

## TIL Spring/Summer 2018 Newsletter



### **Greetings from the President**

Dear TIL-eros:

Welcome to the Coyotes-in-July issue of the TIL Newsletter. Wow, thanks to your impressive slew of literary achievements, our dedicated and brilliant Secretary, Cary Clack, has amassed scores of distinctions and announcements for our distinguished “letrados” of the TIL into a fascinating mosaic for your reading pleasure.

In the meanwhile, your humble Prez, VP, and Treasurer are continuing to plot sheer brilliance and literary light-shows for the upcoming 2019 TIL Awards Banquet. Please reserve Friday April 26 and Saturday April 27 in McAllen, Texas for the Annual Awards Weekend. This is one you DEFINITELY will not want to miss, as it should include an international reading (probably

along the border wall) plus Literary Excerpt Poster exhibit (ON the wall?) and a lot of cultural and historical tours plus some dynamite readings and fine food at an exceptional resort hotel. Please mark the dates on your calendar and we will be getting more details out to you soon.

But our organization is about a lot more than just the fun getaways to exotic places in Texas, the impressive line on your resume saying “Inducted into the Texas Institute of Letters”, and the scintillating conversation and stunning literary readings at our Annual Awards Weekend. The TIL strives to create a writer-friendly support system, a community of creative thinkers and sharp analysts who bear the courage to create, the persistence to publish, and the genius to craft words into visions. Having the camaraderie and the friendship of other writers can provide us stimulation, support, and inspiration.

And why Coyotes in July? We should be impressed with an animal that manages to survive and adapt and still howl out its song even at midnight in the cañones of Texas. This is the song we each struggle to sing out in our writing, no matter how much struggle and persistence it takes...

So, keep on writing, keep on singing out your song of life and truth and ánimo, and MARK your calendars to gather together in a special moment this coming April 26-27, 2019, in McAllen, Texas, right on the Rio Grande. Hasta muy pronto, mis compañeros TIL-eros!


Su Presidenta,  
Carmen Tafolla

P.S.


If any of you are eager to be on a judging committee, please contact the Wonderful Cary Clack (also known in underground circles as the Grand Secretary of the TIL.)

### **Announcements About Our TIL Members**

**Robert Flynn**, winner of the inaugural Voice of Texas Award from Voices de La Luna, recently published a nonfiction piece, “Guns and Hard Candy” in Voices de la Luna literary arts journal.



**VOICES DE LA LUNA**  
invites you to  
**The Inaugural VOICES OF TEXAS**  
Celebration honoring  
**Texas Literary Legend**  
**Robert Flynn**



**SILENT AUCTION:**

Season tickets for two  
for the Classic Theatre

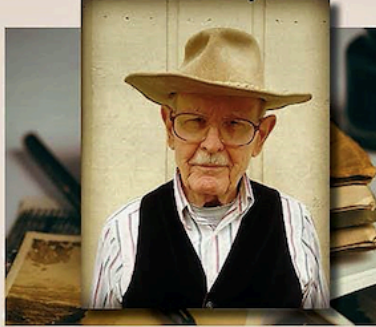
Napa wine, Napa Art

Signed poetry books  
by the Poets Laureate  
of Texas and San  
Antonio

Painting by Kathy  
Sosa

Collector's signed  
copy, Lawrence  
Ferlinghetti

One-hour massage -  
and more!



**Raffle Prize:**  
The famous  
"Storyteller's  
Chair"

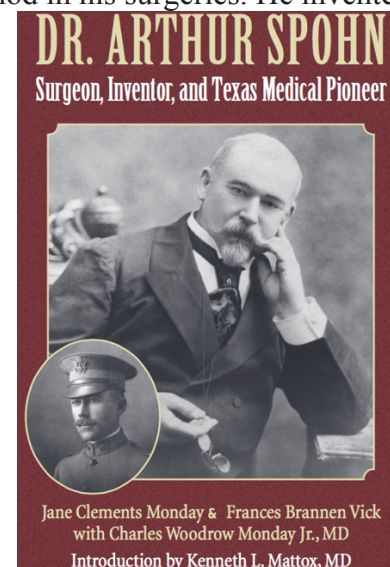
Food catered  
by FrankieB

Music by  
Terry Musaka

Autographed  
books available

Dress: Texas  
Literary

**Frances Vick**, along with her husband Charles and Jane Monday, and husband Charles, put to bed their book, "Dr. Arthur Spohn: Surgeon, Inventor, and Texas Medical Pioneer," The due out in October from Texas A&M University Press. Spohn, a Canadian who got to Texas as a citizen surgeon with the US Army, was stationed at the forts along the Rio Grande and then Corpus Christi, where he became the doctor of the Kings and Kenedys and ended up marrying the Kenedy's only daughter, Sarah. Dr. Spohn introduced the first rabies vaccine to the US, and still holds the Guinness World Record for removing the largest tumor--328 pounds--and the patient survived. He was adamant about using the Lister antiseptic method in his surgeries. He invented



the rubber-ring tourniquet used by the military around the world.

