

# The New Mexico Writer

*A publication of New Mexico Writers  
Supporting and connecting the literary community*

*October 2025*

## Middle Grade Novel in Verse Takes Top Honor in 2025 New Mexico Book Awards

*Radiant* by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson won the inaugural Paul Rhetts Award in the 2025 New Mexico Book Awards. The Paul Rhetts Award is given to the most highly rated book in the contest. Nelson's book was among 47 winners and 156 finalists in 39 categories.



NM Writers took over administration of the New Mexico Book Awards earlier this year. The almost two-decades-old contest was designed “to uncover and honor the best in New Mexico books,” according to Paul Rhetts, co-founder and former director of the competition. The Paul Rhetts Award was created by NM Writers to honor Rhetts's legacy.

“Rhetts has been instrumental during the transition of the Book Awards to NM Writers, and we are pleased to honor him with this new award,” said Lisa McCoy, director of the NM Book Awards.

Nelson, a resident of Rio Rancho, describes her middle grade novel in verse as set against the historic backdrop of the Birmingham church bombing, the Kennedy assassination, and Beatlemania. *Radiant* won the Coretta Scott King Award and was published by Dutton Books.



Among the winners of the 2025 NM Book Awards were a cookbook from the Bear Mountain Lodge in Silver City, a young reader book about Deb Haaland, and a book that shares the story of Hotel Santa Fe and Picuris Pueblo in words and photos. “The winners and finalists reflect the excellent work being published about, and throughout, the state,” McCoy said. A complete list of the winners and finalists can be found [here](#).

Of the 212 books with a creative connection to New Mexico, the most entries were in the categories of Poetry, Autobiography & Memoir, First Book by Author or Publisher, and Mystery/Thriller.

The books were judged over the summer by booksellers, librarians, teachers, authors, publishers, agents, and avid readers living in the Southwest and as far away as

Massachusetts. Many of the judges shared how much they enjoyed this year's batch of books. One judge discovering a new author said, "They make me want more." Another judge said, "I absolutely fell in love with this book!"



In previous years, the finalists and winners of this award have been announced separately, but McCoy decided to celebrate finalists and winners together during this transition year. "Since I began directing the awards program, I've had the opportunity to speak with local authors," McCoy said, "and I've learned how much a finalist or winner sticker helps entice readers to buy books. I'm excited to give both winners and finalists a chance to celebrate together, and to continue spreading the word about these amazing books."

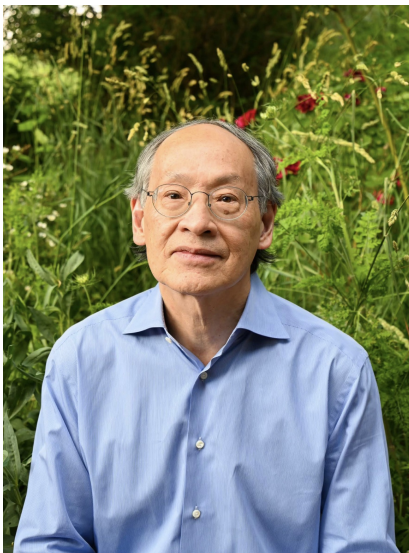
New Mexico Writers is planning publicity events around the state for winners and finalists of the 2025 New Mexico Book Awards.

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## Arthur Sze Is the Next U.S. Poet Laureate



Santa Fe poet Arthur Sze is the nation's 25th poet laureate. He will begin his poet laureateship on October 9 with an inaugural reading in the Library of Congress's Coolidge Auditorium.

Sze, who served as Santa Fe's inaugural poet laureate from 2006 to 2008, has lived in Santa Fe since 1972. He worked in the New Mexico Poetry-in-the-Schools program from 1973 to 1983, teaching across the state, and in 1983, he took on a role at the Institute for American Indian Arts (IAIA), where he would go on to teach for more than two decades.

