

Latinidad - Spring 2015: Writing Grants

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BEFORE YOU SEND IT OUT

“You sending me to the Frederick Douglass Center had a lot to do with this book happening. That class is where I met Sheree Thomas, who became my mentor and where I wrote the first batch of stories in *Salsa Nocturna*. So thank you!”

—Daniel Jose Older, author of *Salsa Nocturna* and *Half-Resurrection Blues*

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1. Saludos

Numerous organizations exist solely to give artists like writers money. Yet, many writers don't apply for grants. Some have never heard of grants, others don't want to take precious time away from their manuscripts, and a few refuse to apply again after a single rejection. Regardless of your reason, if you aren't actively pursuing grants, you are leaving cash on the table.

Winning grants, however, isn't just about dollars. The process of writing successful grants requires you to forge connections in the literary community that can help you promote your work once you are published. Agents and editors are more likely to be impressed by writers who have won grants than writers who have won nothing. Plus, writers who can figure out how to persuade grantmakers to give them money can use the same skill set to persuade strangers to buy their books. To learn more, read the Q&A below with Hoong Yee Lee Krakauer, creator of the Grantwriting Roundup.

Helping Latinos get published,

Marcela Landres

marcelalandres@yahoo.com

<http://www.marcelalandres.com/>

2. Q&A

Hoong Yee Lee Krakauer is a grantmaker by profession, a writer by confession. She is the Executive Director of the Queens Council on the Arts and the creator of the Grantwriting Roundup, an on line grantwriting course to help artists create a rich life by making art, making a difference, and making money. For more information, visit <http://hoongyee.com> and:
<https://www.facebook.com/HoongYeeLeeKrakauer>
<https://twitter.com/hylkrakauer>
<https://plus.google.com/112025478711573860055/posts>
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/hoongyeeleekrakauer>

Q: Clearly you love what you do. How did you become a grantmaker?

A: Never underestimate the power of rejection, beating yourself up and contemplating a career in the post office as I did after the very first grant I wrote got rejected. Nunca!

And by whom? Yes, the Queens Council on the Arts.

This was a defining moment when the universe revealed the many meanings of “no” to me, a lesson I believe to be the key to my success. I was willing to accept rejection, I was willing to acknowledge the possibility I wasn't meant to be a writer, an artist, a creative person worthy of a grant.

But not until I knew why. So I asked.

Do you have any idea how difficult that is to do, coming fast upon the heels of a no-nonsense rejection letter?

“OK, so you think I'm not worth funding. Just kick me again and tell me why?” No wonder the post office looked so good.

However, to my surprise, a very nice grants officer named Alice told me exactly why I didn't get the grant. It had nothing to do with being the best artist and everything to do with being the best candidate for the grant.

I sat on the grant panel for Alice the next year and saw the world from the grantmaker side. It showed me how a grant panel thinks and, most important of all, what they will fund.

Foundations give away over 4 billion dollars a year. Don't you think you deserve some of that?

I do. That is why I became a grantmaker, grantwriter, and the one who will pull the curtain back and show writers how to be the best candidate for the grant. You see, I believe the more artists we fund, the more beautiful the world will be for all of us.

Q: I encounter many writers who don't apply for grants because they don't know how to begin or are convinced they won't win. What advice would you give them?

A: I have good news for any writer who does not know how to begin going for grants. I have a question for the ones who are convinced they will not win:

Cuándo decidiste tu opinión no valía la pena un montón de frijoles, mi amor?

I can help you to get started. But only you can convince yourself you can win a grant.

Do what I did. Start small, look locally. Check in with your friendly neighborhood arts council for some advice. Be memorable and give of yourself: donate a reading, volunteer for a workshop, be the one who makes things happen. Get out and see what other writers are doing and support them. Believe me, people will notice.

Start small. Stay confident. Here's a story about a newbie first time grant writer who got her first literary grant in three weeks by doing all of the above:

<http://hoongyee.com/2015/01/grantwriting-grasshopper-gets-grant/>

Q: What three mistakes should newbie grant writers avoid?

A: 1 The budget does not match the narrative.
 2 The narrative is not crystal clear. Many beginners have plans that are vague and broad in scope.
 3 Artist work samples do not reflect the proposed project.

Q: Alternatively, what are three signs of a top-notch grant writer?

A: 1 The missions, audiences, and goals of the funder and the grant writer are perfectly aligned.
 2 The grant writer has other sources of support and funding secured.
 3 The grant writer will build a relationship with the funder before and after writing the grant.

Q: Aside from your blog, <http://hoongyee.com/>, what resources would you recommend to folks who want to learn more about grant writing?

A: Here is a helpful nugget of information by The Grant Lady courtesy of the New York Foundation for the Arts:

<http://www.chicagoartistsresource.org/articles/etiquette-getting-grants>

The Nonprofit Academy has a rock star list of contributing consultants you can follow in addition to their membership perks. I especially like reading Marc Pitman and Andrea Kihlstedt:

<http://thenonprofitacademy.com/about/contributing-consultants/>

For a national snapshot of arts funding, my go to is Grantmakers in the Arts. I am at their national conference every year and come away inspired and informed by what I see. You can gain a lot of valuable insight through the writing on their site by some great voices across the country:

<http://www.giarts.org/>

Q: Do you have upcoming projects that my readers should have on their radar?

