

Arts & Culture

Georgia's Diverse, Outstanding Literary Offerings Recognized

by Katherine Siegel

Georgia's literature and writers were celebrated and honored as Congressman John Lewis (D-Ga.) announced the Top 25 Books Every Georgian Should Read on Oct. 26, in anticipation of National Book Month. The Georgia Center for the Book made its selections from over 200 titles suggested in more than 1,500 nominations of books set in Georgia or written by a resident or former resident of the state.

"I can say that, within the Center for the Book, we have been enlightened and informed. We've had a lot of lively debate about how to narrow it down to 25, and we're certainly proud that it was such a difficult decision,"

stated Julie Rodgers in her introductory remarks. Ranging from fiction to non-fiction, poetry to children's books, the Top 25 encompasses the Antebellum South, the Civil Rights movement, the rugged mountain wilds, Jewish heritage, and gay and lesbian issues. "It seems that there was nothing that was not included on this list, and I think the Georgia Center for the Book should be very proud to be highlighting the diverse and rich literary traditions Georgia has," said Pat Patrick, Field National Events Specialist for Borders Books & Music, who co-hosted the announcement at the Borders store in Buckhead.

The purpose of the Top 25 Books is to raise awareness of and to promote the reading and discussion of titles that represent the finest of Georgia literature. "Reading is so important," Rep. Lewis said. "When I was growing up here in the South, I was told over and over again to read – read everything. And the book became a way out for me, and maybe a way in." His memoir *Walking With the Wind* is one of the Top 25.

"We're delighted, of course, that *Gone With the Wind* was named among the Top 25 Georgia works of literature, and I come to you today with a great sense of pride in the fact that *Gone With the Wind* still has the ability to shake people up. That's what good literature is supposed to do," said Mary Rose Taylor, founder and executive director of the Margaret Mitchell House and Museum. "The Margaret Mitchell House is designed to bring the works of great Southern writers and journalists into forums to explore the human experience among people of diverse points of view."

Many people describe *Gone With the Wind* as the original piece of feminist literature, and it paints a picture of American women for readers in other countries as well. "We're delighted to be here today, we're delighted that we still spur controversy, and we're delighted that Georgia, through the Center for the Book, is standing up and finally recognizing the rich trove of literature and great writers that this grand state of Georgia offers

to the entire world."

David Bottoms, whose collection *Armored Hearts* is included on the list, offered his thanks on behalf of all poets. "We are often overlooked by the readership at large. It's very heartening to me that the Center for the Book would have chosen a book of poems. We have a fine history of poetry in Georgia, as well as the South. We think of ourselves as leaders in that respect."

"Georgia's authors have proven themselves as some of the most noted anywhere in the world, and their books not only celebrate Georgia, they celebrate the diversity of Georgians," said Patrick. "Borders is pleased to sponsor this program." Borders locations throughout the state will feature in-store displays of these titles and others by the

recognized authors. Partnering with GCB, Borders will host author signings, panel discussions and book groups featuring titles and themes related to the Top 25.

The Georgia Center for the Book is hosted by the DeKalb County Public Library and is made up of library personnel as well as an Advisory Council consisting of distinguished authors, publishers, booksellers, librarians and academics who assist in designing programs that both inform and entertain as they showcase Georgia's literary heritage. Early next year, GCB will choose one book from the Top 25 for the All Georgia Reading the Same Book program and encourage everyone in the state to read it.

For more information, visit www.dekalb.public.lib.ga.us/gcb.

Top 25 Books Every Georgian Should Read

Armored Hearts
David Bottoms

Baby of the Family
Tina McElroy Ansa

Cold Sassy Tree
Olive Burns

The Color Purple
Alice Walker

Deliverance
James Dickey

Dream Boy
Jim Grimsley

Ecology of a Cracker Childhood
Janisse Ray

Gone With the Wind
Margaret Mitchell

*A Good Man Is Hard to Find
and Other Stories*
Flannery O'Connor

An Hour Before Daylight
Jimmy Carter

The Library Dragon
Carmen Deedy

Lighthouse
Eugenia Price

The Member of the Wedding
Carson McCullers

Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil
John Berendt

Peachtree Road
Anne Rivers Siddons

Praying for Sheetrock
Melissa Fay Greene

The Prince of Tides
Pat Conroy

Run With the Horsemen
Ferrol Sams

The Souls of Black Folk
W.E.B. DuBois

*A Testament of Hope:
The Essential Writings and Speeches of
Martin Luther King, Jr.*
edited by James Melvin Washington

