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*“We do this because the world we live in is a house on fire and  
the people we love are burning.”*

—SANDRA CISNEROS, “A House of My Own,” the introduction to the  
25<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of *The House on Mango Street*

## Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundation Announces 2023 Awards

### Sandra Cisneros to Receive the Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award

#### And Finalists in Fiction & Nonfiction

Author of *The House on Mango Street* among many other critically acclaimed authors and bestselling books to be honored in Dayton, OH on November 12, 2023



Photo credit: Keith Dannemiller

**Dayton, OH (September 12, 2023)**—The Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundation, which honors writers whose work uses the power of literature to foster peace, social justice, and global understanding, is proud to announce **Sandra Cisneros** as the recipient of the **Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award**. Cisneros is a celebrated poet, essayist, short story writer, and author of the classic coming-of-age novel *The House on Mango Street*. The Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundation will honor Cisneros’s groundbreaking contributions to peace in an awards ceremony in Dayton, Ohio on November 12, 2023. **Carla Hayden**, the 14<sup>th</sup> Librarian of Congress, will interview Cisneros on stage.

**Nicholas A. Raines**, Executive Director of the Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundation, says, “Sandra Cisneros is the embodiment of the Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundations’ values of peace and understanding, and her empathetic, perceptive voice is needed now more than ever.”

The Holbrooke Award is annually given to a writer whose body of work fosters peace and global understanding. Named in honor of the U.S. diplomat who brokered the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords, which ended the Bosnian War, the Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundations’ lifetime achievement award is widely recognized as one of the most prestigious literary honors in the world.

Born in Chicago in 1954, Cisneros’s work explores Latinx identity, female sexuality and artistry, and the life of the working class. She is best known for her semi-autobiographical novel *The House on Mango Street*, which has sold more than seven million copies worldwide. She has been honored with NEA fellowships in poetry and fiction, a MacArthur Fellowship, the PEN America Literary Award, the National Medal of Arts, the Fuller Award for Lifetime Achievement in Literature, and the Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize, among others. Cisneros is also the founder of two nonprofits, the Macondo Foundation and the Alfredo Cisneros del Moral Foundation, which are dedicated to supporting aspiring and emerging writers.

In response to receiving the award, Cisneros says:

**I witnessed a war’s effects personally with the forty-year friendship of my *hermana-amiga* from Sarajevo. And what I learned was this; the casualties of a war are not simply those killed in warfare. Civilians and unborn generations ever after suffer with the shrapnel of that conflict embedded in their psyche like hidden landmines. I just returned from Sarajevo, and I know this is true.**

**The repercussions of the Bosnian War have shaped me as both a writer and a human being. I have aspired in my life to strive for unity. I'm enormously gratified to be honored with a prize focusing on peace. The Dayton Literary Peace Prize is a benediction and a confirmation of my lifework. My most humble thanks.**

Cisneros is the latest in a long history of distinguished honorees, including Studs Terkel (2006), Elie Wiesel (2007), Tim O'Brien (2012), Louise Erdrich (2014), Gloria Steinem (2015), Margaret Atwood (2020/2021), and Wil Haygood (2022), among others.

The Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundation is also thrilled to announce the 2023 finalists in the categories of fiction and nonfiction. Every year, the DLPP honors one fiction and one nonfiction author whose work advances peace with a \$10,000 cash prize.

The 2023 fiction finalists are:

- [Anthem](#) by Noah Hawley
- [The Immortal King Rao](#) by Vauhini Vara
- [Didn't Nobody Give a Shit What Happened to Carlotta](#) by James Hannaham
- [The Light Pirate](#) by Lily Brooks-Dalton
- [Horse](#) by Geraldine Brooks
- [Mecca](#) by Susan Straight

The 2023 nonfiction finalists are:

- [American Midnight](#) by Adam Hochschild
- [Asian American Histories of the United States](#) by Catherine Ceniza Choy
- [His Name is George Floyd](#) by Robert Samuels and Toluse Olorunnipa
- [Ma and Me](#) by Putsata Reang
- [The Treeline](#) by Ben Rawlence
- [Zarifa](#) by Zarifa Ghafari with Hannah Lucinda Smith

On October 10, 2023, the Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundation will announce the winners of the fiction and nonfiction Dayton Literary Peace Prize. To purchase tickets for the gala on November 12<sup>th</sup>, please contact [info@daytonliterarypeaceprize.org](mailto:info@daytonliterarypeaceprize.org) or visit the [DLPP website](#).

The Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundation is dedicated to celebrating the power of the written word to forge peace. The DLPP offers extensive programming to high schools, colleges & universities, and libraries, including its robust Student Author Series, Community Conversations with the Ohio Public Library Network, among others. A primarily volunteer organization since its conception, the DLPP depends on donations from individuals, corporations, universities and local government to sustain its efforts. Learn more about how you can get involved via the [DLPP website](#).

### **About the Dayton Literary Peace Prize**

The Dayton Literary Peace Prize honors writers whose work uses the power of literature to foster peace, social justice, and global understanding. Launched in 2006, it is recognized as one of the world's most prestigious literary honors and is the only literary peace prize awarded in the United States. An offshoot of the Dayton Peace Prize, the Dayton Literary Peace Prize awards a \$10,000 cash prize each year to one fiction and one nonfiction author whose work advances peace as a solution to conflict and leads readers to a better understanding of other cultures, peoples, religions, and political points of view. Additionally, the Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award is bestowed upon a writer whose body of work reflects the Prize's mission. Previous honorees include Margaret Atwood, Wendell Berry, Taylor Branch, Geraldine Brooks, Wil Haygood, Louise Erdrich, John Irving, Barbara Kingsolver, Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, N. Scott Momaday, Tim O'Brien, Marilynne Robinson, Gloria Steinem, Studs Terkel, Colm Tóibín, and Elie Wiesel.

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