¡Feliz año nuevo, REFORMA family!

In the past few months, I have had the great pleasure of connecting with REFORMA members at various chapter meetings and events. I have attended local (Southern California) events in Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego, and the Inland Empire—our newest REFORMA Chapter. I ventured a little farther away from SoCal and attended meetings of the Bibliotecas para la Gente and the Northeast chapters. Each time I have learned about the wonderful work our members do in their libraries, for their communities, and for their local REFORMA organization. I am extremely proud of the commitment to service of our talented members, and thankful for their time and kindness in hosting me. Next stops: Fresno, Puerto Rico, and Denver.
What an honor to be REFORMA President the year JCLC took place. It was a magnificent gathering of gente and a unique opportunity to share and learn from each other. I highly praise the work of all the REFORMA members who volunteered their time and expertise to organize this conference, especially Roxana Benavides and Susan Luevano, who represented REFORMA in the Steering Committee. I also congratulate the REFORMA members who were honored with awards, and who received scholarships and travel grants. We look forward to JCLC 2022.

REFORMA was invited to participate in the IV Jornadas Nacionales para Bibliotecarios that took place in Argentina in October. I had the privilege of moderating a virtual panel presented by REFORMA members Yago Cura, Sylmari Burgos-Ramirez and Alma Ramos-McDermott on their experiences as outreach and school librarians. The webinar recording is available at bit.ly/ivjornadas.

The Guadalajara International Book Fair (FIL) took place in November. I attended as part of the ALA/FIL FREE PASS Program to represent REFORMA and to assist the Los Angeles Public Library with the selection of Spanish-language materials. I presented a REFORMA update to the Asociación Mexicana de Bibliotecarios (AMBAC) during their Cuarta Reunión Ordinaria, met with members of the Cámara Nacional de la Industria Editorial Mexicana (CANIEM), and met with REFORMA members. As usual, attending FIL was of great value to those seeking to collect quality Spanish-language materials.

If you plan to attend ALA Midwinter, I encourage you to check REFORMA’s schedule of meeting and events, and make plans to join us. On Saturday, our very special Noche de Cuentos at the Seattle Public Library will feature bilingual performances by Seattle-based storytellers. On Monday at 8 am PT, I will have the honor to announce the winners of this year’s Pura Belpre Awards during the ALA Youth Media Awards. You can watch the live webcast at ala.unikron.com.

Gracias REFORMA for all you do. Until next time!
I am writing this article to chronicle the founding meeting of REFORMA at the ALA Annual Conference in 1971 in Dallas, Texas. As a colleague and friend of the founder Arnulfo Trejo, who was at the time a Professor of Library Science at the University of Arizona, he recounted some details of the meeting to me. He did recount a conversation he had with E.J. Josey, the founder of the Black Caucus of ALA. E.J. Josey and Arnulfo were old friends and colleagues and E.J. asked Arnulfo about the possibility of starting a Latino organization to mirror the Black Caucus of ALA. Arnulfo recounted to me that his response to E.J. was that he was working on beginning an organization similar to the Black Caucus and he had a name for the organization—REFORMA.

Dr. Trejo called for a meeting to begin a professional library organization representing Latinos in the USA at the ALA Annual Conference in Dallas, Texas in 1971. A representative group of Latino library professionals attended this meeting: Lillian Lopez (Puerto Rican/NY); Kathleen de la Peña McCook; Martha Tome (Cuban/Florida); Bill Ramirez (Mexican-American/SFPL); Alberto Irabien (Cuban/US State Department); Alfredo de los Santos (Mexican-American/Community College Librarian Southwest); Elizabeth Martinez (Mexican-American/LACoPL) and possible attendees who I have not been able to verify —Roberto Cabello (Chilean/Library Researcher); Jose Taylor (Panamanian/LAPL); Dan Duran (Mexican-American/SF Bay Area Bookmobile Outreach Librarian). Also there were unnamed attendees representing SALALM, University of Arizona students, and several Dallas PL staff members.

At the gathering Elizabeth Martinez presented the film “I am Joaquin,” based on the epic poem written by the Chicano activist Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzalez in 1967. He was from Denver, Colorado. Luis Valdez directed this film, which became an inspiration to the Chicano civil rights movement of the 1960’s and 1970’s.

The outcome of the meeting was the beginning of REFORMA.

I did not attend this meeting because I was a newly-minted Librarian and did not have the resources to pay to attend it. My boss at LACoPL was Elizabeth Martinez and she brought me a membership form to fill out. I joined and attended the 1972 Midwinter ALA Conference. I immediately became active in REFORMA. I was the current Chairperson of the Committee to Recruit Mexican American Librarians, a combined committee of LACoPL and LAPL, at the time, and was very interested in contributing to REFORMA’s growth and success. I became Vice President/President Elect after Alberto Irabien was elected as the second President of REFORMA. Unfortunately Alberto Irabien never served as the second President of REFORMA because the State Department sent him out of the country on assignment. Alberto Irabien subsequently relinquished the Presidency of REFORMA to me and I served his term and my elected term.

One of my proudest moments with REFORMA was in 2001 when I received the Arnulfo Trejo Librarian of the Year Award in San Francisco at the ALA Annual Conference. Dr. Trejo presented me the award and in his remarks he thanked me for “saving” REFORMA when Alberto Irabien was not able to serve.

I want to thank Madeline Peña, our current distinguished REFORMA President, who asked me to write this article. I also want to thank Elizabeth Martinez, who contributed names of attendees to the 1971 Dallas meeting and also Dr. Roberto Haro who knew of the meeting and verified attendees of the organizing meeting of REFORMA.
Interview with Author
Edgardo Miranda-Rodriguez

By Libbhy Romero

Edgardo Miranda-Rodriguez is a graphic novelist and creator of Afro-Boricua heroine, “La Borinqueña.” He is also the Creative Director and owner of his own Brooklyn-based production and creative services studio, Somos Arte. In addition, Edgardo has also written for Marvel Comics’ critically acclaimed anthology Guardians of the Galaxy: Tales of the Cosmos. He is a curator of art exhibitions and has produced the comic book series Freak written by Emmy award-winning writer John Leguizamo. For further information about Edgardo’s works, visit somosarte.com.

Ricanstruction: Reminiscing & Rebuilding Puerto Rico is your latest book release. Please tell us more about it and your collaboration with DC Comics.

It was just two weeks after Hurricane Maria had just hit Puerto Rico and I was attending the New York Comic Con. Initially, I felt uncomfortable setting up my table with La Borinqueña graphic novels given the gravity of the cataclysmic storm that devastated the island. I arrived late to the convention center and did my best to navigate through the hundreds of people that were on line, crowding the aisle where my table was located. As I start to set up the table with my assistant, I ask an event volunteer why there was such a line, and she laughingly told me they were waiting for me. I quickly set up my books, and immediately opened my space for everyone. What would happen next would completely catch me off guard. Women and men came to me with tears because they had not heard yet from their families. I’d reach over and do my best to console everyone as best as I could, knowing very well that I myself had not heard from my family.

