



## WRITERS' LEAGUE OF TEXAS

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### 2011 Writers' League of Texas Book Awards Final Juror Guidelines

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a final juror for the Writers' League of Texas' 2011 Book Awards. The awards are presented annually, honoring books published in four categories: Fiction, Nonfiction, Literary Prose and Poetry, and Children's Books.

For this year's contest, books had to have been published in 2010. Authors do not need to be a member of the Writers' League of Texas to enter. The winning author in each category will receive a cash prize of \$1,000.

The books you have received have been reviewed by preliminary jurors. We tabulated the results to come up with the finalists.

The Writers' League of Texas extends its deepest gratitude to you for giving your time and effort in this endeavor.

#### Final Judging Procedure

- The final juror should indicate his or her selections on the score sheet provided and may include comments or observations.
- Return the score sheet or submit your selection (see below) **August 1**.  
Writers' League of Texas  
611 S. Congress Ave., Ste. 130  
Austin TX 78704  
jan@writersleague.org.

#### Judging Tips

Although your comments and observations are not required, if there is anything you would like us to know or anything you feel strongly about, please indicate that on your score sheet.

The League also encourages your ideas about any aspect of the awards program. Your comments shall be kept in the strictest of confidence. Please direct those comments to Cyndi Hughes, Executive Director.

By its nature, judging has a subjective side to it. Some aspects to consider include:

- **Originality** – Are the characters fresh and memorable? Does the work distinguish itself in its type (mainstream, genre, children's, etc.)? Does the plot, development, or story line do anything new, even daring?
- **Movement** – Does the book engage interest from the beginning to the end? Is this a book that is hard to put down, and one that leaves you wishing for more of the same?
- **Authenticity** – Does the book ring true? Are the details accurate and real, and do they reinforce the story? Are the details, actions, and other aspects of the work organic to it, as opposed to manipulated or gratuitous? For nonfiction, is the story told in a compelling way? Are the facts and supporting details credible and well researched?

- **Value** – Does the story have a redeeming value? Has it exposed a problem or offered a solution? Is the world of intelligent and considerate thought a better place for this book being published?

### **Announcement of the Awards**

The finalists and winners will be featured at the Writers' League of Texas session at the Texas Book Festival on Saturday, October 31. Although we do maintain the anonymity of our judges, we invite you to attend the session if it's convenient. We will send more details to you before the Festival.

### **Confidentiality**

Until the winners are announced in late October, the Writers' League will keep the names of the jurors in the strictest confidence. Should you wish to remain anonymous after the awards are announced, please let us know.

**For questions or more information, please contact  
Programming Manager Sara Kocek  
at 512.499.8914 or [Sara@writersleague.org](mailto:Sara@writersleague.org).**



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### Final Juror Score Sheet & Comments

**Juror Name:** Susan B.A. Somers-Willett

**Category:** ☐ Fiction  
☒ Poetry

☐ Nonfiction  
☐ Children's Books

Please indicate the title and author of the book that you have selected as the winner of the category you are judging. If you would like to include any comments about the winning book and/or the runners-up, please feel free to do so

**Title:** Works & Days

**Author:** Dean Rader

#### Comments (include additional sheets, if desired):

Dean Rader's book *Works & Days* is a smart, and well-organized collection of poems that made me want to read more. One of the things that sets Rader's book apart from the other finalists is the range of its intellect. Many poems harken back to the ancient rhetorical use of the poem --to philosophize and to persuade its audience toward a point of view-- but in a way that remains down-to-earth. Probably the best example of this are the series of poems in the voice of the Frog and Toad stories; Frog and Toad contemplate language, consciousness, the mortal coil, and through it all they are still humble, simple, and of course friends. Another thing that stands out about this book is its use of many different styles and forms; Rader is a writer who knows his poetics, and rather than confine his subject to a singular mode of address, he strives to find the form and diction the subject demands. The result is innovative: poems made of bulleted lists, or lines made Mad Libs-style with fill-in-the-blanks, a sonnet presented as a lecture on the sonnet laid out in a powerpoint presentation. Yet despite the author's willingness to layer narrative and experiment, this is not art for art's sake: the lyrics remain personal and authentic. This book is smartly intertextual, and I don't think I've heard a voice quite like Rader's. His writing conjures the surrealism of Wallace Stevens, the whimsy of Frank O'Hara, and the philosophy of Anne Carson—all very good counterparts for this debut poet.

Please return this form, along with any additional comments, to Sara Koczek at the Writers' League of Texas at 512.499.0441 (fax) or [sara@writersleague.org](mailto:sara@writersleague.org)