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For Immediate Release

THE FRENCH HONOUR “MONSIEUR TAYLOR”!

TORONTO, March 27, 2017 – The International Festival of Authors (IFOA) and Harbourfront Centre are thrilled to announce that Geoffrey E. Taylor has received word that the French government has conferred on him the distinguished honour of Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (Knight in the Order of Arts and Letters).

In a congratulatory letter from France’s Minister of Culture and Communications, Mme Audrey Azoulay, Mr. Taylor was informed that he has received this honour for his significant contribution to the enrichment of the French cultural inheritance. In a subsequent letter adding his congratulations received from France’s Ambassador to Canada, M. Nicholas Chapus, it was further stated that this honour was also bestowed on Mr. Taylor for his role as Director of Toronto’s International Festival of Authors.

“It is truly incredible to be recognized by the Republic of France for my contributions to the world of literature. I am honoured that my name will be listed amongst so many of those I admire who have already received this distinction. To be fêted in this manner is a great testament to the work that my colleagues and I do to bring the voices of the world to a Toronto stage,” said Geoffrey E. Taylor.

“This is a great honour for Geoffrey E. Taylor and the IFOA,” said IFOA President A. Charles Baillie. “An international acknowledgment of this stature helps draw awareness to the extraordinary work Geoffrey, as Director of the International Festival of Authors, has undertaken in Canada and abroad to promote culture and the arts. On behalf of the IFOA Board of Directors, I warmly congratulate Geoffrey on the announcement of his appointment as a Knight in the Order of Arts and Letters.”

Marah Braye, Chief Executive Officer of Harbourfront Centre added: “I am delighted that Geoffrey Taylor’s tireless dedication and contributions to the literary world have been recognized with this prestigious award. Toronto’s International Festival of Authors is an important piece of the creative fabric at Harbourfront Centre. Toronto hosts what is recognized as one of the world’s leading literary festivals, and with Geoffrey at the helm I am confident the festival will continue to flourish and enrich the cultural landscape here in Canada and internationally.”

The Order of Arts and Letters was established in 1957 to recognize eminent artists and writers, as well as people who have contributed significantly to furthering the arts in France and

throughout the world. The Order of Arts and Letters is given out three times annually under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Culture and Communication, recipients are not exclusively French nationals, and numerous foreign luminaries have also been invited into the order. Mr. Taylor joins other Canadian cultural icons in this honour including authors Margaret Atwood, Douglas Coupland, John Ralston Saul and Jane Urquhart.

There will be a medal ceremony on October 24th, 2017.

Geoffrey E. Taylor has been a key player with the International Festival of Authors (IFOA) for almost thirty years. As the Festival's Director for the past fifteen years, he travels the world bringing the best authors home to Toronto, as well as promoting Canadian literature here and abroad. He is a founding member of Word Alliance, an alliance of eight major international literary festivals, and has juried various literary awards and prizes both nationally and internationally. In 2003, Mr. Taylor was the inaugural recipient of the Order of the Forest, presented by a consortium of environmental activist groups, for his extraordinary contribution towards building an ancient-forest friendly book-publishing community. In 2006, he received the Jack Award, which is presented by the Book Promoters Association of Canada in recognition of an individual's significant contribution to the promotion of Canadian books and authors. He holds an Honorary Degree from the Humber Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning in recognition of his significant contribution to Canadian books and authors.

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Since its inception in 1974, the **International Festival of Authors** has hosted over 9,000 authors from more than 100 countries, including 22 Nobel Laureates. Our season runs from September to June and includes the annual International Festival of Authors (October 19-29, 2017), including IFOA Ontario, the annual ALOUD: a Celebration for Young Readers with Forest of Reading® Festival of Trees™ (May 16-18, 2017) and Toronto Lit Up (year-round).

Harbourfront Centre is a Canadian charity operating the 10 prime acres of Toronto's central waterfront as a free and open public site. We celebrate the multiplicities of cultures that comprise Canada and enliven the city through the creative imaginations of artists from across the country and around the globe.

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