

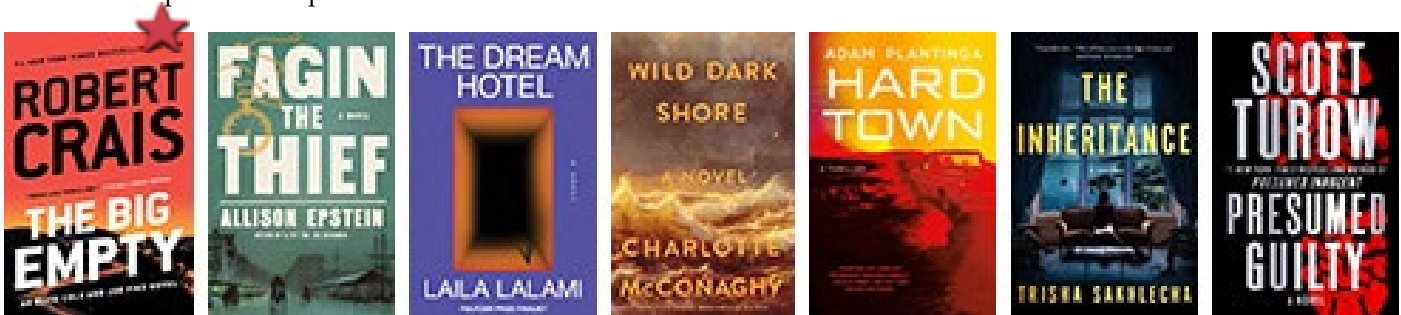


# The 3rd Degree

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA 2026 EDGAR WINNERS

## 2026 EDGAR® AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

MWA is proud to announce the winners of the 2026 Edgar Allan Poe Awards, honoring the best in mystery fiction, nonfiction and television published or produced in 2025. The 80<sup>th</sup> Annual Edgar® Awards were celebrated on April 29, 2026 at the Marriott Marquis Times Square. **Winners are indicated in red text.**



### BEST NOVEL

**The Big Empty** by Robert Crais (Penguin Random House – G.P. Putnam’s Sons)

**Fagin the Thief** by Allison Epstein (Penguin Random House – Doubleday)

**The Dream Hotel** by Laila Lalami (Penguin Random House – Pantheon Books)

**Wild Dark Shore** by Charlotte McConaghy (Macmillan Publishers – Flatiron Books)

**Hard Town** by Adam Plantinga (Hachette Book Group – Grand Central Publishing)

**The Inheritance** by Trisha Sakhlecha (Penguin Random House – Pamela Dorman Books)

**Presumed Guilty** by Scott Turow (Hachette Book Group – Grand Central Publishing)

SEE PAGES 9-11 FOR  
A NEW MWA SPECIAL  
RECOGNITION:  
THE HALL OF FAME



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Visit us at  
[www.mysterywriters.org](http://www.mysterywriters.org)

EDGAR AWARD® WINNERS ANNOUNCED, *continued from previous page*

## BEST FIRST NOVEL BY AN AMERICAN AUTHOR

**Killer Potential** by Hannah Deitch (HarperCollins – William Morrow)

**All the Other Mothers Hate Me** by Sarah Harman (Penguin Random House – G.P. Putnam's Sons)

**Dead Money** by Jakob Kerr (Penguin Random House – Bantam Books)

**Johnny Careless** by Kevin Wade (Macmillan Publishers – Celadon Books)

**History Lessons** by Zoe B. Wallbrook (Soho Press – Soho Crime)



## BEST PAPERBACK ORIGINAL

**Listen** by Sacha Bronwasser (Penguin Random House – Penguin Books)

**The Sideways Life of Denny Voss** by Holly Kennedy (Amazon Publishing – Lake Union)

**Broke Road** by Matthew Spencer (Amazon Publishing – Thomas & Mercer)

**The Backwater** by Vikki Wakefield (Sourcebooks – Poisoned Pen Press)

**One Death at a Time** by Abbi Waxman (Penguin Random House - Berkley)

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**NATIONAL OFFICERS** PRESIDENT, LISA SCOTTLINE; EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, JAMES L'ETOILE; SECRETARY, TERESA CAIN; TREASURER, LAWRENCE LIGHT; PARLIAMENTARIAN, TED HERTEL  
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**VITAL SIGNS, ADDRESS CHANGES AND MEMBERSHIP ISSUES**: MARGERY FLAX Executive Director, Mystery Writers of America 1140 Broadway, Suite 907 New York, NY 10001

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THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF **MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA** ISSN #1535-9034 PUBLISHED 10 TIMES PER YEAR © 2026 MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA, INC. All rights reserved.

