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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCES 93rd ANNUAL PULITZER PRIZES IN JOURNALISM, LETTERS, DRAMA AND MUSIC

New York, NY (April 20, 2009)—The 93rd annual Pulitzer Prizes in Journalism, Letters, Drama and Music, awarded on the recommendation of the Pulitzer Prize Board, were announced today by Columbia University.

The winners in each category, along with the names of the finalists in the competition, follow:

A. PRIZES IN JOURNALISM

1. PUBLIC SERVICE

For a distinguished example of meritorious public service by a newspaper or eligible news organization through the use of its journalistic resources which, as well as reporting, may include editorials, cartoons, photographs, graphics and online material, presented in print or online or both, a gold medal.

Awarded to the Las Vegas Sun, and notably the courageous reporting by Alexandra Berzon, for the exposure of the high death rate among construction workers on the Las Vegas Strip amid lax enforcement of regulations, leading to changes in policy and improved safety conditions.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: The New York Times for its comprehensive coverage of the economic meltdown of 2008, setting a standard for depth and sophistication while making the arcane world of finance and banking accessible to an often bewildered public, and St. Petersburg Times for “PolitiFact,” its fact-checking initiative during the 2008 presidential campaign that used probing reporters and the power of the World Wide Web to

examine more than 750 political claims, separating rhetoric from truth to enlighten voters. (Moved by the Board to the National Reporting category.)

2. BREAKING NEWS REPORTING

For a distinguished example of local reporting of breaking news, with special emphasis on the speed and accuracy of the initial coverage, presented in print or online or both, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to The New York Times Staff for its swift and sweeping coverage of a sex scandal that resulted in the resignation of Gov. Eliot Spitzer, breaking the story on its Web site and then developing it with authoritative, rapid-fire reports.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: the Houston Chronicle Staff for taking full advantage of online technology and its newsroom expertise to become a lifeline to the city when Hurricane Ike struck, providing vital minute-by-minute updates on the storm, its flood surge and its aftermath, and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch Staff for its creative and aggressive coverage, both online and in print, of a city hall shooting that left six people dead, displaying an exemplary blend of speed and rigor in its reporting.

3. INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

For a distinguished example of investigative reporting by an individual or team, presented as a single article or series, in print or online or both, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to David Barstow of The New York Times for his tenacious reporting that revealed how some retired generals, working as radio and television analysts, had been co-opted by the Pentagon to make its case for the war in Iraq, and how many of them also had undisclosed ties to companies that benefited from policies they defended.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: Paul Pringle of the Los Angeles Times for his meticulously researched stories that, in the face of threats, exposed financial abuses by the head of California's largest union, leading to investigations, the leader's departure from office and repayment of misappropriated funds, and Susanne Rust and Meg Kissinger of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel for their powerful revelations that the government was failing to protect the public from dangerous chemicals in everyday products, such as some "microwave-safe" containers, stirring action by Congress and federal agencies.

4. EXPLANATORY REPORTING

For a distinguished example of explanatory reporting that illuminates a significant and complex subject, demonstrating mastery of the subject, lucid writing and clear presentation, in print or online or both, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to Bettina Boxall and Julie Cart of the Los Angeles Times for their fresh and painstaking exploration into the cost and effectiveness of attempts to combat the growing menace of wildfires across the western United States.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: Adam Liptak of The New York Times for his lucid exposition of how the cornerstones of the American judicial system differ from those in other democratic nations, awakening readers to the benefits and drawbacks of those differences, and Robert O’Harrow Jr. and Brady Dennis of The Washington Post for their vivid, richly documented explanation of why AIG, the insurance industry giant, nearly collapsed and what lessons the crisis holds for the nation’s policymakers.

5. LOCAL REPORTING

For a distinguished example of reporting on significant issues of local concern, demonstrating originality and community expertise, in print or online or both, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Two Prizes of \$10,000 each:

Awarded to the Detroit Free Press Staff, and notably Jim Schaefer and M. L. Elrick, for their uncovering of a pattern of lies by Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick that included denial of a sexual relationship with his female chief of staff, prompting an investigation of perjury that eventually led to jail terms for the two officials.

and

Awarded to Ryan Gabrielson and Paul Giblin of the East Valley Tribune, Mesa, Ariz., for their adroit use of limited resources to reveal, in print and online, how a popular sheriff’s focus on immigration enforcement endangered investigation of violent crime and other aspects of public safety.

Also nominated as a finalist in this category was: Brendan McCarthy, Michael DeMocker and Ryan Smith of The Times-Picayune, New Orleans, for their multifaceted examination of a murder case that showed deep understanding of the community, its social ills and the often frustrating path to justice.