Sze was born in New York to Chinese immigrants in 1950. He is the author of 12 poetry collections, including *Into the Hush* (Copper Canyon Press, 2025), as well as *The White Orchard: Selected Interviews, Essays, and Poems* (Museum of New Mexico Press, 2025). He is the recipient of the National Book Award, the PEN Southwest Book Award, the Mountains & Plains Independent Booksellers Association Book Award, and the Library of Congress's Bobbitt Prize for lifetime achievement in poetry. Sze is also highly regarded for his translations of Chinese poetry, including in *The Silk Dragon II* (Copper Canyon Press, 2024).

Sze's signature project as poet laureate will build on his work as a translator. He plans to publish an anthology titled *Transient Worlds*, which will feature poetry in translation from 13 languages. He told the *Santa Fe Reporter*, "I'm going to create an unconventional and very personal guide to translation.... I hope this can be used in high schools and in communities, too, and that it will use translation as a vehicle to deepen and widen the appreciation of poetry in a way that hasn't been done before."

Sze's own poetry is known for its detailed lyricism and its scope. The Library of Congress committee that awarded him the Bobbitt Prize described it this way: "Sze's imaginative capaciousness pulls in languages, traditions and systems from both East and West, and it can speak to the cosmos, then turn to the smallest natural detail."

Many of these small natural details are recognizable, and beloved, to readers familiar with New Mexico, as Sze's work reflects his deep connection to this place: water spilling "over a metal gate into the Río Chamita," "apple blossoms / unfolding white along a stucco wall," "bobcat prints / along the Winsor Trail." In a poem about the Acequia del Llano, he lists plants common to the region: "Yarrow, rabbitbrush, claret cup cactus, one-seed juniper, Douglas fir, and scarlet / penstemon."

Sze has published most of his body of work with Copper Canyon Press, a Washington State-based independent press whose publisher and executive director, Ryo Yamaguchi, also lives in Santa Fe. Of Sze's poet laureateship, Yamaguchi says, "This is a fantastic spotlight on someone who has been dedicated to communities and landscapes of this region for decades, and I'm thrilled for the way it foregrounds New Mexico as a critical artistic locale—by way, of course, through Arthur's singular poetics."

Read a selection of Sze's poems featuring New Mexico [here](#).

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## Rising Writers Offers Sessions for Aspiring Writers

Registration is open for Rising Writers, the New Mexico Writers program that supports aspiring writers. Thanks to a generous donation by Edward and Maria Gale, Rising Writers is a chance for emerging writers to spend time in conversation with an established writer/publisher. Rising Writers sessions are held around the state at small venues such as coffee shops and bookstores. These in-person events provide an opportunity to ask questions and hear from an expert about the craft and business of writing.

A great selection of session hosts and topics are planned for the Fall 2025 Rising Writers program. The schedule and additional details are provided on the NMW [website](#).

October 1 at 5:30 p.m. (Albuquerque): **Geoff Habiger** on "Traditional Publishing with an Indie Publisher"

October 11 at 8:30 a.m. (Las Cruces): **James McGrath Morris** on "Building a Cadre of Critique Readers While Writing Your Book"

October 13 at 3 p.m. (Gallup): **Dr. Manny Loley** on "Saad Bee Hiiná: Writing as Movement and Energy"

October 16 at 12 p.m. (Santa Fe): **Pam Lewis** on "Creative Nonfiction: Start With Real Life"



October 23 at 4 p.m. (Farmington): **Zahra Marwan** on “Art, Writing, and Traditional Publishing for Unconventional Thinkers”

October 27 at 5 p.m. (Silver City): **JJ Amaworo Wilson** on “Getting Your Book Published”

October 29 at 6 p.m. (Albuquerque): **D.J. Green** on “From Writer to Author—Getting Your First Novel Published”

Each in-person conversation is limited to a small group of participants, so do not hesitate! **Register now by [emailing](#) Lucy Moore, chair of the Rising Writers committee.**

The lineup of hosts for the October Rising Writers sessions are as follows:

