

THE REA AWARD FOR THE SHORT STORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ANDREA BARRETT IS WINNER OF 2015 REA AWARD FOR THE SHORT STORY

New York, N.Y. – The \$30,000 Rea Award Winner is ANDREA BARRETT.

Michael M. Rea founded The Rea Award for the Short Story in 1986 to encourage the writing of short fiction. The **annual \$30,000 Rea Award** recognizes a living U. S. or Canadian writer. Rea established the award to honor a writer who **has made a significant contribution to the discipline of the short story as an art form.**

The Rea Award is sponsored by the Dungannon Foundation. Three jurors are appointed each year to nominate and elect the winner. This year's jurors, noted writers **T. C. Boyle, Bill Henderson** and **Karen Shepard**, offered the following citation:

*In three collections of stories and six novels, **Andrea Barrett** has continually enlarged the geography of her imagination, and her lucky readers have been the beneficiaries of those explorations, experiencing, as her characters so often do, the way our own small pasts bear on our own small present. Barrett offers us the news from other worlds as a way to understand our own. In settings ranging all over the globe and from all different time periods, she specializes in examining what's particularly human in the science we do, bringing those traditionally disparate worlds to bear on each other in surprising and moving ways. And she accomplishes those broad thematic implications with a precise and quietly intelligent style that surprises and disturbs and gratifies. That deceptive formal modesty keeps our focus on the world at the fiction's heart and produces testimonies designed to celebrate the attested rather than the attester. The result has been a body of stories that like all great fiction expands our knowledge, brings us more fully into contact with the suffering of others, and supplies intense and gorgeous pleasure.*

Andrea Barrett is the author of three short story collections and six novels. Her story collections include *Ship Fever* (1996), winner of the 1996 National Book Award; *Servants of the Map* (2002), a finalist for the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction; and most recently *Archangel* (2013), a finalist for The Story Prize and also featured in the *New York Review of Books*. Her novels include *Lucid Stars* (1988), *Secret Harmonies* (1989), *The Middle Kingdom* (1991), *The Forms of Water* (1993), *The Voyage of the Narwhal* (1998) and *The Air We Breathe* (2007).

Among her numerous awards and grants **Barrett** won a 1992 National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, was awarded a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship in 1997 and in 2001 received a fellowship at the New York Public Library's Center for Scholars and Writers. In 2001 **Barrett** was awarded the highly esteemed MacArthur Fellowship.

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Andrea Barrett's stories have appeared in numerous periodicals and anthologies including *A Public Space*, *The Paris Review*, *Tin House*, *Ploughshares*, *The Pushcart Prize*, *One Story*, *TriQuarterly*, *Salmagundi*, *The American Scholar*, and *the Kenyan Review*. Her fiction and essays have been selected for *Best American Short Stories*, *Best American Science Writing* and *Best American Essays*. "The Particles" won a 2013 PEN/O. Henry Prize and a new story, "Wonders of the Shore," will appear in *Best American Short Stories*, 2016.

As in the work of William Faulkner, some of **Barrett's** characters have appeared in more than one story or novel. In an appendix to *The Air We Breathe* (2007), **Barrett** supplied a family tree, making clear the characters' relationships that began in *Ship Fever*. The intertwining of these families has continued through the stories of *Archangel* (2013) and into her most recent work. Although each novel and story is self-contained, the reader comprehends an added dimension when familiar with the characters' previous histories.

"I'm trying to make a very quiet point," she says, "I'm trying to make the reader feel the effects of genetic linkage, feel the molecules of DNA tumbling across time and space and continents, combining and recombining. Families and people from different cultures marry and have children, who move to other places and marry yet other people; I want to convey a palpable sense of those relationships over time. I want to bring that very lightly to the surface without having it dominate."

Barrett is particularly well known as a writer of historical fiction, her work reflecting her lifelong interest in science, and women in science. The *Chicago Tribune* has said that "to call Barrett our poet laureate of science is perfectly apropos, as long as we recognize that her specialty is the heart."

