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For Immediate Release

TEXAS INSTITUTE OF LETTERS ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 2022 LITERARY AWARDS

The Texas Institute of Letters has announced the winners of the thirteen Annual TIL Literary Awards. In a year with a record number of contest entries, the TIL will award more than \$26,000 in prizes to these writers at the TIL Awards Ceremony and Presentation in El Paso, Texas on April 23, 2022.

The Texas Institute of Letters is a nonprofit Honor Society founded in 1936 to celebrate Texas literature and recognize distinctive literary achievement. The TIL's elected membership consists of the state's most respected writers— including winners of the Pulitzer Prize, National Book Award, PEN/Faulkner Award, Man Booker Prize, Academy Award, International Latino Book Award, Americas Award, Lambda Literary Award, MacArthur Fellowship, and Guggenheim Fellowship.

The winners of the 2022 TIL Literary Awards are Heath Dollar, Babette Fraser Hale, Lise Olsen, Rodney Gómez, César L. de León, Nicholas Keefauver Roland, David Bowles and Raúl the Third, Varian Johnson, Divya Srinivasan, David Bowles, Dagoberto Gilb, and Skip Hollandsworth. The titles of the winning works and awards are listed below. (These awards are for works published in 2021, except for the biennial Fraser Award.) Celeste Bedford Walker will also receive the Texas Institute of Letters' prestigious Lon Tinkle Award for Lifetime Achievement, the highest honor given by the TIL.

President Sergio Troncoso: "I am always very excited when we have such a successful awards season. I want to thank the judges, many of them TIL Members, for their work in selecting such a diverse group of writers as winners and finalists. These awards truly represent the excellent literary achievement of *all* writers across Texas and beyond. These writers richly deserve many accolades for the high quality of their works. The TIL remains at the forefront of identifying the best literature by writers dedicated to their craft."

In addition, the TIL will be celebrating its fifteen newly inducted Members for 2022: fiction and nonfiction writers Amanda Eyre Ward, Frederick Luis Aldama, and Shelley Armitage; award-winning poets Edward Vidaurre and Melissa Studdard; children's and YA authors Christina Soontornvat, Francisco Stork, Don Tate, Cynthia Leitich Smith, Varian Johnson, Jennifer Ziegler, and Lupe Ruiz-Flores; journalist Carol Flake Chapman; publisher Will Evans; and historian Catherine Clinton. Newly inducted Members will read from their work during the weekend in El Paso on April 22-23. The TIL will also host a series of readings throughout the El Paso Public Library system on Wednesday and Thursday (April 20-21). A downloadable **Schedule of Events for El Paso** is located on the TIL website.

For more information on the TIL or the April 23rd awards ceremony, contact Sergio Troncoso, president@texasinstituteofletters.org, or visit the TIL website at www.texasinstituteofletters.org.

2022 TIL Award Winners

Jesse H. Jones Award for Best Book of Fiction

Winner: *Old Country Fiddle: Stories*, by Heath Dollar, Red Dirt Press.

Finalists: *Martita, I Remember You*, by Sandra Cisneros, Vintage.
Moon Lake: A Novel, by Joe R. Lansdale, Mulholland Books.



Sergio Troncoso Award for Best First Book of Fiction

Winner: *A Wall of Bright Dead Feathers: Stories*, by Babette Fraser Hale, Winedale Publishing.

Finalists: *This Weightless World: A Novel*, by Adam Soto, Astra House.
Las Criaturas, by Leticia Urieta, Flowersong Press.



Carr P. Collins Award for Best Book of Nonfiction

Winner: *Code of Silence: Sexual Misconduct by Federal Judges, the Secret System That Protects Them, and the Women Who Blew the Whistle*, by Lise Olsen, Beacon Press.

Finalists: *Let the Lord Sort Them: The Rise and Fall of the Death Penalty*, by Maurice Chammah, Crown.
A Single Star and Bloody Knuckles: A History of Politics and Race in Texas, by Bill Minutaglio, University of Texas Press.



Helen C. Smith Memorial Award for Best Book of Poetry

Winner: *Arsenal With Praise Song*, by Rodney Gómez, Orison Books.

Finalists: *Machete*, by Tomás Q. Morín, Alfred A. Knopf.
The Blues of Heaven, by Barbara Ras, University of Pittsburgh Press.
Frances of the Wider Field, by Laura Van Prooyen, Lily Poetry Books.



John A. Robertson Award for Best First Book of Poetry

Winner: *speaking with grackles by soapberry trees*, by César L. de León, FlowerSong Press.

Finalists: *How to Be Better by Being Worse*, by Justin Jannise, BOA Editions.

Stay Safe, by Emma Hine, Sarabande Books.



Ramirez Family Award for Most Significant Scholarly Book

Winner: *Violence in the Hill Country: The Texas Frontier in the Civil War Era*, by Nicholas Keefauver Roland, University of Texas Press.

