



NEWS FROM CITY COLLEGE

1313 Park Boulevard • San Diego, CA 92101 • 619.388.3911 • hbunkows@sccd.edu

CITY COLLEGE PROFESSORS LAUREL CORONA AND NANCY CARY NAMED FINALISTS IN THE 2009 SAN DIEGO BOOK AWARDS

San Diego City College's growing reputation as a home for some of the county's best writers got another boost this week with the announcement of the finalists for the 2009 San Diego Book Awards.

Laurel Corona, a professor of Humanities has the highly unusual distinction of having written two books honored as finalists in two different categories: **UNTIL OUR LAST BREATH: A HOLOCAUST STORY OF LOVE AND PARTISAN RESISTANCE** (St. Martin's Press) and **THE FOUR SEASONS: A NOVEL OF VIVALDI'S VENICE** (Hyperion Books/VOICE). **Nancy Cary**, the Chair of the English Department at City College is the editor of **HUNGER AND THIRST: FOOD LITERATURE** (City Works Press) an anthology of poetry, prose, and photography.

UNTIL OUR LAST BREATH, written by Corona with the research assistance of Michael Bart, a son of Holocaust survivors. In this San Diego Book Awards finalist for History/Biography, Corona recounts the story of Jewish resistance against the Nazis first in the ghetto in Vilna, Lithuania, and later in the surrounding forests, where Jewish partisan units committed spectacular acts of sabotage, disrupting German operations against the Soviet Union and hastening the end of the war in Europe. **UNTIL OUR LAST BREATH** recently won a Christopher Award, given to "storytellers who, whether using fact or fiction, tell us something about the human condition [and] who craft words and images into a clear, cohesive vision."

THE FOUR SEASONS: A NOVEL OF VIVALDI'S VENICE (Hyperion Books/VOICE) is a finalist in the Historical Fiction category. Corona's novel is based on composer Antonio Vivaldi's work with an all-female orchestra in Venice, comprised primarily of girls and women abandoned at birth at a foundling hospital known as the Pietà. Girls who showed musical talent were given the chance to develop skills equaling those of their male counterparts on the outside, and by Vivaldi's time the orchestra and choir of the Pietà was one of the most renowned in Europe. Vivaldi worked as composer and maestro of the Pietà's music program for thirty years, achieving his own greatness as a composer by having such skilled and disciplined musicians for whom to write. Corona's novel evokes the colorful world of eighteenth-century Venice as she traces the lives of two musician sisters whose relationship with Maestro Vivaldi is both tumultuous and sublime. Bradley Steffens, President of the San Diego Book Awards Association, comments that "Laurel Corona has already accomplished something few ever have, being a finalist in two categories in one year." Winners will be announced at an awards banquet and ceremony the evening of Saturday May 16 2009. More information about the event and a complete list of finalists can be found at www.sdbookawards.org.

HUNGER AND THIRST contains short works by writers from San Diego and elsewhere, including well-known authors Barbara Kingsolver and Denise Chavez. The anthology focuses on both the concrete and emotional aspects of food, from grocery shopping through cleaning up the leftovers, as the source of some of life's greatest experiences and memories. **City College is represented in the anthology by Cary herself and others from City College including Chris Baron, June Cressy, Ella DeCastro Baron, Nadia Mandilawi, Trissy McGhee, Terrie Relf, and Donna J. Watson.**

This week also marks the sixteenth year of **CITY WORKS**, the literary anthology produced by City Works Press. Produced each year by creative writing faculty and students, it attracts local as well as national and international entries. This year's featured writer is Laurel Corona. She will read at the launch event, to be held from **12-4PM Saturday May 9, 2009 in room B-104 on the San Diego City College campus.** The event is free and the public is welcome.

Corona will also appear at **Book Works in Del Mar on Sunday, May 17** as part of Flower Hill Mall's Art Walk. Check local papers or go to <http://www.book-works.com> for the schedule of events.