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Croatian Literature Wins Top Translation Prize

Portland, OR, February 2, 2007—Already widely acclaimed in Croatia, *American Scream: Palindrome Apocalypse*, by Dubravka Oraić Tolić, has started stacking up the accolades from American scholars, too.

The Association for Women in Slavic Studies (AWSS) awarded the book's translator, Sibelan Forrester, the Heldt Prize for best translation from a Slavic or Eastern European language to English published in the last two years. Margaret Beissinger, the Vice President of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies awarded the prize during the association's annual meeting in November.

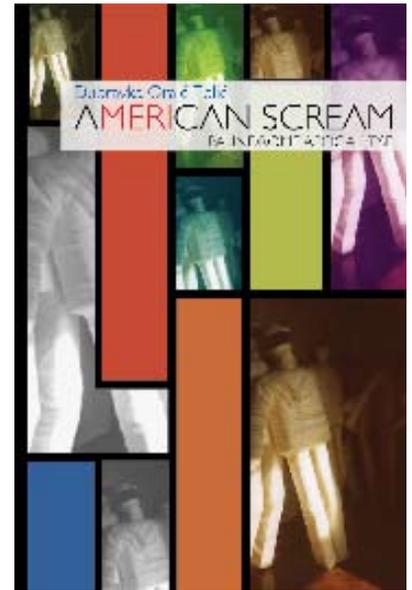
"It is an extraordinary book of poetry and prose by the celebrated female Croatian poet, essayist, and literary critic, Dubravka Oraić Tolić, and it is masterfully, creatively, and sensitively translated," said Beissinger, who chaired the prize committee. The AWSS hailed the book as a "significant contribution to the field of women's studies that will surely be adopted in courses treating contemporary feminist issues and cultural studies in the Slavic world."

The book includes two central literary works. "American Scream," an of lengthy poetry cycle and short prose that explores the meaning of America and the nature of freedom. Accompanying "American Scream" is "Palindrome Apocalypses"—a palindrome that's artful in both technique and story—presented side-by-side with the Croatian original. The volume also contains explanatory essays and commentary that further enlighten the text for the English-speaking world.

The complex work presented a daunting challenge for the translator, but "Professor Forrester more than lives up to the task," Beisseinger said. "Her solutions to the authoritative, creative postmodernist style are often themselves notably inventive."

"I am delighted to receive this prize, which recognizes both my work as a translator and Oraic Tolic's importance as a poet, intellectual, and commentator on her own times. The prize is also a tribute to the work of Ooligan Press, which published the book in such a beautifully-designed edition," said Forrester, who is an associate professor of Russian at Swarthmore College.

Ooligan Press published *American Scream: Palindrome Apocalypse* in partnership with the Croatian Ministry of Culture. The book was the third of three Croatian titles in the Press's concerted effort to bring the works of Croatian writers to a wider audience. The other titles are: *Zagreb, Exit South* by Edo Popović, and *The Survival League* by Gordan Nuhanović.



Praise for *American Scream Palindrome Apocalypse*:

"Dubravka Oraić Tolić goes beyond playing with language and textual contexts. Although reality and notions of home, country, people, nation, and life permeate her poetry, the thematic weight does not rest on the semantic deconstruction of concrete geographical-historical localities, but on their empowerment through words, metaphors and symbols as elements of the text and culture."
Dr. Bernarda Katusić, University of Vienna.

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