



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

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PINEDA, GREEN, AND GOOLRICK RECEIVE LITERARY AWARDS

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(Richmond, Virginia) – The Library of Virginia is pleased to announce the winners of the 19th Annual Library of Virginia Literary Awards, sponsored by Dominion. The October 15 awards celebration was hosted by best-selling author and award-winning filmmaker Adriana Trigiani. Awards categories were poetry, nonfiction, fiction, and literary lifetime achievement. Winners of the Library of Virginia's Annual Literary Awards receive a monetary prize and a handsome engraved crystal book. This year the Library Board also presented its first ever Honorary Patron of Letters Degree.

Jon Pineda is the recipient of the **2016 Literary Award for Poetry** for *Little Anodynes*, which the judges felt was a beautifully crafted book employing memory and language as a way of salvaging the present. "Pineda uses form to navigate place and identity in a wonderful hybrid of verse and prose reminiscent of A. R. Ammons and even William Faulkner." With its perhaps paradoxical title, *Little Anodynes* is a big book with sequence of lyrical, personal narratives that explore Pineda's biracial identity, the death of his sister, and the joys and fears of fatherhood.

Jon Pineda was born in Charleston, South Carolina, and raised in Chesapeake, Virginia. Pineda, a poet, novelist, and nonfiction writer, is an assistant professor of English, linguistics, and communications at the University of Mary Washington, where he recently received the 2016 UMW Alumni Association Outstanding Young Faculty Member Award. His books include the novel *Apology*, winner of the 2013 Milkweed National Fiction Prize; the memoir *Sleep in Me*, a 2010 Barnes and Noble Discover Great New Writers selection; and the poetry collections *The Translator's Diary*, winner of the 2007 Green Rose Prize from *New Issues Poetry and Prose*, and *Birthmark*, winner of the 2003 Crab Orchard Award Series in Poetry Open Competition.

Pineda graduated from James Madison University and Virginia Commonwealth University. His work has appeared in *Poetry Northwest*, *The Literary Review*, *Sou'wester*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Many Mountains Moving*, *Asian Pacific American Journal*, *Puerto del Sol*, and elsewhere.

The other finalists for the poetry prize were: *Impossible Bottle* by Claudia Emerson and *The Regret Histories* by Joshua Poteat. The judges praised Emerson's work as "gracious, intense, and unapologetically self-reflective. One reads the poems in *Impossible Bottle*, which was published posthumously, with impending sorrow, recognizing that the worst thing about the book is that there won't be another one." *The Regret Histories* by Joshua Poteat tells a story that many people don't see. It was judged not merely a book about place but also one that speaks to relationships between a man, his history, and his home.

The winner of the **2016 Literary Award for Nonfiction** is **Kristen Green** for *Something Must Be Done about Prince Edward County*. The judges felt that Kristen Green, in grappling with the difficult questions about her family's complicity in the school closures and their legacy in Prince Edward County, demonstrates the truth of

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William Faulkner's adage that the past isn't even past—as the perceptions of scarcity, competition, and fear that were employed to justify segregation appear in today's headlines about schools, resources, and fair treatment.

Green, a journalist at newspapers including the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, *San Diego Union-Tribune*, and *Boston Globe*, grew up in Farmville, the only community in the nation to close its schools for five years rather than desegregate. She attended the all-white Prince Edward Academy, which did not admit black students until 1986. She earned her bachelor's degree at the University of Mary Washington and holds a master's degree in public administration from Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Something Must Be Done about Prince Edward County has received recognition as a *New York Times* Bestseller in Education and in Race and Civil Rights, a *New York Times Book Review* Editors' Choice, a Southern Indie Bestseller, a *Washington Post* Notable Nonfiction for 2015, and a Booklist Editors' Choice: Adult Books, 2015 selection. It was longlisted for the 2016 Andrew Carnegie Medals for Excellence in Nonfiction

The other nonfiction finalists were: *Twisted: My Dreadlock Chronicles* by Bert Ashe and *Madison's Hand: Revising the Constitutional Convention* by Mary Sarah Bilder. The judges lauded *Twisted* for its self-deprecating humor and thorough research. Ashe, an English and American studies professor at the University of Richmond, explores serious and poignant questions about identity and perception in 21st-century America. *Twisted* speaks about more than hair, just as *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* spoke about more than bike repair.

In *Madison's Hand* legal historian Mary Sarah Bilder uses both forensic techniques and old-fashioned research to demonstrate that in the five decades after the Philadelphia Convention, James Madison extensively and repeatedly altered his notes about the drafting of the Constitution—often in response to the changing politics of slavery and state's rights rather than fidelity to the event. *Madison's Hand* effectively removes Madison's convention notes as a reliable contemporaneous account of the proceedings.

Robert Goolrick won the **2016 Emyl Jenkins Sexton Literary Award for Fiction** for the *Fall of Princes*, a cautionary tale of a man brought low by his own glittering excess in the 1980s, an era of greed and collapse. The judges praised it for its immediacy, precision, and finely tuned sense of bleak humor.

