

For Immediate Release

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NEW YORK, NY—*Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine* and The Wolfe Pack, the official Nero Wolfe society, will sponsor a new annual writing prize, the Black Orchid Novella Award, the two organizations have announced. The contest will offer a prize of \$1,000 and publication in *Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine*.

The first Black Orchid Novella Award will be announced at The Wolfe Pack's annual Winter Banquet in December 2007. The deadline for submissions is May 31, 2007.

The contest will honor an unpublished work of mystery fiction written in the tradition of the Nero Wolfe mystery stories: this tradition emphasizes the deductive skills of the story's sleuth and eschews overt sex and violence. The contest will not consider stories that use characters from Rex Stout's Nero Wolfe stories, which are protected by copyright.

Entries must be 15,000 to 20,000 words in length. Submissions will be screened by members of The Wolfe Pack, and the winner will be selected by Linda Landrigan, editor of *Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine*.

Rex Stout (1886-1975) was the author of over seventy novels and stories featuring the brilliant, irascible, and corpulent private detective Nero Wolfe, a lover of food, beer, and orchids. Stout was named a Grand Master by the Mystery Writers of America in 1959 and his Nero Wolfe stories continue to be popular throughout the world.

“The novella, between a short story and a novel in length, is an unusual and somewhat uncommon form,” notes Landrigan. “But it’s a form that Stout used regularly for his Nero Wolfe tales. It is appropriate, therefore, that an award honoring the Wolfe tradition should focus on the novella form.”

“The Wolfe Pack already sponsors awards honoring published works and lifetime achievement,” notes Jane K. Cleland, the group’s president, “but we wanted to develop a program that would encourage the creation of new work—especially in the novella form—and possibly inspire young or unpublished writers. We are thrilled that *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine* has joined us in this effort.”

Founded in 1978, The Wolfe Pack celebrates all things Nero Wolfe. For example, the society publishes a semi-annual Gazette and sponsors a variety of activities with Wolfeian themes including a regular book discussion group and tours of locations mentioned in the opus. The group has been holding its annual Winter Banquet for more than twenty-five years.

Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine is one of the oldest and most influential magazines of short mystery and crime fiction in the world. The magazine is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary in 2006.

Further information about the Black Orchid Novella Award can be found at The Wolfe Pack’s web site, <<http://www.nerowolfe.org>>.