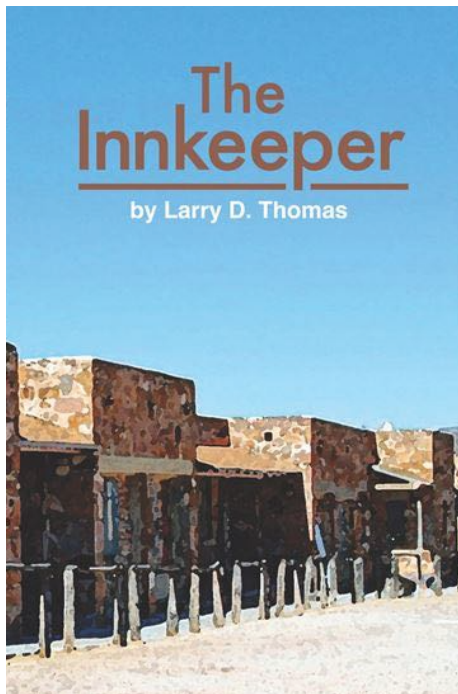
**José E. Limon** presented a paper, "Laura Krey, a Texas Agrarian: The Sewanee Review Essays" at the annual meeting of the American Literature Association. The paper about Texas writer

Laura Krey (1890-1985) and her connection to the Southern Agrarians, is a chapter in his book-in-progress, *Neither Friends, Nor Strangers: Anglos and Mexicans in the Literary Making of Texas*.

**Lynn Hoggard's** most recent poetry collection, *Bushwhacking Homes* (TCU Press, 2017) has won first place in the Press Women of Texas Competition (2018).

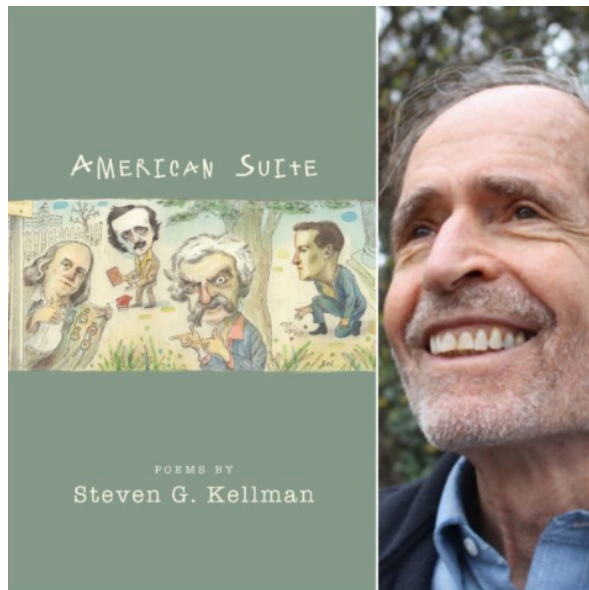
**Stephen Harrigan** has just finished writing *Big Wonderful Thing: The History of Texas*. Much copy editing and fact checking ahead—it's over 300,000 words!— but it will be published in Fall 2019 by the University of Texas Press. He's also at work on a new novel for Knopf, and co-wrote with TIL-member Elizabeth Crook the screenplay for the film adaptation of her novel *The Which Way Tree*, produced by and starring Robert Duvall.

**Larry D. Thomas's** poem, "Dayroom," was selected as first runner-up for the 2017/2018 Switchgrass Review Poetry Prize sponsored by Texas A&M University/Corpus Christi. Thomas served as final judge for the 2017 Writers' League of Texas Book Awards (poetry category), and he also served as preliminary judge for the 2017 X. J. Kennedy Poetry Prize (Texas Review Press). His most recent poetry collection, *The Innkeeper*, was released by Mouthfeel Press in March 2018 ([www.mouthfeelpress.com](http://www.mouthfeelpress.com)).



