

FOR RELEASE OCTOBER 12, 2005

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**JUDGES SELECT FINALISTS
FOR 2005 NATIONAL BOOK AWARDS**

**Winners to be Announced on November 16 at Benefit
Ceremony Hosted by Garrison Keillor**

*Norman Mailer and Lawrence Ferlinghetti
Will Receive Lifetime Achievement Awards*

Oxford, Mississippi (October 12, 2005) -- The 20 Finalists for the 2005 National Book Awards, announced today, include a few of America's most well known and pre-eminent authors and represent extraordinary writing from the last year.

Two previous National Book Award winners, E.L. Doctorow and John Ashbery, are among the Finalists. Several of this year's Finalists have been nominees in the past, including Joan Didion, W.S. Merwin, Frank Bidart, Adele Griffin and Walter Dean Myers. Three authors are nominated for their first books.

In the nonfiction category, the five nominated books cover a range of topics, from slavery and the genius of Jean-Jacques Rousseau to ecology, overwhelming grief and the heroic efforts by civilians to save the lives of those trapped in the twin towers on 9/11.

The announcement was made today by bestselling author **John Grisham** at Rowan Oak, the home of William Faulkner in Oxford, Mississippi. The winner in each of the four categories – **Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry, and Young People's Literature** – will be announced at the National Book Awards Benefit Dinner and Ceremony in Manhattan on November 16. The dinner will be hosted by **Garrison Keillor**. Each winner receives \$10,000 plus a bronze statue; each Finalist receives a bronze medal and a \$1,000 cash award.

The Finalists were selected by four distinguished panels of Judges who were given the charge of selecting what they deem to be the best books of the year. Their decisions are made independent of and without interference by the National Book Foundation and their deliberations are strictly confidential. To be eligible for a 2005 National Book Award, a book must have been published in the United States between December 1, 2004 and

November 30, 2005 and must have been written by a United States citizen. This year the Judges chose from a record 1,195 entries submitted by publishers.

“I commend our judges on their brilliant selections,” said Harold Augenbraum, executive director of the National Book Foundation. “Their selections reflect an astonishing range of subject matter, styles and voices. After months of intensive reading and discussion, our judges have truly arrived at the best books of the year.”

Also on the evening of November 16, the Board of Directors of the National Book Foundation will bestow its 2005 Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters upon **Norman Mailer**, and the first Literarian Award for Outstanding Service to the American Literary Community to **Lawrence Ferlinghetti**. Toni Morrison and Jessica Hagedorn, respectively, will present those awards.

Following is the list of the 2005 National Book Award Finalists in Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry and Young People’s Literature. For additional descriptions of the titles and author biographies visit www.nationalbook.org or call Camille McDuffie at Goldberg McDuffie Communications at (212)446-5106.

Readings, discussions and special events will take place during “**National Book Awards Week.**” For details, visit the Foundation’s website or call (212)446-5106.

The Judges for the 2005 National Book Awards:

Fiction panel: **Andre Dubus III** (chair), Rikki Ducornet, Cristina Garcia, Tom LeClair, and Anna Quindlen.

Nonfiction panel: **Brenda Wineapple** (chair), Mark Bowden, Dennis Covington, Tony Horwitz, Gregory Wolfe.

Poetry panel: **Carl Phillips** (chair), John Balaban, Carol Frost, Lawson Fusao Inada, and Julie Kane.

Young People’s Literature panel: **Liz Rosenberg** (chair), Mari Evans, Claudia Mills, Jim Murphy, and Rita Williams-Garcia.

2005 NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FINALISTS

Fiction

E.L. Doctorow, *The March* (Random House)

Mary Gaitskill, *Veronica* (Pantheon)

Christopher Sorrentino, *Trance* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

Renè Steinke, *Holy Skirts* (William Morrow)

William T. Vollmann, *Europe Central* (Viking)

Nonfiction

Alan Burdick, *Out of Eden: An Odyssey of Ecological Invasion* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

Leo Damrosch, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Restless Genius* (Houghton Mifflin)

Joan Didion, *The Year of Magical Thinking* (Knopf)

Jim Dwyer and Kevin Flynn, *102 Minutes: The Untold Story of the Fight to Survive Inside the Twin Towers* (Times Books)

Adam Hochschild, *Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves* (Houghton Mifflin)

Poetry

John Ashbery, *Where Shall I Wander* (Ecco)

Frank Bidart, *Star Dust: Poems* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

Brendan Galvin, *Habitat: New and Selected Poems, 1965-2005* (Louisiana State University Press)

W.S. Merwin, *Migration: New and Selected Poems* (Copper Canyon Press)

Vern Rutsala, *The Moment's Equation* (Ashland Poetry Press)

Young People's Literature

Jeanne Birdsall, *The Penderwicks* (Alfred A. Knopf Books for Young Readers)

Adele Griffin, *Where I Want to Be* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, a division of Penguin Young Readers Group)

Chris Lynch, *Inexcusable* (Ginee Seo Books/Atheneum Books for Young Readers)

Walter Dean Myers, *Autobiography of My Dead Brother* (HarperTempest Amistad)

Deborah Wiles, *Each Little Bird That Sings* (Harcourt)