When I look to the line, I recognize a face in the crowd. It was Dan DiDio, co-publisher of DC Comics. I gestured that he should come up to the line, but he kindly refused, instead waiting another 45 minutes until he made it to the front to talk to me. He had heard of my work with my first book, La Borinqueña #1 (2016), and complimented me on its production value. I then asked him, “What are we going to do for Puerto Rico?” The question caught Dan off guard, but the two of us immediately got into a conversation about how I could go about producing an anthology. As he left my table, the title immediately came to me for my benefit anthology: Ricanstruction: Reminiscing & Rebuilding Puerto Rico.

Within a week of meeting Dan at the event, we came to a written agreement allowing me the right to use any DC Comics character that I wanted for this charity effort. I was also allowed to ask any DC Comics exclusive writers and artists to work on this project so long as they were interested and available. In the end, I gathered close to 150 contributors for the 200-page anthology. Amongst them were notable comic book industry professionals such as Frank Miller, Gail Simone, Greg Pak, Bill Sienkiewicz, Reginald Hudlin, in addition to Latinx celebrities like Rosario Dawson, Rubén Blades, Sonia Manzano, Freddy Rodriguez, and celebrated novelist Esmeralda Santiago. The book would be released in May of 2018 and would become a number one best-selling book on Amazon for close to four months and help us raise to date close to a quarter of a million dollars for our La Borinqueña Grants Program which last fall awarded nine grants to local grassroots organizations across the island of Puerto Rico and in the fall of 2019 we look to return to award more grants.
How was your main character, Afro-Boricua heroine “La Borinqueña,” born? What are her superpowers?

In 2015, then Governor Padilla of Puerto Rico announced that the close to $80 billion debt that Puerto Rico had amassed would be unpayable. I was aware that the Puerto Rican economy was on a devastating decline once tax code Section 936 was repealed by President Clinton in 1996 and phased out by 2006. This lead to the collapse of the pharmaceutical industry and the ripple effects would dismantle the Puerto Rican economy. This would also lead to a massive migration to the U.S. of close to 350,000 (Pew Research Center, October 14, 2015). Over 300 public schools were closing. Many people were losing their jobs, homes, and families due to migration.

In addition to the economic crisis, I was aware of the work of scientists such as Dr. José Molinelli and how they clearly stated at the ENCUENTRO event in Puerto Rico produced by El Puente Latino Climate Action Center (LCAN) how the effects of climate change would drastically affect Puerto Rico, especially given its weakened infrastructure due to the economic crisis.

I strongly felt that given that we were living in an era consumed with popular culture, that perhaps if I created a superhero character I could use this platform to help bring to light the humanitarian crisis that Puerto Rico was now finding itself in. Thus was born La Borinqueña, a superhero who in her secret identity would actually be a college student studying earth and environmental studies at Columbia University. Through my character, I would be able to engage my readers in a discourse about the island’s failing economy and climate change.

I further decided to have her be an Afro-Boricua to truly embrace the diversity of being Puertorriqueño. Within our community and those in other Latinx groups, there exists colorism. To help address this head on, I would create a character that celebrated her Afro-Latinidad.

Her powers would be drawn from Puerto Rico’s mysticism and mythology. She would obtain supernatural abilities as gifts presented to her via a star that Atabex, the mother goddess of the Taínos, would present her. She would additionally receive elemental powers from Atabex’s twin sons Yucahu, the god of the seas and mountains, and Huracán, the god of the storm. This origin story would give the reader an introduction to the rich history of Puerto Rico.

My love for science would influence me to address global warming in my first book when La Borinqueña does not face off a super-villain, but instead faces a hurricane. This would inevitably be the precursor to the reality of how Puerto Rico would suffer under the blow of Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

What impact would you like your writing and your characters to communicate to your readers?

The most powerful impact I hope to leave with readers is the importance of representation. Most of the literature that we study, share, and enjoy does not always represent its audience. Oftentimes the reader is subconsciously convinced that their experience or appearance cannot be considered universal or mainstream. My hope is to undo this with my graphic novel series. When Latinx read this series, they will find inspiration in seeing a character that reflects their experience, perspective, and culture. However, what I also hope is that everyone, no matter if they be from San Juan, Puerto Rico or Austin, Texas, that they see themselves in La Borinqueña because they relate to the very core of where I draw inspiration to write. From family, from friends, from heritage, from love.
Did the library play any role when you were growing up?

As a child growing up I would frequent my libraries. My family moved quite often due to our financial constraints, and we'd find ourselves in different cities. I recall often visiting the Bronx Library Center when it was still the Fordham Library Center. I would go there to read J.R.R. Tolkien, H.G. Wells, Jules Verne, and others.

As a teen, we lived in Reading, Pennsylvania. I would frequent the Reading Public Library to check out vinyl records by Prince, The Police, Billy Joel,

and more. The public libraries always provided me a haven to read, enjoy art, and enjoy being and thinking creatively.

Which are your favorite book titles and authors that you enjoy reading?

I particularly enjoy the comic book series Saga by Fiona Staples and Brian K. Vaughan; Wonder Woman: Earth One Vol 1 & Vol 2 by Grant Morrison and Yanick Paquette; War Against All Puerto Ricans: Revolution and Terror in America’s Colony by Nelson A. Denis; and various children books to my youngest son by Dr. Seuss, Mo Willems, and Oliver Jeffers.

Libbhy Romero is the World Languages Collections Coordinator at BookOps, the shared technical services organization of Brooklyn Public Library & New York Public Library. She has written articles about collection development of Spanish-language materials in Library Journal. She is a former REFORMA Northeast Chapter President and recipient of the 2016 Pura Belpre Librarian of the year award of the REFORMA Northeast Chapter.
The unfolding drama in the U.S. Supreme Court dominated headlines this past fall. Lost in all the acrimony was the latest trailblazing action by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor. In September, she released a children’s picture book, *Turning Pages: My Life Story*, which features a Latina protagonist and her love of books. This unassuming yet revolutionary tale chips away at the existing hegemony in the literary world, adding a refreshing new voice to Latinx children’s literature. It’s long overdue.

Consider this: all white children are immigrants to this land and some are also poor. However, “poverty” and “immigration” are not common themes in children’s books featuring white characters. Instead, white children are given the freedom to explore life in its fullest spectrum. They can be anything under the sun, feel every emotion and try on any behavior imaginable. This is not the case with Latinx youth.

In the landscape of this nation’s Latinx children’s literature, young protagonists are often shown operating within very restricted social and emotional boxes. As a child, I never read books with Latinx characters that looked or lived like me. Now, as a mother of two young children, I have scoured libraries and book reviews for the last seven years in search of books that echo a wide range of Latinx narratives only to come up practically empty-handed. The most common storyline I have encountered: that of the poor immigrant child.

