

## The PW Review that Initiated the \$2.4 Million Deal with William Morrow for *The Lace Reader*:

### ★ The Lace Reader

Brunonia Barry. Flap Jacket ([www.flapjacketpress.com](http://www.flapjacketpress.com)), \$14.95 paper (360p) ISBN 978-0-9791593-0-5

In Barry's captivating debut, Towner Whitney, a dazed young woman descended from a long line of mind readers and fortune tellers, has survived numerous traumas and returned to her hometown of Salem, Mass., to recover. Any tranquility in her life is short-lived when her beloved great-aunt Eva drowns under circumstances suggesting foul play. Towner's suspicions are taken with a grain of salt given her history of hallucinatory visions and self-harm. The mystery enmeshes local cop John Rafferty, who had left the pressures of big city police work for a quieter life in Salem and now finds himself falling for the enigmatic Towner as he mourns Eva and delves into the history of the eccentric Whitney clan. Barry excels at capturing the feel of small-town life, and balances action with close looks at the characters' inner worlds. Her pacing and use of different perspectives show tremendous skill and will keep readers captivated all the way through. (Oct.)

August 6, 2007 Publishers Weekly

## A Few Months Later, the Result:

### PW Review Leads to Multimillion-Dollar Deal

By Matthew Thornton -- Publishers Weekly, 10/22/2007 7:30:00 AM

Brunonia Barry, whose independently published debut novel, *The Lace Reader*, received a starred PW review in early August, now has a seven-figure world English rights deal with William Morrow for that book and a second. Laurie Chittenden beat out several other houses, reportedly including Grand Central and Hyperion, after agent Rebecca Oliver at Endeavor turned down a seven-figure preemptive offer that kicked off an auction. Oliver just accepted a substantial preempt in Italy and has auctions coming up in six more territories; Harper will publish in the U.K.

*The Lace Reader* centers on a young woman descended from a long line of mind readers and fortune tellers who can read the future in patterns of lace. Her return to her hometown of Salem, Mass., to recover from a series of traumas is tragically interrupted by the death of a beloved great-aunt. Circumstances suggest foul play, but the woman's suspicions aren't taken seriously given her history of hallucinations and self-harm. Each chapter begins with an excerpt from a fictional book, *The Lace Reader's Guide*, written by a character in the novel, that offers insight into what lies ahead for the reader.

Barry is a Massachusetts native who has recently returned there after nearly a decade as a screenwriter in Hollywood. This is the first major book deal for Endeavor's new literary arm, and Chittenden has had some success with independently published debuts before—most recently, the #1 New York Times bestseller *The Christmas Box*. Pub date for Morrow in the U.S. and Harper in the U.K. is fall 2008.