



**SANTA FE**  
*international*  
**LITERARY**  
**FESTIVAL**

## MILESTONES IN NEW MEXICO LITERARY HISTORY

For centuries, New Mexico has been a center of storytelling—from generations of Indigenous and Hispano peoples whose oral traditions root them in the landscape, to a long line of writers whose work imagines and illuminates the American West and the world.

In the capital of Santa Fe, the art of writing is deeply embedded in the city's creative identity and contemporary cachet as an international cultural destination. Now home to the Santa Fe International Literary Festival, New Mexico's rich and vibrant literary legacy is centered within the international crossroads of words and story. A multicultural milieu of literary milestones, driven by the vital voices of a host of author luminaries, charts the state's history as a haven for diverse expressions, storytelling traditions, and points of view. Among the highlights:

### **Indigenous Oral Traditions**

Thirteen thousand years of unbroken history distinguishes New Mexico as the oldest continually inhabited cultural landscape in the United States, the home of self-determining Indigenous communities steeped in rich oral traditions, storytelling rituals, and multiple languages. Today, members of the state's 23 sovereign tribal nations—including **19 Pueblos, three Apache tribes, and the Navajo Nation**—continue to share and preserve their vital spoken word legacy.

### **Conquest and Cuentos**

The late sixteenth century colonization of New Mexico's Indigenous homelands by Spain carried a new layer of language and story along El Camino Real, an Indigenous trade route transformed to a military path of conquest. Oral tradition was now accompanied by detailed Spanish chronicles, written by authors and scribes from Spain to Mexico to New Mexico, a linguistic lineage forever linking Europe and the Americas.

New Mexico made its first appearance in colonial literature with the publication of **Gaspar Perez de Villagrà's** *Historia de la Nueva México*. The official historian of the Juan de Oñate expedition, Villagrà crafted an epic poem and firsthand account of the goals, hardships, and brutality of the Indigenous colonization and creation of the first European settlement in New Mexico. It was published in 1610, the same year Santa Fe became the state capital.

Spanish, Mexican, and other colonists brought oral storytelling traditions as well, including folk *cuentos* and *dichos* that had been passed down through generations and that, today, remain intertwined in Hispano New Mexican life.

### **The Printing Press**

With Mexico's independence from Spain in 1821, Spanish control of New Mexico gave

way to governance by Mexico. The subsequent legalization of international trade and establishment of the Santa Fe Trail resulted in the arrival of the state's first printing press in 1834. This Ramage Press, made in Philadelphia, was soon acquired by **Padre Antonio José Martínez** of Taos. An influential educator, writer, and activist, Martínez and his printer Jesús María Baca created school textbooks as well as several religious and political texts. Imprinted in Spanish, these were the first books published in New Mexico.

Padre Martínez also loaned the press to the Mexican government, which printed two newspapers, likely from a room in the Palace of the Governors on the historic Santa Fe Plaza. It was the start of an important legacy of newspaper publishing that, with the American occupation in 1846, would spread statewide.

### **Laws and Literature**

By the spring of 1846, Santa Fe's Palace of the Governors was the seat of the U.S. government, and New Mexico's only printing press was now in the hands of soldiers under the command of General Stephen Watts Kearny. They used the press to print the Kearny Code, the first laws governing the U.S. Territory of New Mexico.

As overland trade expanded under American rule, other presses flowed into the territory. The newspaper industry flourished, including Spanish-language newspapers, which commonly featured a mix of poetry, opinion pieces, and literary contributions from New Mexicans as well as select works by European and Latin American authors. The *Santa Fe New Mexican* was launched in 1849, and today continues publishing as the oldest newspaper in the West.

Among the frequently published local literary luminaries was **Higinio Valentín Gonzáles**, who was born in Santa Fe in 1942 and lived a richly varied life as a tinsmith, soldier, newspaper editor, folk songwriter, poet, and educator. His intellectually diverse and singularly dramatic Spanish-language poetry and prose encompassed everything from commentary on local and world politics, to his patriotic fervor for serving one's country, to his passion for beautiful women and the New Mexican landscape.

Another notable nineteenth-century voice was **W.W.H. Davis**, a U.S. Attorney in New Mexico, whose 1857 book, *El Gringo: New Mexico and Her People*, described life as a newcomer in Territorial New Mexico. Later, **Territorial New Mexico Governor Lew Wallace** completed his 1880 novel, *Ben Hur*, while in residence in the historic Palace of the Governors. It became one of the most popular bestselling novels in history.

