

Fiction News

The Ridgefield Library's Fiction Newsletter

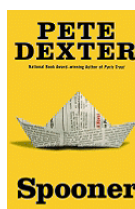
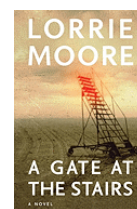


January 2010

BEST FICTION 2009

This is the time of year that publications select their "Best of" lists for 2009. We're always excited to see what titles have been chosen as the most notable fiction of the year by book reviewers. Below is a sampling of some of the selections that have made the top choices from multiple sources. To peruse copies of "Best of" lists from *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe*, *Time Magazine*, *Library Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Publishers Weekly*, and other publications, visit the Fiction Room on the second floor of the Library. Among this year's most acclaimed titles are *Wolf Hall* by Hilary Mantel, *Lark & Termite* by Jayne Ann Phillips, *Love & Summer* by William Trevor, *Spooner* by Pete

Dexter, *The Children's Book* by A. S. Byatt, *The Gate at the Stairs* by Lorrie Moore, *The Financial Lives of Poets* by Jess Walters, and *Let the Great World Spin* by Colum McCann. As in past years, we're compiling an aggregate list of the Best Fiction of 2009.



BOOK SELECTIONS FOR THE A. M. BOOK GROUP AND THE CRITICS' CIRCLE BOOK GROUP

A.M. Book Group selections: (fourth Wednesdays of the month at 10 AM)

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| Jan. 27th | <i>The Elegance of the Hedgehog</i> by Muriel Barbery |
| Feb. 24th | <i>A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man</i> by James Joyce |
| March 24th | <i>Last Night at the Lobster</i> by Stewart O'Nan |
| April 28th | <i>The Trial</i> by Franz Kafka |
| May 26th | <i>The Housekeeper and the Professor</i> by Yoko Ogawa |
| June 23rd | <i>Midaq Alley</i> by Naguib Mahfouz |

Critics' Circle Book Group selections: (third Tuesdays of the month at 7 PM)

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| Jan. 19th | <i>The Dubliners</i> by James Joyce |
| Feb. 16th | <i>The Space Between Us</i> by Thrity Umrigar |
| March 16th | <i>My Life in France</i> by Julia Child with Alex Prud'homme |
| April 20th | <i>People of the Book</i> by Geraldine Brooks |
| May 18th | <i>The Help</i> by Kathryn Stockett |
| June 15th | <i>North and South</i> by Elizabeth Gaskell |

ENJOYING JOYCE @ THE RIDGEFIELD LIBRARY

January marks the beginning of a six-month celebration of James Joyce at the Ridgefield Library. Starting on Thursday, January 14th at 7 PM with "An Introduction to James Joyce" by Dr. Mark Schenker, Associate Dean at Yale College, and ending on June 16th with a Bloomsday celebration, the Library is offering a series of lectures, book discussions and movie screenings celebrating this 20th century literary master. A six-part lecture/discussion series on Joyce's *Ulysses* commences on Thursday, March 11th at 7 PM

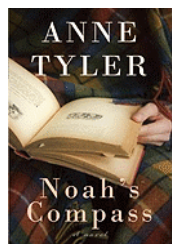


and runs through Thursday, June 10th. Here is a chance to read or re-read *Ulysses* with expert guidance from Dr. Schenker. Sign-up is required for the *Ulysses* discussion, and copies of the book will be provided while the supply lasts. For a complete list of Enjoying Joyce events visit our website, or pick up a brochure at the Library.

Enjoying Joyce is made possible thanks to the Friends of the Ridgefield Library and the Wadsworth Russell Lewis Trust Fund.

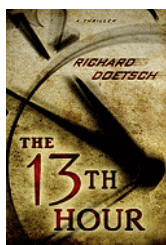
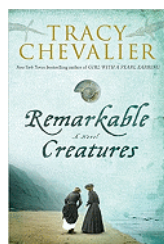
NEW FICTION

(Annotations from BookLetters)



Noah's Compass by Anne Tyler.
From Pulitzer Prize-winner Anne Tyler, a wise, gently humorous, and deeply compassionate novel about a retired school teacher forced to re-evaluate his life.

