



PEN/MALAMUD AWARD

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DEBORAH EISENBERG TO RECEIVE 2015 PEN/MALAMUD AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE SHORT STORY

Washington, D.C.—**Deborah Eisenberg** has been selected to receive the twenty-seventh **PEN/Malamud Award for Excellence in the Short Story**. Given since 1988 in honor of the late Bernard Malamud, this award recognizes a body of work that demonstrates excellence in the art of short fiction. The announcement was made today by the directors of the PEN/Faulkner Foundation and chairwoman Susan Richards Shreve.

Deborah Eisenberg is a playwright, an actor, and one of the most acclaimed short story writers working in America today. Her work is renowned for her patient, acute observation of character, her fluid and masterful language, and her embrace of the uncertainty of human life. Alan Cheuse, a member of the PEN/Malamud selection committee, wrote of Eisenberg, “With every story, with every collection, she offers new ways of seeing and feeling, as if something were being perfected at the core. She’s one of the consummate story makers of our day.”

When Eisenberg published her first collection of stories, *Transactions in a Foreign Currency*, in 1986, Bob Shacochis wrote in the *New York Times* Book Review that “page for page, vision for vision, Deborah Eisenberg has much more to offer than the majority of writers who have ascended since the revaluation of the American short story.” Over the past three decades, she has proved him right time and time again. In 2006, Ben Marcus welcomed the stories in *Twilight of the Superheroes* as “machines of perfect revelation deftly constructed by a contemporary master,” and in 2010 Maud Newton wrote that in the sixty years since William Faulkner proclaimed the human heart in conflict with itself to be the only subject worthy of literary examination, “no writer has concerned herself more explicitly or precisely with the complexities of human emotion than Deborah Eisenberg.”

The author of one play and five collections of short fiction including her collected works, Eisenberg is a professor of creative writing at Columbia University. She is a MacArthur Foundation Fellow and has received awards and honors including a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Whiting Writer’s Award and, in 2011, the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction for *The Collected Stories of Deborah Eisenberg*. She lives in New York City.

The **PEN/Malamud Award** includes a **reading in the 2015-2016 PEN/Faulkner Reading Series at the Folger Shakespeare Library** and a **prize of \$5,000**. The selection committee is composed of a panel of PEN/Faulkner Board members.

Previous PEN/Malamud Award winners include: John Updike, Saul Bellow, George Garrett, Frederick Busch and Andre Dubus, Eudora Welty, Peter Taylor, Grace Paley, Stuart Dybek and William Maxwell, Joyce Carol Oates, Alice Munro, John Barth, T. Coraghessan Boyle, Ann Beattie and Nathan Englander, Sherman Alexie and Richard Ford, Junot Diaz and Ursula K. Le Guin, Barry Hannah and Maile Meloy, Richard Bausch and Nell Freudenberger, Lorrie Moore, Tobias Wolff and Adam Haslett, and Elizabeth Spencer, Cynthia Ozick and Peter Ho Davies, Amy Hempel and Alistair MacLeod, Nam Le and Edward P. Jones, Edith Pearlman, James Salter, and George Saunders.

During his 37-year writing career, **Bernard Malamud** received the National Book Award twice as well as the Pulitzer Prize, a PEN/Faulkner Award nomination, and the Gold Medal for lifetime achievement from the National Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. His published works include: *The Natural*, *The Magic Barrel*, *The Fixer*, and *The Stories of Bernard Malamud*.

Talking about the art of the short story, Malamud said, “I like packing a self or two into a few pages, predicting lifetimes. The drama is terse, happens faster, and is often outlandish. A short story is a way of indicating the complexity of life in a few pages, producing the surprise and effect of a profound knowledge in a short time.”

The **PEN/Faulkner Foundation**, now celebrating its 35th year, is committed to building audiences for literature and bringing writers together with their readers. This mission is accomplished through **readings at the Folger** by distinguished writers who have won the respect of readers and writers alike; the **PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction**, the largest peer-juried award for fiction in the United States; the **PEN/Malamud Award**, honoring excellence in the short story; and the **Writers in Schools** program, which brings nationally and internationally acclaimed authors to public and charter high school classrooms in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, MD to discuss their work with students.

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