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## EDGAR AWARD® WINNERS ANNOUNCED, *continued from previous page*



### BEST FACT CRIME

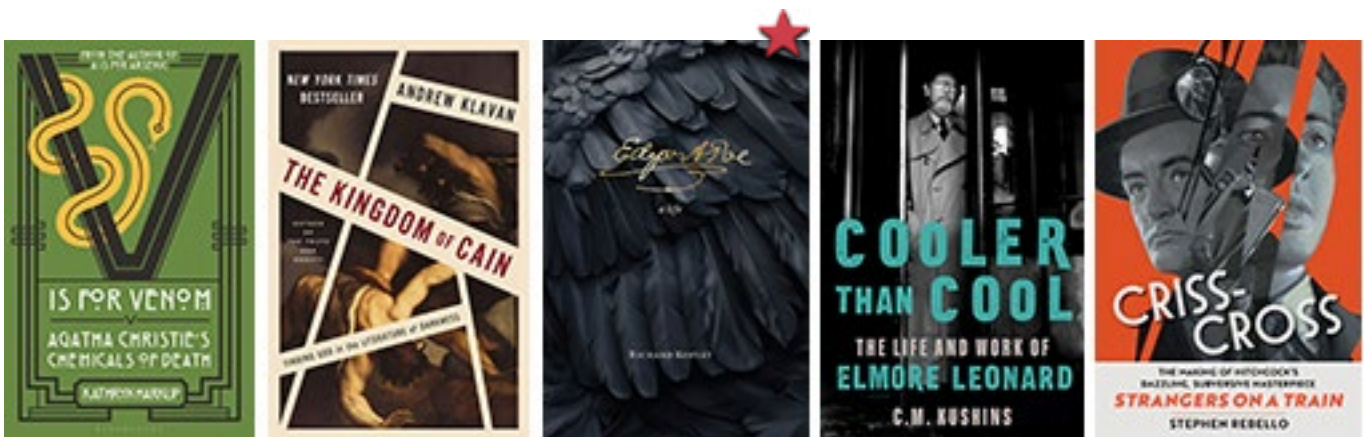
**They Poisoned the World: Life and Death in the Age of Forever Chemicals** by Mariah Blake (Penguin Random House - Crown)

**Blood and the Badge: The Mafia, Two Killer Cops, and a Scandal That Shocked the Nation** by Michael Cannell (Macmillan Publishers – Minotaur Books)

**Murderland: Crime and Bloodlust in the Time of Serial Killers** by Caroline Fraser (Penguin Random House – Penguin Press)

**Out of the Woods: A Girl, a Killer, and a Lifelong Struggle to Find the Way Home** by Gregg Olsen (Amazon Publishing – Thomas & Mercer)

**Story of a Murder: The Wives, the Mistress, and Dr. Crippen** by Hallie Rubenhold (Penguin Random House - Dutton)



### BEST CRITICAL/BIOGRAPHICAL

**V is for Venom: Agatha Christie's Chemicals of Death** by Kathryn Harkup (Bloomsbury - Sigma)

**The Kingdom of Cain: Finding God in the Literature of Darkness** by Andrew Klavan (HarperCollins Christian {Publishing - Zondervan)

