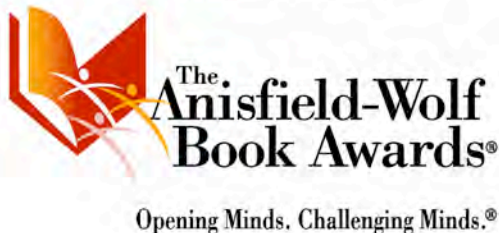


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Press Release

For Immediate Release

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73rd Annual Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards® Winners Announced ***Works Address Issues of Race and Culture***

CLEVELAND, Ohio (April 17, 2008) – The Cleveland Foundation today announced the winners of the 2008 Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards, created in 1935 to recognize outstanding works that contribute to society's understanding of racism and foster an appreciation of the rich diversity of human cultures. The 2008 winners are:

- **Junot Diaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*** (Riverhead Books)
- **Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*** (Harcourt)
- **William Melvin Kelley** – Lifetime Achievement Award

The winners will be honored in Cleveland at a ceremony hosted by the Cleveland Foundation and emceed by Jury Chair Henry Louis Gates Jr., the Alphonse Fletcher University Professor and Director of the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for African and African-American Research at Harvard University. The Cleveland Foundation has administered the book awards since 1963, upon the passing of the awards creator, Edith Anisfield Wolf.

“The books and the authors selected this year stand out not only for their creative and wide-ranging approach to difficult subject matter, but also in their powerful insistence and unyielding faith in the essential humanity of all of their subjects,” said Gates. “The Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards has become internationally recognized for shining a light on these critical, yet complex, issues we continue to face as a global society.”

“Edith Anisfield Wolf had a passionate desire to engage others in conversation about diverse cultures and people throughout the world, conversations still very much in need today,” said Cleveland Foundation President and Chief Executive Officer Ronald B. Richard. “These prize-winning authors challenge us as individuals to look harder and deeper at who we are, and where we want to go, as a society.”

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Anisfield-Wolf Winners – add one

The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao, Diaz's first novel, is not the traditional immigrant-family saga. In language described as hip, funny, soulful and bursting with desire, the novel follows the struggles of a mother, son and daughter from the Dominican Republic who settle in New Jersey, but never quite escape the curse that has tormented the family for generations. In its review, *Publisher's Weekly* said this novel "makes the case for a multiperspectival view of life, wherein an individual cannot be known or understood in isolation from the history of his family or his nation." *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* received the 2008 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, 2008 National Book Critic's Circle Award for Fiction and the Sargent First Novel Prize.

In *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Hamid takes the reader inside the head of Changez, a young Pakistani in the post-September 11 world. Princeton-educated, working at a top-flight Wall Street firm and living the high life in New York City, Changez returns to his hometown in Pakistan for a visit. While in a café, he meets an anonymous American and begins to tell the story of his post-September 11 transformation – the growing disillusionment with all he thought he treasured, the increased bigotry he experiences, both subtle and overt – only to find himself coming to loathe all things American, making the allure of terrorism all the more appealing. The novel won the South Bank Show Award for literature and was short listed for the Man Booker Prize.

Kelley, an American novelist, is known for works that chronicle the contemporary Afro-American experience, during the tumultuous time period in the United States between 1962 and 1970. His novels address inner-racial conflict, including the myths that both blacks and whites carry to delude themselves. While Kelley does not offer "solutions" to these conflicts, he illuminates the importance of self-understanding. *A Different Drummer*, first published in 1962, was followed by *A Drop of Patience* in 1966, *Dem* in 1967 and *Dunford Travels Everywheres* in 1970. Among his many honors, Kelley received the Dana Reed Literary Prize from Harvard University in 1960, a Whitney Foundation award and Rosenthal Foundation award in 1963 and the Black Academy of Arts and Letters Award in 1970.

A panel of nationally known jurors, chaired by Dr. Gates, selects the Anisfield-Wolf winners. He is joined by:

Rita Dove, Commonwealth Professor of English, University of Virginia

Joyce Carol Oates, Roger S. Berlind '52 Professor in the Humanities, Princeton University

Steven Pinker, Johnstone Family Professor of Psychology, Harvard University

Simon Schama, University Professor of History and Art History, Columbia University

The Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards is the only juried American literary competition devoted to recognizing books that have made an important contribution to society's understanding of racism and the diversity of human cultures. Edith Anisfield Wolf was a published poet and civic

Anisfield-Wolf Winners – add two

activist who became passionately committed to social justice as a young girl. As a poet, she chose literature as a means to explore racial prejudice and celebrate human diversity. Upon her passing, she left her funds to the Cleveland Foundation for a community service award, aid for the needy and the Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards. The Foundation continues to carry on her work and wishes.

For additional information, including a complete list of winners, visit www.anisfield-wolf.org.

Established in 1914, the Cleveland Foundation is the world's first community foundation and the nation's third-largest today, with assets of \$1.9 billion and 2007 grants surpassing \$85 million. The foundation improves the lives of Greater Clevelanders in perpetuity by building community endowment, addressing needs through grantmaking, and providing leadership on vital issues. Currently the foundation proactively directs two-thirds of its flexible grant dollars to the community's greatest needs: economic transformation (including advanced energy and globalization), public school improvement, early childhood and youth development, neighborhoods and housing, and arts advancement.

For more information on the Cleveland Foundation, please visit www.clevelandfoundation.org.