
The Reading List 2008

The RUSA Reading List Council

Reading List Council 2007–08

members: Katie Dunneback, *South-eastern Library Services, Bettendorf, Iowa*; Arlene Griffin, *LSSI Library North Jackson Madison County Library, Tennessee*; Mirja Johanson, *Perrot Memorial Library, Connecticut*; Lucy Lockley, *St. Charles City-County Library District, Missouri*; Robert Renwick, *Brooklyn Public Library, New York*; Joyce Saricks; *Jacqueline Sasaki, Ann Arbor District Library, Michigan*; Tapley Trudell, *San Antonio Public Library, Texas*; Neal Wyatt, *Chair*; Alan Ziebarth, *Chicago Public Library*.

Established in 2007 by the Collection Development and Evaluation Section (CODES) of RUSA, The Reading List Council seeks to highlight outstanding genre fiction that merits special attention by general adult readers and the librarians who work with them.

The Council, which consists of ten librarians who are experts in readers' advisory and collection development, select books in eight different categories: Adrenaline, which include suspense, thrillers, and action adventure; Fantasy; Historical Fiction; Horror; Mystery; Romance; Science Fiction; and Women's Fiction. This inaugural juried list features established voices and debut novelists and suggests titles that will thrill avid fans and entice new readers.

ADRENALINE

Mark Frost. *The Second Objective.* Hyperion, 2007. 978-1401302221

This evocative World War II espionage thriller deftly mixes a well-realized cast and an expertly crafted plot that hurdles toward a white-knuckled climax. With defeat near, the Nazis send a secret brigade to infiltrate the advancing Allied Forces. Among them is an elite unit, led by a charismatic, ruthless SS officer with a top-secret second objective.

Readers may also enjoy Ken Follett's *The Eye of the Needle*, Martin Cruz's *December 6*, and Jeffery Deaver's *Garden of Beasts*.

FANTASY

Patrick Rothfuss. *The Name of the Wind.* Daw Books, 2007. 978-0756404079

This engrossing debut fantasy, the first in a projected trilogy, introduces readers to Kvothe—a hero in his own time. Living incognito as an inn keeper, he is tracked down by a chronicler who convinces him to narrate his own story—and what a story it is. Magic, music, revenge, and a drug-addled dragon fuel this saga for the ages.

Readers may also enjoy Mercedes Lackey's Bardic Voices series, George R. R. Martin's Song of Ice and Fire series, and David Eddings's *The Belgariad*.

HISTORICAL FICTION

Tim Willocks. *The Religion.* Farrar Straus and Giroux, 2007. 978-0374248659

Kidnapped as a boy, and reared as a Muslim warrior, Mat-

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tias Tannhauser, now a smuggler, is seduced by the lure of women and war in this action-filled romp that blends horrific violence, madcap adventure, and great storytelling. Willocks delivers a strong narrative punch and solid, addictive writing in an intricately detailed and historically rich novel set against the backdrop of the 1565 Siege of Malta.

Readers may also enjoy Dorothy Dunnett's *Lymond Chronicles*, David Ball's *Ironfire*, and *The Abyssinian* by Jean-Christophe Rufin.

HORROR

Joe Hill. *The Heart-Shaped Box*. William Morrow, 2007. 978-0061147937

Retired heavy-metal superstar Judas Coyne collects obscure, macabre objects, but the ghost he buys over the Internet turns out to be very real, very mad, and out for revenge. A menacing atmosphere and sinister characters produce a fabulous mix of creepy thrills and look-behind-you, leave-the-light-on-chills. Hill turns a simple ghost story into a cinematic nightmare ride that blends gothic references with a razor-sharp sensibility.

Readers may also enjoy Stephen King's *The Mist*, Peter Straub's *Mr. X*, and Dan Simmons's *Summer of Night*.

MYSTERY

Ariana Franklin. *Mistress of the Art of Death*. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2007. 978-0399154140

This smartly paced mystery skillfully blends historical details, entertaining characters, and horrific murders. With a serial killer loose in 12th Century Cambridge, King Henry II decides he must summon a Master of the Art of Death—and gets a Mistress instead. This grabbing debut combines forensic detail, religious fervor, and a great sense of place with just a touch of romance.

Readers may also enjoy Ellis Peters's Brother Cadfael series, Caroline Roe's *Chronicles of Isaac of Girona*, and Peter Tremayne's *Sister Fidelma* mysteries.

ROMANCE

Susan Elizabeth Phillips. *Natural Born Charmer*. William Morrow, 2007. 978-0060734572

A swaggering football star and a sassy itinerant artist spar with each other and discover how to forge a family in this sweetly charming novel filled with humor, snappy dialog, and fabulous scenes. Phillips's pitch-perfect story embodies the contemporary romance genre and offers a superb cast of characters, a richly detailed world, and a story line that will please long-time romance readers and new fans alike.

Readers may also enjoy Jennifer Crusie's *Bet Me*, Jane Ann Krentz's *Trust Me*, and Nora Robert's *Born in Fire*.

SCIENCE FICTION

Kathleen Ann Goonan. *In War Times*. Tor, 2007. 978-0765313553

In this captivating alternative history tale a young army engineer is given a mysterious device by a gypsy physicist on the eve of Pearl Harbor. If used successfully this device could end mankind's penchant for war and violence. To preserve a peaceful time stream, he must alter an epochal event of the twentieth century. Goonan flavors her multiverse with rich details of jazz, quantum physics, and history.

Readers may also enjoy Rudy Rucker's *Mathematicians in Love*, Stephen Baxter's *The Time Ships*, and Joe Haldeman's *The Accidental Time Machine*.

WOMEN'S FICTION

Sarah Addison Allen. *Garden Spells*. Bantam, 2007. 978-0553805482

Claire Waverly's world is turned upside down when her wayward sister returns home with a young daughter in tow and a sexy college professor moves in next door. Adding to the spot-on rendering of sibling rivalry and small-town dynamics are the stories of first loves and second chances, loveable quirky characters, culinary alchemy, and the magic of place. An enchanting debut.

Readers may also enjoy Alice Hoffman's *Practical Magic*, Joanne Harris's *Chocolat*, and Rebecca Wells's *Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood*.