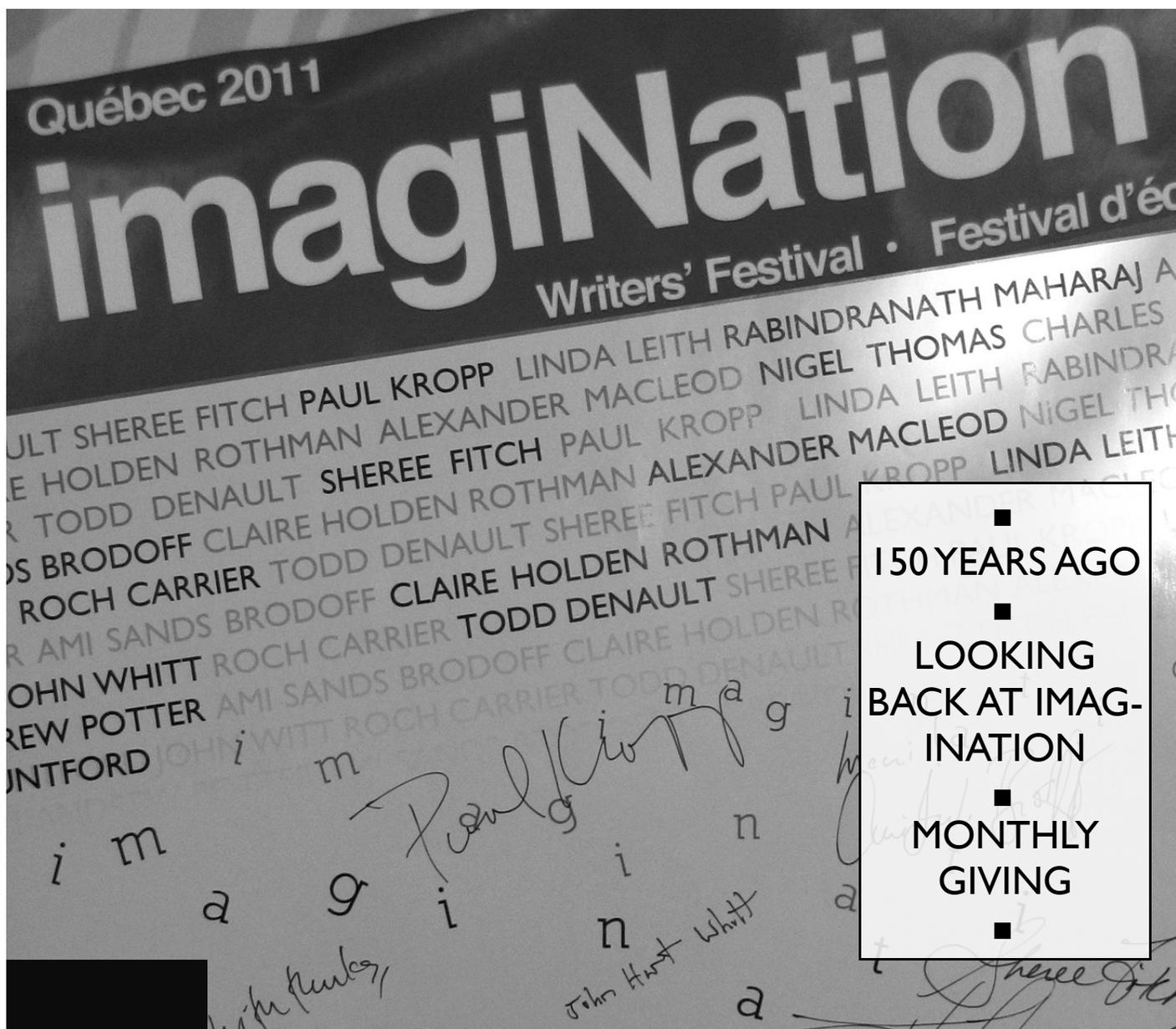


SOCIETY PAGES

NUMBER 31 ■ Spring 2011 ■ \$2.00



■
150 YEARS AGO
■
LOOKING
BACK AT IMAG-
INATION
■
MONTHLY
GIVING
■



Canadian Heritage / Patrimoine canadien



SOCIETY PAGES

NUMBER 31 ■ SPRING 2011

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LIBRARY HOURS

Sunday	12:00PM-4:00PM
Monday	CLOSED
Tuesday	12:00PM-9:00PM
Wednesday	12:00PM-4:00PM
Thursday	12:00PM-4:00PM
Friday	12:00PM-4:00PM
Saturday	10:00AM-4:00PM

Front cover: ImagiNation 2011—Poster with authors' signatures

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The mission of the **Morrin Centre** is to share and foster English-language culture in the Quebec City region. The Morrin Centre is administered by the Literary & Historical Society of Quebec.

ISSN 1913-0732

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear members and friends,

The Quebec Literary and Historical Society is in the process of establishing a strategic plan for the future. We have retained the services of Zins Beaudesne & Associés, a firm of consultants to advise us on how best to formulate this plan. Ultimately, however, the issue that we are facing is one of funding. We have been in existence since 1824. We are one of the oldest if not the oldest cultural institution in the city and indeed in Canada.

However, due to a variety of circumstances, we have fallen through the cracks when it comes to public funding. The various government agencies have not been able to properly characterize us nor place us in a category for which funding for other libraries and museums is available on a regular basis. Although we are a library, we are not part of the public library network comprising 25 establishments in the city, and not eligible for a share of the city's 23 million dollars budget for libraries. We have artefacts and hold exhibitions, but we are not officially classified as a museum either, so we have no access to the provincial government funding for museums such as le Musée des Beaux Arts, le Musée de la civilisation, le Musée de l'Amérique française and the other 14 museums and 6 interpretation centres presently operating in the city.

