

ANNOUNCING THE 2023 OHIOANA BOOK AWARD FINALISTS

Ohioana Library is pleased to announce the finalists for the 82nd annual 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, Nonfiction, Poetry, Middle Grade/Young Adult Literature, and Juvenile Literature. The sixth category, About Ohio or an Ohioan, may also include books by non-Ohio authors.

The recognition this year's stellar list of authors has received includes the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, the PEN America Literary Award, the National Book Critics Circle Award, the Coretta Scott King Book Award, the Caldecott Medal and Newbery Honors, the Edgar Award, and the Kirkus Prize. Eight authors are previous Ohioana Book Award winners.

On June 1, Ohioana will kick off the tenth annual "30 Books, 30 Days," our popular feature in which we profile one award finalist every day on our social media. This year, we have thirty-three finalists, expanding the feature by three books and three days! In mid-June we'll launch the annual Readers' Choice Award poll. First held in 2016, the poll allows the public to vote online for their favorite book from among all the finalists.

Winners will be announced in July, and the awards ceremony will be held at the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus on Thursday, September 21. The finalists are:

Fiction

- Hyde, Allegra. *Eleutheria*, Vintage
- Ng, Celeste. *Our Missing Hearts*, Penguin
- Okorafor, Nnedi. *Noor*, DAW
- Scalzi, John. *The Kaiju Preservation Society*, Tor
- Umrigar, Thrity. *Honor*, Algonquin Books

The Director's Chair

Dear Friends,

May . . . what a glorious month. Filled with the sights and smells of spring at its peak. It's a time for many memorable events—proms, graduations, and weddings. And holidays—we just celebrated Mother's Day, and in a few weeks we will observe Memorial Day.

At Ohioana, May means the announcement of the finalists for the annual Ohioana Book Awards. As you can see from our cover story, the thirty-three finalists for the 2023 awards represent the very best of this past year in books by Ohio authors and about Ohio subjects. Since 1942, more than 400 titles have been honored with an Ohioana Book Award. Seven more titles will be added to that distinguished list on September 21.

As I'm writing this, the Ohioana Book Festival ended just a few weeks ago. Our first live, in-person festival since 2019 was a spectacular success, with more than 5,100 attendees at Columbus Metropolitan Library's Main Library on April 22. Everyone was clearly

Nonfiction

- Brinkley, Douglas. *Silent Spring Revolution: John F. Kennedy, Rachel Carson, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and the Great Environmental Awakening*, HarperCollins
- Gay, Ross. *Inciting Joy: Essays*, Algonquin Books
- Macy, Beth. *Raising Lazarus: Hope, Justice, and the Future of America's Overdose Crisis*, Little, Brown and Company
- Millard, Candice. *River of the Gods: Genius, Courage, and Betrayal in the Search for the Source of the Nile*, Doubleday
- Mufleh, Luma. *Learning America: One Woman's Fight for Educational Justice for Refugee Children*, Mariner Books

About Ohio or an Ohioan

- Celeste, Richard F. *In the Heart of It All: An Unvarnished Account of My Life in Public Service*, The Kent State University Press
- Dyer, Joyce. *Pursuing John Brown: On the Trail of a Radical Abolitionist*, The University of Akron Press
- Ervick, Kelcey. *The Keeper: Soccer, Me, and the Law That Changed Women's Lives*, Avery
- Jarrett, Gene Andrew. *Paul Laurence Dunbar: The Life and Times of a Caged Bird*, Princeton University Press
- Schulz, Kathryn. *Lost and Found: Reflections on Grief, Gratitude, and Happiness*, Random House
- Schwartzman, Nancy and Nora Zelevansky. *Roll Red Roll: Rape, Power, and Football in the American Heartland*, Hachette Books

Poetry

- Fagan, Kathy. *Bad Hobby: Poems*, Milkweed Editions
- Freeman, Siaara. *Urbanshee*, Button Poetry
- Hindi, Noor. *Dear God. Dear Bones. Dear Yellow.*, Haymarket Books
- Jones, Saeed. *Alive at the End of the World*, Coffee House Press
- Wagner, Sara Moore. *Swan Wife*, Cider Press Review

