

BANFF CENTRE
MOUNTAIN
FILM AND BOOK
FESTIVAL

**2021 Banff Mountain Book Competition
Category Finalists**





Grand Prize

\$4000 – Sponsored by the Alpine Club of Canada

Finding the Mother Tree

Suzanne Simard, Allen Lane Canada, an imprint of Penguin Random House Canada (Canada, 2021)

It's wonderful when a book can change the way we perceive the world around us. As someone who spends a lot of time in forests, my perception and understanding of that interconnected world has been altered, thanks to Suzanne Simard's story.

Throughout *Finding the Mother Tree*, Simard alludes to the awareness of indigenous first nation peoples for the wisdom of the forest - the caring networks of trees and other organisms, including humans. She has used the scientific method and her own inspirational grit and determination to make us remember this forgotten knowledge. Moreover, in discovering and explaining at an ecological, biological and chemical level, she has substantially enhanced this knowledge. By relating it in a manner our industrialized world will understand, Simard is showing us the reasons why we need to change our ways.

Simard has tied cutting-edge science, decades of hands-on research, and expert storytelling with a powerful personal story. It's an unbeatable combination that renders complex science approachable and beautiful.

- 2021 Book Competition Jury

Mountain Literature (non-fiction) – The Jon Whyte Award

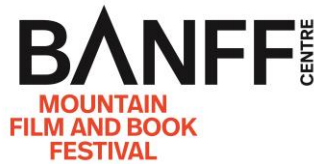
\$2000 - Sponsored by The Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies

Structured Chaos

Victor Saunders, Vertebrate Publishing (UK, 2021)

In his unique, conversational style, Victor Saunders has taken us on a wonderful journey; sometimes heart-breaking, often hilarious. His observations are surgically precise, his evocative descriptions are skilfully penned and his personal reflections are unstintingly honest. From his early awkward years to his many impressive climbs in the Great Ranges, what stands out above all in *Structured Chaos* is the value he places on friendship.

– Bernadette McDonald, 2021 Book Competition Jury



Mountain Fiction & Poetry

\$2000 – Sponsored by the Town of Banff

Dammed If You Don't
Chris Kalman (USA, 2021)

Kalman's third book asks a very topical question: Can we love a place to death? Kalman answers this question with a spare quality that evokes a bit of James Salter. His portrayal of a lush, pristine Chilean valley is immediate and profound. His writing is peppered with the intimate details that also bring the characters, their foibles, and struggles to life. Their dilemmas soon become our dilemmas. Perhaps the best thing about *Dammed If You Don't* are the plot twists, building to a final scenario that is plausible, disturbing, and strangely uplifting.

– Pete Takeda, 2021 Book Competition Jury

Mountain Environment and Natural History

\$2000 – Sponsored by Canadian Mountain Network

Finding the Mother Tree
Suzanne Simard, Allen Lane Canada, an imprint of Penguin Random House Canada (*Canada, 2021*)

Suzanne Simard has proven, without doubt, the power of storytelling in the communication of science. A forest ecologist who is renowned for her breakthrough research into the underground communication of trees, she has brought this mind-boggling world she calls the 'wood-wild web' into our minds, and perhaps more importantly, into our hearts. From her childhood, growing up in a logging family in rural British Columbia, to her life as a celebrated scientist battling cancer, she has woven together stories of relationships – both human and ecological – so skilfully that her book reads like one seamless, interconnected tale. In doing so, she bridges the gap between science and emotion in a way that feels more like a call to action: save the forests so that they can, in turn, save us.

– Bernadette McDonald, 2021 Book Competition Jury



Adventure Travel

\$2000 – Sponsored by World Expeditions

Two Trees Make a Forest

Jessica J. Lee, Hamish Hamilton Canada, an imprint of Penguin Random House
Canada (*Canada, 2020*)

Exploring physical and cultural landscapes, this book made us question the meaning of 'adventure'. Travelling through her ancestry and her family's roots in Taiwan, Jessica J. Lee seeks and finds her own place amongst the mountains, trees and people of their home. *Two Trees Make a Forest* is full of evocative descriptions of the land along with a gentle, determined search to find belonging. Jessica unravels a complex, ultimately grounding family history during a brave and enlightening journey.

- Heather Dawe, 2021 Book Competition Jury

Mountain Image

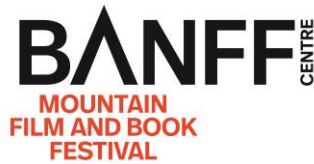
\$2000 – Sponsored by Banff Culture Collective

The Great Sea Cliffs of Scotland

Guy Robertson, Scottish Mountaineering Press (UK, 2020)

The outrageous beauty of Scotland's sea cliffs had this jury checking weather forecasts and flight schedules to Scotland's ragged coastline. The spectacular photographs are richly supported by exciting first-hand climbing tales, lyrical natural history prose and some fine poetry from Stuart Campbell. A visual and literary gift.

– Bernadette McDonald, 2021 Book Competition Jury



Guidebooks

\$2000 – Sponsored by the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides

Irish Peaks

Mountaineering Ireland (Ireland, 2020)

A wonderful showcase of the rugged beauty of the island of Ireland's upland landscapes, *Irish Peaks* made me want to head for these hills. This book combines detailed route guides to the highest 101 mountains with incredible photography and comprehensive guides to their natural and hill-walking history. Ireland is a country where access to the mountains is not a given. *Irish Peaks* shares the invaluable route knowledge of local experts with the visitor; clearly mapping and explaining established lines into and over the ground. This is an inspirational guidebook that will surely entice many hill-goers to further explore these mountains.

- Heather Dawe, 2021 Book Competition Jury

Mountaineering Article

\$2000 – Sponsored by Rab

Letters to a Young Climber

Doug Robinson, *Alpinist Magazine* (USA, June 2021)

A thoughtful meditation on the power of mentorship. A legendary climber and guide for most of his years, Robinson draws on personal history to show us what mentorship is. He reminds us that the ever-evolving process extends beyond a climber's personal ambitions—into something more meaningful. Through sharing and teaching, climbing becomes a potent vehicle for growth, one that adapts as our world changes.

– Pete Takeda, 2021 Book Competition Jury



Climbing Literature

\$2000 – Sponsored by Mountain Life

A Feeling for Rock

Sarah-Jane Dobner, Dob Dob Dob (UK, 2021)

A Feeling For Rock is a unique take on climbing. The sensuality of movement on the rock, the feelings for place, of sea-cliffs, gritstone and mountain crags. Sarah-Jane Dobner explores in fresh ways and is not afraid to question perceived norms. Provocative pieces, climber interviews and cartoons sit alongside poetry, prose and photography that show and describe the beauty she sees and feels in the rock landscapes around her. Sarah-Jane makes this eclectic mix work, binding it together with her love for the climbing life.

- Heather Dawe, 2021 Book Competition Jury

Special Jury Mention

More than It Hurts: And Other Stories of (Mis)Adventure by Womxn Who Climb and Mountaineer

Wendy Bruere, Climb and Wine (Australia, 2020)

More Than It Hurts is in a class of its own—a compilation of fourteen climbing stories by women who climb and mountaineer. In these pages one discovers: a deeper acknowledgment of fear and joy; discussions about identity and dysphoria; climbing's power to nurture the love for nature and for others; and how the vertical world can foster the peculiar courage required for personal growth. This is an important book, selected and edited to, "celebrate a broader and more diverse range of adventures on rock and in the mountains." Each story is a refreshing reimagining the climbing narrative.

– Pete Takeda, 2021 Book Competition Jury