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For Immediate Release

TEXAS INSTITUTE OF LETTERS ANNOUNCES 2019 LITERARY AWARDS

The Texas Institute of Letters has announced the selection of thirteen recipients of their Annual TIL Literary Awards based on the careful review of exemplary, recently published works. More than \$21,000 in award monies will be given to the recipients at the annual TIL Awards Banquet, which this year is scheduled to take place April 27th in McAllen, Texas.

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, and MacArthur "Genius" Grants.

The following authors have been named as recipients of the listed awards. This year, for the first time ever, there were two different authors who each won two awards, in different categories for separate works, and also two individuals who tied for first place in one of the categories, a rare occurrence in TIL's literary awards history. TIL President, Carmen Tafolla, takes this as "a sign of the ethical integrity of the awards, as each panel of judges is instructed to focus only on the literary goals of that award and the quality of the individual submission." There is no overlap of judges between committees and information is not shared with anyone outside the particular judging committee until the final results are reported to the President. Tafolla states, "Our judges have been carefully selected to ensure balance, integrity, and a lack of conflict of interest. They are accomplished writers judging excellent writing. And so many of our submitting authors produce several high-quality works a year that it's not too much of a surprise to me that a writer would win more than one award."

Winners this year include nationally recognized poet and former Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets, San Antonian Naomi Shihab Nye, who is being recognized with the Lon Tinkle Lifetime Achievement Award for her entire body of work. Other award-winners include Ben Fountain, Natalia Sylvester, Brent Nongbri, David Bowles, Varian Johnson, Tarfia Faizullah, Clay Reynolds, Megan Peak, Chris Barton, and Steven Markley. The names of the winning works and awards appear below.

In addition, the Institute's Annual Awards Banquet will celebrate the induction of 17 new members to the Texas Institute of Letters, which has inducted in the past such notables as Cormac McCarthy, Larry McMurtry, Sandra Cisneros, Américo Paredes, Vassar Miller, and Ntozake Shange. Being inducted this spring are fiction writers Tim Z. Hernandez, Wendell Mayo,

and Ito Romo; filmmakers Wes Anderson and Jesús Salvador Treviño; playwright Eugene Lee; poets Rosa Alcalá, Robin Davidson, Betty Sue Flowers, and Carrie Fountain; non-fiction writer Wes Ferguson and journalist John MacCormack; scholars Patrick Cox and Ellen Clarke Temple; children's author Xavier Garza; children's book author and songwriter Tish Hinojosa; and theater critic/playwright Robert Faires.

For more information on the TIL or on attending this spring's awards Banquet, contact president@texasinstituteofletters.org. Or see the TIL website at www.texasinstituteofletters.org.

TIL AWARD WINNERS:

Naomi Shihab Nye: who is being recognized with the Lon Tinkle Lifetime Achievement Award for a lifetime of distinction in letters. A former Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets, Nye has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the Jane Adams Children's Book Award, The Paterson Poetry Prize, four Pushcarts, and a Guggenheim Fellowship, and her most recent collections of poetry include *Transfer* (2011),



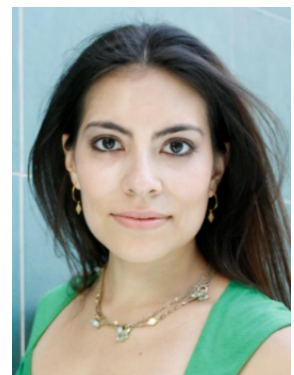
Voices in the Air: Poems for Listeners (2018), and *The Tiny Journalist* (2019).

Ben Fountain: Winner of the Carr P. Collins Award for Best Book of Non-Fiction, for *Beautiful Country Burn Again: Democracy, Rebellion, and Revolution* (Ecco)



Finalists: *Francisco Cantú, for *The Line Becomes a River: Dispatches from the Border* and *Lawrence Wright, for *God Save Texas: A Journey into the Soul of the Lone Star State*.

Natalia Sylvester: Winner of the Jesse H. Jones Award for Best Work of Fiction, for *Everyone Knows You Go Home* (Little A)



Finalists: *Sarah Bird, for *Daughter of a Daughter of a Queen* and *Miles Wilson, for *Woodwork*.

Stephen Markley: Winner of The Sergio Troncoso Award for Best Work of First Fiction, for *Ohio* (Simon & Schuster)

Finalists: *Diane DeSanders, for *Hap and Hazard and The End of the World* and *Fernando A. Flores, for *Death to the Bullshit Artists of South Texas*.



Tarfia Faizullah: Winner of The Helen C. Smith Memorial Award for Best Book of Poetry, for *Registers of Illuminated Villages* (Graywolf Press)

Finalists: *Bruce Bond, for *Rise and Fall of the Lesser Sun Gods* and *Cyrus Cassells, for *The Gospel According to Wild Indigo*.



Megan Peak: Winner of The John A. Robertson Award for Best First Book of Poetry, for *Girldom* (Perugia Press)

Finalists: *Rodney Gómez, for *Citizens of the Mausoleum* and *Analia Sotelo, for *Virgin*.



Brent Nongbri: Winner of The Ramirez Family Award for Most Significant Scholarly Book, for *God's Library: The Archaeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts* (Yale University Press)



Finalists: *J. Brooks Flippen, for *Speaker Jim Wright*, *Cristina Salinas, for *Managed Migrations*, and *Wayne Ludwig, for *Old Chisholm Trail*.

David Bowles: Winner of Texas Institute of Letters Best Young Adult Book, for *The Feathered Serpent, Dark Heart of Sky: Myths of Mexico* (Cinco Puntos Press)



And also Co-Winner of the Jean Flynn Award for Best Middle Grade Book, for *They Call Me Güero* (Cinco Puntos Press)

Finalists for the TIL Best Young Adult Book: *Guadalupe García McCall, for *All the Stars Denied* and *Christopher Carmona, for *El Rinche*.

Varian Johnson: Co-Winner of the Jean Flynn Award for Best Middle Grade Book, for *The Parker Inheritance* (Arthur A. Levine Books)



Chris Barton: Winner of The Texas Institute of Letters Best Children's Picture Book, for *What Can You Do with a Voice Like That?* (Beach Lane Books)

Finalist: *Xavier Garza, for *Just One Itsy Bitsy Little Bite/Solo una mordidita chiquitita*.



Clay Reynolds: Winner of The Edwin “Bud” Shrake Award for Best Short Nonfiction, “Railroad Man,” *New Madrid*, 2018.

And also winner of The Kay Catarulla Award for Best Short Story, “Autumn Moon,” *New Texas*, 2018.



Finalists for the Bud Shrake Award: *Bob Flynn, for “Guns and Hard Candy” and *Michael Hall, for “The Girl Who Told the Truth”.

Finalists for the Kay Catarulla Award: *Heath Dollar, for “Ink Upon the Furrows” and *Miles Wilson, for “Field of Vision”.