**Steven G. Kellman's** first book of poetry, *American Suite*, will be published in September by Finishing Line Press.





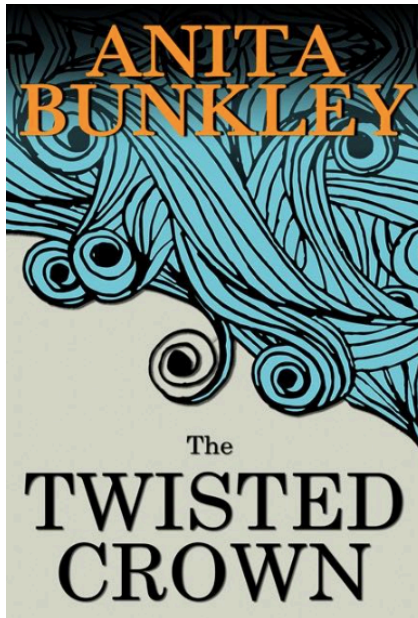
**Ron Tyler** has a book coming out this fall from the University of Oklahoma Press, *Western Art, Western History: Collected Essays*, discussing the work of a number of artists who worked in the American West from early 19<sup>th</sup> century until early 20<sup>th</sup> century: Louis Choris, Karl Bodmer, Alfred Jacob Miller, John James Audubon, government survey artists, George Caleb Bingham, Alfred Mathews, and Frederic Remington. He has also written the catalogue introduction for an exhibition this fall at the Martin Museum of Art at Baylor, *John James Audubon: Life, Work, Legacy*, on view September 29-November 11.

**C.M. Mayo's** *Dispatch from the Sister Republic or, Papelito Habla*, a longform essay about the Mexican literary landscape and the power of the book, has been published on Kindle, and an edited and annotated transcript of her talk about her book, *Metaphysical Odyssey into the Mexican Revolution: Francisco I. Madero and His Secret Book, Spiritist Manual* (Dancing Chiva, 2014) is forthcoming in the Journal of Big Bend Studies.

**Lonn Taylor's** new book of essays about Texas writers and Texas books, *Turning the Pages of Texas*, with a foreword by past TIL president Steve Davis, had been accepted for publication by Texas Christian University Press. The book will be designed and illustrated by TIL member Barbara Whitehead. Some TIL members may find themselves profiled in it, but Taylor says that most of the writers he writes about have passed away. "My lawyer tells me you can't libel a dead person," Taylor says. Taylor is now at work on a memoir about his boyhood in the Philippine Islands, where his family lived from 1946 to 1955.

**Anita Bunkley's** latest work of historical fiction, *The Twisted Crown* (Rinard Publishing) is set for release in September. The novel takes readers into the war-ravaged landscape of Reconstruction-era Charleston, South Carolina as Eva Phillips, a spirited young widow whose husband died while fighting with the 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry, leaves her home in Boston to search for the African mother who gave her away twenty-one years ago. Anita's novel was inspired by the unusual life of her great-grandfather, a white carpetbagger who entered South

Carolina after the Civil War, married a woman of color, and amassed large tracts of land, some of which remain in Anita's family today.



**Marion Winik's** new collection, due in October from Counterpoint, includes many TIL members including the late Susan Bright, Gary Cartwright, Margaret Moser, and Lewis Nordan, as well as the great friend of literature, Mary Margaret Farabee. The new book "The Baltimore Book of the Dead" is a sequel to "The Glen Rock Book of the Dead" (2005) -- both are collections of very brief essays remembering people who have died, as well as a few non-people: a dog, a fish, a house, a river. The 61 subjects are not named in the pieces, so it's a bit of a guessing game to identify "The Warrior Poetess," "The Old Rake," "The Queen of the Scene," and others. Marion will return to Austin to sign books at BookPeople on October 15th, and is hoping to be at the Texas Book Festival as well. If you have any questions or thoughts for her, she's at [maliwali@aol.com](mailto:maliwali@aol.com)."

Here she is, hanging out at Green Mount Cemetery, the location of the last piece in the book. Also, the cover.



**Tracy Daugherty** has a biography of Billy Lee Brammer forthcoming in October from the University of Texas Press. It's called *Leaving the Gay Place: Billy Lee Brammer and the Great Society*. Also forthcoming, in spring 2019 from Yale University Press, a book called *Dante's Astronomer*, about a Victorian-era solar astronomer and Dante scholar named Mary Evershed. She recently published a new short story in the recent Gettysburg Review and an essay on science and writing in the new Writer's Chronicle.

**Joe Holley** has a March deadline for his book about Sutherland Springs, the little town east of San Antonio that lost 26 members of the local Baptist Church to a mass shooter. The working title is *When Peace Like a River. . . God, Guns and Desperate Hope in a Small Texas Town* and the publisher is the Hachette Group. Trinity University Press also is bringing out a second volume of his "Native Texan" columns from the Houston Chronicle, probably in early 2019.

