



## BOOK RELEASE

### *Elle*

Douglas Glover

Reader's Guide Edition, with an afterword by Lawrence Mathews

Fiction

978-0-86492-492-6

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*"What do you do with a headstrong girl? Always a difficult question."*

*Elle* is a lusty, subversive woman in this astonishing riff on the discovery of the New World. Based on a true story, Douglas Glover's fantastical novel chronicles the ordeals and adventures of a young French woman marooned on the desolate Isle of Demons during Jacques Cartier's ill-fated third and last attempt to colonize Canada.

*"Kill her, maim her, amputate her limbs, pour acid over her face, put out her eyes, shave her head, put her in a brothel or a nunnery, or simply get her pregnant and marry her. Better yet, maroon her on a deserted island lest she spread the contagion of discontent to other girls or even men . . ."*

This much we know is true: the Sieur de Roberval did abandon his unruly young niece, her lover, and her nurse on the Isle of Demons; her companions and her newborn baby did die; and she was indeed rescued and taken home to France. Beyond that, Glover's Rabelaisian imagination takes over.

When it was first released in 2003, *Elle* caused a literary sensation, selling over 25,000 copies and winning the Governor General's Award for Fiction. It has subsequently been translated into five languages. Earlier this year, author Douglas Glover was honoured by the Writers' Trust of Canada with the Timothy Findley Award for a male writer in mid-career, making this a perfect time to reintroduce *Elle*. The 2007 edition of this modern classic comes complete with a sensuous new cover and a Reader's Guide to the story of a libidinous 16th-century belle turned Robinson Crusoe — perfect for book clubs. In addition, the afterword by Lawrence Mathews draws a parallel between the author and *Elle*'s one-time lover, François Rabelais.

*"He's a contemporary version of Elle's F., his writing playful, passionate, and intelligent. Perhaps Canada is now ready to respond positively to such qualities in its nationally recognized authors. Perhaps a wider audience is at last ready to appreciate his work as Elle appreciates F.'s: "What I love about his stories: He writes as if he is never afraid of what he might say next."*

In a carnal whirlwind of myth and story, lust and love, of beauty and hilarity, Douglas Glover brings the past violently and unexpectedly into the present. His well-known scatological realism, exuberant violence, and dark, unsettling humour give history a thoroughly modern chill.

— more —

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## About The Author

Douglas Glover is an itinerant Canadian. Born in 1948, he grew up on the family tobacco farm in southwestern Ontario, studied philosophy at York University and the University of Edinburgh, then worked on a series of daily newspapers in New Brunswick, Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan before earning his MFA at the Iowa Writers' Workshop in 1982. He is the author of five story collections, four novels, a book of essays, *Notes Home from a Prodigal Son*, and *The Enamoured Knight*, a book about *Don Quixote* and the novel form.

His bestselling novel *Elle* won the 2003 Governor General's Award for Fiction, was a finalist for the 2005 International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award, and was optioned by Igloolik Isuma Productions, makers of *Atanarjuat The Fast Runner*. His short fiction collection, *A Guide to Animal Behaviour*, was a finalist for the 1991 Governor General's Award. His critically acclaimed novel *The Life and Times of Captain N.* was listed by the *Chicago Tribune* as one of the best books of 1993 and as a *Globe and Mail* top-ten paperback of 2001. *16 Categories of Desire* was shortlisted for the Rogers Writers Trust Fiction Award and was a top fiction pick for *This Morning* (CBC Radio), *Hot Type* (CBC Television), and *The Toronto Star*.

Glover has taught at Skidmore College, Colgate University, Davidson College, the State University of New York at Albany, and Vermont College. In addition, he has been writer-in-residence at the University of New Brunswick, the University of Lethbridge, St. Thomas University, and Utah State University.

## Accolades

"A remarkable, wondrous experience"

— Wayne Johnston

"Only Douglas Glover could write such a bawdy, outrageously modern historical novel that bridges the plagues of Canada with the continent of the hidden heart. *Elle* is present in the past, and the past is funny, sexy and boisterous — the real becomes fanciful then real again — it teems with bears, native myths and the insights of a French woman who turns from tart to turnip, who's been there, done that, and ready to do it all again. Glover, like an animal, shifts his head to see straight, and what he sees is the unofficial, non-history of our nation — it is an 'us' as seen through a beaver's anus. *Elle* is all rump and romp."

— Michael Winter

"*Elle* is a magical novel that manages to plumb the depths of religious wonderment, even while it is also a wild, nearly pagan celebration of what is ribald in man and nature. Aside from a richness of language and lavishly conveyed historical detail, this book has a remarkable narrative. With overtones of *The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, of the Irish/Viking Sagas, and of bawdy female centered novels like *Fear of Flying*, the book is very much its own ever charming and gritty creation. To my mind, it beats out many another historical novel — a splendid read . . ."

— Oscar Hijuelos

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