

Wilson's 'Fences' wins prize

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NEW YORK (AP) — "Fences," August Wilson's powerful story of conflict between a father and his second son, won the 1987 Pulitzer Prize for drama Thursday, Columbia University announced.

The play, starring James Earl Jones, opened to laudatory reviews on Broadway last month after an initial production at the Yale Repertory Theater.

"Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference" won the biography award.

The book, by David J. Garrow, an associate professor at City College of New York, was an entry but was not one of three works recommended by the Pulitzer jury for biography. It was given the prize by the Pulitzer Board, which has the power to ignore jury recommendations.

The jury had recommended biographies of Dostoyevsky, John Quincy Adams and Edward R. Murrow.

The fiction prize went to Peter Taylor for the novel "A Summons to Memphis" for his novel, which tells the story of a scholarly man's return to his home town and a family crisis. Earlier this month, Taylor became the first American to win the 3-year-old, \$50,000 Ritz-Hemingway award.

New York Times reporter David K. Shipler won the general non-fiction award for his book, "Arab and Jew: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land."

Shipler, now working in the Times' Washington office, spent five years covering the Middle East from Israel. He also has written "Russia: Broken

Idols, Solemn Dreams," based on his years as a correspondent in Moscow.

The history award went to Bernard Bailyn of Harvard for "Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the Revolution."

A past president of the American Historical Association, Bailyn is a professor at Harvard and author of previous works on the Colonial era in America.

Rita Dove, professor at Arizona State University, was awarded the poetry prize for her volume "Thomas and Beulah."

The prize in music was awarded to John Harbison for "The Flight into Egypt," which was first performed in November by the Cantata Singers and Ensemble at the New England Conservatory in Boston.

Harbison lives in Cambridge, Mass., but does most of his composing on a farm in Wisconsin.

Wilson, contacted at home in St. Paul, Minn., said winning the Pulitzer "feels great."

"Of course, I'm honored. It's always pleasing when someone sees value to your work. I'm very excited and honored."

Wilson said his plays about black life try to show "that there is a value in black life, there is a system of values at work that can sustain someone once they have left their parents' house."