During a remarkably successful major fundraising campaign over the past few years, we were able to gather over five million dollars in contributions and commitments from both private and public sources. We invested a portion of these sums in endowments which will ensure long-term revenues for the future. The provincial and particularly the federal government contributed project funding in response to our campaign and ongoing grant applications. Project funding on its own, however, does not enable us to cover the cost of the basic operations of the Morrin Centre.

Thus, despite the fact that we are among the oldest cultural institutions in the country, we are only sporadically supported by the various levels of government and we get virtually no core funding. Core funding is the key to the ongoing healthy operation of the Morrin Centre and the Society. If we are to develop, sustain and grow our library services and cultural programs, we have no choice but to ensure the provision of significant core funding from one or other or all three levels of government.

The governments must recognize the important role that we play in the city of Quebec and indeed in the province and the nation. We are a cultural jewel that has been forgotten and unrecognized by the public purse. While we do undertake a large variety of activities which are intended to generate revenues, we are a cultural institution and not a business, and we cannot survive nor do we want to survive by making profit the goal of our activities.

With unflagging determination, the Society has independently provided faithful service to the Quebec City community for over 187 years. In 13 short years, we will be celebrating our 200th anniversary. This is a remarkable achievement and one for which we must all be very proud. In order to secure the future and to allow the organization to continue serving its community, we must be successful in obtaining a sustained source of public funding while retaining the character and independence of the Society.

In these circumstances the strategic plan that we are working on will identify a path for us to follow into the future, a path providing security and a vision for the long-term.

Thank you for your continued support.



THE LIBRARY IS YOURS... BE PART OF IT!

Read any good books lately?

If so, fill out one of the slips you'll find in the library, write your name on it, and add the book to our recommendations shelves.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It was good to see so many of you at the Annual General Meeting on March 28th. Thank you for taking the time to attend.

As I reported to you last year, we needed an additional one million dollars to finish the building restoration. I am pleased to announce that we received the funds necessary for completion thanks to our provincial partners the Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine and the Ministère du Tourisme; our federal partners, Parks Canada and Canadian Heritage, as well as the City of Quebec, the Office du Tourisme, the CLD de Québec and the Bureau de la Capitale-Nationale. Last, but certainly not least, we also received major support from the Jeffrey Hale Foundation, the R. Howard Webster Foundation and la Maison Simons. The restoration of the building is almost completed with just a few loose ends to tie up.

New hand rails have been installed on the central staircases and the staircases leading to college hall and the library. A second, higher handrail will be discreetly added behind the existing ones on the balconies in College Hall and the Library, to bring them up to conformity with the building code. Wheel chair ramps have been installed between College Hall and the library, so that it should now be easy to get into the library from the elevator. The exit door to the ramp has finally got a proper fixture to open and close! The entrance hall staircases have been painted and new linoleum was installed. Both prison cell blocks have been restored, each in their own fashion. The prison exhibition will be ready to open at the beginning of the summer, along with an interpretation project on the English community. The chemistry class room has now been restored and will also be opened during the summer. The third floor meeting room and a fourth floor office have been restored along with the introduction room next to the kitchen. All the original wooden floors in the central staircase and the mezzanine floors in College Hall have been cleaned and oiled.

The only work that is left to do is the re-varnishing of the entrance hall and the library as well as the installation of lights in the library and the balcony railing.

We have also been very busy on the cultural activities side. Here is a quick list of what we have done: Imagination Writer's festival (presenting 13 authors over five days), the Celtic festival, the Literary Feast, Arts Matters events (one with the Conservatoire de Musique, 5 with the OSQ and 4 with the Violon du Roy), four concerts in the Songwriter's Circle, various book launches (Louise Penny, Aurian Haller, Ray Baillee, Alexander Reeford, Earl John Chapman and Ian McPherson McCullough), history lectures (Steve Cameron, William Moss, Jack Little), We organised a Book Quest over the summer to encourage young readers.



This year, we plan on creating activities for seniors to expand our library services, with possible pick-up and drop-off services in Ste-Foy at the Eastern Quebec Learning Centre. Louisa Blair, Donald Fyson and Patrick Donovan are presently working on a book exploring the

history of our building and the different organisations that have been housed in it. The book is expected to be published in the spring of 2012.

We are currently developing our guided tours, which already have obtained the position of #2 'Things to do', according to TripAdvisor, a travelers web advisory forum. Here, we will need your help. During the summer, we will be open for tours 7 days a week and would really appreciate the help of volunteers at the reception desk in the entrance hall. If you have time this summer, please consider volunteering at the Morrin Centre.

I look forward to seeing you this summer at the library or at one of our many cultural events.

