

CHICAGO HALL OF LITERARY FAME

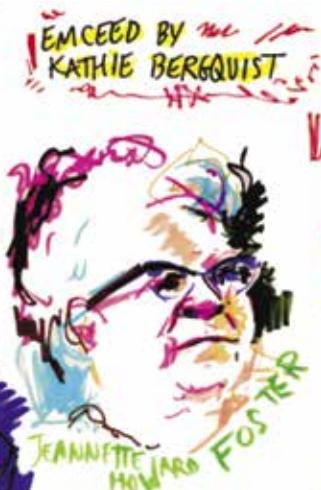
INDUCTION CEREMONY

(CLASS OF
2019)

SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 19, 2021
7 - 8:30 PM

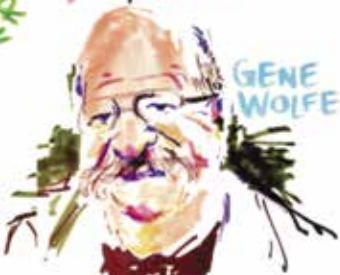
CITY LIT THEATER

1020 W. BRYN MAWR CHICAGO IL 60613



SPEAKERS INCLUDE

KATHLEEN RODNEY
CARLOS GUAPÍAN
VALYA DUDYČZ
LUPESCU
TRACY BAIM



CHICAGOLITERARYHOF.ORG
/EVENTS_ENTRY/INDUCTION-
CEREMONY-CLASS-OF-2019

TONIGHT'S PROGRAM

Donald G. Evans	Welcome
Kathie Bergquist	Emcee
Valya Dudycz Lupescu	Presenting for Gene Wolfe
Therese Wolfe-Goulding	Accepting for Gene Wolfe
Carlos Cumpián	Presenting for Carlos Cortéz
National Museum of Mexican Art (Cesáreo Moreno)	Accepting for Carlos Cortéz
Tracy Baim	Presenting for Jeannette Howard Foster
Kathleen Rooney	Presenting for Frank London Brown
Pamela Marie Brown Rakestraw	Accepting for Frank London Brown

THE CHICAGO LITERARY HALL OF FAME'S MISSION



The Chicago Literary Hall of Fame (CLHOF) honors, celebrates, preserves, and promotes the development of Chicago's great literary heritage--past, present, and future. We celebrate authors whose words have best captured the essence of our city; writers whose Chicago roots enabled them to create narrative worlds far beyond our boundaries; people who've built and maintained a supportive infrastructure; people who've played instrumental parts in enabling great artists to thrive. People who have made this city a better place in which to live. We walk and mark Chicago's spectacular literary trails.

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OUR HOST:

CITY LIT

LITERATE ★ THEATER

By Jenna Shattuck

City Lit Theater is a non-profit organization founded in 1979 with the mission of bringing adaptations of literary material to the stage, and was the only theater in the nation devoted to this at the time. Founders Arnold Aprill, Lorell Wyatt, and David Dillon pooled together \$210 to launch this theater. In the more than four decades since, it has taken in--from ticket sales, individual donations, and other sources--almost five million dollars. More than \$1.7 million of that has been used in direct payments to the artists who come to City Lit to put up the 139 shows they've thus far produced.

City Lit has explored fiction, non-fiction, biography, essays and drama in performance while also presenting a wide array of voices, including diverse casts, to present work by and about underrepresented groups.

It is also a theater that respects and amplifies the voices of many Chicago writers. City Lit has staged productions like *Chaos Doesn't Run the Whole Show*, which Aprill adapted and directed based on the work of Chicago Literary Hall of Fame inaugural inductee Saul Bellow. City Lit has also staged work by or based on such esteemed Chicago-affiliated authors as Charles Johnson (*Faith and the Good Thing*), Lynda Barry (*The Good Times are Killing Me*), Archibald MacLeish (*J.B.*), April Sinclair (*Coffee Will Make You Black*), Barbara Kensey (*Claiming the Cat's Eye and Other Stories*), and Douglas Post (*Forty-Two Stories* and *Somebody Foreign*). The legendary writer and director John Logan (*Hauptmann*) has also been involved in City Lit productions. Among resident playwright Kristine Thatcher's four plays that have been or will be produced, two (*The Bloodhound Law* and *Emma's Child*) feature Chicago settings.

City Lit Theater is located on the second floor of the Edgewater Presbyterian Church at the corner of Bryn Mawr and Kenmore, right around the corner from where Lake Shore Drive starts at Hollywood and Sheridan. It's an intimate 99-seat space with great sound and sightlines.

The Chicago Literary Hall of Fame is proud and grateful to be partnering with an organization that does so much to support our literary scene and heritage, especially as regards its devotion to our theatrical writers and performers.

PARTICIPANTS



Tracy Baim is president and co-publisher of the *Chicago Reader* newspaper. She is co-founder and former publisher of *Windy City Times*. Baim received the 2013 Chicago Headline Club Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2014, she was inducted into the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association Hall of Fame. She was inducted into the Association for Women Journalists-Chicago Chapter Hall of Fame in 2018. She is also in the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame. She has won numerous LGBTQ community and journalism honors, including the Community Media Workshop's Studs Terkel Award. Baim has written and/or edited 13 books including *Barbara Gittings: Gay Pioneer; Gay Press, Gay Power: The Growth of LGBT Community Newspapers in America; Obama and the Gays: A Political Marriage; and Out and Proud in Chicago*. Baim was executive producer of the lesbian film *Hannah Free*, starring Sharon Gless, and *Scrooge & Marley*.



