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APA Announces Audie Nominees for Audiobook of the Year and Distinguished Achievement in Production Categories

Princeton Junction, NJ – The Audio Publishers Association (APA) has announced three Audie nominees for the prestigious Audiobook of the Year Award and five nominees for the newly created Distinguished Achievement in Production category. The winners will be announced at the Audies Gala awards ceremony on May 29, 2009, at the New-York Historical Society in New York City.

The three titles that have been selected for Audiobook of the Year contention are: *Brisings* by Christopher Paolini, read by Gerard Doyle, published by Listening Library; *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman, read by the author, published by HarperAudio; and *A Wolf at the Table: A Memoir of My Father* by Augusten Burroughs, read by the author, published by Macmillan Audio. All three titles are distinguished by excellence in production as well as by their ability to create new interest in the audiobook format through creative and innovative marketing.

The five titles that have been selected to compete for the inaugural Distinguished Achievement in Production award are: *Curse of the Blue Tattoo* by L.A. Meyer, read by Katherine Kellgren, published by Listen & Live Audio; *Fairest*, by Gail Carson Levine, read by Sarah Naughton and a full cast, published by Full Cast Audio; *Many Things Invisible* by Carrington MacDuffie, read by the author, published by Blackstone Audio; *The New Adventures of Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer* by various authors, read by Stacy Keach and a full cast, published by Blackstone Audio; and *Louis Vuitton Soundwalk: Shanghai* read by Joan Chen, published by Soundwalk.

The Audies, the only awards program in the United States devoted entirely to honoring spoken word entertainment, drew in a record 1,000 entries from audio publishers this year, reflecting the health of the audio industry. In recognition of the diversity and excellence achieved by a wide range of audiobook publishers, the APA created the Distinguished Achievement in Production award this year to recognize a production that represents the best the format has to offer in listening excellence. Audiobook of the Year recognizes the audiobook that, through quality, innovation, marketing and sales, has had the most significant impact on the industry.

“This was a tough year for the judges to choose the best audiobooks because the quality of the material is better than it’s ever been,” said Ellen Myrick, chair of the Audies

judges. "Each of these titles was phenomenal in their own right and we congratulate everyone who worked to bring these works to life," she added.

"I applaud the publishers, authors, narrators and all the behind-the-scenes producers who continue to entertain audio fans in new and innovative ways," said Anthony Goff, APA president.

This year's judges provided their comments and insight into the selection of these prestigious finalists. The finalists, with the judges' comments, are listed below:

Audiobook of the Year Nominees:

Brisingr

By Christopher Paolini

Read by Gerard Doyle

Published by Listening Library

As the third book of the Inheritance trilogy, *Brisingr* already had a strong following but the audiobook was an integral part of the overall Inheritance experience. Clues about the next book in the series were even included in an audio-only interview with the author. Narrator Gerard Doyle's masterful performance encompassed everything from people of all ages and genders to fantastic beasts with magical powers, demonstrating his own magical gifts in the process.

The Graveyard Book

By Neil Gaiman

Read by the author

Published by HarperAudio

Also a Finalist in the Thriller/Suspense and Children's Titles for Ages 8-12 categories.

The Graveyard Book leaped into immortality with its Newbery Medal win, but the audiobook adds the author's haunting performance, which strikes the perfect balance between a professional reader and the heart and soul of the author. Bela Fleck's eerie and whimsical original musical composition for the audiobook sets the tone and punctuates the production. Gaiman's unabashed enthusiasm for the audiobook format found expression throughout his book tour and on his website. Gaiman's and HarperAudio's efforts have clearly won new fans through these recorded readings and effective social media marketing.

A Wolf at the Table: A Memoir of My Father

By Augusten Burroughs

Read by the author

Published by Macmillan Audio

Augusten Burroughs' audio bestseller, *A Wolf at the Table: A Memoir of My Father*, features a dramatic narration by the author and additional material specifically related to the audiobook production, including original songs from Patti Smith, Sea Wolf, Ingrid Michaelson and Tegan Quin, and a unique musical score. Additionally, Burroughs was particularly involved in both the production and promotion of the audiobook, endorsing the audiobook product as much as he did the hardcover.

Distinguished Achievement in Production:

Curse of the Blue Tattoo

By L.A. Meyer

Read by Katherine Kellgren

Published by Listen & Live Audio

Also a Finalist in the Teen and Solo Female Narration categories.

Katherine Kellgren is like a one-woman Broadway revue in *Curse of the Blue Tattoo*, a superbly written and produced audiobook. She sings, dances, tells a wonderful tale and captures the listeners' hearts in this outstanding performance that is at once touching, comic and highly entertaining.

Fairest

By Gail Carson Levine

Read by Sarah Naughton and a full cast

Published by Full Cast Audio

Also a Finalist in the Children's Titles for Ages 8-12 and Teen categories.

Fairest, set in a kingdom where singing is the natural form of dialogue, is transformed from words on a page into a fully-scored, full cast audiobook. From the director/composer to sound engineer, lead narrator/singer to minor cast member, each member of this masterful ensemble contributes to an enhanced work of literature, defining distinguished production.

Louis Vuitton Soundwalk: Shanghai

Read by Joan Chen

Published by Soundwalk

Louis Vuitton Soundwalk: Shanghai is a beguiling, compelling mix of narration, music and the sounds of the city that transports the listener to Shanghai present and past. Joan Chen's gentle voice and the variety of places visited provide a satisfying sense of having traveled abroad. The varied production is seamless, creating a near-cinematic experience for the ears.

Many Things Invisible

By Carrington MacDuffie

Read by the author

Published by Blackstone Audio, Inc.

Carrington MacDuffie's production hits a high note for innovation, and that originality is backed by strong production values. Her melodious and versatile voice, the content, the music and the mix all combine to form a unique and rewarding audio experience.

The New Adventures of Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer

By various authors

Read by Stacy Keach and a full cast

Published by Blackstone Audio

The New Adventures of Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer remains faithful to the spirit of the original while creating an audio drama with exceptional production values. Actor Stacy Keach gives voice to the detective with engaging panache.

For more information on covering the event, contact Kaitlin Friedmann at (609) 297-2215, or kfriedmann@audiopub.org. To purchase a ticket, visit the APA website at www.audiopub.org or contact Diane Galante at (609) 799-6327.

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About Audio Publishers Association (APA)

The Audio Publishers Association (APA) is a not-for-profit trade organization whose primary goals are to promote awareness of the audiobook industry, gather and disseminate industry statistics, encourage high production standards, and represent the interests of audiobook publishers. Since 1986, the APA has worked to bring audio publishers together to increase interest in audiobooks. Please visit www.audiopub.org for more information.