
“This is a book of our times, a story of struggle and resilience, a warrior song that refuses to look or run away,” says Melissa R. Sipin, TAYO editor in chief. “Knitting the Fog brings us the immigrant experience in a refreshingly new light,” explains judge and author Bridgett M. Davis. “How exciting that Hernandez’s voice joins the canon of contemporary Latina stories.”

The Feminist Press and TAYO Literary Magazine established the prize in 2016 to honor landmark African American feminist author Louise Meriwether and her 1970 novel Daddy Was a Number Runner. One of the first American novels to feature a young black girl as the protagonist, the book inspired the careers of writers like Jacqueline Woodson and Bridgett M. Davis, among countless others. The Louise Meriwether First Book Prize annually seeks the best debut work by women and nonbinary writers of color.

“We celebrate and invest in extraordinary emerging writers from communities whose stories are often unheard or undersupported,” says Feminist Press executive director Jamia Wilson. “The Prize creates space for fresh narratives that shift culture, inspire action, and expand our vision for the future.”

The inaugural prize was awarded to writer YZ Chin for her short story collection, Though I Get Home. The Feminist Press will publish Chin’s collection in April.

Claudia D. Hernández was born and raised in Guatemala. She is a mother, photographer, poet, translator, and bilingual educator residing in LA. Hernández holds an MFA in creative writing from Antioch University Los Angeles. She is the founder of the ongoing project Today’s Revolutionary Women of Color.

The submissions period for the 2019 prize will be open March 1, 2018 through June 30, 2018. For submissions guidelines, visit FeministPress.org or email louisemeriwetherprize@gmail.com. The winner will receive $5,000 and publication by the Feminist Press.