

BOOKSELLER BEN McNALLY NAMED 2026 IVY AWARD RECIPIENT

**McCLELLAND & STEWART EDITORIAL DIRECTOR OF FICTION ANITA CHONG
NAMED PACLA PERSON OF THE YEAR**

Also announced: 2026 International Visitors (IV) Programme Fellows



TORONTO, October 7, 2026 -- The 19th edition of the International Visitors (IV) Programme, in association with the Toronto International Festival of Authors (TIFA), today announced that **Ben McNally will be the 15th recipient of the Ivy Award**, given annually to an individual who has made a substantial contribution to Canadian publishing. McNally will be honoured during the 2026 Ivy Award & Conversation taking place at Victoria University in the University of Toronto during the Toronto International Festival of Authors on Wednesday, October 28, at 2:30pm (ET). The event will also feature a Keynote Conversation between James Daunt, CEO of Barnes & Noble and Craig Swinwood, CEO of Harlequin & HarperCollins Canada.

Ben McNally has been a bookseller since 1969. His career in books – 57 years and counting – started at Coles, where he became a buyer before moving on to management at The Book Cellar, Book City, and Nicholas Hoare. McNally is best known for his beloved eponymous shop, Ben McNally Books, “a cherished independent Toronto bookstore and a champion of Canadian authors” (The Globe and Mail, 2019).

Ben McNally Books, a stalwart of the city’s Best Of lists, opened its doors in 2007. Its flagship store at 366 Bay St. is remembered as Toronto’s most beautiful and well-stocked bookshop. In 2020, Ben McNally Books relocated twice before finding a new permanent home at 108 Queen Street East. In 2025, two of McNally’s children, Rupert and Danielle, assumed operational responsibility for the store. McNally does not consider himself retired: he is recovering from knee replacement surgery, and looks forward to spending more time at the store.

“The Ivy Award is an opportunity each year to celebrate the vibrancy, creativity and resilience of Canada’s literary and publishing community,” said Roland Gulliver, chair of the Ivy Award jury. “From authors and publishers to festivals and booksellers, we all work for something we fiercely believe in: the power of books and stories to change lives. This year’s Ivy Award winner, Ben McNally, encapsulates this belief. Over decades, he has worked tirelessly to champion books and writers through his bookstore, wherever the location. He is a beloved figure in the book community who turns out, whether rain, shine or snow, to make sure the best books find their readers.”

Past Ivy Award recipients include: Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm (2025); Nicole Winstanley (2024); Alana Wilcox (2023); Iris Tupholme (2022); Errol Sharpe (2021); Nurjehan Aziz (2020); Anne Collins (2019); Brian Lam (2018); Phyllis Bruce (2017); Linda McKnight (2016); David Kent (2015); Dean Cooke (2014); Louise Dennys (2013) and Scott McIntyre (2012).

This year's Ivy Award jury is composed of Carolyn Forde, Partner, Senior Literary Agent, Transatlantic Agency, Co-Chair IV Committee; Adam Sol, Director, Centre for Creativity, Victoria University in University of Toronto; Samia Madwar, Senior Editor, The Walrus; Judith Pereira, Arts Editor, The Globe and Mail; Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm, Publisher, Kegedonce Press & Ivy Award Recipient 2025; and Roland Gulliver, Artistic Director & CEO, TIFA & Ivy Award Jury Chair .

PACLA (Professional Association of Canadian Literary Agents) Person of the Year Award

PACLA is delighted to announce that Anita Chong has been selected as the 2026 recipient of the PACLA Person of the Year Award.

The PACLA (Professional Association of Canadian Literary Agents) Person of the Year award is awarded by the Canadian literary agent community to recognize and celebrate exemplary individuals in editing, publicity and marketing, or sales, who have gone above and beyond in support of authors.