All the best,

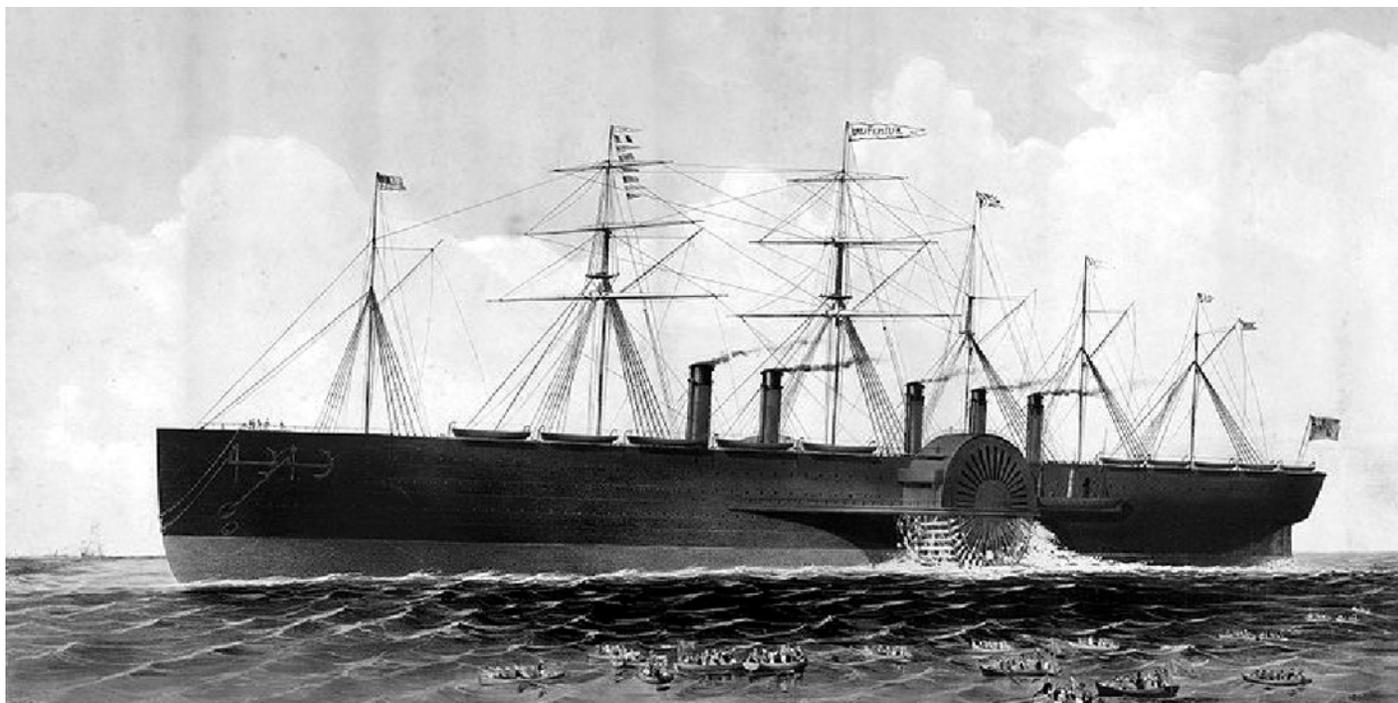
Simon Jacobs

TRANSACTIONS

150 YEARS AGO

A GRAND VISIT TO QUEBEC CITY

By Charles André Nadeau



Late afternoon, Saturday, July 6, 1861. Almost the entire population of Quebec City is gathered on or along the Saint Lawrence. The mayor, the aldermen, the members of the Chamber of Commerce and many citizens have embarked on the steamer *Napoleon*, the Grand Trunk ferries *S.P. Bidder* and *James Mackenzie* or various commercial vessels to go down river. Shortly after 5 o'clock, the *SS Great Eastern* appears, emitting a long trail of black smoke and proceeding at high speed. As the incoming ship approaches, hurrahs burst out from the *Napoleon*, handkerchiefs wave and a band plays popular tunes. The visitor replies with a two-gun salute and slows down to accompany the welcoming flotilla. On Durham Terrace, the heights and the quays, thousands observe the anchoring of the cruise liner in front of the Queen's wharf, near the actual ferry terminal.

The *Great Eastern* is by far the largest vessel in the world. Some claim that only Noah's Ark exceeded in dimension this giant of the seas. It is twice the length and six times the weight of the biggest ships of its time. The barques and ferries of the port seem like toys in comparison. It entered service in 1859. Not until 1899 will the *RMS Oceanic* surpass it in length and not until the 20th century will another White Star liner, the *RMS Celtic*, exceed its tonnage.

Everything about the *Great Eastern* is out of the ordinary. Three methods of propulsion are available: sail, including 18,148 square feet of canvas and six masts; two side wheels 56 feet in diameter; and one 24-foot propeller. Five engines provide the propulsion: four for the wheels, one for the propeller. Five funnels (a unique feature in maritime history) emit the polluting smoke produced by ten boilers heated by 100 coal-fed furnaces. The use of wind and steam concurrently is not possible, however, because the sails would catch fire under the intense heat of the exhaust. The hull is double (a very avant-garde novelty), made entirely of iron and includes 3,000,000 rivets. Its length is 692 feet (211 m), draft 30 (9.1 m) and maximum displacement 32,160 tons. Its speed reaches 13 knots (24 k/h). Its crew comprises 418 members. The vessel can carry 4000 passengers for a return trip from England to Australia without coaling. A reporter from the *Morning Chronicle* described the splendour of the interior, its gilded saloon, fine picture gallery and the extensive library. He declared seeing more conveniences and luxuries than in any hotel in America or Europe.

The *Great Eastern* attracts much attention during its various stopovers. Earlier in the year, while in New York, 164,754 visitors came aboard, including 16,817 in one

TRANSACTIONS - CONTINUED

single day. Walt Whitman mentioned its name in his *Year of Meteors*. In Quebec, hundreds of small boats buzz around the ship on the Sunday afternoon after its arrival. The city organizes a banquet for the officers at the Hotel Russell where the Honorable George Étienne Cartier figures among the guests. The liner is open to the public for 50 cents starting on the 17th of July. Tourists come from Montreal, Upper Canada and the US on the occasion.

