

## Latinidad – 11/09: La Casa Azul Bookstore

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### BEFORE YOU SEND IT OUT

"Marcela Landres has been a great help to me. I was able to strategize about my writing career with her in a way that I have never done before. She is insightful and honest, and that's all any writer could ask of an editor. Her line editing of my novel manuscript was meticulous, and I was able to revamp my writing to make it better. Marcela, you truly are a great resource for any writer, but I appreciate your help for Latino writers in particular. It was invaluable."

--Sergio Troncoso, author of *The Nature of Truth* and *The Last Tortilla & Other Stories*, <http://www.sergiotroncoso.com/>

Ready to work with a professional editor? Visit

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

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### 1. Saludos

Most of us aren't lucky enough to have a brick and mortar Latino bookstore in our neighborhoods. Thanks to Aurora Anaya-Cerda, now you have the online equivalent: La Casa Azul, <http://www.lacasaazulbookstore.com/>. Whether you are already published or aspire to be, it is critical to your writing career to shop at Latino booksellers because they are more likely to support Latino authors in the long term than non-Latino bookstores. The next time you buy a book (or CD or DVD), ask yourself: Do I want to give my money to the gringos behind Barnes & Noble and Amazon.com, or to the Latina behind La Casa Azul? To learn more, read this month's Q&A with Aurora.

Helping Latinos get published,

Marcela Landres

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

### 2. Q&A

Aurora Anaya-Cerda is the owner of an online bookstore, La Casa Azul Bookstore, which she founded in 2008. She had been featured in American Latino TV, the New York Daily News, and La Bloga. A member of the Young

Hispanic Leaders Program, she is the recipient of the Juanita Centeno Leadership Award, the UCLA Women for Change Leadership Award, and a scholarship from the New Start Fund that is awarded to women entrepreneurs in New York City. For more information, visit <http://www.lacasaazulbookstore.com/>

Q: What inspired you to open La Casa Azul bookstore?

A: The idea of opening a bookstore came while I was in college. I contemplated the idea, but did other things before making the decision to open La Casa Azul Bookstore. It wasn't until I moved to East Harlem from East Los Angeles that I decided to make the dream a reality. I enrolled in a business course and immersed myself in the book industry world; soon I was so motivated and determined to open the bookstore that there was no going back.

I chose East Harlem because I loved everything about it, its culture, art, music and energy overall. There are not enough venues in the community that promote Latino literature. As an online store, I connect writers and readers on a virtual level with the e-newsletter. But when La Casa Azul Bookstore opens as a storefront it will complement other businesses that already exist in East Harlem, adding a Chicana twist to the color, flavor, and culture of the neighborhood.

Q: As one of the few Latina bookstore owners in the U.S., you have a unique perspective on the book business. What are your impressions of the current publishing landscape in general, and on Latino publishing in particular?

A: The more I learn about the book industry, the more committed I am to opening La Casa Azul Bookstore as a brick and mortar. I would like to see publishing companies promote and feature more Latino writers, but until that happens I am going to continue featuring them at my book clubs, readings, and online. I use my platform as a bookseller and promoter of Latino writers to educate people, let them know the importance of supporting both established and new writers. I am also a strong advocate for communities to support their local businesses, and I speak about that often because independent bookstores are vital in all neighborhoods. They are the cultural hub and the place where book lovers of all ages can come together.

Q: How can authors partner with bookstores to help sell their own books?

A: My advice is to contact local/independent bookstores. If you are self-published, you have to do some legwork, if you have a publicist make sure he/she books readings at local bookstores too! If you have a book tour, consider adding independent bookstores to the roster. Booklovers love meeting writers, and in the intimate setting of an indie bookstore, both the

authors and the audience have a better experience. It's also a great way to keep indies alive!

Q: For those people who dream of opening their own bookstore one day, what advice would you offer?

A: You have to love what you do! No matter what your passion is, you have to know that along with the fun and rewards also comes responsibility, commitment, and long hours. You also have to do your homework, know as much about the industry as possible in order to determine if this is right for you.

Q: Other than buying books, music CDs, and movie DVDs from the online store, how can we support La Casa Azul?

A: Yes, buying book, CDs and DVDs online is a great way to support La Casa Azul Bookstore but you can also:

- \* Be a part of the Founding Familia as a bookstore investor
- \* Purchase books for your school library or classroom from La Casa Azul Bookstore
- \* Host a book reading at your school, organization, or club
- \* Invite La Casa Azul Bookstore to your school book fair or parent/teacher night
- \* Attend the Barrio Book Club held on the second Tuesday of the month at El Museo del Barrio
- \* Sign up for the store e-newsletter
- \* Tell everyone you know about La Casa Azul Bookstore!

Q: If authors, publicists, or publishing companies are interested in having an event hosted by La Casa Azul, how should they contact you?

