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### **Ohioana Announces Ohioana Book Award Finalists**

Columbus, OH – March 20, 2007—The Ohioana Library has announced the 23 finalists for the 2007 Ohioana Book Awards. Of those selected, two of the authors, Ellis Avery and Samrat Upadhyay, are past recipients of the Ohioana Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant, a \$1,000 prize given to encourage authors under 30 who have not yet published a book, and three authors, Louise Borden, Lee K. Abbott, and Denise Fleming, are past Ohioana Book Award winners.

“This was an outstanding year for books by Ohio writers and books about Ohio and Ohioans,” said Linda Hengst, executive director of the Ohioana Library. “We receive 800-1,000 books a year, which become eligible for the book awards, so the authors of the books selected as finalists this year should feel truly honored.”

The book awards are given in five categories: fiction, nonfiction, poetry, juvenile literature, and “about Ohio/Ohioans.” Ohioana will announce the winners in each category near the end of August, and recipients will be honored at the annual Ohioana Day Awards Ceremony and Luncheon on Saturday, October 27, 2007.

These are the Ohioana Book Award finalists (short profiles of each author are also included at the end of this release):

#### **Fiction:**

1. *All Things All At Once: New and Selected Stories* by **Lee K. Abbott**, Columbus (W. W. Norton & Company, 2006)
2. *The Teahouse Fire* by **Ellis Avery**, Columbus (Riverhead Books, 2006)
3. *Body Language* by **Kelly Magee**, Columbus (University of North Texas Press, 2006)
4. *The Royal Ghosts: Stories* by **Samrat Upadhyay**, Berea (Houghton Mifflin, 2006)
5. *The Kindness of Strangers* by **Katrina Kittle**, Dayton (William Morrow, 2006)

**Nonfiction:**

1. *The Good-bye Door: The Incredible True Story of America's First Female Serial Killer to Die in the Chair* by **Diana Britt Franklin**, Columbus (Kent State University Press, 2006)
2. *The Beautiful Cigar Girl: Mary Rogers, Edgar Allan Poe, and the Invention of Murder* by **Daniel Stashower**, Cleveland (Dutton, 2006)
3. *The Great Deluge: Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast* by **Douglas Brinkley**, Toledo (William Morrow, 2006)
4. *Lincoln's Melancholy: How Depression Challenged a President and Fueled His Greatness* by **Joshua Wolf Shenk**, Cincinnati (Houghton Mifflin, 2005)
5. *Life Happens: And Other Unavoidable Truths* by **Connie Schultz**, Cleveland (Random House, 2006)

**Poetry:**

1. *Flowering Bruno: A Dography: Poems* by **Charlene Fix**, Columbus (XOXOX Press, 2006)
2. *Metropolis Burning* by **Karen Kovacik**, Cleveland/Columbus (Cleveland State University Poetry Center, 2005)
3. *Blue Front* by **Martha Collins**, Lorain (Graywolf Press, 2006)
4. *Declension in the Village of Chung Luong* by **Bruce Weigl**, Lorain (Ausable Press, 2006)

**Juvenile Literature:**

1. *The Journey That Saved Curious George: The True Wartime Escape of Margret and H. A. Rey* by **Louise Borden**, Cincinnati (Houghton Mifflin, 2006)
2. *The Lemon Sisters* by **Andrea Cheng**, Cincinnati (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2006)
3. *Copper Sun* by **Sharon Draper**, Cincinnati (Atheneum Books for Young Readers/ Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, 2005)
4. *The First Day of Winter* by **Denise Fleming**, Toledo (Henry Holt & Co., 2005)
5. *Eva Underground: A Novel* by **Dandi Daley Mackall**, West Salem (Harcourt, 2006)

**About Ohio:**

1. *Growing Season: The Life of a Migrant Community*, text by **David Hassler**, photographs by **Gary Harwood**, both from Kent (Kent State University Press, 2006)

2. *Architecture in Cincinnati: An Illustrated History of Designing and Building an American City* by **Sue Ann Painter**, Cincinnati, with additional text by Beth Sullebarger and Jayne Merkel, and photographs by Alice Weston. (Ohio University Press, 2006)
3. *Citizen Spielberg* by **Lester Friedman** (University of Illinois Press, 2006)
4. *The Complete Stories of Paul Laurence Dunbar* edited by **Thomas Lewis Morgan & Gene Andrew Jarrett** (Ohio University Press, 2005)

The Ohioana Awards were first given in 1942, with James B. “Scotty” Reston, Walter Havighurst, and Willard M. Kiplinger as the first recipients. In addition to the book awards, the library sponsors six other awards, including lifetime achievement awards in poetry and children’s literature, special citations, the Marvin Grant, the Pegasus Award, and the Career Award.

The mission of the Ohioana Library, established in 1929 by First Lady Martha Kinney Cooper, is to recognize and encourage the creative accomplishments of Ohioans; preserve and expand a permanent collection of books, sheet music, manuscripts, and other materials by Ohioans and about Ohio; and disseminate information about the work of Ohio writers, musicians and other artists to researchers, schools and the general public. Individuals can visit the library at 274 East First Avenue, Columbus, OH, or online at [www.ohioana.org](http://www.ohioana.org).