### **The Literary Colonies**

The American occupation and the arrival of the railroad in New Mexico brought significant cultural change, including new residents, new material goods, and new waves of creative expression. While Santa Fe and Taos became most famous for the newly arrived visual artists who recorded the romance of the region, authors seeking solace from the overindustrialized American mainstream formed equally robust literary colonies that thrived through the 1920s and 1930s.

Although many of these writers had already enjoyed faraway fame, they found new voice and inspiration in the unique cultural geography of the Southwest. Some, such as the art maven and memoirist **Mabel Dodge Luhan**, ventured to Taos, where she lured other writers and artists. Among the notables were international authors **D.H. and Frieda Lawrence**, who lived in Taos briefly but eventually moved on after breaking with Luhan. After D.H.'s death in 1930, Frieda returned his ashes to Taos.

**Mary Hunter Austin**, noted for her environmental, feminist, and cultural writings, and cultural journalist **Ina Sizer Cassidy** landed in Santa Fe. So did poets **Witter Bynner** and **Alice Corbin Henderson**. Another poet, **Spud Johnson**, lived first in Santa Fe and then Taos. Also a printer, Johnson published some of the most important writers of the era in his satirical monthly magazine, *Laughing Horse*. Other famed authors, including **Robert Frost** and **Aldous Huxley**, often visited friends in these tightknit writing enclaves, though they did not come to live there.

It was while visiting Santa Fe in the mid-1920s that **Willa Cather**, then a recent Pulitzer Prize winner, wrote significant portions of her bestselling novel, *Death Comes for the Archbishop*. A fictionalized account of the Frenchman Jean Baptiste Lamy, New Mexico's controversial first archbishop, the book features characters based on real-life individuals, including Lamy's nemesis, Padre Martínez of Taos, the owner of the state's first printing press who Lamy excommunicated for his outspoken criticism of the Catholic Church.

**Oliver La Farge** had the 1929 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *Laughing Boy*, under his belt before moving to Santa Fe in 1941. While the author-anthropologist became known for his social activism and writings on Native American themes, he wrote also wrote about the diverse cultures of northern New Mexico, including ranch life, and Latin America. From 1950 to 1963, LaFarge worked as a columnist for the *Santa Fe New Mexican*, offering keen, and often humorous, social commentaries on life in mid-century Santa Fe.

**Frank Waters**, another author who became identified with Native American subjects, moved to Taos in 1937, after his first novel, *Fever Pitch*, set in the California desert, flopped. His writing flourished in New Mexico as he became known for fiction and nonfiction infused with spirituality and mysticism of the New Mexico landscape and its Indigenous cultures. Perhaps most famous among his 27 books is the 1954 *The Man Who Killed the Deer*, a fictional account of a Taos Pueblo man found guilty and fined for slaying a deer out of season. He earned several nominations for a Nobel Prize in literature during his decades-long career.

### **Local Literati**

In the mid-1930s, writers from Santa Fe and Taos formed **Writers' Editions**, a cooperative publishing group dedicated to regional publishing intended to "foster the growth of American literature." They were aided in their efforts by Walter Lippincott

Goodman Jr., a nationally known printer and publisher who relocated his **Rydal Press** to Tesuque to print the group's writings.

Though Writers' Editions proved short-lived, it published 17 books by the decade's end, from poetry by **Alice Corbin Henderson**, **Haniel Long**, and **John Gould Fletcher**, to *Frijoles Canyon Pictographs*, a book of woodblock prints by **Gustave Baumann**, which won the American Institute of Graphic Arts prestigious Fifty Best Books of the Year award in 1940.

Among the charter members of Writers' Editions was the poet **Peggy Pond Church**, a native of the Pajarito Plateau who penned original poetry for another Baumann book, *Gustave Baumann's Book of Saints*. Decades later, after her family was forced to leave the Pajarito Plateau for its transformation to the secret city of Los Alamos, she became famous for her classic 1960 book, *The House at Otowi Bridge: The Story of Edith Warner and Los Alamos*.

Other important native-born writers also narrated the traditions and transformations of New Mexico through time. In 1931, Santa Fe native **Ruth Laughlin** detailed the city's "Spanish-American" customs and culture in her book *Caballeros: The Romance of Santa Fe and the Southwest*. But it was her 1948 book, *The Wind Leaves No Shadow*, a historical novel about Santa Fe's most famous madam, Doña Tules, who ran a gambling house and brothel in the 1840s, that elevated her as an author of a Southwest classic.

