



DEBATES OF THE SENATE

1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT • VOLUME 150 • NUMBER 164

GEORGE ELLIOTT CLARKE

POET LAUREATE—TRIBUTES

Statement by:

The Honourable Patricia Bovey

Thursday, November 30, 2017

THE SENATE

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Hon. Patricia Bovey: Honourable senators, as George Elliott Clarke completes his term as Poet Laureate of the Parliament of Canada, I want to thank and congratulate George on his work and the voice he has given to the work of parliamentarians. He is one of those stellar Canadians who inspire us; he has inspired us with his insights eloquently articulated through his writing, poems, plays and prose.

To pay adequate tribute to his work on the Hill and for Canadians, I knew I had to look elsewhere for assistance, as I obviously do not have the talent to respond and thank him in kind. So I turned to St. Boniface poet Roger Léveillé for help. This is what he wrote for me to read in honour of his and our colleague George Elliott Clarke today. One is in French and one in English.

[*Translation*]

La poésie est sans espoir
Elle n'a rien à perdre
ou à gagner

Sa façon est la sienne
Sa voie est vraie
Elle va où elle veut sans errer
et arrive toujours
à point

[*English*]

Poetry is without hope
It has nothing to gain
or lose
Her ways are her own
She goes at will
without wandering
The wonder of her manner is true
and knows no end

Thank you, George. I look forward to what you undertake as an encore. I eagerly await your next volume. I know it will be *toujours à point*, and that your artistry with words, “the wonder of [your] manner” will always be true and “[know] no end.” *Merci*.