Kathie Bergquist, a 2008 Lambda Emerging Writers fellow, teaches creative writing at SAIC and Columbia College Chicago. The former managing director of the Story Week Festival of Writers, Bergquist is co-author (with Robert McDonald) of the *Field Guide to Gay and Lesbian Chicago*, and editor of *Windy City Queer: LGBTQ Writing from the Third Coast*. Her work has appeared in the *Chicago Reader*, *The Advocate*, *Publishers Weekly*, and several journals and anthologies, and has been performed internationally. Prior to teaching, Bergquist worked for many years for Women & Children First and Unabridged Bookstores, and today she manages social media for The Book Stall, in Winnetka.



Carlos Cumpián has been a Chicagoan for five decades and arrived here in his mid-teens from Texas. He worked for various nonprofits and as an English high school teacher for over 20 years. He has been an editor/publisher for March Abrazo Press, the first and possibly the only Chicano Indigenous and Latino poetry publisher in Illinois with a 30-year track record. His books include *Coyote Sun*, *Latino Rainbow*, *Armadillo Charm*, and *14 Abriles*. He has two new manuscripts: a poetry collection with the working title, *Human Cicada*, and a poetic and prose memoir *Accidental Rebel (1968-1974): The War Years*.



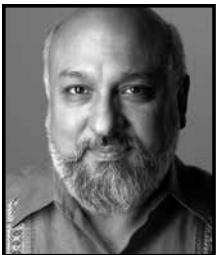
Donald G. Evans is the author of the novel *Good Money After Bad* and short story collection *An Off-White Christmas*. He edited the anthology *Cubbie Blues: 100 Years of Waiting Till Next Year*. He started the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame in 2010 and serves as its Founding Executive Director. He's listed as a *Newcity Lit 50* Hall of Famer, received the Chicago Writers Association's Spirit Award for lifetime achievement, and is a longtime Cliff Dwellers Artist-in-Residence. He serves on various boards and committees.



Therese Wolfe-Goulding is one of three surviving children of Gene and Rosemary Wolfe. Therese has worked in the photography, advertising, and marketing industries and is currently a copyeditor with a prominent marketing and communications company in the Chicagoland area.



Valya Dudycz Lupescu has been making magic with food and words for more than 20 years, incorporating folklore from her Ukrainian heritage with practices that honor the Earth. She's a writer, instructional designer, and mother of three teenagers. Valya earned her MFA in Writing from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and her poetry and prose have been published in anthologies and magazines that include *The Year's Best Dark Fantasy & Horror*, *Kenyon Review*, *Culture*, *Gargoyle Magazine*, *Gone Lawn*, *Strange Horizons*, *Mythic Delirium*, and others. Valya is the author of *The Silence of Trees* and the founding editor of *Conclave: A Journal of Character*. Along with Stephen H. Segal, she is the co-author of *Forking Good: An Unofficial Cookbook for Fans of The Good Place*; and *Geek Parenting: What Joffrey, Jor-El, Maleficent, and the McFlys Teach Us about Raising a Family* (Quirk Books), as well as the co-founder of the Wyrd Words storytelling laboratory. Valya's graphic novel, *Mother Christmas*, is forthcoming from Rosarium Publishing in 2022.



Cesáreo Moreno has been with the National Museum of Mexican Art since 1992. He has been the Visual Arts Director since 1995, and was named the museum's first full-time Chief Curator in 2004. Moreno has curated numerous exhibitions for the NMMA, as well as for the El Paso Museum of Art (2013), Smithsonian Latino Center (2011), and the National Hispanic Cultural Center (2015). His most important assignments at NMMA have included curating *Arte Diseño Xicágó* (2018), *A Declaration of Immigration* (2008), and *The African Presence in México: From Yanga to the Present* (2006). Additionally, he has curated fourteen of the annual *Day of the Dead* exhibitions to date and the permanent exhibition, *Nuestras Historias: Stories of Mexican Identity from the Permanent Collection*.



Pamela Marie Brown Rakestraw is the recently retired President and Co-Founder of family business, SCR Medical Transportation. Pam, and her husband of 40 years, Stan, are parents to two dynamic young entrepreneurs and the proud grandparents of four talented, treasured granddaughters. In reflecting on her father Pam says, "I only had my father for seven precious years. Though our time together was short, the memories of his love and impact continue to guide me today. He wrote a letter to all his daughters a few months before he passed. His message to me was to work and study hard and to learn to depend on myself. My father believed in my future greatness. I can only pray I have made him proud."

Beginning her career as a social worker, Mrs. Rakestraw went on to be pivotal in building SCR. In 2019 and 2020 *Crain's Chicago Business* recognized the company as the largest African-American owned employer in Chicago. At the time of publication, SCR employed more than 1,200 men and women. Mrs. Rakestraw built her business and lives her life with the unshakeable commitment to treating everyone within her sphere with dignity and respect, and, to leveraging her resources in service of social justice and equity.