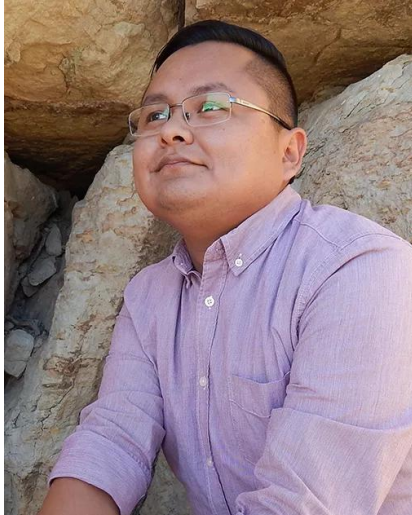


Geoff Habiger is an author and the owner/managing editor at Artemesia Publishing, a small, independent traditional publisher based in Tijeras. Habiger is the author of seven books and multiple short stories and has run Artemesia Publishing for over 20 years. Since its start in 2004, Artemesia Publishing has published over 100 titles from more than 50 authors. Artemesia focuses on fiction but has nonfiction titles as well. One imprint, Kinkajou Press, focuses on early reader, middle grade, and YA fiction, while the second imprint, Shadow Dragon Press, focuses on horror, fantasy, science fiction, and speculative fiction.

James McGrath Morris is an award-winning and *New York Times*–bestselling biographer. He is the author of five biographies and three works of narrative nonfiction. His most recent work is *Tony Hillerman: A Life*, which was a finalist for an Edgar Award. He lives in Santa Fe, and serves as Executive Director of New Mexico Writers.



Dr. Manny Loley (Diné) is a storyteller from Tsé'tah Tó Ák'olí in New Mexico. He holds a Ph.D. in English and literary arts from the University of Denver, and an M.F.A. in fiction from the Institute of American Indian Arts. Since 2018, he has served as director of the Emerging Diné Writers' Institute. He currently holds a Mellon Impact Postdoctoral Fellowship in Native American Studies and serves as a lecturer at the University of Oklahoma. His work has found homes in *Poetry Magazine*, *Pleides Magazine*, the *Massachusetts Review*, the *Santa Fe Literary*



*Review*, *Broadsided Press*, the *Yellow Medicine Review*, and the *Diné Reader: an Anthology of Navajo Literature*, among others. His writing has been thrice nominated for Pushcart Prizes. Loley is the editor of *Leading the Way*, a Navajo literary magazine.

Pam Lewis is the author of three novels: *Speak Softly, She Can Hear*; *Perfect Family*; and *A Young Wife*. Her short fiction has appeared in *The New Yorker* and literary magazines, and her nonfiction in *Redbook* and various newspapers. A trip to Antarctica in 2012 ignited a love of photography. Since 2022, she has been making dignified portraits of unhoused people in an Albuquerque shelter. She is currently at work on a novel set in Albuquerque's International District and based loosely on the sudden and tragic death of a young man who sat for an early portrait.



Zahra Marwan, award-winning writer and illustrator, works as a traditional artist with watercolor and ink. Zahra creates work that reflects her cultural roots in Kuwait as well as her life now in Albuquerque. Her debut picture book, *Where Butterflies Fill the Sky*, was published by Bloomsbury Books and named one of the *New York Times*/New York Public Library's 10 Best Illustrated Books as well as NPR's Best Books of 2022. She serves on the board of New Mexico Writers.

JJ Amaworo Wilson is a German-born Anglo-Nigerian-American writer. His 2016 novel, *Damnificados*, won the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award for Debut Fiction, the Independent Publisher Book Award for Multicultural Fiction, the New Mexico-Arizona Book Award for Fiction, and the Prix Révélation de Traduction for the French translation, and was named a Top 10 book in *O*, the Oprah magazine. His 2021 novel, *Nazaré*, won the Foreword INDIES Book Award and the Independent Publisher Book Award. He is the writer-in-residence at Western New

Mexico University and teaches on the MFA in Creative Writing at Stonecoast, University of Southern Maine. He serves as the board chair of New Mexico Writers.



D. J. Green is a writer, geologist, and sailor. As an environmental and engineering geologist for more than thirty years, she consulted on projects throughout the U.S. before turning her attention to writing, where she weaves science into story. She lives near the Sandia Mountains in Placitas and cruises the Salish Sea on her sailboat during the summers. *No More Empty Spaces*, her first novel, won the 2024 Next Generation Indie Book Award for General Fiction and the 2024 International Book Award for Best New Fiction.

