



Public vote for **PASSION** in the **RNA's 50th Anniversary Year**

London, 11 February 2010: The Romantic Novelists' Association (RNA) is pleased to announce the creation of **The RNA's Pure Passion Awards**, in celebration of the Golden Anniversary of the founding of the Association. The 50th Anniversary celebration and presentation of awards will take place in London on Tuesday 16th March 2010.

Each year, the very finest romantic fiction has been recognised by the long-standing and hotly-contested Romantic Novel of the Year and Love Story of the Year awards. The RNA is proud to offer more chances to salute the best writers and best stories through a number of new awards and a major national promotion in retail outlets and in libraries.

The initiative has the support of leading publishers and highstreet retailers and will see posters and stickered books in shops and supermarkets and coverage in the press, reinforcing the RNA Pure Passion Awards as a major industry event.

RNA Chair Katie Fforde said 'In our 50th year we are celebrating with more awards and more opportunities which provide a wonderful opportunity for readers to be introduced to writers they may not yet have heard of.

We are proud to showcase contemporary women's fiction, chic lit, sagas, and historical fiction. Some are written by newcomers and some by more established authors. What links them all is that they have been selected by discerning readers to be loved by everyone.'

The 50th Anniversary celebration will include the presentation of the much-loved **Romantic Novel of the Year** and **Love Story of the Year** awards. The new awards introduced this year are **The Publishers' Choice Award**, **The Rom Com Award**, and the **Romantic Film of the Year**. The RNA is pleased to include **The Harry Bowling Prize for New Writing** as part of its celebration. Two **RNA Lifetime Achievement Awards** will also be presented at the Anniversary event.

The greatly-prized **Romantic Novel of the Year** is chosen from a shortlist of six titles which have been selected by the reading public from more than 150 nominated books. The winner is selected by three independent judges. The shortlist, in alphabetical order by author name, is:

Passion	Louise Bagshawe	Headline Review
Fairytale of New York	Miranda Dickinson	Avon (Harper Collins)
Lost Dogs and Lonely Hearts	Lucy Dillon	Hodder & Stoughton
A Glimpse at Happiness	Jean Fullerton	Orion
The Glass Painter's Daughter	Rachel Hore	Pocket (Simon & Schuster)
The Italian Matchmaker	Santa Montefiore	Hodder & Stoughton

The Love Story of the Year is for a shorter romance where there is a strong emphasis on the developing central relationship. A shortlist of six is again chosen by the reading public, with the winner selected by three judges. The shortlist is:

The Notorious Mr. Hurst	Louise Allen	Harlequin Mills & Boon
Animal Instincts	Nell Dixon	Little Black Dress
Always the Bridesmaid	Nina Harrington	Harlequin Mills & Boon
Fair Deception	Jan Jones	Robert Hale
The Wedding Party	Sophie King	Hodder
Claimed for the Italian's Revenge	Natalie Rivers	Harlequin Mills & Boon





The People's Choice Award

To celebrate the modern nature of the Pure Passion Awards, the RNA has created a special 'current award' to recognise key new or developing authors in the romantic genre with paperbacks out in the spring.

In keeping with the RNA's desire to help good new romantic writers achieve prominence, publishers were invited to submit books by authors in whom they believe passionately, who would benefit from being part of the 50th Anniversary Awards event. Expert romantic writing buyers at key retailers were then asked to select their favourite six for the shortlist.

