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THE SURRENDERED BY CHANG-RAE LEE AND

IN THE PLACE OF JUSTICE BY WILBERT RIDEAU

NAMED WINNERS OF 2011 DAYTON LITERARY PEACE PRIZE

Winners to receive \$10,000 Prize;
Beneath the Lion's Gaze by Maaza Mengiste and
The Warmth of Other Suns by Isabel Wilkerson Named Runners-Up

Dayton, OH (September 26, 2011) – Celebrating the power of literature to promote peace and global understanding, the Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundation today announced that *The Surrendered* by Chang-Rae Lee and *In The Place Of Justice: A Story of Punishment and Deliverance* by Wilbert Rideau are the winners of the 2011 Dayton Literary Peace Prize for fiction and nonfiction, respectively.

The Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundation also announced this year's runners-up: *Beneath the Lion's Gaze* by Maaza Mengiste and *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson.

Inspired by the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords that ended the war in Bosnia, The Dayton Literary Peace Prize is the only international literary peace prize awarded in the United States. The Prize celebrates the power of literature to promote peace, nonviolent conflict resolution, and global understanding. Winners receive a \$10,000 honorarium while runners-up receive \$1,000.

Organizers previously announced that author Barbara Kingsolver (*The Poisonwood Bible*, *The Lacuna*, *Small Wonder*) will receive the first-ever Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award, formerly known as the Lifetime Achievement Award and renamed this year in honor of the late U.S. diplomat who was instrumental in negotiating the Dayton Peace Accords. The award will be presented to Kingsolver by journalist Kati Marton, Holbrooke's widow.

Last year's winners, Dave Eggers (*Zeitoun*) and Marlon James (*The Book of Night Women*), will present the awards to this year's honorees at a ceremony hosted by award-winning journalist Nick Clooney on Sunday, November 13th at the Benjamin and Marian Schuster Performing Arts Center in Dayton, Ohio.

"While this year's winners demonstrate how much individual lives are at the mercy of larger political currents around them, they also remind us that we each have the opportunity – and responsibility – to shape a better world," said Sharon Rab, chair of the Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundation. "Sometimes one voice can be the catalyst for improving an entire state's prison system, and one person can potentially provide the kind of support and comfort that could ease the personal trauma of war. We are honored to celebrate these remarkable books and authors."

In *The Surrendered* (Riverhead Books), Chang-rae Lee's Pulitzer Prize-nominated epic, the author examines the long-lasting scars of war-time horrors through the intricately entwined lives of a Korean War orphan and an American GI who continue to cross paths years after first colliding in an orphanage in war-torn Korea. Sympathetic yet unsentimental, the book shows how the psychological wounds left by the war play out in the destructive relationship between the two.

"History shows that all nations eventually decline, governments shall fall, great structures will crumble to dust; yet literature endures -- because in order to thrive we need our own voices to tilt against intolerance, ignorance, callousness; to make ourselves vulnerable to the difficult and beautiful truths of our humanity; to remind us we are one," said Lee. "This is what the Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundation so rightly supports and celebrates; that my work has been thusly recognized is a deeply humbling -- and inspiring -- honor."

[In the Place of Justice: A Story of Punishment and Deliverance](#) (Alfred A. Knopf) is the powerful memoir of Wilbert Rideau, who found redemption as a prison journalist in Louisiana's notoriously violent Angola penitentiary. Originally condemned to death in an unfair trial, Rideau later had his sentence amended to life imprisonment and became editor of the prison newsmagazine *The Angolite*, which under his leadership became an uncensored, daring, and crusading journal instrumental in reforming the prison and the corrupt Louisiana justice system. His story was described as "stunning" by *Vanity Fair*, which went on to add, "Quite simply, no prison memoir in recent memory contains prose as deft or as riveting."

"No one is more mindful than I am of the long journey I traveled to become an advocate for peace, and to have my writing recognized as serving that end is the ultimate honor," said Rideau, who has since been released from prison. "I am a witness for the power of the written word. I know first-hand that reading is transformative. I know that books can inspire people to be better than they are, to aim higher than they thought they could ever go, to create opportunity where none was apparent, to find hope in the bleakest of circumstances, and to discover their own humanity. If my memoir can help one person find a more peaceable path through life, I will consider it a success."

The 2011 runners-up are:

- Fiction: *[Beneath the Lion's Gaze](#)* by Maaza Mengiste (W. W. Norton and Company): An epic tale of a father and two sons, of betrayals and loyalties, and a family unraveling in the wake of Ethiopia's revolution.
- Nonfiction: *[The Warmth of Other Suns](#)* by Isabel Wilkerson (Random House): Wilkerson tells the stories of three black Americans who fled the South for an uncertain existence in the urban North and West in what became known as the Great Migration of the mid-20th century.

The Foundation will also award Professor Nigel Young with a special Dayton Literary Peace Prize Award for Scholarship for his role as editor of *[The Oxford International Encyclopedia of Peace](#)* (Oxford University Press). The award, which carries a \$1,000 prize, was created especially for the *Encyclopedia* as a tribute to its lasting contribution to the study of peace, and also to Young's monumental achievement in marshalling the efforts of hundreds of scholars from around the world to create this unique and comprehensive work.

To be eligible for the 2011 awards, English-language books must have been published or translated into English in 2010 and address the theme of peace on a variety of levels, such as between individuals, among families and communities, or among nations, religions, or ethnic groups.

A panel of prominent writers including Ken McClane, Eric Bates, Ron Carlson, and April Smith reviewed the 2011 finalists and selected this year's winners and runners-up. A full list of the 2011 finalists can be found at www.daytonliterarypeaceprize.org/2011-finalists.htm.

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 already 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. The Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award is also bestowed upon a writer whose body of work reflects the Prize's mission; previous honorees include Studs Terkel, Elie Wiesel, Taylor Branch, Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, and Geraldine Brooks.

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