

The 34th Annual Northern California Book Awards

Sunday May 3, 2015

Koret Auditorium-- San Francisco Main Library

Translation-Fiction

Translation by Denise Newman, from the Danish:

Baboon, Naja Marie Aidt, Two Lines Press

Translation by Anne Milano Appel, from the Italian:

Three Light-Years: A Novel, Andrea Canobbio, Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Translation by Dick Cluster, from the Spanish:

A Corner of the World, Mylene Fernandez-Pintado, City Lights

Translation by Katherine Silver, from the Spanish:

Las Orejas del Lobo & The Ears of the Wolf, Antonio Ungar, Brutus Editoras

Three Light-Years: A Novel

by Andrea Canobbio [Italian] translation by Anne Milano Appel

(Farrar, Straus, and Giroux)

The narrator in Andrea Canobbio's *Three Light-Years* imagines the three years that led to his birth, before his mother's pregnancy. This is the frame, or rather the pretext, of the drama that involves and centers on the two main characters: his father, Claudio, and the woman he falls in love with, Cecilia, both of whom are doctors in the same hospital. In intelligent, thoughtful prose—thanks to the translator, Anne Milano Appel—Canobbio takes the reader through the daily lives of these characters. For a while, Claudio, who is unattached, seems like both a hopeless lover and a voyeur into the life of Cecilia, who is a recently divorced woman raising two children. Then the balance shifts, and Cecilia responds to Claudio's attentions. When, finally, the reader is led to believe that a relationship between the two is possible, fate intervenes: Claudio is introduced to Silvia, Cecilia's eccentric sister. The novel's ending is somewhat ambiguous, yet the narrator (who makes several discreet appearances at the beginning and the end of the novel) offers subtle hints about how he grew up and who raised him, so the reader can imagine the outcome of the drama between Claudio, Cecilia, and Silvia. This is a novel about contemporary relationships, about the potential perils of indecision and not taking chances, which should appeal to mature readers everywhere.