**Judy Alter** will have two new titles out this fall. *Contract for Chaos*, the eighth novel in her Kelly O'Connell Mysteries, brings racism to the streets of Fort Worth (fictional, of course). And in November, her second cookbook, *Gourmet on a Hot Plate*, will launch. It's the product of her two years in a tiny cottage with an infinitesimal kitchen—no stove, no oven, no dishwasher, an induction hot plate, a toaster oven, and a huge refrigerator, plus family to cook for and plenty of friends to entertain. Judy also reports that she celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in July surrounded by family and friends. Retirement is great, according to the former director of TCU Press.

**Robert Cashion's** *Lone Star Mind--Reimagining Texas History* should be released by The University of Oklahoma Press sometime around late October. Their fall catalog states: "Framing

the search for a collective Texan identity in the context of a post-Christian age and the end of Anglo male hegemony, *Lone Star Mind* illuminates the many historiographical issues besetting American history....A clear-sighted, far-reaching work of intellectual history, this book marshals a wide array of pertinent scholarship, analysis, and original ideas to point the way toward a new 'usable past' that twenty-first-century Texans will find relevant."



**William Martin's** biography, *A Prophet with Honor: The Billy Graham Story*, first published by William Morrow in 1991, has been updated with four new chapters, bringing the account of Graham's life and ministry up through the 2017 inauguration of Donald Trump. The new edition, released in late February, is published by Zondervan.

**Ann Weisgarber's** next novel, *The Glovemaker*, will be released in early February, and she's ready to get the show on the road. She states "The film project for The Personal History of Rachel DuPree with Viola Davis playing the lead fell apart at the last minute but wine and chocolate zapped my disappointment in no time flat. In other news, I had the chance this year to serve as a judge for one of the Dobie Paisano fellowships. It was time consuming but rewarding. The best part? Getting to meet and work with other TIL members."

**Pat Mora's** picture book in verse, *Bookjoy, Wordjoy* was published in July 2018 by Lee & Low Books. *Encantado, Desert Monologues* will be published in Fall, 2018, by University of Arizona Press. She continues working with organizations across the country including TLA and TSLAC in promoting Children's Day, Book Day--all children, all cultures, all languages--as a yearlong commitment with culminating celebrations every April 30th.

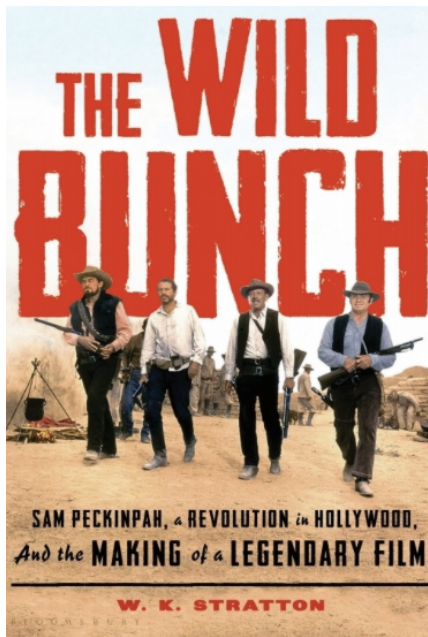
**James Crisp** has a chapter in the forthcoming multi-authored work from Louisiana State University Press entitled *Writing History with Lightning: Cinematic Representations of Nineteenth-Century America*. Crisp's chapter is on the John Wayne and Billy Bob Thornton ALAMO movies of 1960 and 2004.

In addition, these last 6 months since the last TIL newsletter, he has progressed another 9 chapters (of Herman Ehrenberg's total of 34 chapters) -- annotating and explicating his memoir



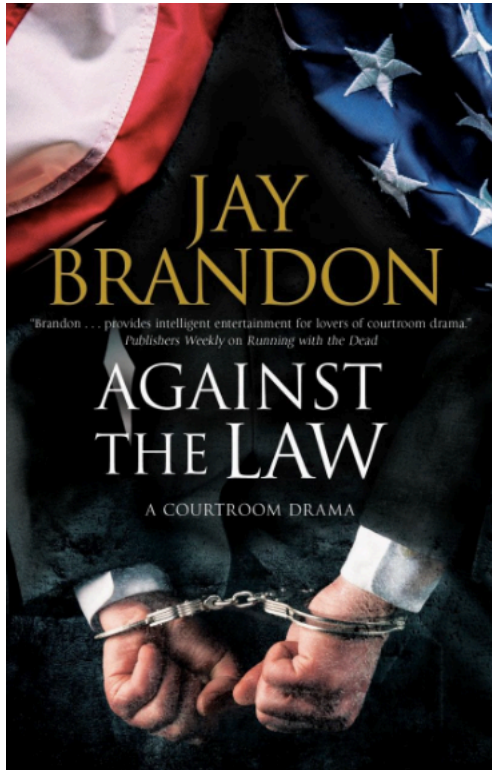
of the Texas Revolution. He comments, “I’m now sweating out the crucial chapters 16 through 18 (on the Battle of Coleto, the imprisonment at Goliad, and the murder of the prisoners). There’s an enormous amount of data to wade through, but I’m having fun with it every day.” He’ll be giving a longer talk, about San Antonio during the years of the Texas Republic, for the GLO’s symposium on September 15. He invites us with his usual good humor, “Hecklers are welcome.”

