



## 2010 BANFF MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL BOOK COMPETITION WINNERS

### GRAND PRIZE

Don and Phyllis Munday Award · \$2,000, sponsored by the Alberta Sections of the Alpine Club of Canada

#### **THE STONEMASTERS: CALIFORNIA CLIMBING IN THE SEVENTIES**

John Long, Dean Fidelman, Stonemaster Press (USA, 2009)

In the early 1970s when they started showing up at Southern California crags — the San Gabriels, Joshua Tree, and Tahquitz — this particularly talented group of young climbers had an immense impact not only on climbing in North America, but also on the youth culture of the decade. The Stonemasters, as they called themselves, with their tans, cut-offs, nomadic natures, their dope-smoking, and lightning-fast ascents, established countless new routes in a pure, bold, and visionary style. Their story, in personal anecdotes and archival photos, is told in John Long and Dean Fidelman's book *The Stonemasters: California Climbing in the Seventies*. With a freewheeling style that soon dominated Yosemite, these California kids influenced their sport across the continent and overseas, creating a climbing revolution that easily echoes today. "We considered ourselves nothing if we couldn't affect a sea change in the ways climbers felt and thought and behaved," Long writes. "It was all part of proving that we mattered, that we were worth a damn as human beings. In our minds, a revolution was not a luxury but a condition of being alive."

### BEST BOOK – MOUNTAIN LITERATURE

Jon Whyte Award for Mountain Literature · \$1,000, sponsored by The Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies

#### **WALKING HOME**

Lynn Schooler, Bloomsbury (USA, 2010),

In the chaotic interplay between the elements of life's journey — including work, love, illness, adventure, and that master of all thieves, time itself — there remains the incomparable and restorative power of wilderness and our movement through it. Journeying in these rugged places involves negotiating not only the difficult ground beneath one's feet, but just as often the more complex and challenging terrain of the heart. *Walking Home* by Lynn Schooler is the touching and true story of a man at middle age — Schooler himself — navigating his way through the difficult questions. What does the life well-lived really look like? What does it mean to die, how much time do we have, what should we do with the time we have, and with whom do we spend it? In the midst of all these questions, Schooler decides simply to "take a walk". But it is no mere walk. The author, a resident of Juneau, Alaska, undertakes a challenging solo expedition by sea and land through the rugged mountainous terrain of Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve as he searches the land and his life. He shares not only his own story, but the many stories of the aboriginal people and adventurers who came before him, and the stories of the land itself — that mighty Alaskan geography and wildlife that is the canvas for this painting. Elegantly and simply written, it is a humble, meaningful and insightful book, and like all good literature, its words remain echoing in the reader long after the last page is turned.

2010 Jury Member Jon Popowich

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## BEST BOOK – ADVENTURE TRAVEL

\$500, sponsored by Bison Courtyard

### **RUNNING DRY: A JOURNEY FROM SOURCE TO SEA DOWN THE COLORADO RIVER**

Jon Waterman, National Geographic Books (USA, 2010)

If this year's submissions are any true indication, if you want to understand the state of our planet, consider the state of adventure travel writing. Gone are the books of simple wonder and awe, untouched exotica, unseen peoples. Instead, writers travel and share their dismay, their fears, their difficult internal journeys, their worries that any place they might visit could be changed, or even gone, before anyone visits again. The entries this year were all sobering demands for attention, awareness and change, passionate pleas for protection filled with impeccable research and deep thought connecting troubling facts, about our mountains and deserts, poles and watersheds, dams and tigers and vanishing cultures. It was exceptionally difficult to choose from amongst so many excellent books in this category, but one did grab the attention of all three of us, particularly because its premise was so simple, and its heart so evident. The writer simply walked out his back door, put a boat into the best known river in the nation, and paddled to the sea. Nothing else about this book was simple, however; through the author's eyes we see how everything beautiful and majestic, and difficult and frightening, about the United States in 2010 is carried in the currents of that river. You can't put it down, and you can't put it aside, without asking yourself: What should I be doing differently?

2010 Jury Member Geoff Powter

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## BEST BOOK – MOUNTAIN IMAGE

\$500, sponsored by RAB

### **POLAR OBSESSION**

Paul Nicklen, National Geographic Books (USA, 2009)

Here again, the entries crossed the boundaries of adventure, exploration, and capturing the beauty of vastly different areas of the natural world. Polar Obsession is a visually stunning book that combines adventure, exploration, and unforgettable photographs in a well-crafted large format. The uniquely engaging wildlife photos and depictions of the austere grandeur of the polar regions make it a standout. Just a half dozen pages into this huge and gorgeous book and we wanted to own it! The absolutely stunning photography laid out in big beautiful two-page spreads made us want to browse through it again and again.

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## BEST BOOK – MOUNTAIN EXPOSITION

\$500, sponsored by Yamnuska Mountain Adventures

### **CANADIAN ROCK: SELECT CLIMBS OF THE WEST**

Kevin McLane, High Col Press (Canada, 2010)

Never, ever, write a guidebook. I've heard that from every guidebook author I've ever spoken to. No matter how much research you do, how many times you go out on cold mornings to get a crag shot, how many times you climb slag heaps to get the details on climbs people haven't done for years, no matter how many days of your own climbing you give, how many climbers you chase after to get route descriptions, you will piss someone off. You'll put years of pretty much unpaid effort into your book, and then someone will send an email complaining that there are six, not seven, bolts on pitch 15 of that climb. Thankfully, because guidebooks are also often the most tangible threads that connect us as a community, there are people who continue to write guides despite their own best advice. We're very happy to honour one author who took the risk of describing not just a crag, but half a country — and did a remarkable job. This wonderful book gives us new projects, new places, and new friends, for years to come...

2010 Jury Member Geoff Powter

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## BEST BOOK – MOUNTAINEERING HISTORY

James Monroe Thorington Award for the Best Work of Mountaineering History, \$500, sponsored by UIAA

### **THE STONEMASTERS: CALIFORNIA CLIMBING IN THE SEVENTIES**

John Long, Dean Fidelman, Stonemaster Press (USA, 2009)

Each year the jury has the choice of recognizing an outstanding work of mountain history, honouring a book in the name of J.M. Thorington, one of the great chroniclers of our home ranges here in the Rockies. It was a very, very easy decision to make the choice to award a history prize this year. The winner is a near-perfect capture of a unique, golden moment in climbing history; tracing a decade of revolution that foretold all that was going to come, in climbing, and even, I'd suggest, in a nation. This is a remarkable ethnology of a tribe on the cusp of a change, filled with manic, joyous, complex characters who play out their strange and beautiful rituals on the most idyllic stage in the world. This book of iconic images and wonderful writing is, indeed...exactly how we were.

2010 Jury Member Geoff Powter

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## SPECIAL JURY MENTION

### **THE TIGER**

John Vaillant, Knopf Canada (Canada, 2010)

From the beginning of our discussions, one book was always on the list. It was a book which explored the many levels on which man is losing the natural balance that once existed with human society and the animal kingdom. This is obvious in most of the world but in far-eastern Siberia where the habitats of the arctic and the southeast Asian arboreal forest meet, the breakdown is current and full of tragic and destructive consequences. This is a book we highly recommend to anyone who wants to understand how man and the animal kingdom might once have lived in proximity with some sense of harmony and respect.

2010 Jury Member John Porter