilian rainforest.
Born and raised on the West Coast, Bridgeman now resides and paints in Saanich, British Columbia where she lives with her husband and two children. Her work has been shortlisted for the Governor General’s Literary Award for illustration. In 2009, Bridgeman was honoured by the Community Arts Council of Greater Victoria as one of 150 significant BC women artists, past and present. Bridgeman’s fine art pieces can be found at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria and Sooke Harbour House Gallery.

The other four finalists for the City of Victoria Butler Book Prize included Carla Funk, Stephen Hume, Sylvia Olsen and John Schreiber. Sarah N. Harvey and Arthur John Stewart were the two other finalists for the Bolen Books Children’s Book Prize. Held at the Union Club of British Columbia, the gala featured readings by the eight finalists, offering guests the opportunity to meet the writers and have their books autographed. The event was emceed by Jo-Ann Roberts of CBC Radio.

Founded in 2004, the City of Victoria Butler Book Prize is a partnership between the City of Victoria and Brian Butler of Butler Brothers Supplies. The Bolen Books Children’s Book Prize was founded in 2008 and is funded by Bolen Books. This year’s sponsors include the Greater Victoria Public Library, the Magnolia Hotel and Spa, the Union Club of British Columbia, the Victoria Marriott Inner Harbour Hotel, CBC Radio and Island Blue Print.

The Victoria Book Prize Society establishes the policy and criteria for the prizes, appoints the juries and administers the competitions.

For more information, visit:  www.victoria.ca  and click on What’s New? or visit:  www.victoriabookprizes.ca

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