MLA’S KATHERINE SINGER KOVACS PRIZE AWARDED TO B. CHRISTINE ARCE FOR MÉXICO’S NOBODIES; AMY SARA CARROLL TO RECEIVE HONORABLE MENTION

New York, NY – 5 December 2018 – The Modern Language Association of America today announced its twenty-eighth annual Katherine Singer Kovacs Prize for an outstanding book published in English or Spanish in the field of Latin American and Spanish literatures and cultures. The winner is B. Christine Arce, of the University of Miami, for her book México’s Nobodies: The Cultural Legacy of the Soldadera and Afro-Mexican Women, published by the State University of New York Press. Amy Sara Carroll, of the University of Texas, Austin, has received an honorable mention for ReMex: Toward an Art History of the NAFTA Era, published by the University of Texas Press.

The Katherine Singer Kovacs Prize was established in 1990 by a gift from Joseph and Mimi B. Singer, parents of the late Katherine Singer Kovacs. The prize is one of eighteen awards that will be presented on 5 January 2019, during the association’s annual convention, to be held in Chicago. The members of the selection committee were Laura G. Gutiérrez (Univ. of Texas, Austin); Kathleen McNerney (West Virginia Univ., Morgantown); Jesús R. Velasco (Columbia Univ.); Lisa Vollendorf (Sonoma State Univ.), chair; and Oswalda Zavala (Coll. of Staten Island, City Univ. of New York). The committee’s citation for Arce’s book reads:

B. Christine Arce’s México’s Nobodies: The Cultural Legacy of the Soldadera and Afro-Mexican Women makes a significant contribution to Latin American gender and cultural studies. Her deep reading of soldaderas and Afro-Mexican women spans many fields, including anthropology, pop music, ethnography, and the arts, and reveals the power and even the necessity of a gender-specific, interdisciplinary lens for Mexican studies. Arce grounds her thinking in the archive as well as in the lived experience of Mexican women. Stunning photographs reinforce the powerful analysis throughout the book. México’s Nobodies decisively demonstrates the ability of focused analysis to make impactful arguments about race, gender, and identity.

B. Christine Arce is an associate professor at the University of Miami in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures and received her PhD from the University of California, Berkeley. She works on issues of gender, migration, and non-Western epistemologies in the cultural production of Mexico, Brazil, and the Caribbean. She has published in journals such as Callaloo, Chasqui, and Aztlán. In fall 2017 she was invited to present her book in the Hispanic Division of the Library of Congress, and in October 2018 was invited to speak on her work on Afro-Mexican women in the National Museum of Anthropology in México City. México’s Nobodies: The Cultural Legacy of the Soldadera and Afro-Mexican Women was also the recipient of the 2016 Victoria Urbano Critical Monograph Book Prize, issued by the Association of Gender
and Sexuality Studies (formerly the International Association of Feminine Literature and Culture), with a dedication by the Mexican writer Elena Poniatowska.

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

Amy Sara Carroll’s *ReMex: Toward an Art History of the NAFTA Era* makes a unique contribution to literary and cultural studies. A brilliant combination of cultural analysis, manifesto, and performance, this book demands our attention. Carroll’s multidisciplinary work exposes readers to a wide range of artistic expression rooted in the NAFTA era. Photographs of performance art, exhibits, graffiti, and everyday people help Carroll tell the story of how the arts are intimately connected to the fraught political relationship between the United States and Mexico. This is a vital, refreshing book guaranteed to ignite curiosity and inspire debate.

Amy Sara Carroll is the author of *Secession* and *Fannie + Freddie: The Sentimentality of Post-9/11 Pornography*, chosen by Claudia Rankine for the 2012 Poets Out Loud Prize. Since 2008, Carroll has been a member of Electronic Disturbance Theater 2.0, coproducing the *Transborder Immigrant Tool*. She coauthored *The Desert Survival Series / La serie de sobrevivencia del desierto*. Published under a Creative Commons license, the volume has been digitally redistributed by *CTheory* Books, the *Electronic Literature Collection 3*, CONACULTA E-Literatura / Centro de Cultura Digital, and HemiPress. Since 2010, Carroll has participated in SOMA in Mexico City. Carroll was a 2017–18 Fellow in Cornell University’s Society for the Humanities. Currently, she is a 2018–19 Fellow in the University of Texas at Austin’s Latino Research Initiative. *ReMex: Toward an Art History of the NAFTA Era* was also selected for an honorable mention by the 2018 committee for the LASA Mexico Award for Best Book in the Humanities.

The Modern Language Association of America and its 24,000 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; the 2019 convention in Chicago is expected to draw 7,000 attendees. More information on MLA programs is available at www.mla.org.

Recent winners of the Katherine Singer Kovacs Prize include Nicolás Wey Gómez, Lisa Beth Voigt, Stephanie Merrim, E. Michael Gerli, Joanne Rappaport and Tom Cummins, Mabel Moraña, Stephanie Sieburth, Enrique Fernandez, Anne Lambright, and Nancy J. Gates Madsen. The prize is presented under the auspices of the MLA’s 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. Mildenberger Prize; the Mina P. Shaughnessy Prize; the MLA Prize for Independent Scholars; the Morton N. Cohen Award; the MLA Prizes for a Scholarly Edition and for a Bibliography, Archive or Digital Project; 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 MLA Prize for Studies in Native American Literatures, Cultures, and Languages; the Matei Calinescu Prize; 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, and for a Translation of a
Scholarly Study of Literature; and the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Publication Award for a Manuscript in Italian Literary Studies.

Katherine Singer Kovacs completed her undergraduate studies at Tufts University, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, and earned her MA and her PhD (in 1974) at Harvard University. She is the author of “Le Rêve et la Vie”: A Theatrical Experiment by Gustave Flaubert and articles and reviews on Latin American literature, culture, and film and on comparative literature. Kovacs was a specialist in Spanish and Latin American literature and film. She taught at Stanford University, the University of Southern California, and Whittier College. She was associate editor and coeditor of Humanities in Society, a member of the executive committee of the Quarterly Review of Film Studies, and a consultant for Latin American Perspectives. Kovacs died in May 1989.