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Massachusetts Book Awards News

Must-Read MassBooks for 2023 Announced!



Just in time for summer reading, the Must-Read titles in the 23rd Annual Massachusetts Book Awards were announced this morning, May 8th, at the Massachusetts Library Association conference in Falmouth.

Must-Read Fiction

- Atomic Anna* by Rachel Barenbaum (Grand Central)
- The Beckoning World* by Douglas Bauer (U of Iowa Press)
- Horse* by Geraldine Brooks (Viking)
- How to Fall Out of Love Madly* by Jana Casale (Dial Press)
- The Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali* by Uzma Aslam Khan (Deep Vellum)
- Our Missing Hearts* by Celeste Ng (Penguin Press)
- Pictures of the Shark* by Thomas H. McNeely (Texas Review)
- Shadows of Berlin* by David R. Gillham (Sourcebooks Landmark)
- Thank You, Mr. Nixon* by Gish Jen (Vintage)
- Tides* by Sara Freeman (Grove Press)
- Tracy Flick Can't Win* by Tom Perrotta (Scribner)

Must-Read Nonfiction

- By Hands Now Known* by Margaret A. Burnham (W.W. Norton)
Civil Rights Queen by Tomiko Brown-Nagin (Pantheon)
How to Raise an Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi (One World)
The Imposter's War by Mark Arsenault (Pegasus)
Rebels at Sea by Eric Jay Dolin (Liveright)
Six Walks by Ben Shattuck (Tin House)
Teaching White Supremacy by Donald Yacovone (Pantheon)
The Third Person by Emma Grove (Drawn & Quarterly)
This is What It Sounds Like by Susan Rogers and Ogi Ogas (W.W. Norton)
Ways and Means by Roger Lowenstein (Penguin Press)
We Refuse to Forget by Caleb Gayle (Riverhead)
Winslow Homer: American Passage by William R. Cross (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

Must-Read Poetry

- American Treasure* by Jill McDonough (Alice James)
Headstone by Mark Elber (Passager)
Hyperphantasia by Sara Deniz Akant (Rescue)
Let the World Have You by Mikko Harvey (House of Anansi)
On the Mercy Me Planet by Maya Janson (Blue Edge)
Previously Owned by Nathan McClain (Four Way)
The Queen of Queens by Jennifer Martelli (Bordighera)
Sleeping in the Dead Girl's Room by Cynthia Bargar (Lily Poetry)
Star Lake by Arda Collins (The Song Cave)
The Study of Human Life by Joshua Bennett (Penguin Books)
We Are Mermaids by Stephanie Burt (Graywolf)
The World Keeps Ending, and the World Goes On by Franny Choi (Ecco)

Must-Read Middle Grade/Young Adult Literature

- Cress Watercress* by Gregory Maguire (Candlewick)
A Dragon Used to Live Here by Annette LeBlanc Cate (Candlewick)
Gold Mountain by Betty G. Yee (Carolrhoda Lab)
Healer & Witch by Nancy Werlin (Candlewick)
Hidden Powers by Jeannine Atkins (Atheneum BYR)
The Moth Girl by Heather Kamins (G.P. Putnam's BYR)
Myrales in the Void by Wes Dyson (WONDERLOVE)
No Filter and Other Lies by Crystal Maldonado (Holiday House)
The Polter-Ghost Problem by Betsy Uhrig (Margaret K. McElderry)
A Scatter of Light by Malinda Lo (Dutton BYR)
Slip by Marika McCoola (Algonquin YR)
Trouble at Turtle Pond by Diana Renn (Fitzroy)

Must-Read Picture Book/Early Readers

- Diving Deep: Using Machines to Explore the Ocean* by Michelle Cusolito; Nicole Wong, illus. (Charlesbridge)
Good Night, Little Bookstore by Amy Cherrix; E.B. Goodale, illus. (Candlewick)
Hope is an Arrow by Cory McCarthy; Ekua Holmes, illus. (Candlewick)
I'll Go and Come Back by Rajani LaRocca (Candlewick)
Lulu and Zoey by Carrie Finison (Running Press Kids)

My Pet Feet by Josh Funk (Simon & Schuster BYR)

Sanctuary: Kip Tiernan and Rosie's Place, the Nation's First Shelter for Women by Christine McDonnell (Candlewick)

Show and Tell! Great Graphs and Smart Charts by Stuart J. Murphy (Charlesbridge)

Sunday Pancakes by Maya Tatsukawa (Dial BYR)

Twinkle, Twinkle, Winter Night by Megan Litwin (Clarion)

Whose Nest is Best? by Heidi E. Y. Stemple (Little Simon)

Wombat Said Come In by Carmen Agra Deedy; Brian Lies, illus. (Margaret Quinlin)

Awards & Honors will be named from these long lists in September, and the annual State House celebration will be held on October 24th. Details in September!

New in 2023!

The MassBooks will name the first annual prize for translated literature in September to celebrate Massachusetts residents who introduce us to wor in all genres from other countries.



This Year's MassBook Judges

Karen Ball (Wilbraham Public Library); Jennifer Bruneau (Northborough Free Library); Devon Evans (Brewster Ladies' Library); Brett French (CWMARS Worcester); Kelly Gates (Somerville Public Library); Jennifer Jones (Mattapoisett Free Public Library); Dory Klein (Boston Public Library); Melissa MacLeod (Carver Public Library); Tegan Mannino (Clapp Memorial Library, Belchertown); Alene Moroni (Forbes Library, Northampton); Sara Rottger (Wilmington Memorial Library); Emily Souza (Rockport Public Library); Melanie Terrill (West Bridgewater Public Library); Jennifer Usovicz (Peabody Institute Library, Peabody); Lexi Wright (High Five Books, Florence); and staff/consultants of Massachusetts Center for the Book.

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General: info@massbook.org

Program Specific: bookawards@massbook.org

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Mass Center for the Book | 17 New South St., #302, Northampton, MA 01060

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