Winners of The Rea Award for the Short Story 1986 – 2015

Cynthia Ozick	Tillie Olsen	Mavis Gallant	James Salter
Robert Coover	Richard Ford	Antonya Nelson	Charles Baxter
Donald Barthelme	Andre Dubus	Lorrie Moore	Richard Bausch
Tobias Wolff	Gina Berriault	Ann Beattie	Elizabeth Spencer
Joyce Carol Oates	John Edgar Wideman	John Updike	T. C. Boyle
Paul Bowles	Joy Williams	Stuart Dybek	Andrea Barrett
Eudora Welty	Deborah Eisenberg	Amy Hempel	
Grace Paley	Alice Munro	Mary Robison	

In addition to The Rea Award for the Short Story, the Dungannon Foundation also sponsors ReaVisiting Writers and ReaVisiting Lecturers at the University of Virginia, and Selected Shorts: A Celebration of the Short Story at Symphony Space in New York City.



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Andrea Barrett was born in Boston in 1954, grew up on Cape Cod, and graduated with a degree in biology from Union College. She is particularly well known as a writer of historical fiction. Her work reflects her lifelong interest in science, and women in science. "Scientific questions are very precise and very directed. A scientist poses problems that can be answered if one works hard enough," Barrett observes. In contrast, writers "pose question after question, and none of them get answered. A lot of what I write about in science and history serves as a metaphor for the discoveries we make as writers." In both areas, she said, "there is that sense of pushing at boundaries, of trying to discover new ways of looking at things."

As in the work of William Faulkner, some of Barrett's characters have appeared in more than one story or novel. In an appendix to *The Air We Breathe* (2007), Barrett supplied a family tree, making clear the characters' relationships that began in *Ship Fever*. The intertwining of these families has continued through the stories of *Archangel* (2013) and into her most recent work. Although each novel and story is self-contained, the reader comprehends an added dimension when familiar with the characters' previous histories. "I'm trying to make a very quiet point," she says, "I'm trying to make the reader feel the effects of genetic linkage, feel the molecules of DNA tumbling across time and space and continents, combining and recombining. Families and people from different cultures marry and have children, who move to other places and marry yet other people; I want to convey a palpable sense of those relationships over time. I want to bring that very lightly to the surface without having it dominate."

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Andrea Barrett teaches writing at Williams College and in the MFA Program for Writers at Warren Wilson College. She lives in North Adams, Massachusetts, with her husband, photographer Barry Goldstein.



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JURORS FOR THE 2015 REA AWARD FOR THE SHORT STORY

T. Coraghessan Boyle has authored ten short story collections, and fifteen novels. His story collections include *Descent of Man* (1979); *Greasy Lake & Other Stories* (1985); *If the River Was Whiskey* (1989); *T. C. Boyle Stories* (1998); *Without a Hero* (1994); *After the Plague* (2001); *The Human Fly and Other Stories* (2005); *Tooth and Claw* (2005); *Wild Child and Other Stories* (2010); *Stories II, The Collected Stories of T. C. Boyle, Volume II* (2013). Boyle's first novel *Water Music* (1981) won France's Prix Passion publishers prize; his third novel *World's End* (1987) received the PEN/Faulkner Award; *The Road to Wellville* (1993) was made into a major motion picture starring Anthony Hopkins. *The Tortilla Curtain* (1995) was awarded France's Prix Médicis Étranger. He was National Book Award Finalist for *Drop City* (2003). His *New York Times* bestseller novel *The Harder They Come* (2015) was selected as one of the year's ten best. Five times honored in *The O. Henry Prize Stories*, T. C. Boyle has received numerous other awards including the PEN/Malamud Award and the PEN Center West Literary Prize. Other honors include induction into the American Academy of Arts and Letters; a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship; a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship; a Doctorate of Humane Letters honorary degree from State University, NY; the Howard D. Vursell Memorial Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters; the Ross Macdonald Award; and the PEN/New England Henry David Thoreau Prize. T. C. Boyle has won the Robert Kirsch Award and The Rea Award for the Short Story. In addition to his published story collections, Boyle's work has appeared five times in *The Best American Short Stories* and in numerous periodicals and anthologies including *The Pushcart Prize*, *Granta*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The New Yorker*, *Harper's*, *The Paris Review*, *The Kenyon Review*. Ecco/Harper Collins will release T. C. Boyle's sixteenth novel, *The Terranauts*, in the fall of 2016. He lives with his wife in Santa Barbara.