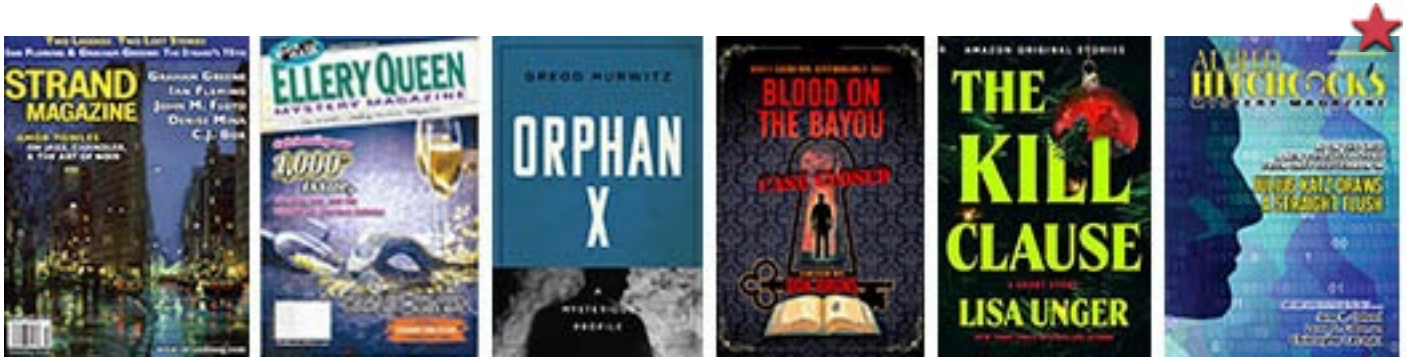
**Edgar Allan Poe: A Life** by Richard Kopley (University of Virginia Press)

**Cooler Than Cool: The Life and Work of Elmore Leonard** by C.M. Kushins (HarperCollins Publishers – Mariner Books)

**Criss-Cross: The Making of Hitchcock's Dazzling, Subversive Masterpiece Strangers on a Train** by Stephen Rebello (Hachette Book Group – Running Press)

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## EDGAR AWARD® WINNERS ANNOUNCED, *continued from previous page*



### BEST SHORT STORY

“Reading at Night,” **The Strand Magazine** by Graham Greene (The Strand Magazine)

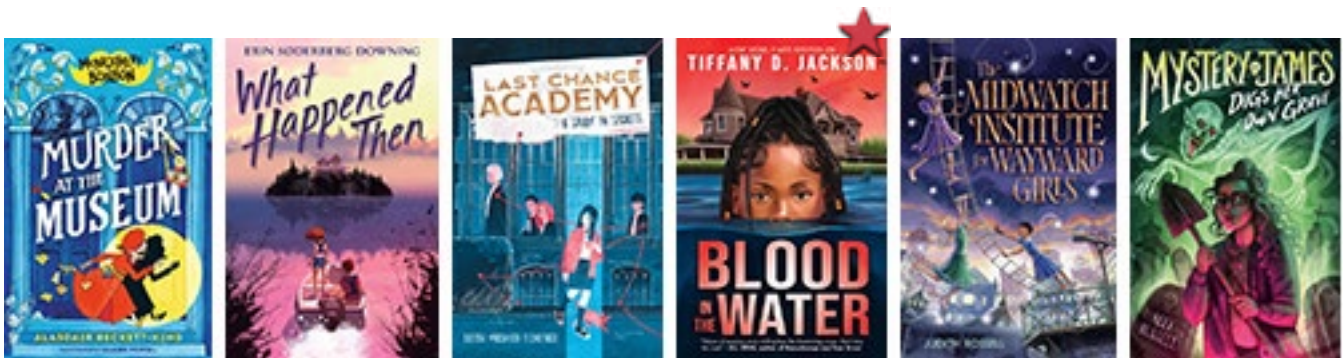
“The One That Got Away,” **Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine – January-February 2025** by Charlaine Harris (Must Read Books Publishing)

“Orphan X: A Mysterious Profile,” by Gregg Hurwitz (Penzler Publishers – The Mysterious Bookshop)

“Lucky Heart,” **Blood on the Bayou – Case Closed** by Tim Maleeny (Down & Out Books)

“The Kill Clause,” **Amazon Original Stories** by Lisa Unger (Amazon Publishing)

“Julius Katz Draws a Straight Flush,” **Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine – September-October 2025** by Dave Zeltserman (Must Read Books Publishing)



### BEST JUVENILE

**Montgomery Bonbon: Murder at the Museum** by Alasdair Beckett-King (Candlewick Press)

**What Happened Then** by Erin Soderberg Downing (Scholastic Press)

**A Study in Secrets** by Debbi Michiko Florence (Simon & Schuster – Aladdin)

**Blood in the Water** by Tiffany D. Jackson (Scholastic Press)

**The Midwatch Institute for Wayward Girls** by Judith Rossell (Penguin Young Readers – Dial)

**Mystery James Digs Her Own Grave** by Ally Russell (Random House Children’s Books – Delacorte Press\_

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## EDGAR AWARD® WINNERS ANNOUNCED, *continued from previous page*



