

## NEWS RELEASE

September 6, 2011

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## William Saroyan International Prize for Writing to be Awarded in 2012

Stanford University Libraries, in partnership with the William Saroyan Foundation, announced today the launch of the fifth William Saroyan International Prize for Writing (Saroyan Prize). Intended to encourage new or emerging writers and honor the Saroyan literary legacy of originality, vitality and stylistic innovation, the Saroyan Prize recognizes newly published works of both fiction and non-fiction. A prize of \$5,000 will be awarded in each of these categories.

Literary fiction, including novels, short story collections, and drama, will be eligible for consideration for the Saroyan Fiction Prize. Literary non-fiction of any length is eligible for consideration for the Saroyan Non-fiction Prize, most particularly writing in the Saroyan tradition: memoirs, portraits and excursions into neighborhood and community. Entries in either category are limited to English language publications that are available for individual purchase by the general public. Entries must be received on or before January 31, 2012. Official entry forms and rules are available at <http://saroyanprize.stanford.edu>.

"Stanford is thrilled once again to honor the literary legacy of William Saroyan by awarding The William Saroyan International Prize for Writing," said Michael A. Keller, Stanford University Librarian. "However, the prize not only allows us to recognize the talents of an author whose archive we are pleased to hold but as well to engage with new authors, whose works are often found to be of wide interest and significance. In addition, Stanford gets another opportunity to engage with a remarkable team of alumni who serve both on our judging panel and as volunteer reviewers."

The Saroyan Prize was last awarded in 2010, when the fiction prize went to Rivka Galchen for her novel *Atmospheric Disturbances* (Picador, 2009) and the non-fiction prize went to Linda Himelstein for *The King of Vodka* (HarperBusiness, 2009). Other notable winners include Jonathan Safran Foer in 2003 for his novel *Everything is Illuminated* (Houghton Mifflin, 2002). George Hagen in 2005 for his novel *The Laments* (Random House, 2004), and Kiyo Sato in 2008 for *Dandelion Through the Crack* (Willow Valley Press, 2007).

William Saroyan, an American writer and playwright, was a Pulitzer Prize and Academy Award winner best known for his short stories about humorous experiences of immigrant families and children in California. Much of Saroyan's other work is clearly autobiographical, although similar in style and technique to fiction. Saroyan was the fourth child of Armenian immigrants. He battled his way through poverty and rose to literary prominence in the early 1930s when national magazines began publishing his short stories, most notably *The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze*. Published collections of those stories include, *My Name Is Aram*, *Inhale & Exhale*, *Three Times Three*, and *Peace, It's Wonderful*. Saroyan also had success as a playwright on Broadway and a writer of screenplays in Hollywood. His notable successes include: My Heart's in the Highlands, The Time of Your Life, The Beautiful People, and The Human Comedy. The Time of Your Life was awarded the Pulitzer.

Stanford University Libraries & Academic Information Resources supports the teaching, learning and research mandates of the University through delivery of bibliographic and other information resources and services to faculty, students and staff. It is tackling the challenges of the digital age while continuing the development, preservation and conservation of its extensive print, media and manuscript collections.

The William Saroyan Foundation was founded by the author on December 30, 1966 and remains active under a Board of Trustees. Commencing in 1990, the Trustees set a goal of bringing together into one single archive his entire literary estate. A decision was finally made by the Trustees to offer Stanford University the assembled Saroyan Literary Collection with provisions that would safeguard in perpetuity one of the rare treasure troves in American literature, carrying on the legacy of Fresno, California's own native son, William Saroyan.

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Attachments:

- FAQ
- Terms and Conditions

Links:

- Entry Form:  
<http://tinyurl.com/3htmj8b>
- William Saroyan International Prize for Writing homepage:  
<http://library.stanford.edu/saroyan>

# 2012 William Saroyan International Prize for Writing

## Entry FAQ

### **What works are eligible for the Saroyan Prize?**

Works of fiction (novels, short story anthologies, or drama) or non-fiction (biography, history, or memoirs) by authors from around the world and first published during 2010-2011 are eligible for consideration. Works must be imprinted with either a 2010 or 2011 copyright date. Poetry will not be considered in this cycle. All entries must be predominately in English, and available for individual purchase by the general public. Works by members of The Saroyan Writing Prize Committee, members or officers of the William Saroyan Foundation, or previous winners are not eligible. Eligibility rules may be modified over time.

While all works fitting the above description are eligible, and all entries are welcome, note that the judges will be looking for works with strong literary merit that honor the Saroyan legacy. In past prize cycles, works that fell into a specific publishing sub-genre – juvenile, science fiction, Western, mystery, romance, erotic, self-help, religion, etc. – were frequently found to be outside of that legacy.