There is no excuse for this inequity.

Our history in this country is more multidimensional than the reductive and stereotypical accounts of poverty and immigration. Yes, these factors are defining for many Latinx and it is important that they are explored. An understanding of the trauma created by scarcity and migration, as well as its transcendence, is vital to young readers of all backgrounds as they develop a sense of personal and cultural identity.

"As a child, I never read books with Latinx characters that looked or lived like me."

Audiences from all walks of life are lucky several beautiful books tackle these topics. Still, we need more diverse stories.

Children are simply not served by the continued portrayal of the Latinx experience primarily in terms of poverty and immigration. There are countless other true stories to be told.

The numbers back this idea. According to the Pew Research Center, as of 2015, there were over 37 million U.S.-born Hispanics in this country, compared to 19 million foreign-born Hispanics. Certainly, immigration affects many Latinx but a majority of us were born here and may not directly connect with an immigrant story.

This overlooked majority needs to see themselves in the stories they read so they can understand themselves better, feel less isolated, and love reading. More and more, this means including middle or upper-class settings, private schools, and big homes in Bel Air.

According to a recent study by Standard, Harvard, and Census Bureau researchers, the Latinx community is increasing its economic mobility and obtaining higher levels of education than it did in the past. In 2016, the percentage of Hispanic high school graduates ages 18-24 enrolled in college was 47%, up from 32% in 1999.

While Hispanics' income mobility still lags behind their white counterparts, they are quickly moving up the economic ladder. Among those who grew up in the lowest income quintile, some 45% of Hispanics made it to the middle class or higher, compared to 46% of whites. Meanwhile, 14% of Hispanic middle-class kids made it to the top income scale, compared to 19% of whites. It is clear that Latinx lives are constantly evolving; our books should as well.
Children’s literature must mirror the real-life push to reimagine and move past limiting ideas of what is possible. Consistently casting Latinx as have-nots and foreigners in the arts curtails what burgeoning Latinx can dream about for themselves and validates deprivation and otherness as the most authentic Latinx life stories.

This incomplete understanding also leaves us vulnerable to the vilification and scapegoating we see these days, and is damaging to the psyche of the community as a whole. Books can be great equalizers. But if they do not help bridge Latinx lived experiences with everyone else's journeys, our kids will always be seen as outsiders, by themselves and others.

Increasingly, people of all backgrounds want to see more diversity in children’s literature. This is true for me too. It is essential my children have access to Latinx literature that reflects our rich, multifaceted cultural history. We need more books like Turning Pages, which highlights the role of books in guiding Sotomayor to greatness. We also need books about doctors, entrepreneurs, artists, and many other Latinx characters living abundantly. Simply put: representation matters.

It is time to dispense with the recycled clichés. We cannot tell one third of our children that their story is relegated to humble origins or else it does not really exist. Books need to reflect the robust Latinx realities in this country. We are not one-dimensional and our stories should not be either.

Norma Newton is a Los Angeles-based writer, lawyer, and creative. Her writing explores the intersection of class, race, and gender from an Indigenous Latina's perspective. She is also a board member of the Vincent Price Museum Foundation. A dedicated bookworm, Norma is a lover of all libraries.

How Inclusive Are Your Subject Headings in Your OPAC?

By Sol María López

Technical services staff do the “behind-the-scenes” type of work in libraries. The nature of our work keeps many of us sitting down, consulting cataloging rules, working closely with collections, and deeply concentrating to describe attributes in bibliographic records. Many of us, however, enjoy opportunities to interact with our users, whether working at the Reference desk, or providing an information literacy class.

Sometimes institutions have priorities that do not allow for juggling technical and public service duties together. As a cataloger in academic libraries for 7 years, I can attest to the multiple projects technical services departments handle all at once: creating original bibliographic records, copy cataloging, completing retrospective cataloging projects, re-classing projects, getting training on cataloging trends, attending conferences, giving a workshop, and so on. How can technical services staff find a balance between main responsibilities while having opportunities to work with the users they serve?

For me, I have been fortunate to be in positions that allow and encourage pursuing creative projects to implement that typically fall outside of direct cataloging duties, allowing me the ability to bring in the human aspect (users) into my work. One such project, and one that I hope other libraries will implement in time, includes adding local and inclusive subject and keyword access terms to thousands of bibliographic records on the topic of immigration, in particular to records containing offensive Library of Congress Subject Headings (authorized) to describe underrepresented groups, such as “Illegal aliens” or “Illegal alien children.”

What are factors that led to the project? I moved to Colorado from El Paso, Texas in 2016. Having grown up on the border has definitely been a strong motivator in pursuit of this particular project. I understand what it is to be bicultural, and bilingual, and sometimes struggle to fit in having two cultures.
As a cataloger at The University of Texas at El Paso Library, I served in roles that allowed me to work closely with our student body: serving a few hours per week at the Reference desk, teaching information literacy courses in both English and Spanish, and serving as a subject specialist in Psychology. Those roles allowed me to better understand the unique information needs of users.

Students at that institution also knew about biculturalism and bilingualism. It is a way of life. Many would commute daily between countries, crossing an international point of entry at least twice a day. Many converse in both English and Spanish at school, work, and at home. The same is true of many of my colleagues at that institution. Many had student or work visas, while many others had U.S. citizenship but resided in Mexico. Many were also DACA students.

Upon relocating to Colorado in 2016, I quickly realized the differences inherent in living and working in a non-border city. My first position was at Regis University as a cataloger. During the initial months after being hired, I had a conversation with the library dean about the Library of Congress’ decision to drop the authorized subject heading for “Illegal aliens.” I told her I would make sure to stay abreast of any updates, and that is what I did. I became determined to conduct research on the topic. I began following conversations through listservs and became, in many ways, shocked as I learned more about the succession of events that lead the Library of Congress to announce its resolution, as well as learning about how government officials ordered the Library of Congress to retain the term “illegal aliens.”

In light of this, it was an opportunity to take action, to take my knowledge of the topic I had acquired and apply it as a cataloger. I had the tools to make changes at the local level. I was able to get a proposal approved to implement replacing the authorized Library of Congress Subject Headings for the “i-word” and six other variants with more ethical alternatives like “undocumented immigrants,” proposed by ALA’s Subject Analysis Committee Working Group on the LCSH for “illegal aliens.” Once I consulted with the Systems Librarian on the best approach to implement the changes, I ran with it. I presented it to the library staff and got overwhelming support from my colleagues. It was very encouraging and motivating!

I am now a cataloger at the University of Colorado Boulder. While here, I submitted a proposal and was again encouraged and approved to bring this project to life. The libraries serve an estimated 100 DACA students, and understanding this number facilitated the adoption of the project. I’ve enhanced approximately 5,600 bibliographic records with inclusive terminology at CU Boulder Libraries. It is an ongoing project, with updates made once a month. I now continue to collaborate and co-present with colleagues who are passionate about the topic. I am grateful for all who have assisted in bringing light to issues that libraries care about, especially those in administrative roles. One aspect I have greatly enjoyed since implementation are the multiple professional relationships and collaborations with other library departments; one of the reasons I love my profession!

