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***Banyan Moon* by Thao Thai wins 2025 Crook's Corner Book Prize
\$5,000 prize awarded for best debut novel set in the American South**

CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA, JANUARY 6, 2025—*Banyan Moon* by Thao Thai (Mariner Books) is the winner of the twelfth annual Crook's Corner Book Prize for the best debut novel set in the American South.

Selected by this year's judge, award-winning author [Megan Mayhew Bergman](#), *Banyan Moon* is a “sweeping, evocative novel following three generations of Vietnamese American women reeling from the death of their matriarch, revealing the family's inherited burdens, buried secrets, and unlikely love stories.”

Bergman says:

Banyan Moon by Thao Thai is a striking debut novel that will captivate readers with its stunning prose and lush descriptions of the surrounding world. Through the compelling narratives of three generations of Vietnamese American women - who are destabilized by the death of their matriarch - Thai reveals the family's inherited burdens and secrets in gorgeous sentences and smart dialogue. With deeply developed characters, this incredibly moving book invites us to explore the complex bonds of love and family, making it a deserving selection for the Crooks Corner Book Prize.

The winner was chosen from the Shortlist announced in September 2024. The three shortlisted titles also included *Coleman Hill* by Kim Foote (SJP Lit) and *Fireworks Every Night* by Beth Raymer (Penguin Random House).

[Thao](#) is also a recipient of the 2024 Ohio Arts Council's Individual Excellence Award. Her work has been published in the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *WIRED*, *Elle*, *Lit Hub*, and other publications. She lives in central Ohio with her husband and daughter.

The Crook's Corner Book Prize, established as a collaboration between the iconic Southern restaurant Crook's Corner in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and the Crook's Corner Book Prize Foundation, was inspired by the prestigious book awards long given by famous "literary

cafés" in Paris. Submissions are now open for next year's prize. For more information on the Prize and submission guidelines, please visit www.CrooksCornerBookPrize.com or follow us on [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

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