



**THE WRITERS'
UNION OF CANADA**
200-90 Richmond Street East, Toronto,
Ontario M5C 1P1
T 416-703-8982 F 416-504-9090

June 7, 2012
For Immediate Release

WINNERS ANNOUNCED FOR THE 2011 DANUTA GLEED LITERARY AWARD

Toronto – The Writers' Union of Canada announced today that **Ian Williams** is the recipient of the \$10,000 first prize in the 15th annual Danuta Gleed Literary Award, recognizing the best first English-language collection of short fiction by a Canadian author published in 2011.

Of Ian Williams' book *Not Anyone's Anything* (published by Freehand Books, an imprint of Broadview Press), jury members **Gail Anderson-Dargatz**, **Robin McGrath**, and **Hal Niedzviecki** said: "The writing in *Not Anyone's Anything* is fresh, funny, and intelligent. This is a solid first book with gripping, convincing dialogue, a fluid sense of urbanity, and structural innovation that doesn't come off as trickery. You see the poet here, in the crisp choice of language and even in the line breaks, as Williams uses typography and unusual layout to suggest a split-screen view of life. This is a brilliant collection." Ian Williams divides his time between Massachusetts and Toronto.

Runners-up **Jessica Westhead** and **Daniel Griffin** will each receive \$500.

Of **Jessica Westhead's** *And Also Sharks* (published by Cormorant Books) the jury said: "Served up in energetic, quirky, and playful prose, these urban, delightfully twisted stories about souls who just don't fit in are set in the familiar anonymity of the office cubicle or the lonely middle-aged lady's apartment. Westhead makes you care about people lost in the all too familiar traps of postmodern life. To make a reader care about the everyday nothingness that surrounds us, without giving that nothingness redemptive qualities, is a fascinating accomplishment." Jessica Westhead lives in Toronto.

Of **Daniel Griffin's** *Stopping for Strangers* (published by Véhicule Press) the jury said: "These are Carveresque stories with a little Richard Ford and Tobias Wolff thrown in for good measure. Griffin gives us stripped down, often first person narratives about the many ways we fail ourselves, and our relationships. He quickly gets to the heart of the matter in precise, plain language; classic story-telling and very clean writing are the hallmarks here. This is an impressive first book." Daniel Griffin was born in Kingston and lives in Victoria.

The short list of five books was announced on May 9, 2012 and also included **Andrew J. Borkowski**, *Copernicus Avenue* (published by Cormorant Books) and **Johanna Skibsrud**, *This Will Be Difficult to Explain*, (published by Hamish Hamilton Canada).

The announcement of the winners was made at a morning press conference at Ben McNally Books in Toronto hosted by Writers' Union of Canada Chair, author **Merilyn Simonds**. **Rachel Gleed Werner**, Danuta Gleed's daughter, delivered remarks from the family. Long-time Advisory Committee Chair, author **Frances Itani**, announced the winner. **Ian Williams** was on hand to accept the award. Also

present were runner-up **Jessica Westhead**, finalist **Andrew Borkowski**, and jury member **Hal Niedzviecki**.

The Award was created as a celebration of the life of Danuta Gleed, a writer whose short fiction won several awards before her death in December 1996. Danuta Gleed's first collection of short fiction, *One of the Chosen*, was posthumously published by BuschekBooks. The Award is made possible through a generous donation from John Gleed, in memory of his late wife, and is administered by The Writers' Union of Canada.

The Writers' Union of Canada is our country's national organization representing professional authors of books. Founded in 1973, the Union is dedicated to fostering writing in Canada, and promoting the rights, freedoms, and economic well-being of all writers.

- 30 -

For further information about **The 2011 Danuta Gleed Literary Award**, please contact:

Diane Hargrave

416-467-9954, ext 104

dhprbks@interlog.com

and

Kelly Duffin, Executive Director

The Writers' Union of Canada

416.703.8982 Ext. 221

kduffin@writersunion.ca

www.writersunion.ca