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## Book Festival Launches in Las Cruces

The inaugural Southern New Mexico Book Festival, organized by Las Cruces Writers, will debut in Las Cruces on Saturday, October 11. The event, which is free to attend, will feature readings from more than 20 local authors, including Charmayne Samuelson, Eva Nevarez St. John, Shelley Armitage, and Carlos Melendrez, as well as several workshops on topics ranging from social media marketing strategies for writers, to the importance of finding critique partners, to ideas for starting your own book club. The day will close with a reception featuring a presentation from New Mexico Writers and a talk by Denise Chávez.

Younger attendees at the book festival will also discover a day's worth of offerings geared specially toward them—including children's book readings, giveaways, activities, and a raffle.

The festival will be held from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Doña Ana Community College's East Mesa Campus. Learn more [here](#).

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## New Mexico Writers Grantee News





2025 NMW Grantee **Marie Parks** announced the release of *Undeniable*, co-authored with Jes Honard, the second in their Grigori Cycle series.



2023 NMW Grantee **Sage Vogel** will be a featured storyteller at the SOMOS Storytelling Festival in Taos.

## Briefly Noted



Casa Urraca Press announced the publication of *Hearts in Motion, Hearts in Place: The Quest for Querencias on Turtle Island and Abya Yala* by Enrique R. Lamadrid with illustrations by Jim Vogel, and *A Soliloquy of Some Disconnected Tales* by Thomas E. Chávez.

Claire Wilcox announced the publication of her new book, *Rewire Your Food-Addicted Brain: Fight Cravings and Break Free from a High-Sugar, Ultra-Processed Diet Using Neuroscience*.

J. N. Crain announced the publication of *Ysobel*, the second novel in his Infinity Times Four series.



Ella Shaefer and Rena Sapon-White announced the publication of their new book, *Sweet Talk*.

Artemesia Publishing announced the publication of *One Night at Kedasi* by Ashton Macaulay, *The Lost Knight and Other Tales* by Ricardo Victoria, and *Death is a Hungry Angel* by Leah Holbrook Sackett.

Demetria Martínez and Susan Sherman read from their new book, *Poetry in Dangerous Times: Two Women, Two Worlds*, at Collected Works and Southside Library in Santa Fe, Jules' Poetry Playhouse in Placitas, and Bookworks, Chatter, and First Congregational Church in Albuquerque. The *Albuquerque Journal* also

Margaret Randall held her talk, “Writing Under Fascism,” at the Albuquerque Museum on September 14. The essay will be included in her forthcoming collection from Casa Urraca Press, *Pages Lost and New*.

Priyanka Kumar, NMW board member and author of *The Light Between Apple Trees*, joined host Jenni Doering on the podcast *Living on Earth*.

Roshi Joan Halifax appeared in conversation with Rebecca Solnit in a recent session of the Upaya Zen Center’s Awareness in Action series.

published a full review of *Poetry in Dangerous Times*.

Jake Fournier announced the forthcoming publication of his debut poetry collection, *Punishment Bag*, from University of New Mexico Press in January 2026.

Emily Jones, writer and anthropology professor at UNM, discussed her debut novel, *Nahia*, in a recent episode of the *Write On! Four Corners* podcast.

Santa Fe Poet Laureate Tommy Archuleta received an Academy of American Poets Laureate Fellowship.

### Send Us Your News!

Having a book or article published? Doing a reading? Offering a workshop? Let us know, so we can share your news with other writers. We’re particularly interested to hear from New Mexico and greater Navajo Nation writers. [Drop us a line](#).

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## Upcoming Events

### October 1 at 6 p.m. [Bookworks](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Priyanka Kumar** for a reading and signing of her new book, *The Light Between Apple Trees: Rediscovering the Wild Through a Beloved American Fruit*.

### October 2 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Ella Shaefer** and **Rena Sapon-White** for the launch of their new book *Sweet Talk*.

### October 3 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **C. Prudence Arceneaux** for a reading from her poetry collection *Proprioception*.

### October 4 at 2 p.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Ella Shaefer** and **Rena Sapon-White** in an author appearance.

