

## OHIOANA ANNOUNCES 2020 BOOK AWARD FINALISTS

The Ohioana Library is pleased to announce the finalists for the 2020 Ohioana Book Awards. First given in 1942, the awards are the second-oldest state literary prizes in the nation and honor outstanding works by Ohio authors and illustrators in five categories: Fiction, Poetry, Juvenile Literature, Middle Grade/Young Adult Literature, and Nonfiction. The sixth category, About Ohio/An Ohioan, may also include books by non-Ohio authors.

Among the literary honors this year's finalists have previously received are the National Book Award, the Pulitzer Prize, the Coretta Scott King Book Award, the Cleveland Arts Prize, the Edgar Award, and the New York Public Library Young Lions Fiction Award. One author is a finalist for her debut book. Five are past Ohioana Book Award winners, and two received Ohioana's Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant early in their writing careers.

Beginning June 15, Ohioana will profile all the finalists with the return of "30 Books, 30 Days," a special feature on our social media in which one finalist is highlighted each day. Later in June, Ohioana will launch its fifth Readers' Choice Award poll, allowing the public to vote online for their favorite book from the finalists.

Winners will be announced in July, and the 2020 Ohioana Book Awards will be presented at the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus on Thursday, October 15. The finalists are:

### **Fiction**

- DiFrancesco, Alex. *All City*, Seven Stories Press.
- Hurley, Kameron. *The Light Brigade*, Gallery/Saga Press.
- Montgomery, Jess. *The Widows*, Minotaur Books.
- Scibona, Salvatore. *The Volunteer*, Penguin Press.
- Woodson, Jacqueline. *Red at the Bone*, Riverhead Books.

### *The Director's Chair*

Dear Friends,

One of my favorite times of every year is when we get to announce the Ohioana Book Award finalists. And even though we're a little later than normal (due to COVID-19), we're pleased to introduce our 2020 finalists in this issue's cover story.

As you can see, it is a stellar list of authors representing every literary genre from novels to picture books, from poetry to history. Several of these authors are among America's and Ohio's most celebrated writers, while others are just at the beginning of what promises to be great writing careers. We applaud them all and look forward to sharing more about them and their books in the days and weeks ahead.

Ohioana has several major online events coming up, including our first-ever writing workshop and our third virtual book club. And this week, we'll take part in an event that happens once every few years: the Columbus Foundation's Big Give, a 25-hour online giving rally that supports more than 1,100 charities, including Ohioana. I hope you will

## Nonfiction

- Abdurraqib, Hanif. *Go Ahead in the Rain: Notes to a Tribe Called Quest*, University of Texas Press.
- Brinkley, Douglas. *American Moonshot: John F. Kennedy and the Great Space Race*, Harper.
- Kaufman, Kenn. *Season on the Wind: Inside the World of Spring Migration*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Salamon, Julie. *An Innocent Bystander: The Killing of Leon Klinghoffer*, Little, Brown and Company.
- Vanasco, Jeannie. *Things We Didn't Talk About When I Was a Girl*, Tin House Books.

## About Ohio or an Ohioan

- Abbott, Karen. *The Ghosts of Eden Park: The Bootleg King, the Women Who Pursued Him, and the Murder That Shocked Jazz-Age America*, Broadway Books.
- Brouwer, Sigmund. *Moon Mission*, Kids Can Press.
- Grunenwald, Jill. *Reading Behind Bars: A True Story of Literature, Law, and Life as a Prison Librarian*, Skyhorse Publishing.
- McCullough, David. *The Pioneers: The Heroic Story of the Settlers Who Brought the American Ideal West*, Simon & Schuster.
- Ruffner, Howard. *Moments of Truth: A Photographer's Experience of Kent State 1970*, Kent State University Press.

## Poetry

- Abdurraqib, Hanif. *A Fortune for Your Disaster*, Tin House Books.
- Atkins, Russell. *World'd Too Much: The Selected Poetry of Russell Atkins*, edited by Kevin Prufer and Robert E. McDonough, Cleveland State University Poetry Center.
- Selcer, Anne Lesley. *Sun Cycle*, Cleveland State University Poetry Center.
- Townsend, Ann. *Dear Delinquent*, Sarabande Books.
- Weigl, Bruce. *On the Shores of Welcome Home*, BOA Editions.

