If 2020 took some unexpected turns, Deep Vellum rose to the occasion. In our 2019 report, we announced that we had just experienced our most impactful year ever, but here's some exciting news. 2020 was even more impactful!

- Deep Vellum published an incredible 17 books, a 70% increase from 2019
- Published 8 works of translated fiction and the first-ever literary translation from Sierra Zapotec
- Expanded our editorial vision to include 7 English-original titles
- Published new genres, including photography, essays, and an anthology of literary prize acceptance speeches
- Produced 3 audiobooks
- Expanded programmatic offerings and convened readers from around the world together in the same virtual room
- Gave away $20,000 in relief grants to Texas writers
- Collaborated with a Dallas theater company to produce a stage adaptation of one of our poet's works
- Initiated a merger with the renowned publishing house Dalkey Archive Press
- Signed an array of critical titles exploring race, inequality, and history in Dallas, to be published over the next two years

We have you to thank for this growth. Not only did we receive more single donations and gain more new supporters than any other year in our history, but you continued to read—and buy—books! Readers are at the heart of our mission to bring the world into conversation through literature.

With your support, we harness the power of literature to create a more empathetic, equitable, and curious global community—from Texas to the world and from the world to Texas!

Read on for our 2020 highlights.

Will Evans,
Executive Director and Publisher
AN ILLUMINATED ALPHABET AND OUR FIRST AUDIOBOOKS

Deep Vellum published 17 books this year. Why are books at the heart of our programming? Books allow readers to experience life from a new perspective. Books promote empathy, build bridges, and educate communities.

While you might know us best for our translated fiction, we have expanded our editorial vision to include both English-original titles and new genres. This year Deep Vellum published 6 books of poetry, 6 novels, 2 books of photography, 1 collection of short stories, 1 essay, 1 chapbook, and 1 anthology of literary prize acceptance speeches. Among these were 8 translated titles and 7 English-original titles. We also recorded our first 3 audiobooks, slated to release in 2021.

In April, the publishing house released its first English-original novel, a masterful “illuminated alphabet” by DFW-based writer and artist Fowzia Karimi. Above Us the Milky Way is a semi-autobiographical depiction of Karimi’s journey from Afghanistan to the United States with her family when she was a young girl. With medieval-style illustrations hand-drawn by Karimi, the work is a profound story of loss and remembrance. Above Us the Milky Way received starred reviews in Kirkus and Foreword Reviews, and in June Karimi appeared on KCRW’s Bookworm to discuss the book.

REIMAGINING TEXAS

In September, Deep Vellum announced that it would reissue The Accommodation, a searing account of the history of race and racism in Dallas by journalist Jim Schutze. The book has been out of print for over 30 years. Deep Vellum has long sought to cultivate a list of writing that addresses important contemporary issues in international contexts. Now, the Deep Vellum team is striving to develop a deep roster of titles that explore the story of Texas from all sides, engaging on issues like structural inequality and racism in our home city and state. We look forward to working with Texas writers to give voice to these stories.
The Albertine Prize, an annual readers’-choice award that recognizes US-based readers’ favorite work of contemporary French fiction translated and published in the US, was awarded to Deep Vellum’s 2018 title “Muslim”: A Novel by Zahia Rahmani in 2020. In the genre-bending book, Algerian-born Rahmani, now regarded as one of France’s leading writers, reflects on what it means to be Muslim.

**THIS YEAR DEEP VELLUM PUBLISHED**

*The Love Story of the Century* | Märta Tikkanen | Translated by Stina Katchadourian (Finland)

*Girls Lost* | Jessica Schiefauer | Translated by Saskia Vogel (Sweden)

*Above Us the Milky Way* | Fowzia Karimi (DFW)

*The River Always Wins: Water as a Metaphor for Hope and Progress* | David Marquis (Dallas)

*A Grave Is Given Supper* | Mike Soto (Dallas)

*At the Lucky Hand: aka The Sixty-Nine Drawers* | Goran Petrović | Translated by Peter Agnone (Serbia)

*Jean-Luc Persecuted* | C.F. Ramuz | Translated by Olivia Baes (Switzerland)