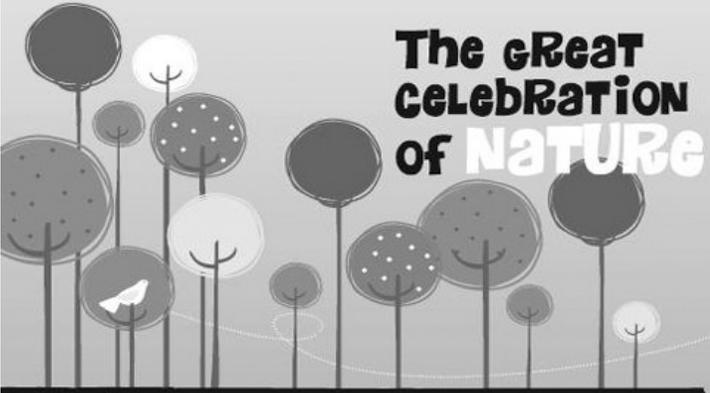
The grandiose spectacle of the *Great Eastern* on the river is not, however, for the benefit of the local population or the tourists. It is addressed to the government, press and population of the United States. The political crisis which escalated on December 20, 1860 by the secession of South Carolina and became a civil war on April 12, 1861, worries Great Britain. There is talk of annexing Canada to compensate for the loss of the slave states. Relations between London and Washington are tense because of the possibility that England acknowledges the independence of the Confederacy. Canada is the weakest point for the empire because of its location and the length of the common border. Furthermore, the military resources of the colony are quite limited: 2200 regular British soldiers and a poorly equipped and trained militia. Fearing a degeneration of the situation, British Prime Minister Palmerston and his Foreign Affairs Secretary Lord Russell recognize the need for reinforcements. At first they propose sending the troops without much publicity, but following the angry reaction in the American press to the declaration of neutrality by Queen Victoria, they opt for a show of force. The War Office charters the *Great Eastern*. The liner departs Liverpool on June 25th. However, there is a mutiny by the civilian crew, unhappy with being thus mobilized. The situation is resolved and the vessel

reaches Quebec City two weeks before the first battle of the American Civil War.

The armed contingent sent to Canada includes the 4th Battery of the Royal Artillery, the 30th Foot, the 4th battalion of the 60th Rifles, as well as replacements for units already in the country. In all 2,139 soldiers. The passenger list also comprises 184 women and 253 children. One hundred and twenty-two horses made the voyage. The artillery men and the 30th Regiment are transferred to the steamers *Banshee* and *Passport* and continue to Montreal. The 60th Rifles disembarks at the Queen's wharf and marches up to the Jesuit barracks, at the site of the present City Hall.

The *Great Eastern* departs on August 6th with only 344 passengers. This lack of clientele is unfortunately usual for the vessel. Three decades shall pass before the large waves of immigrants from Europe signal the need for liners of its size. Meanwhile the ship must find other employment. In 1863, it is rented by the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company to install a transatlantic cable from Ireland to Newfoundland. It never returns to Quebec City.

After the war, the British government concludes that the transport of reinforcements across the ocean costs too much. This experience encourages the ministers to support the concept of a confederation of its North American colonies and the creation of the Dominion of Canada. ■



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EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Québec 2011

imagiNation

Writers' Festival • Festival d'écrivains



LOOKING BACK AT IMAGINATION

By Valérie Chabot

Time flies by, it seems like only yesterday that we were tying up the loose ends of this year's Writers' Festival. Volunteers, accommodation, transportation and simple details to take care of such as nametags, gifts and food filled up our to-do list and kept us on our toes. Looking back at this whole adventure, it is an understatement to say that this year's edition was a real success. Not only were attendees delighted with the events, but the authors themselves were much impressed by the quality of our festival. To quote Todd Denault, our guest on Saturday afternoon who discussed his books *Greatest Game* and *Jacques Plante, The Man Who Changed The Face of Hockey*: "Everything on the weekend was first class and top notch and each of you and your crew should be very proud of what you were able to pull off." This comment sure put a smile on my face.

Other venues welcomed our authors, too. On Thursday, Champlain St-Lawrence College welcomed Roch Carrier and Claire Holden Rothman for a special reading at lunch time. Over 150 students gathered in the classrooms to hear them read and for a short Q&A period. John Whitt, who also teaches at St-Lawrence, held an afternoon of poetry on April 17th. This event was partly hosted by Bob McBryde, but mostly by students enrolled in his journalism class. You could tell they were well prepared and had put great care into researching the authors.

Sheree Fitch also toured a few schools to pay a visit to her number one fans, school children. She visited Dollard des Ormeaux, Mount Everest and St. Vincent on Wednesday and Thursday and reached out to 550 kids who listened to her in awe. CBC Radio One went to the heart of the action to capture this event live.

Another highlight of the festival was the VIP cocktail held on Thursday April 14th to celebrate the winners of this year's writing contest, sponsored by the Alex and Ruth Dworkin Foundation. We promoted this contest to cegep students, asking them to write short stories or poems about intercultural dialogue, exploring racism, anti-Semitism, and other forms of discrimination (against women, homosexuals, etc.) and on reconciliation.

Canadian authors Roch Carrier, Linda Leith and Paul Kropp had judged the entries that morning and the winners were disclosed later on, when the mayor himself, Régis Labeaume, presented a total of \$1,000 worth of prizes. A poem written by Fanny Doodridge, a student at Cegep de Limoilou, won first prize. She was doubly delighted as Thursday was also her birthday. Her poem was read aloud to those gathered at the VIP cocktail party and dealt with the abuse of women. All three judges were unanimous in choosing Fanny's story which, according to Roch Carrier, internationally renowned author, library enthusiast and this year's Honorary Pres-

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES - CONTINUED

ident of ImagiNation Writers' Festival, has a certain "wow" factor. The second prize was won by Pierre-Luc Fréchette of Champlain St. Lawrence College and third prize winner, Marie-Hélène Mercier-Goulet, is a student at Cégep Ste-Foy.