Altogether, while implementing a project involving local practices or procedures, there are many issues that need to be closely looked at, such as understanding workflows, ILS capabilities, and resources needed (and available). The project itself, on top of bringing positive change to library spaces, can provide opportunities to grow skillsets and build on positive working collaborations with colleagues.

The project also provides an opportunity to consider other inadequate subject headings to describe groups of people. In the two years I’ve lived in Colorado, I now look forward to continuing to present on this topic, again with hopes that other libraries can follow suit, until the Library of Congress finalizes its decision to move forward with dropping the offensive terms (I’m hopeful it will, as many of us in libraries are).

All in all, a project like this allows libraries to be inclusive and communicates to users that we want them to feel welcomed, and to feel safe within our spaces. I encourage readers to reach out to me for any questions about how your library can describe collections in more inclusive ways. My contact email is sol.lopez@colorado.edu.
Acaba usted de ganar el I Premio Guantanamera y ha pasado a ser representada por la Agencia Carmen Balcells. ¿Qué puede suponer esto para su carrera?

Para mí constituye un privilegio ser representada por una agencia tan prestigiosa en el mundo hispanoamericano. Es también un reto, puesto que significa que mi literatura se enfrentará con los rigores del mercado. Estoy a la expectativa, pues lo que es muy seguro es que no haré concesiones para gustar a cierto público. Tampoco creo que sea de interés para la Agencia Balcells una literatura comercial.

No creo que sea solamente el aislamiento lo que hace diferente a la literatura cubana. Es que Cuba es un país diferente, pues su ideal de sociedad no es el mismo que el de otros países del mundo. Creo que efectivamente esa diferencia puede satisfacer el interés de un público curioso, ansioso de novedades. La literatura cubana es más efectiva que su prensa a la hora de contar lo que verdaderamente sucede en un país bloqueado y necesita establecer puentes con el mundo.

Háblenos de su libro premiado, Alguien tiene que llorar otra vez. ¿Qué encontraremos en él?

En él encontraremos las angustias, conflictos y circunstancias de la mujer contemporánea, tanto cubana como de otras partes del mundo, pues no he querido hacer un libro que se reduzca a situaciones locales. He aprovechado mis viajes para observar lo que ocurre fuera de mi país y he visto algunas zonas de comunión entre las mujeres de distintas partes.

Cuba es un lugar diferente, posiblemente por el aislamiento. Imagino que también lo son sus autores y sus libros. ¿Es así? ¿La diferencia es una cualidad a poner en valor de su literatura en un mercado tan saturado y aparentemente homogéneo como el literario global?

No creo que sea solamente el aislamiento lo que hace diferente a la literatura cubana. Es que Cuba es un país diferente, pues su ideal de sociedad no es el mismo que el de otros países del mundo. Creo que efectivamente esa diferencia puede satisfacer el interés de un público curioso, ansioso de novedades. La literatura cubana es más efectiva que su prensa a la hora de contar lo que verdaderamente sucede en un país bloqueado y necesita establecer puentes con el mundo.

¿Qué cree que aporta la Editorial Guantanamera al panorama de ofertas literarias del mercado internacional?

Aporta gran diversidad en lo que a autores cubanos se refiere promoviendo a escritores de diversas generaciones y diversos puntos de vista, temáticas y estilos.

“La literatura cubana puede romper barreras mientras los políticos se ponen de acuerdo”
¿Cree que existe un lugar para las voces cubanas en las bibliotecas públicas y universidades de EEUU? ¿Le gustaría que así fuera?
Claro que me gustaría. Sería una manera de demostrar que la literatura sí puede romper barreras mientras los políticos se ponen de acuerdo.

¿Cómo le gustaría que la producción literaria cubana fuera valorada en el mercado internacional?
Como lo que es: una gran literatura que no sigue las normas de lo trillado.

¿Qué nos puede contar de su siguiente libro?
No puedo adelantar nada. Solo que es una novela que transcurre desde los años cincuenta hasta la actualidad y, por supuesto, en Cuba. Soy supersticiosa y pienso que libro que se cuenta es un libro que no se escribe o se escribe mal.

¿Cuáles son sus principales referentes literarios a nivel internacional?
Mis referentes son todos los escritores buenos que leo, de cualquier parte del mundo. Pudiera citar a la brasileña Clarice Lispector, al norteamericano Raymond Carver, al inglés Martin Amis, al chileno Roberto Bolaño y al español Javier Cercas. Claro que estoy hablando solo de los contemporáneos. Entre los clásicos están desde Cervantes, pasando por Shakespeare y sin olvidar a León Tolstói, Fiódor Dostoyevski y Antón Chéjov. Hay muchos más. Tengo una lista interminable y estoy abierta a seguir alargándola.

“En mi libro premiado hablo de las angustias, conflictos y circunstancias de la mujer contemporánea, cubana y de otras partes del mundo”

¿Cómo definiría el nivel y estilo literarios de lo que se está escribiendo ahora mismo por parte de los autores cubanos que residen en la isla y en los de la diáspora?
Es un nivel muy alto y signado por la diversidad. El estilo depende de cada autor en particular pero en todos los escritores cubanos hay una marca de pertenencia a una identidad muy consolidada y peculiar.

Daniel Pinilla es un periodista, escritor y editor español que en la actualidad dirige Editorial Samarcanda y Editorial Guantanamera, ambas enmarcadas en la empresa Lantia Publishing. Como autor, además de colaborar en diversas antologías, Pinilla ha publicado media decena de libros y ha sido traducido a diversos idiomas, especializándose en la literatura de viajes.
By Cristina D. Ramirez

This year I was thankful to be able to bring my advocacy and work around equity, diversity, and inclusion to a number of venues. I had my presentation, “Gathering all Peoples: Embracing Culture & Community,” accepted to the Joint Conference of Librarians of Color 2018 (JCLC 2018), and in September I flew from Richmond, Virginia to Albuquerque, NM to present on “Embracing a Burgeoning Community: Meeting the Emerging Needs of Latinx in Central Virginia.”

After having attended the opening session and a number of talks, I was energized, excited, and full of hope and goals to better serve the growing Hispanic/Latino communities of Central Virginia that have seen a dramatic demographic growth in an area served by multiple library systems. I presented to a room full of over forty participants from all over the country and from both public and academic libraries. The questions, ideas, and suggestions from the interactive audience were inspiring and helpful for all in attendance to think about ways to better serve Latinx and the Spanish-speaking in areas that have traditionally not had library and/or government services and that have few staff that identify as Latinx or are Spanish-speaking.