The winner of this award is chosen by the public. Readers are invited to read as many of the new paperbacks as possible and vote for their favourite at the poll website www.lovereading.co.uk/purepassion. The shortlist is:

Missing You	Louise Douglas	Pan
Remembrance Day	Leah Fleming	Avon
I Heart Hollywood	Lindsey Kelk	Harper
Rich Girl Poor Girl	Lesley Lokko	Orion
Heiresses	Lulu Taylor	Arrow

The Rom Com Award is organised and administered in the same way as the Romantic Novel of the Year. To reach the shortlist, the books must really tickle readers' funny-bones. The winner is chosen by a panel of writers and readers selected by the RNA. The shortlist is:

Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend	Jenny Colgan	Sphere
The Nearly-Weds	Jane Costello	Simon & Schuster
50 Ways to Find a Lover	Lucy-Anne Holmes	Pan
Rumour Has It	Jill Mansell	Headline Review

RNA Romantic Film of the Year

Romance is a theme that moves easily from the printed page to film. The RNA celebrates this shared love of romance by selecting the finest romantic adaptations released as a film in the UK during 2009.

Once again the public will help select their favourite adaptation on the partner website www.lovereading.co.uk/purepassion. These votes will be added to the views of the RNA expert panel to select the winner. The shortlist is:

Confessions of a Shopaholic	Sophie Kinsella	Black Swan (Transworld)
An Education	Lyn Barber	Penguin
The Time Traveller's Wife	Audrey Niffenegger	Vintage (Random House)
Twilight: New Moon	Stephanie Meyer	Atom, Little Brown

The Harry Bowling Prize for New Writing

Awarded every two years, and now for the first time included in the RNA Awards, this prize is given to the best first chapter and synopsis submitted by an author who has not yet had an adult novel published. The setting must be urban, and the book should contain a strong romantic element. The prize, organised and administered by the MBA Literary Agency in conjunction with the RNA, offers a great opportunity for a budding writer.

Lifetime Achievement

Two awards will be presented at the Pure Passion Awards to two people who have made outstanding contributions to romantic fiction and the Romantic Novelists' Association.

The winners for each award will be named Tuesday, March 16th 2010 at the Award lunch at the Royal Garden Hotel, in Kensington.





Notes to Editors

The Romantic Novelists' Association (RNA) was set up in 1960 to promote respect for the genre and to encourage excellence. It has more than 700 members, including writers, agents, publishers and others associated with the publishing industry.

The Romantic Novel of the Year Award was inaugurated in the same year to recognise excellence in romantic novels and thereby enhance the standing of the genre. Any novel which is first published in the UK (or simultaneously with other countries) in 2009 is eligible for the 2010 Award.

The RNA has always involved readers in judging the awards. Keen readers are asked to rate nominated books on a number of criteria including romantic content, readability, characters, plot, dialogue, style and ending. These readers' favourites are then presented to the expert judges, who decide the overall winners.

The 2009 Romantic Novel of the Year award winner was Julia Gregson with 'East of the Sun'. Recent winners include Freya North, Rosie Thomas, Erica James, Katharine Davies, Jojo Moyes, Sarah Mason, Cathy Kelly, Philippa Gregory and Maureen Lee. A list of past winners can be found at www.rna-uk.org

The RNA's 50th Anniversary is supported by an extensive, nationwide in-store promotion under the '2010 Pure Passion Awards' banner, and all shortlisted titles will be stickered with the official logo. Posters and official consumer magazines featuring all the shortlisted titles and authors in each category will be available from bookshops and libraries throughout the UK.

The RNA's 50th Anniversary Celebrations also include the publication of an anthology, **Loves Me, Loves Me Not** (MIRA), edited by Katie Fforde and Sue Moorcroft. The book features short stories by more than forty RNA members, including bestsellers such as Joanna Trollope, Adele Parks, Carole Matthews, Jill Mansell and Judy Astley, as well as fresh new voices.

Later in the year, the RNA will release a second publication, **Fabulous at Fifty**, a series of reminiscences by members and extracts from the RNA archives, charting the humour and heartbreak, the hard work and the honours of the past 50 years.

Other events during the year include a three day conference in London featuring leading industry figures and award winning writers as guest speakers, and a poll to be conducted in association with libraries to decide the nation's most popular romantic novel of the past 50 years.

The Pure Passion Awards will be presented on Tuesday, March 16th 2010 at the Award lunch at the Royal Garden Hotel, in Kensington.

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