Kathleen Rooney is a founding editor of Rose Metal Press, a nonprofit publisher of literary work in hybrid genres, as well as a founding member of Poems While You Wait. Her most recent books include the novel *Lillian Boxfish Takes a Walk* and *The Listening Room: A Novel of Georgette and Loulou Magritte*. Her World War I novel *Cher Ami and Major Whittlesey* was released by Penguin in August 2020, and her criticism appears in *The New York Times Magazine*, The Poetry Foundation website, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, and elsewhere. She lives in Chicago and teaches at DePaul University.



GENE WOLFE

(May 7, 1931 - April 14, 2019)

Science Fiction and Fantasy Writer

Great writing is writing that can be reread with increased pleasure and clearer understanding. Some simple truths are almost always rejected, anathema to the modern mind. One of these is that a good book can be written on any subject. And that a bad book can be written on any subject, too. A great writer is not merely great himself; he makes his readers great. Subjects are not good or bad, the writing makes them so.

– Gene Wolfe

by Valya Dudycz Lupescu

When people who love literature talk about Gene Wolfe, five declarations almost always follow:

- Gene is one of the greatest science fiction writers of all time.
- Gene is a writer loved by writers.
- A Gene Wolfe story can't just be read once, because the experience improves with each reread.
- Gene Wolfe's narrators are sometimes unreliable and challenge the reader.
- Gene's stories are full of puzzles, allusions, and archaic diction.

What people *don't* often say is that Gene Wolfe is a Chicago writer, a brilliant literary stylist whose work bridges his contemporaries, the New Wave speculative writers and postmodern magic realists.

Although he didn't begin to publish stories until he was 34 years old and his first novel when he was 39, Gene Wolfe published more than 30 novels and more than 200 short stories before dying at the age of 87 on April 14, 2019.

Much of that work is difficult to classify. Gene traverses genres, from science fiction to noir to mystery to ghost story to epistolary novel, digging deep into themes that recur and evolve: the origin of the Universe, the nature of good and evil, what it means to be a moral person in a morally corrupt world, the truth of memory and perception.

Gene Rodman Wolfe was born on May 7, 1931 in Brooklyn, New York. His father, Roy, was a traveling salesman, and so the family moved around when Gene was young, first to Peoria, Illinois; next to Massachusetts and Ohio; eventually on to Des Moines,

Dallas, and Houston. In grammar school, the introverted Gene escaped into comics, model planes, and stories by Edgar Allan Poe, L. Frank Baum, and Rudyard Kipling.

He discovered science fiction in *The Pocket Book of Science Fiction*, a pulp paperback shared with him by his mother, who was also a voracious reader. Theodore Sturgeon's story "The Microcosmic God" opened a new world to Gene, who went on to spend many afternoons in junior high reading pulps behind the candy case at the pharmacy.

In high school, he had an English teacher who encouraged his writing, but Gene chose to pursue his degree in engineering at Texas A&M, where he wrote a few stories for its literary journal before deciding to drop out. He was drafted into the Army and served in Korea as a combat engineer from March 1953 to May 1954. He frequently wrote home to his mother, Mary "Fanny" Olivia Ayers Wolfe; the collection of those letters was later published as a book, *Letters Home*, in 1991.

Reading Gene's war letters, full of playful and imaginative prose, reveals a blueprint for what was to come in his fiction. There were times when he was unapologetically honest and relayed vivid details of the soldier's life. Other times he took the tone of a correspondent: "G. Rodman Wolfe, your far-eastern correspondent with the 7th Div. in Korea," or Wally Balloo of the "Asia News Letter," no doubt using humor to assuage his parents' fears. He spent one letter explaining a theory of how "this planet has been periodically, at least, visited by the inhabitants of other worlds" who, when seen, have mistakenly been identified as "witches, demons, fauns, werewolves, ghosts" etc. There were also painful letters, where we can read between the lines to get a sense for things that Gene chose not to tell his mother. Already, he was figuring out that certain information is better omitted, and certain stories needed to be told by different narrators in different ways.

After coming home from the Army, Gene attended the University of Houston on the GI Bill and earned his degree in mechanical engineering. He married his childhood friend from Peoria, Rosemary Dietsch, in 1956, and also converted to Catholicism, which shaped much of his life and writing. Gene then went to work in research and development for Procter and Gamble in Ohio, where he helped to develop the production equipment that made Pringles.

With the publication of his first story, "The Dead Man," in *Sir* in 1965, Gene's literary career began in earnest. Hoping to bring in extra money to help his wife and children, Gene began to write and publish more, assisted by the mentorship of editor and critic Damon Knight. The critical acclaim he received for *The Fifth Head of Cerberus* in 1972 set him apart as an eloquent and sophisticated prose stylist. Knight invited him to participate in a prestigious writing retreat in Milford, Pennsylvania, where he workshopped his writing along with Ursula K. Le Guin, Anne McCaffrey, and Frederik Pohl.

At that time, Gene moved his family back to Illinois, taking a job in the Chicago suburb of Barrington as a senior editor for the trade journal *Plant Engineering*. He worked there from 1972 to 1984 as robot editor, screws editor, letters-to-the-editor editor, glue editor, welding editor, and comics editor. While he and Rosemary raised their four children, Gene would wake up early every day to write for an hour before work, as well as on the weekends. Finally after the success of *The Book of the New Sun*, Gene was able to quit his editor job to make a living as a full-time writer.

