

(Le français suit)



NEWS RELEASE

Parliament of Canada

Appointment of a new Parliamentary Poet Laureate

January 24, 2018 (Ottawa) – The Honourable George J. Furey, Speaker of the Senate, and the Honourable Geoff Regan, Speaker of the House of Commons, announced the appointment of Georgette LeBlanc as Canada’s next Parliamentary Poet Laureate, effective January 1, 2018. Ms. LeBlanc is the eighth poet to hold this office, succeeding George Elliott Clarke, whose two-year term ended on December 31, 2017.

Georgette LeBlanc was appointed by the Speakers upon the recommendation of the Selection Committee chaired by Sonia L’Heureux, Parliamentary Librarian and composed of Guy Berthiaume, Librarian and Archivist of Canada; Pierre Lassonde, Chair, Canada Council for the Arts (represented by Joanne Larocque-Poirier, Director of Cabinet and Corporate Secretary); and Ghislaine Saikaley, Interim Commissioner of Official Languages.

Born in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec, Georgette LeBlanc grew up in Baie Sainte-Marie, Nova Scotia. She holds a Doctorate in Francophone Studies from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Her published works include *Alma* (2007), *Amédé* (2010), *Prudent* (2013) (finalist for the 2014 Governor General’s Literary Award for poetry), and most recently, *Le Grand Feu* (2016), published by Éditions Perce-Neige, where she edits the poetry collection *Acadie tropicale*. She has collaborated on and contributed to theatrical, televisual and musical projects—including the screenplay for the television drama series *Belle-Baie* and to the albums *Havre de Grâce* (Radio Radio), *Deuxième nation* (Cy), *Le couloir des ouragans* (Vivian Audet) and $\frac{3}{4}$ (Arthur Comeau). Ms. LeBlanc has also self-published her own audio archives, *Sadie: Les Archives sonores de Georgette LeBlanc vol. 1*. Her work has also appeared in various literary reviews, including *Exit*, *Cousins de personne*, *Voix plurielles*, *Les Écrits* and *Estuaire*. Ms. LeBlanc has also taught creative writing at her alma mater, Sainte-Anne University in Nova Scotia.

Quotes

“Georgette LeBlanc is a rising star in the Canadian poetry community. She is a truly gifted storyteller and I am confident she will bring a new voice and dynamism to the role of Parliamentary Poet Laureate.”

- Hon. George J. Furey, Speaker of the Senate of Canada

“Ms. LeBlanc’s narrative poetry is widely recognized for highlighting the richness of written and spoken Acadian French. She has played a key role in making poetry known to a new generation of readers and authors.”

- Hon. Geoff Regan, Speaker of the House of Commons

“What a delight it is to accept this appointment as Parliamentary Poet Laureate! It is a true honour. I look forward to continuing to write and to inspire poetry in all its forms over the next two years, as well as celebrating and promoting poetic language, this individual form of expression that enchants and regenerates the four corners of this new world.”

-Georgette LeBlanc, Parliamentary Poet Laureate

Overview of Parliamentary Poet Laureate Program:

Federal legislators created the position of Parliamentary Poet Laureate in 2001 to draw Canadians’ attention to the reading and writing of poetry. Pursuant to the *Parliament of Canada Act*, the Poet Laureate performs a range of duties, including: compose poetry, particularly for use in Parliament on occasions of state; sponsor poetry readings, advise the Parliamentary Librarian on the Library’s cultural collection; and perform related duties at the request of the Speaker of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Commons, or the Parliamentary Librarian.

Biographical notes and a photo of Georgette LeBlanc are available [online](#).

For additional information media may contact:

Library of Parliament Media Relations

Tanya Sirois

613-608-3956

tanya.sirois@parl.gc.ca