

NEAR SOUTH PLANNING BOARD

HAROLD WASHINGTON LITERARY AWARD

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2025



David Lee Costosko

**AMANDA THOMPSON & ALAN WEEL, CO-CHAIRS,
HAROLD WASHINGTON LITERARY AWARD DINNER COMMITTEE,**
invite you to a literary evening celebrating the presentation of

THE HAROLD WASHINGTON LITERARY AWARD TO

SANDRA CISNEROS



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2025

THE UNION LEAGUE CLUB OF CHICAGO

65 West Jackson, Chicago, IL

**COCKTAILS
AT 6:00 P.M.**

Crystal Room

**PRESENTATION & DINNER
AT 7:00 P.M.**

Lincoln Ballroom



SANDRA CISNEROS

Bio Credit: Donna Seaman, Booklist

Photo by Keith Dannemiller



For **Sandra Cisneros**, writing is a mission of profound resonance. A poet, fiction writer, and essayist of exceptional acuity, imagination, and compassion, Cisneros was born and raised in Chicago and the city shapes her work, most famously in *The House on Mango Street*. An internationally cherished and exquisite novel-in-vignettes, it illuminates the author's signature themes: family, community, and injustice against girls and women, people of color, and immigrants.

A versatile and adventurous writer of searing candor and wit and extraordinary generosity of spirit, Cisneros has also written *Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories*, the children's book *Hairs/Pelitos*, the novels *Caramelo* and *Martita, I Remember You/Martita te Recuerdo*, the essay collection *A House of My Own: Stories from My Life*, and the poetry collections *My Wicked Wicked Ways*, *Loose Woman*, and *Woman Without Shame*. With composer Derek Bermel, Cisneros has created *The House on Mango Street: The Opera*.

Cisneros's many accolades include fellowships from the MacArthur Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, the PEN/Nabokov Award for International Literature, the National Medal of Arts, the Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize, the Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award from the Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundation, the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame's Fuller Award, and the Ivan Sandrof Life Achievement Award from the National Book Critics Circle. Cisneros is the founder of the Macondo Foundation, the Alfredo Cisneros del Moral Foundation, and the Latino MacArthur Fellows.



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LITERARY AWARD 2025

SELECTION COMMITTEE

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Co-Chairs

Randy Albers, Rosellen Brown, Carey Cranston, Amy Danzer, Frances de Pontes Peebles, Rachel DeWoskin, Donald G. Evans, Miles Harvey, Parneshia Jones, Lindsay Laren, Ethan Michaeli, Evan Moore, Nami Mun, Elise Paschen, Bonita Sanchez-Carlson, Donna Seaman, R. Clifton Spargo, and Elizabeth Taylor

The Harold Washington Literary Award is given annually to an author or poet who makes creative use of the written word to address issues of contemporary life. The dinner celebrates the recipient of the Harold Washington Literary Award and raises funds for Near South Planning Board's literary programs and Authors in the Schools educational outreach program. The dinner serves as the kickoff event for the Printers Row Lit Fest, also an event of the Near South Planning Board.

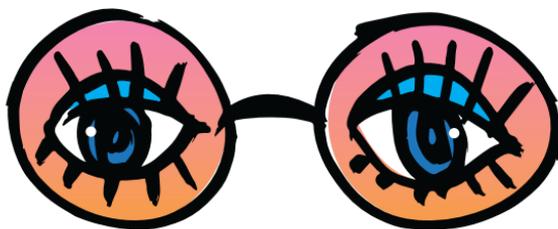
LITERARY AWARD PAST RECIPIENTS

Tracy K Smith (2024), Isabel Wilkerson (2023), Natasha Trethewey (2022), Ta-Nehisi Coates (2021), Alex Kotlowitz (2019), Rabih Alameddine (2018), Rita Dove (2017), Marilynne Robinson (2016), Edward P. Jones (2015), Stuart Dybek (2014), Art Spiegelman (2013), Sara Paretsky (2012), Edwidge Danticat (2011), Barbara Ehrenreich (2010), Dave Eggers (2009), Scott Turow (2008), Walter Mosley (2007), E. L. Doctorow (2006), Garrison Keillor (2005), Jules Feiffer (2004), Margaret Atwood (2003), Grace Paley (2002), August Wilson (2001), John Hope Franklin (2000), Robert Pinsky (1999), Joseph Epstein (1998), Cynthia Ozick (1997), Isabel Allende (1996), Doris Kearns Goodwin (1995), Zbigniew Brzezinski (1994), Garry Willis (1993), Ralph Ellison (1992), Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. (1991), Saul Bellow, Ray Bradbury, Gwendolyn Brooks, Cyrus Colter, William Maxwell, Studs Terkel (1990), and Susan Sontag (1989)



“We’re living in such horrible times for people of color, immigrants, working-class people. There’s such open vilification of things I never would have imagined I would hear in my lifetime. I feel as a writer that I have a gift of expressing things that people feel, and speaking for them, and also creating clarity and bridges between communities that misunderstand one another. You can’t see clearly in times of fear. So I try to be of some use because when you witness or read intense hatred, it’s your obligation to try to right the planet. Otherwise, you’re part of the problem.”

– Sandra Cisneros



HAROLD WASHINGTON LITERARY AWARD

AN EVENT OF THE NEAR SOUTH PLANNING BOARD

2600 South Michigan Avenue, LL-C, Chicago, IL 60616
Phone: 312.987.1980 Email: info@theNSPB.org

Visit our website at www.theNSPB.org for additional information.
Check out the schedule of events for 40th Anniversary of the
Printers Row Lit Fest at www.PrintersRowLitFest.org.

Illustration by: David Lee Csicsko Design by: Mike Vesper, Studio Lynd

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**HAROLD WASHINGTON
LITERARY AWARD**



I/We will attend the dinner **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2025**

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Address: _____

- Friend \$500 per person Individual \$275 per person
 Benefactor Table \$10,000 Patron Table \$5,000
 Contributor Table \$3,500 *(all Tables consist of ten guests)*
 I/We cannot attend but would like to make a contribution to support the Authors in the Schools program.
 Enclosed is a check for \$ _____ payable to the Near South Planning Board.

All Benefactors, Patrons, and Friends will be listed in the Dinner Program.

Name(s) to be listed as:

ONLINE PAYMENTS ACCEPTED AT www.theNSPB.org

PLEASE RSVP BY AUGUST 28, 2025