Remarkable Creatures by Tracy Chevalier.
Remarkable Creatures is a stunning novel of how one woman's gift transcends class and social prejudice to lead to some of the most important discoveries of the nineteenth century. Above all, it is a revealing portrait of the intricate and resilient nature of female friendship.



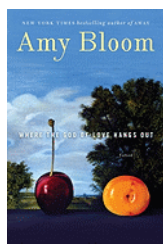
The 13th Hour by Robert Doetsch.
An Indie Next Selection
A mesmerizing thriller -- told in reverse *The 13th Hour* is the story of a man given the chance to go back in time in one-hour increments to prevent a vicious crime from destroying his life.

True Confections by Katherine Weber.
From the critically acclaimed author of *The Music Lesson* and *Triangle* comes the ingenious, witty, and affecting fictional story of Zip's Candies, a family-run candy factory trying to stay alive after 85 years in the business.



Summertime by J. M. Coetzee.
Summertime is an inventive and inspired work of fiction that allows J.M. Coetzee to imagine his own life with a critical and unsparing eye, revealing painful moral struggles and attempts to come to grips with what it means to care for another human being. Incisive, elegant, and often surprisingly funny, *Summertime* is a compelling work by one of today's most esteemed writers.

Where the God of Love Hangs Out by Amy Bloom.
Love, in its many forms and complexities, weaves through this collection by Amy Bloom, the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Away*. Bloom's astonishing and astute new work of interconnected stories illuminates the mysteries of passion, family, and friendship.

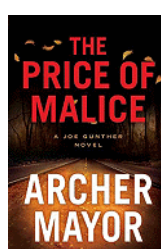
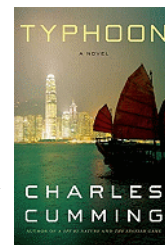


For a more extensive list of new fiction, mystery, and science fiction and fantasy titles visit our website at www.ridgefieldlibrary.org.

STAFF PICKS

Elise's Picks

Typhoon by Charles Cumming.
On the eve of the handover of Hong Kong to China, a talented young British agent loses his lover and a valuable informant to a ruthless CIA operative. Ten years later, the two square off again when a rogue CIA plot threatens the opening of the Beijing Olympics. Chosen by the *New York Times* as one of the Notable 100 Books of 2009, *Typhoon* is both a sophisticated spy novel and a complex, satisfying love story. While the author has been touted internationally as one of the bright, young successors to John Le Carré and Len Deighton, for me this novel feels more like, as one of the characters remarks, "Graham Greene territory."

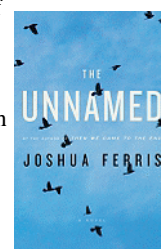


The Price of Malice by Archer Mayor.
The latest from "the master of the police procedural" finds veteran Vermont lawman Joe Gunther trying to solve two mysteries simultaneously. One involves the savage murder of a suspected pedophile, the other the disappearance of two Gloucester fishermen, possibly involved in drug smuggling. This 20th entry in a highly esteemed series has all the elements of Archer Mayor's finest work. There are poignant portraits of both small cities devastated by the loss of their industrial base and dysfunctional families with their convoluted loyalties.

But most importantly, there is an insider's appreciation for the professionalism and compassion of dedicated law officers.

Dorothy's Picks

The Unnamed by Joshua Ferris.
Ferris' debut novel *Then We Came to the End* was one of the funniest novels I've read, and earned the author a place on my list of writers to watch. In *The Unnamed*, Ferris ventures into very different territory. Tim Farnsworth is a successful corporate lawyer afflicted with an undiagnosed ailment that makes him unable to stop walking. Allegorical in tone, this luminous and heartbreaking novel explores the havoc wreaked on Tim and his family by his inexplicable compulsion to keep moving. Ferris shows he is a writer not afraid to take risks, including some missteps in what is overall a haunting and thought-provoking novel.



The Girl Who Stopped Swimming by Joshilyn Jackson.
A teenage girl is found dead in the backyard pool of the Hawthorne family, and their seemingly idyllic world is shattered. With no witnesses to the drowning, Laurel Hawthorne begins a quest to find out if foul play was involved, and if her own pre-teen daughter is harboring a secret about the death of her playmate. This is storytelling with a distinctly Southern flare combining a murder mystery, a ghost story, and an oddly likeable dysfunctional family. A good read to cozy up with on a winter's night.