ImagiNation Writers' Festival, presented in collaboration with the Salon international du livre de Québec, is Quebec City's only English-language literary festival and was held from April 13 to 17 at the Morrin Centre. The festival brings both emerging and internationally-renown Canadian writers to Quebec City, hosting discussions, debates, readings, interviews and performances. The three winning texts are available on the ImagiNation website, but we decided nevertheless to include them here



The Judges and the First Prize Winner

FIRST PRIZE WINNER

Fanny Doddridge, Cégep Limoilou

This Morning

my room is filled with clouds
 clouds painted on the walls
 my mother was always cleaning it
 one day she met him; she doesn't clean anymore
 the filth, I think she doesn't see it
 this morning I'm eating eggs
 she smiles at me, eye to eye
 then he arrives and insults her
 is it because they are adults?
 Teddy told me everything
 he said that parents love to tease each other
 At school, I teased Sophie
 yet Miss Helene punished me
 this morning mom is crying
 is it because of my mistake?
 I think it's just the adults

that are allowed to behave that way
 I apologized to Sophie
 explaining that my mother was also punished
 he is often angry
 when mom doesn't want to listen to him
 this morning, I'm in the hospital
 I'm hurt and I'm suffering
 yesterday, my mom didn't listen to him
 he decided to tease me instead

SECOND PRIZE WINNER

Pierre-Luc Fréchette, Champlain St Lawrence College

Trudeau's Mosaic

Silent raindrops fall and clutch the window. The winds scream some intangible, unbearable advice. Still, the sun in flight leaves the sky and the winds the opportunity to dry and rest. In the past, beaten angels and hell hounds had sat on my couch, but never was I to meet such a curious, fancy case. Though his body implored the sofa to entomb him, his bright eyes remained fearless and alive, fixing my soul with some kind of pity. How he silently told me both that he dearly needed my help and that he pitied me as if I was the endangered one will remain a buried treasure.

The kid, or whatever he was, had no eccentric or dramatic problem: "Dr. Tremblay, sometimes I swear to myself Moses was born to drive me crazy!", his mother had told me the day she came to see me. "He goes around, placidly, as if it was normal to have no enemies, but only equal friends! Can't he see the repulsiveness, strangeness of some others? How can he dare treat us all equal? How can he dare treat me equal to them! Oh that boy will lose these aspirations of grandeur, of freedom, and of independence that I granted him!" No, that kid was in no way a complex case. A simple, common crisis of identity and existence. Yet, I felt a growing, awakening anger in me. His light, fair eye warmed my blood and increased my heartbeat. Then the pressure of the handset on my temple returned with the father's rude voice: "It's disastrous. That boy has no patriotism, no attachment to family values. The noble, precious heritage will find no heir, for my son will break himself into fragments. And his mother. Ten years... Why does he offend her like that for Christ's sake!? Yes... ten years it took her, before she began to accept him."

All of a sudden my mind was dangerously approaching the boiling point. I looked away, and caught for a second the small mosaic that was hanging on my wall, but was

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES - CONTINUED

disgusted. Where the hell did I get that colorful thing from? Gladly, my gaze switched back to the weeping window. I sighed; my respiration was recovering. "My dear... boy. Don't you have a clue why your parents brought you to me?" No response. Though my eyes religiously focused on the raindrops, I nevertheless felt he was shrinking, trying to escape the situation. I fiercely stared at the window, nervously played with my pencil. An infinite minute waved by. Then I saw all the rainbow colors in a damned raindrop: "Young boy! No one can accept and find interest in all human beings! No one ever did! Favor some, hate some!" A deafening silence echoed in the room. I perceived he was fading away, melting into the chair. "Don't you know what your roots are? Where you come from!?" Suddenly I was petrified, for the runt had begun to croon:

*D'ivres pierres lancées dans un trou d'eau,
Je naquis mais ne serai sauvé des eaux.*

His voice was low, and weak, and dying, as if he was moving far, far away. I was so frozen I did not move for a long time. But when I looked back, all I could see was my chair, empty, and the wall, empty. It had disappeared. They had disappeared. Yes, the day is just beginning, and weather still has time to change. Doesn't it?

THIRD PRIZE WINNER

Marie-Hélène Mercier-Goulet, Cégep Sainte-Foy

Fighter

My mom promptly swings our big suitcase onto the bed. Then, she begins to gather everything from the dresser drawers.

She was packing our bags. Again.

"What are you doing, Mommy?" I murmur.

She doesn't respond. She doesn't even look my way, so I sit on the bed, and I look at her. Her hair is in a loose bun, and she looks tired.

"Mommy, are you crying?"

"Hush, little girl, don't you worry." is her easy answer.

She smiles her sad smile, the same as two years ago, when we had taken the airplane to Canada. I don't understand. Are we moving again? So soon?

A tear rolls down my cheek. I don't want to go away.

"We are not leaving, are we?" My voiced choked on the last word.

"We... We don't have a choice, baby."

"You say we always have a choice, Mommy. That's what you always tell me!" I yell.

I don't want to leave the home we made here. I don't want to lose my friends all over again.

"Well, we have a choice, and I am choosing to go back to India. We are not welcome here, baby girl." She doesn't even look at me.

"Of course we are welcome here. That's what Juliette said, our neighbour. And you know it's going well in my classes. They are not making fun of me, the other children, I swear!"

I remember my first day of school, here. Mom had told me not to let anyone say bad things about me. They had not. I made a lot of friends! My mom looks at me, and the tears are falling down her cheeks. I don't understand. She comes and sits next to me, on her bed. The lights in the room are dimmed, making the atmosphere heavy. "You are too young to understand this, baby, but it is not the children who are being mean, it's the adults. Sometimes, sometimes, they are misguided. "

I stay silent, not understanding. She sees my discomfort. "I don't understand."

"You remember your first day of school?"

