



## Lorna Crozier and Mark Leiren-Young Win 2020 Victoria Book Prizes

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For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC – Last night at the 17th annual Victoria Book Prize Gala, Lorna Crozier was awarded the City of Victoria Butler Book Prize for *The House the Spirit Builds* (Douglas & McIntyre), and Mark Leiren-Young was awarded the City of Victoria Children’s Book Prize for *Orcas Everywhere; The Mystery and History of Killer Whales* (Orca Book Publishers).

“Victoria’s local authors bring inspiration and joy into our everyday lives, connecting us at this time when it is more challenging to be together,” said Mayor Lisa Helps. “Congratulations to both Lorna and Mark on their tremendous achievement.”

Mayor Lisa Helps and co-sponsor Brian Butler announced the winners at a virtual gala Sunday evening as part of the Victoria Festival of Authors. Both winners will receive \$5000.

*The House the Spirit Builds* explores human-crafted and natural landscapes from a variety of angles. An image of a slice of light falling across a tablecloth, three oranges in a red bowl, a black beetle on a leaf: these poems speak of moments “when the dragonfly lands and grips the skin/ on the back of your hand” or “rain stops falling/ but/ hangs around/ like the shape of lust/ in bed sheets.” The impressions and expression vary, but all are informed by a sense of place and aim to take understanding to a more visceral plane.

An Officer of the Order of Canada, Lorna Crozier has been acknowledged for her contributions to Canadian literature, her teaching and her mentoring with five honorary doctorates, most recently from McGill and Simon Fraser Universities. Her books have received numerous national awards, including the Governor General’s Award for Poetry. She has performed for Queen Elizabeth II and has read her poetry, which has been translated into several languages, on every continent except Antarctica.

*Orcas Everywhere* looks at how humans around the world (Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike) related to orcas in the past, how we relate to them now and what we can do to keep cetacean communities alive and thriving. The book deals with science, philosophy, environmentalism and ethics in a kid-friendly and accessible way. Mark Leiren-Young takes us back to a time when killer whales were considered monsters, and examines how humans went from using orcas for target practice to nearly loving them to death.

Author Mark Leiren-Young is a writer, documentary filmmaker, podcaster and orca activist. His book *The Killer Whale Who Changed the World* won the Science Writers and Communicators of Canada general audience book award. He wrote, directed and produced an award-winning documentary called *The Hundred-Year-Old Whale*, and his documentary about Moby Doll is being produced by Middle Child Films. Mark hosts a podcast about orca and ocean stories and is actively involved in the fight for the survival of the endangered southern residents. Mark has written for young audiences for ABC, PBS, YTV, Treehouse and BBC Kids.

“In a year when reading and books have been a comfort to many of us, it was wonderful to gather virtually as a community and to celebrate our region’s writers,” said Alyssa Polinsky, president, Victoria Book Prize Society. “Congratulations to all the winners and nominees.”

The prizes are presented with the support of Brian Butler of Butler Brothers Supplies and the City of Victoria. Additional sponsors include Munro’s Books, Ivy’s Bookshop, Russell Books, Tanner’s Books, Greater Victoria Public Library, Island Blue Print, Friesens Corporation and CBC Radio. CBC’s Gregor Craigie hosted the event.

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](http://www.victoria.ca) or [www.victoriabookprizes.ca](http://www.victoriabookprizes.ca).

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**For More Information:**

Alyssa Polinsky  
President  
Victoria Book Prize Society  
250.893.1311  
[victoriabookprizes@shaw.ca](mailto:victoriabookprizes@shaw.ca)

Connor Tice  
Arts, Culture, and Events Liaison  
City of Victoria  
250.418.0564  
[ctice@victoria.ca](mailto:ctice@victoria.ca)