**W.K. (Kip) Stratton's** book *The Wild Bunch: Sam Peckinpah, a Revolution in Hollywood, and the Making of a Legendary Film* went into production in early July at Bloomsbury in New York. Kip has been working on the book since 2013. The film is extraordinary in many ways, not the least of which is the landmark contributions made to it by Mexican and Mexican-American actors and film crew members, which Kip documents for the first time. Among other things, he discovered that Raul Madero, younger brother of Francisco Madero (father of the Mexican Revolution) appeared in a cameo in *The Wild Bunch*. The *Wild Bunch* movie turns 50 years old in June 2019; Kip's book will be published in February to be available in time for the anniversary. Galleys should be out at the end of this summer.



**Ben Fountain's** book *Beautiful Country Burn Again*, which is based on a series of essays he wrote for the Guardian over the course of the 2016 presidential campaign, will be published by Ecco/HarperCollins in September 2018.

**Jay Brandon's** 19th novel, *Against The Law*, was published in June. He celebrated with great signings at The Twig in San Antonio and Book People in Austin. Booklist called it, 'A fine, tense legal thriller with an offbeat plot.'



**William Sibley** spent the month of June high (9000' above sea level) in the New Mexico mountains finishing up a new novel. He reports in, "Almost done - but still a bit more to go. With the help of my faithful 4-legged companion, 'Remy,' work proceeded uninterrupted and 'doggerel-free.'"



**Gerald Duff's** newest novel, *Memphis Luck*, a comic hard core mystery, was published July 1.

**Steven Schneider** traveled to Hunan Province, China, for the opening of his exhibit *The Magic of Mariachi*, based on the 24 poems in Steven's book *The Magic of Mariachi / La Magia del Mariachi* and the 24 pastel paintings of musicians and dancers in the book. Steven's poems were translated into Chinese for the show, which opened May 21, 2018, at Hengyang Normal University (HYNU.) President Pi of HYNU said the exhibit "shows the truth of art without borders."



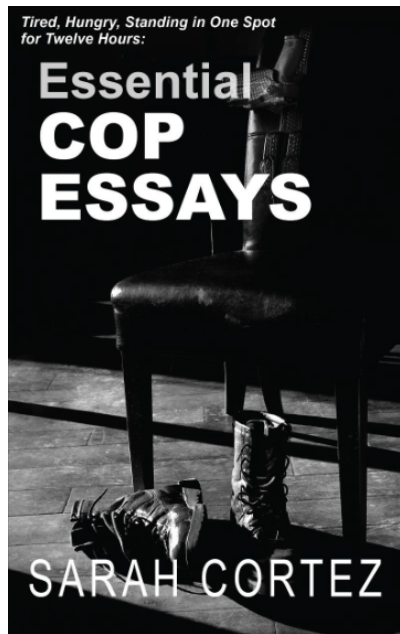
**Steve Davis** has now been released back into the general population after serving his two-year sentence as TIL President. In his newly abundant spare time, he is at work on an anthology called *The Essential J. Frank Dobie*. “Dobie could often be a very fine writer, underneath all that brush-choked prose,” Davis says. “You can even see instances where Cormac McCarthy, of all people, very closely adapted Dobie’s prose into his own work. With just a little pruning Dobie easily comes alive for modern readers. What I’m doing is editing Dobie’s most personal and consequential writings and collecting them into a single volume. His observations on the environment and social justice, along with the vibrant social history he recorded, distinguish him as a writer with timeless appeal.”

Back in January, Davis and his writing compadre, fellow TIL-er **Bill Minutaglio** published *The Most Dangerous Man in America: Timothy Leary, Richard Nixon & the Hunt for the Fugitive King of LSD*. The follow-up to their PEN USA-winning Dallas 1963, this book received glowing reviews and has been optioned for film. Davis is still reveling in the world tour he and Minutaglio enjoyed, which carried them from Austin to Houston to San Antonio. “Our publisher was very astute in identifying the Texas market as the most natural target for a book touting a psychedelic outlaw on the run from a madman president,” Davis says. “They clearly spared no expense in promoting us and our work.”

