

Writers read their work to help the less fortunate

Sun-News report

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Art historian, curator, publisher, literary translator, and poet, Roberto Tejada is the author of a variety of books that include "Manuel Alvarez Bravo: In Focus" (Getty Publications, 2001), "Luis Gispert: Loud Image" (University Press of New England, 2004), "National Camera: Photography and Mexico's Image Environment" (University of Minnesota Press, early 2009), and "Celia Alvarez Muñoz" (UCLA's Chicano Studies Research Center, University of Minnesota Press, early 2009); he is the founder and co-editor of "Mandorla: New Writing of the Americas," a yearly journal of literature and translation, now on its 11th issue. His poetry includes: "Gift & Verdict" (1999), "Amulet Anatomy" (2001), "Mirrors for Gold" (2006) and, forthcoming, "The Art Institute" (2009).

Stacey D'Erasmus is the author of the novels "Tea" (Algonquin, 2000), which was a New York Times Notable Book of the Year; and "A Seahorse Year" (Houghton Mifflin, 2004), which was named a Best Book of the Year by the San Francisco Chronicle and Newsday, and won both a Lambda Literary Award and a Ferro-Grumley Award. Her essays, features, and reviews have appeared in the New York Times Magazine, the New York Times Book Review, and "Ploughshares." She is currently completing her third novel, tentatively titled "A Secret Life."

An event to raise funds for Casa de Peregrinos, a Las Cruces food bank, takes place Friday evening at the Rio Grande Theatre, featuring readings from poet Roberto Tejada and novelist Stacey D'Erasmus.

The annual Writer's Harvest Hunger Benefit,

sponsored by La Sociedad para las Artes, is a charity event that has helped Casa de Peregrinos through the difficult holiday season for 14 years. In that time, La Sociedad has raised almost \$60,000 for Casa de Peregrinos.

La Sociedad Para Las Artes is an organization of creative writing graduate students dedicated to promoting the arts at New Mexico State University and in Las Cruces. For 30 years, La Sociedad Para Las Artes has been bringing local and national writers to Las Cruces for free public readings of poetry, fiction, and essays. The annual reading series is the only one of its kind at NMSU. In addition, La Sociedad places graduate students in public schools to teach creative writing.

The Annual Hunger Benefit is intended to be both a charity for Casa de Peregrinos and a community-building arts event. This year the benefit will include a silent auction.

Rebecca Renteria, director of Casa de Peregrinos, said La Sociedad's Hunger Benefit is a great source of reliable annual aid and with more community support "it could be a really amazing and defining thing [for Casa de Peregrinos]."

Support could come as donations to the silent auction (anything from art to jewelry to gift certificates), bids during the silent auction, or the purchase of a ticket to the event. All proceeds go to Casa de Peregrinos and the money from the event, Renteria said, accomplishes more than a simple food drive because Casa is able to use the cash to purchase bulk food at discounted rates that can help keep the shelves full throughout the holidays.

The silent auction will begin at 5 p.m. and the readings will begin at 7 p.m. All proceeds go to Casa de Peregrinos. If you would like to donate to the silent auction, buy tickets, or learn more about

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helping La Sociedad promote the arts, contact
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If you go

What: 14th annual Writer's Harvest Hunger Benefit

When: Friday, 5 p.m. for silent auction, 7 p.m. for readings

Where: Rio Grande Theatre, 211 N. Downtown Mall

Cost: \$12 (includes admission to a post-reading reception with music and a cash bar at The Rain Forest, 1765 S. Main)

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