



## **Nationwide Library “Staff Picks” List Off to a Fast Start Grassroots Program Wins Support in Libraries and Publishing Industry**

Philadelphia, PA (January 23, 2014) LibraryReads, the monthly, nationwide library staff picks list, is off to a running start. The five-month-old program has garnered widespread community and industry support, showcasing a variety of new titles, including buzzed-about debuts, genre favorites, bestselling authors, and lesser-known midlist titles that librarians are raving about.

“Support from the public library community has been amazing – every month we see more postings on library blogs and websites, more social media outreach, an increasing number of physical displays in libraries, and more enthusiastic discussions wherever public librarians gather,” says Stephanie Anderson, Head of Reader Services at Darien Library in Connecticut, and member of the LibraryReads steering committee.

Marketing materials – including posters of the Top Ten list for physical display in libraries, and for digital marketing purposes – are provided on the LibraryReads website. “The first book display we put up melted fast – all the books were checked out almost immediately,” Anderson reports. “But the flyers can stay up, and digital marketing is key.”

“We couldn’t have done it without tremendous support from public libraries, and from a broad range of partners and stakeholders,” says LibraryReads steering committee member Robin Nesbitt, branch manager, Columbus Metropolitan Library in Ohio. “So many people are banging the drum for us, and finding ways to support this grassroots effort, including library distributors, publisher marketing teams, Edelweiss, the Association of American Publishers, the American Booksellers Association, the American Library Association, and many others.”

The program is “helping authors reach the wide audience they deserve,” says Josh Marwell, President of Sales at HarperCollins.

“We believe LibraryReads is a most effective new way for librarians to spread the word to patrons about their favorite books,” says Skip Dye, Vice President, Library/Academic Marketing and Sales, Random House. “Upon each month’s selections, we are seeing a positive impact in both sales and circulation for our LibraryReads choices.”

Success stories point to measurable impact on midlist and debut titles, categories that public libraries have traditionally supported with enthusiasm, and with strong initial orders.

*The Cartographer of No Man's Land* by P. S. Duffy was "our most successful book in libraries for a first-time novelist as a result of being a LibraryReads selection," says Dossier Hammond, VP, Director of Library Sales & Marketing for W.W. Norton & Company, about their November pick from Liveright.

Michael Barron, Publicity Director for New Directions, cites the example of *Hawthorn & Child*, the first book they've published by Irish writer Keith Ridgway. It became their "biggest library title from a new author this past October, when it was picked by Library Reads."

Librarians believe that creating buzz around staff favorites not only increases circulation, but also drives retail sales in bookstores. "Reports have shown that library patrons also buy books at retail, and that bookstore customers also spend time in libraries" says Nesbitt. "Our goal is to shine a light on the books we love – and then the reader can decide whether to borrow it or buy it."

Outreach will continue at ALA Midwinter, where a panel session on LibraryReads will focus on collaborative discovery, and how public librarians can participate and help grow the program. Leading the discussion are Stephanie Anderson; Melissa DeWild, Collection Development Manager, Kent District Library; Kaite Mediatore Stover, Director of Readers' Services, Kansas City Public Library; and Miriam Tuliao, Assistant Director, Selection, BookOps, New York Public Library.

"We want to keep up the incredible momentum," says Nesbitt. "Support from publishers, distributors, and Library Journal resulted in a record number of nominations last month. We look forward to connecting with more librarians at ALA Midwinter, at PLA in March, and at variety of state shows this year." Nesbitt points out that while many titles also appear on the Indie Next List chosen by booksellers every month, a large number of titles are unique to the LibraryReads list.

"LibraryReads is an idea whose time has come," says Marwell "a well-conceived and beautifully executed showcase enabling librarians across the country to share their passion for newly published books."

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Media contact:  
Miriam Tuliao, New York Public Library  
[miriamtuliao@bookops.org](mailto:miriamtuliao@bookops.org)

For more information, visit: [www.libraryreads.org](http://www.libraryreads.org)