Bill Henderson is Founder and Editor of Pushcart Press, publisher of the annual *Pushcart Prize: Best of the Small Presses*. His anthology, featuring fiction, poetry and essays, has earned national recognition and is celebrating its 40th Anniversary. The *Pushcart Prize* has been named one of the most influential projects in the history of American publishing. Pushcart Press was awarded the 1979 Carey Thomas Prize for Publisher of the Year by *Publishers Weekly*. Henderson received the New York Center for Independent Publishing's Poor Richard Award in 2001; the 2005 Ivan Sandrof Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Book Critics Circle and the 2006 Poets & Writers/Barnes & Noble's "Writers for Writers" Citation. Henderson is the author of a novel *The Kid That Could* (1970); and the memoirs *His Son* (1980); *Her Father* (1995); *Tower* (2000); *Simple Gifts* (2006); and *All My Dogs: A Life* (2011). His most recent memoir *Cathedral: An Illness and a Healing* was published in 2014. He lives on the East End of Long Island and in Maine.

Karen Shepard is a Chinese-American born and raised in New York City. She is the author of four novels, *An Empire of Women* (2000), *The Bad Boy's Wife* (2004), *Don't I Know You?* (2009), and *The Celestials* (2013), which was short-listed for the Massachusetts Book Award and the William Saroyan International Prize for Writing. Her short fiction has been published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Tin House*, *One Story*, and *Ploughshares*, among others. Her nonfiction has appeared in *O Magazine*, *More*, *Self*, *USA Today*, and *The Boston Globe*, among others. She has received the William Goyen-Doris Roberts Fellowship for Fiction from the Christopher Isherwood Foundation, was a National Magazine Award Finalist, and was a recipient of a Massachusetts Cultural Council Artist Grant. She teaches writing and literature at Williams College in Williamstown, MA, where she lives with her husband, novelist Jim Shepard, and their three children.



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MICHAEL MOORHEAD REA

Michael M. Rea, devotee of the short story and founder in 1986 of the Rea Award for the Short Story, was born on January 19, 1927 in New York City and grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. At seventeen, he joined the U.S. Marine Corps and served in North China at the end of World War II. In 1952 he graduated from the University of Virginia with a B.A. in English. From 1952 to 1969, he was Vice President of the Oliver Tyrone Corporation, a family real estate firm in Pittsburgh. From 1970 to 1979 he was active in real estate in the Washington DC area. There he founded Harrea Broadcasting, Inc., which owned and operated radio stations in Pennsylvania and Maryland.

A passionate reader, Michael Rea wrote short fiction and collected first editions of American short stories. He also collected fine art and served as a Trustee of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, and the Norton Museum of Art. Through his company, Sweetwater Editions, he published Livre Deluxe limited editions of Isaac Bashevis Singer's *Satan in Goray* and *Early American Stone Sculpture: Found in the Burying Grounds of New England*. Mr. Rea also edited an anthology, *The American Story: Short Stories from the Rea Award* (Ecco Press, 1994). This book consists of 21 stories by Rea Award winners and nominees selected by seven Rea Award jurors: Ann Beattie, Stanley Elkin, Joyce Carol Oates, Cynthia Ozick, Shannon Ravenel, Joy Williams, and Tobias Wolff.

To administer the annual \$30,000 Rea Award for the Short Story, Mr. Rea established the Dungannon Foundation, which is named for his paternal hometown in Northern Ireland. He traced his love of the short story back to his Irish forebears. "The Irish were great storytellers," he said. "The basic thrust of the award," Mr. Rea noted, "is to foster a literary cause, to ennoble the form, to give it prestige." He gave complete independence to an annual jury of three notable literary figures and chose not to participate in the judging process. When the winner was selected he joined the jurors for a private luncheon celebration. During that luncheon he would telephone the winner to break the news personally. This tradition is continued by his widow, Elizabeth Richebourg Rea.

In addition to The Rea Award for the Short Story the Dungannon Foundation, directed by Ms. Rea, a photographer and curator, sponsors Rea Visiting Writers and Rea Visiting Lecturers at the University of Virginia. The Foundation also provides financial support for Selected Shorts at Symphony Space in New York City.

Michael Rea died in the summer of 1996.



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