

Texas Institute of Letters  
Fall 2017/Winter 2018 Newsletter



[www.TexasInstituteofLetters.org](http://www.TexasInstituteofLetters.org)

Prepared by TIL Secretary Sergio Troncoso.

### *Communique from the President*

Welcome to this new installment of the TIL newsletter, very capably prepared by our Secretary, Sergio Troncoso (who also volunteers as Webmaster and Roving Ambassador.)



As I read through these sixty-plus updates from TIL members, I was reminded that there's more to being TIL President than the diplomatic immunity and cool little TIL flags on the hood of my car.

What really makes this organization special, of course, is the sense of community, of camaraderie. That's actually been the great joy for me these past two years as your TIL President -- getting to know and work with so many of you. Thank you all for that.

The truth is, it's not always easy to be a writer in a place like Texas -- or anywhere for that matter. Which is why it's nice that the Texas Institute of Letters exists -- as a way to challenge and inspire each other, and also to support each other.

You've seen the painting of the coyote leaping over the cactus. This was created by San Antonio artist, Regina Moya, who worked with our VP, Carmen Tafolla to develop the design. This image will appear on the literary awards we present to the contest winners this year in San Antonio.

Why the coyote? Well, as the TIL council discussed ideas, the coyote seemed to best exemplify the spirit of what it means to be a writer:

Coyotes are highly individualistic and extremely adaptable animals that express great joy in being alive. They have been shot, trapped, poisoned, and yet remarkably survive in today's world. They are revered as fabled tricksters in many cultures and they are as likely to set their own tail on fire as they are to snatch fire from the heavens. They are ridiculous and vain, but also highly intelligent and capable of great empathy. They improve any range simply by being part of the ecosystem. They are indispensable.

Coyotes, of course, can function just fine on their own -- but they do enjoy coming together in groups, to lift their voices to the sky as they delight in each other's company. And that's exactly what we'll be doing in San Antonio April 6-7. I'm looking forward to seeing you all there!

*Steve Davis*

## Member News

(Sixty-three updates from TIL Members, in the order received)

**John Bloom:** “I received the 2016 Horror Icon Award at the Crimson Screen Film Fest in Charleston, South Carolina. (This is my alter ego Joe Bob Briggs.)



My latest book *Eccentric Orbits* was named Nonfiction Finalist for the 2016 Writer’s League of Texas Book Awards.”

**Kurt Heinzelman:** “My fifth book of poetry, *Whatever You May Say*, was published in August. I hold, in addition to my UT appointment, an Honorary Professorship at Swansea University (Wales) and continue to be one of the judges of the International Dylan Thomas Prize now in its 12th year.”

**Carolyn Banks:** “My comic short story, “How I Personally and Perhaps Finally Broke Bad” appears in an online publication, *The Persimmon Tree*. I like the story so much, I couldn’t wait to enter it in the annual TIL competition, but guess what? TIL doesn’t permit entries from online publications. So consider this note an announcement as well as a complaint! This is the digital age, TIL. Get with it! In any case, here is the link: <http://www.persimmontree.org/v2/winter-2018/broke-bad/>. I hope you’ll read it and laugh as the narrator, Madeline, tells a lie that, egad! starts to come true.”

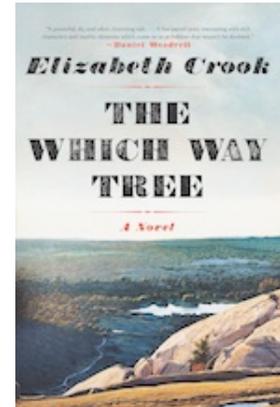
**Steve Wilson’s** fourth collection of poetry, *Lose to Find*, was published this summer.

**Light Cummins** completed a manuscript this summer entitled *Into the Vast and Beautiful Land: Anglo-American Migration into Spanish Louisiana and Texas, 1760s—1820s*. It is currently in the hands of a university press for review. This manuscript ties together research he has been doing for the last thirty-five years in the archives of Spain, the U.K., and the U.S. The first chapter begins with English speakers moving into the lower Mississippi Valley just before the American Revolution and concludes in the last chapter with the settlement of Texas by Stephen F. Austin. In addition, he is joining his wife Victoria in her publishing interests. They are embarking together in the editing of a book of readings dealing with the history of female artists in Texas. They are at present organizing a group of historians and art historians to write original chapters for this volume. Cummins continues to give talks and presentations, especially on his recent article dealing with the 1944 firing of University of Texas President Homer Price Rainey – a topic which surprisingly still evokes interest around Texas.

**Larry D. Thomas’s** poems (“Bluing,” “Alzheimer’s” and “Primary Colors”) were used as the text for a three-part song cycle for mezzo-soprano, saxophone, and piano. The composition,

titled “Blue Diminuendo,” was composed by Dr. Lon Chaffin, composer-in-residence and music department chair of New Mexico State University, and was world-premiered at the Hemmle Recital Hall of Texas Tech University on Sept. 24, 2017. Additionally, Thomas’s poem, “Dayroom,” was selected as first runner-up for the 2017-2018 *Switchgrass Review* Prize sponsored by Texas A&M University/Corpus Christi and the Coastal Bend Wellness Foundation of Corpus Christi, Texas.

**Elizabeth Crook:** “My novel *The Which Way Tree* was published by Little, Brown earlier this month and I hope I’ll be seeing some of you at book events around the state. It’s always a boost to see friends at those events. The story involves a young girl, Samantha (Sam) Shreve, in the Texas hill country in 1863 tracking a murderous mountain lion that’s disfigured her face and killed her mother. She sets out through the canyons with an unlikely posse consisting of a charismatic Tejano outlaw, a compassionate preacher with an aging but unstoppable panther-tracking dog, and her half brother, Benjamin.”