*The Ancestry of Objects* | Tatiana Ryckman (USA)

*The Nightgown and Other Poems* | Taisia Kitaiskaia (USA)

*Mrs. Murakami’s Garden* | Mario Bellatin | Translated by Heather Cleary (Mexico)

*Two Half Faces* | Mustafa Stitou | Translated by David Colmer (Netherlands)

*Greetings from the Future* | Tatiana Ryckman | Illustrated by Emily Roberts (USA)

*Dispatches from the Republic of Letters: 50 Years of the Neustadt International Prize for Literature* | Edited by Daniel Simon (International Anthology)

*Meditations on Being* | Rachel Fox (Dallas)

*Raised by Wolves* | Amang | Translated by Steve Bradbury (Taiwan)

*Red Ants* | Pergentino José | Translated by Thomas Bunstead (Mexico)

*Ballroom Harry: Volume II* | Harry Goaz (Dallas)

*A Pedestrian’s Recent History of Dallas* | Zac Crain (Dallas)
RELIEF FUNDS FOR TEXAS WRITERS

During a board meeting in April, Deep Vellum staff and board members realized that, despite the emergence of multiple relief funds providing emergency grants to artists of a variety of disciplines, there was no Covid-19 relief program supporting Texas writers. To fill this gap, Deep Vellum founded the only relief fund exclusively designed to help Texas writers meet their financial needs during the pandemic. Between June and October, Deep Vellum awarded 86 small grants to writers across Texas. Over 50% of recipients were Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, and over 50% were women. Recipients came from across the state, including urban and rural areas.

“You are the only organization who has been able and willing to assist me. I am profoundly grateful especially as there are so many of us who are experiencing difficulty. I adore Deep Vellum’s hard work and dedication to literary publishing and to community. So again, thank you.” – Relief Grant Recipient

Deep Vellum is grateful to our board member Paul Wingo, Writers’ League of Texas, the Embrey Family Foundation, Nancy Perot, Pam Lange of the former PEN Texas chapter, and many other individual donors for supporting this fund.

EXPANDING OUR REACH WITH DIGITAL TOOLS

Like most arts organizations, Deep Vellum moved its events online in 2020 and used the virtual platform to get creative with innovative literary programs. We set up a one-night-only hotline for readers to be treated to a private reading by author Tatiana Ryckman to celebrate the release of her novel The Ancestry of Objects. Poet Mike Soto created a multimedia musical and literary performance at the release of his volume of poetry A Grave Is Given Supper. Brazilian writer Noemi Jaffe, author of What are the Blind Men Dreaming?, gave readers a tour of her quirky home office in São Paulo.

This year Deep Vellum also hosted numerous events that went beyond the scope of our published titles. We invited Texas literary leaders for one-on-one conversations via Instagram Live. We hosted a panel series entitled “Accessibility in the Literary Arts” to explore how to make the literary arts a more inclusive place for all readers and writers. Among the topics covered were mental health, dyslexia, and BIPOC/disability inclusion.
In November, our recently released volume of poetry *A Grave Is Given Supper* by local poet Mike Soto became our first original title to be adapted for the stage. In collaboration with Teatro Dallas and thanks to the support of the City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture and TACA, Soto, a first-generation Mexican American raised in East Dallas, transformed *A Grave Is Given Supper* into a transcendent one-person show performed by New York actor Elena Hurst. A “narco-acid Western” based on a fictional town on the US/Mexico border, *A Grave Is Given Supper* explores love and violence in the liminal space of the southern border.

The production, mounted by Teatro Dallas, ran for 7 nights for a small audience seated at distanced tables outside the City of Dallas Latino Cultural Center. Audience members each received a signed copy of Soto’s work.

“The earthly and heavenly meet in Teatro Dallas premiere of ‘A Grave Is Given Supper’...Soto’s words reinforce that otherworldly sensibility while also grounding the play in the realities along the border.” - Manuel Mendoza for the *Dallas Morning News*
January 2021 ended with a bang! In November, Deep Vellum announced that our organization will merge with acclaimed nonprofit independent publishing house Dalkey Archive Press.

