



Saint Louis University Library Associates 2017

The St. Louis Literary Award 2017 Award Presentation Ceremony

September 19, 2017
The Sheldon Concert Hall

On September 19th an overflow crowd gathered at the Sheldon Concert Hall to hear 2017 St. Louis Literary Award recipient, Margaret Atwood. Saint Louis University Library Associates President Lana Pepper opened by welcoming the audience to the fiftieth St. Louis Literary Award presentation. Lana then introduced Ted Ibur, Associates Board Member and Chair of the Selection Committee for the 2017 Award who described the selection process. Ibur reminded the audience of the Literary Award's mission statement: *The St. Louis Literary Award recognizes a living writer with a substantial body of work that has enriched our literary heritage by deepening our insight into the human condition and by expanding the scope of our compassion.* Associate Professor Rachel Greenwald-Smith, PhD spoke about Atwood's work, defining dystopian novels as thought experiments and noting that Margaret Atwood's writings served as test cases.



Fresh from a triumphant evening at the Emmys watching as the Hulu adaptation of her novel *The Handmaid's Tale* won eight awards, Atwood first set the tone of her address by noting that she also won the Swedish Humor Award. (Yes, there is a Swedish Humor Award; it even has a Facebook Page.) Unfortunately, the award, an engraved crystal bowl, was promptly stolen. The author quickly turned to more serious topics, first stating that she was happy to be in the birthplace of Josephine Baker, whom she called "one tough cookie," challenging St. Louis to erect a statue to Baker.

Ever politically aware and outspoken, Atwood next addressed the recent Stockley verdict, saying, "When police become judge, jury, and executioner,

you have a police state. You don't want that." Her plea: "America, please don't go there. Please honor your pledge of 'liberty and justice for all.' Live up to your propaganda. You owe it to yourselves and to the world."

Recounting her first published book of poetry, a mere 425 copies, Atwood described a book tour that meant lugging boxes of books from city to city, sometimes on the bus. Her first interviewer suggested she "say something interesting." "Imagine, poetry was still considered interesting in 1967," she mused.

Atwood then accepted the St. Louis Literary Award on behalf of "all the rest" of the writers and readers who make up the community of creators in which art takes place. She noted that there has been art since we were recognizably human, and that



(2017 Award Presentation, cont'd)

narrative itself is very old, even though writing is relatively recent. She described women writers' roles as either Cassandra, whose prophecies—although true—were not believed, or the divinely inspired Sibyl. When writing *The Handmaid's Tale*, she was Cassandra. Although the novel builds on things that have happened in real life, the future it depicted was not universally accepted as possible, "not in America," she said, "at any rate, not at Harvard. They were quite annoyed. They've come around." Today, she has become Sibyl, as the world pictured in *The Handmaid's Tale* feels more real, and more possible. Atwood cited rapidly approaching perils: climate change, racism, punishing women for being women, and a level of inequity comparable to that which inspired the French Revolution, noting that the latter risks the advent of a totalitarian regime.

In sum, she believes that the world needs a better America and expressed her hope that the admirable America would prevail.

Jennifer Beuhler, PhD, Associate Professor of English Education at SLU, opened the question and answer period, asking Atwood her impressions of the Emmys. Her response, "I'm short – especially around people wearing shoes. I saw a lot of ... torsos and lovely interpretations of what you can do with cloth."

Atwood's latest novel, *Hag Seed*, is a retelling of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* set in a prison. Atwood explained that she couldn't put the tale on an island today, because they'd be found, so prison provided the required isolation. St. Louisans will be able to experience *Hag Seed* live as the author has agreed to allow a version to be developed first for Prison Performing Arts and later for the Repertory Theater of St. Louis. Following on the success of *Handmaid*, Atwood has just finished filming a six-part Netflix series based on her novel *Alias Grace* that debuted November 3rd.

Asked why we need books and stories, Atwood explained that stories provide a survival edge. Through narrative, primitive man could share his experience with a man-eating crocodile, avoiding the need for his friends and family to figure it out for themselves. Noting that we are affected more strongly by stories about people than by statistics, she asked, "Why did Jesus use parables? Because they work."