Juvenile Literature

- Campbell, Marcy. Illus. by Francesca Sanna. *The More You Give*, Knopf Books for Young Readers
- Hale, Shannon. Illus. by Tracy Subisak. *This Book is Not for You!*, Dial Books
- Hoefler, Kate. Illus. by Jessixa Bagley. *Courage Hats*, Chronicle Books
- Kuo, Julia. *Luminous: Living Things That Light Up the Night*, Greystone Kids
- Wang, Andrea. Illus. by Hyewon Yum. *Luli and the Language of Tea*, Neal Porter Books
- Woodson, Jacqueline. Illus. by Rafael López. *The Year We Learned to Fly*, Nancy Paulsen Books

happy and excited to get together once again for an event that truly embodies Ohioana's tagline: *Connecting readers and Ohio writers.*

So now it's on to the Ohioana Book Awards. We invite you to join us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram as we celebrate one finalist every day, starting June 1. And don't forget to vote for YOUR favorite book when we open the annual Readers' Choice Award poll in mid-June.

I hope the rest of spring and summer are fun and enjoyable for you—and include lots of reading! If you're looking for suggestions, you'll find thirty-three great books right here in the cover story. *Happy reading!*

David E. Weaver
Executive Director

Middle Grade/Young Adult Literature

Brown, Echo. *The Chosen One: A First-Generation Ivy League Odyssey*,

Christy Ottaviano Books

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *The School for Whatnots*, Katherine Tegen Books

McCarthy, Cory. *Man O' War*, Dutton Books for Young Readers

Nelson, Marilyn. *Augusta Savage: The Shape of a Sculptor's Life*, Christy Ottaviano Books

Van Vleet, Carmella. *Nothing is Little*, Holiday House

Warga, Jasmine. *A Rover's Story*, Balzer + Bray



A scene from the 2016 Ohioana Book Awards.
(Photo by Mary Rathke)

COMING SOON

Thurber House Summer Literary Picnics

June 7 – August 9, 2023, Thurber House, Columbus

The popular outdoor series kicks off with mystery author Andrew Welsh-Huggins on June 7. It continues with Ohio Roller Derbyists Samantha Tucker and Amy Spears (June 21), *New York Times* and *USA Today*–bestselling crime author Linda Castillo (July 12), cultural essayist Negesti Kaudo (July 18), Ohio Poet Laureate Kari Gunter-Seymour (August 2), and wraps up with essayist and OSU Director of American Indian Studies Elissa Washuta (August 9). For more information and tickets, visit www.thurberhouse.org/literary-picnics.

Ohioana Book Club

June 21, 2023, 10:00 a.m. – noon, Ohioana Library, Columbus

June's title is the Agatha Award–winning historical mystery *Because I Could Not Stop for Death* by Amanda Flower. The group will meet in person. If you would like to attend, please email us at ohioana@ohioana.org.

Author Event: CW Goodyear

July 13, 2023, 7:00 p.m., Loganberry Books, Shaker Heights

Join Loganberry Books to celebrate the launch of *President Garfield* by author and historian CW Goodyear. The last president to be born in a log cabin and the second to be assassinated, Garfield was one of the most remarkable Americans ever to win the Presidency. Goodyear's is the first comprehensive biography of the Ohio-born president to be published in decades. For more information, visit www.loganberrybooks.com/events/authors.htm.

Columbus Book Festival

July 15-16, 2023, Columbus Metropolitan Library's Main Library, Columbus

This two-day event featuring national and local authors, exhibitors, entertainment, food vendors, and more will showcase Columbus Metropolitan Library's historic Main Library, the adjacent Kaufman Plaza, and Topiary Garden Park. Presented in celebration of Columbus Metropolitan Library's 150th anniversary. For more information, visit www.columbusbookfestival.org.

Mazza Museum Summer Conference

July 17-19, 2023, University of Findlay's Mazza Museum, Findlay

A three-day conference where teachers, librarians, and book lovers delight in educational and engaging presentations from some of the top authors and illustrators in the picture book industry. For more information and to register, visit <https://conference.mazzamuseum.org>.