### BEST YOUNG ADULT

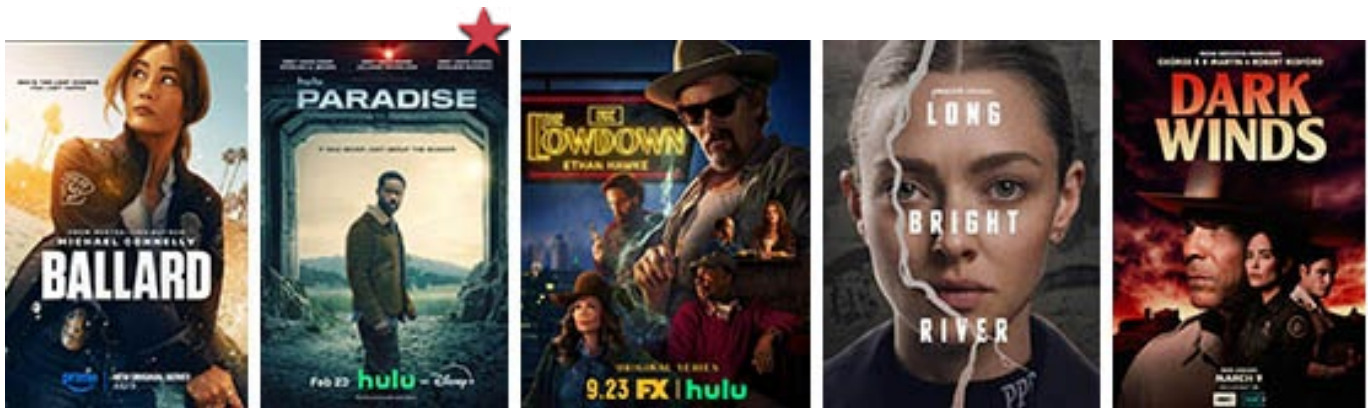
**Under the Same Stars** by Libba Bray (Macmillan Publishers – Farrar, Straus and Giroux BFYR)

**Catch Your Death** by Ravena Guron (Sourcebooks – Sourcebooks Fire)

**This is Where We Die** by Cindy R.X. He (Sourcebooks – Sourcebooks Fire)

**The Scammer** by Tiffany D. Jackson (HarperCollins Children’s Books – Quill Tree Books)

**Codebreaker** by Jay Martel (St. Martin’s Publishing Group – Wednesday Books)



### BEST TELEVISION EPISODE TELEPLAY

“**End of the Line**” – **Ballard**, Written by Michael Alaimo & Kendall Sherwood (Amazon/Fabel)

“**Pilot**” – **Paradise**, Written by Dan Fogelman (Hulu)

“**Episode 101**” – **The Lowdown**, Written by Sterlin Harjo (FX on Hulu)

“**These Girls**” – **Long Bright River**, Written by Nikki Toscano & Liz Moore (Peacock)

“**Ye’iitsoh (Big Monster)**” – **Dark Winds**, Written by John Wirth & Steven Paul Judd (AMC)

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EDGAR AWARD® WINNERS ANNOUNCED, *continued from previous page*

