



## New York Library Association

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### 2012 Inductees to the NYS Writers Hall of Fame Announced

**January 12, 2012.** Noted authors Toni Morrison, Joyce Carol Oates, E.L. Doctorow, and Pete Hamill are among the 14 writers in the 2012 Class of Inductees into the NYS Writers Hall of Fame. The four will be in attendance at the induction on June 5, 2012, at the Princeton Club of New York. The announcement was made last night at the Forbes Gallery in New York City by Robert L. Forbes, who serves on the board of the Empire State Center for the Book. The Center for the Book is the organization that oversees the Hall of Fame. Ten deceased writers including Kurt Vonnegut, Washington Irving, and Marianne Moore will also be inducted.

The full list of the 2012 inductees is as follows:

**John Cheever** (May 27, 1912 – June 18, 1982) – a novelist and short story writer. He was a long time resident of Ossining, NY, who is sometimes called "the Chekhov of the suburbs." His fiction is mostly set in the Upper East Side of Manhattan and the Westchester suburbs. 2012 marks the centennial of his birth.

**Hart Crane** (July 21, 1899 – April 27, 1932) – a poet who depicted New York City in many of his works with a vibrancy that is rare in poetry. He was a resident of Brooklyn living at 77 Willow Street and 110 Columbia Heights. While there, he wrote to his mother "Just imagine looking out your window directly on the East River with nothing intervening between your view of the Statue of Liberty, way down the harbour, and the marvelous beauty of Brooklyn Bridge close above you on your right!"

**Edna Ferber** (August 15, 1885 – April 16, 1968) – a novelist, short-story writer, playwright, and member of the Algonquin Roundtable. She won the Pulitzer Prize for her novel, *So Big*, her *Showboat* was translated into a Broadway musical by Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein, and her works *Saratoga Trunk*, *Cimarron*, and *Giant* were made into memorable films. She lived for a time at West 65<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Park West.

**Washington Irving** (April 3, 1783 – November 28, 1859) – author, essayist, biographer, and historian best known for "Legend of Sleepy Hollow" and "Rip Van Winkle". He solidified the term *Knickerbocker* into the American vocabulary. Although he is best associated as a resident of the Hudson Valley with his Sunnyside home, a Tarrytown tourist attraction, he also lived on Williams Street in Manhattan.

**Henry James** (April 15, 1843 – February 28, 1916) - New York City born writer of 20 novels, 112 stories, 12 plays, several volumes of travel & criticism, and a great deal of literary journalism. He is well-known for such works as *The Portrait of a Lady* and *The Turn of the Screw*.

**Mary McCarthy** (June 21, 1912 – October 25, 1989) a novelist, essayist, and critic. Although born in (omitted the word “the”) Seattle, her New York roots began in 1929 when she arrived in Poughkeepsie, NY, to attend Vassar College and continued her ties until her death in 1989. During that period she taught at New York’s Bard & Sarah Lawrence Colleges and wrote political and social commentary, literary essays, and drama criticism which appeared in magazines such as *Partisan Review*, *The New Yorker*, *Harper’s*, and *The New York Review of Books*. McCarthy was the author of 28 books during her lifetime, both fiction and non-fiction. 2012 marks the centennial of her birth.

**Marianne Moore** (November 15, 1887 – February 5, 1972), a poet noted for her irony and wit. Although born in Missouri, she was a quintessential New Yorker throwing out the first ball to open the Yankees 1968 season and living at 35 West 9th Street in Manhattan, as well as living for 37 years at 260 Cumberland Street in Brooklyn. It is only fitting that she joins her protégés Elizabeth Bishop (inducted in 2010) and John Ashbery (inducted in 2011) in the Hall of Fame.

**Barbara Tuchman** (January 30, 1912 – February 6, 1989) a self-trained historian who received two Pulitzer Prizes. She won in 1963 for *The Guns of August* that chronicled the days before World War I and in 1972 for the biography of Joseph Stilwell, *Stilwell and the American Experience in China*. Tuchman’s New York roots began at birth and continued throughout her life. 2012 marks the centennial of her birth.