Anita Chong is the Editorial Director of Fiction at McClelland & Stewart. Among the many acclaimed books she has edited and published are Sharon Bala's *The Boat People*, Eleanor Catton's *The Luminaries*, Michael Christie's *Greenwood*, Tessa Hulls's *Feeding Ghosts*, Tsering Yangzom Lama's *We Measure the Earth with Our Bodies*, Jen Sookfong Lee's *The Hunger We Pass Down*, Michael Ondaatje's *The Distance of a Shout*, Janika Oza's *A History of Burning*, Vivek Shraya's *The Hystericals*, Souvankham Thammavongsa's *How to Pronounce Knife*, and Richard Wagamese's *Starlight*. Her authors have been shortlisted for or won major awards including the Giller Prize, the Governor General's Literary Award, the Pulitzer Prize, The Center for Fiction First Novel Prize, the Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Nonfiction, the Carol Shields Prize for Fiction, and the Booker Prize.

"Reading and writing may be solitary acts, but publishing is a communal endeavour, and it has been one of the great joys of my life to be part of Canada's dynamic publishing community. I am deeply honoured to receive this recognition from the Professional Association of Canadian Literary Agents, and grateful to the PACLA board and its members, so many of whom I count as valued colleagues, friends, and partners in our shared commitment to nurturing, supporting, and celebrating Canadian writers," said Anita Chong.

Previous winners of the PACLA Person of the Year Award include Jennifer Lambert, Editor-in-Chief at HarperCollins Canada (2025), Simon & Schuster editor, Brittany Lavery (2023) and author and festival director, Jael Richardson (2022).

The 2026 International Visitors (IV) Programme Fellows

The International Visitors Programme, now in its 19th year of hosting publishing professionals from around the world for cultural exchange and industry networking, will welcome 14 delegates and fellows to the Toronto International Festival of Authors this year.

The 2026 IV Programme Delegates are: Hiroshi Asamai of KANKI Publishing, Japan; Maria Horvei of Aschehoug, Norway; Lena Stöneberg of Aufbau Verlag, Germany; Jeramie Orton of Pamela Dorman Books/Viking, USA; Ranya Ismail Abdelhakam Bakr of Al Arabi Publishing, Egypt; Jenna Gordon of VERVE Books, UK; Abbe Goldberg of Jenny La Plante Inc, USA; Jennifer Izumi Fry of Canongate, UK; Giulia Lunerti of Mondadori, Italy; Suzie Dooré of The Borough Press/Harper Fiction UK; Dan López of Counterpoint Press, USA; and Raphaël Bodilis of Michel Lafon Publishing, France.

The 2026 Canadian IV Programme Fellows are Shirarose Wilensky of House of Anansi Press and Olivier Moreira of Michel Lafon Québec.

The 2026 IV Programme Keynote Address will be given by James Daunt, CEO of Barnes & Noble and Waterstones, and founder of Daunt Books.

About the IV Programme

The International Visitors (IV) Programme provides a valuable cultural and economic exchange between Canada's publishing community and some of the most influential publishing figures from around the world. Since 2008, it has generated visibility and marketability for Canadian literature abroad, by acting as a Canadian rights fair, introducing international publishers to the Canadian literary scene, and strengthening relationships with international counterparts that have led to new business development initiatives and the creation of new literary works. Organized by a committee of Canadian book industry representatives, the IV Programme takes place every fall during the Toronto International Festival of Authors. Its selected fellows participate in structured inter-industry dialogue and activities led by distinguished professionals. Over 300 fellows have taken part in the Programme since its inception.

About Toronto International Festival of Authors

The Toronto International Festival of Authors (TIFA) inspires, empowers and connects through the art of stories, offering book lovers a breadth of bold, ambitious and accessible literary experiences. The charitable organization provides engaging opportunities to meet, hear and learn from the world's best contemporary writers and thinkers, and to celebrate the power of stories. Since 1974, TIFA has presented

thousands of authors, including 22 Nobel Laureates, who represent diverse perspectives and a range of literary genres for all ages. The 47th edition of the Toronto International Festival of Authors takes place October 28 – November 1, 2026.

Event Details

2026 Ivy Award & Conversation

Wednesday, October 28th, 2:30PM

Isabel Bader Theatre

Victoria University in the University of Toronto

93 Charles St West, Toronto, ON

Free as part of the Toronto International Festival of Authors

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