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Mystery Writers of America Announces Martha Grimes as 2012 Grand Master Plus Ellery Queen and Raven Awards

November 21, 2011 – New York, NY – **Martha Grimes** has been chosen as this year's Grand Master by Mystery Writers of America (MWA). MWA's Grand Master Award represents the pinnacle of achievement in mystery writing and was established to acknowledge important contributions to this genre, as well as a body of work that is both significant and of consistent high quality. Ms. Grimes will be presented with her award at The Edgar Awards Banquet, which will be held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in New York City on Thursday, April 26, 2012. When told of being named Grand Master, Grimes said, "I was, for once, speechless. Thank you very much for making me a Grand Master."

Martha Grimes is the best-selling author, known for her three outstanding mystery series: the Richard Jury, Andi Olivier, and Emma Graham series. She is also the author of several acclaimed fiction books outside the mystery genre including *Foul Matter*, *Cold Flat Junction*, *Hotel Paradise*, *The End of The Pier* and *The Train Now Departing*. She has in fact, published a book (sometimes two) every year for the past 30 years!

Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Martha Grimes began as a poet, but then turned to mystery novels. Martha sent her first novel "over the transom" to several publishers. In 1979 an editor at Little, Brown, Inc. found the book in the "slush pile" and offered to publish *The Man with a Load of Mischief* with a first printing of 3,000 copies. It was published in 1981, and since then Grimes's legions of fans have devoured 22 books in this series. The most recent, *The Black Cat*, was published in 2010. *Biting the Moon*, the first book in the Andi Olivier series was published in 1999. The plot focused on the prevention of animal abuse and featured two teenage heroines. Grimes donated two-thirds of her royalties to animal abuse organizations across the country.

Martha Grimes currently lives in Washington, DC.

Previous Grand Masters include Sara Paretsky, Dorothy Gilman, James Lee Burke, Sue Grafton, Bill Pronzini, Stephen King, Marcia Muller, Dick Francis, Mary Higgins Clark, Lawrence Sanders, P.D. James, Ellery Queen, Daphne du Maurier, Alfred Hitchcock, Graham Greene, and Agatha Christie.

One mystery bookstore and one outstanding individual supporting the mystery book genre will be honored with the 2012 Raven Award. Established in 1953, the award recognizes outstanding achievement in the mystery field outside the realm of creative writing. **M is for Mystery** in San Mateo, CA and **Molly Weston of Meritorious Mysteries** will be honored with the **2012 Raven Awards**.

M is for Mystery opened its doors in 1996, and is one of the strongest and most visible mystery bookstores in North America. Owner and founder Ed Kaufman, along with his wife Jeannie, are devoted champions of the mystery genre. With the closing of the San Francisco Mystery Bookstore, M is for Mystery remains the only mystery bookstore between Los Angeles and Portland.

The bookstore hosts authors and mystery writers from all over the USA and across the globe, with an average of 150-200 book signings a year. Kaufman and his staff are an integral part of the community,

and host book events at libraries, at the Noir City film festival and at conferences. They connect readers and authors through personal recommendations, their newsletter (over 4000 subscribers in 30+ states and 15 foreign countries) and special programs (*Signed and Selected* and *Mystorical*, which highlight recommended texts in contemporary and historical mystery). They offer hard cover and paperback mysteries published in the UK, books which are not sold at any other bookstore in Northern California.

The Kaufmans said, "We are thrilled to be honored with the MWA Raven Award. It is a distinction that puts us in the company of many wonderful mystery bookstores nationwide that have previously received this award. We wish to acknowledge the support of all our loyal customers over these fifteen years, and the many great authors who have come to the store to speak, sign, and lend their creative spark."

Molly Weston of Apex, North Carolina, is the blogger behind *Meritorious Mysteries*. She is a media escort and editor of the *Sisters in Crime* newsletter. Weston reads 200 mysteries a year and has been reviewing and lecturing about mysteries for over twenty years. She hosts mystery authors (in particular women authors) and books them into stores, libraries, and other venues in the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill area. In the last six months, she's hosted the Older Hotter Deadlier tour, the Lethal Ladies Tour, Ladies on the Lam Tour, and the Dangerous Dames tour!

"Helping mystery readers find new authors, and great authors find new readers, has given me incredible pleasure for many years. To be honored as the recipient of this year's MWA Raven Award is indeed a highlight of my life" says Weston.

The 2012 Ellery Queen Award will be given to **Joe Meyers of the Connecticut Post/Hearst Media News Group**. The Ellery Queen award is given to editors or publishers who have distinguished themselves by their generous and wide-ranging support of the genre,

Joe Meyers writes about mystery/thriller books, reviews them, and blogs about them for the *Connecticut Post*. He consistently reviews not only bestselling mystery authors, but lesser know authors as well. His reviews are thoughtful and perceptive, and his criticism is constructive. He is a scholar of mystery and crime fiction, attending conferences and moderating panels. Joe was one of the first reviewers on Twitter to write about mystery/thriller books and authors.

When told of the award he said, "To say I was bowled over by the news of this award is an understatement. I feel so lucky to work for a news organization that supports me in reviewing crime fiction and doing profiles of so many of the figures in the mystery field. I know I am part of an endangered species, so I try to relish every day I spend on the job. I am deeply honored that an organization I respect so much would single me out for giving mystery writers and their work the attention they deserve."

Previous Raven winners include Centuries & Sleuths Bookstore in Chicago, Once Upon a Crime Bookstore in Minneapolis, Mystery Lovers Bookstore in Oakmont, PA, Kate's Mystery Books in Cambridge, MA, and The Poe House in Baltimore, MD.

Previous Ellery Queen winners include Kate Stine and Brian Skupin, co-publishers of *Mystery Scene Magazine*, Carolyn Marino, Vice President/Executive Editor, Harper Collins, and Ed Gorman.

The Edgar Awards, or "Edgars," as they are commonly known, are named after MWA's patron saint Edgar Allan Poe and are presented to authors of distinguished work in various categories. MWA is the premier organization for mystery writers, professionals allied to the crime-writing field, aspiring crime writers, and those who are devoted to the genre. The organization encompasses more than 3,000 members including authors of fiction and non-fiction books, screen and television writers, as well as publishers, editors, and literary agents. For more information on Mystery Writers of America, please visit the website: www.mysterywriters.org

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