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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Anthology, Literary Fiction, & Poetry Finalist Reading in Colorado Springs**

May 27 – 4 p.m. at Library 21c, 1175 Chapel Hills Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80920

Experience violent storms of Denver, dive into the lives of Boulder sausage factory workers, consider how family is formed, and find a sense of self amongst different cultures and human experiences in this event celebrating Anthology, Literary Fiction, and Poetry. Featuring queer and Latinx literature and authors, finalists in these categories will read from their work and attendees can pose questions in this free public reading. Select finalist books will be available for purchase at the reading and through Poor Richard's Books & Gifts at <https://poorrichardsdowntown.com/#books>. Registration for this free event is available at <https://coloradohumanities.org/programs/colorado-book-awards/>.

### **Anthology Finalists**

*Bizarre Bazaar*

*Amy Drayer and Veronica R. Calisto*

Welcome to the Bizarre Bazaar – a collection of 17 speculative stories that invite and beguile the reader to examine fictions new and old in a fresh light. Fairy tales are reborn as sci-fi romps. Silly folklore matures with the weight of tradition to approach truth. And ghost stories teach us all we need to know about love. Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers is a non-profit, volunteer-run organization dedicated to supporting, encouraging, and educating writers seeking publication in fiction.

### **Denver Noir**

*Cynthia Swanson*

Even a city that boasts three hundred days of sunshine a year has its sudden, often violent storms—and writers have long taken advantage of that metaphor. Renowned authors Katherine Anne Porter, Jack Kerouac, Stephen King, Rex Burns, Robert Greer, Michael Connelly, and Kali Fajardo-Anstine—among many others—have brilliantly portrayed this picturesque but often merciless city. Cynthia Swanson writes literary suspense, often using historical settings. Her debut novel, *The Bookseller*, was a *New York Times* best seller, an

Indie Next selection, and the winner of the 2016 WILLA Literary Award for Historical Fiction. Cynthia lives in Denver.

### *The Long Devotion: Poets Writing Motherhood*

Emily Pérez, Nancy Reddy

A collection of poems, essays, and writing prompts that celebrates motherhood and creates a space, as poet Molly Spencer has written, to “tell an unlovely truth about family life and not have to take it back.” The poets in this book represent and describe a wide range of experiences. Emily Pérez is an English and gender studies instructor and grade-level dean at Colorado Academy. She is the author of *What Flies Want*, winner of the Iowa Prize; *House of Sugar*, *House of Stone*; and the chapbooks *Backyard Migration Route* and *Made and Unmade*. She lives in Denver. Nancy Reddy is associate professor of writing and first-year studies at Stockton University. She is the author of *Pocket Universe*, *Double Jinx*, a 2014 winner of the National Poetry Series, and the chapbook *Acadiana*. She lives in Collingswood, New Jersey.

### **Literary Fiction Finalists**

#### *Any Other Family*

Eleanor Brown

Though they look like any other family, they aren’t one—not quite. They are three sets of parents who find themselves intertwined after adopting four biological siblings, having committed to keeping the children as connected as possible. And when they receive a call from their children’s birth mother announcing she is pregnant again, the delicate bonds the women are struggling to form threaten to collapse as they each must consider how a family is found and formed. Eleanor Brown is the *New York Times* bestselling author of the novels *The Weird Sisters* and *The Light of Paris*, and the editor of the anthology *A Paris All Your Own*. An adoptive mother herself, Eleanor lives in Highlands Ranch.

#### *Bratwurst Haven*

Rachel King

Linked stories trace the vocational and emotional bargains made by workers at a Colorado sausage factory almost a decade after the Great Recession. Over the course of these twelve interrelated stories, Rachel King gives life to diverse, complex, and authentic characters who are linked through the sausage factory and through their daily lives in a vividly rendered small town in Boulder County. Rachel King is the author of the novel *People along the Sand*. Her short stories have appeared in *One Story*, *North American Review*, *Green Mountains Review*, *Northwest Review*, and elsewhere. A former resident of Colorado, she now lives in her hometown of Portland, Oregon.

#### *Confessions*

Sean Eads

Nathan Ashcraft knew this morning wasn’t going to be easy. After all, he’s the town funeral director, and he’s coming to work early to meet two grieving parents whose baby was

stillborn. The meeting fills him with dread and anticipation because the baby's father, Steve, was his high school crush, and they haven't seen each other in almost thirty years. Sean Eads has published three novels and a short story collection, and has been a finalist for the Shirley Jackson Award, Lambda Literary Award, and Colorado Book Award. His stories have appeared in numerous anthologies. He lives in Westminster.

### Poetry Finalists

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Katherine Indermaur

This full-length debut is a serial lyric essay that explores the mirror's many dimensions—philosophical, spiritual, scientific, mythological, historical—alongside the author's own experiences. Anyone who has struggled with the disconnect between their outward appearance and their inner self knows how fraught and fragmentary it can be to behold one's own reflection. Katherine Indermaur is the author of two chapbooks and an editor for *Sugar House Review*. She is the winner of the Black Warrior Review 2019 Poetry Contest and the 2018 Academy of American Poets Prize, runner-up in the 92Y's 2020 Discovery Poetry Contest, and has been nominated for Best of the Net. She lives in Fort Collins.

### *What Flies Want*

Emily Pérez

Disaster looms in domesticity: a family grapples with its members' mental health, a marriage falters, and a child experiments with self-harm. With its backdrop of school lockdown drills, #MeToo, and increasing political polarization, the collection asks how these private and public tensions are interconnected. The speaker, who grew up in a bicultural family on the U.S./Mexico border, learns she must play a role in a culture that prizes whiteness, patriarchy, and chauvinism. Emily Pérez is author of *House of Sugar*, *House of Stone* and co-edited *The Long Devotion: Poets Writing Motherhood*. She works as a high school teacher and dean and lives in Denver.

### *You Better Be Lightning*

Andrea Gibson

In this queer, political, and feminist collection guided by self-reflection, the poems range from close examination of the deeply personal to the vastness of the world, exploring the expansiveness of the human experience from love to illness, from space to climate change, and so much more in between. Andrea Gibson (they/them/theirs) has released seven full-length albums of spoken word and is the author of five full-length collections of poetry, including *Lord of the Butterflies*, which sold over 20,000 copies worldwide. The winner of the first Women's World Poetry Slam, Gibson has gone on to be featured on BBC, Air America, C-SPAN and is the winner of The Independent Publishers Award in 2019, and a three-time Goodreads Choice Awards Finalist. They live in Longmont.

### Finalist Reading Schedule

June 3 – Science Fiction/Fantasy and 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 on sale at <https://coloradohumanities.org/product/2023-colorado-book-awards-celebration/>

### **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](http://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.

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For more information, images, recording clips, and interviews, please contact Mary Hickey at [mary@coloradohumanities.org](mailto:mary@coloradohumanities.org) or 303.894.7951 x19.