### October 4 at 2 p.m. [Center for Contemporary Arts](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Maiya Brock**, **Sofia Salazar**, **Tony Barnstone**, **Yuyutsu Sharma**, **Miriam Sagan**, and **Alexandra Eldridge** for a Community Reading Series poetry reading.

### October 4 at 3 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Lorena Hughes** for a reading from her new novel *The Night We Became Strangers*.

### October 4 at 6 p.m. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)

Join **Catherine Strisik** for the launch of her poetry collection *Goat, Goddess, Moon*, with Lise Goett.

### October 4 at 7 p.m. [Center for Contemporary Arts](#) (Santa Fe)

Former Santa Fe Poet Laureate **Darryl Lorenzo Wellington** will introduce a special opening screening of *The Librarians*.



**October 7 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)**

Join **Ramona Emerson** for a celebration of the paperback release of her novel *Exposure*.

**October 8 at 6 p.m. [Bookworks](#) (Albuquerque)**

Join **Ramona Emerson** for a celebration of the paperback release of her novel *Exposure*.

**October 9 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)**

Join **Mark Small**, author of *Lee Berk: Leading the Berklee Way*, in conversation with John Trentacosta and Susan Berk.

**October 11 at 10 a.m. [Libros for Kids](#) (Albuquerque)**

Children and families are invited to the **New Mexico Children's Book Fair**, a free-of-charge book fair spotlighting New Mexico children's book authors and illustrators.

**October 11 at 2 p.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)**

Join **Nicholas Aragon**, author of *Curly Crow Goes to the Balloon Festival*, with Dr. Rudy Garcia.

**October 11 at 4 p.m. [Geronimo's Books](#) (Santa Fe)**

Join **Catherine Strisik**, author of *Goat, Goddess, Moon*, with former Santa Fe Poet Laureate Elizabeth Jacobson.

**October 12 at 12 p.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)**

Join **Sarah Azizi** for a signing from her debut poetry collection, *Make a Wish*.

**October 12 at 4:30 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)**

Join **Sandra Cisneros** for a deep dive into *The House on Mango Street* with Dr. Patricia Trujillo.

**October 13 at 6 p.m. [Bookworks](#) (Albuquerque)**

Join **Joshua Wheeler** for a reading and signing of his new novel, *The High Heaven*.

**October 14 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)**

Join **Joshua Wheeler** for a reading and signing of his new novel, *The High Heaven*.

**October 15 at 1:30 p.m. [Thomas Branigan Memorial Library](#) (Las Cruces)**

Join **Coventina Waterhawk**, author of *Dually Diagnosed Dually Blessed*, for an author talk.

**October 16 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)**

Join **Dina Gilio-Whitaker** for a reading from her new book, *Who Gets to Be Indian?*

**October 16 at 6 p.m. [Bookworks](#) (Albuquerque)**

Join **Kathleen M. Rogers** for a reading and signing of her new book, *The Llano County Mermaid Club: A Novel*, in conversation with local author Sue Boggio.

**October 17 at 4 p.m. [Santa Fe Public Library](#) (Santa Fe)**

Join **Enrique R. Lamadrid** for the launch of *Hearts in Motion, Hearts in Place: The Quest for Querencias*.

**October 17 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)**

Join **Owen Lipstein**, **John Miller**, and others for a celebration of *I Am Santa Fe*, *Santa Fe Magazine's* first-ever coffee table book.

**October 18 at 3 p.m. [FriendShop Bookstore](#) (Rio Rancho)**

Join **Mike Avery**, **J.L. Greger**, **Judi Phillips**, and **Suzanne Stauffer** at a Sisters in Crime panel and Q&A session titled "Add Mysteries to your Halloween."

**October 18 at 4 p.m. [Geronimo's Books](#) (Santa Fe)**

Join **Emily Hyland** and **David Oates** for a poetry reading.

**October 18 at 6 p.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)**

Join **Cody Polston**, author of *Haunted Albuquerque*, for a night of spooky stories.

**October 19 at 2 p.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)**

Join **Syd Linkletter**, author of *TarotSaur*, for an author appearance.

**October 20 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)**

Join **Paul Andrew Hutton**, author of *The Undiscovered Country: Triumph, Tragedy, and the Shaping of the American West*, in conversation with Hampton Sides.

