

**BC'S CARLO ROTELLA RECEIVES 2007 WHITING WRITERS' AWARD,
GIVEN TO THOSE WITH EXCEPTIONAL TALENT AND PROMISE**

New York, October 25, 2007 – Boston College Professor of English and Director of American Studies Carlo Rotella is one of ten recipients of the 2007 Whiting Writers' Awards, the Mrs. Giles Whiting Foundation has announced. The awards, which are now \$50,000 each, have been given annually since 1985 to emerging writers of exceptional talent and promise.



Rotella won the award in a nonfiction category for *Cut Time: An Education at the Fights*, published by Houghton Mifflin in 2003, which previously won the L.L. Winship/PEN New England Award and was a finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize. In addition, its title chapter was selected for inclusion in Best American Essays 2001 and chosen by The American Scholar as "Best Essay" and "Best Work by a Younger Writer" in 2000.

Rotella, who holds a Ph.D in American Studies from Yale and has held Guggenheim, Howard and Du Bois Fellowships, has written two other books of nonfiction: *October Cities: The Redevelopment of Urban Literature* (1998) and *Good with their Hands: Boxers, Bluesmen and other Characters from the Rust Belt* (2002), both published by University of California Press. He also has published numerous essays and magazine pieces.

Since its inception, the Whiting Foundation program has awarded more than \$5 million to 230 poets, fiction and nonfiction writers, and playwrights. Among the past recipients who have achieved acclaim and prominence in their field are Jonathan Franzen, Sarah Ruhl, William T. Vollmann, Colson Whitehead, Jorie Graham, Kim Edwards, Z Z Packer, Denis Johnson, Tobias Wolff, Michael Cunningham, Lydia Davis and Jeffrey Eugenides.

"The Whiting winners this year represent a broad literary spectrum, and it is particularly gratifying to have a strong showing of playwrights and nonfiction writers," said Barbara Bristol, the Director of the Writers' Program. "Impressed by what these writers have already accomplished, we are confident that in the future their work will be even more remarkable. We hope this recognition will help them move toward that future."

The 2007 recipients were announced at a ceremony at The Morgan Library & Museum in New York on Wednesday, October 24. Dr. Robert L. Belknap, President of the Foundation, and trustee Kate Douglas Torrey presented the ten writers with their awards.

Whiting Writers' Awards candidates are proposed by about a hundred anonymous nominators from across the country whose experience and vocations give them knowledge about individuals of extraordinary talent. Winners are chosen by a small anonymous selection committee of recognized writers, literary scholars and editors, appointed annually by the Foundation. At four meetings over the course of the year, the selectors discuss the candidates' work and gradually winnow the list. They then recommend up to ten writers for awards to the Foundation's Trustees. The Foundation accepts nominations only from the designated nominators.

The other nine writers recognized this year are:

Sheila Callaghan, plays. Her latest play, *Lascivious Something*, developed at the Soho Rep, is scheduled for a fall 2008 production at the Cherry Lane Theatre. She lives in Brooklyn.

Ben Fountain, fiction. His first book of stories, *Brief Encounters with Che Guevara*, was published by Ecco/Harper Collins in 2006. He lives in Dallas, Texas.

Paul Guest, poetry. He is the author of two collections, *The Resurrection of the Body and the Ruin of the World* (New Issues Press) and *Notes for My Body Double*, which will be published this year by the University of Nebraska Press. He is currently Visiting Professor of English at University of West Georgia and lives in Carrollton, Georgia.

Brad Kessler, fiction. *Birds In Fall* was published by Scribner in 2006. He is completing a nonfiction work, *The Goat Diaries*, and lives in Vermont.

Cate Marvin, poetry. Her new book of poems, *Fragment of the Head of a Queen*, was published by Sarabande in August 2007. Ms. Marvin teaches poetry writing in Lesley University's Low-Residency M.F.A. Program and is Associate Professor in Creative Writing at the College of Staten Island, City University of New York.

Tarell Alvin McCraney, plays. *The Brothers Size* was presented at the McCarter Theater and will be shown at the Young Vic in London and at New York City's Public Theater. He lives in Miami.

Dalia Sofer, fiction. Her first novel, *The Septembers of Shiraz*, was published by Ecco this year. Born in Iran, she lives in New York City.

Peter Trachtenberg, nonfiction. He is the author of *Seven Tattoos: A Memoir in the Flesh*, published by Crown. He lives in Red Hook, New York.

Jack Turner, nonfiction. His memoir, *Teewinot: A Year in the Teton Range*, was published by St. Martin's Press. He lives in Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming.

The Mrs. Giles Whiting Foundation was established in 1963 by Flora E. Whiting. In 1972, her unrestricted bequest of over \$10 million enabled the Foundation to establish the Whiting Fellowships in the Humanities for doctoral candidates in their dissertation year. In the years since, the Foundation has annually awarded grants to Bryn Mawr, University of Chicago, Columbia, Harvard, Princeton, Stanford and Yale to fund these Fellowships, the recipients of which are selected by each institution. The Foundation created the Whiting Writers' Awards in 1985 under the direction of Gerald Freund, who organized and led the program until his death in 1997.

To learn more about the Whiting Foundation and the selection process for the Whiting Writers' Awards visit the website at: www.whitingfoundation.org.

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