

## Latinidad™ Newsletter – November 2004: Short Stories

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For lists of agents and editors seeking Latino writers, visit [www.marcelalandres.com](http://www.marcelalandres.com) and click on Writing Opportunities.

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### 1. Saludos

Large publishers prefer novels over short story collections, leaving small publishers to discover and nurture those writers who have mastered the short form but aren't quite ready to make the leap to novels. If you are one of those writers, don't fret. Submit your stories to magazines, journals, and contests in order to establish or raise your profile in the literary community. The more short pieces you publish, and the more awards you garner, the wider the pool of agents and editors you will attract once you are ready to submit a novel. To get you started, a reputable small publisher is profiled in Editor Q&A; an eloquent debut collection is reviewed in Author Spotlight; and numerous short story contests are featured in Writing Opportunities.

Helping Latino writers get published,

Marcela Landres

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[www.marcelalandres.com](http://www.marcelalandres.com)

### 2. Editor Q&A

Chris Fischbach is a Senior Editor at Coffee House Press, where he has worked for ten years. He is also the Assistant Director of the annual Twin Cities Book Festival. Coffee House Press is an award-winning, nonprofit literary publisher known for publishing fine writers.

Why is Coffee House Press a great home for Latino writers?

Coffee House Press is well-known and has an excellent reputation for publishing multicultural writers/writers of color, including Victor Hernandez Cruz and Sandra Benitez. This reputation will help writers get attention in the larger publishing world.

Which Latino authors has Coffee House Press published?

Victor Hernandez Cruz and Sandra Benitez.

What kinds of manuscripts do you seek?

Fiction and creative nonfiction. We are not, however, currently accepting poetry manuscripts.

How can writers avoid your “Reject” pile and get into your “Pursue” pile?

Do research into the kinds of book we publish and see if their book fits well with those books. Also, be sure to research the proper way to submit manuscripts to publishers.

Write a short and concise cover letter and be sure that your manuscript and materials are presented in the most professional way possible.

Other than honing their craft, what is the smartest step writers can take to become happily published?

Become a part of a community of other writers.

Send submissions to: Chris Fischbach, Senior Editor, Coffee House Press, 27 North 4th St., Ste. 400, Minneapolis, MN 55401

Coffee House Press web site: <http://www.coffeehousepress.org/>

More Editor Q&A: <http://www.marcelalandres.com/id60.htm>

### 3. Recommendations

Zoetrope: All-Story is a quarterly literary publication founded by Francis Ford Coppola which concentrates on short fiction. It was selected as a finalist for the 2004 National Magazine Award for Fiction. In addition, many individual stories published by the magazine have been honored with prestigious awards, including the O. Henry Prize for “Sphinxes” by Timothy Crouse and “Refuge in London” by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala; a Pushcart Prize for Russell Working’s “The Irish Martyr”; and the PEN David T.K. Wong Prize for Short Fiction for Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s “Half of a Yellow Sun.” They are currently seeking never-before-published writers. Visit their web site, <http://www.all-story.com/>, for submission guidelines.

Zoetrope: All-Story web site: <http://www.all-story.com/>

Offer a recommendation: [marcelalandres@yahoo.com](mailto:marcelalandres@yahoo.com)

More recommendations: <http://www.marcelalandres.com/id25.htm>

### 4. Author Spotlight

Lolita Hernandez’s *Autopsy of an Engine* is a collection of short stories influenced by voices as diverse as Jorge Luis Borges, Karl Marx, and Trinidadian folk songs. Her style is inventive, with one story told in the form of a long voicemail message, another from the perspective of a slumbering woman trapped between a dream and reality. Hernandez examines the interconnections between the ethereal and the gritty, rhythm and soul, and work as both refuge and prison. Lauded by Ruth Reichl as “a story you can’t forget from a voice that has not been heard before,” *Autopsy of an Engine* is a welcome introduction to a writer who is sure to be heard from again.