Gene Wolfe's body of work is difficult to classify because so much of it exists at the intersection of what seem to be opposites. He was influenced by the classics and the Sunday Comics, novels of realism and the pulps, engineering manuals and religious texts. Gene's dialogue might be conversational but is also peppered with antiquated diction. His prose style could be both technically complicated and elegantly lyrical. Comfortably melding science fiction paradigms, the scientific method, and mythological archetypes, Gene invited his readers to occupy that same space—to suspend disbelief and step into the intersection of opposing ideas working together to get at a more accurate truth.

That intersectionality is the context for Gene's legacy as a Chicago writer. In the middle of the country, centered between the coasts with their respective styles and sensibilities, Chicago is a city "in between," an urban metropolis with small town sensibilities, a city of skyscrapers and green spaces. Chicago is also a city of borders: the enormity of Lake Michigan to the East, the rural landscape to the south and west, and within, neighborhoods defined by ethnic and racial borders as well.

The Midwest, and Chicago in particular, evokes liminal spaces—a rich ethnic diversity and spiritual undercurrent brought to the city by waves of migrants and immigrants in the 20th century. Chicago writers like Stuart Dybek and Harry Mark Petrakis drew from their heritages to incorporate speculative elements into their lyric, descriptive prose, as they wrote about dwelling in those unique spaces. Like Dybek, Gene Wolfe's writing is character-driven with carefully crafted sentences and symbolism and language choices that serve the story. Like Dybek, his writing also deals with themes of memory, time, and transformation. This can be seen in Gene's beautiful 1975 novel *Peace*, where he presents us with a phantasmagorical Midwestern memoir that transforms as you read and reveals even more upon rereading.

His 1984 novel *Free Live Free* is set in a condemned building during a Chicago winter. Rich in detail and description, *Free Live Free* is a story about time and space, contradictions and border crossings. Sometimes those borders are actual places in the urban landscape, sometimes they are temporal or fantastic. At the heart of it, of course, there is a mystery, a question, a puzzle. Because that wasn't just Gene's technique. It was his point.

For six decades, Gene explored humanity's relationship with the unknown and unknowable, be that outer space, the past or the future, the human mind or the human heart. The central truth of his stories is one of the best gifts that fiction, and especially science fiction, have to offer us: that people can change, the future can change, and the possibility of change means that there is hope.

SAVE THE DATE!



The program will include:

- Readings by Chicago authors
- Live auction
- Trivia prizes

More details to come!

Proceeds will help support three new CLHOF initiatives:

- 1** Educational programming for youth in Chicago
- 2** A poetry anthology
- 3** A video series

The money raised will also go toward costs to coordinate induction ceremonies, lifetime achievement awards, and special exhibits.

VIRTUAL FUNDRAISER

FRIDAY DEC 10

7:00 P.M. (CST)

If you would like to donate something - an antique typewriter, artwork, first editions, sports memorabilia, company swag, a weekend writing escape – **contact Amy Danzer at amydanzer@gmail.com.**

If you are interested in donating directly to the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame, visit chicagoliteraryhof.org/support.



FRANK LONDON BROWN

(October 7, 1927 – March 12, 1962)

Author, journalist, activist, editor

And we walked and walked and walked—walking through the great Trumbull Park, Buggy walking to Helen, Harry walking to his wife Margaret, walking to all our friends there. Walking.

— from Frank London Brown's *Trumbull Park*

by Rachel Swearingen

Shortly before the release of his seminal 1959 novel, *Trumbull Park*, Frank London Brown penned a profile of jazz great Thelonious Monk for *Downbeat*. "Thelonious Sphere Monk finally has been discovered," he wrote, recognizing in Monk a rare creative genius who would spend the next thirty years transforming jazz, years Brown would not live to see though he was a full decade younger. Just four years later, at 34, he succumbed to leukemia, and though his contributions to literature and the Civil Rights movement were significant, Frank London Brown's own literary genius would, until recent years, largely fall into obscurity.

Trumbull Park sold more than 25,000 copies, catapulting the author into short-lived fame and solidifying his place within the Chicago Black Renaissance. Inspired by his family's tumultuous experience integrating Trumbull Park, a White public housing development at 105th and Yates on the far South Side, the novel dramatizes the terror and eventual empowerment of several Black working-class couples as they endure violent mobs and police indifference, as well as rising tensions within their own ranks.

Unapologetically political and progressive, Frank London Brown was a union organizer and a Civil Rights activist, as well as a writer, muckraker, musician, reporter and editor. He worked numerous jobs to support his growing family and his literary aspirations, endured poverty and racism, as well as constant surveillance by the FBI. Described by scholar Mary Helen Washington as "a handsome and eloquent man," Brown could talk to anyone, loved jazz and the blues, and occasionally sang in the clubs. He read his stories aloud at The Jazz Showcase. He joined Thelonious Monk at the Five Spot in New York and cut a 45 of "Let's Have a Party (Let's Have a Ball)" with Lil Armstrong, a song his daughter Debra Thompson-Brown remembers singing with her father on weekends when the house was filled with the sounds of Charlie "Bird" Parker, Thelonious Monk, and Dizzy Gillespie.

