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MEDIA RELEASE

Banting Fellow and fiction writer nets national SSHRC Talent Award

September 15, 2017

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Claire Battershill, an award-winning fiction writer who holds a Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship in English at SFU, is being honoured with the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council's (SSHRC) prestigious **Talent Award**.

The award, one of five of SSHRC's Impact Awards, is given to an individual who maintains academic excellence, has a talent for research and knowledge mobilization, and has demonstrated clear potential to be a future leader in the academic community or other sectors. **Battershill is being honoured at a ceremony in Ottawa later today (Sept. 15)**. The Impact awards will be presented by the Right Hon. David Johnston, Canada's Governor General.

The Talent Award is the latest in a long list of literary and academic accomplishments for Battershill.

"Claire Battershill's research shows the dynamic between print culture, literary history, and transnational writing communities—we're proud that she's here at SFU, as her work ties into the many strengths of our English Department, our post-doctoral programs, and our library," says Jeff Derksen, dean (pro-tem) of graduate studies.

"Her research has significant real-world implications, shedding light on the rapidly-shifting structures of the publishing industry as it moves into the digital era. And, in a great SFU tradition, Claire, as an author of prose and poetry, both studies and produces literature."

Says Battershill: "I am honoured and delighted to receive the SSHRC Impact Award, and grateful to SFU for the nomination and for the support I have received as a postdoc here. I love the research I do unearthing important stories of books, and the human relationships that give rise to and result from them. I'm excited about continuing my work at SFU and developing new research methodologies for the historical study of publishers, writers, and readers."

Battershill's SFU research focus includes a project called *Travelling Books: A Transnational History of Literary Publishers and their Archives, 1914-2014*. Using material from publishers' archives, she is examining the relationship between literary aesthetics and the emergence of a global publishing trade.

Through her examination of financial records, publishers' correspondence, and authors' papers she hopes to reveal the international relationships that allowed twentieth-century's best-known novels to "find their readers."

Another project, *Selling Real Lives*, examines the role of true stories in shaping 20th century literature and publishing culture.

A book based on her doctoral dissertation, called *Modernist Lives: Biography and Autobiography at the Hogarth Press*, will be published in 2018. She also has a novel in progress called *Lift*, a literary comedy about “friendship, loss and choreographed weightlifting.”

A co-winner of the Canadian Authors Association’s Emerging Writer Award for her first book of short stories, *Circus*, Battershill was a finalist for both the Danuta Gleed Award, recognizing the best debut fiction by a Canadian author, and the PEN International /New Voices Award. She also received a CBC Literary Award for the title story in her book, *The Collective Name for Ninjas*.

She is also the author of two collaboratively written books published in 2017 and has written numerous short stories, poems and articles.

Originally from Dawson Creek, B.C., Battershill earned a Bachelor of Arts with honors in English language and literature at the University of Oxford, and a PhD in English literature and book history from the University of Toronto.

While a doctoral student she worked as a printer's apprentice in the Robertson Davies Library at Massey College, and was a research assistant for Margaret Atwood's Massey Lectures, *Payback: Debt and the Shadow Side of Wealth* (Anansi 2008).

Battershill received a SSHRC doctoral award for her graduate studies at the University of Toronto and a SSHRC postdoctoral award for her research at the University of Reading in England.

She is also the co-holder of a SSHRC Insight Development grant for the Modernist Archives Publishing Project (MAPP), a digital resource for the study of modernist book production. A Canada Council New Chapter grant will fund her work on a series of exhibitions and creative writing workshops set for public libraries and archives across Canada in 2019.

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