

Fiction News

The Ridgefield Library's Fiction Newsletter



May 2011

AUTHOR IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Susan Vreeland

In novels and short stories Susan Vreeland combines history, social history, and biography and offers fascinating glimpses into the world of art and artists. Each well-researched title adds insights into the philosophy that drives the artist. Her elegant, graceful prose invites readers into these evocative and sometimes romantic explorations of characters set

firmly in their times. Female artists and the role of women in creating art are a frequent focus.



Clara and Mr. Tiffany (2011)

Vreeland creates a dynamic portrait of Clara Driscoll, lead designer for Louis Comfort Tiffany and a woman conflicted between her desires for artistic recognition and romantic love. (See Staff Picks)

Luncheon of the Boating Party (2007)

Renoir is inspired to paint "Luncheon of the Boating Party" when his other work is criticized by Emile Zola, and while doing so is drawn into lives of the thirteen people featured in it during a Parisian summer in the late 1800s.

The Forest Lover (2004)

Presents a fictional portrait of artist Emily Carr, whose independence, boldly original artwork, and unconventional approach to life overcame Victorian restrictions to blaze a new path for twentieth-century women artists.

Life Studies (2004)

This collection of short stories explores art through the eyes of those who surrounded great Impressionist and Post-Impressionist masters.

The Passion of Artemisia (2002)

This novel set against the backdrops of Rome, Florence, and Genoa recreates the life of Artemisia Gentileschi, whose search for love, forgiveness, and wholeness through her art led to her fame as a painter.

Girl in Hyacinth Blue (1999)

Chronicles the history of a painting and the lives with which it intersects, from the artist's inspiration to its admiration by two art scholars three hundred years later.

EDGAR AWARDS 2011

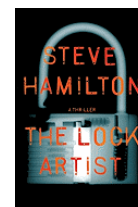
Each Spring, Mystery Writers of America present the Edgar® Awards, widely acknowledged to be the most prestigious awards in the genre.



BEST NOVEL

The Lock Artist by Steve Hamilton.

This captivating thriller focuses on a young man with the talent to become the perfect criminal—whether he likes it or not. Hamilton steps away from his Alex McKnight series to introduce a unique new character, unlike anyone you've ever seen in the world of crime fiction.



BEST FIRST NOVEL BY AN AMERICAN AUTHOR

Rogue Island by Bruce DeSilva.

Liam Mulligan is as old school as a newspaper man gets. His beat is Providence, Rhode Island, and he knows every street and alley. He knows the priests and prostitutes, the cops and street thugs. He knows the mobsters and politicians - who are pretty much one and the same. Someone is systematically burning down the neighborhood Mulligan grew up in, and the public is on the verge of panic. Mulligan must weed through a colorful array of characters to find the truth.



BEST PAPERBACK ORIGINAL

Long Time Coming by Robert Goddard.

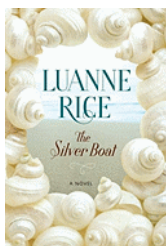
In Antwerp in 1939, a Jewish diamond trader flees Nazi Europe, leaving his priceless collection of Picasso paintings and diamonds with a friend who takes them to London. The boat he flees on sinks, leaving no survivors. Fast forward to 1976 when his penniless family tries to track down the missing paintings. A classic thriller with Goddard's trademark plot twists.



For a complete list of the Edgar Award nominees visit www.theedgars.com.

NEW FICTION

(Annotations from BookLetters)

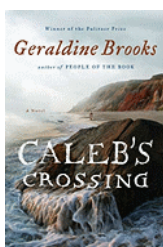
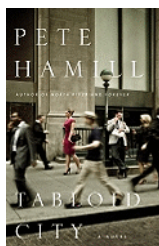


The Silver Boat by Luanne Rice.
BookPage Notable Title

From the beloved *New York Times*-bestselling Rice comes a heartwarming yet heart-wrenching portrait of three far-flung sisters who come home to Martha's Vineyard one last time. *The Silver Boat* is Rice at her very best, complete with her singular talent for capturing a family in all its flawed complexity.

Tabloid City by Pete Hamill.

In a stately West Village townhouse, a wealthy socialite and her secretary are murdered. In the 24 hours that follow, a flurry of activity circles around their shocking deaths: The head of one of the city's last tabloids stops the presses. A cop investigates the killing. A reporter chases the story. A disgraced hedge fund manager flees the country. An Iraq War vet seeks revenge. And an angry young extremist plots a major catastrophe.

