

Fall 2002

Outstanding Southeastern Author Awards Go to Patchett and Carter

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Recommended Citation

Hearne, Mary Glenn (2002) "Outstanding Southeastern Author Awards Go to Patchett and Carter," *The Southeastern Librarian*: Vol. 50 : Iss. 3 , Article 6.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/seln/vol50/iss3/6>

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Saturday Awards Brunch

Outstanding Southeastern Author Awards Go to Patchett and Carter

Mary Glenn Hearne, chair, presented SELA's 2002 Outstanding Author Awards to Ann Patchett and Jimmy Carter. The following are highlights of Mary Glenn's presentation. The winner of the SELA 2002 Author Award for fiction is Ann Patchett for her fourth novel *Bel Canto*, which won the PEN/Faulkner Award and Britain's distinguished Orange Prize. Ann Patchett is a graduate of St. Bernard Academy in Nashville; Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, NY and received her MA from the University of Iowa in Iowa City. Ms. Patchett is a recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship. Last year she spoke to the Nashville Chapter of the Women's National Book Association where she captured and enthralled her capacity audience with stories of writing and book tours. Patchett has been called "an elegant and lyrical writer." She has a remarkable capacity to form emotional connections in unlikely ways as she demonstrates in *Bel Canto*, which is loosely based on the hostage crisis in Lima, Peru and deals with terrorists and hostage taking which evolve into love stories, music, language and life. She states in her letter that she is very honored to receive this award from the Southeastern Library Association and sorry she cannot be present today. It is my privilege to award to Ann Patchett in absentia the SELA's award for her latest work, *Bel Canto*.

With pride and affection SELA presents the 2002 Book Award for non-fiction to Jimmy Carter for *An Hour Before Daylight*. Jimmy Carter, 39th president of the U.S., has gone on to have an illustrious career in other areas, those mainly which show concern and compassion for others both in this country and abroad. We have rejoiced with him recently upon reading of his selection as the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize and the one million dollars which will be used to further the work of the Carter Center in Atlanta, Georgia. Is it not interesting that this prize is made at the same time as the SELA Author Award? Both are quite different but equally worthy. Other than the Carter Center and Habitat for Humanity, Jimmy Carter has devoted himself

to writing. He has written 13 books of non-fiction and poetry, some in cooperation with his wife Rosalyn. The work for which we honor him today is *An Hour Before Daylight*, which deals with his boyhood growing up in Plains, Georgia. Published in 2001 by Simon and Schuster, a review of this work by Roy Reed in the NYT Book Review states that the "overriding value of this book is its vivid and well-researched portrait of rural Southern life during the hard times of the 1920's and 30's. ...two things make this book special. First, it (is) ...dead honest ... Second the boy whose story it tells grew up to be not just president of the US but one of the great Americans of our time." Jimmy Carter could not be with us today but asked that his gratitude be expressed to you for thinking of him. He also sends his best wishes. Lauren Fallon will personally take the plaque honoring Mr. Carter to the Carter Center.

- Mary Glenn Hearne

Sequoyah (Georgia) Library System Presented Outstanding Southeastern Library Program Award

Each biennium SELA recognizes an outstanding program of service in an academic, public, school or special library in a SELA member state. This year's winner is The Sequoyah Regional Library System, Canton, Georgia, for its series of programs in 2002 entitled "Journey Through Prejudice". The project, co-sponsored by the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust, was designed to stimulate discussion on issues of discrimination and prejudice. Additional support was made possible through the Georgia Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Pictured below l. to r. are SELA president Barry Baker, Sequoyah Library System director Joan H. Adam, and Nanette Kicker, assistant director.

- Presentation made by Barry Baker

