



John Rechy Wins Lifetime Achievement Award from the Texas Institute of Letters

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The Texas Institute of Letters proudly announces the naming of John Rechy, El Paso native and best-selling novelist, as the winner of the prestigious Lon Tinkle Award for Lifetime Achievement. This is the highest honor given by the TIL, which was established in 1936 to recognize and celebrate the state's literary artists. The award will be presented to Rechy in Georgetown, Texas at its March 28, 2020 Awards Banquet.

Rechy is the author of fourteen novels, two non-fiction books, three plays, a memoir, numerous essays and literary reviews, and books which have become classics in the core curriculum of Chicano Literature, American Studies, and Gay Fiction. His books have been translated into twenty languages. TIL President Carmen Tafolla calls Rechy's work "a significant turning point in modern American literature, and a prose so poetically crafted it sharpens our perception of both the beauty and the ache of the human experience."

Called by Gore Vidal "One of the few original American writers of the last century" Rechy is the first novelist to receive PEN USA WEST's Lifetime Achievement Award (1997.) When John Rechy published his first novel, *City of Night* (1963), it became a national bestseller and marked a groundbreaking departure in American literature, ushering in a new era of gay fiction. Larry McMurtry said of it, "Probably no novel published in this decade is so complete, so well held together, and so important as *City of Night*." The Washington Post called it "one of the major books to be published since World War II.") Rechy has been widely acclaimed, and among his honors are the 2018 Lambda Literary Award, the William Whitehead Award for Lifetime Achievement, and UC Santa Barbara's Luis Leal Award.



Of this honor in his home state, Rechy said, "During the early years of my literary life, I did not expect to receive any recognition from the Texas Institute of Letters, a group I admired ...I suspected that I would be considered something of an outlier, not a conventional Texas writer, not a conventional Mexican/Chicano writer, and openly gay.... When I was told I was receiving

TIL's Lon Tinkle Award for Lifetime Achievement, I was both surprised and very proud to be very much a part of Texas' formidable contribution to literature. And that feels great.”

The [Texas Institute of Letters](http://www.TexasInstituteofLetters.org) is a non-profit 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, who have earned the acclamation of their peers. Previous Lifetime Achievement Award winners include Sandra Cisneros, Cormac McCarthy, Américo Paredes, Naomi Shihab Nye, Sarah Bird, Larry McMurtry, Vassar Miller, and Pat Mora, among others.

For more information on the Texas Institute of letters, visit our website, www.TexasInstituteofLetters.org.