"Yes. Nobody said mean things, Mommy!" I say rapidly.

"Yes, that's what you told me, and I'm really happy for you. Who could be mean to you, huh?"

But some adults have been mean to me. Really mean, and now, I don't see any solution other than to go back to where we came from."

"But you always say to fight..." My shoulders slump.

"One day, when you are older, you will understand. But right now, all I can tell you is that Mommy has worked really hard in the past year, and tried really hard to make us settle here..."

"I know! You were always studying for all your exams! Like me!"

She looks at me with teary eyes again.

"Is it because you had a bad mark on an exam, Mom? You can do better on the next one..."

And she laughs, and I laugh too. She looks pretty when she smiles, she looks younger, and I feel a little better.

"No, that's not it. I had really good marks on my exams, like you. But sometimes it's not enough." Her voice sounds so defeated. I'm not used to hearing her like this.

"Why?" I ask.

"You remember, back in India, when Mommy was a doctor?"

"Yes..." Where is she going with this?

"Well, Mommy wanted to be a doctor here, too."

"I know. You said you were taking all these exams to be a doctor here."

"Well, even though I have had great marks, the people in charge are not letting me be a doctor. They say I am not qualified."

We stay quiet for a while. She brushes my hair as I lean

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES - CONTINUED

my head on her shoulder.

"Well, why not take another exam that would show them you are good?" I quickly suggest.

"That's the problem, sweetie, there are no more exams."

"But..." I try to talk, before she cuts me off.

"It's the same as with your playmates. I said they might judge you, because of our origins. Well, adults do that, too."

This is not making any sense. That's not what we learn in school.

"Well, are you sure?" I look at her questioningly.

"What do you mean?"

"How do you know for sure that they think you are not good enough?"

"You remember when you stayed with Juliette last month? Because Mommy was meeting people? Well, Mommy had an interview. It was really short. They didn't ask anything about medicine, not even about my qualifications!" She sighs. "We just met, and they made me repeat everything I was saying three times, as though they didn't understand..."

"Why? Other people understand what you say..."

"I know. I don't know what to tell you, sweetie. A little while later, they sent a letter, saying my application was non-competitive."

"What is non-competitive?"

"That's a really good question, sweetie. I don't know."

"Well, ask them."

"If it were that easy, baby, I'd be a doctor, and we would have no worries..."

I sighed, and my mom looks at the wall, but she's not moving. I won't let her quit. We are fighters. So I get up, and pull the clothes out of the luggage.

"Sweetie..." She begins.

Ring. Ring.

She gets up, and answers the phone...

"Hello?" She asks, exasperated.

"..."

"Yes, this is she. Who is this?"

"..."

"The National Film Board of Canada? You want to do a documentary on the difficulties of immigrant doctors?"

"..."

"Do you think this would really change something? I was planning on leaving..."

"..."

"And what if the College of Physicians discredits me? Then I'll never get a job!"

"..."

"Yes, I know."

"..."

"Okay, I will do it..."

"..."

"I'll meet you there tomorrow."

She smiles, her face radiating.

"We are staying, baby girl. We won't go down without one last fight."

I see the fire in her eyes that I was looking for. ■

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LIBRARY PAGES

BOOK REVIEW

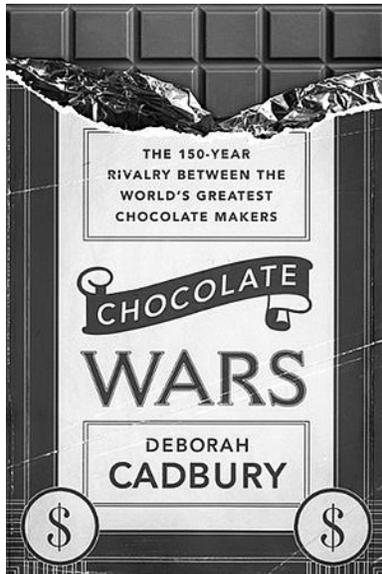
CHOCOLATE WARS

By Deborah Cadbury

A book for both lovers of chocolate and those impervious to its enticements, *Chocolate Wars* by Deborah Cadbury spins a fascinating tale of chocolate's history through five generations of the Cadbury family. The story begins when Birmingham draper Richard Tapper Cadbury sends his youngest son John to investigate a new commodity, cocoa, with the notion that it might provide a wholesome alternative to gin.

The Cadburys were Quakers. Legally barred from admission to Oxford and Cambridge by reason of their nonconformism (they were not members of the Church of England) and therefore largely excluded from the professions, they were left with the world of business.

The Quakers took business seriously. They made their mark on the course of the Industrial Revolution, in banking and in business practice. Capitalists they may have been but profit for personal gain was never their aim. They believed wealth should benefit workers and that entrepreneurs had a responsibility to society. The Cadbury chocolate business was true to its Quaker



code, sparing no effort in improving the products it manufactured and in providing for its employees.

Written in a lively and entertaining style, *Chocolate Wars* introduces us not only to the Cadburys but also to other Quaker chocolate manufacturers, Fry and Rowntree, to their European competitors Lindt and Nestlé, and to Americans Hershey and Mars. We follow the twists and turns as cocoa is transformed from a rough product, often rancid and routinely contaminated by red ochre from brick dust and red lead, into quality-controlled confections many of whose names we recognize.

But Deborah Cadbury, a family member, tells the story so much better than I, as she guides us from the very beginnings of the Cadbury involvement with chocolate in the early 1800s through to Kraft's takeover of the company in 2009. With or without chocolate to accompany it, this is a delicious read!

