

For Immediate Release

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Maurice Samuels Awarded Gaddis Smith International Book Prize by The MacMillan Center

May 16, 2007. New Haven, CT ◆ Maurice Samuels, Professor of French, has been awarded the Gaddis Smith International Book Prize by the MacMillan Center for his book, *The Spectacular Past: Popular History and the Novel in the Nineteenth-Century France* (Cornell University Press, 2004).

Established in spring 2005, the MacMillan Center awards the Gaddis Smith International Book Prize each year for the best first book by a member of the Yale ladder faculty. Gaddis Smith, Larned Professor Emeritus of History, is a former Director of the MacMillan Center. Award recipients receive a research appointment at the MacMillan Center, and a \$10,000 research award over two years.

In *The Spectacular Past*, Professor Samuels examines the realm of an emerging bourgeois culture of spectacle - wax museums, phantasmagoria shows, historical panoramas, Romantic historical writing, dramas about Napoleon -- in order to understand new forms of historical representation in post-Revolutionary France. He shows that the rise of a 'spectacular historical consciousness' was not coincidental or gratuitous, but drew upon new markets, technologies, artistic and aesthetic forms, and sprang from a desire to ground Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary identities in a stable vision of the past that would justify the rise of a new class and political regime.

"The MacMillan Center established the book prize to stimulate scholarship in international fields by honoring outstanding accomplishments," said Ian Shapiro, the Henry R. Luce Director of the MacMillan Center. "I am delighted that Samuels' exceptional book has won the award this year."

Previous Gaddis Smith International Book Prize winners include (2006) Julia Adams for *The Familial State: Ruling Families and Merchant Capitalism in Early Modern Europe* and (2005) Mridu Rai for *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Islam, Rights, and the History of Kashmir*.

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