2017 Ong Award Winner Tarrell Rodney Campbell

The Department of English is the University's center for the study of our vibrant literary heritage. Each fall, the Department announces the winner of our prize for excellence in graduate student research in conjunction with the SLU Library Associates St. Louis Literary Award. This award is named in honor of Fr. Walter Ong, S.J., a brilliant Jesuit scholar who taught for many years in our program, as well as for the Von Kaenel family, whose generosity underwrites this prize.



The winner of the 2017 Walter J. Ong, S.J., Von Kaenel Award is Tarrell Rodney Campbell, a candidate for the PhD in English at SLU. Tarrell currently is completing his dissertation, which is entitled "Post-Brown v. Board of Education Black Masculine Identities in Contemporary African American Literature." The dissertation analyzes how depictions of African American men changed in the wake of the landmark Supreme Court ruling and follows that legacy through to current portrayals of mass incarceration and racial violence. Tarrell examines work by some of the most aesthetically innovative writers of our time, including Percival Everett, Michael Thomas, John Edgar Wideman, and Colson Whitehead. His work is both literary criticism of the highest caliber and a call for social engagement and racial justice.

A native St. Louisan, Tarrell graduated from MICDS. Before beginning his PhD studies at SLU, he earned a BA in History from Stanford, an MA in Teaching from Webster University, and MAs in Historical Studies and English from SIU. Tarrell's generation inherits the great burden of living in a city, region, and country riven by race, gender, and class. His work holds out hope for collective healing.

SLU Library Associates Book Club



The Saint Louis University Library Associates practice of holding a “community read” of a key book by the recipient of the St. Louis Literary Award was expanded this year as Associates President, Lana Pepper, hosted a monthly book club based on Margaret Atwood’s fiction. Associates members and friends met on Monday evenings to discuss *The Handmaid’s Tale*, *Alias Grace*, *Cat’s Eye*, *The Year of the Flood*, and Atwood’s latest, *Hag Seed*. Moderators for each session were chosen from the community. Local faculty included Hal Bush, Professor of English at Saint Louis University, Jennifer Buehler, Associate Professor of Educational Studies at Saint Louis University, and Lisa Oliverio, Associate Professor at Fontbonne University. Because *Hag Seed*, Atwood’s “cover” of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, is set in a prison theater program, the discussion was led by Christopher Limber, Director

of Adult Prison Programs at Prison Performing Arts, Seth Gordon, Associate Artistic Director at the Repertory Theater of Saint Louis, and Prison Performing Arts Alum Chris Harris. Limber and Gordon announced that a play based on *Hag Seed* is being developed. It will be presented through Prison Performing Arts and then extended to the Repertory Theater stage next year.

Based on the success of the Atwood book clubs, the Associates Board is exploring offering a similar program next spring and summer based on works by the as yet unnamed 2018 recipient.



The Handmaid’s Tale at the Emmys

St. Louis Literary Award 2017 recipient Margaret Atwood’s 1985 best-seller, *The Handmaid’s Tale*, won eight awards at the 69th annual Emmy Awards including outstanding drama series, outstanding lead actress in a drama series (Elisabeth Moss), outstanding writing for a drama series (Bruce Miller), outstanding supporting actress in a drama series (Ann Dowd), and outstanding directing for a drama series (Reed Morano). The streaming mini-series currently holds a 100% rating from Rotten Tomatoes’ “top critics” and an overall 92% audience rating.

The series, starring Elizabeth Moss and Joseph Fiennes, was the first streaming series to win the top award. Atwood consulted on the production and even had a cameo role. *The Handmaid’s Tale* gained nationwide exposure through a Super Bowl trailer as well as the

appearance around the country of actresses in the iconic red outfits. Activists even showed up at the Texas Legislature dressed as handmaids to protest a series of proposed anti-abortion bills. Set in a future fundamentalist religious society called Gilead, the series gained popularity in part because it spotlights issues which are resonant today. Atwood says that when she first published the book more than thirty years ago, friends told her it was “over the top.” She doesn’t get that reaction anymore.

Following Sunday night’s Emmy ceremony, Atwood travelled directly to St. Louis where she had dinner on Monday at the home of Library Associates President, Lana Pepper, joined by board members and major donors. Asked whether the Emmy award ceremony had been exciting, she replied with typical frankness, “It was exciting because we won. If we had lost, it would have been boring.”