## OUR OTHER AWARDS



**ROBERT L. FISH MEMORIAL AWARD** – Endowed by the family of Robert L. Fish.

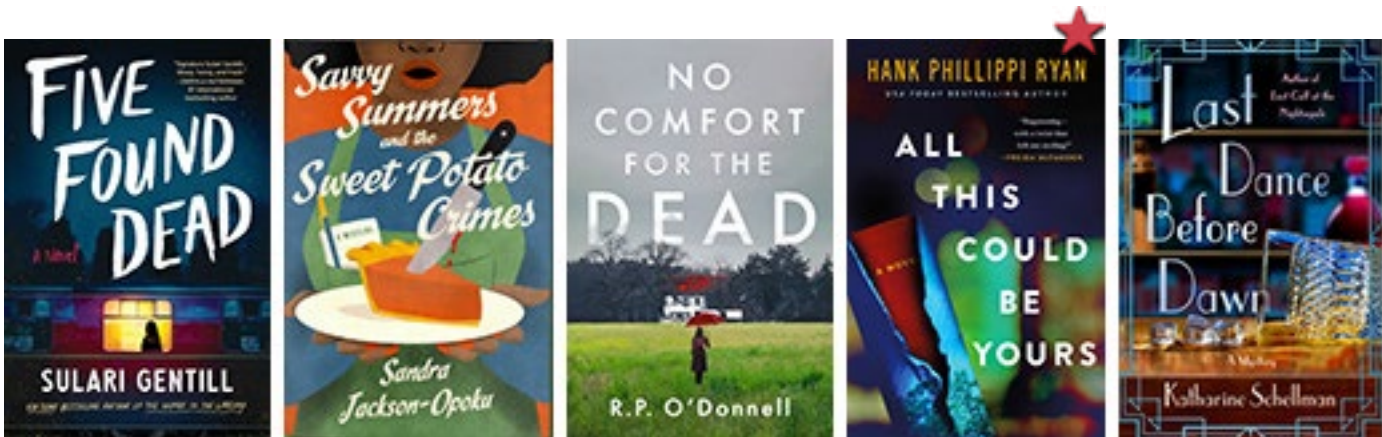
“A Textbook Example,” *Sacramento Noir* by Luis Avalos (Akashic Books)

“How It Happened,” *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine, July-August 2025* by Billie Kay Fern (Must Read Books Publishing)

“Baggage,” *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine, January-February 2025* by Rick Marcou (Must Read Books Publishing)

“Bloodsurf,” *Hollywood Kills* by Tiffany D. Plunkett (Level Best Books – Level Short)

“Grand Theft Auto in the Heart of Screenland,” *Hollywood Kills* by Robert Rotstein (Level Best Books – Level Short)



**THE SIMON & SCHUSTER MARY HIGGINS CLARK AWARD** – Presented on behalf of Simon & Schuster.

*Five Found Dead* by Sulari Gentill (Sourcebooks – Poisoned Pen Press)

*Savvy Summers and the Sweet Potato Crimes* by Sandra Jackson-Opoku (Macmillan Publishers – Minotaur Books)

*No Comfort for the Dead* by R.P. O’Donnell (Crooked Lane Books)

*All This Could Be Yours* by Hank Phillippi Ryan (Macmillan Publishers – Minotaur Books)

*Last Dance Before Dawn* by Katharine Schellman (Macmillan Publishers – Minotaur Books)

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## EDGAR AWARD® WINNERS ANNOUNCED, *continued from previous page*



### THE G.P. PUTNAM'S SONS SUE GRAFTON MEMORIAL AWARD – Presented on behalf of G.P. Putnam's Sons.

**Cold as Hell** by Kelley Armstrong (Macmillan Publishers – Minotaur Books)

**Rage: A Novel** by Linda Castillo (Macmillan Publishers – Minotaur Books)

**Fallen Star** by Lee Goldberg (Amazon Publishing – Thomas & Mercer)

**The Red Letter** by Daniel G. Miller (Sourcebooks – Poisoned Pen Press)

**Gone in the Night** by Joanna Schaffhausen (Macmillan Publishers – Minotaur Books)



### THE LILIAN JACKSON BRAUN MEMORIAL AWARD – Endowed by the estate of Lilian Jackson Braun.

**Mrs. Christie at the Mystery Guild Library** by Amanda Chapman (Penguin Random House - Berkley)

**A Senior Citizen's Guide to Life on the Run** by Gwen Florio (Severn House)

**The Marigold Cottages Murder Collective** by Jo Nichols (Macmillan Publishers – Minotaur Books)

**Murder Two Doors Down** by Chuck Storla (Crooked Lane Books)

**Vera Wong's Guide to Snooping (On a Dead Man)** by Jesse Q. Sutanto (Penguin Random House - Berkley)

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EDGAR AWARD® WINNERS ANNOUNCED, *continued from previous page*

