

THE LOIS ROTH ENDOWMENT

Fostering international dialogue



2017

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Awards for Cultural Diplomacy

Six exemplary cultural diplomats were recognized for their achievements at the annual awards ceremony of the US State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) on May 31, 2017.

Lois Roth Award. Priscilla Hernandez, Cultural Affairs Officer at the US Embassy in Caracas, Venezuela, has served in a series of challenging posts, where she incorporated new technologies, while mentoring colleagues and optimizing American Spaces, English language programs and alumni networks. She is particularly recognized for encouraging women to overcome social and economic obstacles.

An Honorable Mention went to Damian Wampler, Cultural Affairs Officer at the US Embassy in Tbilisi, Georgia, where he has used music, film, sports and technology to reach out to overcrowded refugee camps and remote areas. His language skills, cultural sensitivity and compassion helped him create new, sustainable programs on interfaith dialogue, refugee integration and women's empowerment.

Gill Jacot-Guillarmod Award. This award for Locally Engaged Staff went to Ms. Basma Amawi, Senior Cultural Assistant at the US Embassy in Amman, Jordan. Over 32 years of service, Basma has built unsurpassed networks of exchange program grantees, and created and enriched thousands of programs with lasting impact.

Two Honorable Mentions went to the Cultural Specialists at the US Embassies in Brasilia, Brazil and Hanoi, Vietnam. For 29 years, Marcia Mizuno has worked effectively and passionately on educational and cultural programming in schools

and the 40 Bi-national Centers across Brazil. Since 1996, Quynh Ngo's profound knowledge of Vietnamese history and traditions has guided US efforts to deepen people-to-people ties, particularly through education.

Ichman-Richardson Award. David Plack, in his role as ECA's Senior Advisor for Policy and Academic Programs, has led new international educational initiatives, engaged with Congress for funding special exchanges, and negotiated to ensure US colleges and universities are internationally competitive. David is recognized for his work ethic, intellect and helpfulness in educating colleagues about the values, premises and processes of ECA's work.

Awards for Literary Translation

Dyankov Award. Managed by the Elizabeth Kostova Foundation in Sofia, this award is named for Krustan Dyankov, pioneer translator of English-language literature into Bulgarian. This year it went to Angel Igov for his translation of *The Collector of Lost Things*, by Jeremy Page. Second place went to Margarita Dogramadzhyan for *The Cat's Table*, by Michael Ondaatje.

MLA-Roth Award. With the Modern Language Association, LRE awards a prize for literary translation into English from any language. 2017 was the last year in the previous biennial cycle. Starting in 2018, the MLA-Roth Award will be given every year!

Persian Translation Prize. The jury was very impressed by the number and quality of recent translations of contemporary Iranian literature into English. Jason Bahbak Mohaghegh won for *Born upon the Dark Spear: Selected Poems of Ahmad Shamlu* (Contra Mundum Pr., 2015);

known for his voice of resilient defiance and political dissent, Shamlu is one of the most prominent literary figures of 20th-century Iran—as evidenced by his nomination for a Nobel Prize in Literature in 1984. The jury also awarded two Honorable Mentions, to: Nastaran Kherad for *The Neighbors*, by Ahmad Mahmoud (Center for Middle Eastern Studies, 2013); and Janet Afary and John R. Perry for their *Charand-o Parand: Revolutionary Satire from Iran, 1907-1909* (Yale Univ. Pr., 2016)

Prix Coindreau. It is with great regret that we announce that, last year, the Prix Coindreau—LRE's oldest translation prize, established in 1993—came to an end. We were informed of this decision by Marc Chénétier, founding member and chair of the jury. He wrote: "The measure we resolved to take will insure that the Prix Maurice-Edgar Coindreau will never decline or peter away. A clean break is, to our eyes, more efficient and honest than a potentially limping future." Our gratitude and admiration go to Marc, Marie-Claude Peugeot and Anne Damour for their expertise and untiring devotion to the best of contemporary American literature and its translation into French.

Project Support

Project Support Awards are designed to supplement existing grant funding to help selected individuals enrich and expand their work in countries to which Lois Roth was particularly attached.

