

Contact

Mary Hickey

mary@coloradohumanities.org

303.894.7951 x19

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2023 Colorado Book Awards in Colorado Springs

The Colorado Book Awards annually celebrates Colorado's outstanding literary achievement by commending the accomplishments of its authors, editors, illustrators, and photographers. Volunteer judges from across the state review submissions to select finalists and winners through a rigorous selection process.

Prior to the June 10 awards celebration in Colorado Springs, finalists will present a series of free public readings from April 15 to June 3 to connect audiences and authors. The readings will be held at different Pikes Peak Library District branches throughout the Colorado Springs area. Finalists will read from their work and attendees can pose questions. Select finalist books will be available for purchase at the readings and through Poor Richard's Books & Gifts at <https://poorrichardsdowntown.com/#books>. Finalists will be announced throughout the finalist reading series.

2023 Finalist Reading Series

Saturdays at 4 p.m.

April 15 – Historical Fiction, History/Biography, & Pictorial at East Library, 5550 N Union Blvd, Colorado Springs, CO 80918

Historical Fiction Finalists

Little Souls

Sandra Dallas

World War I is raging overseas, but it's the home front battling for survival. With the Spanish Flu, Denver's schools are converted into hospitals, churches and funeral homes are closed, and horse-drawn wagons collect corpses in the street. Sisters Helen and Lutie have moved to Denver from Iowa after their parents' deaths. Set against the backdrop of an epidemic that feels all too familiar, *Little Souls* is a tale of sisterhood and of the sacrifices people make to protect those they love most. Sandra Dallas, dubbed "a quintessential American voice" in *Vogue Magazine*, is the author of over a dozen novels, including *Prayers for Sale* and *Tallgrass*, many translated into a dozen languages and optioned for films. Six-time winner of the Willa Award and four-time winner of the Spur Award, Dallas was a *Business Week* reporter for 25 years covering the Rocky Mountain region. She lives in Denver and Georgetown.

The School for German Brides

Aimie K. Runyan

Germany, 1939. As the war begins, Hanna Rombauer, a young German woman, is sent to live with her aunt and uncle after her mother's death. Thrown into a life of luxury she never expected, Hanna soon finds herself unwillingly matched with an SS officer. The independence that her mother lovingly fostered in her is considered highly inappropriate as the future wife of an up-and-coming officer, and she is sent to a "bride school." There, in a posh villa on the outskirts of town, Hanna is taught how to be a "proper" German wife. The lessons of hatred, prejudice, and misogyny disturb her, and she finds herself desperate to escape. Aimie K. Runyan has been honored as a Historical Novel Society Editors' Choice selection, as a three-time finalist for the Colorado Book Awards, and as a nominee for the Rocky Mountain Fiction Writer of the Year. Aimie is active as an educator and speaker in the writing community and beyond. She lives in Estes Park.

Woman of Light

Kali Fajardo-Anstine

Luz "Little Light" Lopez, a tea leaf reader and laundress, is left to fend for herself after her older brother, Diego, a snake charmer and factory worker, is run out of town by a violent white mob. As Luz navigates 1930's Denver on her own, she begins to have visions that transport her to her Indigenous homeland in the nearby Lost Territory. Luz recollects her ancestors' origins, how her family flourished, and how they were threatened. She bears witness to the sinister forces that have devastated her people and their homelands for generations. In the end, it is up to Luz to save her family stories from disappearing into oblivion. Kali Fajardo-Anstine is the author of *Sabrina & Corina*, a finalist for the National Book Award, the PEN/Bingham Prize, The Story Prize, and winner of an American Book Award. She has written for *The New York Times*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *ELLE*, *The American Scholar*, *Boston Review*, and elsewhere, and has received the Denver Mayor's Award for Global Impact in the Arts. She lives in Arvada.

