

Sirenes 2023 Festival: literary prizes awarded



IMAGE: Estelle Faye received the Sirenes 2023 student prize for *Widjigo* at Le Tambour on Monday October 23, 2023.

This event, dedicated to imaginary cultures (science fiction, fantasy and fantastical), is an educational project run by Rennes 2 University in conjunction with secondary schools. Originally launched under the name of 'Ouest Hurlant' in 2022, the first edition of the festival was aimed at a mix of secondary schools, university students and the general public. After a restructuring by the different organizers last year, it was decided that L'Ouest Hurlant would organize meetings for the general public, while the Rennes 2 organizers would be focusing specifically on an audience of students of secondary schools and universities.

On Monday October 23rd, the winners of the school short story competition and the 2023 literary prizes were honored at an awards ceremony, followed by a round table discussion. Four categories of literary prizes were determined by the Sirenes Festival: a high school prize, a middle school prize, a student prize, and a special prize called the "Prix Martin Lessard". With the exception of the "Prix Martin Lessard", all prizes were voted for by secondary school pupils and students, who chose their favorite novel from pre-selections drawn up by juries made up mainly of teachers, booksellers and instructors.

Martin Lessard Award

Michel Pagel for *Startuffe*, a science-fiction play published in the literary magazine [Fiction, l'imaginaire radical](#).

Prix collégien

Mathilde Maras for [Villa Anima](#), published by Gulf Stream éditeur

High school prize

Kamel Benaouada for [LX18](#), published by Gallimard jeunesse

Student prize

Estelle Faye for [Widjigo](#), published by Albin Michel

Why a Martin Lessard award?

Martin Lessard was a Quebec science fiction author and fervent advocate of alternative publishing, who passed away in August 2018. This award pays tribute to the spirit of independence and transmission that inspired him. It will reward editorial audacity among works of small-scale publishing. It can be awarded for a novel or short story, as well as an essay or a beautiful book.

The program for the 2024 edition of the Sirenes festival, whose theme is "Tissages et métissages" (interweaving and blending):

April 10: professional day

April 11-12: school days

April 13: general public and university days

26 October 2023