I partnered with the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities to bring in the CEO Jonathan Zur to give the keynote, “Success Through Inclusion,” and I created an activity that was interactive for all 200 staff members. Each staff member was assigned to an identity at a table such as “Immigrants and Refugees,” “Homeschool Families,” “Persons Formerly Incarcerated,” “Persons Experiencing Homelessness,” etc. Each table had a facilitator trained by me to walk the staff at the table through the identity, definitions, concepts, library services, and then three prompts to elicit conversation and to generate ideas from all staff at all libraries, in all departments and service areas. Staff generated incredible suggestions that we can now capture and categorize into short-term and long-term goals, easy versus hard, and free versus cost. The most exciting aspect of this program was that it created a baseline for us to implement deep diversity transformational change in our library system that was started by our own staff members. The lesson was that everyone can contribute from their role, position, department, and library in order to best serve all community members we see and want to see.

Cristina D. Ramirez, MPA, MSLS, MA is the Assistant Manager for the Varina Area Library of the Henrico County Public Library. She serves on the Richmond Chapter of the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities and is a Doctoral Student in Educational Leadership. Previously she served as the library branch manager for the Sandston Branch Library for HCPL and the Broad Rock Library for Richmond Public Library.
JCLC, Now What?

By Eva Rios-Alvarado

REFORMISTAS, tengo tanto que les quiero compartir acerca de mis días en Albuquerque durante la conferencia que conocemos como JCLC, the Joint Conference of Librarians of Color. Ask me and I’ll tell you every detalle.

Nimitzlahpaloz (I greet you) REFORMISTAS, ASK ME about JCLC!

Every four to five years, ethnic caucus-member Library and Information Science (LIS) workers are privileged to attend the Joint Conference of Librarians of Color (JCLC). With some of the most socially relevant dialogues, sessions, and leaders in LIS, we gather to learn with and from each other, aspiring to make the world a better place.

This was my first time attending JCLC and, wow, so much to share. The 2018 theme, Gathering all People: Embracing Culture & Community, echoed the backdrop of New Mexico’s landscapes and vibrant communities. The five days of conference activities, from September 25 to 30, 2018, gave plenty of time for self-exploration, meandering through the conference ideas, networking, feelings, and issues discoursed by pockets of colleagues and large groups alike.

Albuquerque is no doubt a wonderful location for a conference. I happily bumped into colleagues all the way to New Mexico and back to California in my travels. I even saw actor Nestor Carbonell at the airport upon my arrival. FYI, handsome even in person! Gotta love his acting in Lost!

My favorite activity during the conference was visiting the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center. A lovely and empowering tour was provided. It was a definitive highlight. Groups came to the center to view the collections, visit the Library and Archives, which I highly recommend if you are ever in Albuquerque, and honor and learn about the dynamic Native American cultures in New Mexico. Tour guides provided context for the current and rotating exhibits and answered all my questions about Estevanicio. The art and cultural identities shared in the space were impressive and I felt honored to be part of the whole activity.

However, what I would like to reflect on and share more about in this post is my journey in librarianship and how it is tied to space. Especially, I’d like to share and reflect on the moments we have in our profession which allow people of color to feel whole (if possible). I share these thoughts because so often there is marginalization in our daily and work lives. Empowerment is needed in these times, and it just happens to be an inspiring feeling to enter a room full of amazing library workers who are majority people of color. Yes, it does.

Like some of you, REFORMA was my first introduction to librarianship. I recall how empowering it felt as a student to be with information workers who looked and talked like me, and who I aspired to be like one day. To this day, REFORMA Los Angeles continues to serve as a model for me in my professional life. We make magic happen, y’all.

It really does come full-circle at conferences such as JCLC, where I can enter library spaces, especially in a conference setting, with others who I admire and have touched me deeply in my growth as a scholar, community member, and librarian. I do aspire to do the same in my communities as I hope you are called to actions in similar capacities.
Eva M.L. Rios-Alvarado attributes her empowerment, spirituality, and beautiful-resistance from Xicana and Black Feminist practice. With a B.A. in Geography and M.S. in Library and Information Studies, she works alongside community college students exploring and crafting their unique information literacy repertoires. Currently, she is the Student Equity & Outreach Librarian at Mt. San Antonio College Library. Twitter @EvaRiosAlvarado

These thoughts ring even more true for those of us who work at diversity-sanitized institutions, departments, or other places. Our labor and sanity are used to fill in the cracks of injustice, where we are pitted against each other to find employment, homes, healthcare, citizenship, and love. Even though we are often used as the cement to fill these gaps, we also develop structural wear and tear.

JCLC, just like the new POCinLIS Summit, is one of the conferences to be used to develop an internal framework in your LIS practice, to cultivate and work alongside your LIS family – whoever they are. To quote Myrna Morales, “It’s a beautiful thing.” Magic even. Attending JCLC puts LIS racial diversity into perspective and makes it tangible and not just some trending concept in libraries. It really did feel uplifting.

When I left for Los Angeles, I went home with images and ideas of librarians leading the changes we want to see universally in our societies. I imagined all the library workers holding hands and knitting out our plans for global systems of change. I closed my eyes and recalled the aspirations of the newer librarians and veteran librarians I spoke with. On getting together to talk about all of our hopes to transform the world.

Appreciative. That’s the word I would use to describe JCLC and how I feel about the many people I have been privileged to encounter on my LIS journey, my homes from Librarians of Color, Los Angeles. Panels and sessions, all powerful. Our beautifully unique communities of color in LIS unite under the banner of representation and justice. The LIS elders and the power of uniting the ethnic caucuses reminds us how people of color and all people need to unite under the banner of justice. Imagine. Ashe.

I would like to honor my LIS mentors. Thank you Michelle Baildon. Thank you ARL-IRDW and ALA-Spectrum. Thank you Angela Boyd and my homegirl Suzanne Im and Nancy Olmos for believing in me. My POCinLIS LA crew, it’s full circle y’all. This was my JCLC 2018. EvaLandia en Infolandia out.
JCLC scholarship winners · Ken Yamashita, Loida Garcia-Febo, Jim Neal, Lessa Pelayo-Lozada · Richard Ashby, Ying Zhang, Lillian Chavez, Madeline Peña, Paolo P. Gujilde · National Institute of Flamenco · Noche de Cuentos: Rosalia de Aragon, Estevan Pacheco · Ready for a Ghost Tour!
REFORMA members at the JCLC Gala · Sylmarí Burgos Ramirez and Susan Luevano, Distinguished Service Award · John Ayala, Legacy Award · Sylmarí Burgos Ramirez and Elizabeth Borges-Ocasio, Advocacy Award · Gladys Smiley Bell and Ray Pun, Rising Leader Award · Dancing the night away! · REFORMA members at the JCLC Awards Dinner.
Photo from the *Telling Our Stories: Community Building and Leadership Forum* held at the 3rd National Joint Librarians of Color Conference. The forum was made possible through the REFORMA grant *Telling Our Stories: Building Community to Improve Recruitment and Retention of Latinx to the Library Profession*, a Laura Bush 21st Century National Forum Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The grant awarded 17 Travel Awards to 11 LIS students and 6 first-time attendees to allow them to participate and network at the JCLC conference.