Brown's love of music and innovation weaves through much of his work. Richard Guzman heralds his acclaimed short story "MacDougal," which features a White jazz musician on Chicago's 58th Street, as one that explores "the possibilities that people could relate and empathize across the terrible racial boundaries he [Brown] spent his short life not only writing about, but also trying to help everyone overcome in daily life." And *Trumbull Park* is a cacophony of noise, from the city, from the angry White crowds that surround the housing development. In a penultimate scene of resistance and communal power, the main characters sing a refrain from a Joe Williams blues tune as they march toward the mob.

Born in Kansas City, Frank London Brown moved to Chicago when he was twelve and was educated at DuSable High School and Roosevelt University. He attended Kent School of Law for a time and earned an MA in Social Science from the University of Chicago. He was Director of the Union Research Center of the University of Chicago and a candidate for a doctorate from the prestigious Committee on Social Thought. As a journalist and editor, he published countless articles in the *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Ebony*, *The Chicago Tribune*, the *Chicago Defender*, the *Chicago Review*, *Negro Digest*, and other periodicals. He's known for his unflinching coverage of the murder of Chicago teen Emmett Till in Mississippi, and he wrote features on a number of important artists, including gospel singer Mahalia Jackson.

In Brown's work is a unique knowledge of the complexities of humanity and of Chicago, honed through the many people he met working various jobs and recruiting for the AFL-CIO and the UPWA. Debra E. Brown-Thompson, one of his three daughters, recalls accompanying her father on a union canvassing trip in an unfamiliar neighborhood. "We walked for blocks and blocks, must have knocked on about 30 doors," she said. "'Hello, I'm Frank Brown,' he'd say. Daddy had a way of talking to people that made them feel they had known him for years." She had nearly memorized his speech when they walked up a decrepit back staircase and her father asked if she wanted to try. "The door opened and this big, burly, White man with a big belly, gray pants, and white shirt pushed open the screen door. 'What da' ya' want?' he said in gruff, bullying voice." Her father waited for her to speak. What happened next is hazy for Brown-Thompson, but she doesn't think it ended well. Still "I felt so brave and proud of myself! I knew then I could confront anyone, anything, at any time. I had just asked a big ole' White man to join my Daddy's Union. It didn't even matter what he said."

Thompson-Brown recalls how her father would take the family on car rides to "follow the sun," as he would say, down 95th Street. In summer, they would stop at the Rainbow Cone Ice Cream Shop on 95th and Ashland for sherbet. In winter after the first snow, they'd drive to the Midway on 55th Street near the University of Chicago. "He would say, 'Okay! Look at the snow. There are no footprints! Let's make our mark on the world!'" They would run up and down the Midway making

footprints in the snow. He encouraged his daughters and his community to use their voices and to leave their marks.

Gwendolyn Brooks eulogized Brown in a poem after his death, and over the years his Chicago community worked to keep his memory alive. In 1969, Path Press, a venture Brown himself once envisioned with Herman C. Gilbert and Gus Savage, published his posthumous novel *The Mythmakers*. Nonetheless Brown's legacy languished for a time. While *Trumbull Park* was admired by the likes of Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks and Sterling Stuckey, several prominent critics minimized its importance, either by only seeing Brown in comparison to Richard Wright, or by criticizing him for not depicting, as R.L. Duffus of the *New York Times* complained, the "white people of Trumbull Park" and their "fears and frustrations."

In the 1990s scholars began to re-examine Brown's work and his place in literary history. In 2005, Northeastern University Press republished *Trumbull Park* with a foreword by Mary Helen Washington. His work has been anthologized in numerous anthologies and taught in college courses. Over the past two decades interest in his life and books continues to grow. As Brown once proclaimed of his friend Thelonious Monk, we finally can say of him: More man than myth, Frank London Brown has emerged from the shadows.

New Anthology of Chicago Poetry

Coming in April 2022
from the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame
and After Hours Press

Wherever I'm At

An Anthology of Chicago Poetry



Watch for updates and details about the launch of this important and exciting book.
More to come!
chicagoliteraryhof.org

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JEANNETTE HOWARD FOSTER

(November 3, 1895 - July 26, 1981)

I knew damn well I didn't want to major in Latin!

by Joanne E. Passet

Born in Oak Park, Illinois, in 1895, Jeannette Howard Foster is best known as the author of *Sex Variant Women in Literature* (1957), a germinal study that earned her recognition as a foremother of lesbian history and literature. The daughter of Winslow Howard and Mabel (Burr) Foster, she excelled in her studies at the Parker Practice School and graduated from Calumet High School in 1912. Entering the University of Chicago the following autumn, she studied chemistry and physics, but preferred writing poetry. She wrote her earliest surviving poem, "White Night" (1914), while watching a woman from the window of her Beecher Hall dormitory at the University of Chicago.

In 1915, Foster transferred to Rockford College, where she majored in English and American literature and published her first short stories in a school magazine. Following graduation in 1918, she taught high school science in Kentucky and Wisconsin, before returning to the University of Chicago to earn an M.A. in English, completed in 1922.

During the next decade, as she taught English at women's colleges in Minnesota, Georgia, and Virginia, Foster wrote numerous poems and pieces of short fiction. Her story, "Lucky Star," appeared in *Harpers Magazine* in 1927, but there was no market for her lesbian poetry.

Restless, Foster decided to change careers. After earning a Bachelor of Library Science degree from Emory University in 1932, she found her way back to the University of Chicago, where in 1936 she became one of the first women to earn a doctorate from the Graduate Library School.