**Dick J. Reavis:** “Before I became a journalist, at the age of 28, I held several jobs but mainly I lived to agitate for left-wing causes. That was prohibited to reporters and writers during my career of 30 years. We were supposed to be “objective” and “neutral.” Even today, reporters at our dailies can’t even support politicians even in minor ways, like putting a yard sign outside one’s home.

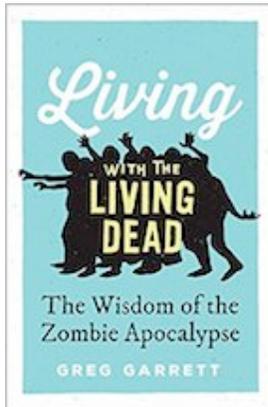
From 2004 to 2014 I was a professor in North Carolina. Political activity was not verboten for me but academic routines ate most of my time.

I’ve been retired for nearly four years and have reverted to the pursuits of my youth, though in a somewhat unexpected way. I am the oldest of 250 members of the Democratic Socialists of America in Dallas. DSAers are mostly millennials who are wrestling with questions and projects similar to those that occupied me during the ‘60s. I don’t have any answers for the kids, but I attend meetings and help circulate petitions opposing a fare hike on municipal buses and trains. It’s not as much fun as journalism, perhaps, but it makes me feel useful.”

**Lonn Taylor’s** new book, *Marfa for the Perplexed*, will be released by Tim Johnson’s Marfa Book Company on March 30. The book is a collection of 60 essays about people and places in Marfa and the surrounding area. Taylor says that the book is intended to enlighten people who have come to Marfa to see the art but are puzzled by other aspects of the community, “the people we see wandering down Highland Avenue on Monday mornings with perplexed looks on their faces.”

Taylor says that the book is a purely local production. “The illustrations are by Alpine artist Avram Dumitrescu, and the foreword is by Marfa writer Sterry Butcher. The designer is Kyle Schlesinger, whose Cuneiform Press is in Austin but who spends a lot of time in the Big Bend.”

This is Taylor's first experience with a small press. His previous books were published by university presses, Smithsonian Books, the Library of Congress, and Harper & Row. "It has been great to work hands-on with Tim, Avram, Kyle, and Sterry," he says. "It has been very different from putting myself in the hands of a big publisher. I feel that I am much more a part of the book."



**Greg Garrett** spoke at the Edinburgh International Festival of Books and Greenbelt Festival in the UK in August, at the Texas Book Festival in November, and at Trinity Church Wall Street in NYC in December. In addition to his regular teaching gig at Baylor, Greg taught classes for the Writers League of Texas on beginning a novel and the hero's journey, did a Texas Writes program in Clifton on writing from your own life, and appeared on six panels at the Austin Film Festival in October. He's at work currently on a literary novel set in Paris, a nonfiction book on race and film for Oxford, and has recently signed a contract to do a book of conversations with Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, on beauty, creativity, and faith. This spring, he's looking forward to finishing the novel, a national program on race and film at Washington National Cathedral he's been curating, and spring break. That cannot come soon enough."

**James Crisp:** "I will have a chapter in a forthcoming book from the University of Georgia Press that explores how movies have treated the history of the 19th century. There are about 20 historians involved in the project. The book should be out in a little less than a year from now. My contribution will be titled "Delineating Davy, Defining Ourselves: *The Alamo* in 1960 and in 2004." I'll be comparing the Crocketts as played by John Wayne and Billy Bob Thornton, and commenting as well on the relative damage done to history by each of the two films. This was a new genre for me--challenging but fun.

I'm at work on the introduction to Chapter 9 (out of a total of 34 chapters) of Herman Ehrenberg's memoir of the Texas Revolution. I've only been working on this project for 25 years (actually a bit longer than that), but with retirement from teaching, and other writing commitments out of the way, I've finally got time to spend every day with Herman, and it's really satisfying (and enlightening) work. My German translator passed away last year, so when I get stuck on any apparent problem with the German to English, I'm calling from time to time on my good friend and relatively new member (like me) of the TIL, James C. Kearney of Weimar."

**Ben Fountain's** short story "One Hundred Million Years of Solitude" was recently published in the Winter 2017 issue of *Sewanee Review*. In September, Ecco/HarperCollins will publish his nonfiction book *Beautiful Country Burn Again*, about the presidential election of 2016. *Beautiful Country* is based on a series of essays on the election published in *The Guardian* during 2016,

which were subsequently nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in commentary by the editors of *The Guardian*.

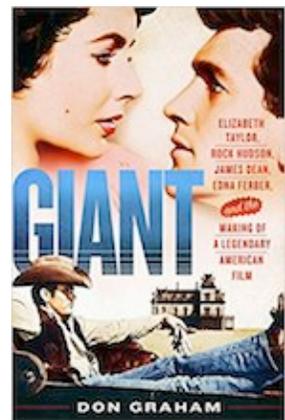
**Alicia Gaspar de Alba:** “I have a new book of short fiction coming out in April 2018. It’s called *The Curse of the Gypsy: Ten Stories and a Novella*, and will be published by Arte Público Press.