6. NATIONAL REPORTING

For a distinguished example of reporting on national affairs, in print or online or both, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to the St. Petersburg Times for “PolitiFact,” its fact-checking initiative during the 2008 presidential campaign that used probing reporters and the power of the World Wide Web to examine more than 750 political claims, separating rhetoric from truth to enlighten voters. (Moved by the Board from the Public Service category.)

Nominated as finalists in this category were: Amy Goldstein and Dana Priest of The Washington Post for their relentless exploration of America's network of immigration detention centers, melding reporting and computer analysis to expose sometimes deadly abuses and spur corrective steps; John Shiffman, John Sullivan and Tom Avril of The Philadelphia Inquirer for their exhaustive reports on how political interests have eroded the mission of the Environmental Protection Agency and placed the nation's environment in greater jeopardy, setting the stage for remedial action, and The Wall Street Journal Staff for its highly detailed coverage of the collapse of America's financial system, explicating key decisions, capturing the sense of calamity and charting the human toll.

7. INTERNATIONAL REPORTING

For a distinguished example of reporting on international affairs, in print or online or both, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to The New York Times Staff for its masterful, groundbreaking coverage of America's deepening military and political challenges in Afghanistan and Pakistan, reporting frequently done under perilous conditions.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: Rukmini Callimachi of the Associated Press for her in-depth investigation of the exploitation of impoverished children in West and Central Africa who are often traded like animals by adults who prize their labor, and The Washington Post Staff for its sensitive examination of how females in the developing world are often oppressed from birth to death, a reporting project marked by indelible portraits of women and girls and enhanced by multimedia presentations.

8. FEATURE WRITING

For a distinguished example of feature writing giving prime consideration to quality of writing, originality and concision, in print or online or both, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to Lane DeGregory of the St. Petersburg Times for her moving, richly detailed story of a neglected little girl, found in a roach-infested room, unable to talk or feed herself, who was adopted by a new family committed to her nurturing. (Moved into contention by the Board within the Feature Writing category.)

Nominated as finalists in this category were: John Barry of the St. Petersburg Times for his concise, captivating story about a rescued baby dolphin that needed a new tail and became a famous survivor, illuminating the mysterious connection between human beings and animals; Amy Ellis Nutt of The Star-Ledger, Newark, N.J., for her poignant, deeply reported story of a chiropractor who suffered a severe stroke following brain surgery and became a wildly creative artist, in many ways estranged from his former self, and Diane Suchetka of The Plain Dealer, Cleveland, for her harrowing tale of a mechanic whose arms were reattached after being severed in an accident, a disciplined narrative that takes readers on the man's painful personal and physical journey to recover.

9. COMMENTARY

For distinguished commentary, in print or online or both, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to Eugene Robinson of The Washington Post for his eloquent columns on the 2008 presidential campaign that focus on the election of the first African-American president, showcasing graceful writing and grasp of the larger historic picture.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: Regina Brett of The Plain Dealer, Cleveland, for her range of compelling columns that move the heart, challenge authority and often trigger action while giving readers deeper insight into life's challenges, and Paul Krugman of The New York Times for his prophetic columns on economic peril during a year of financial calamity, blending the scholarly knowledge of a distinguished economist with the skill of a wordsmith.

10. CRITICISM

For distinguished criticism, in print or online or both, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to Holland Cotter of The New York Times for his wide ranging reviews of art, from Manhattan to China, marked by acute observation, luminous writing and dramatic storytelling.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: Inga Saffron of The Philadelphia Inquirer for her fascinating and convincing architectural critiques that boldly confront important topics, from urban planning issues to the newest skyscraper, and Sebastian Smee of The Boston Globe for his fresh, accessible and energetic reviews on the New England art scene, creating for readers a sense of discovery even as he provides discerning analysis.

11. EDITORIAL WRITING

For distinguished editorial writing, the test of excellence being clearness of style, moral purpose, sound reasoning, and power to influence public opinion in what the writer conceives to be the right direction, in print or online or both, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Mark Mahoney of The Post-Star, Glens Falls, N.Y., for his relentless, down-to-earth editorials on the perils of local government secrecy, effectively admonishing citizens to uphold their right to know.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: Charles Lane of The Washington Post for his succinct and insightful editorials on the nation's economic collapse, zeroing in on problems and offering solutions with a steady voice of reason, and John McCormick, Marie Dillon and Bruce Dold of the Chicago Tribune for their persistent campaign to reform statehouse ethics, drawing on corruption in the governor's office to drive home their successful call for legislative action.