While a student at the University of Chicago, Foster searched its library collections for books containing references to the existence of lesbians, bisexuals, and cross dressers, taking detailed notes on each title. She continued working on this project after moving to Philadelphia to become a professor at the Drexel Institute of Technology's Library School in 1937. In her free time, she visited countless East Coast libraries in search of lesbian literature. Her original intent was to include only works that she had seen firsthand, a goal made difficult by cataloging obscurities, inaccessible or lost material, and closed collections. In her spare time she continued writing poetry and short fiction, but filed it away due to lack of publication outlets.

In 1941, after reading about the pioneering sex research of Indiana University professor Dr. Alfred Kinsey, Foster volunteered to sit for an interview, and subsequently assisted him in identifying additional interviewees. Impressed by her extensive knowledge and scholarly credentials, Kinsey invited her to join his staff shortly after he incorporated the Institute for Sex Research in 1948. During her four years as Kinsey's librarian, Foster organized materials he had collected from all over the world, and at the same time continued her search for titles to add to her study of lesbian literature. While at the Institute, Foster also grew close to another employee, Hazel Toliver, who became her life partner. Concerned that Kinsey might appropriate her research or suppress it, Foster and Toliver accepted positions at the University of Kansas City and moved to Missouri in 1952.

Foster had hoped to interest a university press or reputable publisher in her study of approximately 2600 years of literary images of female sex variants—women today called lesbian, bisexual, or transsexual—but in an era infused with McCarthyism, publishers regarded her subject matter as subversive. Turning to a subsidy press, she spent nearly \$4,500 of her retirement savings to have the book printed, and she made the bold decision to publish it under her own name. Unfortunately, her delight upon holding the first copy of *Sex Variant Women in Literature* in her hands in February, 1957, soon turned to bitter disappointment because it failed to generate the reviews.

Unknown to Foster until later that year, the publication of her book coincided with the emergence of *The Ladder*, the first nationally distributed monthly lesbian magazine. In addition to alerting other gays and lesbians to her book, *The Ladder* became an outlet for the short stories and novella she had written in the 1930s. She published her creative work under pseudonyms (many of them derived from family names), but also wrote numerous reviews and letters to the editor under her own name.

As the gay liberation movement emerged and called for social change in the 1960s, Foster gained long overdue recognition for her pioneering work to establish a canon of lesbian literature. Organizers of the first Lesbian Writers Conference, held in Chicago in September 1974, dedicated the conference to her. That same year, The American Library Association Task Force on Gay Liberation gave *Sex Variant Women in Literature* its third Gay Book Award. This recognition of the long out-of-print work led to its reissuance by Diana Press (1976) and to the publication of *Two Women: The Poetry of Jeannette Foster and Valerie Taylor* (Womanpress, 1976). Her translation of Renée Vivien's *A Woman Appeared to Me* became one of the first books published by the newly established Naiad Press, enabling her work to reach thousands of lesbian readers worldwide.

Like Dr. Kinsey's pioneering studies, Jeannette Howard Foster's *Sex Variant Women in Literature* shattered myths and misunderstandings and touched the lives of countless lesbians and gays coming of age in the 1950s and beyond. As growing numbers of people visited libraries in search of gay books, they often turned to *Sex Variant Women in Literature* as a guide. Foster's literary and intellectual heirs include the distinguished historian Lillian Faderman, who in 1962 discovered Foster's book on the shelves of UCLA's English Reading Room. The book had a profound impact on her life, inspiring her to write *Surpassing the Love of Men* (1981). In Chicago, Joseph Gregg credited his literary activism to Foster's book, which became an important tool when building the Gerber/Hart Library collection. These, and many similar examples, illustrate the far-reaching impact of Foster and her work.



Chicago Classics is an ongoing CLHOF series that features readings of our most cherished Chicago writers and their books. In addition to several themed virtual events scheduled this year, we frequently add new videos online.

We welcome your submission.

Contact Don Evans
at dgevans@chicagoliteraryhof.org with your
idea and details on how to submit.

chicagoliteraryhof.org/chicago_classics



CARLOS CORTÉZ

(August 13, 1923 - January 19, 2005)

Poet, Graphic Artist, Muralist, Political Activist,
Photographer

Culture comes up from the bottom. It never comes down from the top. The only thing that comes down from the top? There is a Mexican popular saying. "Las gallinas de arriba siempre cagan en las de abajo." The chickens on the top always shit on those below.

– Carlos Cortéz

by Fred Sasaki

Carlos Cortéz was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to a Mexican Indian father and German mother who provided him with a multi-hyphenate, multilingual, and totally radical household. He was a singular artist of many abilities, and worked as a poet, writer, visual artist, printer, photographer, muralist, organizer, editor, and activist. We honor him today for the spellbinding life of art he created in Chicago, where he will be remembered as a beloved abuelo to generations of poets and activists.

His parents met on the street while his father was peddling copies of the Industrial Workers of the World's chief publication, *Industrial Solidarity*. His mother belonged to the Socialist Party of America and wrote poetry, and his father was a Wobbly union organizer, construction worker, soapboxer, and singer —he sang in seven languages and was fluent in five.

