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# Carnegie Awards

## *A New and Important Addition to the Book Scene*

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**A**t the ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim this past summer, RUSA and *Booklist* celebrated both their partnership with the Carnegie Corporation of New York in awarding the first ever Andrew Carnegie Medals for Excellence in Fiction and Nonfiction and the authors and publishers of these outstanding new books. Please join me in congratulating the winners and the nominees.

The 2012 Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Fiction was awarded to Anne Enright for her novel *The Forgotten Waltz*, published by W. W. Norton.

The 2012 Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Nonfiction was awarded to Robert K. Massie for his work *Catherine the Great: Portrait of a Woman*, published by Random House, an imprint of the Random House Publishing.

The other finalists in fiction were Russell Banks, *Lost Memory of Skin* (Ecco, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers), and Karen Russell, *Swamplandia* (Alfred A. Knopf).

The other finalists in nonfiction were James Gleick, *The Information: A History, a Theory, a Flood* (Pantheon Books), and Manning Marable, *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention* (Viking Penguin).

This prestigious Carnegie Medal is the first award from the American Library Association that honors individual adult trade book titles. The leaders of RUSA are very excited about our relationship with the new awards and we look forward to many years of great reading ahead.

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### THE CARNEGIE AWARD

The Carnegie Corporation is giving the award on the occasion of the centennial of the foundation and in honor of Andrew Carnegie, one of the greatest benefactors of libraries all around the globe. Mr. Carnegie is remembered for his belief that libraries and reading were excellent sources of education and leisure for the working man and his family. Building free public libraries was a priority for his philanthropic activities and he built more than 2,800 libraries in the English-speaking world, placing “education and free inquiry as primary fields of importance in creating a better society.”<sup>1</sup>

Nominated books are selected from two long-standing annual lists of books published in the United States in the previous year, the annual *Booklist* Editors’ Choice list and the RUSA CODES Notable Books list. They are selected by a committee composed of librarians representing both the RUSA Notable Books Committee and the editors of *Booklist*.

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## RECOGNIZING THOSE WHO WORKED SO HARD

Special thanks go to the Carnegie Corporation for the ongoing grant that made the award possible. The people in RUSA and at *Booklist* who worked tirelessly over many years to establish the award deserve special recognition for the award and for their ground-breaking work in promoting modern-day readers' advisory services in libraries. There are many more people than I have space to mention, but particular thanks go to Joyce Saricks of *Booklist* and Neal Wyatt and Barry Trott of RUSA. We were fortunate to have Nancy Pearl chair the inaugural selection committee, bringing national recognition to the award. She and her committee worked with great intensity to review the 50 titles for consideration from the *Booklist* Editors' Choice list and the RUSA CODES Notable Books listing.

Books and reading for adults plus the services that accompany them have been RUSA's bread and butter for many years, even as we have associated ourselves with sound and images and online resources. RUSA leaders and members are honored to be associated with this annual award.

Congratulations to the winners, to the selection committee, and to the visionaries within ALA and outside it who made this award a reality. To the rest of us—happy reading! Let's make plans to read all of these outstanding books soon.

### References

1. Joseph Frazier Wall, "Andrew Carnegie," in *American National Biography*, ed. John A. Garraty and Mark C. Carnes (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 4, 408–15.