A: Aurora Anaya-Cerda

La Casa Azul Bookstore

Website: <http://www.lacasaazulbookstore.com/>

E-mail: [lacasaazulbookstore@gmail.com](mailto:lacasaazulbookstore@gmail.com)

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/lacasaazulbookstore>

Phone: 646-413-5251

### 3. Upcoming Workshops

#### WHAT: Before You Send It Out Workshop

Agents and editors don't have time to read entire manuscripts. So how do they choose which writers they want to work with? Proposals. Regardless of whether you have a book for adults or children, in fiction or nonfiction, you need a strong proposal. But while many writers invest a significant amount of time, energy, and money in crafting their manuscripts, few know how to compose a proper proposal. In this class, you will learn:

- \* Why 90% of submissions are rejected based on the cover letter alone
- \* The single most reliable—and free!—resource for finding a good agent
- \* Three common, yet easily avoidable, mistakes writers make
- \* A proposal's true purpose (hint: it's not to demonstrate talent)

WHEN: Saturday, April 10, 2010, 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

WHERE: Unicorn Writers' Conference, Oronoque Country Club, Stratford, CT

REGISTER: <http://www.unicornwritersconference.com/>

List of upcoming workshops:

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

#### 4. Resources

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##### 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>

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##### \$3250 FALL FICTION CONTEST

Deadline: November 30

Narrative magazine is seeking short shorts, short stories, essays, memoirs, photo essays, graphic stories, all forms of literary nonfiction, and excerpts from longer works of both fiction and nonfiction. For more information, visit <http://narrativemagazine.com/>

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##### ANJANETTE DELGADO VIRTUAL BOOK TOUR

Dates: November 9-20

Anjanette Delgado, author of *Heartbreak Pill*, will be the next star of the BronzeWord Latino Virtual Book Tour. Join the fun and visit each day, leave a comment to win an autographed copy of *Heartbreak Pill*. For more information, visit <http://authorslatino.com/wordpress/>

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##### WRITEGIRL SEEKS MENTORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Deadline: November 10

WriteGirl is looking for women of diverse professional backgrounds to be mentors and volunteers for their creative writing workshops for teen

girls. For more information, visit <http://www.writegirl.org/>

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#### EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH ABUNDANCE

Date: November 12

Ana Nogales, author of *Latina Power*, offers wisdom and advice on behavioral finance. Sponsored by the National Hispanic Business Women Association in Orange, CA. For more information, call 714-836-4042 or e-mail [info@nationalhbwa.org](mailto:info@nationalhbwa.org).

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#### PEN/BEYOND MARGINS AWARDS

Deadline: December 14

\$1000 is given to writers of color of fiction, literary nonfiction, biography/memoir, and other works of literary character. U.S. residency or citizenship is not required. For more information, visit:

<http://www.pen.org/page.php/prmID/280>

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#### BUZZ YOUR BOOK ONLINE CLASS

Dates: January 11 - February 19

By the end of the "Buzz Your Book" class, you will have a customized marketing plan for your book and your book only. Authors from MacAdam/Case, Ballantine, Penguin and SMP have taken this class, as well as publicists and editors from Tor, Wylie and Simon & Schuster. For more information, please visit <http://www.bksp.org/content/view/141/2/>

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#### BORDERLANDS CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Guest Editor: Liliana Valenzuela

Deadline: January 15

Borderlands is currently accepting poetry, as well as poetry in translation from any language into English or from English into Spanish. Submissions must include the original and the translation, as well as a brief introduction (under 250 words) describing the context of the piece, including something about the author, and any special translation challenges. Translators are responsible for securing copyright permission. For more information, please visit <http://www.borderlands.org/>

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#### BREAD LOAF WRITERS CONFERENCE

Financial Aid Application Deadline: March 1

General Application Deadline: March 19

Dates: August 11-21

The Bread Loaf Writers' Conference is one of America's most valuable literary institutions. The annual conference includes lectures, craft classes, and meetings with editors and agents, readings by faculty and guests, and workshops in poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. Writers who have

attended in the past include Toni Morrison, Walter Mosley, and Julia Alvarez. For more information, visit  
<http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/blwc/>

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#### RIP LAUNCHES NEWSLETTER

Revitalize, Inspire, and Perform (RIP) magazine launches a monthly newsletter. RIP strives to reach all of the players involved in positively influencing today's urban teens--from health educators to teachers and principals to parents and youth center leaders. For more information, visit: <http://www.revitalizeinspireperform.com/>

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#### DK PUBLISHING SEEKS SALES MANAGER

DK Publishing, a division of Penguin, has an opportunity for a manager to sell Eyewitness Travel Guides, BradyGames and Rough Guides. Must have at least 3 years of book selling experience (trade book sales preferred). To apply, please send resume and cover letter with salary requirements to [jobs@us.penguin.com](mailto:jobs@us.penguin.com) and indicate position title in the subject line.

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#### NOMINATE WWW.MARCELALANDRES.COM

If you like my web site, please nominate it for next year's Writer's Digest Magazine's "The 101 Best Web Sites for Writers" list. Send nominations to [writersdig@fwpubs.com](mailto:writersdig@fwpubs.com) with "101 Best Web Sites" as the subject line and a brief note explaining how <http://www.marcelalandres.com/> has helped you. Thank you in advance for your support!

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#### SPREAD THE WORD

Want to see your announcement in an upcoming issue of Latinidad? Just e-mail me at [marcelalandres@yahoo.com](mailto:marcelalandres@yahoo.com)

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"When I get a little money I buy books; and if any is left I buy food and clothes."

--Desiderius Erasmus

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Author of the e-book How Editors Think: The Real Reason They Rejected  
You