I also donated my archives, *The Alicia Gaspar de Alba Papers*, to the Benson Library’s Latin American Collections at U.T. The archive contains 40 boxes of old drafts of each of my books, journals, letters, research files, ephemera, and other objects detailing my life’s work as a poet, novelist, and scholar. A launch party for the archive is slated for Spring quarter 2018.

Also my narrative poem, “Jesus Had a Thing For Older Women,” was published in *Huizache 7* in 2017.”

**Reginald Gibbons:** “In October 2017, I published a collection of (very) short fiction, *An Orchard in the Street* (BOA Editions), and I’m now sending out a book I have completed with Russian poet Ilya Kutik--a selection of the poems of Boris Pasternak, translated (we believe) for the first time in a way that shows English-language readers what Pasternak’s poems are really like in Russian. It also has an introduction, in which we narrate two major events in his poetic career--his decision to abandon music (piano) and music composition in favor of poetry, when he was still very young, and the risks and constraints of writing in the Soviet regime. In a unique way, Pasternak not only wrote poems about music but also created a musical poetic style. In 1934, at the first Soviet Congress of Writers, Pasternak was singled out for both praise and blame. It was at this gathering that the Stalinist rule was imposed that only “socialist realism” would be permitted in the arts. Like all the other writers, from this point on, Pasternak had to try to write as he wished while at the same time writing as Stalin required. We show what this meant, in his poetry.”

**Don Graham’s *Giant*:** *Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson, James Dean, Edna Ferber and the Making of a Legendary American Film* will be published by St. Martin’s Press on April 10, 2018.



**Robert Bonazzi’s *Reluctant Activist: The Spiritual Life and Art of John Howard Griffin*** will be published by TCU Press in the Spring of 2018.

This is the “Authorized Biography” of the author of *Black Like Me*. This is Bonazzi’s second book about Griffin, the first being *Man in the Mirror: The Story of Black Like Me* (Orbis Books, 1997), which received rave reviews and sold over 80,000 copies. Bonazzi, who is the Executor of the Griffin Estate, also wrote the Introductions to the Wings Press cloth and E-Book Editions, paperback editions from Penguin, as well as many of the 16 translations of the classic. Bonazzi knew Griffin from 1966 to 1980 and was married to Griffin’s widow, Elizabeth, for 17 years. Griffin’s letters to Bonazzi are in the archives of Columbia University, as well as many of the Griffin archives.

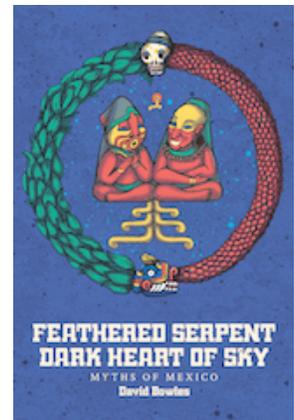
**Marian Schwartz:** “Last year, Amazon Crossing published two of my translations: Andrei Gelasimov’s *Into the Thickening Fog*, literary fiction set in a Yakutsk winter during a power failure, with one of my favorite first lines— “The best place to pass out is in the tail-end lavatory of a Boeing 757”; and Polina Dashkova’s *Madness Treads Lightly*, a thriller about a serial murderer from Russia’s queen of crime fiction. On about as different a note as there could be, the University of Notre Dame Press published my translation of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s *March 1917: The Red Wheel, Node III, Book 2*. As the title implies, this is one of a multi-volume cycle of documentary novels covering the period 1914-1918, of which I’m translating the middle four, which cover the February Revolution. Also last year, snippets of my translation of Ivan Goncharov’s *Oblomov* were used by Japanese photographer for a volume entitled “I, Oblomov,” his interpretation of Russia and other post-Soviet countries in interior pictures and self-portraits—all packaged with a highly appropriate pillow cover—a creative take on Russia and Oblomovshchina that won first prize at Photobookfest.”

TIL members and owners of Cinco Puntos Press, **Lee and Bobby Byrd** announce the publication of two books by TIL members.

In 2017, Cinco Puntos Press published *The Last Cigarette on Earth* by **Benjamin Alire Saenz**. Poet Eileen Myles said about Ben's latest book of poetry: “I love the honesty... His tunes are wild and brave.”

In March, Cinco Puntos will bring out *Feathered Serpent, Dark Heart of Sky* from **David Bowles**. Think *Norse Mythology* with sun instead of ice.

“Strange and yet familiar, comforting and also inspiring, David Bowles’ *Feathered Serpent, Dark Heart of Sky* brings Mesoamerican mythology to vivid life. A D’Aulaire for the twenty-first century.” –Adam Gidwitz, author of the Newbery-Honor winning *The Inquisitor’s Tale*

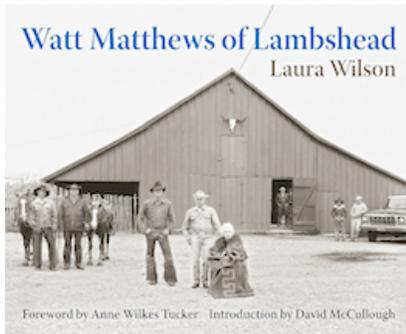


**Gerald Duff:** “My novel *Nashville Burning* was published by TCU Press in October, and one of my previously published novels, *Memphis Mojo*, will be published in a new edition by Brash Books, under a new title, *Memphis Luck*.”

**Pat Carr:** “I taught the five-day Hemingway Literary Retreat at the Hemingway Center in Piggott, Arkansas, the first week in November, 2017, to writers from as far away as Miami and Boston, and I learned in December that the International Women’s Writing Guild will start offering an annual literary prize in my name, the Pat Carr Fiction Award, in 2018.”