A: Stay tuned! I have something fabuloso for my Grantwriting Roundup students. I am putting the finishing touches on a six pack of instructional videos packed with valuable insights and strategies about how to create winning proposals—from a grant reviewer's point of view. This new course is for artists, people with inner artists, creative thinkers and professionals who want to master grantwriting to boost their art career to the next level. There are one-on-one coaching sessions available and two must-have bonus videos which will be available in Spanish and Chinese.

Ready to get a grant? Get on my early bird list and I will send you my Free Master Grant Strategy Worksheet to get you started on creating your rich life now:

<http://hoongyee.com/heres-master-grant-strategy-worksheet/>

3. Resources

HOW EDITORS THINK

"I read *How Editors Think* in one sitting and was engaged from beginning to end. It is well written, highly informative, and humorous—I found myself laughing out-loud in a few spots! Thanks for sharing the secrets of the trade."
—Mayra Lazara Dole, author of *Down to the Bone*

Inspired by my experience as a former Simon & Schuster editor, *How Editors Think: The Real Reason They Rejected You* reveals what it really takes to get published. For more information, visit:

<http://www.marcelalandres.com/E-book.html>

YOUNG ADULT LITERARY MAGAZINE

Submission Date: March 16 for 24 hours only

Sucker Literary is a platform for established and emerging, hugely intelligent writers who have the grit and talent to create compelling, authentic young adult literature that both adults and teens can enjoy. For more information, visit <http://www.suckerliterary.com/submissions/>

ESSAY COLLECTION COMPETITION

Deadline: March 31

A prize of \$1000 and publication by the Cleveland State University Poetry Center is given for an essay collection. For more information, visit <http://tinyurl.com/qfg4lu6>

FLANNERY O'CONNOR AWARD FOR SHORT FICTION

Submission Dates: April 1-May 31

The Flannery O'Connor Award recognizes outstanding collections of short fiction. This year's judges include Hugh Sheehy and Anjanette Delgado, among others. For more information, visit <http://www.ugapress.org/index.php/series/FOC>

SEEKING STORIES ABOUT TEACHERS

Deadline: April 6

Creative Nonfiction Journal seeks stories by and/or about elementary and secondary school teachers, recalling and reflecting on the most salient moments of their careers. For more information, visit <http://www.creativenonfiction.org/>

FARRAR, STRAUS & GIROUX SEEKS INTERNS

Deadline: April 15

Farrar, Straus & Giroux, renowned for its international list of literary fiction, nonfiction, poetry and children's books, offers internships that run for

approximately 10-12 weeks. Interns are paid. For more information, visit <http://us.macmillan.com/fsg/about>

\$4100 SHORT STORY PRIZE

Deadline: May 1

The Elizabeth Jolley Short Story Prize offers approximately \$4100 and publication in Australian Book Review. A second place prize of approximately \$1640 and a third place prize of approximately \$820 will also be awarded. For more information, visit <http://tinyurl.com/c8wgkcm>

\$20,000 POEM PRIZE

Deadline: May 15

The Montreal International Poetry Prize offers \$20,000 and publication in the Global Poetry Anthology for a poem. For more information, visit <http://montrealprize.com/>

DUENDE SEEKS DIVERSE WRITERS

Deadline: May 15

Duende is the national literary journal of Goddard College's BFA program. They publish writers who are queer, of color, differently abled, immigrant, working class, youth, elder, and/or otherwise from underrepresented communities. For more information, visit <http://www.duendeliterary.org/>

TO BE PUBLISHED 4/15: WAR AGAINST ALL PUERTO RICANS BY NELSON DENIS

On October 30, 1950, a violent revolution swept through Puerto Rico: assassins were sent to kill President Harry Truman. Gunfights roared in eight towns as police stations and post offices were burned down. The Army deployed 5,000 troops—the only time in history that the U.S. bombed its own citizens. War Against All Puerto Ricans tells the story through first-person accounts, congressional testimony, and recently de-classified FBI files. The New York Daily News found it “meticulously researched . . . a timely, eye opening must-read.” For more information, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/mxtfqz8>

JUST PUBLISHED: LILY OF PERU BY DAVID C. EDMONDS

A university professor struggles to get the woman he loves out of Peru during the Shining Path insurrection. He's a former Peace Corps Volunteer and recently divorced; she's an ex-pat American who's unhappily married. His attempts to find her takes him from the fog-shrouded streets of Lima to haunted Inca ruins and into the eastern jungles, where he is chased by elite army units, hostile natives, narco-traficantes, and a jealous husband. For more information, visit <http://tinyurl.com/ol5v9fd>

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“When you clear away the cobwebs of the description of every job in the world, at the bottom of that job is service. It’s service. And I took that ethic and applied it to my writing.”

—Adriana Trigiani

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