

June 3, 2005, New York, NY - The recipients of the 17th Annual Lambda Literary Awards were announced last night at a gala ceremony in New York City emceed by comedian and Broadway actress Lea Delaria during the BookExpo America convention. The awards celebrate achievements in lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) literature for books published in 2004.

A \$1,000 prize made possible by the Board of Trustees of the Lambda Literary Foundation, which organizes the Awards, was awarded to the recipient of awards in each of two new categories: The Trustees Award for Gay Men's Debut Fiction Award was given to actor, model, producer and writer Blair Mastbaum, for his novel *Clay's Way* (Alyson). The Lesbian Debut Fiction Award was given to Judith Frank, who drew on her experience as an adult literacy tutor to write her first novel *Cry Baby Butch* (Firebrand). A \$500 prize was awarded to Bella Books for The Independent LGBT Press Award.

The Gay Men's Fiction Award was given to Booker Prize finalist Colm Tóibín for *The Master* (Scribner), a fictionalized study of the interior life of novelist Henry James, and The Lesbian Fiction Award was given to Village Voice writer and novelist Stacey D'Erasmus for *A Seahorse Year* (Houghton Mifflin), which follows a San Francisco family coping with a 16-year-old son's mental illness. Winners in the above categories, and eighteen others, received a crystal trophy.

Comedian and Broadway actress Lea Delaria recounted the widely covered story of her last public appearance, a May 14 benefit for the AIDS Assistance Program in Palm Springs, in which organizers shut off her microphone and dragged her off stage for her Bush-Bashing jokes. The audience of The Lambda Literary Awards, several of whom showed up sporting "Impeach Bush" buttons, gave Delaria quite the opposite

reception by bursting into rousing applause and laughter throughout the night.

In her acceptance speech for The Bridge Builder Award, *Vagina Monologues* author Eve Ensler said that "creating better understanding between gays and straights is less about building bridges and more about excavating the crud between us."

When *New York Times* bestselling Eleanor Roosevelt-biographer Blanche Weisen Cooke accepted the Pioneer Award, she told a story to make the point that two butches can't dance, but Lea Delaria proved her wrong by waltzing with her onstage.

Among the award presenters were Style TV drag talk show host Brini Maxwell presenting the Humor Award, and porn star turned poet Aiden Shaw presenting the Erotica Award, as well as Broadway writer and performer Charles Busch, who when presenting the memoir category joked that among his favorite memoirs were those by Suzanne Sommers and Mary Lou Henner.

The Lambda Literary Awards recognize and honor the best in lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender literature. From hundreds of books nominated by their publishers and other authorized agents, five nominees were selected in each of 20 categories. Panels of judges in each category, chosen to represent the diversity of the LGBT literary community, determined the final winner from the finalists.

The Lambda Literary Awards are produced by the non-profit Lambda Literary Foundation (www.lambdalit.org)
Photos and bios available upon request.

Award Recipients:

The Trustees Award for Debut Gay Men's Fiction
Clay's Way by Blair Mastbaum, Alyson

The Trustees Award for Debut Lesbian Fiction

Crybaby Butch by Judith Frank, Firebrand

Gay Men's Fiction

The Master by Colm Tóibín, Scribner

Lesbian Fiction

A Seahorse Year by Stacey D'Erasmus, Houghton Mifflin

Lesbian Poetry

Sweet to Burn by Beverly Burch, Gival Press

Gay Men's Poetry

Written in Water by Luis Cernuda, City Lights Publishers

Lesbian mystery

Hancock Park by Katherine V. Forrest, Berkley Prime
Crime/Penguin Group USA

Gay Men's Mystery

Flight of Aquavit by Anthony Bidulka, Insomniac Press

Fiction Anthology

Fresh Men: New Voices in Gay Fiction selected by Edmund
White, edited by Donald Weise, Carroll & Graff

Nonfiction Anthology

I Do/I Don't: Queers on Marriage edited by Greg Wharton and
Ian Philips, Suspect Thoughts Press

Memoir

Name All the Animals by Alison Smith, Scribner

Biography

Warrior Poet: A Biography of Audre Lorde by Alexis De Veaux, W.W. Norton

Children's/Young Adult

So Hard to Say by Alex Sanchez, Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers

Erotica

Best Gay Erotica 2005 edited by Richard Labonte, Cleis Press

Humor

Dress Your Family in Corduroy and Denim by David Sedaris, Little, Brown

Romance

Almost Like Being in Love by Steven Kluger, HarperCollins

Scifi/fan/horror

The Ordinary by Jim Grimsley, Tor Books

Spirituality

Jesus and the Shamanic Tradition of Same-Sex Love by Will Roscoe, Suspect Thoughts Press

Drama / Theater

I am My Own Wife by Doug Wright, Farrar, Straus & Giroux

Visual Arts/Photography

At Ease: Navy Men of World War II by Evan Bachner, Harry Abrams

LGBT Studies

For the Love of Women: Gender, Identity and Same-Sex Relations in a Greek Provincial Town by Elisabeth Kirtsoglou, Routledge

Transgender

The Gender Frontier by Mariette Pathy Allen, Kehrer Verlag

The 2005 Lambda Literary Awards were hosted by
The Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies of the City University of New York

The 2005 Lambda Literary Awards were co-sponsored by
The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center

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