Reviewed by Donna Yavorska, Book Selection Committee member

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BOOK REVIEW

SUPER SAD TRUE LOVE STORY

By Gary Shteyngart

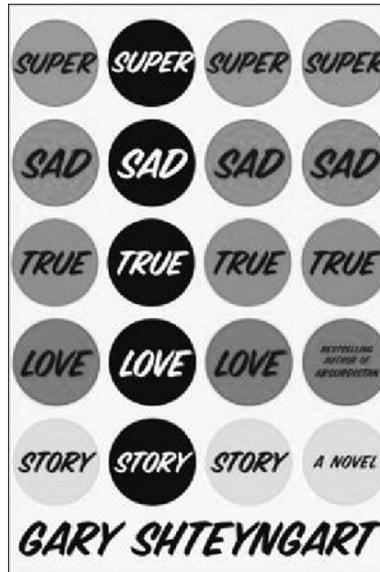
Super Sad True Love Story is Gary Shteyngart's third novel. The title almost says it all. It's super-sad, and it's got a true-love story in it.

What the title doesn't say: the book is also hilarious.

Super Sad True Love Story is about the unlikely wooing of Eunice Park by Lenny Abramov and their subsequent romance. Eunice is a beautiful, young Korean-American woman. Lenny is the balding, middle-aged son of Russian Jewish immigrants. Lenny falls in love with Eunice in Rome. After returning home to New York, he pursues her. After calculating her options, she reluctantly moves in with him. And slowly, she comes to love him. Yet, as we learn through Lenny's old-fashioned diary entries and Eunice's online chats and emails, love can't save them from themselves.

The novel is set in the near future, which gives rise to all kinds of absurdist humour and satirical commentary on US politics and culture. The US dollar is solvent only because it is backed by the Chinese yuan. America is run by global mega-corporations who answer to the Chinese and sometimes the Norwegians. The idea of privacy has gone up in smoke, to the point that your credit rating is flashed on street displays as you walk by. If you happen to walk into a bar or club, your attractiveness rating is flashed on other patrons' smartphones (now called äppäräti). Youth is literally everything, and high net-worth individuals can actually buy it (and by the way, Lenny's selling). Printed books are smelly and arcane, and those who read them are probably slightly mad.

Yet it would be misleading to say the book is pure satire. There is also a sense of Russian tragedy, not just in the sad love between two lonely people but also in the ultimate collapse of the US as it descends into totalitarianism.



Gary Shteyngart's choice of setting or genre isn't out of the ordinary in contemporary literature. Last year, Rick Moody, who otherwise writes reflective novels about family break-ups in suburban Connecticut, published *The Four Fingers of Death*, a complex novel spanning both the space-cowboy and future-dystopia genres. Margaret Atwood has been dipping her pen in these waters for years, starting with *The Handmaid's Tale* and more recently with *Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood*.

Last summer, the *New Yorker* magazine included Gary Shteyngart in their 20 under 40 Fiction Issue, which featured up and coming writers of contemporary

American fiction. He's also won a number of other awards, including recognition from the *New York Times* Book Review as well as the Stephen Crane Award for First Fiction. He's published two other novels, *The Russian Debutante's Handbook* (2003) and *Absurdistan* (2006), and his other writing has been in *The New Yorker*, *Slate*, and *Granta*.

Reviewed by Sovita Chander, Vice-President



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LIBRARY PAGES - CONTINUED

BOOK REVIEW

ESTHER—THE REMARKABLE TRUE STORY OF ESTHER WHEELWRIGHT

By Julie Wheelwright

I heard the name Esther Wheelwright for the first time during a private guided tour of the Ursuline Convent in the Old-Town of Quebec City. The sisters, knowing that I worked at the Morrin Centre, proudly pointed out the portrait of “Notre mère supérieure, Esther Wheelwright”, an “English women” captured by the Abenakis and who after her release, negotiated by a French Jesuit, joined the convent and later on become Mother Superior.

A few weeks later, Virginie Haustrate, the LHSQ librarian, came to see me with a book, wondering if I might be interested in reading it and writing a review. I was surprised to see a book about a woman whose existence I had just learned a few weeks ago. I hesitated first, not knowing if I would have time to read the book, but I was intrigued and felt that this was not a coincidence. I then made a deal with Virginie: If I liked the book, I

would write a review. Obviously I did, since you are to find out about this fascinating story of a young Puritan girl who survived her abduction, war, starvation and the cold as a 200-mile journey by foot took her through swamps and forests to a Jesuit mission near Trois-Rivières. After her release from the Abenakis had been negotiated, Esther, by then twelve years old was taken to Quebec City where she joined the Ursuline convent and refused to return to her parents. Esther went on to become not only the Mother Superior, one of the highest positions available to women in the 18th century, but also a pivotal figure in the Quebec landscape after the siege of the city in 1759. A fascinating story, an account of Canadian history and a search for the author’s own personal history.

Reviewed by Marie Rubsteck, Director of Development

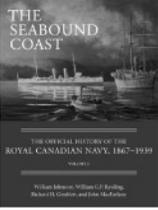
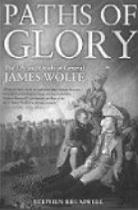


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FUNDRAISING

THE STORY OF JAMES DOUGLAS, JR.

By Marie Rubstek

Once upon a time there was a young boy by the name of James Douglas. He grew up in a home full of semi-dissected corpses on Quebec City's Côte de la Montagne. His father, Dr. Douglas, had earned the reputation of being the fastest surgeon in town, capable of performing an amputation in less than one minute.

However, young James initially chose a different career from his father, studying to become a minister in the Presbyterian Church. By the end of his studies, he had second thoughts: "When therefore I was licensed to teach, my faith in Christ was stronger but my faith in denominational Christianity was so weak that I could not sign the Confession of Faith and therefore was never ordained."

He then started helping his father at the Beauport Asylum while studying towards a career in medicine. He also worked as a librarian at the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, and later became the youngest president in the history of the Society.