Finalists: *The Union League and Biracial Politics in Reconstruction Texas*, by Carl H. Moneyhon, Texas A&M University Press.

Lone Star Vistas: Travel Writings on Texas, 1821-1861, by Astrid Haas, University of Texas Press.



Jean Flynn Award for Best Young Adult Book

Winner: *The Witch Owl Parliament (Clockwork Curandera)*, by David Bowles and Raúl the Third (illustrator), Lee & Low Books: Tu Books Imprint.

Finalists: *Fifteen Hundred Miles from the Sun*, by Jonny Garza Villa, Skyscape.

Where I Belong, by Marcia Argueta Mickelson, Lerner Publishing Group.



Deirdre Siobhan FlynnBass Award for Best Middle Grade Book

Winner: *Playing the Cards You're Dealt*, by Varian Johnson, Scholastic Press.

Finalists: *Barefoot Dreams of Petra Luna*, by Alda P. Dobbs, Sourcebooks Young Readers.

Carry Me Home, by Janet Fox, Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

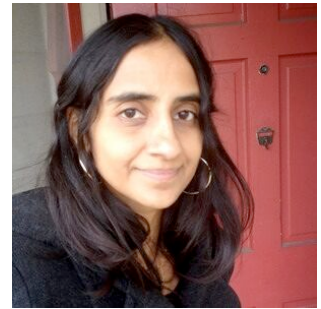


Brigid Erin Flynn Award for Best Picture Book

Winner: *What I Am*, by Divya Srinivasan, Viking Books for Young Readers.

Finalists: *Child of the Flower-Song People: Luz Jiménez, Daughter of the Nahua*, by Gloria Amescua, Harry N. Abrams.

Everybody in the Red Brick Building, by Anne Wynter, Harper Collins: Balzer + Bray.



Soeurette Diehl Fraser Award for Best Translation of a Book

Winner: *The Sea-Ringed World: Sacred Stories of the Americas*, by María García Esperón, translated by David Bowles, Levine Querido.

Finalists: *The Passenger: A Novel*, by Ulrich Alexander Boschwitz, translated by Phillip Boehm, Metropolitan Books.
Soliloquies, by Saint Augustine, translated by Michael P. Foley, Yale University Press.



Kay Cattarulla Award for Best Short Story

Winner: Dagoberto Gilb, "Two Red Foxes," *ZYZZYVA*.

Finalists: Rick Bass, "The Inside Passage," *The Idaho Review*.
William J. Cobb, "The Masked Daughter," *Clackamas Literary Review*.



Edwin "Bud" Shrake Award for Best Short Nonfiction

Winner: Skip Hollandsworth, "The Notorious Mrs. Mossler," *Texas Monthly*.

Finalists: Sergio Troncoso, "Dust to Dust: A Mother's Hope Binds Her Family in the Border Town of Ysleta," *Texas Highways*.
Christian Wallace, "The Resurrection of Bass Reeves," *Texas Monthly*.



Lon Tinkle Award for Lifetime Achievement



Author Celeste Bedford Walker has been named the winner of the Texas Institute of Letters' prestigious Lon Tinkle Award for Lifetime Achievement. This is the highest honor given by the TIL.

Acclaimed playwright Celeste Bedford Walker is the author of over forty plays that have received national awards and productions. She has won the National Black Theatre Festival's August Wilson Playwriting Award, the NAACP Theatre Awards for Best Play and Best Playwright, New York's AUDELCO Award, and BroadwayWorld's (Houston) Regional Award for Best Play. For her play *Distant Voices*, she was a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, an international award for outstanding work by a female playwright in the English-speaking theatre. *The New York Times* has praised her plays as "forceful, well-crafted,"

"vigorous social satire," "an uproariously good time," and "unquestionably good theatre." *Dramalogue* from Los Angeles has described her first play *Sister Sister* (retitled from *Once in a Wife Time*) as "practically flawless." *Variety* praised Bedford Walker's murder mystery *Reunion in Barbersville* as a "gourmet dish." The *Houston Chronicle* has called her work "appealing and affecting, expressively written."

Born and raised in Houston Texas, Bedford Walker attended Jack Yates High School and Texas Southern University, both historically Black institutions in the Third Ward. She is a veteran of the Houston theatre scene. Her list of eclectic plays cover the spectrum of the Black experience, including *Once In A Wife Time*, *Sassy Mamas*, *Over Forty*, *Greenwood: An American Dream Destroyed*, *I Barbara Jordan*, *Harlem After Hours*, *Black Spurs*, *Praise the Lord and Raise the Roof*, *The Wreckin' Ball*, *The Red Blood of War*, *More Than Christmas*, and *NeNe*. Her most recent commission is the BOLD Commission with the Ensemble Theatre in Houston. In the spring of 2022, she will publish an anthology of her work, *Sassy Mamas and Other Plays*, by Celeste Bedford Walker (Texas A&M University Press and The Wittliff Literary Series).