

For immediate release: July 20, 2020

Contact: Nanda Dyssou, nanda@corioliscompany.com

LARB
BOOKS



LOS ANGELES REVIEW OF BOOKS

TOMÁS RIVERA BOOK PRIZE FINALISTS ANNOUNCED BY LARB BOOKS

LOS ANGELES, CA - Tom Lutz, publisher of LARB Books, has announced the finalists of the inaugural Tomás Rivera Book Prize: Maceo Montoya, Toni Margarita Plummer, and J. L. Torres.

The Tomás Rivera Book Prize is a unique partnership between the *Los Angeles Review of Books* and the University of California, Riverside, committed to the discovery and fostering of extraordinary writing by an author whose work examines the long and varied contributions of Chicanx/Latinx in the United States.

Known for his seminal collection of stories, *...y no se lo tragó la tierra/ ...and the Earth Did Not Devour Him*, Rivera was the first Latino chancellor of the UC system and a champion of higher education and social justice. The Tomás Rivera Book Prize honors his legacy and his belief in the power of education, activism, and stories to change lives.

The award attracted applications from writers from California, Texas, the East Coast, and the Midwest.

“The selection committee was impressed by the quality of the manuscripts and the range of voices,” said Alex Espinoza, the current Tomás Rivera Endowed Chair of Creative Writing at UC Riverside and author of *The Five Acts of Diego León*, the first title published by LARB’s Libros series. “The three finalists selected exhibit the freshest and most innovative voices in Chicanx and Latinx prose in the country.”



Award finalist Maceo Montoya is a California-based author, artist, and educator who has published *The Scoundrel and the Optimist* (Bilingual Review, 2010); *The Deportation of Wopper Barraza* (University of New Mexico Press, 2014); *Letters to the Poet from His Brother* (Copilot Press, 2014), a hybrid book combining images, prose poems, and essays; *You Must Fight Them: A Novella and Stories* (University of New Mexico Press, 2015), which was a finalist for Foreword Review’s INDIEFAB Book of the Year Award; and *Chicano Movement for Beginners*, which he both wrote and illustrated. He is currently an associate professor of Chicanx culture and literature at UC Davis.



Toni Margarita Plummer, a finalist from Hudson Valley, is the author of the story collection *The Bolero of Andi Rowe* and won Honorable Mention for the 2019 Reynolds Price Prize in Fiction given by the Center for Women Writers. A Macondo Fellow and graduate of the Master of Professional Writing Program at USC, she is a contributor to the anthologies *East of East: The Making of Greater El Monte* and *Latina Outsiders Remaking Latina Identity*. She is a member of Latinx in Publishing and currently mentors a writer in its inaugural Writers Mentorship Program.



Finalist J. L. Torres is the author of *The Family Terrorist and Other Stories*; a novel, *The Accidental Native*; and the collection of poetry, *Boricua Passport*. He has published stories and poems in numerous journals and magazines, including the *North American Review*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Eckleburg Review*, *Puerto del Sol*, *Las Americas Review*, and the anthology *Growing Up Latino*. Born in Puerto Rico, raised in the South Bronx, he lives in Plattsburgh, New York, where he teaches American literature, US ethnic literatures, and creative writing at the SUNY campus there. Besides the PhD, he holds an MFA in creative writing from Columbia University.

The winner of the Prize will be announced on October 1, 2020, and will receive a \$1,000 prize; publication of the manuscript by LARB Libros, a series by LARB Books dedicated to highlighting emerging Latinx talent; and 10 copies of the book. Additionally, the winner will have a book signing at UC Riverside during Writers Week in 2021. The award's final judge will be Luis Alberto Urrea, Mexican-American novelist, poet, and essayist.

To request an interview or feature, please contact Nanda Dyssou, nanda@corioliscompany.com.

###

ABOUT THE LOS ANGELES REVIEW OF BOOKS The Los Angeles Review of Books (<http://lareviewofbooks.org>) is a nonprofit, multimedia magazine of literature and culture that combines the great American tradition of the serious book review with the evolving technologies of the web. We are a community of writers, critics, journalists, artists, filmmakers, and scholars dedicated to promoting and disseminating the best that is thought and written, with an enduring commitment to the intellectual rigor, the incisiveness, and the power of the written word.