

The American Library in Paris

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The 2015 American Library in Paris Book Award goes to *The Marquis: Lafayette Reconsidered*, by Laura Auricchio

For immediate release

6 November 2015

PARIS. *The Marquis: Lafayette Reconsidered*, by historian Laura Auricchio, is the winner of the third annual American Library in Paris Book Award.

The annual prize honors the most distinguished book of the year about France or the French-American encounter, and carries a cash award of \$5,000.

The other books on the 2015 shortlist were:

- *The Other Americans in Paris: Businessmen, Countesses, Wayward Youth 1880-1941*, by Nancy L. Green. (University of Chicago Press)
- *Fatal Isolation: The Devastating Paris Heat Wave of 2003*, by Richard C. Keller. (University of Chicago Press)
- *In Montmartre: Picasso, Matisse, and Modernism in Paris, 1900-1910*, by Sue Roe. (Penguin/Fig Tree)
- *When Paris Went Dark: The City of Light Under German Occupation 1940-1944*, by Ronald Rosbottom. (Little, Brown)

The choice of the winning book was made by the award jury, drawn from the Library's Writers Council, this year consisting of Laura Furman, the chair, editor of the O. Henry Prize Stories since 2002; novelist and biographer Lily Tuck, winner of the National Book Award in Fiction; and Harvard University historian Fredrik Logevall, author of *Embers of War*, winner of the first American Library in Paris Book Award in 2013.

"For many Americans, the Marquis de Lafayette is a distant, bewigged figure, a man who helped us fight the British and win our



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independence," said Furman in remarks prepared for the award ceremony at the George C. Marshall Center in Paris November 6.

"He had no talent for the manners, dress, and customs of court life in Versailles. He longed to be a soldier. Fortunately for him, his imaginative intellect and his open heart were captured by the idea of an American revolution that would create a new nation and better the lives of its citizens. Before he ever saw America, he loved it, and, we come to learn, he was better loved there than he ever was in his native France."

Logevall another of the three jurors, observed: "Her analysis is subtle and often penetrating, and the range is noteworthy – she covers two continents and seven-plus decades. I like her generosity of spirit toward her subject, yet to her credit she's also aware of his faults, not least his puzzling if often charming naiveté."

Laura Auricchio, an art historian by training and a dean at the New School in New York, is the author of a previous book, *Adélaïde Labille-Guiard: Artist in the Age of Revolution*. *The Marquis* was published in the fall of 2014 by Alfred A. Knopf.

The annual award is supported by a grant from the Florence Gould Foundation. This third award is for books originally published between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015.

Book-length prose works originally written in English, including but not limited to fiction, history, biography, travel, politics, cooking, and art, were eligible for the award. One hundred and two submissions were received in 2015, and nominations are already open for the 2016 award.

The American Library in Paris was founded in 1920 with books sent by American libraries to United States personnel serving in World War I. It has since grown to more than 120,000 volumes, making it the largest English-language library on the European continent, and perhaps in any non-English-speaking country in the world.

The Library's international membership enjoys reading rooms, research facilities, book groups, children's programming, art workshops, film screenings, community events, and the city's best-known stage for appearances by distinguished authors.



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In addition to Furman, Logevall and Tuck, the Library's Writers Council consists of Diane Johnson, its chair, and Pierre Assouline, Julian Barnes, Antony Beevor, Laurent de Brunhoff, Christopher Buckley, Michael Chabon, Alex Danchev, Sebastian Faulks, Adam Gopnik, Robert Harris, Alice Kaplan, Philippe Labro, Joyce Carol Oates, Robert O. Paxton, Scott Turow, and Ayelet Waldman.

Details about the award are available on the Library's website, at <http://americanlibraryinparis.org/events-programs/american-library-in-paris-book-award.html>

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