

University of Texas at El Paso

Press Release

Duo wins 12th Hertzog Award for book design

Rustic cotton rag paper that almost feels like cloth and pen-and-ink line drawings done in a turn-of-the-century style helped two Northeast printers earn the 2009 Carl Hertzog Award for excellence in book design.

A three-judge panel recently selected Joseph Conrad's 20th century novella *Heart of Darkness*, designed by Chad Pastotnik and James Dissette as the winner of the biennial award that includes a \$1,000 prize.

Pastotnik, owner of Deep Wood Press in Michigan, and Dissette, a partner with Chester River Press in Maryland, said they were excited and honored to be recognized for the book that took them about a year to complete.

Pastotnik considered it a validation of his 20 years in the business.

"Actually I'm a little shocked. I don't enter too many competitions," he said from his home in Mancelona, Mich. "Frankly, my head is still reeling. This is great."

Dissette called the award a once-in-a-lifetime achievement that puts them in select company. He also wanted to share the win with his business partners William Frank and Gerard Cataldo.

"It's changed our universe," he said from Maryland.

"It is prestigious recognition, for sure, but more than that it's encouragement for the book arts world itself to continue the tradition of fine printing and (it keeps) in the world the unsurpassed beauty of the book as one of humanity's achievements," he added later in an e-mail.

Pastotnik and Dissette will be recognized during ceremonies Feb. 6, 2010, at The University of Texas at El Paso.

The competition was Dec. 12 in the University Library, and the judges made up their minds quickly, said Claudia Rivers, director of the library's special collections and the contest administrator. She said the judges, who all had design and publishing experience, appreciated the winner's traditional binding and its use of Marc Castelli artwork.

“The illustrations captured a nostalgic feeling for the book. They fit seamlessly together with the text,” said Marcia Hatfield Daudistel, editor of Literary El Paso, an anthology, and former associate director of Texas Western Press.

The field of 73 entries came in many shapes and sizes and included novels, cook books, biographies, picture books, childrens’ literature and books of poetry.

The judges noted the bevy of well-designed trade publications and the creative volumes of poetry, Rivers said.

The first runner-up was Margie Adkins for *Tales of the Gladiator*. The second runner-up was Charles Hobson for *Ancient Mariner*. Honorable mentions went to Mindy Belloff for *W2LZX* and Inge Bruggeman for *Nowhere to Go*.

The award was started in 1991 by the Friends of the University Library at UTEP to honor the ideals of the late Carl Hertzog, one of America’s most accomplished book designers known as the “Printer at the Pass.” He worked at UTEP from 1948 until his retirement in 1972.

The guest speaker at the accompanying Carl Hertzog Lecture Series in February will be Edward Nawotka, a Houston-based writer and journalist who specializes in books and publishing fields.

Information: 915-747-6720.