Cortéz himself did poorly in school, "not out of lack of intelligence but lack of adhering to the academic regime." His parents called their cantankerous young son "cabezudo" (hard head) and "dummkopf" (blockhead). And so he decided to skip college and get to work instead. Cortéz wrote his first "serious" poem in his early twenties after being locked-up overnight on suspicion. A few years later he picked up work by the Beats and thought, "Hell, I can write this shit." When WWII broke out he became a conscientious objector to war, stating his refusal to "shoot fellow draftees" in a "gang fight for power and wealth." He was subsequently imprisoned for 18 months and, after his release, promptly became a lifelong member of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW).

Often a trickster, Cortéz named himself C.C. Red Cloud, Koyokuikati (coyote sound), and X321826 for his many leftist columns, poems, cartoons, and etchings published in the *Industrial Worker*. And of all the names he owned during his lifetime, the name "friend" sticks the strongest. IWW member and oilfield worker Gary Cox wrote in the

Industrial Worker newspaper: "I have never met a more gentle and honest man in my life. What you saw is what you got." A genius at living.

Young people often asked Cortéz about making a living at art—his question back to them was, "Do you want to make a living of art, or do you want to make a life of art?" In an interview with Christine Flores-Cozza he notes: "I don't turn my nose up at making money," he said, "but what is more important to me is making face."

When Cortéz bequeathed his wood and linoleum printing blocks to the National Museum of Mexican Art, he stipulated that if any of his prints became too expensive for working people to purchase, they should be used to print more and drive the price down. He used old methods to produce work, and took his time to get it right. The prints embodied physical labor and provided glimpses into the love and struggles of working people and their families. Founder and president of the museum, Carlos Tortolero, commented that, "you couldn't separate the manual labor he did from who he was. Carlos was always about the real value of things. It was never money."

The primary concern of his work was the liberation of working people—"mostly the idea that we can do something with our world, particularly our human society, the way it is run, so we can better appreciate all the wealth the world has to offer." Or, as he also said: To "stop the wheels from turning."

Cortéz believed that art is essential to human experience, and therefore everyone was entitled to it.

"My greatest goal is to feel I've turned on others to the path of creativity. Turned on others, not only to their own personal creativity, but to work toward a truly creative society. A society that is more egalitarian, more loving of each other, more recognizing of the worth in each of us."

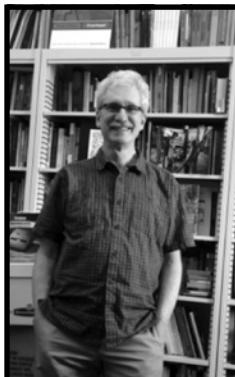
To him, the highest praise would be for someone to say, "That's the guy who got me started."

"The only thing is," he said, "you don't teach art. You open doors. It's one thing to show you how to push an engraving tool, handle a brush, blend colors and that. But that only liberates what is already inside of you."

If you're looking for credentials, Carlos Cortéz is the author of *Where Are The Voices & Other Wobbly Poems* and *Crystal-Gazing the Amber Fluid and Other Wobbly Poems*, both published by Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company, as well as *De Kansas a Califas & back to Chicago* (March Abrazo Press). His visual art is held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Smithsonian, the National Museum of Mexican Art in Chicago, and elsewhere. If you want his writing—good luck. His poems, essays, and cartoons are scarcely available in bookstores and libraries. And there is a

dearth of material available online, even. So it is our turn to carry his voice forward and encourage the next generations to take up his call for human ingenuity and solidarity. As our hero put it: "I think the best thing is that when you know something, you pass it on to the next person."

May the torch we bring to this ceremony ignite something inside of you all, to carry his fire into a better future, for a better Chicago and world beyond. We need each other.



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OCTOBER 28, 2021
6:00 - 7:30 P.M.
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF MEXICAN ART
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THE SELECTION PROCESS

By Donald G. Evans

Founding Executive Director, Chicago Literary Hall of Fame

The Chicago Literary Hall of Fame's approach to identifying and selecting worthy candidates for induction is and always has been a thoughtful, rigorous, and highly competitive process. Our philosophy is to let as many informed, passionate people as possible decide. More than 150 individuals were directly involved in the nomination and selection of the ten CLHOF classes. These nominators and selectors possess outstanding reputations in our cultural community, and almost all prove insightful about the relative merits of writers under consideration. Librarians, historians, scholars, educators, fine artists, social activists, business people, and of course many authors have participated. These are the people running our local reading series and museums and arts organizations; writing book reviews and author profiles and literary commentary; teaching creative writing and literacy and the arts throughout our school systems; overseeing our journals, newspapers, and magazines; and authoring our finest plays, short stories and novels.

The ceremonies to officially induct new classes happen in the calendar year following selection. The one exception is this year—2021—in which the class of 2019 ceremony was held over one year due to the public health crisis.

From 2010-2015, our nominators were asked to write a ballot consisting of six unique writers. Basically: who and why. Some nominators wrote at length, some were brief. That process resulted in a fairly large list of Chicago writers to be considered for Chicago Literary Hall of Fame induction. At first, the candidates (many of them, anyway) seemed obvious, and of the 27 writers nominated in the inaugural year just four have yet to be selected: Oscar Brown Jr., Edgar Rice Burroughs, John Callaway, and Norman Maclean. Each year, though, new candidates emerge with at least some support. Writers you'd expect, like Hamlin Garland and Carol Shields. Writers you need to google, like Iceberg Slim and Bette Howland. Writers known best in other fields, like Steve Goodman and John Hughes. Writers recently passed, like Lisel Mueller and "Hache" Carrillo. Even writers for unknown reasons long out of the public consciousness, like Violin Spolin and Meyer Levin.