**October 21 at 6 p.m. [Bookworks](#) (Albuquerque)**

Join **Philip Connors** for a reading and signing of his new book, *The Mountain Knows the Mountain: A Fire Watch Diary*.

**October 24 at 5:30 p.m. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)**

Join **Lama Sarah Harding** for a teaching and signing of her book *Severance: The Early Practice of Chö*.

**October 25 at 1 p.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)**

Join **H. M. Colugo** for a signing of her book, *Beneath the Bloody Moon*.

**October 25 at 4 p.m. [Geronimo's Books](#) (Santa Fe)**

Join **Alicia Elkort** and **Karen Petersen** for a poetry reading.

**October 26 at 12 p.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)**

Join **Andrew Singer**, author of *Now Is the Time: A Van Life Road Trip*, and **Sarah May**, author of *She Journeys*, for a book signing and van tour.

**October 26 at 4:30 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)**

Join **Elizabeth Jacobson**, **Anne Haven McDonnell**, **Lauren Camp**, **Sawnie Morris**, and **Pamela Uschuk**, for readings from the anthology *Attached to the Living World*.

**October 28 at 6 p.m. [Bookworks](#) (Albuquerque)**

Join **Emily Zipps** for the launch of her debut novel, *Alice Rue Evades the Truth*, in conversation with Kit Rosewater.

**October 30 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)**

Join photographer **Stuart Cohen** for a celebration of *Here in Santa Fe*.

**November 1 at 10 a.m. [SouthWest Writers](#) (Albuquerque)**

Join SouthWest Writers in person or via Zoom for featured readings from the SWW Anthology *Unbreaking the Circle: Stories of Service*, moderated by **Dan Wetmore**.

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## More Opportunities for Writers

*Please note, there may be fees associated with these opportunities.*



### Voces de Santa Fé Honoring Carmella Padilla

Voces de Santa Fé/Voces de New México will host a special event honoring Carmella Padilla, the former New Mexico Writers board chair and current chair of the NMW grants committee. She will be in conversation with Jaima Chevalier. The event will take place at La Fonda on the



### Taos Storytelling Festival

SOMOS is hosting the 27th annual Taos Storytelling Festival in Taos on **October 11**. The event will feature a storytelling workshop with Eldrena Douma, a community StorySwap, and a community storytelling event. For more information, click [here](#).

Plaza in Santa Fe on **October 19** at 11:30 a.m. [Email](#) to learn more.

### **Beyond the Book: How to Monetize Your Message & Think Like a CEO Author**

In this workshop from the New Mexico Book Association, on **October 7** at 12 p.m., award-winning book coach and publishing expert Porsché Mysticque Steele will show you how to shift from author to “Authorpreneur” using your existing body of work. Learn more [here](#).

### **SWW Annual Meeting**

SouthWest Writers is holding its annual meeting in Albuquerque on **October 11** at 10 a.m. The meeting will include the announcement of the 2025 Writing Contest Awards winners, as well as the Paris Award Presentation, and election of 2026 Officers. Learn more [here](#).

### **Casa Urraca Press at the Abiquiú Studio Tour**

Casa Urraca Press and founder and author Zach Hively will be participating in this year’s Abiquiú Studio Tour on **October 11-12**. The press will be hosted at the Nest gallery. Learn more [here](#).

### **SOMOS Presentation**

SOMOS is offering “To Change or Not to Change: A Question Only You Can Ask—and Answer” presented by LPCC therapist Mike Murphy on **October 14** at 6 p.m. in Taos. Learn more [here](#).

### **2026 NMPW New Mexico Professional Communication Contest**

The 2026 New Mexico Press Women Communication Contest opens for entries of work published or broadcast in 2025 from **October 15** through **January 21, 2026**. The state contest is the first tier in the National Federation of Press Women’s contest. Entries are submitted through the National Federation of Press Women’s Communications Contest portal. Learn more [here](#).

### **SOMOS Presents Craft & Critique**

A series of eight monthly workshops for writers of fiction, creative nonfiction, and memoir will be provided online via Zoom from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., with the next event on **October 25**. Register [here](#).

