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Winners Announced for 2004 Connecticut Book Awards

December 6, 2004...Winners were announced for the third annual Connecticut Book Awards Sunday, December 5, in the city hall atrium in downtown Hartford.

An audience of more than 130 attended to pay tribute to the state's authors and illustrators in an award ceremony presented by the Connecticut Center for the Book, a program of the Hartford Public Library.

The awards, an annual event for the Connecticut Center for the Book, were made after 40 judges distinguished in the fields of writing, librarianship, book arts, academe, journalism and publishing considered more than 100 nominations for work published in 2003. (For the list of 2004 judges, visit online at www.hplct.org/cfb) The winners, current or former state residents or authors whose work had a Connecticut setting, were chosen in seven categories as well as for a Lifetime Achievement award.

The 2004 Connecticut Book Award winners are:

- Lifetime Achievement for Service to the Literary Community: Wally Lamb, a nationally honored teacher, critically acclaimed writer and bestselling author. His work includes the #1 *New York Times* bestseller, *She's Come Undone* (Pocket Books; 1992), as well as published fiction and non-fiction in *The Missouri Review*, *Allure*, *USA Weekend*, *Northeast*, and *The New York Times Magazine*. Lamb is editor of the poetry collection, *Always Begin Where You Are* (McGraw Hill; 1979);
- Memoir: Colin McEnroe, *My Father's Footprints: A Memoir* (Warner Books), speaks of the complex relationship between the author and his father;
- Children's Author: Pegi Deitz Shea, *Tangled Threads* (Clarion Books), a novel for young readers about the Hmong immigrant experience;

- Children's Illustrator: Wendell Minor, *Into the Woods* (Atheneum), the illustrated biography of the early American woodsman and artist John James Audubon (1785-1851);
- Design: Robin Price, *Language of Her Body* (Robin Price, Printer & Publisher), a meditative artist's book that explores the photographic nude female figure, re-interpreted through a landscape of sumi-e (Japanese brush painting);
- Fiction: Stewart O'Nan, *The Night Country* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux) a contemporary ghost story set in suburban Connecticut that focuses on the survivors of a car accident that killed three teenagers on Halloween exactly a year before the novel begins;
- Non-Fiction: Christopher P. Bickford and Howard R. Lamar, editors, *Voices of the New Republic: Connecticut Towns, 1800-1832* (Connecticut Academy of Arts and Science), a look at the early nineteenth century as seen through the eyes of those who lived there;
- and, Poetry: Susan Howe, *The Midnight* (New Directions), an autobiographical collection of poetry and prose that embodies the poet's historical and literary passions .

Author and wildlife enthusiast John Himmelman was the featured speaker. Himmelman has written and illustrated more than 50 books in a little over twenty years. Along with fellow children's book author/illustrator, Kay Kudlinski, he founded a "traveling school," Storycraft Studios, to teach people how to get published as a children's book writer and/or illustrator.

Jerry Franklin, president and CEO Connecticut Public Broadcasting, served as master of ceremonies. Under Franklin's leadership, Connecticut Public Television has won 43 Emmy Awards, two George Foster Peabody Awards, and two Ohio State Awards for Broadcast Excellence, and Connecticut Public Radio has earned three Mark Twain Awards from the Associated Press.

Stuart Lamson of Bank Square Books in Mystic supplied the titles for the book signing during the awards reception. Authors were present to sign their works.

The mission of the Connecticut Center for the Book is to celebrate books, writers and readers who engender and sustain the life of the imagination and to highlight authors, illustrators, printers and the literary heritage of the state of Connecticut. The Connecticut Center for the Book is an affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress.

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