## SPECIAL AWARDS

### GRAND MASTER

Donna Andrews

Lee Child

### RAVEN AWARD

Book Passage, Corte Madera CA

### ELLERY QUEEN AWARD

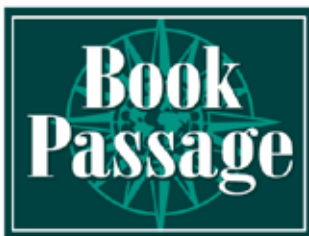
John Scognamiglio, Kensington Books



GRAND MASTER  
DONNA ANDREWS



GRAND MASTER  
LEE CHILD



BOOK PASSAGE  
RAVEN AWARD



JOHN SCOGNAMIGLIO  
ELLERY QUEEN AWARD

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED  
ON JANUARY 13, 2026

The Edgar Awards, or “Edgars,” as they are commonly known, are named after MWA’s patron saint Edgar Allan Poe and are presented to authors of distinguished work in various categories. MWA is the premier organization for mystery writers, professionals allied to the crime-writing field, aspiring crime writers, and those who are devoted to the genre. The organization encompasses some 3,000 members including authors of fiction and non-fiction books, screen and television writers, as well as publishers, editors, and literary agents.

**Mystery Writers of America would like to emphasize our commitment to diversity and fairness in judging of the Edgar Awards. Judges are selected from every region of the country, from every sub-category of our genre, and from every demographic to ensure fairness and impartiality.**

###

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**MWA'S DIVERSITY/HARASSMENT POLICY** MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA WELCOMES PEOPLE FROM ALL BACKGROUNDS, REGARDLESS OF RELIGION, RACE, ETHNICITY, GENDER IDENTITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, OR DISABILITY. WE DO NOT TOLERATE DISCRIMINATION OR ABUSE OF ANY KIND, INCLUDING ANY FORM OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT. WE SIMILARLY REQUIRE OUR MEMBERS AND GUESTS TO COMPLY WITH THIS POLICY WHEN PARTICIPATING IN ANY MWA-SPONSORED EVENTS.

## NEW EDGAR AWARD® SPECIAL RECOGNITION ANNOUNCED AT 2026 BANQUET

## THE MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA BOARD OF DIRECTORS PRESENTS A NEW CLASS OF HONOREES

Honoring The Giants  
On Whose Shoulders We Stand

By Leslie S. Klinger

The Articles of Incorporation of Mystery Writers of America, Inc., explicitly express the purpose of our organization:

To foster and promote discussion of mystery writing, publishing and production in books and magazines and on the stage, screen, and radio by the sponsorship of trade magazines and books, the granting of awards for works of merit, and to promote and maintain high standards in the writing, publishing, and production of mystery stories.

How better, we decided in 1954, to accomplish this than to spotlight the finest practitioners of our craft with a “Grand Master” award, singling out not only individuals who made important contributions to mystery writing over time, but had a significant output of consistently high quality as well.

To date, 81 individuals have been so honored. But the Board of

Directors always self-imposed this important criterion: The honoree must have been living at the time of the award.

Because we decided to exclude authors who died before they could be celebrated, many crime-writers who clearly fit the criteria of “Grand Master” were never so honored. As MWA celebrated its 80th anniversary, the Board of Directors determined to recognize persons ineligible to be named as Grand Masters by creating a “Hall of Fame” of the greatest authors in the history of the genre, those giants upon whose shoulders so many contemporary writers stand.

The first “class” of honorees was fairly simple to select: those whose work has stood the test of time and whose ideas, philosophies, styles, and leadership, as well as contributions to the profession of writing, placed mystery writing onto its present course.

Not all are well-known to the general public, but all should be. We limited ourselves to ten choices for the initial honors, though many more are worthy. In future years, additional outstanding authors will be added to the Hall of Fame, so that we may continue to promote and celebrate those who lived up to the highest standards in our chosen field.

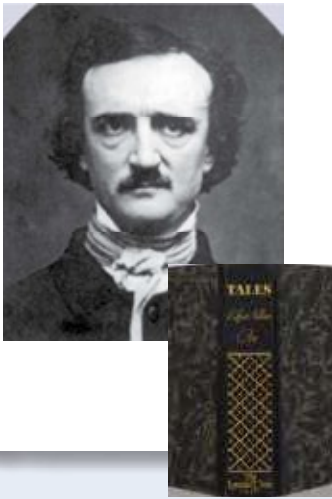
**Leslie S. Klinger** is the two-time Edgar winner for *New Annotated Sherlock Holmes: The Short Stories and Classic American Crime Fiction of the 1920s*. He is also the Series Editor of the Library of Congress Crime Classics. He currently serves as Chapter President of the SoCal Chapter of Mystery Writers of America, and is Chair of the Archives Committee of MWA.



