



**LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA**

**Sandra Gioia Treadway**  
Librarian of Virginia

## **Eastman, Dove and Johnson Receive Literary Awards** **Library of Virginia honors 2022 recipients**

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(RICHMOND, VIRGINIA) The Library of Virginia is pleased to announce the winners of the 25th Annual Library of Virginia Literary Awards, presented by Amazon and Dominion Energy. Best-selling author and award-winning filmmaker Adriana Trigiani hosted the Oct. 15 awards celebration, with author and culinary historian **Michael W. Twitty** as the featured speaker. Award categories were nonfiction, fiction and poetry; People's Choice Awards for fiction and nonfiction; and Art in Literature: The Mary Lynn Kotz Award. In addition to an award and distinguished recognition, winners in each category received a monetary prize. The Literary Awards also raise critical support for the Library's work through the Library of Virginia Foundation.

The 2022 Literary Award for Nonfiction winner is **Carolyn Eastman** for her book *The Strange Genius of Mr. O: The World of the United States' First Forgotten Celebrity*, the biography of a remarkable performer—a gaunt Scottish orator who appeared in a toga—and a story of the United States during the founding era. Her first book, *A Nation of Speechifiers: Making an American Public after the Revolution*, received the James Broussard Best First Book Prize from the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic. Eastman is a professor of history at Virginia Commonwealth University and a 2022–2023 National Endowment for the Humanities Public Scholar.

Other nonfiction award finalists were John Woodrow Cox for *Children Under Fire: An American Crisis* and Caroline Janney for *Ends of War: The Unfinished Fight of Lee's Army after Appomattox*.

The 2022 Poetry Award Winner is Pulitzer Prize winner and former U.S. Poet Laureate **Rita Dove** for her book *Playlist for the Apocalypse*. In her first volume of new poems in 12 years, Dove investigates the vacillating moral compass guiding America's, and the world's, experiments in democracy. Her numerous honors include Lifetime Achievement Medals from the Library of Virginia and the Fulbright Association, the 2014 Carole Weinstein Poetry Prize, the 2019 Wallace Stevens Award from the Academy of American Poets and the 2021 Gold Medal for Poetry from the American Academy of Arts and Letters—making her the third female and first African American poet in the medal's 110-year history. Dove is the Henry Hoyns Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Virginia.

Other poetry finalists were Sandra Beasley for *Made to Explode* and Tina Parker for *Lock Her Up*.

The 2022 Fiction Award winner is **Jocelyn Nicole Johnson** for her book *My Monticello: Fiction*. Set in the near future, *My Monticello* tells the story of a diverse group of Charlottesville neighbors fleeing violent white supremacists. The book was called "a masterly feat" by the *New York Times* and placed third on *Time* magazine's 10 best books of the year. *My Monticello* won the Weatherford Award, the Lillian Smith Prize and the Balcones Prize

and was a finalist for many others, including a National Book Critics Circle Award, a Pen/Faulkner Award and an *LA Times* Book Award. A veteran public school art teacher, Johnson lives and writes in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Other fiction award finalists were Joanna Pearson for *Now You Know It All* and Sheri Reynolds for *The Tender Grave*. Angel Khouri received honorable mention for *Between Tides*.

The winners of the People's Choice Awards are **Mari K. Eder** in the nonfiction category for her book *The Girls Who Stepped Out of Line: Untold Stories of the Women Who Changed the Course of World War II* and **Sadeqa Johnson** in the fiction category for her book *Yellow Wife: A Novel*.

The Art in Literature: The Mary Lynn Kotz Award went to **Erin I. Kelly** and **Winfred Rembert** for their book *Chasing Me to My Grave: An Artist's Memoir of the Jim Crow South*. The winner of the 2022 Pulitzer Prize in Biography, *Chasing Me to My Grave* tells the remarkable life story of Black American artist Winfred Rembert (1945–2021). The book presents Rembert's breathtaking body of artwork alongside his story, bringing to life the promise and the danger of civil rights protest, the brutalities of incarceration, his search for his mother's love and the epic bond he found with his wife, Patsy.

Presented by the Library and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, the Art in Literature Award recognizes an outstanding book published in the previous year that is written primarily in response to a work (or works) of art while also showing the highest literary quality as a creative or scholarly work. Established in 2013, the award is named in honor of Mary Lynn Kotz, author of the award-winning biography *Rauschenberg: Art and Life*.

Also among the evening's highlights was recognition of **Katie Couric** for outstanding contributions to literature and journalism. An award-winning journalist and #1 *New York Times* best-selling author of her memoir, *Going There*, Couric is also the author of two children's books and *The Best Advice I Ever Got: Lessons from Extraordinary Lives*. She was the first woman to solo anchor a network evening newscast, serving as anchor and managing editor of the CBS Evening News from 2006 to 2011 following 15 years as co-anchor of NBC's *Today Show*.

**Photographs** of the winners, honoree, featured speaker and host are available at this link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/3iakwv7vo3ypses/AACiEOLbZsezZxv9gC5tXIGNa?dl=0>

**Photographs** from the event are available at this link:

[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/dnxvil5qvaudv78/AAC3FUyUJhRj1\\_DfNAvPyFqna?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/dnxvil5qvaudv78/AAC3FUyUJhRj1_DfNAvPyFqna?dl=0)

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## **ABOUT THE LITERARY AWARDS**

In 1997, the Library of Virginia established its annual Literary Awards program to honor Virginia writers and celebrate their contributions to the literary landscape of our state and nation. Given to Virginia authors in the categories of fiction and poetry—and to nonfiction authors for works about a Virginia subject as well—the awards are presented at an annual celebration that has become the Library's signature fundraising event and an eagerly anticipated cultural tradition in Richmond.

## **ABOUT THE LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA**

The Library of Virginia is the state's oldest institution dedicated to the preservation of Virginia's history and culture. Our online offerings attract nearly 4 million website visits per year, and our resources, exhibitions and events bring in more than 100,000 visitors each year. The Library's collections, containing more than 130 million items, document and illustrate the lives of both famous Virginians and ordinary citizens.

## **ABOUT THE LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA FOUNDATION**

Founded in 1984, the Library of Virginia Foundation supports the Library of Virginia and its mission by raising private financial support, managing its endowment and overseeing programming that brings Virginia's history and culture to life.