**Jerry Bradley's** latest poetry book is *South of the Boredom* from Angelina River Press. His poems appear in recent issues of *Caesura*, *CCTE Studies*, *Poets Reading the News*, *San Antonio Express News*, and *Writing Texas*.

**C.M. Mayo's** *Meteor* won the Gival Press Poetry Award and will be published in 2018. She continues working on a book-length essay about the Trans-Pecos. Publications in 2017 include her translation "The Apaches of Kiev," a short story by Agustín Cadena in *Tupelo Review*, and "The Café," a novel excerpt by Rose Mary Salum, in *Catamaran Review*. Mayo's prologue for a book by Luis Reed Torres, *El Libertador sin patria (The Liberator without a Country)*, is available in English at <http://www.cmmayo.com/ARTICLES/Prologue-to-El-Libertador-sin-patria.html>. Her essay for *Letras Libres* (in Spanish) and *Catamaran Review*, "Tulpa Max or, Notes on the Afterlife of a Resurrection," apropos of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the execution of Maximilian von Habsburg, is available at <http://www.cmmayo.com/ARTICLES/Tulpa-Max.html>.



**Laura Wilson** recently released a third edition of her book, *Watt Matthews of Lamshead*, which was favorably reviewed in *The Wall Street Journal*. The book, now in its third edition (fifth printing), has already sold out. Her exhibition, *That Day*, is still traveling, and recently opened at the Booth Western Art Museum in Cartersville, Georgia.

**Robert Flynn's** story "Guns and Hard Candy" will be published in the February issue of *Voices de La Luna*.

**Alwyn Barr's** essay, "Freedom and Slavery in the Republic: African American Experiences in the Republic of Texas," appeared in *Single Star of the West: The Republic of Texas, 1836-1845*, edited by Kenneth Howell and Charles Swanlund and published by the University of North Texas Press in 2017.

**Jerry Thompson's** *Tejano Tiger: Jose de los Santos Benavides and the Texas-Mexico Borderlands, 1823-1891*, published by TCU Press, won the 2017 Tejano Book Award. Thompson is the first person to receive this award for a third time.

On September 8, 2017, **José E. Limón** presented a plenary address at the American Literature Association annual meeting in New Orleans, LA. with the title: *Nelson Algren in Texas: A Critical Regionalist Reading*. On October 18, 2017, he received the Américo Paredes Prize for excellence in folklore scholarship at the annual meeting of the American Folklore Society in Minneapolis, MN. He will also present a plenary address at the meeting of the Society for the

Study of Southern Literature at the University of Texas - Austin on February 17, 2018. The title is: *South by Southwest by Way of Minnesota: The Strange Career of Texas Writer, Laura Krey*.

**Mark Busby's** novel *Fort Benning Blues* was featured on the Huffington Post in an article titled "24 Books That Will Help You Understand America" by Claire Fallon. Also featured among the 24 books were William Faulkner's *Light in August*, Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, Annie Proulx's *Close Range*, and Philipp Meyer's *American Rust* in this "literary road trip through the nation's heartland." [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/a-literary-road-trip-through-america\\_us\\_59948091e4b0d0d2cc839bc3#](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/a-literary-road-trip-through-america_us_59948091e4b0d0d2cc839bc3#).

**Norma Cantú:** "A novel, *Cabañuelas, A Love Story*, will be out next spring from the University of New Mexico Press. And my book manuscript *Meditación Fronteriza/Border Meditation* will be published by the University of Arizona Press."

New inductee **Daniel Chacón** recently published his first young adult novel. Named a Junior Library Guild Selection, *The Cholo Tree* (Arte Público Press, 2017) is an engrossing coming-of-age novel that examines the intersection of art and ethnicity. *The Horn Book* said, "Told in chunks spanning four years, this is a Bildungsroman with a voice reminiscent of Sherman Alexie or Walter Dean Myers, gritty but with a sense of humor. The plot will appeal to reluctant readers, but Victor's struggle to be taken seriously and define himself without adult input is a teen experience with which a wide range of readers will identify."



**Clay Reynolds** reports: "Native Texan **Betty Wiesepape**, former member of the TIL Council and assembler of much of the TIL history during her tenure, announced her retirement this year. After twenty years of teaching creative writing and Texas literature at the University of Texas at Dallas, Betty has left a lasting impact on the state's literary achievements. An active participant in numerous creative writing and literature conferences, Betty also is the author of two major works concerning Texas authors. The list of her students who have achieved publication and won writing awards under her tutelage runs to almost three pages of individual achievements. Although her retirement by no means will diminish her work as a writer, may, in fact, increase her active work in writing both fiction and nonfiction about Texas, her contributions to Texas letters over the span of her active professional teaching career are nothing short of remarkable. She is to be congratulated on her achievements as an instructor of Texas writers and also as a promoter of Texas writing, generally, and she is deserving of best wishes for a continuing career as an author of works dedicated to the history and culture of the Lone Star State."

**Chip Dameron's** next book of poems, *Mornings with Dobie's Ghost*, is scheduled for publication at Wings Press in September 2018. Individual poems have recently appeared in

*Concho River Review*, *Borderlands*, *Ocotillo Review*, *Texas Poetry Calendar*, *San Pedro River Review*, *Amarillo Bay*, and the anthology *Weaving the Terrain: 100-Word Southwestern Poems*. He is currently serving on the board of directors of the Writers' League of Texas.

