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**CRAIG SANTOS PEREZ TO RECEIVE MLA PRIZE FOR STUDIES IN NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURES, CULTURES, AND LANGUAGES FOR *NAVIGATING CHAMORU POETRY*; CHARLES MAURICE PIGOTT TO RECEIVE HONORABLE MENTION FOR *WRITING THE LAND, WRITING HUMANITY***

New York, NY – 7 December 2022 – The Modern Language Association of America today announced it is awarding its fourth MLA Prize for Studies in Native American Literatures, Cultures, and Languages to Craig Santos Perez, associate professor of English at the University of Hawai‘i, Mānoa, for his book *Navigating CHamoru Poetry: Indigeneity, Aesthetics, and Decolonization*, published by the University of Arizona Press. Charles Maurice Pigott, lecturer in Hispanic studies at the University of Strathclyde, is receiving an honorable mention for *Writing the Land, Writing Humanity: The Maya Literary Renaissance*, published by Routledge. The prize is awarded for an outstanding scholarly study of Native American literature, culture, or languages written by a member of the association.

The MLA Prize for Studies in Native American Literatures, Cultures, or Languages 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 Deanna Reder (Simon Fraser Univ.); Robbie Richardson (Princeton Univ.); and Cheryl L. Suzack (Univ. of Toronto), chair. The committee’s citation for the winning book reads:

Craig Santos Perez’s *Navigating CHamoru Poetry: Indigeneity, Aesthetics, and Decolonization* explores the intricate connections and layered histories represented by CHamoru poetry in its addressing the annexation, militarization, and political loss resulting from colonial expansion on Guam. Perez explores how several generations of CHamoru poets have illuminated CHamoru values of *inafa’maolek* (interdependence), *chenchule’* (reciprocity), *mamāhlao* (shame), and *respetu* (respect) as part of a continuum of resistance to colonization and global imperialism. A CHamoru poet himself, Perez sensitively explores Indigenous local and transnational aesthetics and provides a decolonial path that centers movement and Indigenous epistemologies in dialogue with other Pacific and Indigenous cultures. Perez’s work, urging us to turn our attention to the ongoing Indigenous struggles against American imperialism in Guam, emerges as a key text in Indigenous studies.

The committee’s citation for Pigott’s book reads:

In *Writing the Land, Writing Humanity: The Maya Literary Renaissance*, Charles Maurice Pigott highlights the work of a generation of contemporary Maya writers to emphasize how the Maya literary renaissance relies on the local conditions of the Yucatan Peninsula to adapt Maya worldviews to the present context, as a way to face universal threats of ecological, epistemological, and linguistic collapse. Pigott draws on Maya concepts, language, and the influence of land, considering poetry in the light of

the Maya concepts of *tsikbaal* (the land as tapestry), *ts'iib* (multimodal forms of writing), and *k'awiil* (the interplay between the human and the nonhuman) to suggest that literature is a mode through which the world writes itself. The result is a deeply impressive work of literary scholarship and philosophy that illuminates the important and resurgent Maya literary renaissance.

The Modern Language Association of America and its 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](http://www.mla.org).

The MLA Prize for Studies in Native American Literatures, Cultures, and Languages was established in 2014 and is awarded under the auspices of the 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 Katherine Singer Kovacs Prize; 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 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 prizewinners can be found on the [MLA website](#).