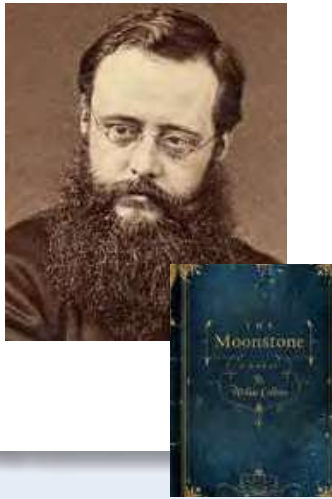
MWA HALL OF FAME ANNOUNCED, *continued from previous page*

# THE EDGAR AWARDS

**EDGAR ALLAN POE**  
(1809-1949)



**WILKIE COLLINS**  
(1824-1889)



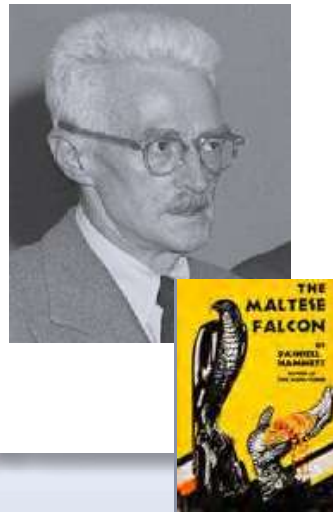
**CHARLES DICKENS**  
(1812-1870)



**DOROTHY L. SAYERS**  
(1893-1957)



**DASHIELL HAMMETT**  
(1894-1961)

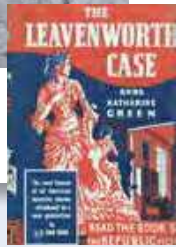


MWA HALL OF FAME ANNOUNCED, *continued from previous page*

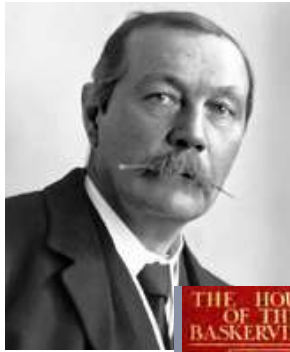
# HALL OF FAME



**ANNA KATHARINE GREEN**  
(1846-1935)



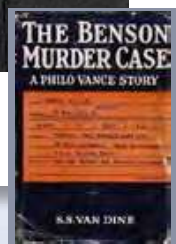
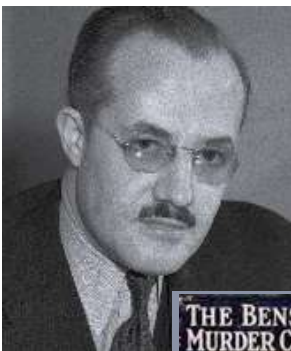
**ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE**  
(1859-1930)



**MARY ROBERTS RINEHART**  
(1876-1958)



**S. S. VAN DINE**  
(1888-1939)



**RAYMOND CHANDLER**  
(1888-1959)





A SPECIAL AWARD PRESENTED FOR THE FIRST TIME:  
**THE PRESIDENT'S AWARD**  
GIVEN TO  
**MARGERY FLAX**

BEST NOVEL WINNER *(details on page 1)*



CONGRATULATIONS  
TO ALL OF THE  
2026 EDGAR AWARD  
WINNERS AND  
NOMINEES



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE NOMINATED AUTHORS AND  
THEIR WORKS ON MWA'S SOCIAL MEDIA:

- [INSTAGRAM](#)
- [X/TWITTER](#)
- [FACEBOOK](#)
- [BLUESKY](#)

MWA WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL OF THE VOLUNTEER JUDGES WHO WORKED SO HARD  
TO READ ALL OF THE SUBMISSIONS, AND TO CHOOSE THE FINAL EDGAR® AWARD NOMINATIONS.