Photo attached: Nixon bowling, from the “most dangerous man” book.



**Sarah Cortez's** book of personal essays, *Tired, Hungry, Standing In One Spot For Twelve Hours: Essential Cop Essays*, has been released by Texas Review Press. One of her poems recently placed second in the annual Press Women of Texas awards. Upcoming is a short fiction piece in *Houston Noir* (Akashic Press, Brooklyn). Sarah was recently named one of Houston's "Breakout Women" by the Greater Houston Women's Chamber of Commerce. Recent book and/or teaching trips include the Tucson Festival of Books, Alabama Writers Conclave, Women



Writing the West Conference in Tucson.  
at [www.sarahcortezcop.com](http://www.sarahcortezcop.com).

More info available

**Kathryn Jones'** essay "Revelation in the Desert: Making History Personal" will be included in a volume of essays to be published next year by the University Press of Kentucky to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Sam Peckinpah's ground-breaking film, *The Wild Bunch*. The essay discusses Jones' childhood in the Nueces Strip and how history and fiction interweave in the film to reveal truths about the borderland. Jones also is finishing her biography of the Academy Award-winning actor and real cowboy Ben Johnson, to be published by the University Press of Mississippi as part of its "Hollywood Legends" series. It is the first critical and unauthorized biography of the actor, who was won the Oscar for Best Supporting Actor for his portrayal of Sam the Lion in *The Last Picture Show* based on Larry McMurtry's classic Texas novel.

**Sarah Bird** reports, "My good news/incredible relief is that I just received two pre-publication reviews and, WHEW!!, they are both okay!!" Both reviews listed at the sites below:

<https://www.publishersweekly.com/9781250193162?perma=more>

<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/sarah-bird/daughter-of-a-daughter-of-a-queen/>

**Karla K. Morton** won the National Cowboy Heritage Wrangler Award in Oklahoma City for her poetry book *Wooden Lions*, and just learned "Wooden Lions" is a Finalist for the Will Rogers Medallion Award. This photo is at the Oklahoma City black-tie ceremony with fellow Wrangler award winner Barry Corbin. Morton was also invited to read at the Strokestown International Poetry Festival in Strokestown, Ireland in May.

Morton is 27 Parks into her *Words of Preservation: Poets Laureate National Parks Tour* with fellow Texas Poet Laureate Alan Birkelbach, with their next Parks being Yosemite, Hawaii and the Samoa Islands. They are visiting all 60 National Parks, writing poetry and taking photos,



with a percentage of the sales from the forthcoming book going back to the Park System to help celebrate the next 100 years of America's greatest treasures!



**Sergio Troncoso** recently published a review essay of Alfredo Corchado's *Homelands* in *Texas Monthly*, June 2018. This year Troncoso also has short stories forthcoming in the *New Guard Literary Review* ("Fragments of a Dream") and *Yale Review* ("Eternal Return"). Recently he was featured in *Understanding Publication Contracts* ("an author as well as a savvy negotiator"), a publication by Authors Alliance, a nonprofit law group from the University of California, Berkeley that helps authors understand and defend their publication rights. Finally, Troncoso will publish a new book of short stories, *At the Edge of the Edge: A Collection of Short Fiction*, with Cinco Puntos Press in 2019.

**Barbara Whitehead** is busy making linocut illustrations for *Turning the Pages of Texas* by Lonn Taylor for TCU Press. She is cutting portraits of at least 9 Texas writers that Lonn has written about in his newspaper column in Marfa, "The Rambling Boy". She will also design the book, which has a 2019 publication date.



**Lee and Bobby Byrd**, Cinco Puntos co-founders, along with son and CEO Johnny Byrd, received the [2018 Lord Nose Award from the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines and Presses](#). The award celebrates the legendary Independent publisher Jonathan Williams and his Jargon Society Books. Cinco Puntos continues to publish books by some of the top authors in the nation, including TIL members. In September they'll be publishing David Bowles' middle-grade collection of poems [They Call Me Güero, A Border Kid's Poems](#). In the Spring, they'll publish Lisa Sandlin's sequel to her much celebrated and award winning crime novel, *The Do-Right*; and in the Fall-Winter 2019-20 Season, they'll be publishing Sergio Troncoso's collection of short fiction, tentatively titled *At the Edge of the Edge*.