**Kurt Vonnegut** (November 11, 1922 – April 11, 2007) a writer who used satire, gallows humor, and science fiction in his works of fiction. A longtime resident of Manhattan and eastern Long Island, it is a fact that most of his published works were created within its borders of New York, beginning with columns he wrote for *The Cornell Daily Sun*, in Ithaca, where he was a member of the class of 1944. Jay McInerney described Vonnegut as a “satirist with a heart, a moralist with a whoopee cushion, a cynic who wants to believe.” He served as New York State Author from 2001 – 2003.

**Richard Wright** (September 4, 1908 – November 28, 1960) an African-American author of controversial novels, short stories, poems, and non-fiction. Much of his literature concerns racial themes, especially those involving the plight of African-Americans during the late 19th to mid-20th centuries. He came to New York in 1937 and as a member of the WPA worked on a guidebook to the city, *New York Panorama* (1938), and wrote the book’s essay on Harlem. While in New York he earned a Guggenheim Fellowship, which allowed him to complete *Native Son*. It was selected by the Book of the Month Club as its first book by an African-American author.

The following living writers will also be inducted and have agreed to attend the June 5<sup>th</sup> ceremony.

**E. L. Doctorow** (January 6, 1931) born in the Bronx, a long time resident of New Rochelle and now in residence in Manhattan. Doctorow’s novels include *The Book of Daniel*, a National Book Award nominee in 1972, *Ragtime*, which received the first National Book Critics Circle Award for fiction in 1976, *World’s Fair*, which won the 1986 National Book Award, and *Billy Bathgate*, winner of the PEN/Faulkner prize, the National Book Critics Circle Award and the William Dean Howells medal of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. His most recent novel, *Homer & Langley*, was published in 2009.

**Peter Hamill** (June 24, 1935) Brooklyn born Hamill is a journalist, novelist, and essayist. He worked as a journalist for the *New York Post*, the *New York Daily News*, the *Village Voice*, and *Newsday*. Author of 11 novels with his latest being *Tabloid City* published in 2011.

**Toni Morrison** (February 18, 1931) a Nobel Prize and Pulitzer Prize-winning American novelist. *The Bluest Eye* and *Beloved* are among her best known works. In 1977 *Song of Solomon* became the first work by an African-American author to be a featured selection in the Book-of-the-Month Club since *Native Son* by Richard Wright. Her New York roots span back to 1964 when she lived in Syracuse and then later in New York City and Rockland County. She taught both at Bard College and the University at Albany, The State University of New York.

**Joyce Carol Oates** (June 16, 1938) born in western New York's Lockport and graduated from Williamsville South High School and Syracuse University. She has written over 50 novels in addition to short stories, poetry, and non-fiction. Her novel *them* (1969) won the National Book Award, and her novels *Black Water* (1992), *What I Lived For* (1994), and *Blonde* (2000) were nominated for the Pulitzer Prize.

The nominees into the NYS Writers Hall of Fame were chosen by a selection committee comprised of Harold Augenbraum, Executive Director of the National Book Foundation, Jeffrey Cannell, Deputy Commissioner for Cultural Education of the New York State Education Department, Barbara Genco, retired librarian from Brooklyn Public Library and Editor of Collection Management at Media Source, Brian Kenney, Director of the White Plains Public Library, Brian McCarthy, Associate Publisher of the Library of America, Kathleen Masterson, Director of the Literature Program at the New York State Council on the Arts, Bertha Rogers, Executive Director of Bright Hill Press & creator of the New York State Literary website and map, Rocco Staino, Chairman of the Empire State Center for the Book, and Hong Yao, Associate Coordinator Collection Development at Queens Library.

Plans are under way to house the NYS Writers Hall of Fame at the New York State Library in Albany.

The Empire State Center for the Book is part of the Library of Congress Center for the Book and is housed at the New York Library Association.

For additional information on the Empire State Center for the Book and the Writers Hall of fame, contact Rocco Staino at the New York Library Association 1-800-252-NYLA or [rstaino@yahoo.com](mailto:rstaino@yahoo.com).