Which author or book inspires you, and why?

Many authors inspire me. It's difficult for me to put my finger on one in particular. I can say that Julio Cortazar, Jorge Luis Borges, Nadine Gordimer, Kafka, John Steinbeck, Ernest Hemingway, and Robert Antoni have greatly influenced my writing. But then again, so have Gloria Naylor, Jamaica Kincaid, Isabel Allende, V.S. Naipaul, Andre Malreaux, and Alejo Carpentier. All of them are my literary family.

Why do you love to write short stories?

I love short stories because they provide more space than poetry but not as much space as the novel, so you can combine poetry and story. I still have a novel in me. Maybe two.

How did you meet your agent?

I don't have an agent. A friend who knows my work urged me to send my manuscript to Coffee House Press. I did. Someone who works there is familiar with my work and likely encouraged CHP to read the manuscript. As I understand it, that person had no role in the decision to publish the manuscript. After about a year, I heard from CHP that they wanted to publish my work. Several months went by and CHP contacted me with a date for publication. I read the contract; it seemed reasonable so I signed it and then the whirlwind of activities began. So far, CHP has worked diligently on my behalf every step of the process, from editing, to book and cover design to promotion. CHP treats authors with dignity and respect; this press is nurturing and extremely helpful. CHP has done more for me than I ever expected. I don't know if every medium or small press would be so wonderful but CHP has a good reputation, and the folks there are dedicated to publishing good literature, not raking in big bucks. I don't expect to rake in big bucks either. If I was going for the big bucks, I'd find an agent and go for the jugular. Truth is my CHP book tour is wonderful, fun and instructive. It's very real. I love it. I'm going a few places, including the Twin Cities and Miami. I would urge caution with most presses, but CHP has proven to be honorable.

What is your writing ritual?

When I am in the middle of a project I tend to write in the evening during the week and in the morning on the weekends. I still work a 40 hour week. Otherwise, I journal as I am able.

Other than honing their craft, what advice would you give to Latino writers looking to land a book deal?

When the time is right, things will happen. Be prepared with good work. Be yourself. Immerse yourself in life.

Read excerpt: <http://www.coffeehousepress.org/autopsyofanengine.asp>

Obtain Autopsy of an Engine: [http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1566891612/marcelalandre-20/104-7718603-5847146?dev-t=mason-wrapper%26camp=2025%26link\\_code=xm2](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1566891612/marcelalandre-20/104-7718603-5847146?dev-t=mason-wrapper%26camp=2025%26link_code=xm2)

More Author Spotlights: <http://www.marcelalandres.com/id58.htm>

## 5. Upcoming Workshops

### How to Write a Knockout Book Proposal

WHAT: Most proposals are rejected not because the writing is unpublishable, but because the writer failed to provide agents and editors with all the information they need. This is especially true for fiction proposals. Topics discussed include: the true purpose of a proposal; why 90% of proposals are rejected based on the cover letter alone; and the three most common mistakes writers make when preparing proposals.

WHEN: 6:45p.m.-9:30p.m., Tuesday, November 9, 2004

WHERE: [The Learning Annex](#), New York City, NY

REGISTER: Visit <http://www.learningannex.com/> and search for "427DNY"

Invite me to speak for your organization: <http://www.marcelalandres.com/id49.htm>

List of upcoming workshops: <http://www.marcelalandres.com/id22.htm>

## 6. Writing Opportunities

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For more calls for submissions, contests, conferences, etc., visit

[www.marcelalandres.com](http://www.marcelalandres.com) and click on Writing Opportunities.

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### SHORT FICTION CONTEST FOR UNPUBLISHED WRITERS

Deadline: December 15

Boulevard magazine offers a prize of \$1500 and publication for a short story by a writer who has not published a book with a nationally distributed publisher. All submissions will be considered for publication. For guidelines visit <http://www.boulevardmagazine.com/>.

