

Margaret Laurence (1926-87) has been called "Canada's most successful novelist,"<sup>1</sup> "the most significant creative writer in Canadian literature,"<sup>2</sup> as well as "the most renowned writer in Canadian literary history."<sup>3</sup> A bearer of the distinguished Molson Prize, and of the Governor General Award twice,<sup>4</sup> a Nobel Prize in Literature nominee in 1982,<sup>5</sup> a receiver of a number of honorary doctorates from prestigious Canadian universities, and a Companion of the Order of Canada,<sup>6</sup> she played a key role in establishing the canon of the newly emergent Canadian literature and placing it on the global literary map.

As Kristjana Gunnars argues, Laurence "has been a founding mother of Canadian literature. She has given voice to the Manitoba prairie. She has raised the value of all sectors of society by showing the full humanity of the most neglected and forgotten among us. From her example, we have learned the value of Canadian literature and culture; the importance of art to that culture; the necessity of honesty in a dangerous time in history; the truth of fiction and poetry."?