What is Dalkey Archive Press? Founded in 1984, it is America’s preeminent publisher of literary fiction in translation. Dalkey has published astounding works of English-original literature, alongside translated works. Titles include works by three Nobel Prize winners, including Voices from Chernobyl, by Belarusian writer Svetlana Alexievich, as well as classics by writers including Aldous Huxley, Carlos Fuentes, and Gertrude Stein.

Over the next year, Dalkey Archive Press will become an imprint of Deep Vellum, taking our roster of published works to nearly 1,000. Chad Post, Open Letter Books Publisher, will join Deep Vellum as Dalkey director. Stay tuned as we bring Dalkey Archive Press on board and publish 20 new books under the Dalkey imprint in 2021!

“We are honored to continue the legacy of Dalkey Archive Press,” said Deep Vellum director Will Evans. “Making Dalkey Archive an imprint of Deep Vellum will allow us to continue publishing works using the Dalkey name, with the same vision that first inspired John O’Brien to found the press. Deep Vellum will take over operations that bring Dalkey books from manuscript to final form.”
In July, Deep Vellum was selected as one of just 5 Dallas organizations to receive CARES Act funding from the National Endowment for the Arts. This grant allowed us to continue to pay our writers and book designers on schedule, to sign books for 2021 and 2022, and to ensure that 2020 would be a year of growth rather than survival.

This year, our organization conducted two fundraising campaigns, including our annual North Texas Giving Day drive. Our 2020 North Texas Giving Day was our most successful campaign yet, and we’re grateful to our readers for showing support for our work.

A NEW SPACE ONLINE

Dallas-based designer Justin Childress outdid himself with a sharp new redesign for our website.

Not only is the sales experience on the new website much easier, but the site also includes a “Virtual Event Archive,” where readers can watch past events; a “Resources” tab with information for booksellers and members of the media; and a new, dynamic pages about our mission, goals, and history.
DEEP VELLUM TEAM GROWS

NEW HIRES

Development Director: In March, Lindsay King came on board as director of development. Lindsay, who joined Deep Vellum after receiving a Ph.D. in history from UCLA, works closely with our board members, supporters, institutional funders, and volunteers to ensure organizational sustainability in the future.

Poetry Editor: In October, Sebastián Páramo joined our team as poetry editor. An accomplished poet himself, Sebastián is the founder and editor of the literary journal THE BOILER, as well as the co-founder of the Pegasus Reading Series in Dallas. Sebastián's work has appeared or is forthcoming in 32 Poems, New England Review, Crazyhorse, Missouri Review, Blackbird, and others. He will contract and edit poetry titles published by the Deep Vellum imprint. Deep Vellum is now one of the leading US-based independent publishers of poetry by international and American writers.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Natalie Parker, a trial attorney at Thompson & Knight, joined Deep Vellum's board this spring. Parker focuses her practice on written advocacy, with specializations in intellectual property, appellate, and commercial litigation matters.

She has litigated appeals before the Federal and Fifth Circuits, as well as the Texas Supreme Court. Outside of work, Natalie has spent time pursuing nonprofit work with the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center, where she oversaw fundraising and marketing communications.

I am a book evangelist. When I’m especially enthralled with something I’ve read, rather than just recommend the book, I buy a dozen or more copies to give to everyone I think would like to read it. Sometimes, I keep extra “just in case” copies with me to make sure I’m prepared in the event of an unexpected literary gifting need. I hope they’re as meaningful to the recipients as they were to me! – Natalie, on her relationship to books

Valerie Boyd, originally from Missoula, Montana, landed in Dallas in 2013 after living in many cities across the US. She joined the Deep Vellum board last fall. In the past, Valerie worked as a flight attendant for Delta Airlines, worked at inlingua in the Translation and Interpretation Department, and taught yoga. Valerie has served on several boards, including Milkweed Editions, and volunteered in various capacities while raising her children. Currently, she is focusing her energies on art. She has painted a series of Badass Women and recently published an accompanying art book highlighting one hundred of their portraits.