**David Bowles** has four upcoming publications.

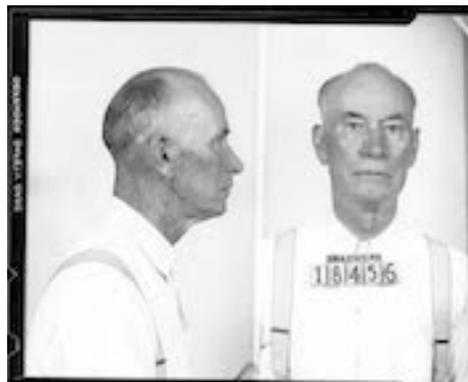
- *El verano de las mariposas* (March 2018, Tu Books). A Spanish translation of *The Summer of the Mariposas* by Guadalupe García McCall.
- *Feathered Serpent, Dark Heart of Sky: Myths of Mexico* (April 2018, Cinco Puntos Press).
- *The Hidden City* (July 2018, IFWG Publishing). Book 3 of the Garza Twins series.
- *They Call Me Güero: Poems from a Border Kid* (fall 2018, Cinco Puntos Press).

**Nicolás Kanellos** published a history of Chicano publishing houses and the general market for literature in the U.S. in "El libro chicano y sus editoriales." *Historia comparada de las Américas: Perspectivas de la integración cultural*. Ed. Liliana Weinberg. México, DF: UNAM Centro de Investigaciones sobre América Latina y el Caribe, 2017. 573-590.

He was interviewed: "Revista Chicano-Riqueña and Arte Público Press: An Interview with Nicolás Kanellos," *Diálogo* 20/2 (Fall 2017): 135-140.

**Ann McCutchan**: "Scenes from *Swan's Inlet*, my opera with composer Mark Alan Taggart, will be performed by the Center for Contemporary Opera in New York, March 10."

**W.K. "Kip" Stratton**: "My book, *COLO—STATE—PEN: 18456: A Dark Miscellany*, will be published early this year by Lamar University Literary Press. The title comes from my paternal grandfather's serial number when he was a convict at the Colorado State Penitentiary in Cañon City. I never knew him. He was 60 years old when my father was born in Denver; my grandfather had been dead a decade or more by the time I was born. If he were alive today, he would be 146 years old. So he was definitely a man from a different time. He was also a bad man: a life-long criminal, a racist, a compulsive philanderer, a liar, an Army deserter, and he abandoned wives and children (as did his son, the rodeo cowboy/carny who became my father). The centerpiece of the book is a long poem concerning him. *COLO—STATE—PEN: 18456* is volume three of projected quintet of books of poems and short prose pieces that collectively I call *Dreaming Sam Peckinpah*. The first volume was *Dreaming Sam Peckinpah*; the second, *Ranchero Ford/Dying in Red Dirt Country*. Plans call for my grandfather's prison mugshot to be incorporated into the cover art."



**Ann Weisgarber:** “Rob and I moved to Galveston last spring to a charming historic home in the Renaissance District. We quickly learned that “charming historic” translates to the house is old and something falls apart the second we turn our backs.

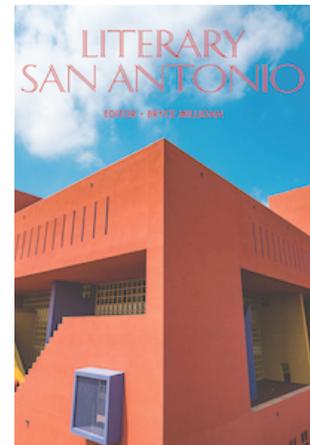
My novel, *The Glovemaker*, will be published next winter in the States, the UK, Italy, and Germany. Filming for *The Personal History of Rachel DuPree* is scheduled to begin on April 16<sup>th</sup> with Viola Davis playing the lead. Just writing that sentence makes my nerves jump.

I’m having great fun serving on the TIL council and look forward to serving as the next secretary. Sergio Troncoso leaves mighty big footsteps for me to follow.”

**Bryce Milligan** has received an Artist Foundation of San Antonio Award, a grant for the creation of new work. Milligan’s project will be, not surprisingly, “a series of long prose poems and other poetry exploring the literary history, heritage, and accumulated literary lore of San Antonio.” Recent poems by Milligan have appeared in *Café Review*, *Cutthroat*, *Clover*, *La Voz de Esperanza*, and the *San Antonio Express-News*. Last fall, Milligan’s most recent book of poetry, *Take to the Highway* (West End, 2016) won the 2017 Writers League of Texas Discovery Prize.

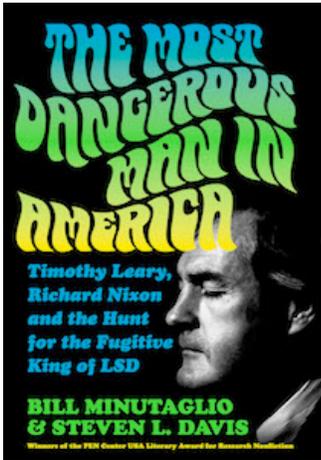
In February, Milligan delivered the semi-annual Carl Hertzog lecture at the awards presentation for the Hertzog book design awards in El Paso. The lecture was entitled, “Arabesques for Travelers: Landscape and Literary Imagination.”

During the Saturday TIL awards ceremony, Milligan will give a brief overview of San Antonio’s literary past. He is the editor of the newly published *Literary San Antonio* (TCU, 2018). Milligan and Chicano arts scholar Dr. Tomás Ybarra-Frausto will conduct a year-long series of *platicas*/public conversations focused on the city’s literary and cultural history, sponsored by Gemini Ink.



