



CONDOLENCE MOTION

Moved by: Councillor Paula Fletcher

Seconded by: Councillor Joe Cressy

The Mayor and Members of Toronto City Council are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Wayson Choy on April 27, 2019.

Wayson Choy was a powerful voice for the Chinese-Canadian community as one of the most important pioneers of Asian Canadian literature in Canada. He was also an important figure in LGBT literature as one of Canada's first openly gay writers of colour to achieve widespread mainstream success.

Wayson was born and raised in Vancouver and graduated from the University of British Columbia with a Bachelor's Degree in English. He settled in Toronto in 1962 and helped set up the English Literature and Writing programs at the newly-opened Humber College of Applied Arts and Technology in 1967. He would remain a teacher at Humber until 2004.

Although Wayson published a number of short stories while in university, one appearing in the annual Best American Short Stories anthology, he devoted himself primarily to teaching until later in life. He was 56 when his debut novel, "The Jade Peony", was published in 1995. It was one of the first books to detail life in a Chinese-Canadian community. The novel shared an English-language Trillium Award with Margaret Atwood in 1996. The prequel, "All That Matters", published in 2004, was nominated for the Scotiabank Giller Prize and won a Trillium Book Award in 2005. Wayson published two more best-selling novels/ memoirs, "Paper Shadows" and "Not Yet – A memoir of Living and Almost Dying".

In 2006, he was awarded the Order of Canada.

Toronto and Canada have lost someone who inspired not just an entire generation of Asian-Canadian writers but students, readers and friends across the country.

The City Clerk is requested to convey, on behalf of the Members of Toronto City Council, our sincere condolences to the chosen families of Wayson Choy.

May 14, 2019