

CBHL Literature Awards Recognize Excellence in Botanical and Horticultural Literature

May 9, 2013 – East Lansing, Michigan – The Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries, Inc. (CBHL) presented its fourteenth Annual Literature Awards on May 9, 2013. This presentation was made in East Lansing during CBHL's 45th Annual Meeting hosted by the Michigan State University Libraries. The Annual Literature Award, created to recognize significant contributions to the literature of botany and horticulture, honored two monumental resources this year. *Conifers around the World* by Zsolt Debreczy and Istvan Racz, edited by Kathy Musial and published by DendroPress was honored with the 2013 award in the Technical category. The winner in the General Interest category is *Gardens for a Beautiful America, 1895-1935: Photographs by Frances Benjamin Johnston* by Sam Watters and published by Acanthus Press.

Six years ago Sam Watters took on the challenge of identifying the unlabeled, undated jumble of glass slides in the Frances Benjamin Johnston archive at the Library of Congress. She was the earliest and one of the most important photographers of American gardens. Johnston was described by C. Ford Peatross of the Library of Congress as “a force of nature who passed through her world like a fresh breeze, bending the stiff backs of convention and clearing the air to allow us to see and understand her subjects in new ways.” Using her lantern slides to deliver lectures and presentations across America, she was at the forefront of the movement to beautify America. Watters’ narrative restores Johnston’s photography to its place in the “golden age” of American gardens and in the context of the Progressive era’s social, intellectual and aesthetic goals. Also to be commended are the efforts of Acanthus Press to reproduce Johnston’s lantern slides as luminously as if they were projected on the book’s pages.

It is not surprising that in their preface, the authors of *Conifers Around the World* describe the creation of their book as a decades-long labor of love. The completeness and thoroughness of the authors is evidence of their passion and knowledge of conifers. Through this work, the authors provide an overview of the natural history of conifers, describe in detail the geographic regions in which conifers grow, and provide detailed accounts of hundreds of species. Written in an accessible style and illustrated with numerous photographs and detailed maps, the Annual Literature Award Committee applauds the creation of this thoroughly informative work.

The Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries, Inc. is the leading professional organization in the field of botanical and horticultural information services. It recognizes the critical importance of collecting, preserving, and making accessible the accumulated knowledge about plants for present and future generations. For more information, visit its web site at <http://www.cbhl.net>.

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