12. EDITORIAL CARTOONING

For a distinguished cartoon or portfolio of cartoons, characterized by originality, editorial effectiveness, quality of drawing and pictorial effect, in print or online or both, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to Steve Breen of The San Diego Union-Tribune for his agile use of a classic style to produce wide ranging cartoons that engage readers with power, clarity and humor.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: Mike Thompson of the Detroit Free Press for his compelling collection of print and animated cartoons that blend the great traditions of the craft with new online possibilities, and Matt Wuerker of Politico for his engaging mix of art and ideas, resulting in cleverly conceived cartoons that persuade rather than rant and that sometimes use animation to widen their impact.

13. BREAKING NEWS PHOTOGRAPHY

For a distinguished example of breaking news photography in black and white or color, which may consist of a photograph or photographs, a sequence or an album, in print or online or both, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to Patrick Farrell of The Miami Herald for his provocative, impeccably composed images of despair after Hurricane Ike and other lethal storms caused a humanitarian disaster in Haiti.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: the Associated Press Staff for its haunting chronicle of death, destruction, heartbreak and renewal when an earthquake devastated Sichuan, China, and Carolyn Cole of the Los Angeles Times for her valorous on-the-spot coverage of political violence in Kenya, capturing the terror as rebellion and reprisals jolted the nation.

14. FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

For a distinguished example of feature photography in black and white or color, which may consist of a photograph or photographs, a sequence or an album, in print or online or both, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to Damon Winter of The New York Times for his memorable array of pictures deftly capturing multiple facets of Barack Obama's presidential campaign.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: Carol Guzy of The Washington Post for her powerfully intimate coverage of the perils and sorrow of childbirth in Sierra Leone, where women face the world's highest rate of maternal mortality, and Sonya Hebert of The Dallas Morning News for her empathetic portrait of palliative care in a Texas medical center as terminally ill patients cope with the end of their lives.

B. LETTERS AND DRAMA PRIZES

1. FICTION

For distinguished fiction by an American author, preferably dealing with American life, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to “Olive Kitteridge,” by Elizabeth Strout (Random House), a collection of 13 short stories set in small-town Maine that packs a cumulative emotional wallop, bound together by polished prose and by Olive, the title character, blunt, flawed and fascinating.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: “The Plague of Doves,” by Louise Erdrich (HarperCollins), a haunting novel that explores racial discord, loss of land and changing fortunes in a corner of North Dakota where Native Americans and whites share a tangled history, and “All Souls,” by Christine Schutt (Harcourt), a memorable novel that focuses on the senior class at an exclusive all-girl Manhattan prep school where a beloved student battles a rare cancer, fiercely honest, carefully observed and subtly rendered.

2. DRAMA

For a distinguished play by an American author, preferably original in its source and dealing with American life, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to “Ruined,” by Lynn Nottage, a searing drama set in chaotic Congo that compels audiences to face the horror of wartime rape and brutality while still finding affirmation of life and hope amid hopelessness.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: “Becky Shaw,” by Gina Gionfriddo, a jarring comedy that examines family and romantic relationships with a lacerating wit while eschewing easy answers and pat resolutions, and “In The Heights,” by Lin-Manuel Miranda and Quiara Alegria Hudes, a robust musical about struggling Latino immigrants in New York City today that celebrates the virtues of sacrifice, family solidarity and gritty optimism.

3. HISTORY

For a distinguished and appropriately documented book on the history of the United States, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to “The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family,” by Annette Gordon-Reed (W.W. Norton & Company), a painstaking exploration of a sprawling multi-generation slave family that casts provocative new light on the relationship between Sally Hemings and her master, Thomas Jefferson.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: “This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War,” by Drew Gilpin Faust (Alfred A. Knopf), a deeply researched, gracefully written examination of how a divided nation struggled to comprehend the meaning and practical consequences of unprecedented human carnage, and “The Liberal Hour: Washington and the Politics of Change in the 1960s,” by G. Calvin Mackenzie and Robert Weisbrot (The Penguin Press), an elegantly written account of a brief period in American history that left a profoundly altered national landscape.

4. BIOGRAPHY

For a distinguished and appropriately documented biography or autobiography by an American author, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to “American Lion: Andrew Jackson in the White House,” by Jon Meacham (Random House), an unflinching portrait of a not always admirable democrat but a pivotal president, written with an agile prose that brings the Jackson saga to life.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: “Traitor to His Class: The Privileged Life and Radical Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt,” by H.W. Brands (Doubleday), a richly textured and highly readable exploration of the inner Roosevelt, presented with analytical acuity and flashes of originality, and “The Bin Ladens: An Arabian Family in the American Century,” by Steve Coll (The Penguin Press), an epic tale extending far beyond Osama Bin Laden and the calamity of 9/11, rooted in meticulous research and written with an urgency, clarity and flair that entertains as easily as it educates.