Australia. Travis Franks (Arizona State Univ.) received this year's award, administered with the Australian-American Fulbright Commission, for his dissertation comparing settler colonialism narratives in the town of Texas, in Queensland Australia, and the US State of Texas. It explores

the creation of place-specific collective identity through the use of literary traditions. Travis' award enabled him to present his work at the international conference on "Race, Whiteness and Indigeneity" of the National Indigenous Research and Knowledges Network

Denmark. The 2017 prize, administered with the American Scandinavian Foundation, was awarded to UT-Austin professor Lynn R. Wilkinson to help support research for her book on Danish writer and cultural figure Emma Gad. Exploring Gad's role as a dramatist, journalist, influential hostess and pioneering feminist, it evaluates her influence on Denmark's culture and politics at the turn of the 20th century.

Finland. In cooperation with The Fulbright Center in Helsinki, an exceptional three prizes were awarded in 2017. Hannah Duncan (Brown Univ.) complemented her research on education in Finland by organizing a conference on racism, nationalism and xenophobia in Europe. Natalia Magnani (Cambridge Univ.) undertook research into Sami identities and customs with young urban Skolt Sami, as well as more traditional Indigenous groups. An Honorable Mention was awarded to Rebekah Zimmerer (Univ. of Massachusetts) to compare gender practices of forestry landowners, especially in Finland and the U.S.

New Zealand. The Robin and Avril Winks Award is granted yearly to a New Zealander pursuing graduate study in the U.S. The 2017 award, administered with Fulbright New Zealand, went to Patricia Tupou for her MA in Pacific Islands Studies at the Univ. of Hawaii at Manoa. A member of the Tongan community, she strives to open climate discussions to Indigenous

perspectives as she examines the impact of environmental issues on native Pacific communities.

Norway. Solveig Mebust (Univ. of Minnesota) received the 2017 award to expand her innovative dissertation research on Nina Hagerup Grieg and the role of women in music in 19th-century Norway. It highlights the influence of women's folk music on male composers. An Honorable Mention went to Nora Uhrich (St. Olaf College) for her timely research on victims of sexual violence seeking asylum as refugees in Norway and on the cultural and legal elements at play in their resettlement cases.

Sweden. A Roth-Thomson Award went to Kathleen Ernst (Univ. of Tennessee) for her research into climate services and social planning in Sweden; it allowed her to learn about the EU approach to environmental issues at the third European Climate Adaptation Conference.

Co-Sponsored Programs

Fulbright Legacy Lectures. To honor the life of J. William Fulbright, prominent figures in international relations give a set of three lectures—at Pembroke College, Oxford (where Senator Fulbright studied, 1924-28), Kings College London and the University of Edinburgh. Other sponsors include the US-UK Fulbright Commission, Oxford's Department of Politics and International Relations, and the US Fulbright Association.

The 2017 lectures, given by political scientist Louise Richardson, Vice Chancellor of the University of Oxford, were on "Universities in an Age of Populism." She is uniquely positioned to tackle this issue arising on both sides of the

Atlantic, having taught at Harvard and led both the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study and the University of St. Andrews before her appointment at Oxford. Her research has focused on international terrorism, security institutions, and international relations; she is the author of the influential book *What Terrorists Want: Understanding the Enemy*.

Henry and Judith Millon Award. The Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (CASVA) at the National Gallery of Art chose Professor Basile Baudez of the Paris-Sorbonne University for the 2017 Millon Architectural History Award. His project examines *Tracing Paper as a Commodity: The Example of Antonio Senape's Italian Landscape Album*.

Sozopol Writers Seminar. We helped the Kostova Foundation bring authors Dimiter Kenarov, Marin Bodakov, Philip Gourevitch and Philip Graham together to join Elizabeth Kostova in working with a group of young Bulgarian and American writers. The seminar fosters the sharing of recent work among fiction writers in Bulgarian and English and has galvanized the Bulgarian literary scene. This year's seminar, held June 8-12, was followed by the CapitalLiterature program in Sofia

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For more details on programs and awardees please see www.rothendowment.org

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