2017 Library Associates Member Reception

The grand foyer of the Samuel Cupples House on the Saint Louis University campus was host to a reception for the Saint Louis University Library Associates on April 23, 2017. This magnificent Richardsonian Romanesque mansion was completed in 1890 at a cost well over its \$150,000 budget (over \$4 million in current dollars). After the death of Cupples in 1912, the house was sold first to the Brotherhood of Railroad Telegraphers and then, in 1946, to Saint Louis University. The University used it for classrooms until 1973 when it was scheduled to be demolished. Fr. Maurice McNamee, S.J., petitioned the University President, Fr. Paul Reinert, S.J. for time to find a rescuer for the building. By 1975, restoration was underway and the empty building was opened to the public. The next year it was entered on the national Register of Historic Places, and by the end of the decade the exterior and much of the interior had been cleaned and restored. In 1989, the Victorian Society cited Cupples House as an outstanding example of historic preservation and restoration.

Association members were greeted by an outstanding buffet of hors d'oeuvres and wine in the Cupples House dining room. Following the buffet, Library Associates President, Lana Pepper, welcomed the members citing the organization's mission—"to enhance the Saint Louis University Libraries and the development of their world-renowned collections and services." President Pepper described member events including the Evenings at Home featuring local authors. This year *New York Times* best-selling author Curtis Sittenfeld author of *Prep* and *Eligible*; Mark Essig, author of *Lesser Beasts: A Snout to Tail History of the Humble Pig*; and Kea Wilson, author of *We Eat Our Own* spoke to members at private homes. Lana also announced the 2017 winner of the St. Louis Literary Award, Margaret Atwood. Atwood, fresh from a triumphant evening in which the Hulu adaptation of her novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*, won eight Emmys, spoke to a sold-out audience at the Sheldon on September 19th with a reception following in the Sheldon ballroom. Ms. Pepper congratulated the selection committee headed by Associates Board member, Ted Ibur, and consisting of Professor Nancy Bell, Jeanette Cooperman of *St. Louis Magazine*, Jane Henderson of the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*, author George Hodgman, Sarah Holt of Left Bank Books, Past Library Associates President Boo McLoughlin, Medical Center Library Director Patrick McCarthy, and Lana Pepper.



Erika Cohn, Director of the Vincent C. Immel Law Library, spoke about how the Library Associates help deal with the challenges faced by the Law Library. For several years, budgets have been flat while the cost of key legal research resources has risen. Funds provided by the Associates have helped purchase two major databases, one of which covers historical and recent developments in immigration law. This timely collection is particularly relevant to the variety of immigration research the Law Library supports, including that of the Catholic Legal Assistance Ministry, which focuses on immigration issues and operates out of the Law School. The other database deals with Intellectual Property Law. The six million pages of legal documents provided serve as a valuable teaching and research tool for students seeking careers in patent, copyright, and trademark law.

In addition to being open to students, the library serves the general public, including both practicing attorneys and individuals looking to represent themselves. The wide-ranging impact of the library's services attests to the importance of the gifts provided by the Saint Louis University Library Associates.

Following Erika's remarks, Gregory Pass and Jennifer Lowe invited the members to review two key rare book purchases made for Pius XII Library in part with funds provided by the Library Associates.

Rare Books Presentation

A highlight of the April 23rd Associates Member Reception was the presentation by Gregory Pass, Assistant Dean for Special Collections and Jennifer Lowe, Rare Books Librarian. Two of Pius Library's recent acquisitions, funded in part by the Associates, were displayed in the Cupples House library for the afternoon. Assistant Dean Pass exhibited a gorgeous limited edition facsimile copy of the 15th century *Codice Rustici* written by Marco di Bartolomeo Rustici. Rustici, a Florentine goldsmith subtitled his effort *dimostrazione dell'andata o viaggio al Santo Sepulchro* (*Demonstration of the Journey to the Holy Sepulchre*).



