



Biblio Bash Raises Nearly \$700,000 for Youth Empowerment Programs and Services at Toronto Public Library

Click here to view TPLF's [documentary short film](#) which premiered at Biblio Bash

Toronto, ON (May 1, 2018) – Last week, the Toronto Reference Library was once again transformed into a glamorous black-tie gala for ***Biblio Bash***, presented by TD Bank Group. Bringing together 43 of Canada's top authors, local philanthropists, entrepreneurs and arts and culture supporters, the evening raised more than \$692,000 through ticket and table sales, a silent auction and onsite donations. Money raised will help support Toronto Public Library's (TPL) programs and services that empower youth in vulnerable neighbourhoods across the city.

More than 470 guests attended the sold-out event hosted by Canadian author, investor and television personality **David Chilton**. Each table featured a Canadian author host, including notables such as *Giller Prize* winners **Michael Redhill** (*Bellevue Square, 2017*) and **Esi Edugyan** (*Half-Blood Blues, 2011*); New York Times Bestseller **Shari Lapena** (*The Couple Next Door*); Toronto chef and cookbook author **Matt Dean Pettit**; novelist, screenwriter and journalist **Heather O'Neill** (*Lullabies for Little Criminals*); Order of Canada recipients, **Joy Kogawa** (*Obasan*), **Thomas King** (*The Inconvenient Indian*) and children's poet **Dennis Lee** (*Alligator Pie*); and acclaimed author and playwright **Ann-Marie MacDonald**, among others. For the second year in a row, ***Biblio Bash's*** Author Host Sponsor was the Gerald Sheff and Shanitha Kachan Charitable Foundation.

The evening kicked off with a champagne welcome, sponsored by Toronto Life, and a buzz-worthy cocktail reception held among the stacks of the Library, sponsored by the Mantella Corporation. Guests mixed, mingled and enjoyed Mumm's Champagne and oysters while browsing featured photos from the Toronto Star Archives as accomplished saxophonist Miles Raine performed live.

Following the reception, guests made their way to the main floor for the evening's program with event sponsor Whitehots Inc. returning as a TPLF event partner for the 12th consecutive year. Toronto-based slam poetry group, ***The Uncharted***, set the tone for the night with a striking performance commissioned exclusively for ***Biblio Bash*** 2018. Members of the group teach Toronto teens in the popular TPL program, Poetry Saved Our Lives.

Food Network Canada personality, award-winning restaurateur and renowned **Chef Cory Vitiello** with 10tation Catering, prepared a custom-designed meal featuring a shaved candy cane beet and watermelon radish salad with fresh favas, spring asparagus and buffalo mozzarella, and a braised beef short rib accompanied with potato and fresh horseradish croquette. Dinner sponsor Labatt supplied Stella Artois beer service during the second course, and Balzac's sponsored delicious dessert treats that included chocolate covered strawberries and macarons. The coffee roaster also gifted Atwood Blend Coffee to guests.

Throughout the night, Chilton's charm had guests opening up their hearts (and wallets) to drive up the bidding for exclusive silent auction items such as a breathtaking trip to Fogo Island, a family staycation at Hotel X Toronto (by Library Hotel Collection), as well as trips to New York City and Quebec City, tickets to the Raptors and Blue Jays, and jewellery from Maison Birks. Also up for auction was a once-in-a-lifetime book club dinner with Canadian literary icon, **Margaret Atwood**. While the legendary author wasn't able to attend, Atwood did lend her support of TPL earlier in the week by taking to Twitter to encourage donations:

"Thurs. nite at [#BiblioBash](#) library lovers & city builders are coming together to raise money for [@TorontoLibrary](#). Sadly I can't be there but I am always a TPL supporter. Please help the Library with a donation - just tell them Margaret sent you! <https://imlibrarypeople.ca>"

