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Press release

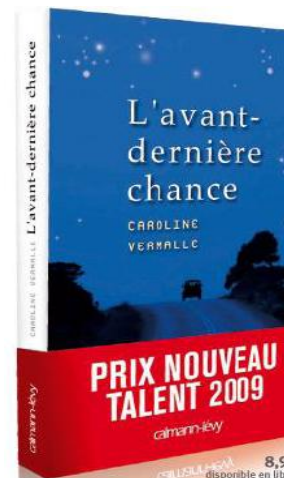
Caroline Vermalle today won the second Bouygues Telecom-Metro New Talent Prize for her novel, *L'avant-dernière chance* (next to last chance).

The winner will receive her award at the Salon du Livre book fair in Paris, where the 2010 New Talent Prize will be launched.

***L'avant-dernière chance* (available in bookshops on 18 March 2009)**

Adèle, a young French intern, is working on a TV drama shoot in London when she receives a decidedly unexpected happy birthday text message. The message is from her grandfather, who died several days earlier.

Adèle retraces the events of the last month. Her 83-year-old grandfather, Georges, has always been a permanent fixture in his vegetable garden in rural Poitou country in western France. Until one day he decides to take a trip around France with his 76-year-old neighbour and friend, Charles. When she finds out about their plan, Adèle is worried about her grandfather's health and makes him promise to text her every day. And so Georges and Adèle, who have not seen each other for ten years, begin to correspond by SMS, developing a close and tender relationship.



This touching and deftly-observed novel mixes wisecracking dialogue with the emotional release of long-buried feelings.

Biography of Caroline Vermalle

Caroline Vermalle was born in the Oise *département* north of Paris in 1973. Her father was a fighter pilot, so she moved house ten times before she left the family unit at 17. A fan of travel, adventure and cinema, she obtained a degree from Ecole Supérieur d'Etudes Cinématographiques before leaving France for London at the age of 21. She started working at the BBC and went on to become an associate producer. Having realised her dream of making a career in audiovisual documentary production, in 2006 she married a South African architect. She left the BBC and moved to France in December 2007. At 35, she is publishing her first novel with Calmann-Lévy. She recently created a blog, <http://carolinevermalle.typepad.fr>, to share her experience as a writer and, in a few weeks, reveal the sequel to *L'avant-dernière chance*.

The third Bouygues Telecom Foundation-Metro New Talent Prize

The Bouygues Telecom Foundation and Metro are launching the third New Talent Prize (“Prix Nouveau Talent”), in collaboration with the Calmann-Lévy publishing house, to reveal new literary talent and reward a French-language novel in which SMS language and instant messaging are included in the story.

The prize is awarded to debut novels of all genres.

Manuscripts have to be submitted before 31 October 2009. The winning novel will be published by Calmann-Lévy and the winning author will receive a €10,000 prize from the Bouygues Telecom Foundation.

The jury will be made up of publishers, Metro journalists, Bouygues Telecom employees, and the winner of the 2009 competition.

Complete rules can be found online at www.fondation.bouyguetelecom.fr and www.calmann-levy.fr.

All Bouygues Telecom Foundation initiatives are intended to inform and create bonds between individuals

The aim of the New Talent Prize is to bring mutually enriching worlds together. Like rap, slang and patois, SMS language is a community-based idiom that gives people the joy of speaking a lingo that is off-limits for other people.

The Bouygues Telecom Foundation's other initiatives are aimed at helping people with mental or social difficulties (support for the Petits Princes association) and protecting the environment (partnership with Nicolas Hulot Foundation through *Défi pour la Terre* (“Earth Challenge”). The Foundation also backs associations sponsored by company employees.

Bouygues Telecom employees benefit from “volunteer” status and can devote up to four half-days of their total working time every year to work in the field on their association's initiatives. In all, Bouygues Telecom donates 3,000 working hours every year to its Foundation, which has nearly 460 volunteers.

Metro, a leading daily in France

The objective of the French daily, Metro, is to bring young active professionals varied, in-depth news with no political or ideological bias. An unflinching observer of urban life styles, Metro keeps a close eye on new practices and habits in consumption, dedicating a third of its daily content to culture. Metro, an urban media actor, supports all artistic disciplines.

Present in 12 large French cities, Metro has an average daily readership of 2,419,000 and the fastest growing readership numbers in France¹. Metro is present in 20 countries in Europe, North America, South America and Asia. It has the highest readership of any daily in the world, with 22 million readers a day².

¹Source: *Epiq 2007-2008. Readers per issue aged 15 and over. 382,000 more readers in one year.*

²Source: *Total of national readerships worldwide.*

Calmann-Lévy

Calmann-Lévy is one of the oldest French-language publishing houses, having published the likes of Flaubert, Baudelaire, Georges Sand, Victor Hugo, Stendhal and Balzac. Today Calmann-Lévy is a full-line publisher, recognised both for its non-fiction, current events and history publications and for its Suspense and Fantasy collections, Shoah Memorial works, and sports annuals.

Calmann-Lévy's main collections are *Interstices*, *Traduit de*, *Shoah Memorial*, *Pérenne*, *Fantasy*, *Siècles de* and *Année du*.

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