Travel grant recipients at the JCLC Gala with REFORMA President Madeline Peña, Immediate Past President Tess Tobin, IMLS Senior Program Officer Sandra Toro, and ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo.
JCLC 2018 in Photos
REFORMA Member Maria Cotto: Rhode Island Outstanding Librarian of the Year

Maria Cotto is the Bilingual Children’s Librarian at the Pawtucket Public Library in Rhode Island. She received her Master’s in Library and Information Science from the University of Rhode Island as a Prism Scholar and B.S. in Spanish from Rhode Island College. She has been working at the Pawtucket Public Library for six years, focusing on programming and collection development for the Latino population including children, teens, and adults, both in print and electronic materials. Maria also developed the collection for families with children on the Autism Spectrum and other disabilities.

Since 2014, Maria has been working in partnership with Rhode Island Latino Arts (RILA) in promoting Latino literature throughout the state. Maria is one of the founders of the Rhode Island Latino Books Month Award, which began in 2014 with the intention of getting children in Kindergarten through 12th grade to read literature written by and for Latinos in both English and Spanish. She is currently the coordinator for the RI Latino Books Month Award. As a Latina herself, Maria is dedicated to sharing and promoting Latino literature to all readers.

In 2018, Maria was named the “Outstanding Librarian of the Year” by the Rhode Island Library Association. This award was given for her advocacy and work with children with autism and other special needs in the library. Maria actively assists other youth librarians in Rhode Island with developing their own programming for children with special needs. She also helped develop a support group to help youth librarians better serve families and expand programming, outreach, partnership, and resources.

She has been a REFORMA Northeast Chapter member and REFORMA Northeast Chapter State Representative since 2006. Maria is also a member of Cornucopia of Rhode Island (CORI), a Library Community of Color since 2006; an Ocean State Libraries eZone Selection Committee member since 2018; and a member of the 2015 ALA Pura Belpré Award Selection Committee.
REFORMA Northeast 3rd Annual Spanish-Language Book Buzz

By Linda Caycedo

The Northeast Chapter of REFORMA had their 3rd Annual Spanish-Language Book Buzz on Friday, January 18, at the Penguin Random House offices in New York City. A group of approximately 95 attendees, including librarians from the tri-state area, were treated to a preview of upcoming and recently released Spanish-language, bilingual, and Latinx-focused books for the library market.

This year’s theme was “Books without Boundaries Build the Bridge to a Borderless World.” The two program sessions, morning (juvenile and young adult) and afternoon (adult), were dedicated to presentations and exhibits of literary materials in Spanish. The keynote speakers included Newbery Award Winner & New York Times Bestseller Matt de la Peña, author of Amor; New York Times Bestseller & National Book Award finalist Erika L. Sánchez, author of Yo no soy tu perfecta hija Mexicana; and International Latino Book Award 2018 Winner Fey Berman, author of Mexamérica: una cultura naciendo...

A panel of experts in the Spanish-language and bilingual books market were presented, with representatives from Brooklyn Public Library, Findaway, HarperCollins Publishers, Ingram Content Group, Lectorum Publications, Pawtucket Public Library, Queens Public Library, Spanish Publishers, The New York Public Library (NYPL), and Vintage Español. The sessions were respectively moderated by SLJ’s Shelley Diaz and Indent Literary Agency’s Andrea Montejo. Topics covered ranged from immigration-related concerns to challenges faced by librarians, authors, and publishers in promoting and purchasing materials for Spanish-speaking readers.

Andrew Medlar, the Director of BookOps, the shared technical services organization of the Brooklyn Public Library & NYPL, emphasized the importance of working together to promote libraries and information services to Latinos and the Spanish-speaking through a common word, “knowledge,” during his opening remarks. Participating panelists pointed out that new market trends centered on immigration-related issues, and stressed the importance of librarians, educators, and publishers working more closely together to raise empathy and awareness, as well as to help eradicate the negative image about undocumented immigrants.


The 2019 Book Buzz Event Committee was chaired by Alexandra Gómez with committee members Linda Caycedo, Asunción Cora, Elisa García, Fred Gitner, Evelyn Muriel-Cooper (REFORMA Northeast Chapter President,) and Libbhy Romero. Host collaborators from Penguin Random House Group were Andy August and Miriam Tuliao.

For more information about the event and to download a PDF of the title selections presented, visit bit.ly/3rdbookbuzz.

Linda Caycedo, retiree (2014) served the New York Public Library since 1979. She served as a Community Liaison/Young Adult Librarian on the Lower East Side, then as a Branch Manager in the East Village. She currently serves as the curator of the Latino & Puerto Rican Cultural Center & Heritage Gallery at the Bronx Library Center.
Upcoming Events

February 1, 2019
8-9 am PT / 10-11 am CDMX Time / 11-12 pm ET
Webinar: La profesión bibliotecaria en México: una perspectiva desde el Colegio Nacional
Online - Free
bit.ly/irwebinarfeb

En esta presentación se abordará una perspectiva general de la profesión bibliotecaria en México a través de sus actores principales. Se discutirán los retos y oportunidades para el futuro próximo subrayando el papel del Colegio Nacional de Bibliotecarios. Presentado por el Comité de Relaciones Internacionales de REFORMA.

February 8, 2019
9 am - 4 pm
Spanish Language Book Fair
Cesar Chavez Library - Salinas, California
bit.ly/bplgbookfair

Organized by the Bibliotecas para la Gente Chapter of REFORMA.

February 20, 2019
9 am - 4 pm
Spanish Language Book Fair
City of Commerce Public Library - Commerce, CA
bit.ly/labookfair


March 14-15, 2019
Seguimos Creando Enlaces Conference
San Diego & Tijuana - Free
creandoenlaces.org/registration

Seguimos Creando Enlaces, now entering its eighth year, is a free conference that brings together librarians from the US and Mexico to further their professional knowledge and exchange ideas. The theme for 2019 is Librarians as Educators – Impacting the Underserved and will take place March 14 & 15 in San Diego and Tijuana respectively. Fresno and Stockton will be satellite locations. The deadline to register is March 1, 2019.

May 10, 2019
10 am – 4 pm
15th Annual REFORMA Northeast Chapter Joint Mini-Conference
Langston Hughes Library - Queens, New York - Free
reformanortheast.org/upcoming-events.html

An all-day event of professional development that brings together the ethnic caucuses of ALA.

May 18, 2019
7th Annual REFORMA CO Conference
Denver, CO
reformacolorado.wordpress.com

The Colorado Chapter works on matters of importance to Colorado's Latino/Hispanic communities. This conference supports that mission by providing high quality professional development and networking opportunities to Colorado library staff.
REFORMA Scholarship Applications Available

By Delores Carlito

Applications are now being accepted for the 2019-2020 REFORMA Scholarship and the 2019-2020 Rose Treviño Memorial Scholarship.