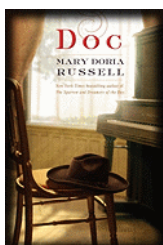
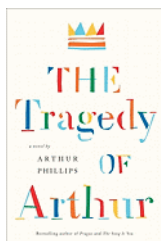


Caleb's Crossing by Geraldine Brooks.

In 1665, a young man from Martha's Vineyard became the first Native American to graduate from Harvard College. Upon this slender factual scaffold, the author of the *New York Times* bestseller *People of the Book* has created a luminous tale of love and faith, magic and adventure.

The Tragedy of Arthur by Arthur Phillips.

By turns hilarious and haunting, this virtuosic novel --which includes Shakespeare's alleged lost King Arthur play in its five-act entirety--captures the very essence of romantic and familial love and betrayal. *The Tragedy of Arthur* explores the tension between storytelling and truth-telling, the thirst for originality in all our lives, and the act of literary mythmaking, both now and four centuries ago, as the two Arthurs--Arthur the novelist and Arthur the ancient king--play out their individual but strangely intertwined fates.



Doc by Mary Doria Russell.

Violence is random and routine in Dodge City, Kansas, in 1878, but when the burned body of a mixed-blood boy named Johnnie Sanders is discovered, his death shocks a part-time policeman named Wyatt Earp and is a matter of strangely personal importance to Doc Holliday.

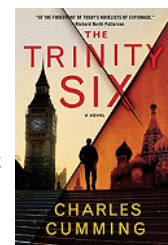
For a more extensive list of new fiction, mystery, and science fiction and fantasy titles, visit our website at www.ridgefieldlibrary.org

STAFF PICKS

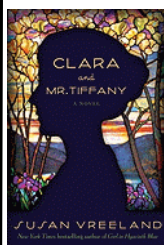
Elise's Picks

The Trinity Six by Charles Cumming.

After publishing a scathing biography of the current Russian President, History Professor Sam Gaddis is approached by a journalist friend who confides in him that she is in contact with the long-rumored sixth member of the "Cambridge Five" spy ring, students at Trinity College who were recruited by the Soviets in the 30's and who later passed on British secrets for decades. But what starts out as a promising scoop soon turns deadly when witnesses are murdered and Gaddis finds himself being hunted by both the KGB and MI6. Charles Cumming's new thriller is an intense and knowledgeable look at the bitter rivalry between the British and Russian intelligence agencies.



Clara and Mr. Tiffany by Susan Vreeland.



Until a recent exhibition at the New York Historical Society, no one knew that the designer of many of the iconic Tiffany lamps was a woman. Pouring over the extensive research that accompanied the show, author Susan Vreeland discovered that Clara Driscoll, the creator of many of the beautiful leaded-glass lampshades, was an extraordinary person. A freethinker who bicycled all over New York at the turn of the last century, Clara lived in a bohemian boardinghouse and participated in the emerging Progressive Movement. Although Mr. Tiffany admired her and made her the head of the women's studio, he forbade his "Tiffany Girls" to marry, a policy that Clara personally challenged - twice. Susan Vreeland's latest historical novel is a fascinating portrait of "a gifted unsung artist" and the city she cherished.

Dorothy's Picks

Please Look After Mom by Kyung-Sook Shin.

Park So-nyo disappears after being separated from her husband in a crowded Seoul train station, and her four grown children embark on a search to find her. As each tries to reconcile their own view of this wife and mother with the facts, a portrait emerges of a woman who spent her married life sacrificing her own needs in deference to those of her family. This poignant story, told in alternating perspectives, shows the consequences of judging those closest to us through the prism of our own wants and desires. Kyung-Sook Shin is a best-selling author in Korea, and this is her first novel to be released here.



Reading My Father: A Memoir by Alexandra Styron.

To the world William Styron was a literary lion, whose circle included some of the greatest writers and artists of his generation. In this memoir, his youngest daughter tries to reconcile this public persona with the distant and sometimes cruel father she knew, who for much of his later life battled with depression and mental illness. After scouring through the massive amount of papers Styron left behind, his daughter gives us a compassionate yet brutally honest portrait of Styron's life and the demons and insecurities that haunted him.