



The Canadian Children's Book Centre

Bringing Canadian Books and Young Readers Together

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Canadian Children's Book Award Announced

TORONTO, JANUARY 19, 2011 — The **Canadian Children's Book Centre** is very pleased to announce a major new Canadian children's literature award. The **John Spray Mystery Award** will honour excellence in the children's mystery book format and comes with a \$5,000 cash prize which will be awarded annually beginning in November 2011. To be eligible the book must be an original work in English, aimed at readers ages eight to sixteen, and written by a Canadian author. A mystery book can be a thriller, a crime novel, or a 'whodunit'.

John Spray, President of the Mantis Investigation Agency, is delighted to give the prize, saying that reading mysteries made him a passionate reader at an early age and helped him find his chosen career. "For many years, through the publishing career of my wife, Gail Winskill, I became acquainted with both contemporary children's literature as well as the unwavering support of the Canadian Children's Book Centre for children's writers and illustrators. While attending the 2010 Canadian Children's Literature Awards Celebration, I was struck by the absence of an award for mystery writing. My childhood was spent rapidly turning the pages of the Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys books, which morphed into the Spillanes and le Carres on my adult bookshelf. Offering a prize for children's mystery books seemed to me to be a modest payback for a lifetime of joy spent reading great mysteries."

The **John Spray Mystery Award** is organized and administered by the **Canadian Children's Book Centre**, a national, not-for-profit organization founded in 1976 to encourage the reading, writing and illustrating of Canadian books for young readers. "We are thrilled that John Spray has entrusted us with the co-ordination of this important and generous new award that will recognize all the elements that make a great mystery book. The winning book will be recognized for its high literary qualities as well as for a great story with lots of suspense and thrills. Although there already exist a few Canadian literary awards for the mystery genre, this is the first one that comes with a cash prize and such a generous one at that. This new award is yet another way of bringing national recognition to the great Canadian creators writing for young people." said Charlotte Teeple, Executive Director of the Canadian Children's Book Centre.

The three inaugural judges for this important new award are **Ken Setterington**, librarian, author, reviewer and former Child and Youth Advocate for the Toronto Public Library; **Marian Misterns**, co-owner of the Sleuth of Baker Street Mystery Bookstore, former judge for Crime Writers of Canada and the International Association of Crime Writers, and **Eric Wright**, retired Professor of English at Ryerson University, writer, and winner of numerous awards including four Arthur Ellis Awards for Best Crime Novel, and the Derrick Murdoch Award for lifetime contribution to Canadian crime writing.

Complete details of the **John Spray Mystery Award** can be found at www.bookcentre.ca.

Suite 101
40 Orchard View Blvd.
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M4R 1B9

T: 416.975.0010
F: 416.975.8970
E: info@bookcentre.ca
www.bookcentre.ca

Charitable Tax Number
BN124389164RR0001

For further information contact:

Charlotte Teeple, Executive Director | The Canadian Children's Book Centre
416 975-0010 ext. 226 | charlotte@bookcentre.ca