Any current or newly-entering graduate library school student [M.L.S. or Ph.D.] may apply for these $1,500 maximum scholarships. The applicant must provide proof of enrollment to an ALA-accredited library school. Full-time status is not a requirement. The scholarships are not restricted by age, sex, creed, national origin, or minority group/association membership.

The REFORMA scholarship is open to students who are Spanish-speakers or interested in serving Latinos or the Spanish-speaking. The Rose Treviño Memorial Scholarship is for those pursuing a degree in children’s or young adult librarianship and are Spanish-speakers or interested in serving Latinos or the Spanish-speaking.

The application deadline is March 15, 2019.

More information and the application can be found on reforma.org, under Awards & Scholarships.

For questions, please email Delores Carlito, Chair of the REFORMA Scholarships Committee, at dcarlito@uab.edu with the subject 2018 REFORMA Scholarship Questions.

Nominations 2019-20 REFORMA Board

By Maria Kramer

The REFORMA Nominations Committee is looking for dedicated members to run for the following positions:

- Vice-President/President Elect
- Treasurer
- Member-At-Large Representative
- West Region Chapter Representative

Consult the REFORMA Manual for the full description of responsibilities for each position.

One of the most significant contributions you can make to REFORMA is to participate in our annual nominations process to ensure that highly qualified and dedicated colleagues can continue our long tradition of excellence and leadership. Your nominations assist the Committee in ensuring that, among other things, the leadership of REFORMA reflects a consistent commitment to service.

When submitting your nomination, we ask that you please consider the following:

- Quality and length of REFORMA leadership, including REFORMA Committees.
- Participation and contributions in programs and services.
- Commitment and ability to work effectively as a member of the Board.
- Additional relevant nonprofit organization board membership experience, if any.

Please send the contact information (name, email, phone#) of the person you are nominating via email to: mkramer@redwoodcity.org by Friday, February 15, 2018.

Any candidacy for nomination does not mean automatic nomination to the Board of Directors. Nominees must have current membership status in REFORMA.
Alguien tiene que llorar otra vez by Marilyn Bobes
September 2018 | Guantanamera
9788417283650 | Adults

In this Guantanamera Award winner, Bobes explores the deep feminine look of Cuba’s women and its realities with the authentic character Cary Serrano.

El amigo americano by James Costos and Santiago Roncagliolo
January 2019 | Debate
9788499929071 | Adults

U.S. ambassador to Spain during President Obama administration, James Costos shares in this memoir his experiences and accomplishments. Costos’ commitment broke the barriers of international relations protocol. He normalized gay diplomacy and turned the U.S. Embassy in Madrid into a meeting place where art and culture connected.

April, Adam y la trayectoria de los planetas by Andrea Longarela
January 2019 | Destino
9788408201298 | Young Adults

April and Adam do not realize it but they have something in common: they both like to dream...

¡Buen día, buenas noches! Palabras de ánimo para mí y para ti by Lin-Manuel Miranda
December 2018 | Vintage Español
9780525566878 | Adults


Los caminantes nº 1 by Carlos Sisí
January 2019 | Minotauro
9788445006160 | Adults

For the 10th anniversary of the saga Los caminantes, the first volume is being reissued. This is the heartbreaking story that includes the last days of civilization as we know it. After surviving the overwhelming pandemic that brings the dead back to life, the survivors face the task of reaching the end of each day.
El país de Toó by Rodrigo Rey Rosa
January 2019 | Alfaguara
9788420434681 | Adults

The Mayan communal system, the land of Toó, emerges from its hundred-year-old lethargy to defend the rights of the indigenous people and the environment.

Para español, pulse 2 by Sara Cordón
November 2018 | PRH Grupo Editorial
9788415451969 | Adults

Sara is a New York postgraduate scholar who attempts to publish the book she has written during her master’s degree study years.

Puerto langosta by Edo Brenes
January 2019 | Reservoir Books
9788417511128 | Young Adults

This graphic novel is set in the 1940s in Puerto Limón, a small coastal town in Costa Rica. Enrique Yermo is a teenager who comes from the capital to finish high school. He turns to lobster fishing and, almost without knowing it, goes into the dark world of the local mafia, where the competition with American companies is more real than he thought.

El niño de Hollywood by Óscar Martínez
November 2018 | Debate
9786073169004 | Adults

Based on many hours of interviews with the fearsome MS-13 gang member Miguel Ángel Tobar and his associates, this book reveals the underlying dynamics of the Central American gangs in a detailed and insightful way.

Shakespeare Palace: Mosaicos de mi vida en México by Ida Vitale
November 2018 | Lumen
9788426407115 | Adults

Uruguayan poet Ida Vitale, 2018 Cervantes Award recipient, reconstructs the years she spent in Mexico City.
Books for Children

By Dinorah Pinelo, Catalog Dept. Manager, Los Angeles Public Library

Camino a las estrellas by Sylvia Acevedo
September 2018 | Clarion Books
9781328534811 | Ages 10-12

Amazing autobiography of a Latina scientist and CEO of the Girls Scouts. She grew up with her Mexican mom and Mexican-American dad, and Sylvia experienced shifting cultural expectations at school and at home but worked hard to graduate with a master’s in engineering from Stanford University and went on to become a rocket scientist at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

¡Crece ya, David! by David Shannon
August 2018 | Scholastic en Español
9781338299519 | Ages 3-5

David teases his older brother with his mischief. He eats his Halloween candy, makes a bathroom mess, and follows him up the tree house. This book will surely tickle your funny bone!

Los deseos de Carmela by Matt de la Peña
October 2018 | G.P. Putnam’s Sons Books for Young Readers
9780525518709 | Ages 4-8

Carmela wakes up excited on her birthday. She runs errands with her older brother and they go all over the city. She finds a dandelion and starts making wishes. A beautiful story about siblings, family, independence, kindness, and growing up.

El día en que descubres quién eres by Jacqueline Woodson
August 2018 | Nancy Paulsen Books
9781984812070 | Ages 4-8

This story starts with a young girl entering school for the first time and then pulling on her hair thinking that she looks different from her classmates. There are multicultural characters that have different concerns because they are different in some way, such as with the food they eat, how they look, and so on. But at the end, they see that they all have similarities.

Frida, el misterio del anillo del pavo real y yo by Angela Cervantes
August 2018 | Scholastic en Español
9781338269079 | Ages 8-12

Paloma Marquez travels to Mexico for the first time because her mom got a fellowship to study there. Paloma is not thrilled and would much rather spend her time in Kansas. The story develops nicely when Paloma meets siblings Gael and Lizzie, who are the ones that teach Paloma a lot. We already know many things about Frida but the information provided here will make kids want to learn more about the Mexican artist.
**El fuertecito rojo** by Brenda Maier  
June 2018 | Scholastic en Español  
9781338269017 | Ages 4-8  
Ruby asks her brothers for help building a little red fort, but they all refuse. Once it’s finished, of course, they all want to play in it.