Milligan’s Wings Press will sponsor the food for this year’s New Members reception and Poetry Awards ceremony. Please visit the display of books by Texas authors published by Wings over the past 43 years, ranging from Townes Van Zandt’s 1975 *For the Sake of the Song* to Lynn Maverick Denzer and Maury Maverick Sr.’s history of La Villita, originally published by the WPA in 1939 and republished now in an expanded edition in honor of the city’s Tricentennial. Not counting authors included in anthologies, Wings Press has published some 120 books by at least 80 Texas authors, including TIL past presidents **Bryan Woolley**, **James Hoggard**, **Carolyn Osborn**, **Robert Flynn**, and incoming president **Carmen Tafolla**.

**Dominic Smith** received a 2018 Creative Writing Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. His new novel, *The Electric Hotel*, about the early era of silent filmmaking, will be released by Sarah Crichton Books at Farrar, Straus & Giroux in 2019.



**Sarah Cortez** has been inducted as a Fellow of the Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture. April 2018 will see publication of *Tired, Hungry, Standing in One Place for Twelve Hours: Essential Cop Essays* (Texas Review Press).

*The Most Dangerous Man in America: Timothy Leary, Richard Nixon & the Hunt for the Fugitive King of LSD* by **Bill Minutaglio** and **Steven L. Davis** has just been published. The book describes the LSD guru's escape from a California prison in 1970 (after being sentenced to ten years for possessing two joints) and his subsequent misadventures with the Weather Underground and the Black Panthers, along with President Nixon's increasingly frantic efforts to recapture him.

**Joe Holley:** "My new book, *Hurricane Season*, will be out in May. Published by the Hachette Group, it's a tripartite story about Hurricane Harvey, Houston's resilience and the Astros' World Series championship."

**William Hauptman:** "In November, I privately published *Journey to the West*, a lightly fictionalized memoir of my life in the 60s from my senior year of high school to my journey to San Francisco and further, and travelled to Texas to give copies to my closest friends. Response has been good. Members who go to <http://www.journeytothewestbook.com> will find a website where the book may be purchased, or it can be found on Amazon. Jan Reid reviewed it in *Texas Monthly* and mentioned the book's love affair, which he said was 'so tender it brought tears to my eyes.'"

**Sergio Troncoso's** short story, "Fragments of a Dream," was a finalist for the Machigonne Fiction Prize and is forthcoming in *New Guard Literary Review* in 2018. Other recent work has appeared in *Michigan Quarterly Review* and *The Dallas Morning-News*. He was final judge in the Essay Category of the *New Letters* Literary Awards. On December 14, 2017, he awarded the annual Troncoso Reading Prizes to six middle school and high school students at the Sergio Troncoso Branch Library in El Paso, Texas. In June of 2018, Troncoso will be teaching a fiction workshop at the Yale Writers' Workshop.

**Katherine Hoerth** has published a new poetry book, *The Lost Chronicles of Slue Foot Sue* (Angelina River Press) January 2018. The book is a collection of formal poetry that re-imagines popular Texas folklore. She also began a new column for the *The Examiner* titled "The Beaumont Book Beat" where each month she discusses new books by southeast Texas authors, Lamar University news, and literary happenings in Beaumont. Her recent editions of the column discuss TIL member **Jerry Bradley's** new poetry collection, *South of the Boredom*, and member **Jan Seale's** collection of essays, *Ordinary Charms*. She has had work published or is

forthcoming in *The Georgia Review*, *Southwestern American Literature*, *The San Antonio Express News*, *Poets in the News*, *The Langdon Review of the Arts in Texas*, and *Pleiades*. She also had a poem in the *Nasty Women Poets* anthology recently released by Lost Horse Press. Katherine was the 2017 Langdon Review Writer in Residence. She will be presenting at the Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP) annual conference, in addition to giving readings at The People's Poetry Fest at Texas A&M Corpus Christi and the Houston Public Library as part of Public Poetry.

**Jerry Craven** and **Andrew Geyer** wrote *Parallel Hours*, a time-travel novel linking characters and events between the thirteenth and twentieth centuries, published in August 2017 by Angelina River Press (Dallas). TIL member **Jerry Bradley** said this about the novel: "If you were to go back in time eight centuries, you couldn't imagine all the troubles you'd face. But you wouldn't have to because Jerry Craven and Andrew Geyer have imagined them for you. The adventures in *Parallel Hours* are so breathtaking that you won't have time to realize how much you miss the future."



**Guadalupe Garcia McCall:** "In March, the Spanish edition of *Summer of the Mariposas*, *El verano de las mariposas*, translated by **David Bowles**, will be released by Tu Books, Lee & Low Books. I am very excited about this, as this is my first translated novel.

In March, my poem "Ti-ki-ri, Ti-ki-ri, Ti-ki-ri, Tas!" will appear in *World Make Way*, a poetry anthology for the Metropolitan Museum of Fine Arts, edited by Lee Bennett Hopkins, Harry N. Abrams. In May, my short story, "Rancho Nido, A Borderlands Kaiju Origin Story," will appear in *Kaiju Rising, Age of Monsters II*, edited by N. X. Sharps and Alan Joli Abbott and released by Outland Publications. In 2019, my poem, "Quinceañera," will appear in *I Remember: Poems and Pictures of Heritage*, edited by Lee Bennett Hopkins for Lee & Low Books.

On July 16, I will be a Summer Guest Speaker at Hollins University in Roanoke, VA. On August 2-5, I will be teaching a MG/YA Master Class at the Mendocino Coast Writers' Conference, in Mendocino, CA.

