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APA Announces Finalists for Most Prestigious Audies Awards

Gary Dell'Abate, Howard Stern Show Executive Producer and Avid Audiobook Listener, to Host Audies Gala on May 25

Princeton Junction, NJ – The Audio Publishers Association (APA) has announced three Audie finalists for the prestigious Audiobook of the Year Award and five finalists for the Distinguished Achievement in Production Award. The winners will be announced at the Audies Gala awards ceremony on Tuesday, May 25, 2010, at The Museum of the City of New York in New York City.

The association will welcome Gary Dell'Abate, Executive Producer for the Howard Stern Show on SiriusXM, as this year's host. An avid audiobook listener, Dell'Abate also contributed to the narration of comedian Artie Lange's hit audiobook, *Too Fat to Fish*, last year.

The three titles that are in the running for Audiobook of the Year are: *Nelson Mandela's Favorite African Folktales*, narrated by a full cast including Samuel L. Jackson, Helen Mirren, Don Cheadle and Alan Rickman; *The Time of My Life*, written and read by Patrick Swayze; and *The Word of Promise Audio Bible*, performed by a full cast of over 600 actors, including narration by Michael York. All three titles are distinguished by excellence in production as well as by their ability to create new interest in the audiobook format through creative and innovative marketing.

The five titles that have been selected to compete for the Distinguished Achievement in Production award are: *Graceling* by Kristen Cashore, narrated by David Baker and a full cast; *The Help*, by Kathryn Stockett, narrated by Cassandra Campbell, Jenna Lamia, Octavia Spencer, and Bahni Turpin; *The Maltese Falcon*, by Dashiell Hammett, dramatized for audio by Yuri Rasovsky, narrated by Michael Madsen, Sandra Oh, Edward Herrmann and a full cast; *Nelson Mandela's Favorite African Folktales*, narrated by a full cast including Samuel L. Jackson, Helen Mirren, Don Cheadle and Alan Rickman; and *The Screwtape Letters*, by C.S. Lewis, performed by Andy Serkis and a full cast. This award recognizes a production that represents the best the format has to offer in listening excellence.

"Each of these finalists should be celebrated for bringing such wonderful stories to life," said Ellen Myrick, chair of the Audies judges. "This eclectic group of titles represents a

broad range of audiobook experiences and includes some of the most entertaining productions and performances the judges have seen in years.”

This year’s judges provided their comments and insight into the selection of these prestigious finalists. The finalists, with the judges’ comments, are listed below:

Audiobook of the Year Nominees:

Nelson Mandela’s Favorite African Folktales is a remarkable collection of preserved folklore from across the African continent featuring a stellar cast including Samuel L. Jackson, Helen Mirren, Don Cheadle and Alan Rickman. Introduced by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, directed by Alfre Woodard, the production was enhanced by original music and filled with meaningful bonus material. Truly a labor of love for all involved, everyone from the director and cast to the musicians and producers donated their time, so that 100% of the proceeds benefits African children orphaned and impacted by HIV/AIDS.

The Time of My Life was Patrick Swayze’s last performance. Brave and heroic, without any self-pity and, amazingly, full of his signature energy and enthusiasm for life and for his wife of 34 years, the recording was completed only weeks before his death. This extraordinary audiobook was the focus of enormous attention and brought the power, fullness and immediacy of audio to a wide audience.

The Word of Promise Audio Bible is a massive feat of art and marketing, tapping the skills of over 600 actors and anchored by the steady excellence of Michael York’s narration. Original music gave the recording a cinematic quality, creating an aural landscape that gave the biblical words freshness and immediacy. A uniquely adaptable package and effective use of a wide variety of marketing strategies ensure that this is an audiobook people will hear about for a long time.

Distinguished Achievement in Production Nominees:

Graceling (Full Cast Audio)

Backed up by flawless production values, listeners are wonderfully treated to more than 10 hours of memorable ‘mind theatre’ entertainment of the first caliber. Though the book is officially classified as Young Adult, this audio edition will hold enormous appeal for fantasy fans of all ages with its compelling storyline and Todd Hobin’s music.

The Help (Penguin Audio)

From beginning to end, the way narrators’ interpretation of the best-selling book is flawless. The listener truly knows the characters, feels their joy, pain and dignity. This audiobook is recommended to all who want to open their minds to why the civil rights movement happened, and in a sense, what still needs to be done today.

The Maltese Falcon (Blackstone Audio)

This multicast audiobook is a first-class production incorporating a talented cast of readers in Yuri Rasovsky’s deftly-written adaptation of the novel, which included the clever concept of having the characters narrate their own action.

Nelson Mandela’s Favorite African Folktales (Hachette Audio)

An impressively diverse collection of readers perfectly showcase 32 African fables ranging from creation myths, to morality tales, to heroic fantasies. Under the direction of Alfre Woodard, the technical production values are glitch-free perfection, producing a truly memorable and thoroughly entertaining experience for listeners of all ages.

The Screwtape Letters (Tyndale House)

Wonderful music, sound effects, character voices and Andy Serkis' amazing performance bring out the theatrical vibrancy and intense intelligence of C.S. Lewis' literary treasure. *The Screwtape Letters* is a truly entertaining radio theatre approach that succeeds in its goal of capturing the essence of hell.

For more information on covering the event, contact Kaitlin Friedmann at (609) 297-2215, or kfriedmann@audiopub.org. To purchase a ticket, visit the APA website at www.audiopub.org or contact Lindsay Piccolella at (609) 799-6327.

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About Audio Publishers Association (APA)

The Audio Publishers Association (APA) is a not-for-profit trade organization whose primary goals are to promote awareness of the audiobook industry, gather and disseminate industry statistics, encourage high production standards, and represent the interests of audiobook publishers. Since 1986, the APA has worked to bring audio publishers together to increase interest in audiobooks. Please visit www.audiopub.org for more information.