History/Biography Finalists

Life is a Game: Adventures of a World War II Interrogator and U.S. Soccer Pioneer

G.K. Guennel & Flint Whitlock

G.K. "Joe" Guennel was born in Germany and came to the U.S. as a teenager just as the Nazis were taking over the country. He joined the U.S. Army while in college, and because German was his native language, he was assigned to be an interrogator of German prisoners-of-war—both during the war and prior to the Nuremberg war-crimes trials. After returning to the U.S., he became involved in starting soccer programs wherever he lived while he worked on earning his Ph.D. in paleobotany and was later inducted into both the U.S. and Colorado Soccer Halls of Fame. Before his death, Dr. Guennel gave his voluminous notes, photos, and

artwork to his friend and fellow soccer enthusiast, Flint Whitlock, a few years before he died in hopes that Flint, the award-winning author of 15 books (four of which have been finalists in the Colorado Book Awards) and a 2021 inductee into the Colorado Authors Hall of Fame, could complete his autobiography. Flint lives in Denver.

The Continuing Storm: Learning from Katrina
Lori Peek & Kai Erikson

The final volume in the award-winning Katrina Bookshelf series reflects upon what we have learned about Katrina and about America. The authors expand the view of the disaster by assessing its ongoing impact on individual lives and across the wide-ranging geographies where displaced New Orleanians landed after the storm. Such an expanded view, the authors argue, is critical for understanding the human costs of catastrophe across time and space. Kai Erikson is the William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor Emeritus of Sociology and American Studies at Yale University. He is the author of *Wayward Puritans*, *Everything in Its Path*, *A New Species of Trouble*, and *The Sociologist's Eye*. Lori Peek is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Natural Hazards Center at the University of Colorado Boulder. She is the author of *Behind the Backlash*, coauthor of *Children of Katrina*, and co-editor of *Displaced* and the *Handbook of Environmental Sociology*. Lori lives in Boulder.

The Earth Is All That Lasts: Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, and the Last Stand of the Great Sioux Nation
Mark Lee Gardner

Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull: Their names are iconic, their significance in American history undeniable. Together, these two Lakota chiefs, one a fabled warrior and the other a revered holy man, delivered a crushing defeat to George Armstrong Custer's vaunted Seventh Cavalry. Yet their legendary victory at the Little Big Horn has overshadowed the rest of their rich and complex lives. Based on years of research and drawing on a wealth of previously ignored primary sources, *The Earth Is All That Lasts* chronicles these extraordinary Indigenous leaders. Mark Lee Gardner is the author of *Rough Riders*, *To Hell on a Fast Horse*, and *Shot All to Hell*, which received multiple awards, including a Spur Award from the Western Writers of America. Gardner has appeared on PBS's *American Experience* as well as on the History Channel, AMC, the Travel Channel, and NPR. He has written for *National Geographic History*, *American Heritage*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *True West*, and *American Cowboy*. He lives in Cascade.

Pictorial Finalists

In Pursuit of Happenstance
Barbara Ford & Roberta Smith

In this 68-page book, Smith's imagery square dances with Ford's poetry. The poems serve as both counterpart and counterpoint to Smith's paintings, collages, altered books, found

objects, and mixed media assemblages. The creation of this collaboration was founded in the serendipity of two bodies of work frolicking, laughing, frowning, and wiping away tears together. Smith's and Ford's two worlds come together and create a third, called Happenstance, rife with ravens, bicycle rides, whales, Adam and Eve, turtles, chickens, eggs, and jesters. Roberta Smith has worked as a graphic artist, children's book illustrator, jewelry designer and muralist before becoming an award-winning mixed media artist. She has exhibited in galleries and invitational shows, and her work is represented in public and private collections throughout the country. Barbara Ford's work has been published in a variety of publications, and she has presented her poetry at festivals and conferences throughout the state. Her radio program, *Poets and Minstrels*, has aired for 17 years in Salida, where they both live.