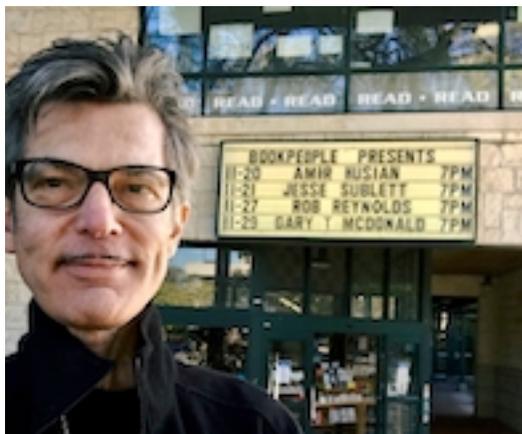
This summer will also see the release of my fourth young adult novel, *All the Stars Denied*, a companion to *Shame the Stars*, from Tu Books. I am super excited about this one. Here's the jacket description: "In a companion novel to her critically acclaimed *Shame the Stars*, Guadalupe Garcia McCall tackles the hidden history of the United States and its first mass deportation event that swept up hundreds of thousands of Mexican American citizens during the Great Depression."

**Michael Adams:** "All is well at the ranch. We're still trying to explore the possibility of resurrecting our well. As always, the obstacle is money. Well, and maybe global warming if it turns out there's nothing to resurrect. The fall fellow, Ricardo Nuila, and his wife, Valeria, held a

special birthday party for their two-year-old, Valentina— a special-delivery pinto pony for her and her friends to ride. **Domingo Martinez** has made an easy transition into his six-month stay, including the adoption of a sweet dog he has renamed Norman.

Jim Crace, the recipient of our first J. Frank Dobie International Residency Prize, has sent word that his latest novel (which he worked on at the ranch) has just come out in Britain, with the American edition due out this June. He will be introducing the Dobie Paisano Program to European audiences. Oh, I almost forgot, the title is *The Melody*.

Barry Lopez, our second recipient, has had to postpone his visit to the ranch to next year. However, he will be giving a reading in Austin April 23rd.”



**Jesse Sublett:** “The year ended in a flurry of PR for two new books, last minute revisions of another, and writing the treatment for a film. Whoa. At the Texas Book Festival, we celebrated and promoted the release of “Armadillo World Headquarters: A Memoir,” by Eddie Wilson and myself, and also “Esther’s Follies: The Laughs, the Gossip, and the True Story of Texas Most Celebrated Comedy Troupe,” by me. Both of them turned out to be beautifully designed books crammed with moving and funny, vital history of Austin and our cultural history.

Last fall I finished writing the memoir of a country singer from Bonham, Texas; “The Real Murder on Music Row,” by Sammy Sadler and myself, is an amazing story of a kid who started singing when he was eight years old and dreamed of moving to Nashville to make it, and on his way to the top, he and a friend were shot down in the middle of Music Row in Nashville. Sammy survived, his friend, Kevin Hughes, who was the chart director for Cash Box Magazine, was executed in a mob style hit. The murder investigation took 13 years to bring the killer to justice and exposed the payola and chart-fixing mafia of Nashville. Sleazy, pulp nonfiction you wouldn’t believe—especially with so many churches around there!

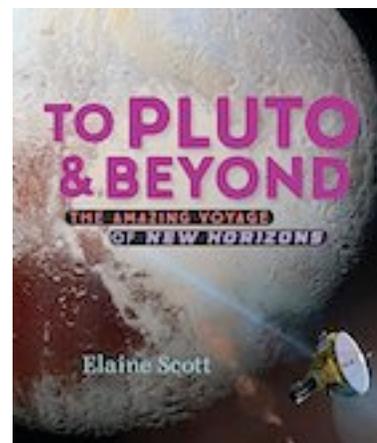
Now working feverishly on a feature documentary on Civil Air Transport and Air America, the secret air forces of the CIA from 1949–1975. It’s a wild story with a lot of extremely talented and brave pilots, and an Agency that built labyrinths of logic and falsehood that would have stymied Theseus and allowed the Minotaur to survive and thrive all the way to the current moment.”

**Bruce Bond:** “Two of my books came out in 2017: *Sacrum* (Four Way Books) and *Blackout Starlight: New and Selected Poems 1997-2015* (LSU). Three books are expected this year: *Dear Reader* (Free Verse Editions), *Rise and Fall of the Lesser Sun Gods* (Elixir Poetry Prize, Elixir

Press), and *Frankenstein's Children* (Lost Horse). Also, my poems were selected for the 2017 and 2018 editions of *Best American Poetry*.”

**Steven Schneider** was selected in the fall 2017 to give the Inaugural Distinguished Faculty Colloquium series lecture at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV). His talk was entitled “Opposing Forces Along the U.S. / Mexico Border.” Steven and his artist wife Reefka had their traveling exhibit *Borderlines: Drawing Border Lives / Fronteras: dibujando las vidas fronterizas*, on display at the Historic Brownsville Museum from September 2017 through January 2018. The exhibit, which consists of 25 portraits of people who live and work along the border, and 25 of Steven’s poems in English and Spanish, is based upon their book by the same title published by Wings Press. Steven’s poem “Chanukah Lights Tonight” was featured on a special NPR Morning Edition feature about holiday poems. In January 2018 he gave a reading from *Borderlines* and from *The Magic of Mariachi / La Magia del Mariachi* at Paragraphs bookstore on South Padre Island. This is the 5<sup>th</sup> year Steven has been awarded an NEA Big Read grant, a community literacy program that features a single book. This year’s program focuses on *Ways of Going Home* by the Chilean author Alejandro Zambra, who Steven is hosting during FESTIBA at UTRGV in the spring of 2018.

