

## **Audiobook Awards Finalists Set**

By Susan Rife

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The press of the Sarasota Film Festival and other work obligations have kept the headphones from my ears of late, so I'll default to information from the Audio Publishers Association for this week's column.

The APA has announced its finalists for Audiobook of the Year and Distinguished Achievement in Production, both of which will be announced at the gala awards ceremony May 25 at the Museum of the City of New York. Finalists for Audiobook of the Year are:

"Nelson Mandela's Favorite African Folktales," narrated by a full cast including Samuel L. Jackson, Helen Mirren, Don Cheadle and Alan Rickman.

"Truly a labor of love for all involved, everyone from the director and cast to the musicians and producers donated their time, so that 100 percent of the proceeds benefits African children orphaned and impacted by HIV/AIDS," says the APA.

"The Time of My Life," written and read by Patrick Swayze.

"Brave and heroic, without any self-pity and, amazingly, full of his signature energy and enthusiasm for life and for his wife of 34 years, the recording was completed only weeks before his death. This extraordinary audiobook was the focus of enormous attention and brought the power, fullness and immediacy of audio to a wide audience."

"The Word of Promise Audio Bible," performed by a cast of more than 600 actors, with narration by Michael York.

"Original music gave the recording a cinematic quality, creating an aural landscape that gave the biblical words freshness and immediacy. A uniquely adaptable package and effective use of a wide variety of marketing strategies ensure that this is an audiobook people will hear about for a long time."

The Distinguished Achievement in Production award honors the audiobook production that "represents the best the format has to offer in listening excellence." Finalists include "Nelson Mandela's Favorite African Folktales" and:

"Graceling" by Kristen Cashore, narrated by David Baker and a full cast.

"Backed up by flawless production values, listeners are wonderfully treated to more than 10 hours of memorable 'mind theatre' entertainment of the first caliber. Though the book is officially classified as Young Adult, this audio edition will hold enormous appeal for fantasy fans of all ages... "

"The Help," by Kathryn Stockett, narrated by Cassandra Campbell, Jenna Lamia, Octavia Spencer and Bahni Turpin.

"From beginning to end, the narrators' interpretation of the best-selling book is flawless. The listener truly knows the characters, feels their joy, pain and dignity. This audiobook is recommended to all who want to open their minds to why the civil rights movement happened, and in a sense, what still needs to be done today."

"The Maltese Falcon," by Dashiell Hammett, dramatized for audio by Yuri Rasovsky, narrated by a full cast including Edward Herrmann and Sandra Oh.

"This multicast audiobook is a first-class production incorporating a talented cast of readers in Yuri Rasovsky's deftly-written adaptation of the novel, which included the clever concept of having the characters narrate their own action."

"The Screwtape Letters," by C.S. Lewis, performed by Andy Serkis and a full cast.

"Wonderful music, sound effects, character voices and Andy Serkis' amazing performance bring out the theatrical vibrancy and intense intelligence of C.S. Lewis' literary treasure. 'The Screwtape Letters' is a truly entertaining radio theatre approach that succeeds in its goal of capturing the essence of hell."

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