### **The award honors the Saroyan literary legacy. What is the Saroyan legacy or style?**

Saroyan's literary style is characterized by originality, stylistic innovation and what is often described as an "exuberant humanism". It is this exuberance and desire to move art in new directions, rather than relevance to the particulars of Saroyan's common settings or themes, that Saroyan Prize judges will be seeking. Of course, any artist's work is best understood through direct experience, and judges for the Saroyan prize will make their choices based on their personal experience with Saroyan's writings.

### **The prize is intended to encourage new or emerging writers. How is that defined?**

Authors' careers follow many different paths, and no single definition fits. Our judges will look at biographies and other background material to assess each submission. However, in general, authors who have published four or more books will not be considered new and emerging.

### **What is the deadline for entry?**

Entries must be received at the Stanford University Libraries on or before January 31, 2012.

### **What materials must I submit to be considered for the prize?**

A complete entry, consisting of the materials listed below, is required for consideration.

- A completed entry form, available from: <http://tinyurl.com/3htmj8b>
- Five copies of the publication.
- A \$50 non-refundable entry fee. Payment may be made using Visa, MasterCard or American Express at the above website, or by check. Checks should be made payable to Stanford University/Saroyan Writing Prizes, and must indicate the title(s) of book(s) being submitted. Multiple entries may be paid with one check.

### **What is the address for submission of entries?**

Administrator of The Saroyan Prize  
Stanford University Libraries  
557 Escondido Mall  
Stanford, CA 94305-6004

**Must the publisher make the entry?**

No, anyone (including the author) may submit an eligible entry.

**Are self-published books eligible?**

Yes, self-published books are eligible as long as they are available for individual purchase by the general public.

**Are electronic books eligible?**

Yes, books published electronically are eligible, assuming they are in a fixed state and readily available for purchase by the public.

**May I get my entry or entry fee back after I submit it to the Prize competition?**

Entries are not returnable or refundable under any circumstance.

**How can I support the William Saroyan International Prize for Writing?**

Individuals may encourage authors and publishers to submit excellent works for the competition. Individuals affiliated with Stanford University may also be eligible to help screen entries in early 2010. Please contact Sonia Lee at [sonialee@stanford.edu](mailto:sonialee@stanford.edu) for additional information about volunteering.

Administration of the prize also involves significant expense, and monetary support is always greatly appreciated. Tax-deductible cash gifts to the Stanford Libraries are, of course, always appreciated and can be directed specifically to the Saroyan Prize.

**Who can I contact with further questions?**

Please direct questions to Sonia Lee, [sonialee@stanford.edu](mailto:sonialee@stanford.edu) or 650-736-9538.

## 2012 William Saroyan International Prize for Writing Terms and Conditions

The following provisions govern the 2012 William Saroyan International Prize for Writing awarded by Stanford University Libraries.

1. The Saroyan Prize Committee will be appointed by the Stanford University Librarian in consultation with the President of the Saroyan Foundation, and will be responsible for all aspects of the administration of the Saroyan Prize.
2. The Stanford University Librarian in consultation with the President of the Saroyan Foundation, will appoint a team of no fewer than three Nominating Jurors for each Saroyan Prize to be awarded.
3. Two prizes of \$5,000 each will be offered in 2012: one for fiction, the other for non-fiction. Poetry and other literary forms will not be considered.
4. Only works published in book form between January 1, 2010 and December 31, 2011, available for individual purchase by the general public, and primarily in English are eligible for the Saroyan Prize in 2012.
5. Works by members of The Saroyan Prize Committee, members or officers of the William Saroyan Foundation, or previous winners are not eligible for the 2012 Saroyan Prize.
6. Only complete entries received by Stanford University Libraries no later than January 31, 2012 will be considered. A complete entry includes:
  - a. A completed entry form: <http://tinyurl.com/3htmj8b>
  - b. Five copies of the work,
  - c. A non-refundable \$50 entry fee. Payment may be made using Visa, MasterCard, or American Express at the above website, or by check. Checks should be made payable to Stanford University/Saroyan Writing Prizes, and should indicate the title(s) of the work(s) they accompany.

Completed entries should be sent to:

Administrator of The Saroyan Prize  
Stanford University Libraries  
557 Escondido Mall  
Stanford, CA 94305-6004

7. The Saroyan Prize Committee will assemble and manage a team of Stanford University alumni and Stanford University Library staff to perform an initial screening of all entries.
8. The Nominating Judges for each Saroyan Prize will review the screened entries, and put forward to the Stanford University Librarian a list of not less than three and not more than five Finalist works for each Prize.
9. The winner of each Prize will be selected by the Stanford University Librarian, in consultation with the President of the William Saroyan Foundation, and based on the recommendations of the Nominating Judges. However, the University Librarian has the authority in extraordinary circumstances to award the Prize to any qualified entry.
10. Nothing in this plan shall be deemed to limit in any way the authority and control of The Saroyan Writing Prize Committee.
11. Finalists and prizewinners of the Prize will be listed permanently on the Saroyan Prize website.
12. Terms and conditions subject to change without notice.