**Fabiola Cabeza de Baca**, who was born in San Miguel County, also documented traditional cultural practices of native New Mexican families. In the 1940s, as a home economics teacher and agricultural extension agent, she began writing as a form of social activism, describing the historical contexts of New Mexican cooking and agriculture as a means of preserving local lifeways in the face of pressure to assimilate. Among her best-known books is the 1954 classic, *We Fed Them Cactus*, which recounts the nostalgia and hardships of her family's four generations on the Llano Estacado.

Born in Wagon Mound, **Fray Angélico Chávez**, the first native New Mexican to become a Franciscan priest, blended a poet's voice and academic rigor in his writings of New Mexico past and present. In addition to his ministry, including time at Peña Blanca, Cerrillos, Jemez Pueblo, and Santa Fe's St. Francis Cathedral, he spent a lifetime researching New Mexico history and writing books, scholarly articles, poetry, and fiction. Among his most important books is *Origins of New Mexico Families: A Genealogy of the Spanish Colonial Period*, a groundbreaking genealogical work first published in 1954. Today, Chávez's personal papers are held in his namesake Fray Angélico Chávez History Library at the New Mexico History Museum.

### **Post-War Voices**

As the tumult and triumph of World War II gave way to vast changes in the nation, new voices emerged in New Mexico to express the tensions between old and new ways of life.

**Richard Bradford's** 1968 *Red Sky at Morning* is a fictional coming-of-age tale of wartime Sagrado, a thinly veiled Santa Fe. In it, a young Alabama transplant strives to find his identity in a predominantly Hispanic town. The book was made into a popular film in 1971, and Bradford, a Chicago native, lived out his life in Santa Fe, where for many years he wrote a popular column for *El Palacio*, the magazine of the Museum of New Mexico.

**Max Evans**, who grew up in West Texas and northeastern New Mexico, returned to the state after participating in the Normandy landings of World War II. Discovering that the cowboy way of life in which he had been raised was dying out, he turned to literature. With his 1960 novel, *The Rounders*, he launched a career writing Western fiction and nonfiction that would span 60 years, ranging from his 1961 *The Hi-Lo Country* to his 2020 *The King of Taos*. A master storyteller and colorful character, Evans was a member of the Western Writers of America Hall of Fame whose life story is detailed in the 2017 documentary, *Ol' Max Evans: The First Thousand Years*.

The Kiowa-Cherokee poet and author **N. Scott Momaday** barreled into the American literary mainstream in 1969 as the first Native American to win the Pulitzer Prize for his first novel, the 1968 *House Made of Dawn*. In it, Momaday's protagonist, Abel, is a World War II veteran who returns to Jemez Pueblo, where Momaday spent much of his youth, to seek healing and balance between the Native and non-Native worlds. Other books of poetry and prose followed, from his best-selling *The Way to Rainy Mountain* in 1969 to the 2020 *Earth Keeper: Reflections on the American Land*. Recipient of countless international honors, including the National Medal of Arts, and the subject of an American Masters documentary, Momaday is widely considered the premier Native writer of the twentieth century, credited with preserving Native oral traditions and inspiring generations of Indigenous writers, scholars, and activists to stay connected to the ancestors and the land.

**Rudolfo Anaya**, a native of Pastura in east central New Mexico, brought bilingualism into the American mainstream with the 1972 novel *Bless Me, Ultima*, a bold, semi-autobiographical portrait of life, tradition, and spirituality in an Hispanic village in the 1940s. Told from a young boy's point of view, the book's powerful exploration of Indo-Hispanic identity in the Southwest redefined readers' perceptions of the American experience, elevating Anaya as the godfather of Chicano literature. His subsequent contributions to the international literary canon in a range of genres, as well as his work as an educator and activist, increased awareness of the political power of the Chicano movement, influencing generations of writers, students, and scholars to come. A recipient of the National Medal of Arts and a host of other honors, Anaya's *Bless Me, Ultima*, continues to lure ever more diverse audiences through its adaptation as an opera and on film.

Born in Tierra Amarilla, **Sabine Ulibarri** followed his service in World War II to become another significant bilingual voice of the Chicano movement. A poet, short story writer, and educator with a doctorate in Spanish literature, Ulibarri was best known for stories written in the *costumbrismo* literary tradition, combining elements of oral folktales with

the distinctive language, landscape, and local color of rural northern New Mexico. His first book of poetry, *Al Cielo Se Sube a Pie* (One Gets to Heaven on Foot), was published in 1961 in Mexico and later in Spain. His best known works are short story collections depicting the distinctive sense of place of Tierra Amarilla, including the 1977 *Mi abuela fumaba puros y otros cuentos de Tierra Amarilla/My Grandmother Smoked Cigars, and Other Tales of Tierra Amarilla*. As an educator and a writer, he illuminated the struggles between traditional life and American progress, inspiring many students to become writers and educators.