Goolrick was raised in Lexington, Virginia, where his father was on the faculty at Virginia Military Institute. Goolrick attended Johns Hopkins University and then lived in Europe for several years. When he returned, he moved to New York, where he worked in advertising and copywriting. He took up writing in his fifties after losing his job as an advertising executive. His sober and compelling 2007 debut memoir *The End of the World As We Know It* recounts his difficult life with his alcoholic parents. In 2009 his novel *A Reliable Wife* was an international best seller. Published in 2012, his novel *Heading Out to Wonderful* explores the small-minded culture and racism of Virginia in 1948 through an ill-fated love story.

The other fiction prize finalists were: *This Angel in My Chest* by Leslie Pietrzyk and *The Shore* by Sara Taylor. *This Angel in My Chest*, a collection of short stories labeled by the judges as spellbinding and unconventional, explores the lives of young women who have lost their husbands. Embracing Joan Didion's observation that "We tell ourselves stories in order to live," Pietrzyk's powerful writing transforms her personal grief into a universal exploration of loss and redemption.

The Shore, a debut collection of interlinked short stories, by Sara Taylor covers murder, misogyny, and morality haunting the lush, green landscape of the three islands that make up the book's setting. The judges were impressed with the fearless sensibility and mordant humor found in these imaginative and atmospheric stories.

The winners of the **People's Choice Awards** are *The Jezebel Remedy* by **Martin Clark** in the **fiction category** and *Something Must Be Done about Prince Edward County* by **Kristen Green** in the **nonfiction category**. Winners are chosen by readers voting online and in libraries. Winners of the People's Choice Awards receive a monetary prize and an engraved crystal book.

The recipient of the 2016 Library of Virginia **Literary Lifetime Achievement Award** is **Nikki Giovanni**. Giovanni grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Knoxville, Tennessee. By the time she received her undergraduate degree in history from Fisk University in 1967, she was an outspoken activist for civil rights and equality issues, organizing Cincinnati's first Black Arts Festival that year. In 1968, when Giovanni was only 24, she published her first books of verse, *Black Feeling*, *Black Talk* and *Black Judgement*. After brief teaching stints at Rutgers University, Queens College, and Ohio State University, she joined the English faculty at Virginia Tech in 1987 and became a full professor in 1989.

Called the "Princess of Black Poetry" by the *New York Times*, Giovanni uses bold language to address social issues based on her experiences as an African American woman. Since 1968, she has published more than two dozen volumes of poetry, essays, and edited anthologies, as well as 11 illustrated children's books, including the award-winning *Rosa*, about Rosa Parks. Her autobiography, *Gemini*, was a finalist for the 1973 National Book Award. In 2004, her album *The Nikki Giovanni Poetry Collection* was a Grammy finalist for the Best Spoken Word Album. Giovanni has received numerous awards, including the inaugural Rosa L. Parks Woman of Courage Award (2002), the Virginia Governor's Award for the Arts (2000), and *Ebony Magazine's* Woman of the Year (1970), although the most unusual honor may be a South American bat species named for her: *Micronycteris giovanniae*. She is also a seven-time recipient of an NAACP Image Award. A devoted teacher, Giovanni has been a visiting professor and poet-in-residence at numerous colleges, and she encourages students of all ages to express themselves creatively through writing.

Giovanni earned an enduring place in the Hokie Nation with a poem she wrote on April 16, 2007, the day mass shootings at Virginia Tech claimed 33 lives, including that of the shooter, and injured 27 others. The poem, which she read at a college memorial service the day after the shootings, began with the words "We are Virginia Tech" and ended with "We will prevail, We will prevail, We will prevail, We are Virginia Tech." Her poem helped Virginia Tech students and faculty recover from the tragedy.

The **Art in Literature: The Mary Lynn Kotz Award** went to **Patrick E. Horrigan** for *Portraits at an Exhibition: A Novel*, the story of a young man's search for the meaning of life amid a gallery of old masters' portraits. The Art in Literature: The Mary Lynn Kotz Award, presented by the Library and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, recognizes an outstanding book published in the previous year that is written primarily in response to a work (or works) of art while also showing the highest literary quality as a creative or scholarly work. This unique award, established in 2013, is named in honor of Mary Lynn Kotz, author of the award-winning biography *Rauschenberg: A Life*.

The first recipient of the **Library of Virginia's Honorary Patron of Letters Degree** is **Carole M. Weinstein**. The ability to grant this honorary degree is given by the Commonwealth of Virginia to the Library Board, whose members chose to bestow this award for the very first time on someone who has shown a deep commitment to the Library and the literary community in Virginia through her generous efforts.

Weinstein is recognized in the community for her service to, and love of, cultural and educational institutions. Her dedication as a tireless volunteer and philanthropic supporter of institutions both local and international has previously been recognized with many honors, including the Central Virginia Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals' Lifetime Achievement Award in Philanthropy, the YWCA Richmond's Outstanding Women Award for Education, and the University of Richmond's President's Medal.

A former member of the Board of the Library of Virginia, Weinstein currently serves on the Board of Trustees of both Davidson College and Florida Southern College, and on the Board of Directors of the Virginia Historical Society.

Her work as vice chairman of Weinstein Management Company (now Weinstein Properties), her family's real estate development and management company, has earned her a place in the Greater Richmond Business Hall of Fame.

Weinstein earned both a BA and a MA from the University of Richmond, where she served as an adjunct faculty member in the English Department for three years. She also served on the faculty of the Upper School of St. Catherine's School, where she taught English for five years.

Next year's Literary Awards Celebration will be held on October 21, 2017.

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