5. POETRY

For a distinguished volume of original verse by an American author, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to “The Shadow of Sirius,” by W. S. Merwin (Copper Canyon Press), a collection of luminous, often tender poems that focus on the profound power of memory.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: “Watching the Spring Festival,” by Frank Bidart (Farrar, Straus and Giroux), a book of lyric poems that evinces compassion for the human condition as it explores the constraints that limit the possibility of people changing the course of their lives, and “What Love Comes To: New & Selected Poems,” by Ruth Stone (Copper Canyon Press), a collection of poems that give rich drama to ordinary experience, deepening our sense of what it means to be human.

6. GENERAL NONFICTION

For a distinguished and appropriately documented book of nonfiction by an American author that is not eligible for consideration in any other category, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to “Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II,” by Douglas A. Blackmon (Doubleday), a precise and eloquent work that examines a deliberate system of racial suppression and that rescues a multitude of atrocities from virtual obscurity.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: “Gandhi and Churchill: The Epic Rivalry That Destroyed an Empire and Forged Our Age,” by Arthur Herman (Bantam Books), an authoritative, deeply researched book that achieves an extraordinary balance in weighing two

mighty protagonists against each other, and “The Bitter Road to Freedom: A New History of the Liberation of Europe,” by William I. Hitchcock (Free Press), a heavily documented exploration of the overlooked suffering of noncombatants in the victory over Nazi Germany, written with the dash of a novelist and the authority of a scholar.

C. PRIZE IN MUSIC

For distinguished musical composition by an American that has had its first performance or recording in the United States during the year, Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Awarded to “Double Sextet,” by Steve Reich (Boosey & Hawkes), premiered on March 26, 2008 in Richmond, VA, a major work that displays an ability to channel an initial burst of energy into a large-scale musical event, built with masterful control and consistently intriguing to the ear.

Also nominated as finalists in this category were: “7 Etudes for Solo Piano,” by Don Byron (nottuskegeelike music/BMI), premiered on March 15, 2008 at Hallwall’s Contemporary Art Center, Buffalo, NY, a deft set of studies that display rhythmic inventiveness and irresistible energy, charm and wit, and “Brion,” by Harold Meltzer (Urban Scrawl Music Company), premiered on April 23, 2008 at Merkin Hall, New York City, a sonic portrait of a cemetery in northern Italy painted with the touch of a watercolorist and marked by an episodic structure and vivid playfulness that offer a graceful, sensual and contemplative experience.

The Pulitzer Prize Board made its recommendations for the 2009 prizes when it met at Columbia on April 16 and 17 and passed them to President Lee C. Bollinger. It announced that the awards would be presented at a luncheon on May 28 at Columbia University.

Danielle Allen, Jim Amoss, Kathleen Carroll and Ann Marie Lipinski were re-elected to membership on the board.

The members of the Pulitzer Prize Board are: President Bollinger; Danielle Allen, UPS Foundation professor of social science, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton University; Jim Amoss, editor, The New Orleans Times-Picayune; Randell Beck, president and publisher, Argus Leader Media; Amanda Bennett, executive editor/enterprise, Bloomberg News; Kathleen Carroll, senior vice president and executive editor, Associated Press; Joyce Dehli, vice president for news, Lee Enterprises; Thomas L. Friedman, columnist, The New York Times; Paul Gigot, editorial page editor and vice president, The Wall Street Journal; Anders Gyllenhaal, executive editor, The Miami Herald; Jay T. Harris, director, The Center for the Study of Journalism and Democracy, University of Southern California; David M. Kennedy, Donald J. McLachlan professor of history emeritus, Stanford University; Nicholas Lemann, dean, Graduate School of

Journalism, Columbia University; Ann Marie Lipinski, vice president for civic engagement, University of Chicago; Gregory L. Moore, editor, The Denver Post; Richard Oppel, former editor, Austin American-Statesman (chair); Paul Tash, editor, CEO and chairman, St. Petersburg Times; Keven Ann Willey, vice president/editorial page editor, The Dallas Morning News; and Sig Gissler, administrator of the Prizes.

In any category in which board members have an interest due to the action of the various nominating juries, those members do not participate in the discussion and voting and leave the room until a decision is reached in the affected category. Similarly, members of nominating juries do not participate in the discussion of or voting on entries in which they have an interest.

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