Among the evening's guests were Toronto's leading philanthropists, city builders, business leaders, supporters of arts and culture and donors, including: **Victoria Webster**, Biblio Bash Committee Chair; **Valerie Picher**, TD Bank Group; **Sylvia Mantella**, Mantella Corporation; **Gerald Sheff** and **Shanitha Kachan**, Gerald Sheff and Shanitha Kachan Charitable Foundation; **Suzanne** and **Edward Rogers**, Rogers Communications; **John Honderich**, *Toronto Star*; **Lynda** and **Jonas Prince**; **Cheryl Hickey**, *Entertainment Tonight Canada*; **Sarah Fulford**, *Toronto Life*; **Victoria Jackman**, Hal Jackman Foundation; **Lainey Liu**, *The Social/eTalk*; **Melissa Grelo**, *The Social/Your Morning*; **Elana Rabinovitch**, Scotiabank Giller Prize; **Sarah Gadon**, Actor; **Caitlin Cronenberg**, Photographer; **Joe Mimran**, **Arlene Dickinson**, **Bruce Croxon** and **Michelle Romanow**, *Dragons' Den*; and **Kim Newport-Mimran**, Pink Tartan.

"The love and affection for Toronto Public Library was on full display at Biblio Bash," said gala Committee Chair, Victoria Webster. "I am incredibly grateful to all our guests and sponsors who together helped us exceed our fundraising goal. It was quite a night in celebration of TPL – definitely one for the books!"

Additional highlights of the evening included the premiere of "*I'm Library People*" – a documentary short film commissioned by TPLF and directed by Official Pictures featuring heart-warming, honest tales from Canadians about how the Library has impacted their life in a meaningful way. Featured Canadians include media personality, **George Stroumboulopoulos**; award winning author, **Joy Kogawa**; and Ontario Supreme Court Justice, **Donald McLeod**. A guest-curated music playlist from the Library's epic collection of 15,000-plus vinyl records was spun by **DJ Wade O. Brown** and soulful R & B singer, **Sean Jones** and his band **The Collective** had the crowd on their feet dancing into the night. Celebrity photographer, **George Pimentel** ran his signature pop-up portrait studio, sponsored by Rogers Communications, artistically designing an exquisite library parlour with vintage furniture pieces and adorned with more than 1,600 books from Toronto Public Library.

"It was incredible to see the Reference Library filled with such passionate Library supporters, all coming together to empower at-risk youth," commented Jennifer Jones, President of TPLF. "Ensuring that the Library remains a thriving community hub is at the core of what we do at the Foundation and with the help of donors, we can ensure TPL continues to create free, life-changing programs, services and spaces for all Torontonians."

This year's **Biblio Bash** fundraising surpassed 2017 with money raised going towards providing Toronto teens with such essentials as: free access to quality after-school homework help, technology, digital and financial literacy learning, and opportunities to participate in enriching programs that help develop social, creative, life and leadership skills.

Contributing over \$1 billion in total economic impact for the City of Toronto, Toronto Public Library is a legacy institution that serves the diverse communities across the city, ensuring all residents have free and equitable access to the latest content programming, spaces, education and technology.

Biblio Bash is proud to have the following sponsors for the 2018 gala: TD Bank Group, Presenting Sponsor; Labatt Breweries of Canada, Dinner Sponsor; Mantella Corporation, Library Lounge Reception Sponsor; Gerald Sheff and Shanitha Kachan, Author Host Sponsor; Whitehots Inc., Event Sponsor; Rogers Communications, Portrait Studio Sponsor; Haynes Connell Foundation and Ewing Morris Investment Partners Ltd., Documentary Sponsor; The Slight Family Foundation and Type Books, Discovery Sponsors; and Toronto Life and Toronto Star, Media Sponsors. In-Kind sponsors include BB Blanc, Boss Print & Creative Services, Hotel X Toronto and Porter Airlines. Biblio Bash was produced by the Toronto Public Library Foundation and Candice&Alison Events Group.

For more information about the gala, links to photo albums, videos and the complete list of authors in attendance at **Biblio Bash**, please visit bibliobash.ca. [#BiblioBash](https://twitter.com/BiblioBash) [#ImLibraryPeople](https://twitter.com/ImLibraryPeople)

ABOUT THE TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY FOUNDATION

The Toronto Public Library Foundation is a registered charity that raises funds to support the exemplary collections, ground breaking programs and services, and the innovative community spaces at the world's busiest public library system; Toronto Public Library. Since its inception in 1997, the Foundation has raised over \$75 million thanks to generous donors and corporate partners who have helped fund such popular and beloved programs as the TD Summer Reading Club and the Sun Life Financial Museum & Arts Pass (MAP). Donating to Toronto Public Library is an investment in literacy, education, culture and the vitality of a world-class city.

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