**Elaine Scott:** “This July Viking Penguin will publish my latest book, *To Pluto and Beyond: The Amazing Voyage of New Horizons*. I’m delighted, since the tiny space probe that revealed Pluto’s world still has work to do. On January 1, 2019 it will fly by MU69, an object at the outermost reaches of our solar system and one that may contain useful information about the formation and population of Earth itself. I love this science and love sharing my enthusiasm with young readers around the world. I also love being a member of TIL and was thrilled Viking mentioned the organization in the flap copy of the book.”



**Sheryl Luna:** “I had a poem titled “Neighbors Smoke on an Apartment Porch Owned by a Mental Health Agency” published in the January 2018 issue of *Poetry*. Here's a link to the poem.”

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/145179/neighbors-smoke-on-an-apartment-porch-owned-by-a-mental-health-agency>

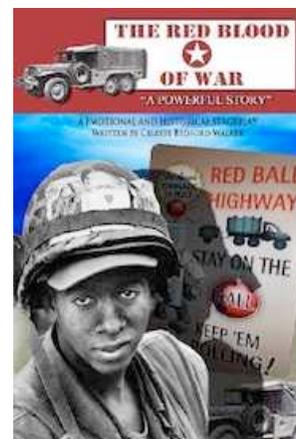
*Fight Like a Man & Other Stories We Tell Our Children* (University of New Mexico Press), by **Christine Granados**, has won The National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies (NACCS) Tejas FocoFiction Award. The committee cited the collection of stories and novella as “an efficient work that isn’t afraid to hit you where it hurts.”

**Celeste Bedford Walker:** “My play ‘Sassy Mamas,’ about the cougar phenomena, was voted Best Play and Best Director by Broadway World Regional Awards.

<https://www.broadwayworld.com/houston/article/Winners-Announced-For-The-2017-BroadwayWorld-Houston-Awards-The-World-According-to-Snoopy-Wins-Best-Musical-20180103>

‘Freedom Train: A Celebration of Black History,’ a play about slaves who escape to freedom in Mexico, will tour various locations/dates in Houston, TX during February-March.

My current work-in-progress is ‘The Red Blood of War,’ about two soldiers who drive an around-the-clock convoy of trucks, called the Red Ball Express, delivering tons of gasoline to the Western Front during WWII.”



Recent poems and essays by 2018 Texas Poet Laureate **Carol Coffee Reposa** have appeared in such publications as *Literary San Antonio*, *Ain't Gonna Be Treated This Way*, *Celebrating Woody Guthrie*, *The Switchgrass Review*, *Red River Review*, *Amarillo Bay*, *Texas Poetry Calendar 2018*, and *Voices de la Luna*. She also has given readings at the Scissortail Writer’s Festival, TACWT, and Texas A&M--Corpus Christi, with additional presentations planned for Baylor University and Angelo State University. Her poem “Venice” won first place in the 2017 *Switchgrass Review* Annual Poetry Contest, and in October she received a fourth Pushcart Prize nomination for “Fracking in South Texas.” Meanwhile, moving with the speed of a glacier, she continues to work on a fifth manuscript. Wish her luck!

This spring and summer **Jan Reid** will be taking his third novel, *Sins of the Younger Sons*, to readings and forums in Santa Fe and Sausalito, California. “Busting Out of Mexico,” his 1976 *Texas Monthly* story, remains under option by an Oscar-nominated screenwriter, and the article is read well in a new audio series sponsored by Penguin Random House and *Texas Monthly*. TCU Press will republish his debut, *The Improbable Rise of Redneck Rock*, in a trade paperback edition. Nearing completion, his new novel draws on that first book’s time and place, but along with the rock and roll it explores the narrator’s struggles with faith and family, the Tet offensive in Vietnam, and his friendship with one of the great heavyweight boxing champions of the 1970s.

Also: The legacy of **Gary Cartwright**, who died in February 2017, is thriving. Gary, whose TIL honors include the Lon Tinkle career achievement award and a Dobie-Paisano Fellowship, leaves four of his favorite books in impressive editions: *The Best I Recall* with the University of Texas Press, *Galveston* with TCU Press, *Dirty Dealing* with Cinco Puntos, and coming soon will be Simon and Schuster’s republication of *Blood Will Tell*. His 2004 *Texas Monthly* story “Showdown at Waggoner Ranch” is one of the premier selections in a new audio series sponsored by Penguin Random House and *Texas Monthly*.



### **Texas Institute of Letters Officers**

President, Steve Davis, San Marcos  
Vice President, Carmen Tafolla, San Antonio  
Secretary, Sergio Troncoso, El Paso  
Treasurer, W.K. (Kip) Stratton, Austin  
Recording Secretary, Joe Holley, Houston

### **Council Members**

Cary Clack, San Antonio, first term ends April 2018  
Sarah Cortez, Houston, second term ends April 2018  
Kurt Heinzelman, Austin, first term ends April 2018  
Diana Lopez, Victoria, first term ends April 2018  
Russell Martin, Dallas, second term ends April 2018  
William Jack Sibley, San Antonio, first term ends 2019  
Jerry Thompson, Laredo, second term ends April 2018  
Ann Weisgarber, Sugar Land, second term ends April 2019