

OKLAHOMA **CENTER FOR THE BOOK**

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Oklahoma Book Award Finalists Announced Sheldon Russell to receive Arrell Gibson Lifetime Achievement Award

Authors, poets, book illustrators, designers, and photographers from across the state and the nation have been selected as finalists for the 2023 Oklahoma Book Awards. The thirty-fourth Annual Oklahoma Book Awards will take place on April 22, 2023, where winners in each category will be announced. The banquet will take place at the Embassy Suites Hotel ballroom, located at 741 N Phillips Avenue in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Thirty-six books were selected as finalists from a record 210 entries in the following categories: children/young adult, design/illustration, fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. The 2023 Oklahoma Book Award finalists are:

CHILDREN/YOUNG ADULT

Poopsie Gets Lost by Hannah E. Harrison
Penguin Random House

Baa, Baa, Tap Sheep by Kenda Henthorn
Sleeping Bear Press

Do You Hear What I Hear? by Helen Dunlap Newton
Yorkshire Publishing

Lovebird Lou by Tammi Sauer
Sterling Publishing Company

Mary Had a Little Plan by Tammi Sauer
Sterling Publishing Company

Three Strike Summer by Skyler Schrempp
Simon & Schuster

Lena and the Burning of Greenwood: A Tulsa Race Massacre Survival Story by Nikki Shannon Smith
Capstone Publishing

Bobby: A Story of Robert F. Kennedy by Deborah Wiles and Tatyana Fazlalizadeh
Scholastic Press

DESIGN/ILLUSTRATION/PHOTOGRAPHY

Memory Keepers: Life Stories of Choctaw People photography by Judy Allen, Deidre Elrod and Christian Toews; designed by Kevin Wingfield
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Capital City: History of Tishomingo designed by Gentry Chapman, Skip McKinstry, and Wiley Barnes
Chickasaw Press

Poopsie Gets Lost illustrated by Hannah E. Harrison
Penguin Random House

Atherton: A Legacy of Family Values designed by Laura Hyde
Müllerhaus Legacy

The Smallest Hint: Photographs and Poems photographs by David Jennings
Yorkshire Publishing

Save-It-Forward-Suppers: A Simple Strategy to Save Time, Money, and Sanity
illustrated by Jeannine Bulleigh
HarperCollins Publishers

FICTION

Prize for the Fire by Rilla Askew
University of Oklahoma Press

Red Rain by Lara Bernhardt
Admission Press

Plot Counterplot by William Bernhardt
Babylon Books

No Church, No Preacher by Freda Haack Collier
Ronald V. Collier Publisher

The Physicists' Daughter by Mary Anna Evans
Sourcebooks

Hardly Any Shooting Stars Left by B.K. Froman
Iron Stream Media

For Those Who Are Lost by Julia Bryan Thomas
Sourcebooks

Fierce Poison: A Barker & Llewelyn Novel by Will Thomas
St. Martin's Publishing Group

NON-FICTION

Raven and the Hummingbird: A Healing Path to Recovery from Multiple Personality Disorder
by Renate F. Caldwell
M & M Publishing

Children of White Thunder: Legacy of a Cheyenne Family 1830-2020 by Dee Cordry
Harry D. Cordry Jr. Publisher

The Land and the Days: A Memoir of Family, Friendship, and Grief by Tracy Daugherty
University of Oklahoma Press

We Refuse to Forget: A True Story of Black Creeks, American Identity, and Power by Caleb Gayle
Penguin Random House

A Place to Stand by Samuel Hall
Reify Press

Gore & Owen: Oklahoma's First Two U.S. Senators by Robert Henry and Bob Burke
Oklahoma Hall of Fame Publishing

A Path Lit By Lightning: The Life of Jim Thorpe by David Maraniss
Simon & Schuster

Throwaway Kids: Reforming Oklahoma's Juvenile Justice System by Terry Smith and Bob Burke
Oklahoma Hall of Fame Publishing

I Can See for Miles: Overcoming the Past and Running to My Future by Hollie Stuart
Marathon Publishing Company

POETRY

Who Do You Think You Are? by Mary B. Gray
Turning Plow Press

Level Land: Poems For and About the I35 Corridor co-edited by Crag Hill and Todd Fuller
Lamar University Literary Press

Cream Lines: Words Risen to Poetry by Karen Kay Knauss
Peach Tree Press

The Collected Poems of Josie Craig Berry edited and introduction by Jeanetta Calhoun Mish
Mongrel Empire Press

The Family Book of Martyrs by Benjamin Myers
Lamar University Literary Press

This year's Arrell Gibson Lifetime Achievement Award honors author Sheldon Russell. Russell is the author of fifteen books, including his award-winning historical fiction novels and his popular *Hook Runyon* mystery series. *Dreams to Dust: A Tale of the Oklahoma Land Rush* won the Oklahoma Book Award for fiction in 2007; and was selected by the Oklahoma Commemoration Commission as an Official Centennial Project, and the Langum Project for Historical Literature. A number of finalist nominations have also been awarded over the course of his writing career. In 2022 Russell's novel, *A Forgotten Evil*, won the Spur Award for Best Historical Western from the Western Writers of America.

Russell's books have earned starred reviews from both *Book List* and *Publisher's Weekly*. The *Insane Train* was selected as one of the six best mysteries of 2010 by *Publisher's Weekly*. *The Bridge Troll Murders* won the Oklahoma Book Award for fiction in 2018 and was chosen for the Librarian-Nominated Longlist for the Dublin Literary Award in 2019. His psychological suspense novel, *A Particular Madness*, has been nominated for the 2023 award. Two new novels, *Justice Rode the Train* and *Listen* are scheduled for release in 2023.

Russell is a graduate of Northwestern Oklahoma State University and Oklahoma State University. He taught graduate school at the University of Louisville and the University of Central Oklahoma, where he retired as Professor Emeritus in 2000.

Nancy, his wife of fifty-nine years, is a talented sculptor in her own right. They have one daughter Shonda who works at the Alva Public Library. The Russells currently live on the family ranch in the beautiful Gloss Mountains of northwestern Oklahoma.

The Oklahoma Center for the Book (OCB), located in the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, is affiliated with the National Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. The OCB's mission is to promote Oklahoma authors, books about Oklahoma, and reading for pleasure by all age groups. The OCB has partnered with the non-profit Friends of the Oklahoma Center for the Book for more than thirty years to co-sponsor the annual Oklahoma Book Awards. For more information, contact Connie Armstrong at 405/522-3383 or connie.armstrong@libraries.ok.gov.