To Aspen and Back: An American Journey
Peggy Clifford, David Hiser, and Daniel Joseph

Journalist Peggy Clifford's account of the town she called home for 26 years was published in 1980 and considered an insightful history and deep examination of the social and cultural forces that both shaped this Shangri-La in the Colorado Rockies and threatened to destroy its ideals. Republished in 2022, *To Aspen and Back* comes more vibrantly to life with curated photographs and the original introduction written by Hunter S. Thompson. Peggy Clifford was a copywriter and reporter in Pittsburgh and New York City before moving to Aspen in 1953. Beginning as the sole editorial employee for the daily *Aspen Flyer*, she became managing editor of *The Aspen Times* and managed Hunter Thompson's campaign for sheriff. She died in 2017. David Hiser has won multiple awards, including the 2015 Pictorial Colorado Book Award for *High Road to Aspen*, and Daniel Joseph Watkins won the 2012 Pictorial Colorado Book Award for *Thomas W. Benton: Artist/Activist*. David lives in Carbondale, and Daniel lives in Aspen.

Vibrant Interiors
Andrea Monath Schumacher

The author's debut interior design book explores her creativity and ability to transform interior spaces into something unique for each client. Regardless of location or style, the skillfully designed homes are layered with a well-balanced mix of complexity and simplicity; sophisticated yet playful; layered but minimal. This dynamic interplay is compelling, unexpected, and creates conversation. Andrea Monath Schumacher started her company in 1999 and has built Andrea Schumacher Interiors into the premiere residential interior design firm in Denver, Colorado that has recently expanded to Santa Barbara, California. The award-winning firm consistently appears on the Luxe Gold List and in *House Beautiful*, *Luxe*, *The Wall Street Journal Off Duty*, *Colorado Homes*, *Mountain Living*, and *Western Art & Architecture*, while ranking #1 on the Best of Houzz for 5 consecutive years.

April 29 – Children’s, Juvenile, & Young Adult Literature at Ruth Holley Library, 685 N Murray Blvd, Colorado Springs, CO 80916

May 13 – General Fiction, Mystery, & Romance at Sand Creek Library, 1821 S Academy Blvd, Colorado Springs, CO 80916

May 20 – Creative & General Nonfiction at East Library, 5550 N Union Blvd, Colorado Springs, CO 80918

May 27 – Anthology, Literary Fiction, & Poetry at Library 21c, 1175 Chapel Hills Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80919

June 3 – Science Fiction/Fantasy & Thriller at Rockrimmon Library, 832 Village Center Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80919

2023 Finalist Celebration and Winners Announcement

Saturday, June 10 at 4 p.m.

Penrose House Garden Pavilion

1661 Mesa Avenue, Colorado Springs, CO 80906

\$30 event tickets go on sale April 15 at <https://coloradohumanities.org/>

About Colorado Humanities & Center for the Book

Colorado Humanities is the only Colorado organization exclusively dedicated to supporting humanities education for adults and children statewide. Celebrating its 49th year and its 19th year as host for the Colorado Center for the Book, Colorado Humanities, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, partners with hundreds of community partners across the state, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Library of Congress Center for the Book, the Smithsonian Institution, and the national award-winning educational nonprofit Helps Education Fund.

About Pikes Peak Library District

Pikes Peak Library District (PPLD) provides everyone with access to resources and opportunities so people can thrive and connect. The Library cultivates spaces for belonging, personal growth, and strong communities via 16 facilities, mobile library services, and a large online hub of resources. It is an internationally recognized system of public libraries serving a population of nearly 700,000 across 2,070 square miles in El Paso County, Colorado. Learn more at ppld.org.

About Poor Richard’s Books and Gifts

Poor Richard's Books and Gifts is a full-service new and used bookstore that was founded in 1975 as Poor Richard's Used Paperbacks. It was the first in the Poor Richard's family of businesses and remains an anchor and draw for both our loyal regulars and new customers who are always delighted to make the discovery of our home-grown, Indie bookstore.

For more information, images, recording clips, and interviews, please contact Mary Hickey at mary@coloradohumanities.org or 303.894.7951 x19.

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