**Galápagos girl/Galapagueña** by Marsha Diane Arnold  
September 2018 | Children’s Book Press (CA)  
9780892394135 | Ages 4-8  
Beautiful bilingual book about Valentina Cruz, whose family was one of the first permanent inhabitants of the Galápagos islands. Vibrant and colorful pencil illustrations will be sure to catch children’s attention as they learn about all the animals of the Galápagos.

**El lector** by Amy Hest  
April 2018 | Obelisco  
9788491451341 | Ages 3-6  
A boy and his dog hike to the top of a very tall, snowy hill where they play, enjoy a snack, and then share their favorite book before sledding home.

**Papa Francisco: Creador de puentes** by Emma Otheguy  
September 2018 | Bloomsbury UK  
9781547600137 | Ages 4-8  
Acrylic watercolors in illustrations show the early beginnings of Pope Francis, such as him praying and helping people. It gives children an overview of Jorge Bergoglio’s life as a child through his papacy.

**Pasando páginas: La historia de mi vida** by Sonia Sotomayor  
September 2018 | Philomel Books  
9780525515494 | Ages 4-8  
Autobiographical story of Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor. She is the first Latina to serve on the Supreme Court and she makes it clear to the readers that this was possible through the inspiration of family stories, recitations, and books.

**Sembrando historias: Pura Belpré: bibliotecaria y narradora de cuentos** by Anika Aldamuy Denise  
January 2019 | HarperCollins Español  
9781400212644 | Ages 4-8  
A picture book biography celebrating and honoring Pura Belpré’s legacy. She was the first Puerto Rican librarian hired by the New York Public Library. Through the power of her storytelling and puppeteering, she opened doors to bilingual literature and forever influenced librarians, educators and community members.
Heartlines

By Dimitri Reyes

When she was young Mamá was a dancer at the Tropicana. Their family never had juice, Mamá never had money, but they squeezed the living life out of sweat to make sangria. Boy asked her how to live, she said drop out of school before you can count. Boy asked her how the bills were paid, her answer was necessity. Then, boy asked her how to cook.

She said, you need to start young and hungry in the Bronx. At least 4 people living in 400 square feet measure the right heapings of sofrito. You need to be 3 children left alone, running inside with the burners turned on HIGH. How not to burn white rice is how to count each other’s blisters. Turning down the fire only when bubbles begin to pop.

Boy was an adult but still too young to feel. He questioned how her mother’s tongue never died despite overwatering. He asked about the beauty mark on her neck that scared him as a child when he thought it grew back at every pull. Boy questioned grandma’s smell, rosewater and carnations. She said it was the perfume of her body: a four course meal infused with inhaled chemicals, four decades of housekeeping. She put her hands over boy’s eyes. Asked him to endure the warmth of unplanned nose bleeds from toilet bleach and Pine-Sol. Detect pain in the knees by slipping on tiles she cleaned. Boy asked grandma how to build a family, she showed him her hand to cover boy’s eyes, to feel her heartlines of grease, the gunk of red sazón inscribed under chipped nails under arthritis. She locked her self in a closet for hours and upon returning let out a noise habitually silent. Boy hugged her once for every meal. Boy wiped the scar tissue off her wrinkled cheeks.

Dimitri Reyes is a Puerto-Vegan writer, educator, and YouTuber from Newark, New Jersey. He is the recipient of the SLICE Magazine’s 2017 Bridging the Gap Award for Emerging Poets and a finalist for the 2017 Arcturus Poetry Prize by the Chicago Review of Books. Dimitri received his MFA from Rutgers University- Newark.
Thank You for Not Smoking

By José Angel Araguz

Gracias por no esconder el sol
detrás de mensajes de oscuridad
y ceniza. Gracias por no ser ceniza.
Gracias por ser más tranquilo,
más quieto, más en tu lugar
que el niño agreste que es la lumbre.
Por tener humildad,
por no estar avergonzado
en no tener nada que ver
con el fuego,
ni con lo que se torna
calor y luz. Gracias
por aceptar tu posición
en el universo,
por saber que,
si uno no brilla,
no significa necesariamente
que le falta luz. Gracias por controlarte,
por no ser tan hambriento
que te comes tu propio cuerpo,
con un hambre tan fuerte
que todo lo que deja atrás
es una bandera
más gris que blanco,
y que significa la entrega
a la mala salud
o peor:
piel fea.
Gracias por no molestar a la boca
con un cigarrillo
como palabra huevona
o indecisa.
Por no pasar por la nariz
como el áspero aliento
de una persona enojada.
Por tener más confianza
en los brazos
que en las brasas.

José Angel Araguz is a CantoMundo fellow and the author of seven chapbooks as well as the collections Everything We Think We Hear, Small Fires, and Until We Are Level Again. He runs the poetry blog The Friday Influence and teaches English and creative writing at Linfield College in McMinnville, Oregon.
**Friday, January 25**

- 7 - 9 pm · **REFORMA Executive Committee Meeting I**, Renaissance Seattle Hotel, Marion

**Saturday, January 26**

- 8 - 10 am · **All Committees Meeting**, Renaissance Seattle Hotel, Federal Room
- 11 - 11:30 am · **National Library Tour** with ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo at Seattle Central Library
- 3 - 5 pm · **Board of Directors Meeting**, Renaissance Seattle Hotel, Visions
- 7:30 - 9 pm · **Noche de Cuentos** (A Night of Stories), Seattle Central Library Auditorium

**Sunday, January 27**

- 1 - 3 pm · **General Membership Meeting**, Renaissance Seattle Hotel, Federal Room
- 4 - 6 pm · **Tour of Seattle Central Library**, limited to 20 attendees
- 8 - 10 pm · **Members Meet & Greet**, sponsored by ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo

**Monday, January 28**

- 6:30 - 7:30 am · **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Observation and Sunrise Celebration**, Sheraton Grand Seattle, Metropolitan Ballroom
- 8 - 9:00 am · **Pura Belpré Awards Announcement/ALA Youth Media Awards**, Washington State Convention Center, Ballroom A-C
- 10 - 11:30 am · **REFORMA Executive Meeting II**, Renaissance Seattle Hotel, James

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**Noche de Cuentos**

Celebrating the Power of Storytelling to Unite Communities

Enjoy an enchanting evening of bilingual performances by Seattle-based storytellers, celebrating the richness of diversity in heritage and culture.

**Saturday, January 26, 2019 - 7:30 PM**

Seattle Central Library
1000 4th Ave., Seattle, Washington 98104
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See you in Seattle!

ALA Seattle Midwinter Meeting & Exhibits
JANUARY 25-29, 2019
ALA American Library Association

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