Tobacco Road
Erskine Caldwell

To Dance With the White Dog
Terry Kay

Uncle Remus: The Complete Tales
Joel Chandler Harris & Julius Lester

Walking With the Wind
John Lewis

*What Looks Like Crazy
on an Ordinary Day*
Pearl Cleage



On hand for the announcement of the Top 25 Books Every Georgian Should Read were (from left to right): Darro Willey, Director of DeKalb County Public Library, host site of the Georgia Center for the Book; David Bottoms, poet laureate of Georgia and one of the authors on the Top 25 list; US Congressman John Lewis (D-Ga.), also a Top 25 author; Tom McHaney, Director of Graduate Studies in English at Georgia State University and member of the GCB Advisory Board; and Julie Rodgers, GCB Top 25 Project Coordinator.

Alliance Française www.afatl.com

December 7, 7:00 PM

CinéSoirée: *Une Liaison pornographique* (*An Affair of Love*) with English subtitles and wine and cheese reception.

December 11, 7:00 PM

Monthly dinner, location to be announced.

Alliance Theatre Company www.alliancetheatre.org

through December 9

The Alliance Children's Theatre Guild has selected Villa Louise, a classically styled French Country Estate for Christmas House 2001. This annual holiday event brings together Atlanta's love of magnificent homes, beautiful decorations and the spirit of Christmas. Visitors will tour the house, decorated by Atlanta's favorite designers, then have lunch at Café Noel and shop for extraordinary gifts at the Christmas House Boutique.

Located at 1005 Heard's Ferry Road in Sandy Springs, Villa Louise is a new home built by Beecham Builders and will be completely furnished and decorated by Beverly Hall Furniture Gallery. Adding new excitement this year, a second home located next door, Villa Lucerne, will be on tour to showcase Earth-Craft House environmentally friendly construction methods and other new features for those interested in remodeling an existing house or building a new one. The presentation schedule is as follows:

struction methods and other new features for those interested in remodeling an existing house or building a new one. The presentation schedule is as follows:

Dec. 1, 11:00 AM: "Artistic Wall Finishes," Top Brush Painting

Dec. 1, 2:00 PM: "Environmentally Friendly Building Methods," EarthCraft House

Dec. 2, 3:00 PM: "Classic Custom Crafted Mantels," Mantels by Meunier

Dec. 4, 11:00 AM: "French Heirloom Sewing," Shirley Bryant & Dee Swink

Dec. 5, 11:00 AM: "Luxurious Linens," Belle Chambres

Dec. 6, 11:00 AM: "Fine 18th and 19th Century Art," Dixon & Dixon

Dec. 7, 11:00 AM: "Elegant Floral Designs," Foxgloves & Ivy

Dec. 8, 11:00 AM: "Designing for the New Millennium," Beverly Hall Furniture Galleries

Dec. 8, 2:00 PM: "Environmentally Friendly Building Methods," EarthCraft House

Dec. 9, 3:00 PM: "French Wine Tasting," The Wine Store

Art Within www.artwithin.org

through December 17

Atlanta premiere of the Off-Broadway hit comedy *Over the River and Through the Woods*, about a young man torn between

family ties and his need to strike out on his own. At the 14th Street Playhouse.

Atlanta Ballet www.atlantaballet.com

December 7-30

The Atlanta Ballet's *Nutcracker* premiered in 1995 to audiences of thousands. Choreographed by Artistic Director John McFall, this *Nutcracker* is an adventurous and visually dazzling version of the cherished holiday tale. Performed in the fabulous Fox Theatre.

Atlanta Botanical Garden www.atlantabotanicalgarden.org

December 1, 9:30 AM-12:30 PM

Propagating Perennials from Seed: Starting perennials from seed isn't the fastest way to fill your garden, but it can save you money and allow you to grow unusual, hard-to-find plants. Many perennials need special treatment in order to germinate. In this hands-on class, students will learn about various techniques including stratification (cold, wet) and mechanical treatments like scarification. Each student will take home several perennials to grow from seed.

Instructor: Stephanie Van Parys, horticulturist. Fee: \$45 (members receive a 20% discount). Registration deadline: Nov. 23