I am excited to join the board of Deep Vellum and support its mission of bringing the world into conversation through literature. While serving on the board of Milkweed Editions, I learned the importance of nonprofit literary presses and the imperative for transformative literature. – Valerie, on what it means to her to join the Deep Vellum board
**RECORD NUMBER OF PUBLICATIONS!**
In 2021, Deep Vellum will publish an unprecedented 28 books, including 11 novels, 7 volumes of poetry, 4 short story collections, 3 works of nonfiction, 2 plays, 2 children's books.

**KNOW A CHILD WHO NEEDS A DEEP VELLUM BOOK?**

**BREAKING NEW GROUND.**
Deep Vellum will publish its first play, *penny candy: a confection*, by acclaimed local playwright Jonathan Norton, who is the Playwright-in-Residence at the Dallas Theatre Center. *penny candy* is a semi-autobiographical play about Norton's experience growing up in the Dallas neighborhood Pleasant Grove, a majority Black community. The play centers on the "candy house" that Norton's parents ran out of their apartment, against the background of the crack cocaine epidemic that swept through Black communities in the 1980s. *penny candy* premiered at the Dallas Theatre Center in 2019.

**ENVISIONING A LITERARY ARTS CENTER FOR DALLAS.**
Deep Vellum is in the early planning stages to open a comprehensive literary arts center to serve Dallas and North Texas residents. The literary arts center will bring Deep Vellum publishing house, literary education and performances, writers' studios and residences, and bookmaking under one roof.

**PROGRAMMING FOR WIDER RANGING AUDIENCES.**
As we look toward the future, Deep Vellum will be developing programming designed to reach new and broader audiences in Dallas. In 2021, we're planning several local book clubs, panel discussions with city leaders about the conclusions articulated in *The Accommodation*, new collaborations with the Dallas Public Library, and outdoor readings at Klyde Warren Park.
FIND US IN THE PRESS

Deep Vellum was recognized for our industry-leading work in press outlets across the country. Read about what journalists had to say about us below.

The *Dallas Morning News* talks with Zac Crain about his Dallas photography book | *At a slower pace, serial pedestrian Zac Crain found unexpected beauty in Dallas...and the source of downtown's cookie smell*

The *Wall Street Journal* publishes a haunting review of *Red Ants* | *“Is anyone living, or have we entered the parallel reality of the unconscious mind?”*

*Publisher’s Weekly* on Dalkey Archive Press merging with Deep Vellum | *Deep Vellum Acquires Dalkey Archive*

The *Dallas Morning News* gets the scoop on Mike Soto's journey | *Dallas author Mike Soto pens a surreal journey through a fictional border town*

*Publishers Weekly* recommends *Red Ants* as a top 2020 summer | *“Bunstead takes José’s clean, punchy lines and makes them sing”*

**DEEP VELLM IS ONE OF THE LEADING TEXAS SMALL PUBLISHERS FOCUSED ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ON MAKING THE INDUSTRY MORE INTERNATIONAL AND RACIALLY DIVERSE. - Nic Yeager for the Texas Observer**

The *Texas Observer* explains Deep Vellum's innovative approach to literary service | *13 Small Texas Presses to Read Right Now*

*Asymptote Journal* brings Deep Vellum book to readers | *Announcing our November Book Club Selection: At the Lucky Hand, aka The Sixty-Nine Drawers by Goran Petrović*

The *Lakewood Advocate* interviews Will Evans | *“The goal is to bring together readers, writers and literary nonprofits under a single roof. The dream space would include a bookstore, book production studio, café, nonprofit offices and co-working space”*


*D Magazine* recognizes Deep Vellum's efforts to support writers during the pandemic | *Deep Vellum Launches Emergency Fund for Texas Literary Artists*
SUPPORT US

$10,000+ | LITERARY CIRCLE
Your support will sponsor author payments, translator payments, and book designer payments for two books.

$5,000+ | BOOK LOVER’S CIRCLE
Your support will send one author on a US tour and cover promotional costs for one novel.

$1,000+ | AUTHOR’S CIRCLE
Your support will help us pay our authors for the rights to publish their work.

$100+ | SPONSOR A LITERARY EVENT
Your support will help us host a literary event in Dallas.

$25+ | FRIEND OF DEEP VELLUM
Help us pay for our monthly subscriptions to our database and our design software.

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