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**DAYTON LITERARY PEACE PRIZE TO HONOR MARILYNNE ROBINSON WITH**

**RICHARD C. HOLBROOKE DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

*Acclaimed for moving meditations on faith, morality, and modern life, the bestselling novelist and essayist to be honored at Dayton ceremony on November 20<sup>th</sup>*

**Dayton, OH (August 24, 2016)** – Writer Marilynne Robinson, whose novels and essays offer moving, graceful, and thoughtful meditations on modern life, spirituality, science, and politics, will receive the 2016 [Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award](#), organizers of the Dayton Literary Peace Prize announced today.

Named in honor of the celebrated U.S. diplomat who played an instrumental role in negotiating the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords that ended the war in Bosnia, the award will be presented to Robinson at the Dayton Literary Peace Prize Gala on November 20th. Founded in 2005, The Dayton Literary Peace Prize is the only international literary peace prize awarded in the United States. It honors writers whose work uses the power of literature to foster peace, social justice, and global understanding. The Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award recognizes authors for their complete body of work.

A native of Idaho, Robinson earned immediate acclaim with her 1980 debut novel, [Housekeeping](#), a story about two sisters that explored universal themes of family and home. Twenty-five years later she produced her renowned Gilead trilogy, three novels exploring the concept of spiritual grace against the backdrop of a mythical Iowa town: [Gilead](#), winner of the 2005 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and the National Book Critics Circle Award; [Home](#), winner of the 2009 Orange Prize; and 2014's [Lila](#), winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award. Her nonfiction books include the essay collections [The Givenness of Things](#), [When I Was a Child I Read Books](#), [Absence of Mind](#), and [The Death of Adam](#), as well as the environmental wake-up call [Mother Country](#), which was a 1989 National Book Award Finalist for nonfiction.

In 2012, President Barack Obama, a self-avowed fan of her work, awarded Robinson the National Humanities Medal. They made headlines again in November 2015 when President Obama [interviewed Robinson for The New York Review of Books](#). Their wide-ranging conversation, which touched on religion, fear-mongering, and the convergence of faith and democracy, went viral.

"In her fiction and in her essays, Marilynne Robinson is concerned with the issues that define the Dayton Literary Peace Prize: forgiveness, the sacredness of the human creature, and delight in being alive and experiencing the natural world," said Sharon Rab, founder and co-chair of the Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundation. "With luminous, deeply moving prose, she explores the causes of strife in a family, in a community, and in the world, while ultimately demonstrating the universal healing power of reconciliation and love."

"I have had the privilege of seeing for myself how books live in the world, how readily they can cross all sorts of borders and boundaries, how important they are in sustaining a human conversation through and despite the frictions that arise among nations, how intensely they can be taken to heart anywhere," said Robinson upon hearing she would be receiving the Holbrooke Prize. "It is certainly appropriate that a literary prize should also be a peace prize, and that writers themselves should be made aware of their

unique opportunity to speak to an international readership, an opportunity created by the interest and quality and commitment to truth of the literary work of generations.”

Robinson will join the ranks of past winners of the Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award, formerly called the Lifetime Achievement Award, including Studs Terkel (2006), Elie Wiesel (2007), Taylor Branch (2008), Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn (2009), Geraldine Brooks (2010), Barbara Kingsolver (2011), Tim O'Brien (2012), Wendell Berry (2013), Louise Erdrich (2014), and Gloria Steinem (2015).

Finalists for the 2016 Dayton Literary Peace Prize will be announced on September 13, 2016.

***About the Dayton Literary Peace Prize***

The Dayton Literary Peace Prize honors writers whose work uses the power of literature to foster peace, social justice, and global understanding. Launched in 2006, it has established itself as one of the world's most prestigious literary honors, and is the only literary peace prize awarded in the United States. As an offshoot of the Dayton Peace Prize, the Dayton Literary Peace Prize awards a \$10,000 cash prize each year to one fiction and one nonfiction author whose work advances peace as a solution to conflict, and leads readers to a better understanding of other cultures, peoples, religions, and political points of view. Additionally, the Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award is bestowed upon a writer whose body of work reflects the Prize's mission; previous honorees include Wendell Berry, Taylor Branch, Geraldine Brooks, Louise Erdrich, Barbara Kingsolver, Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, Tim O'Brien, Gloria Steinem, Studs Terkel, and Elie Wiesel. For more information visit the Dayton Literary Peace Prize media center at <http://daytonliterarypeaceprize.org/press.htm>.

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