Although Rustici never left Florence, he structured his codex as a three-part journey from his home to Jerusalem. The first section is a detailed description of Florence including drawings of the major churches, streets and walls of the city. The margins are populated by Rustici's own watercolor drawings of Florentine buildings, making it an invaluable document for our knowledge of the city in the fifteenth-century. The second section is a travelogue that takes us as far as Cyprus, the last outpost of Christianity, and the third section traces the route onward through Jerusalem to Damascus. There are exquisite drawings of places, animals and plants scattered throughout the margins.



The 16.5" x 11.25" facsimile is accompanied by a second volume that translates the medieval script into contemporary Italian and reproduces the drawings independent of their text. This purchase, funded by the Library Associates, cost approximately \$2,500.



Smaller, but even more precious, is the original 1505 Thielman Kerver *Book of Hours*. Ms. Lowe presented the book explaining that it was an early piece printed with moveable type. The 3.5" x 5.5" *Book of Hours* is printed on vellum and preserved in an 18th century binding of deep green, gilt-stamped, and tooled leather. The book is lavishly decorated with metal-cut illustrations, with some hand painted initials in red, blue, and gold. The opening section, a list of the holy days of the Church calendar shows regular days in black, but feast days printed in red, the origin of the expression "red letter days." The standard prayers for the hours of the day and festivals are included as are special prayers such as one for the relief of kidney stones. This magnificent object was purchased for \$22,500, in part with funds from the Library Associates as well as with a generous gift from Associates member, Dr. Paparao Tatini.



The Third Annual Undergraduate Writing Award

For fifty years, the Saint Louis University Library Associates has recognized contemporary authors whose body of work in English has made a significant contribution to world literature. In 2015, a Student Writing Award was established to recognize those at the beginning of a literary career. The award rotates between fiction, poetry and non-fiction. In an award ceremony held at Pius Library on April 11th, Jennifer Lowe, Rare Books Librarian and Chair of the Library Associates Undergraduate Writing Award Committee, announced the 2017 prizes for Nonfiction. First Prize winner, Parvuna Sulaiman, read an excerpt from her haunting story, "Reds and Yellows," a memoir of her Kurdish family. Second Prize winner, Kristina DeYong, then read a selection from her memoir, "Growing Up Female in the Bible Belt." In recognition of the overall strength of this year's entries an Encouragement Award was added. The winner, Devonn Thomas, read from her entry, "For Nunu."

The prize winners were chosen from among 43 entries by the award committee. In addition to Lowe, the committee consisted of: Saher Alam, Assistant Professor of English at SLU specializing in creative writing (fiction); Philip Boehm, playwright, theater director, literary translator, and Founder of Upstream Theater in St. Louis; Mark Chmiel, Adjunct Professor of Humanities and Intercultural Studies at Maryville University and author of *The Book of Mev*; Lyna Colombo, an editorial consultant living in St. Louis and Taos and a member of the Society of the Muse of the Southwest; Patricia Gregory, Assistant Dean for Library Assessment at SLU; Paul Lynch, Associate Professor of English at SLU specializing in rhetoric and composition and Director of the English Department Writing Program; Frances Pestello, PhD, Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at SLU and Library Associates board member; and Rachel Greenwald Smith, Associate Professor of English at SLU specializing in twentieth and twenty-first century American literature.

The first prize winner received \$500 and second prize received \$300. Both award-winning selections were published in the Spring Issue of Kiln, the student literary magazine. <http://thekilnproject.weebly.com/2017-slu-library-associates-undergraduate-writing-award.html>.



Margaret Atwood on the Writer's Craft

On Wednesday, September 20th, Margaret Atwood spoke to an audience made up primarily of university and high school students, as well as aspiring writers. Atwood was introduced by George Hodgman, author of *Bettyville*, a memoir of his return from New York to Paris, Missouri, to care for his mother as she faced Alzheimer's disease. Atwood's opening remarks dealt with the question of voice and style. She said that style is necessarily influenced by the topic of the book. Her novel, *Alias Grace*, for example, deals with an 1834 murder, the story of which began as a street ballad (written by Atwood). Grace Marks, a servant, was accused of murdering her employers. Public interest was so strong that the courtroom floor collapsed from the weight of the spectators. The novel's style reflects how Grace's contemporaries felt about the trial.

