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ABOUT WAYSON CHOY

Wayson Choy's first novel, *The Jade Peony* (Douglas and McIntyre, 1995), was co-winner -- with Margaret Atwood's *Morning in the Burned House* -- of the 1995 Trillium Award for the best book by an Ontario resident. It also won the City of Vancouver Book Award. *The Jade Peony* spent 26 weeks on the Toronto *Globe and Mail* bestseller list and placed Number 6 on its 1996 Year End National Bestseller List for Fiction. In 1997 it was released in the United States by Picador Books and in Germany by Ullstein Verlag. In 1998 Penguin published the book in Australia, where it quickly became a bestseller. *The Jade Peony* was one of eleven books chosen by the American Library Association as Notable Books for 1998. In 2007 it was re-released in the USA by Other Books, and published in French Canada by XYZ Editeur. The novel was broadcast in a 15-part dramatic reading on "Between the Covers" on CBC-AM radio. Portions were rebroadcast on "Morningside."

The Jade Peony started life as a short story in a University of British Columbia creative writing class conducted by Carol Shields in 1977. The story was first published in the *UBC Alumni Chronicle* in 1979. Since then it has been anthologized over 20 times, and has been made the focus of a Prentice Hall USA *Literature* textbook unit on the short story.

Wayson Choy's memoir *Paper Shadows: A Chinatown Childhood* was published in Canada by Penguin in fall 1999. It won the Edna Staebler Prize for Creative Non-Fiction, and was shortlisted for the Governor General's Award, the Drainie-Taylor Biography Prize, and the Charles Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction. It was released in Australia by Penguin and in the US by Picador. Reviewers called it "exquisitely written" (*Maclean's*), "a wise, lovely, beautifully written book, destined to become a classic childhood memoir" (*Hamilton Spectator*) and "a story of mysteries, secrets, silence, the unknown and the unknowable in everyone's life" (*Calgary Herald*). "The man writes like an angel" (*Now* magazine).

Choy's second novel, *All That Matters* (Doubleday Canada, 2004), a companion to *The Jade Peony*, won the Trillium Book Award and was shortlisted for the Giller Prize. It was released in the USA by Other Press in 2007. The story "A Christmas Memory," excerpted from the novel, appeared in the *Globe & Mail* on Saturday December 21, 1996. His bestselling second memoir, *Not Yet: A Memoir of Living and Almost Dying*, was published in 2009 to rave reviews in Canada (Doubleday) and Australia (Scribe).

Born in Vancouver in 1939, Wayson Choy taught English Literature at Humber College in Toronto for over 25 years. His first published work was selected for *The Best American Short Stories 1962* (Ballantine). In 2004 Choy travelled to China to host the documentary film "Searching for Confucius," which premièred on Vision TV in 2005, the same year that he

was appointed to the Order of Canada and won the Harbourfront Festival Prize, awarded annually to a writer who “has made a substantial contribution to the world of books and writing.” Wayson Choy lives in Toronto and writes full-time.

See also <http://www.thebukowskiagency.com/Not%20Yet.htm>
<http://www.thebukowskiagency.com/Jade%20Peony.htm>

RESPONSE TO THE JADE PEONY

“Choy ranges over familiar territory with a fresh eye, disclosing universal themes in the particularities of the Asian-American life of half a century ago.”

THE NEW YORK TIMES

"An eloquent, confident debut.... Childhood lessons are quietly, powerfully drawn here, with Choy's evocation of harsh immigrant reality nothing short of masterful."

STARRED KIRKUS REVIEW

"Choy adds a heartfelt, beautifully expressed new voice to the growing literature of the Chinese immigrant experience.... His three children, and the details of their lives in the New World, stand for the universal immigrant experience and aren't easily forgotten."

STARRED PUBLISHERS WEEKLY REVIEW

"The Jade Peony offers a true and touching insight into a largely unrecorded wartime world. It's human and moving without being sentimental, and the child's-eye viewpoint is very well handled. The description of warring communities within Canada itself and the effect of World War Two on the problematic concept of nationality was revealing -- this was new material to me, and very interesting. A genuine contribution to history as well as to fiction."

MARGARET DRABBLE

"A lyrical tale of growing up in Vancouver's early Chinatown. Intelligently and sensitively told, with dialogue that crackles with wit and familiarity. I didn't want it to end."

DENISE CHONG

"Finely crafted, elegantly written."

THE FINANCIAL POST

An exquisite novel... The craftsmanship is glorious."

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, TORONTO

"A touching and profound picture of Chinese family life.... Choy's account of one family struggling through hard times in 'Saltwater City' shimmers with life.... The result is not only a pleasure to read, but offers fresh and valuable insights into our collective history."

THE TORONTO STAR

Tuesday, October 27, 2009