

Prix Jean-Éthier Blais de critique littéraire 2004 : Awarded to Austrian Scholar Ursula Mathis-Moser

In November 2004, Ursula Mathis-Moser, Professor for Romance Languages and Literatures at the University of Innsbruck, was awarded the Prix Jean-Éthier Blais 2004 for her book *Dany Laferrière. La derive américaine* (2003) published in Montreal (VLB éditeur). Ursula Mathis-Moser is the first non-native of Canada to win this prize which annually recognizes "le meilleur livre de critique littéraire paru au Québec pendant l'année, portant sur la littérature québécoise de langue française et écrit en français."

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Mathis-Moser's study was unanimously selected from among 16 publications presented by 11 Canadian publishing houses. The jury particularly appreciated "la culture littéraire et universitaire de l'essayiste" and "le grand sérieux de l'ouvrage qui se situe à la fine pointe des recherches les plus actuelles, axées sur les thématiques de la migration, de l'intermédialité, de l'intertextualité et de l'autofiction." La *dérive américaine* is dedicated to Dany Laferrière, a Canadian writer of Haitian origin who has been living alternately in Miami and in Montreal for the past ten years and who, in 1985, clinched his "post-modern best-seller" *Comment faire l'amour avec un Nègre sans se fatiguer*.

Ursula Mathis-Moser has many Canadian and North American connections. She is Director of the Canadian Studies Centre and the Centre d'étude de la chanson québécoise at the University of Innsbruck. She was president of the Association for Canadian Studies in German-speaking countries from 1995 to 1997 and, in 2002, was invited as a Visiting Professor to the Université de Montréal. In 2003, she was elected Chair of the Austrian-Canadian Liaison Group, which coordinates the Austrian contacts of the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies at the University of Alberta.

Ursula Mathis-Moser's research interests focus on French and Spanish literature and media studies. She is also an expert in the area of francophone literatures in North America and authors of migration. In addition to numerous articles on Stendhal, the French chanson, French-Canadian literature, and topics such as the influence of migration on language and literature, she has published two studies on French realism and existentialism for which she was honored by the Theodor-Körner Preis (1982) and the Liechtenstein Preis (1985). In 2003, she directed and edited the proceedings of the Austro-Canadian symposium held in Innsbruck in May 2002, dedicated to the topic *Österreich-Kanada: Kultur- und Wissenstransfer 1990-2000* (Austria-Canada: Cultural and Knowledge Transfer; Autriche-Canada: Le transfert culturel et scientifique).{endif}