

## A Lifetime of Honors for Eudora Welty: A Checklist of Awards by Elaine Saino

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To honor someone is to hold that person in esteem, to show respect, and to mark the person with distinction. The privilege and burden of such an appropriate pause of recognition rested with Eudora Welty on May 24, 1962, when she presented William Faulkner with the Gold Medal for Fiction given by the National Institute of Arts and Letters. She said, "Mr. Faulkner, I think this medal, being pure of its kind, the real gold, would go to you of its own accord, and know its owner regardless of whether we were all here to see or not. Safe as a puppy it would climb into your pocket . . ." (Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the National Institute of Arts and Letters. Second Series. Number 13. New York: 1963: 226). Welty is fond of telling the story that the medal was indeed already in Faulkner's pocket as she spoke. She had passed it to him during dinner and presented an empty box.

Before Welty received her own Gold Medal for Fiction in 1972, she had many other moments of appreciation. In looking at the following checklist of Eudora Welty's lifetime awards, one can see that over many years, Welty has been honored by national governments, colleges and universities, magazines, and local institutions. It is obvious that her appeal is universal as her admirers have no limiting common denominator except a love of her work.

This list includes local, regional, national, and international honors for individual stories and novels as well as for lifetime achievement. The list is culled from Noel Polk's *Eudora Welty: A Bibliography of Her Work* (Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 1994), where the day and month are often given, and from past *Eudora Welty Newsletters*, where fuller reports of awards, including descriptions and names of other recipients, may be found. Please notify the *Eudora Welty Review* of any corrections or additional awards that merit inclusion in future updates.

### EUDORA WELTY: AWARDS AND HONORS

**1920** Silver Badge, *St. Nicholas Magazine*, for a drawing "A Heading for August."

**1921** \$25 prize in "Jackie Mackie Jingles Contest."

**1935** Gold Badge, *St. Nicholas Magazine*, for a poem "In the Twilight."

**1938** "Lily Daw and the Three Ladies" in *The Best American Short Stories of 1938*.

**1939** "A Curtain of Green" in *The Best American Short Stories of 1939*.

**1939** "Petrified Man" in *Prize Stories 1939: The O. Henry Awards*.

**1940** "The Hitchhikers" in *Best American Short Stories 1940*.

**1940** Bread Loaf Fellowship for the upcoming summer.

**1941** Yaddo Writers' Conference, Saratoga Springs, New York.

**1941** "A Worn Path" in *Prize Stories 1941: The O. Henry Awards*.

**1942** Guggenheim Fellowship.

**1942** "The Wide Net" in *Prize Stories 1942: The O. Henry Awards*, second place.

**1943** "Asphodel" in *The Best American Short Stories of 1943*.

**1943** "Livvie Is Back" in *Prize Stories 1943: The O. Henry Award*, first place.

**1944** American Academy of Arts and Letters, \$1000 prize.

**1946** "A Sketching Trip" in *Prize Stories 1946: The O. Henry Awards* .

**1947** "The Whole World Knows" in *Prize Stories 1947: The O. Henry Awards* .

**1949** Guggenheim fellowship renewal.

**1951** "The Burning" in *Prize Stories 1951: The O. Henry Awards* , second place.

**1952** Election to the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

**1954** Honorary LL.D. from the University of Wisconsin.

**1955** Howells Medal for Fiction from the American Academy of Arts and Letters for *The Ponder Heart*.

**1955** Honorary LL.D. from Western College for Women

**1956** Honorary LL.D. from Smith College.

**1957** "A Flock of Guinea Hens Seen from a Car" in *Best Poems of 1957*.

**1958** Honorary Consultant to Library of Congress.

**1958** Lucy Donnelley Fellowship Award from Bryn Mawr College.

**1960** Ford Foundation grant for two seasons of observation and study at New York's Phoenix Theatre.

**1962** Henry Bellamann Memorial Foundation for contribution to American Letters. The award of \$1,000 was presented at Mississippi College, Clinton.

**1966** Creative Arts Medal for Fiction from Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts.

**1968** "The Demonstrators" in *Prize Stories 1968: The O. Henry Awards*, first place.

**1970** Edward MacDowell Medal.

**1971** Doctor of Letters degree from the University of the South.

**1972** Election to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

**1972** Gold Medal for Fiction of the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

**1973** Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for *The Optimist's Daughter*.

**1975** Honorary Degree from Newcomb College, New Orleans, Louisiana.

**1975** Honorary Degree from Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts.

**1979** Honorary Doctor of Letters degree from the University of Illinois-Urbana.

**1979** National Medal for Literature for 1979 from the American Book Award.

**1980** Medal of Freedom given by Jimmy Carter.

**1981** Honorary Degree from William Carey College, Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

**1981** Medal of Excellence from Mississippi University for Women (formerly Mississippi State College for Women).

**1982** Eudora Welty Chair of Southern Studies established at Millsaps College.

**1982** Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Columbia University.

**1983** St. Louis Literary Award from Associates of St. Louis Libraries.

**1984** Eudora Welty New Playwrights Series established at the New Stage Theatre of Jackson.

**1984** Common Wealth Award from the Modern Language Association.

**1984** Elmer Holmes Bobst Award for Fiction for lifetime achievement in arts and letters.

**1984** The Lillian Smith Special Lifetime Achievement Award from the Southern Regional Council of Atlanta.

**1986** Grand Master Award from the Birmingham-Southern Writer's Conference.

**1986** National Medal of Arts for contributions to the nation's culture from the National Endowment for the Arts.

**1986** The Eudora Welty Library, a branch of the Jackson Metropolitan Library,

dedicated.

**1987** French Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres medal.

**1987** Authors Award from the Mississippi Library Association.

**1987** Sesquicentennial Medal from Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Mass.

**1987** Appalachian Gold Medallion from the University of Charleston, Charleston, West Virginia.

**1988** Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Lifetime Achievement Award.

**1988** Honorary doctorate from Princeton University.

**1989** Phi Beta Kappa Associates Award.

**1989** Selected to have portrait hung in the National Portrait Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution by the National Portrait Gallery Commission.

**1991** The Corrington Award from the Department of English at Centenary College in Shreveport, Louisiana.

**1991** Peggy V. Helmerich Distinguished Author Award from the Tulsa Library Trust.

**1991** Cleanth Brooks Medal for Distinguished Achievement in Southern Letters from the Fellowship of Southern Writers.

**1991** National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters.

**1991** PEN-Malamud Award for Excellence in The Short Story.

**1992** Frankel Humanities Prize from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

**1992** Distinguished Alumni Award from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

**1993** Honorary Degree from the University of Burgundy, France.

**1994** Richard Wright Literary Prize from Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Wesson, Mississippi.

**1996** French Légion d'Honneur.

**1998** Doctor of Humane Letters degree from the Mississippi University for Women (formerly Mississippi State College for Women) in Columbus.

**1998** The Mayor's Arts Achievement Honors from the Arts Alliance of Jackson and Hinds County in Jackson, Mississippi.

**1999** Distinguished Achievement Award from the Southern Book Critics Circle.