### **Croak & Dagger Presentation**

The NM chapter of Sisters in Crime, Croak & Dagger, is offering “Way to Prevent a Kill” presented by John Corvino on **October 28** at 6 p.m. Learn more [here](#).

### **Tucson Festival of Books 14th Annual Literary Awards**

Submissions are now open for the writing competition of the 2026 Tucson Festival of Books, which is accepting fiction, nonfiction, and poetry entries through **October 31** and is offering more than \$5,000 in prize money. First- through third-place winners also earn scholarships to the two-day Masters Workshop that follows the March 14-15, 2026 festival; there, they will work with a faculty of distinguished U.S. writers. Learn more [here](#).

### **Santa Fe Literary Review Submissions**

*The Santa Fe Literary Review* invites submissions **July 15 to November 1** of poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, and visual art. Recent issues featured work by Tommy Orange, Layli Long Soldier, Kirstin Valdez Quade, and Darryl Lorenzo Wellington. Learn more [here](#).

### **Acorn Publishing Debut Author Prize**

The Acorn Publishing Debut Author Prize is open to unpublished fiction and memoir writers across the U.S. who have completed manuscripts of 95,000 words or less. The winner, announced at the 2026 San Diego Writers Festival, will receive a full-service professional publishing and national launch package valued at over \$11,000. Submissions must be received by **November 15**. Learn more [here](#).

### **The 2026 Zia Book Award**

The 2026 Zia Book Award will honor women authors of children’s books who have significant ties to New



### Thin Air Magazine Submissions

*Thin Air Magazine*, based out of Northern Arizona University, is accepting submissions for their 32nd issue, Systems, until **October 19**. They accept fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, visual art, and writing that defies classification. View submission guidelines [here](#).

### SWW Presentation and Workshop

SouthWest Writers is offering “Audiobooks for Self Published Authors” presented by Sandra Murphy on **October 20** at 6:30 p.m. online via Zoom, and “AI Revisited: Should We Be Very Afraid?” presented by Léonie Rosenstiel on **October 22** at 6:30 p.m. online via Zoom. Learn more [here](#).

### Poetry in Dangerous Times Workshop

Demetria Martínez will be teaching a two-day poetry workshop in Placitas on **October 24–25**, through Jules’ Poetry Playhouse. For more information and waitlist registration, click [here](#).

Mexico. Submissions can be made by the author, publisher, or someone else on the author's behalf through **January 29, 2026**. Learn more [here](#).

### Story Unlikely Short Story Contest

Story Unlikely is accepting submissions to its annual short story contest from **October 14 to January 31**. Learn more and submit [here](#).

### Green Fire Times Submissions

*Green Fire Times*, a platform for regional, community-based voices, invites submissions of articles about New Mexico and the Southwest. Learn more and submit articles [here](#).



The third annual **Sandia Starforgers Writers Retreat and Workshop** for science-fiction, fantasy, and horror writers is taking place April 24 to 27, 2026, in Albuquerque. Early bird discounted pricing is available through **October 15**. Additionally, there is a scholarship available for one writer with financial need (applications for the scholarship are due November 30). Instructors at this event include:

- Charlie Jane Anders: Hugo, Nebula, and Locus Award–winning author
- Mary Robinette Kowal: Hugo, Nebula, and Locus Award–winning author and audiobook narrator
- dave ring: Ignyte and World Fantasy Award–nominated publisher of Neon Hemlock Press (joining virtually)
- Alexandria Valentine: Editor-in-Chief of *Harriet's House* (joining virtually)
- Darling Heart: writer, editor, creative, and communications professional (joining virtually)
- Geoff Habiger: founder of Artemesia Publishing and NM-AZ Award–winning author
- Marie Parks: NM-AZ Award–winning author and Futurescapes Most

Promising New Author nominee  
For more information and to register, click [here](#).

## In Others' Words

“Poetry has a crucial role to play in our lives, society, and the world. It helps us slow down, hear clearly, see deeply, and envision what matters most in our lives.”

—Arthur Sze, U.S. Poet Laureate

*Have a favorite quote about writing you'd like to share? [Send it to us!](#)*



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