



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

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HUDDLE, MCINNIS, AND WOJAHN RECEIVE LITERARY AWARDS

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(Richmond, Virginia) – The Library of Virginia is pleased to announce the winners of the 15th Annual Library of Virginia Literary Awards, sponsored by Dominion. The October 20 awards celebration was hosted by award-winning Virginia author Adriana Trigiani. Awards categories were fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and literary lifetime achievement. Winners of the Library of Virginia's Annual Literary Awards receive a cash prize and a handsome engraved crystal book.

David Huddle is the recipient of the **2012 Emyl Jenkins Sexton Literary Award for Fiction** for *Nothing Can Make Me Do This*, which the judges felt was written with compelling honesty, humor, and grace. Huddle's elegantly written 10th work of fiction depicts the quirky interior lives that families and close friends seldom reveal to one another.

Originally from Ivanhoe, Virginia, Huddle holds degrees from the University of Virginia, Hollins College, and Columbia University. He taught for 38 years at the University of Vermont, and then served three years as Distinguished Visiting Professor of Creative Writing at Hollins University. In 2000 Huddle was a literary award finalist in both the poetry and fiction category. That year he won the Library's fiction prize for *The Story of A Million Years*, his debut novel.

The other finalists for the fiction prize were: *Welcome to Americastan* by Jabeen Akhtar and *The Art of Fielding* by Chad Harbach. The judges praised Akhtar's lively debut novel for portraying timeless elements of love, friendship, and traditional values contending with confusion, resentment, and suspicion in the complexities of 21st-century America. *The Art of Fielding*, set during the baseball season at a private college, sings with the promising voice of youth to readers who don't know or care about the difference between a ball and a strike.

The judges also selected an **honorable mention** in the fiction category: *Mercy Creek* by Matt Matthews.

The winner of the **2012 Literary Award for Nonfiction** is Maurie D. McInnis for ***Slaves Waiting for Sale: Abolitionist Art and the American Slave Trade***. The judges felt that *Slaves Waiting for Sale* was a beautiful book

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about an ugly subject, combining art history and social history—aesthetic discernment and pioneering archival and archaeological research—to present remarkable new insights about slavery and the slave trade in Richmond, Savannah, Charleston, and New Orleans. Bolstered with historic illustrations, *Slaves Waiting for Sale* offers fresh and startling perspectives about the antebellum South.

McInnis is an associate professor and associate dean for undergraduate academic programs at the University of Virginia. Her main research interest is in the cultural history of American art in the colonial and antebellum South. Her book *The Politics of Taste in Antebellum Charleston* won the South Carolina Historical Society's George C. Rogers Jr. Award and the Society of Architectural Historians' Spiro Kostof Book Award.

The other nonfiction finalists were: *Midnight Rising: John Brown and the Raid that Sparked the Civil War* by Tony Horwitz and *Brown's Battleground: Students, Segregationists, and the Struggle for Justice in Prince Edward County, Virginia* by Jill Ogle Titus. Part biography, part historical narrative, *Midnight Rising* demonstrates why John Brown was—and remains—so troubling and important for modern Americans.

Thoroughly researched, intellectually rigorous, and clearly written, *Brown's Battleground* speaks powerfully to questions that still confront American communities today. *Brown's Battleground* focuses on the people whose lives were affected not only by *Brown v. Board of Education* but also by the prevailing attitudes of the time.

David Wojahn, director of the creative writing program in the Department of English at Virginia Commonwealth University, won the **2012 Literary Award for Poetry** for *World Tree*. *World Tree* is a remarkable whole, at once richly allusive and completely familiar. The judges praised Wojahn as the master of parallel narratives, who treats time as its own geography, braiding the personal with the historical in poems consistently brilliant and beautiful. *World Tree* becomes an invocation not to linger with but to recognize the dead so as to dwell finally with the living.

Ever since his first collection, *Icehouse Lights*, was chosen for the Yale Series of Younger Poets Award in 1981, Wojahn has been one of American poetry's most thoughtful examiners of culture and memory. In addition to his books of poetry, Wojahn is the author of a collection of essays on contemporary poetry. He has received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, Massachusetts, the Illinois Arts Council, and the Indiana Arts Commission. In 2009 Wojahn received the Carole Weinstein Poetry Prize, a \$10,000 annual award that recognizes poets with strong ties to central Virginia who have contributed significantly to the art of poetry.

The other poetry prize finalists were *Touch* by Henri Cole and *Hawks on Wires* by Dave Smith. Situated in the “fraught territories of self and family,” the poems in *Touch* fuse beauty and terror, Cole’s formal intensity a vital part of their meaning. The narratives in Dave Smith’s *Hawks on Wires* range from interactions with the natural world and the landscape of tidewater Virginia to a night at Waffle House. Making “the work of the imagined” palpable, Smith’s poems—ever vivid, gorgeously musical—reflect the richness and tensions of the American South.

The judges also selected an **honorable mention** in poetry category: *Nine Acres* by Nathaniel Perry.

The winners of the **People's Choice Awards** are *The Sixth Man* by David Baldacci in the **fiction category** and *Lost Communities of Virginia* by Terri Fisher and Kirsten Sparenborg in the **nonfiction category**. Winners are decided by readers voting online and in libraries. Winners of the People's Choice awards receive a cash prize and an engraved crystal book.

Also honored at this year's Literary Awards was *When a Dragon Moves In* by Jodi Moore, which was selected as the winner of the annual **Whitney and Scott Cardozo Award for Children's Literature**. A juried panel selected five finalists from nominated authors whose works focused on literature for children ages four through eight, with a publication date of 2011. Nominated titles were accepted from the greater mid-Atlantic region. A public vote occurred online and in public libraries throughout central Virginia in July and August.

Kelly Cherry won this year's **Carole Weinstein Prize in Poetry**. Cherry is a graduate of Mary Washington College, was a Du Pont Fellow at the University of Virginia, and earned her graduate degree from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She is the author of 20 books of fiction, poetry, memoir, essay, and criticism. She was the first recipient of the Hanes Poetry Prize given by the Fellowship of Southern Writers for a body of work. She served as Poet Laureate of Virginia from 2011 to 2012. The Weinstein Prize recognizes significant recent contributions to the art of poetry and is awarded on the basis of a range of achievement in the field of poetry. There is no formal application process or competition. Selection and notification of the annual prize is made by a three-member board of curators.

The recipient of the 2012 Library of Virginia **Literary Lifetime Achievement Award** is **Tom Robbins**, best-known for his 1976 novel, *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*. Robbins was named by Writer's Digest as one of the "Top 100 Writers of the 20th Century" and has been recognized with numerous awards, including the Golden Umbrella from the Seattle Bumbershoot Arts Festival for lifetime achievement in arts and Willamette Writers' Distinguished Northwest Writer Award.

Next year's Literary Awards Celebration will be held on October 19, 2013.

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