The Handmaid's Tale however, "began with Salem." Atwood asked herself, "If the United States were to become a totalitarian society, what would it look like?"

She concluded it would not be communist but would be led by the religious-right. Setting it in Cambridge, Massachusetts, reflected the heritage of 19th century New England.

In creating her characters, Atwood builds a timeline for each individual's life. She believes it is important to know how old her characters were when they encountered historic moments. A child born in 1995, for example, would have been six when watching 9/11 on television. The impact on the child's perception of the world would be different than the impact on someone who was forty in 2001.

At its most basic, Atwood regards a book as a page with black marks. That page is like a musical score, the reader plays the music. She admonished the young writers in the audience, "a writer's first responsibility is to write. If you can't write a good book, who cares what it says."



Meet Margaret Atwood

Google Margaret Atwood today and you'll get 19,500,000 results. Google "*The Handmaid's Tale* book" and you'll get 30,700,000 hits. The author of *The Handmaid's Tale* and Booker Prize-winning *The Blind Assassin* has seen the former vault to the top of Amazon's sales list in the wake of the 2016 United States presidential election. (A fate shared by other dystopian novels such as George Orwell's *1984*.) In the last six months, Atwood has been interviewed and profiled by world media ranging from *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Huffington Post* to *Midnight in Karachi*. The combination of the Hulu series based on *The Handmaid's Tale* (which won eight Emmy's) and the publication of her latest novel *Hag-Seed*, has made Atwood a hot topic. In addition, the always-outspoken writer has been vocal in comparing the dystopian world of *Handmaid* to 2017 American politics.

Born in Ottawa, Canada, Atwood spent much of her childhood in the Canadian north woods. Her father, an entomologist, would take the family north during warm weather, often camping, to study insects, only returning to a city for the winter. Atwood is quoted as saying, "At the age of six months, I was carried into the woods in a packsack, and this landscape became my hometown." She was largely home-schooled, not starting regular school until she was eight. Atwood earned her undergraduate degree at the University of Toronto's Victoria College and her masters from Radcliffe. She started her PhD studies at Harvard but never finished her thesis.

Atwood's versatility is astounding. She has published non-fiction, literary criticism, novels, short stories, poetry, children's books, libretti, television scripts, and graphic novels and even collaborated on a segment of a zombie-themed exercise app. *The Handmaid's Tale* has been adapted into a movie, a play, a ballet, and an opera and, just this April, a ten-part series on Hulu. She has received numerous awards including the Booker Prize, the Governor General's Prize, and a Guggenheim Fellowship, and at least twenty-four honorary degrees.

Today, with the debut of the Hulu series, she is more visible than ever. She has resisted the label "science fiction" for her novels, preferring to call them "speculative fiction." Atwood makes the distinction that everything incorporated in her novels has been taken from real life. "Science fiction has monsters and spaceships; speculative fiction could really happen." Her take on the current American political scene is that the most chilling aspects of *The Handmaid's Tale* seem far less speculative than they did in Reagan-era 1985.

Atwood's family was initially surprised that she chose to write rather than going on in science, a field at which she excelled. However, that early promise has shown up in her inventive approach to book tours. Exhausted by the travel and repeated book signings on the typical tour, she fantasized a means of signing books across the country without leaving home. This led to the invention, development, and patenting of the LongPen, a means of remotely signing documents via robotics that can recreate the patterns and even variations in pressure associated with a signature.

Hag-Seed, a novel based on *The Tempest*, was published this spring. It follows a wronged stage director who attempts to produce *The Tempest* in a prison. The novel is part of the Vintage Hogarth Shakespeare initiative, dedicated to contemporary authors' rewrites of Shakespeare. (One of the first was *The Gap of Time (The Winter's Tale)*, by Jeanette Winterson, the 2014 St. Louis Literary Award winner.)