**Terry Dalrymple** is part of a unique collection of interwoven fiction, by Dalrymple, Jerry Craven, and Andrew Geyer, called *Dancing on Barbed Wire*, set to be released in September by Angelina River Press. The three will also conduct a session about collaborative writing at the annual meeting of the Texas Association of Creative Writing Teachers in September. At the same conference, Dalrymple will read three new flash fictions, one of which, "Tire Swing," will appear in the October issue of Sky Island Journal.

**Clifford Hudder** joined several thousand of his closest and much younger friends at Reed Arena in College Station, Texas, this May, receiving his PhD in American Literature. His dissertation, *The Capital of Elsewhere*, was a geocritical analysis of Houston fiction writers.

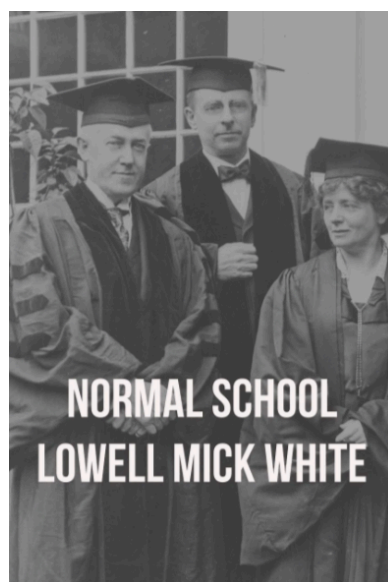
**Reginald Gibbons** is the director of the new full-time MFA (in creative writing) +MA (in English) program at Northwestern University starting in the fall, when the first students arrive; students are fully supported financially. His big poem on the current president of these United States--an adaptation of an ancient poem by the Greek poet Pindar, addressed to an ancient tyrant--is online at [atlengthmag.com/poetry/two-responses-to-donald-trump/](http://atlengthmag.com/poetry/two-responses-to-donald-trump/)

**Carol Coffee Reposa**, the new 2018 State Poet Laureate of Texas, has recent poems appearing or forthcoming in *Literary San Antonio*, *The Enigmatist*, *The 2019 Texas Poetry Calendar*, *The San Antonio Express-News*, *Voices de la Luna*, and *The Langdon Review of the Arts*. Although like Secretary Clack she would like to secede from the Texas heat, she hit the road this spring and summer, giving presentations and workshops at Baylor University, San Antonio College, Landa Library (San Antonio), and the Scissortail Writers' Conference. In May she had the honor of reading for the first time ever with Bob Flynn at the Voices de la Luna spring fundraiser and continues to bask in the memory. She also was pleased, if surprised, to learn that her poem "Venice" took first place in the Switchgrass Review Poetry Contest, but more surprising still was her completion at long last of a fifth manuscript of poetry, *Sailing West*. Wonders never cease? Meanwhile, she keeps on dreaming of ice floes and polar bears.

**Celeste Walker's** *Camp Logan* will be featured in the Wittliff Collection's new exhibit, *Literary Frontiers: Historical Fiction & the Creative Imagination*, which highlights the various takes of Texas History by literary writers. Her children's show, *Freedom Train*, about a family's escape from a Texas plantation to Mexico in 1844 through the Underground Railroad, ran all the month of Feb. in schools, libraries, etc. It played Miller Outdoor Theater Apr. 26 and July 17. There are some performances scheduled in October.

**Marian Schwartz** will be reading from her forthcoming translation of Leonid Yuzefovich's *Horsemen of the Sands* (Archipelago Books) at Malvern Books in Austin on September 30<sup>th</sup> in celebration of International Translation Day, alongside Philip Boehm, winner of the TIL's 2018 Soeurette Diehl Frasier Award for Translation of Hannah Krall's award-winning book, *Chasing the King of Hearts* (Feminist Press.)

**Lowell Mick White** has a new book, a gothic novel-in-stories titled *Burnt House*. Not set in Texas, but it's good! His other writing project is a serialized novel titled *Normal School*, an academic noir and a sequel of sorts to his novel *Professed* (2013.) He'll be posting it online at [www.normalschoolnovel.com](http://www.normalschoolnovel.com) from now until mid-2019. Also—the press he helps run, Alamo Bay Press, has just published a terrific poetry collection by TIL member Dave Oliphant, titled *Austin: a Poem*.



**Carmen Tafolla** Carmen Tafolla has two new books out. Her latest book of poetry was released from TCU Press in June as part of their Poet Laureate Series -- *Carmen Tafolla: New and Selected Poems*. And her Spanish translation of *The Amazing Watercolor Fish*, a bilingual picture book from Arte Publico, was listed on Top 20 new Spanish releases at Amazon. She was also named to ANLE , the North American branch of the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language, and was commissioned this spring to write the inaugural poems for two different university presidents. Last month, the city of San Antonio unveiled a new Public Art sculpture with excerpts of her poetry engraved into the design. Carmen has delivered several keynotes this spring including the Trinity Mellon lecture at the International Latina Writers Seminar, the ILLAS Banned Books Lecture, and the Gemini Ink Writers Conference.