## Juvenile Literature

- Guidroz, Rukhsanna. Illus. by Dinara Mirtalipova. *Leila in Saffron*, Salaam Reads/Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.
- Hoefler, Kate. Illus. by Sarah Jacoby. *Rabbit and the Motorbike*, Chronicle.
- Houts, Michelle. Illus. by Bagram Ibatoulline. *Sea Glass Summer*, Candlewick.
- Mora, Oge. *Saturday*, Little, Brown and Company.
- Salas, Laura Purdie. Illus. by Angela Matteson. *In the Middle of the Night: Poems from a Wide-Awake House*, Wordsong.

## Middle Grade/Young Adult Literature

- Daigneau, Jean. *Code Cracking for Kids: Secret Communication Throughout History, with 21 Codes and Ciphers*, Chicago Review Press.
- Davis, Ronni. *When the Stars Lead to You*, Little, Brown and Company.
- McGinnis, Mindy. *Heroine*, Katherine Tegen Books.
- Takei, George, Justin Eisinger, and Steven Scott, Illus. by Harmony Becker. *They Called Us Enemy*, Top Shelf Productions.
- Warga, Jasmine. *Other Words for Home*, Balzer + Bray.

consider making a gift to Ohioana during the rally, which kicks off this Wednesday.

As we turn the corner on another season, we can look back on what has been a most difficult spring. We're still in the middle of a pandemic, even though there is reason for hope as we slowly begin to reopen. But now on the heels of one crisis has come another—the senseless murder of George Floyd, the latest in a number of horrible tragedies perpetrated against our fellow citizens who are black. Not surprisingly, it has driven many people to the streets in protests, the likes of which we haven't seen since the 1960s.

Often in times of trouble, we look to our great authors to give voice to what many are feeling. On the day of George Floyd's memorial service, we posted the words of one of Ohio's and the world's greatest authors, Toni Morrison: "I'm not a victim. I refuse to be one. If you can only be tall because somebody is on their knees, then you have a serious problem."

Recognizing that there is a serious problem is only one step. Doing something about it is much harder, and it's going to take the efforts of everyone. The words spoken often during the pandemic apply equally to the task before us in overcoming racial injustice: *We're all in this together*.

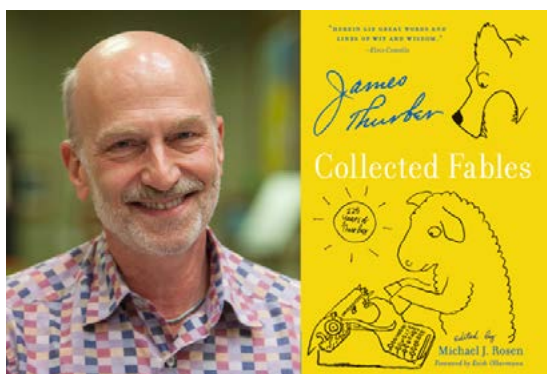
David E. Weaver  
Executive Director

# COMING SOON

## The Big Give 2020

June 10, 10 a.m. – June 11, 11 a.m., online event

Be a vital part of this community-wide, 25-hour online giving rally sponsored by the Columbus Foundation to benefit more than 1,100 charities in Central Ohio, including the Ohioana Library. All gifts made will be amplified by a \$1.5-million match pool and credit card fees for all gifts (\$20 minimum) will be covered. To make a gift to Ohioana during the rally, click on this link: <https://columbusfoundation.org/the-giving-store/nonprofit-directory-listing/OhioanaLibraryAssociation/454>



## Thurber House: The Humor of James Thurber

June 10, 2020, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m., online event

The 2020 season of Summer Literary Picnics kicks off online as Michael J. Rosen is joined by special guest readers, including Ohioana Director David Weaver, in a virtual celebration of Thurber fables. For information and tickets, visit <http://www.thurberhouse.org/literary-picnics/michael-j-rosen>

## Workshop: Starting, Writing and Completing Your Novel

June 14, 2020, 1:00 – 3:30 p.m., online event

Ohioana presents this virtual workshop with Moriel Rothman-Zecher, Ohioana Award-winning author of *Sadness is a White Bird*, that will offer both creative inspiration and practical novel writing tools. Cost \$50. To register, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/starting-writing-and-completing-your-novel-tickets-105844900948>



## Ohioana Virtual Book Club: Mindy McGinnis

June 25, 2020, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m., online event

Join Ohioana and 2020 Ohioana Book Award finalist Mindy McGinnis for a virtual book discussion of Mindy's newest novel, *Be Not Far From Me*. *Hatchet* meets *Wild* in this harrowing YA survival story about a teenage girl's attempt to endure the impossible, from the Edgar Award-winning author of *The Female of The Species*. Free. Registration is limited. Sign up with Zoom here: <https://tinyurl.com/yc8pvrcl>