Dean's Message

Many changes have occurred within our modern academic library, largely driven by information technology, spiraling e-journal costs, new approaches to teaching and learning, new models for scholarly communication, and changing expectations in the ways information is discovered, shared, and used. The academic library today is in a continuing process of redefining itself within a digital information age that has allowed us to expand our mission. We have recently witnessed another step in this continuing transformation with the opening of the new Academic Technology Commons (ATC) on the first floor of Pius Library. The ATC provides the SLU community an opportunity to learn and interact with the latest technologies. Students and faculty will now work directly with Subject Librarians and Information Technology staff to meet their academic and research goals using the most current technology such as 3D printers, 360 cameras, recording studios, and hologram technology. While we continue to house and organize print materials that need physical space, increasingly we need to provide access to vast amounts of digital resources that serve the University's research mission. Fundraising is all the more important for University Libraries in order for us to meet our obligations to current and future students. The mission of the Library Associates is to enhance the Saint Louis University Libraries and assist in funding its world renowned collections and services. Each year the Library Associates present a generous gift to the SLU Libraries that meets current collection needs. The work of the Saint Louis University Library Associates is vitally important for the Libraries and to St. Louis. We could not successfully assist students and faculty in their scholastic endeavors without this support.

David E. Cassens
Dean of University Libraries

President's Letter

As the new President of the St. Louis University Library Associates, my first order of business is to express what an honor it is for me to be part of this incredible organization! I would also like to offer my sincere thanks to outgoing board President, Lana Pepper, for the outstanding work she accomplished during her tenure.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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(President's Letter, cont'd)

I have been so impressed with this board over the years, comprised of exceptionally intelligent and devoted people committed to maintaining the highest quality library system for both the students at Saint Louis University and the greater St. Louis Community. I look forward to helping navigate new and exciting opportunities for the Associates.

As I write this letter, we are a week away from selecting our 2018 Literary Award winner, and I hope our SLU community is still basking in the success of the 2017 Literary Award event at The Sheldon featuring the incomparable Margaret Atwood! We have four exceptional finalists whose works align with our mission statement and would further burnish our list of esteemed awardees.

Additionally, we have many more exciting events coming up this year, including a stellar lineup for our *Evenings At Home* series starting back up this winter, our Undergraduate Writing Award in the spring, and additional happenings to celebrate the University's Bicentennial. Stay tuned!

Along with his many accomplishments as the President of SLU, Father Paul Reinert established a wonderful legacy with the creation of the Library Associates back in 1964. As I reflect on both the mission statements of the Library Associates and the St. Louis Literary Award, I am inspired to create my own guiding principles over the next two years:

The Library Associates will enhance the Saint Louis University Libraries and the development of their world-renowned collections and services. We contribute to the cultural life of the larger St. Louis community by presenting literary and cultural programs that enrich our literary heritage by deepening our insight into the human condition and expanding the scope of our compassion.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Saint Louis University Libraries. Please know you all have an open line to me. Do not hesitate to contact me with your thoughts or suggestions on how to keep the Library Associates ascending to ever-greater heights!

Edward (Ted) Ibur
Board of Directors President
Saint Louis University Library Associates

PAST LITERARY AWARD RECIPIENTS

2017	Margaret Atwood	1994	Stephen Jay Gould	1972	Francis Warner
2016	Michael Ondaatje	1993	David McCullough	1971	Barbara Tuchman
2015	David Grossman	1992	Shelby Foote	1970	W. H. Auden
2014	Jeanette Winterson	1991	August Wilson	1969	George Plimpton
2012	Tony Kushner	1990	Tom Wolfe	1968	Jacques Barzun
2011	Mario Vargas Llosa	1989	Richard Purdy Wilbur	1967	Henry Steele Commager
2010	Don DeLillo	1988	Joyce Carol Oates		
2009	Salman Rushdie	1987	John Updike		
2008	E. L. Doctorow	1986	Saul Bellow		
2007	William H. Gass	1985	Walker Percy		
2006	Michael Frayn	1984	No Recipient		
2005	Richard Ford	1983	Eudora Welty		
2004	Garry Wills	1982	William Styron		
2003	Margaret Drabble	1981	James A. Michener		
2002	Joan Didion	1980	Arthur Miller		
2001	Simon Schama	1979	Howard Nemerov		
2000	N. Scott Momaday	1978	Mortimer J. Adler		
1999	Chinua Achebe	1977	Robert Penn Warren		
1998	Seamus Heaney	1976	R. Buckminster Fuller		
1997	Stephen E. Ambrose	1975	John Hope Franklin		
1996	Antonia Fraser	1974	Tennessee Williams		
1995	Edward Albee	1973	James T. Farrell		