This interest in mining and geology eventually supplanted his interest in medicine and Douglas embarked on a third career. Scientific experiments done with the assistance of Dr. T. Sterry Hunt at

Laval University led him to a discovery that was to change his life. Together, they elaborated a patent for the "Hunt and Douglas" process of extracting copper from its ore. Although Douglas had no formal education in chemistry, he was considered competent enough to fill the Chair of Chemistry at Morrin College. His evening lectures were among the most popular in the history of the College.

Douglas's patents attracted attention in the United States, and he was recruited by the trading company Phelps Dodge and helped transform it into the Fortune 500 company it is today. He eventually became president of Phelps Dodge.

Throughout this time, Douglas maintained an interest in Canadian history and heritage. In addition to bailing Queen's University out of a financial crisis with approximately a million dollars from his own pocket, he also donated to several medical causes, most notably the Douglas Hospital in Montreal. He also financed many libraries, such as the library of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec. Because of his generosity, over a hundred years ago, interest from his donation is still used to purchase almost all of the books for the LHSQ library.



Form of Bequest

*I give and bequeath to the
Literary and Historical Society of Quebec,
in the city of Quebec,
the sum of _____
and the Receipt of the Treasurer of
the said Society be sufficient
discharge to my executors for the same.*

Bequest form used in the 19th century

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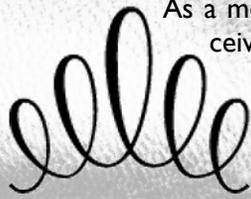
THE STORY OF (your name here)

Once upon a time there was a
who lived in Quebec City.

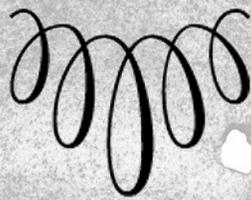
Why don't you write this story.

There are many ways you can contribute to the Morrin Centre. One of them is Planned Giving. Did you know that other than a contribution to your community and leaving a legacy for future generations, planned giving has genuine financial and tax benefits for both you and the charity you are supporting? There are several options available and tax advantages vary according to the type of vehicle chosen to convey the gift. These options can allow you to maximize your gift to your favorite charity without lowering the value of your estate. Amongst these options are the gift of life insurance, of listed securities, of charitable bequests and annuities, or charitable trusts.

The Morrin Centre is part of the Community Planned Giving Program. See www.qcplannedgiving.ca for details about this initiative. For more information on planned giving, you may also follow this link: <http://www.leavealegacy.ca>



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MONTHLY GIVING

As a member of the LHSQ you have certainly received our annual campaign appeal letter in December 2010. If making a donation once a year is not the suitable vehicle for you, how about a monthly donation. Please fill out the enclosed form to set up your monthly gift. You will receive a tax receipt for your cumulative annual contributions at the end of each fiscal year. You can increase, decrease, or suspend your gift amount at any time by calling 418 694-9147.

REMEMBER!

The seed that you plant today will grow to be harvested by future generations. For further information on monthly giving, please contact Marie Rubsteck, Development Director, at the Morrin Centre
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THE MORRIN CENTRE - NOW ACCEPTING CREDIT AND DEBIT CARD PAYMENTS

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Those of you who would like to make credit card payments online may do so by following the Paypal "Buy It

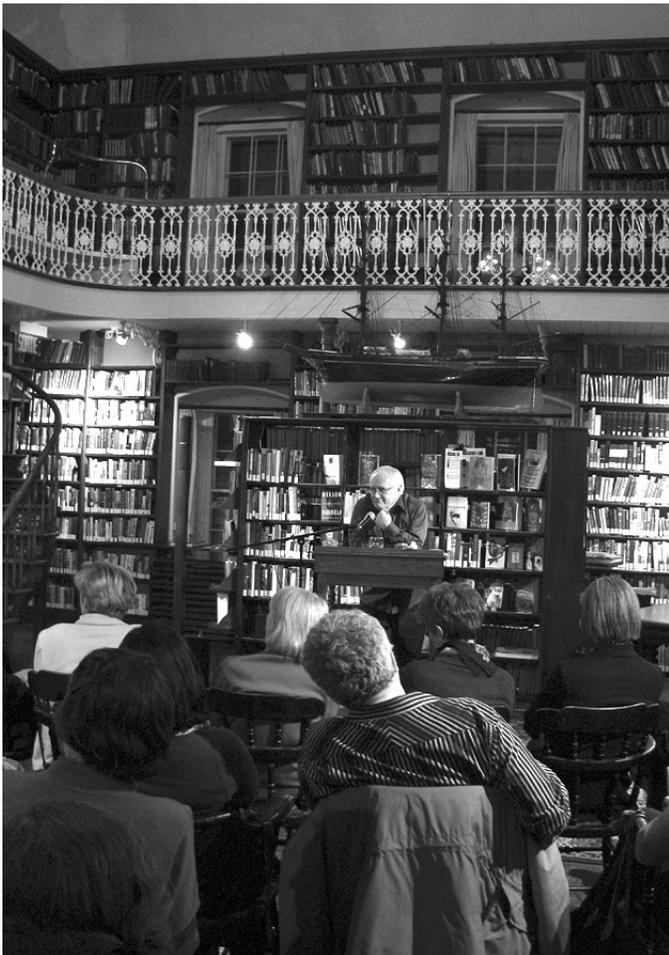
Now" buttons on our website. It is not necessary to have a Paypal account to make payments. All you need is a valid credit card. It's just like making a payment through any web site and it is among the safest and most secure ways to make purchases online.

If you have any questions regarding these payment options, please contact Barry McCullough at the Morrin Centre.

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Toddler Time



Toddler Time