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MLA'S KATHERINE SINGER KOVACS PRIZE AWARDED TO SAMUEL AMAGO FOR *BASURA: CULTURES OF WASTE IN CONTEMPORARY SPAIN*; FELIPE MARTÍNEZ-PINZÓN AND JORGE PÉREZ RECEIVE HONORABLE MENTIONS

New York, NY – 7 December 2022 – The Modern Language Association of America today announced its thirty-second annual Katherine Singer Kovacs Prize for an outstanding book published in English or Spanish in the field of Latin American and Spanish literatures and cultures. The winner is Samuel Amago, professor of Spanish at the University of Virginia, for *Basura: Cultures of Waste in Contemporary Spain*, published by the University of Virginia Press. Felipe Martínez-Pinzón, associate professor of Hispanic studies at Brown University, has received an honorable mention for his book *Patricios en contienda: Cuadros de costumbres, reformas liberales y representación del pueblo en Hispanoamérica (1830–1880)*, published by the Department of Romance Studies, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Jorge Pérez, professor of Iberian literatures and cultures at the University of Texas, Austin, has received an honorable mention for his book *Fashioning Spanish Cinema: Costume, Identity, and Stardom*, published by the University of Toronto Press.

The Katherine Singer Kovacs Prize was established in 1990 by a gift from Joseph and Mimi B. Singer, parents of the late Katherine Singer Kovacs. The prize is one of nineteen awards that will be presented on 6 January 2023, during the association's annual convention, to be held in San Francisco. The members of the selection committee were Frederick Luis Aldama (Univ. of Texas, Austin); Persephone Braham (Univ. of Delaware, Newark); Michelle Hamilton (Univ. of Minnesota, Twin Cities), chair; Leila Maria Lehen (Brown Univ.); and Elizabeth Scarlett (Univ. at Buffalo, State Univ. of New York). The committee's citation for Amago's book reads:

Samuel Amago's *Basura: Cultures of Waste in Contemporary Spain* is an interdisciplinary study that explores how thinking with trash reveals how material culture, and particularly that which is discarded or excluded from society, functions as protagonist in some of the most important transitional moments in Spain's recent history. Amago uses an innovative approach to comprehend the materiality of cultural production, as well as its ecological and epistemic implications, providing the reader with an overview of the intersection between so-called trash and cultural production. Relevant to scholars of Spanish cinema, literature, and the photographic and graphic narrative storytelling arts, *Basura* will also be of interest to those engaged in material ecocriticism.

The committee's citation of Martínez-Pinzón's work reads:

Felipe Martínez-Pinzón's *Patricios en contienda* explores how nineteenth-century liberal intellectuals imagined the role of the various Indigenous peoples of Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador in the modern nation. Based on deep archival research into the periodicals of the day, this study is a thorough, useful analysis of the sociopolitical uses of the *cuadros de costumbres* by old and new elites in the process of defining their

society and their own place in it. Martínez-Pinzón examines the contradictory attitudes toward workers and class distinctions evident in *costumbrista* literature and art and what role the writer and artist had in imagining not only labor but who controlled it.

The committee's citation of Pérez's work reads:

Jorge Pérez's *Fashioning Spanish Cinema: Costume, Identity, and Stardom* provides a highly engaging and informative reading of media culture, fashion, and post-Civil War Spanish society. Pérez focuses on the overlooked role of the costume designer in filmmaking and in modern celebrity culture. Pérez's analysis of the function of fashion in the Spanish film industry from the 1940s to the present is sensitive to both diegetic and extradiegetic factors such as Francoist and post-Francoist politics. Pérez convincingly shows that Spanish film and celebrity culture offers case studies for rethinking fashion performance's function in self-presentation as part of an increasingly diverse media landscape that now extends far beyond traditional cinema.

The Modern Language Association of America and its over 20,000 members in 100 countries work to strengthen the study and teaching of languages and literature. Founded in 1883, the MLA provides opportunities for its members to share their scholarly findings and teaching experiences with colleagues and to discuss trends in the academy. The MLA sustains one of the finest publication programs in the humanities, producing a variety of publications for language and literature professionals and for the general public. The association publishes the *MLA International Bibliography*, the only comprehensive bibliography in language and literature, available online. The MLA Annual Convention features meetings on a wide variety of subjects. More information on MLA programs is available at www.mla.org.

The prize is presented under the auspices of the MLA's Committee on Honors and Awards. Other awards sponsored by the committee are the William Riley Parker Prize; the James Russell Lowell Prize; the MLA Prize for a First Book; the Howard R. Marraro Prize; the Kenneth W. Mildener Prize; the Mina P. Shaughnessy Prize; the MLA Prize for Independent Scholars; the Morton N. Cohen Award; the MLA Prizes for a Scholarly Edition and for Collaborative, Bibliographical, or Archival Scholarship; the Lois Roth Award; the William Sanders Scarborough Prize; the Fenia and Yaakov Leviant Memorial Prize in Yiddish Studies; the MLA Prize in United States Latina and Latino and Chicana and Chicano Literary and Cultural Studies; the MLA Prize for Studies in Native American Literatures, Cultures, and Languages; the Matei Calinescu Prize; the MLA Prize for an Edited Collection; the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prizes for Comparative Literary Studies, for French and Francophone Studies, for Italian Studies, for Studies in Germanic Languages and Literatures, for Studies in Slavic Languages and Literatures, for a Translation of a Literary Work, for a Translation of a Scholarly Study of Literature, for African Studies, for East Asian Studies, for Middle Eastern Studies, and for South Asian Studies; and the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Publication Award for a Manuscript in Italian Literary Studies. A complete list of current and previous winners can be found on the [MLA website](#).

Katherine Singer Kovacs completed her undergraduate studies at Tufts University, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, and earned her MA and her PhD (in 1974) at Harvard University. She is the author of "*Le Rêve et la Vie*": *A Theatrical Experiment by Gustave Flaubert* and articles and reviews on Latin American literature, culture, and film and on comparative literature. Kovacs was a specialist in Spanish and Latin American literature and film. She taught at Stanford University, the University of Southern California, and Whittier College. She was associate editor and coeditor of *Humanities in Society*, a member of the executive committee of the *Quarterly Review of Film Studies*, and a consultant for *Latin American Perspectives*. Kovacs died in May 1989.