

Attachment 1 – Confidential Information

Appointment of the Third City of Toronto Poet Laureate

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Date: | September 3, 2009 |
| To: | Economic Development Committee |
| From: | General Manager, Economic Development, Culture and Tourism |

CONFIDENTIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Economic Development Culture and Tourism recommends that:

1. Council appoint Dionne Brand to the position of Toronto Poet Laureate for a term beginning September 2009 until October 2012, or until a successor is appointed.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Dionne Brand is a renowned poet, novelist and essayist. Born in Guyanayare, Trinidad and Tobago, in 1953, she immigrated to Canada after graduating from high school. She studied at the University of Toronto where she earned a BA in English and Philosophy and an MA in the Philosophy of Education at OISE. Currently, she teaches at the University of Guelph.

Dionne Brand became prominent first as an award-winning poet, winning the Governor General's Literary Award and the Trillium Book Prize for her volume *Land to Light On*. She's garnered two other nominations for the Governor General's Literary Award for the poetry volumes *No Language Is Neutral* and *Inventory* respectively, the latter also nominated for the Trillium and the Pat Lowther. She has won the Pat Lowther Award for poetry for her volume *thirsty* also nominated for the Griffin Poetry Prize and the city of Toronto Book Award.

Brand has also achieved great distinction and acclaim in fiction, non-fiction. Her fiction includes the novel *In Another Place, Not Here*, a New York Times notable book in 1998, and *At the Full and Change of the Moon*, a Los Angeles Times Notable Book of the Year in 1999. Her latest critically acclaimed and Toronto Book Award winning novel, *What We All Long For*, is the story of four young people in Toronto – it has been translated into Italian and German. Like *thirsty*, a recent book of poems, the novel offers an indelible portrait of this great multicultural city. Her non-fiction includes *Bread Out Of Stone*, and *A Map to the Door of No Return*.

Dionne Brand has published eighteen books, contributed to seventeen anthologies and written dozens of essays and articles. She was a Distinguished Visiting Professor at St.

Lawrence University in New York and has taught literature and creative writing at universities in both British Columbia and Ontario. She has also held the Ruth Wynn Woodward Chair in Women's Studies at Simon Fraser University. She lives in Toronto and presently holds a University Research Chair at the University of Guelph where she is a professor.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY: Poetry: *Inventory* (2006), *thirsty* (2002), *Land to Light On* (1997), *No Language is Neutral* (1990), *Chronicles of the Hostile Sun* (1984). **Fiction:** *What We All Long For* (2005), *At the Full & Change of the Moon* (1999), *In Another Place, Not Here* (1996), *Sans Souci and Other Stories* (1988). **Non-Fiction:** *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging* (2001), *Bread Out of Stone: Recollections Sex, Recognitions Race, Dreaming Politics* (1994).

AWARDS: Pat Lowther Award for Poetry and finalist for the Griffin Poetry Prize and Trillium Award, *thirsty*; Governor General's Award for Poetry and Trillium Award, *Land to Light On*; finalist for the Governor General's Award, *No Language is Neutral* and *Inventory*; short listed for the Chapters/Books in Canada First Novel Award, *In Another Place, Not Here*. Toronto Book Award 2006 for the novel *What We All Long For*. Harbourfront IFOA Prize for writer in mid career.