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Historical Society Press Wins Two Gold IPPY Awards

PIERRE, S.D.—The South Dakota State Historical Society has received two Gold IPPY Awards for recent books.

“Transformation and Continuity in Lakota Culture: The Collages of Arthur Amiotte, 1988–2014” won the national Gold Award in the Fine Art category, and “Love Letters from Mount Rushmore: The Story of a Marriage, a Monument, and a Moment in History” by Richard Cerasani (SARA-sa-nee) received the Mid-West Gold Award for Best Regional Non-Fiction.

“These books are engaging stories that speak to the region’s history,” says Jay D. Vogt, director of the South Dakota State Historical Society. “It is an honor to have the work that went into these publications recognized.”

“Transformation and Continuity in Lakota Culture” explores the artwork of Arthur Amiotte, an Oglala Lakota artist from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, and contains essays by Amiotte, Louis S. Warren and Janet Catherine Berlo. Through his artwork, Amiotte offers insight into the early reservation period. He draws inspiration from his great-grandfather, Standing Bear, using physical materials and the remembrances of his relatives to compose collages that tell the story of a culture and people in transition. Louis S. Warren relates the life of Standing Bear in a brief biography, and Janet Catherine Berlo contributes an essay placing Amiotte’s collages in their artistic and anthropological contexts.

“Love Letters from Mount Rushmore” follows Arthur Cerasani, an artist from Rochester, New York, as he traveled to the Black Hills and worked at the national memorial while his family remained over 1,500 miles away in Avon, New York. The book presents the daily correspondence between Cerasani and his wife, Mary, along with never-before-seen photographs. “Love Letters from Mount Rushmore” brings to light the everyday trials of working on the Mount Rushmore Memorial, like the unpredictable moods and fortunes of master sculptor Gutzon Borglum, as well as the strength of the human spirit.

In telling his parent’s story, Richard Cerasani shares the story of other workers on the memorial and puts them into the context of their time. A professional actor made famous by his role as the villain Bill Watson on “General Hospital,” Richard Cerasani has acted under the stage name Richard Caine for over 50 years.

The IPPY Awards are presented by Independent Publisher and are recognized by the publishing industry as the world’s largest book-awards contest. Evaluations are based on “first impression,” design, originality, use of language, message delivery and

relevance. Judges have between 10 and 20 years of experience in critiquing books, and fewer than one in 10 entries win an IPPY medal.

“To have two of our titles take home the gold award, given the competitiveness of this prize, is spectacular,” says Nancy Tystad Koupal, director of the South Dakota Historical Society Press, which also published the recent best seller “Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography” by Laura Ingalls Wilder.

“Transformation and Continuity” and “Love Letters from Mount Rushmore” are both available for \$29.95 each, plus shipping and tax. They can be purchased from most bookstores or ordered directly from the South Dakota Historical Society Press. Visit www.sdshspress.com or call (605) 773-6009.

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The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Education. The State Historical Society, an Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, is headquartered at the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The center houses the society's world-class museum, the archives, and the historic preservation, publishing and administrative/development offices. Call (605) 773-3458 or visit www.history.sd.gov for more information. The society also has an archaeology office in Rapid City; call (605) 394-1936 for more information.