**Naomi Shihab Nye's** *Voices in the Air - Poems for Listeners*, was published by Greenwillow - HarperCollins. She is honored to have accepted a Visiting Creative Writer faculty position at Texas State University as well as continuing her many far-flung writing travels through The Steven Barclay Agency, some of which included: working for the first ever Hawaiian Teachers Fellowship through the Merwin Conservancy, held on Maui; giving the Arbuthnot Lecture about

Children's Literature in Bellingham, Washington; working at The American School of Dubai, a fantastic 50-year-old institution, for two full weeks in March; being back in Oman after 10 years as Writer-in-Residence at The American International School; participating in a project organized by poet Major Jackson at Harvard; reading together with long-time friend Cathy Song at Honolulu Museum of Art, where they were introduced by Maya



Soetoro-Ng, President Obama's sister.

***Literary Frontiers: Historical Fiction & the Creative Imagination***, the Wittliff Collection's new exhibition will be on view from August 1 through December 14, 2018. It showcases how the epic sweep of Texas history has inspired the work of many of our greatest writers, many of whom have won the TIL's top fiction award.



## **New Dobie Paisano Fellows**

Brian Van Reet was awarded the Ralph A. Johnston Memorial Fellowship. His residency will run from September through December 31. Michelle Garcia was awarded the Jess Jones Fellowship. Her residency will run from February 1 through July 31st, 2019. I encourage you to visit the website of each.

Brian Van Reet was born in Houston and grew up there and in Maryland. Following the September 11 attacks, he left the University of Virginia, where he was an Echols Scholar, and enlisted in the U.S. Army as a tank crewman. He was deployed to Baghdad under stop-loss orders and received a Bronze Star for valor. After an honorable discharge, he completed degrees in English at the University of Missouri and an M.F.A. at the University of Texas Michener Center for Writers.

Van Reet began publishing short fiction in 2008, three years after returning from Iraq. His stories have won the Gulf Coast Prize, been named distinguished stories in the Best American anthology, and twice won the Texas Institute of Letters short story award. His essays and articles have appeared in the Guardian, the New York Times, the Washington Post, and elsewhere.

In 2017 his first novel, *Spoils*, was published in multiple languages and territories around the world. The book won the Balcones Fiction Prize and was longlisted or a finalist for the Colby Award, the Center for Fiction First Novel Prize, and the Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence. It was named one of the year's best books by the Guardian, Military Times, British GQ, the New Zealand Listener, and the Wall Street Journal, which called it "the finest Iraq War novel yet written by an American."

Michelle Garcia is a journalist and essayist reporting from New York City, Texas and Mexico, where she has covered stories related to violence, trauma, and organized crime. She is the former Texas correspondent for the Columbia Journalism Review and a former columnist for the Texas Observer. In 2016, she was ranked 4th on BuzzFeed's list of Women Writers Gay Talese Should Read. She is currently working on a narrative non-fiction book about the West, Texas, masculinity and myth. She is a Member of Pen America. Her work has appeared in the Oxford American, Guernica, The New York Times, Columbia Journalism Review, The Atlantic's Quartz, Insight Crime, NACLA, Christian Science Monitor, Salon, The Nation, AlJazeera America, among others. In 2014, she was awarded a grant from the Nation Investigative Fund to report on the dangers faced by journalists in Mexico. She reported from The Washington Post New York bureau for three years. Her essay, "On the Texas Borderline, a Solid, if Invisible, Wall" appeared in the Post's Style section and became the inspiration for her documentary project, "Tell'em Who You Are."

PBS acquired her documentary film, "Against Mexico-the making of heroes and enemies," which explores the reenactments, also known as living history, of the Texas Revolution. The film can be viewed online at pbs.org. PBS Newshour featured Against Mexico as part of its 2012 election coverage. Her video reports have appeared on Time.com, the multimedia site for the magazine. They include coverage of the violence in Ciudad Juárez, the construction of the border fence in South Texas and the plight of the Sahrawi refugees in the Sahara desert.



Her journalism roots belong in public radio. She has reported for NPR's Justice Talking, Day to Day, Latino USA and PRI's The World, Marketplace and the Next Big Thing. Public radio documentaries include investigations into the spread of HIV/AIDS on the U.S.-Mexico border, women and violence in El Salvador and labor abuses in the post Katrina Gulf Coast.



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