

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier
University



***Sacré Blues* wins Edna Staebler Award for Creative Non-Fiction**
Grescoe's first book offers outsider's view of Quebec rituals, customs and eccentricities

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WATERLOO, Ont. – *Sacré Blues: An Unsentimental Journey Through Quebec* has won the 2001 Edna Staebler Award for Creative Non-Fiction. Wilfrid Laurier University today announced that author Taras Grescoe has won and will accept the award on October 04 at 7:30 p.m. in Laurier's Maureen Forrester Recital Hall.

Sacré Blues is Grescoe's attempt to understand the rituals, eccentricities and customs of his new home after moving from the west coast to Quebec in 1996. The author explores the cultural, aboriginal and political landscapes, bringing to light many of the personalities who are defining the new Quebec. He is particularly hard-hitting in his analysis of the xenophobia of the Quebecois who, he says, are missing opportunities for their own greatness.

"The judges felt that *Sacré Blues* provides a no-holds-barred approach to the study of modern Quebec," says Staebler award administrator Kathryn Wardropper. "As a new 'insider,' he brings a journalist's zeal to his research and presents a fresh, even irreverent portrait of Quebec and its peoples. It may infuriate some, but it is a landmark book that portrays the challenges and opportunities for modern Quebec."

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Taras Grescoe was born in Toronto and raised in Vancouver and Calgary. He spent four years in Paris in the early nineties, writing and teaching English. He has written about foreign cultures for such publications as the *Times of London*, *The Chicago Tribune Magazine* and *Wired*, and about Quebec for *National Geographic Traveler*, *Saturday Night* and the *New York Times*. *Sacre Blues* is his first book.

Three other titles were shortlisted for this year's Staebler award. They are *In For A Penny, In For A Pound* by Howard Hower (Stoddart), *Mary Pratt: A Personal Calligraphy* by Mary Pratt (GooseLane Editions) and *River In A Dry Land: A Prairie Passage* by Trevor Herriot (Stoddart).

The Edna Staebler Award for Creative Non-Fiction is supported by an endowment established by author and award-winning journalist Edna Staebler and administered by Laurier. It was created 10 years ago to encourage and recognize a Canadian writer publishing a first or second book with a Canadian locale and/or location.