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### THE WRITER'S DIGEST 5TH ANNUAL SHORT SHORT STORY COMPETITION

Deadline: December 1

Writer's Digest is looking for fiction that's bold, brilliant, but brief. Send them your best in 1,500 words or fewer. First Place: \$3,000. For entry form and more information visit [http://www.writersdigest.com/contests/short\\_story.asp](http://www.writersdigest.com/contests/short_story.asp).

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### JOHN STEINBACK SHORT STORY AWARD

Deadline: December 1

A prize of \$1000 and publication in Reed Magazine is given annually for an unpublished short story. John L'Heureux will judge. For guidelines visit <http://www2.sjsu.edu/reed/>.

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#### MERIDIAN SHORT STORY PRIZES

Deadline: December 20

A prize of \$1000 and publication in Meridian's Spring/Summer issue are given annually for an unpublished short story. For guidelines visit [www.readmeridian.com](http://www.readmeridian.com).

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#### H.E. FRANCIS SHORT STORY COMPETITION

Deadline: December 31

A prize of \$1000 is given annually for an original, unpublished short story by the Ruth Hindman Foundation. For guidelines visit <http://www.uah.edu/colleges/liberal/english/whatnewcontest.html>.

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#### OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY SHORT STORY PRIZE

Deadline: November 30

A prize of \$1500 and publication by Ohio State University Press is given annually for a collection of short fiction. For guidelines visit <http://www.ohiostatepress.org/>.

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#### GLIMMER TRAIN SHORT STORY CONTEST

Deadline: January 15

A prize of \$2000 and publication in Glimmer Train Stories is given twice yearly for a short story. Submit a short story of any length and theme. For guidelines visit [www.glimmertrainpress.com](http://www.glimmertrainpress.com).

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#### LITERAL LATTE SHORT STORY AWARD

Deadline: January 15

A prize of \$1000 and publication in Literal Latte is given annually for an unpublished short story. All entries are considered for publication. For guidelines visit [www.literal-latte.com](http://www.literal-latte.com).

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#### SEEKING STORIES ABOUT RACISM WITHIN LATINO COMMUNITY

Grisel (Y. Acosta) is compiling a series of stories, opinions, and facts relating to black and white Latinos in the U.S., with the main focus being on how black Latinos are discriminated against. She is interested in stories, anecdotes, opinions from black Latinos, of course, but also from people of other backgrounds who have had some sort of encounter with this topic. She strongly encourages white Latinos, African Americans and any other ethnic group to participate. The main goal: to create a document that will record the near past and current black Latino experience in the U.S. Anyone interested in sharing his/her story, or anyone interested in being part of this project, or anyone interested in general should write to Grisel at this email address: [dsegotism@yahoo.com](mailto:dsegotism@yahoo.com).

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#### AND NOW FOR SOMETHING A LITTLE DIFFERENT

Here is a brand new concept in marketing books that every writer, published or unpublished, should check out. Essentially, it's a trailer for a book, in this case for Marc Acito's HOW I PAID FOR COLLEGE. It's so clever, one wonders why it has never been done before. Click here to view it: <http://www.vidlit.com/hipfc/hipfc.html>.

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#### POST AN ANNOUNCEMENT IN LATINIDAD™

E-mail announcements about contests, calls for submissions, conferences, jobs, book publications, literary events, etc., to [marcelalandres@yahoo.com](mailto:marcelalandres@yahoo.com).

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#### BACK ISSUES

All back issues are available at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/marcelalandres/>.

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#### REPRINTS

If you wish to reprint portions of Latinidad™, please credit The Latinidad™ Newsletter and include a link to [www.marcelalandres.com](http://www.marcelalandres.com).

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#### DID YOU LIKE THIS NEWSLETTER?

If so, forward it to friends and colleague. If not, take the Newsletter Survey on my web site <http://www.marcelalandres.com/id59.htm> and tell me what doesn't work and why.

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“True eloquence consists in saying all that should be said, and that only.”

--La Rochefoucauld

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