

Doctor turned Author, Wallace Martin Receives National Recognition Through the INDEPENDENT PRESS AWARD®!

In that Southern classic style with "Huck Finn" and "To Kill a Mockingbird", Martin's "The Goatman" is a coming-of-age tale set in post-WWII North Georgia.

DULUTH, GA, UNITED STATES, February 4, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The INDEPENDENT PRESS AWARD, one of the most prestigious book award programs globally for independent authors, publishers, and illustrators, recognized "The Goatman" by Wallace Martin as a distinguished favorite in the Young Adult Fiction category.

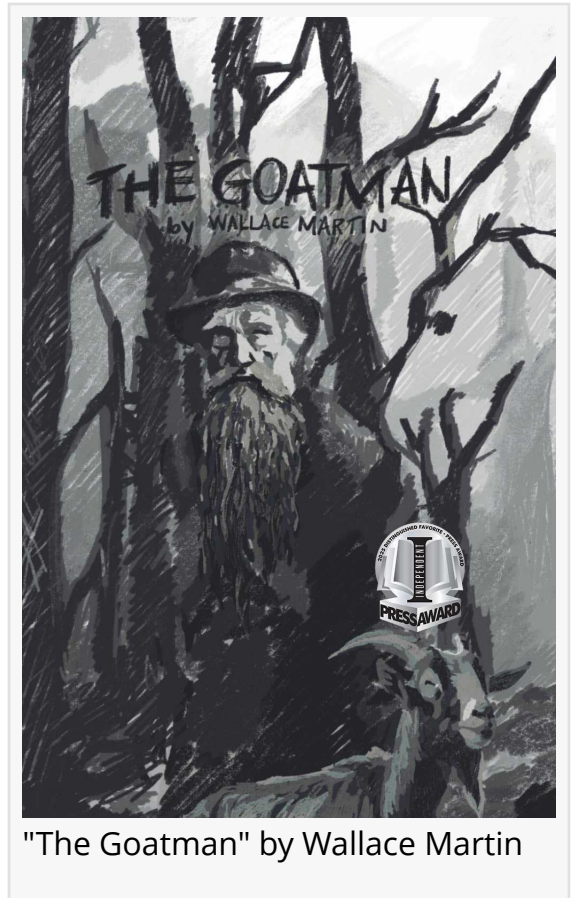
The competition is judged by experts from different aspects of the book industry, including publishers, writers, editors, book cover designers and professional copywriters. Selected IPA Award Winners and Distinguished Favorites are based on overall excellence.

[Wallace Martin's](#) debut murder mystery, "The Goatman", is destined to be a Southern classic along with Huck Finn and To Kill a Mockingbird. This coming-of-age tale set in the mountains of post-WWII North Georgia features a fourteen-year-old Zeb Barton, his irascible surgeon father, and Thelka, the gun-toting maid who mentors Zeb through progressively dangerous times. Even though the book is set in the 1960's, many of the characters are still reeling from the damages of WWII combat while others are being haunted by dead family members. A neo-Southern Gothic tale in the vein of Flannery O'Connor's work, each character contends with their own personal demons while all are under the watchful eye of the "Goatman", the subject of many murderous legends.



2025 Independent Press Award Distinguished
Favorite

For this story, Martin wove fiction with fact, integrating colorful characters from his childhood, including his father, a general surgeon who practiced in Lawrenceville, GA for almost forty years. "Boredom was the greatest challenge of childhood in the 1960's. Mysteries were everywhere. Like my other seven siblings, I had observed my father, Dan Martin MD, 'Doc', performing surgeries since I was around four years old, and the concentration and intensity of focus drew me in. In the small North Georgia community, all Doc's children were different from other children (or at least felt they were). Not in an elitist sense and not all good, but there were expectations to the point I felt I was being watched through the classroom speakers. I wanted to explore that mental aspect in a fictionalized reality. What drove that sense of being watched? "The Goatman" became the hidden watcher. Was it imagined or perceptively real? And are those the same? So I included those aspects that linked together – some humorous, some horrifying-facilitating that exploration."



"The Goatman" by Wallace Martin

In 2025, the INDEPENDENT PRESS AWARD saw participation from journalists, well established authors, and small, medium and large publishers across the globe, including those residing in Australia, Canada, Dominican Republic, France, Germany, India, Hong Kong, Japan, Portugal, Scotland, Singapore, Spain, United Kingdom, and the United States.

“

Boredom was the greatest challenge of childhood.

Mysteries were everywhere.”
*Wallace Martin, author of
"The Goatman"*

Winners were chosen from publishers such as Amplify Publishing Group, Black Rose Writing, Blackstone Publishing, BookBaby, Calumet Editions, Globe Pequot, Finishing Line Press, Gatekeepers Press, Hachette Go (Blanco of Grand Central Publishing), HarperCollins

Leadership, Ideapress Publishing, IVP Kids, Koehler Books, Mad Cave Studios, North Dakota State University Press, Oceanview, Publishing Old Stone Press, Pegasus Books, Post Hill Press, Red T Kid's Media, Rowman & Littlefield, She Writes Press, University of California Press, and University of Georgia Press.

"The 2025 INDEPENDENT PRESS AWARD awardees included the excellence and diversity of global independent publishing," said Gabrielle Olczak, IPA President and Award Sponsor. "There is no stopping independent publishing. It provides unparalleled content and quality to consumers worldwide and we are excited to showcase this year's honorees to the world."

For more information please visit [independentpressaward.com](https://www.independentpressaward.com); and to see this year's list of IPA Distinguished Favorites, please visit:

<https://www.independentpressaward.com/2025favorites>

About the Author

"The Goatman" is the debut novel of Georgia native and retired general/thoracic surgeon, Dr. Wallace Martin. Influenced by literary greats like Harper Lee, Mark Twain, and Flannery O'Connor, the seeds for "The Goatman" were planted in the author's mind when he was a child and witnessed the mysterious Goat Man, an itinerant from Iowa often seen wandering in Georgia with a wooden cart heaped high with pots and pans and pulled by goats. Tales of the disheveled, bearded man's arrival often frightened young children, but seven-year-old Wallace was intrigued. As he put it, "I had never seen anything like him and began creating my own story for him as he remained a progressively distant memory. A mystery."

The Independent Press Award is announced every spring and is open to independent authors and publishers.

The fall book competition, NYC Big Book Award, <https://www.nycbigbookaward.com/> allows all authors, publishers, and includes submissions from the big five publishers.

Join us for the Awards Dinner on May 3rd, and at the BookCAMP event, May 2 - 4, 2025, <https://www.independentpressaward.com/ipabookcamp>

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Author Wallace Martin



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