Facts about Pius XII Memorial Library

- Built in 1959
- Named after Pope Pius XII
- 215,000 square feet
- Houses over 1.3 million volumes
- Over 12,000 e-Books
- 446 group presentations to 8,043 participants
- Wireless access throughout the library
- 53 public computers
- 34 laptops available to check out
- 1,600 seats
- 19 study rooms
- Home to the Vatican Film Library
- Over 30,000 volumes of rare books
- Serves over 14,000 students and faculty
- 24-hour access during fall and spring semesters - Sunday to Friday
- Einstein Bros. Bagels open 7 days a week during fall and spring semesters
- Academic Technology Commons (ATC) opened November 2017

Consider becoming a member of the Library Associates to support the wonderful library of Saint Louis University in addition to the following benefits:

Contributing Member - \$100

- Pius XII Memorial Library borrowing privileges
- Access to unique library resources
- Invitations to members-only literary programs
- Library Associates newsletter

Supporting Member - \$150 *all of the above plus*

- Preferred seating at Award event

Literary Friend - \$250 *all of the above plus*

- 2018 program recognition

Patron - \$500 *all the above plus*

- Preferred seating at Award events
- A signed copy of the awardee's book

Benefactor - \$1,000 *all of the above plus*

- A private dinner with the author and two Award reception tickets

JUST ANNOUNCED!

Composer Stephen Sondheim Named 2018 St. Louis Literary Award Recipient



The Saint Louis University Library Associates have announced the selection of Stephen Sondheim, one of the most eminent lyricists and composers of the modern era, as the recipient of the 2018 St. Louis Literary Award. He is the first musical lyricist to win the award since its inception in 1967. Sondheim will come to St. Louis next fall, on a date and location to be announced soon, to accept the award in a ceremony open to the public.

In a remarkable career spanning 70 years, Sondheim has written the lyrics, music — or both, for some of the most iconic and long running plays in the history of American theater, including *Into The Woods*, *West Side Story*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Sweeney Todd*, *A Little Night Music*, *Gypsy*, and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. Sondheim has won numerous Tony awards for his plays, and Grammy Awards, and he won an Academy Award for the song “Sooner or Later” from the film *Dick Tracy* starring Madonna and Warren Beatty. For the film adaptation of *Into the Woods*, starring Meryl Streep, James Cordon and Anna Kendrick, Sondheim composed five additional songs. The film

grossed more than \$200 million dollars. In 1985, Sondheim won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, and in 2015, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Born in New York, Sondheim showed an early aptitude for music as a pianist and was soon studying musical theater. Composer Oscar Hammerstein, a family friend, critiqued Sondheim’s first musical, written at age 15. While highly critical of the play, Hammerstein recognized the young writer’s talent and became an important friend and mentor. After briefly writing for television in the early 1950s and working in theater, Stephen Sondheim skyrocketed onto the American cultural scene as the lyricist for Leonard Bernstein’s *West Side Story*. Five years later, Sondheim won a Tony award for *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, a play for which he composed both lyrics and music. His exceptional run of musicals, including numerous revivals of older plays, has continued unbroken for more than half a century. Along with composer David Ives, Sondheim is currently working on a brand new play tentatively titled *Bunuel*, based on two Luis Bunuel movies, *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* and *The Exterminating Angel*. His play will debut at New York City’s Public Theater.

Edward Scott Ibur, chair of the literary award selection committee and president of the Saint Louis University Library Associates, said this about the award recipient: “The selection committee believes that as a lyricist, Stephen Sondheim transformed the world of musical theater. As a writer, he created storylines with depth and extraordinary, fully realized characters, breaking free from the traditional mold of musical theater writing. He is a master of dialogue as well as a composer of great sophistication and beauty. These are just a few of the many reasons we found Stephen Sondheim deserving of the 2018 St. Louis Literary Award.”

The award ceremony and conversation with the author, who will be interviewed by Mundy artistic director Michael Isaacson, is planned for next fall. Additional information on the time, program, and registration will be made available on the [Saint Louis University Library Associates website](#).