

Massachusetts Center for the Book
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MASSACHUSETTS BOOK AWARDS “MUST READS” ANNOUNCED

Long-listed Books for the 23rd Annual Awards Unveiled

Northampton, Massachusetts, 8 May 2023 – Massachusetts Center for the Book (MCB) has announced the “Must Read” (long-listed) titles in the 23rd Annual Massachusetts Book Awards program. The titles represent achievements in fiction, nonfiction, poetry and young people’s literature by Massachusetts writers and illustrators during 2022.



The longlists were released Monday, May 8th, at the 2023 Massachusetts Library Association Conference in Falmouth. “Since its inauguration in 2001, the ‘MassBooks’ have become one of the largest state awards programs in the country,” observed Sharon Shaloo, MCB Executive Director. “It’s an annual reminder of the talent and diversity of the many writers who live and work in the Commonwealth, fueling our well-deserved reputation as a literature-rich and book-centric place.”

In her first year as Program Coordinator, Karolina Zapal was impressed by the robust submissions in all genres. “Longlists will be promoted throughout the summer,” noted Zapal. “Awards will then be announced in late summer in the five Must Read categories. We’ll also announce a prize in the new Translated Literature category, and we look forward to celebrating at a State House ceremony in the fall.”



Must-Read Fiction:

Atomic Anna by Rachel Barenbaum; *The Beckoning World* by Douglas Bauer; *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks; *How to Fall Out of Love Madly* by Jana Casale; *The Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali* by Uzma Aslam Khan; *Our Missing Hearts* by Celeste Ng; *Pictures of the Shark* by Thomas H. McNeely; *Shadows of Berlin* by David R. Gillham; *Thank You, Mr. Nixon* by Gish Jen; *Tides* by Sara Freeman; *Tracy Flick Can’t Win* by Tom Perrotta; *Vigil Harbor* by Julia Glass

Must-Read Nonfiction:

By Hands Now Known by Margaret A. Burnham; *Civil Rights Queen* by Tomiko Brown-Nagin; *How to Raise an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi; *The Imposter’s War* by Mark Arsenault; *Rebels at Sea* by Eric Jay Dolin; *Six Walks: In the Footsteps of Henry David Thoreau* by Ben Shattuck; *Teaching White Supremacy* by Donald Yacovone; *The Third Person* by Emma Grove; *This is What It Sounds Like* by Susan Rogers and Ogi Ogas; *Ways and Means* by Roger Lowenstein; *We Refuse to Forget* by Caleb Gayle; *Winslow Homer: American Passage* by William R. Cross

Must-Read Poetry:

American Treasure by Jill McDonough; *Headstone* by Mark Elber; *Hyperphantasia* by Sara Deniz Akant; *Let the*

World Have You by Mikko Harvey; *On the Mercy Me Planet* by Maya Janson; *Previously Owned* by Nathan McClain; *The Queen of Queens* by Jennifer Martelli; *Sleeping in the Dead Girl's Room* by Cynthia Bargar; *Star Lake* by Arda Collins; *The Study of Human Life* by Joshua Bennett; *We are Mermaids* by Stephanie Burt; *The World Keeps Ending, and the World Goes On* by Franny Choi

Must-Read Middle Grade/Young Adult Literature:

Cress Watercress by Gregory Maguire; *A Dragon Used to Live Here* by Annette LeBlanc Cate; *Gold Mountain* by Betty G. Yee; *Healer & Witch* by Nancy Werlin; *Hidden Powers* by Jeannine Atkins; *The Moth Girl* by Heather Kamins; *Myrales in the Void* by Wes Dyson; *No Filter and Other Lies* by Crystal Maldonado; *The Polter-Ghost Problem* by Betsy Uhrig; *A Scatter of Light* by Malinda Lo; *Slip* by Marika McCoola; *Trouble at Turtle Pond* by Diana Renn

Must-Read Picture Books/Early Readers:

Diving Deep: Using Machines to Explore the Ocean by Michelle Cusolito and illustrated by Nicole Wong; *Good Night, Little Bookstore* by Amy Cherrix and illustrated by E.B. Goodale; *Hope is an Arrow* by Cory McCarthy and illustrated by Ekua Holmes; *I'll Go and Come Back* by Rajani LaRocca; *Lulu and Zoey* by Carrie Finison; *My Pet Feet* by Josh Funk; *Sanctuary: Kip Tiernan and Rosie's Place, the Nation's First Shelter for Women* by Christine McDonnell; *Show and Tell! Great Graphs and Smart Charts* by Stuart J. Murphy; *Sunday Pancakes* by Maya Tatsukawa; *Twinkle, Twinkle, Winter Night* by Megan Litwin; *Whose Nest is Best?* by Heidi E. Y. Stemple; *Wombat Said Come In* by Carmen Agra Deedy and illustrated by Brian Lies

Judges for the 23rd Annual Awards are 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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