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TEXAS INSTITUTE OF LETTERS ANNOUNCES FINALISTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Winners of the Texas Institute of Letters' awards for works published in 2015 will be announced at the organization's annual reception and banquet in Austin on Friday and Saturday, April 15-16. TIL is the state's oldest literary organization and will be observing its 80th anniversary at the event. TIL awards are accompanied by cash prizes totaling approximately \$22,000.

Austin novelist Sarah Bird will receive TIL's Lon Tinkle Award, which is presented annually to a distinguished writer with a career in letters associated with Texas. Earlier winners of the award include Larry McMurtry, John Graves, Rolando Hinojosa, Donald Barthelme, and Lawrence Wright.

Finalists for other awards include:

Jesse H. Jones Award for Best Work of Fiction (\$6,000)

Karen Olsson, *All the Houses* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux); Antonio Ruiz-Camacho, *Barefoot Dogs* (Scribner); Elizabeth Harris, *Mayhem: Three Lives of a Woman* (Gival Press)

Steven Turner Award for Best Work of First Fiction (\$1,000)

Mary Helen Specht, *Migratory Animals* (Harper Perennial); Melissa De Carlo, *The Art of Crash Landing* (Harper Paperbacks); Chaitali Sen, *The Pathless Sky* (Europa Editions)

Carr P. Collins Award for Best Book of Nonfiction (\$5,000)

Michael Mewshaw, *Sympathy for the Devil: Four Decades of Friendship with Gore Vidal* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux); Randy Fritz, *Hail of Fire* (Trinity University Press); Jan Jarboe Russell, *The Train to Crystal City* (Scribner)

Ramirez Family Award for Most Significant Scholarly Book (\$2,500)

Andrew Torget, III, *Seeds of Empire* (The University of North Carolina Press); Light Townsend Cummins, *Allie Victoria Tennant and the Visual Arts in Dallas* (Texas A&M University Press); Abigail L. Swingen, *Competing Visions of Empire* (Yale University Press)

Helen C. Smith Memorial Award for Best Book of Poetry (\$1,200)

Bruce Bond, *The Other Sky* (Etruscan Press); Laurie Ann Guerrero, *A Crown for Gumecindo* (Aztlán Libre Press); Scott Wiggerman, *Leaf and Beak* (Purple Flag)

Bob Bush Memorial Award for First Book of Poetry (\$1,000)

Noel Crook, *Salt Moon* (Southern Illinois University Press); Jonathan Fink, *The Crossing* (Dzanc Books); J. Scott Brownlee, *Requiem for Used Ignition Cap* (The Orison Poetry Prize)

Edwin "Bud" Shrake Award for Short Nonfiction (\$1,000)

Melissa del Bosque, "Death on Sevenmile Road," in *Texas Observer* (March 2015); W.K. Stratton, "My Brother's Secret," in *Texas Monthly* (February 2015); Chris Ellery, "A Boy of Bethany," in *Rosebud 60* (Fall/Winter 2015)

Kay Cattarulla Award for Best Short Story (\$1,000)

Rick Bass, "The Blue Tree," in *Whitefish Review*; Brian Van Reet, "The Chaff," in *Iowa Review*; Miles Wilson, "Tough," in *Georgia Review*

H-E-B/Jean Flynn Award for Best Children's Book (\$500)

Liz Garton Scanlon, *The Great Good Summer* (Beach Lane Books); Anne Bustard, *Anywhere But Paradise* (EgmontUSA); Don Tate, *The Remarkable Story of George Moses Horton: Poet* (Peachtree Publishers)

H-E-B Best Young Adults Book (\$500)

David Bowles, *The Smoking Mirror* (IFWG Publishing), Brian Yansky, *Utopia, Iowa* (Candlewick); Rene S. Perez II, *Seeing Off the Johns* (Cinco Puntos Press)

Denton Record-Chronicle Award for Best Children's Picture Book (\$500)

Pat Mora, *The Remembering Day / El día de los muertos* (Arte Público Press); Kathi Appelt, *Counting Crows* (Atheneum Books for Young Readers); Chris Barton, *The Nutcracker Comes to America* (Millbrook Press)

Fred Whitehead Award for Best Design of a Trade Book (\$750)

Bryce Milligan, *Rosengren's Books* by Mary Carolyn Hollers George (Wings Press); Andrea Caillouet, *The Luck Archive: Exploring Belief, Superstition, and Tradition* by Mark Menjivar (Trinity University Press); Mary Ann Jacob, *Feeding Wild Birds in America* by Paul J. Baicich, Margaret A. Barker, and Carrol L. Henderson (Texas A&M University Press)

Soeurette Diehl Fraser Award for Best Translation of a Book (\$1,000)

Marian Schwartz, *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy (Yale University Press); Travis Sorenson, *The Milli Vanilli Condition: Essays on Culture in the New Millennium* by Eduardo Espina (Arte Público Press); Nicolas Kanellos, *When Mexico Recaptures Texas: Essays* by Carmen Boullosa (Arte Público Press).

The Texas Institute of Letters' annual reception and awards banquet will take place on Friday and Saturday, April 15 and 16, at the AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center and at the Bullock Texas State History Museum. The Saturday banquet will be preceded by the induction of and readings by new members.

Membership is by invitation only, based on a substantial contribution to Texas literature and culture. However, the Friday night reception, featuring music and readings by some of Texas' best poets, and the Saturday night banquet are open to the public. The cost is \$50, which includes admission to both events.