The list of candidates awaiting consideration stands at nearly one hundred.

Four years ago, we tweaked the process, so that nominators would supply just one well-defended candidate--the single literary figure whom they felt definitely belonged. We then collated those ten nominees, along with the defense statements, and sent to the selection committee, who debated the merits and ultimately chose

new classes of six inductees. We reduced class size from six to three inductees in 2017. Then in 2019, for the first time, one of our Fuller Award recipients, Gene Wolfe, passed. The Fuller is the honor we give to Chicago's greatest living writers. The CLHOF board of directors made the decision to automatically induct Gene Wolfe and other Fuller Award honorees subsequent to their passing.

That is why the current induction class stands at four.

It's been the case since the inception of this process that while selectors have the final say, nominators hold incredible sway over the process. The late, great Penelope Niven took her job as nominator seriously—she wrote an eloquent, almost airtight, defense of Thornton Wilder, saying that of all the places he lived he was happiest and most productive in Chicago. It was in large part due to Penny's passionate support that Wilder was selected. George Saunders made an eloquent case as to why Steve Goodman's brand of writing ranked as literary, and though Goodman has yet to win induction his candidacy continues to be taken seriously. In short, the nomination and selection process are equally significant, and the work of one is reliant on the work of the other.

This year, we've opened up the nomination process to the general public. We have a lot of faith in our audience, and already the new open call has resulted in responses from some of our most esteemed literary figures, such as Stuart Dybek and Haki Madhubuti.

Specifically, we ask you to nominate a single candidate and then write at least a couple of sentences in support of their selection. Answer the question, "Why this author?" keeping in mind the simple, three-pronged criteria: 1. Dead, 2. Chicago, 3. Literary. This should be the one writer you think absolutely belongs in the next Chicago Literary Hall of Fame class. The selection committee will use this nomination (along with outstanding nominations) as the basis for their deliberations.

To participate in this process, please send your single candidate and a supporting statement to Don Evans (dgevans@chicagoliteraryhof.org).

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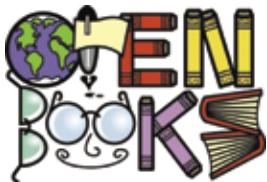
SPECIAL THANKS

Everybody listed in tonight's program deserves special thanks—the participants, the nominators and selectors, our great Board of Directors, the authors who've contributed content, the host and the partners, and.... well, everybody. It's only through their dedication and selfless work that we're able to produce such a lovely ceremony. But there are many others not explicitly mentioned here that I want to acknowledge, foremost Barry Jung, Rana Segal, Don Seeley, Floyd Sullivan, Cate Plys, Terry McCabe, Jeff Waggoner, Dmitry Samarov, Breaker Press, Ana Gore, John Barnicle, and Margaret Flynn. These are all people that routinely employ their enormous talents on behalf of good causes everywhere. I don't know how they find the time, or how we got so lucky to be beneficiaries of their generosity. But the Chicago Literary Hall is grateful for all they've done to make this occasion worthy of the authors we're here to honor.

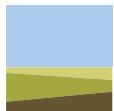
THE CHICAGO LITERARY HALL OF FAME

Robert Sengstacke Abbott (2017)	Sam Greenlee (2018)
Jane Addams (2012)	Lorraine Hansberry (2010)
Nelson Algren (2010)	Alice Judson Ryerson Hayes (2015)
Margaret Anderson (2014)	Ben Hecht (2013)
Sherwood Anderson (2012)	Ernest Hemingway (2012)
Rane Arroyo (2015)	David Hernandez (2014)
Margaret Ayer Barnes (2016)	Langston Hughes (2012)
L. Frank Baum (2013)	Fenton Johnson (2016)
Saul Bellow (2010)	John H. Johnson (2013)
Marita Bonner (2017)	Ring Lardner (2016)
Gwendolyn Brooks (2010)	Edgar Lee Masters (2014)
Frank London Brown (2019)	Harriet Monroe (2011)
Margaret T. Burroughs (2015)	Willard Motley (2014)
Fanny Butcher (2016)	Salima Rivera (2018)
Cyrus Colter (2011)	Carolyn Rodgers (2012)
Carlos Cortéz (2019)	Mike Royko (2011)
Frank Marshall Davis (2018)	Carl Sandburg (2011)
Floyd Dell (2015)	Shel Silverstein (2014)
Theodore Dreiser (2011)	Upton Sinclair (2015)
Roger Ebert (2016)	Studs Terkel (2010)
James T. Farrell (2012)	Margaret Walker (2014)
Edna Ferber (2013)	Theodore Ward (2015)
Eugene Field (2016)	Ida B. Wells (2011)
Leon Forrest (2013)	Thornton Wilder (2013)
Jeannette Howard Foster (2019)	Gene Wolfe (2019)
Henry Blake Fuller (2017)	Richard Wright (2010)

2021 INDUCTION CEREMONY PARTNERS



The Cliff Dwellers



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The Gaylord & Dorothy Donnelley Foundation provides ongoing support.