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### 2007 Ohioana Book Award Finalist Author Profiles

**Lee K. Abbott**—earned a B.A. and M.A. in English at New Mexico State University, and an M.F.A. from the University of Arkansas. He taught at Case Western Reserve University before joining the Ohio State University English Department in 1990.

**Ellis Avery**—was the 2002 Ohioana Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant winner. Her first book, *The Teahouse Fire*, was released late last year by Riverhead Books. Originally from Columbus, she now lives in New York City.

**Kelly Magee**—graduated in 2003 with an M.F.A. in creative writing from Ohio State University. Her first story collection, *Body Language*, won the 2006 Katherine Anne Porter Prize in Short Fiction. Her stories have appeared in *Colorado Review*, *Ninth Letter*, *Black Warrior Review*, *Quarterly West*, *Indiana Review*, *Cream City Review*, and others.

**Samrat Upadhyay**—was born in Kathmandu and came to Ohio at twenty-one to study English at the College of Wooster. After receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Hawaii, he taught for several years at Baldwin-Wallace College before becoming a faculty member at Indiana University in the creative writing program.

**Katrina Kittle**—the author of three books, has lived in Dayton most of her life. She earned degrees in English and education from Ohio University and currently teaches sixth and seventh grades at Miami Valley School in Dayton.

**Diana Britt Franklin**—was born in England but raised in the United States. She began her career with the *New York Herald Tribune* and most recently worked on the staff of the *Columbus Dispatch*. She has authored or co-authored a dozen books under the name of Peter D. Franklin.

**Daniel Stashower**—a native of Cleveland, is the author of four mystery novels and a winner of the Raymond Chandler Fulbright Fellowship in Detective and Crime Fiction Writing. He lives in Bethesda, MD.

**Douglas Brinkley**—who lived in both Toledo and Columbus for a time, is a prolific author and professor of history at Tulane University. He lives with his wife and children in New Orleans.

**Joshua Wolf Shenk**—born in Cincinnati and raised in Wyoming OH, is an essayist and the director of the Rose O'Neill Literary House at Washington College in Chestertown, MD. His work has appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Time*, *Harper's Magazine*, the *New Yorker*, and the *New York Times*, among others.

**Connie Schultz**—winner of the 2005 Pulitzer Prize for commentary, is currently on leave from her job as a columnist for the Cleveland *Plain Dealer*. She is married to Ohio Congressman Sherrod Brown and has four children.

**Charlene Fix**—is a poet and associate professor of English at Columbus College of Art and Design in Columbus. She is the recipient of poetry fellowships from the Ohio Arts Council and the Greater Columbus Arts Council.

**Karen Kovacik**—associate professor of English and director of creative writing at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, earned degrees from Cleveland State University and the Ohio State University. She is the recipient of a number of awards, including a guest fellowship at the University of Wisconsin's Institute for Creative Writing.

**Martha Collins**—is the Pauline Delaney Professor of Creative Writing and English at Oberlin College and one of the editors of *Field* magazine. Her awards include fellowships from the NEA, the Ingram Merrill Foundation, and the Witter Bynner Foundation.

**Bruce Weigl**—grew up in Lorain, graduated from high school, and served in Vietnam. Upon his return, he attended and graduated from Oberlin College and the University of New Hampshire. He currently is Distinguished Visiting Writer at Lorain County Community College. He is the author of nine collections of poetry.

**Louise Borden**—was born and raised in Cincinnati and has lived most of her life in Ohio. She is the author of more than twenty children's books. Before becoming a writer, she taught preschool and elementary classes and was part-owner of a bookstore.

**Andrea Cheng**—grew up in Cincinnati and earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from Cornell University. The daughter of Hungarian immigrants, she married the son of Chinese immigrants, and many of her children's books address the issues that immigrant or biracial children face.

**Sharon Draper**—is the author of more than fifteen children's books. A professional educator as well as an accomplished writer, she has been honored as the National Teacher of the Year, is a four-time winner of the Coretta Scott King Literary Award, and is a New York Times bestselling author.

**Denise Fleming**—was born in Toledo and attended Kendall College of Art and Design in Michigan. A talented paper artist, she illustrates her stories with beautiful pulp paintings. She is the author of more than ten books.

**Dandi Daley Mackall**—a professional writer for more than twenty years, has written dozens of articles for popular magazines and published around 400 books for children and adults alike. A frequent guest on radio and television talk shows, she lives in rural Ohio with her husband, three children, horses, dogs, & cats.

**David Hassler & Gary Harwood**—David Hassler is a poet and the program and outreach director for the Wick Poetry Center at Kent State University. He was named Ohio Poet of the Year in 2006. Gary Harwood has been a photographer for Kent State University for more than twenty-four years and chief photographer since 1987. He has won four national Circle of Excellence awards from The Council for the Advancement and Support of Education.

**Sue Ann Painter**—a cultural and political historian, is director of the Architectural Foundation of Cincinnati. Her historical publications have won local, state, and national awards.

**Lester Friedlan**— is currently scholar-in-residence at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. He is the author of *The Jewish Image in American Film*, *Arthur Penn's Bonnie and Clyde*, and (with David Desser) *American Jewish Filmmakers*

**Thomas Lewis Morgan & Gene Andrew Jarrett**—Thomas Lewis Morgan is a lecturer at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Gene Andrew Jarrett teaches at the University of Maryland-College Park.

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