World War II veteran **Tony Hillerman**, an Oklahoma native, began his New Mexico writing career in the early 1960s as a journalist for UPI, and later, as editor of the *Santa Fe New Mexican*. With the publication of his first novel, *The Blessing Way*, in 1976, he began a lifelong literary foray into the lands and traditions of Navajo peoples and the greater Southwest. Of his 37 works of fiction and nonfiction, 18 comprise his bestselling Navajo mystery series featuring tribal officers Joe Leaphorn and Jim Chee, who introduced readers to the cultural wellspring of Navajo country. The longtime journalism professor also ushered generations of journalists into the field.

### **Land and Language**

The influence of the post-war writers, as well as the national discourse on Civil Rights, the Vietnam War, and the counterculture, inspired new waves of New Mexico writers, native and newcomer alike, to express traditions of land and language in the Southwest in unique ways.

**Nasario García's** upbringing in the Río Puerco Valley inspired an international career teaching Spanish literature and a legacy of writing dedicated to the preservation of language, folklore and culture. The author of over 30 award-winning oral histories, children's stories, and fiction, García's bilingual works span topics from stories of Hispana women to village tales of witchcraft, capturing the spirit of his childhood, the wisdom of elders, and the disappearing ways of life in rural New Mexico.

**Juan Estevan Arellano** of Embudo also documented rural ways of life as journalist, writer, activist, and scholar known for his extensive knowledge of acequias and agriculture. Arellano translated the first Spanish-language book on agriculture, *Obra de Agricultura*, written by Gabriel Alonso de Herrera in 1513, into English, increasing awareness of the book that carried traditional farming techniques from the Old World of Europe to the Americas, including the Embudo Valley. He gained international acclaim when he won Mexico's esteemed Premio Nacional de Literatura José Fuentes Mares prize, for his 1994 picaresque novel, *Inocencio*, written in the geographically specific fusion of Hispano and Native languages of New Mexico and capturing the "manito" culture he cherished.

**Jim Sagel** was another New Mexico writer who gained international acclaim for his unique bilingual writings on New Mexico. The Anglo, Colorado-born Sagel expressed the life and language of his adopted home with great depth, passion, and understanding. Sagel published numerous books of fiction and poetry, including his 1981 *Túnomás, Honey*, for which he became the second U.S. citizen to receive Cuba's

Premio Casa de las Américas award. In 1997, he became the first non-Spaniard to win Spain's El Premio Literario Ciudad de San Sebastián for his Spanish-language play, *Doña Refugio y su comadre*.

In 1969, **John Nichols** moved to Taos from California after his 1965 novel, *The Sterile Cuckoo*, had been adapted to a popular feature film. His interest in activism drew him to the fabled New Mexico town, and provided inspiration for what would become perhaps his most famous work, his 1974 *The Milagro Beanfield War*, also adapted to a film by Robert Redford. It was the first of Nichols' fictional "New Mexico trilogy," including *The Magic Journey* and *The Niroana Blues*, which balance humor and tragedy in exploring the complex relationship between history, race and ethnicity, and land and water rights in New Mexico. Nichols has also written many works of nonfiction documenting lives and landscapes in his adopted home.

**Stanley Crawford** is another novelist who arrived in northern New Mexico in 1969. Settling in Dixon, a village steeped in old acequia culture, he established a successful garlic farm to supplement his writing. His work on the land led to three classic works of nonfiction about life in Dixon. His 1988 *Mayordomo: Chronicle of an Acequia in Northern New Mexico* recounts his unique experience as a mayordomo, or ditch boss, documenting the life of an acequia by a community participant. Stories of water, farming, and outsiders striving to fit in to traditional rural culture flow through his many other titles, including the 1992 *A Garlic Testament: Seasons on a Small New Mexico Farm* and his 2017 novel *Village*.

**Denise Chávez** of Las Cruces, a protégé of Rudolfo Anaya, began giving voice to life and culture in her home on the Southwest borderlands in the 1970s as a Chicana poet, playwright, performer, and novelist. Known for her portraits of small, working-class towns filled with extensive casts of uniquely Mexican-American/Chicano characters, she traverses the borders of geography, history, and class with heart, humor, and exquisite twists of language. From her 1994 American Book Award-winning novel *Face of an Angel* to *Loving Pedro Infante* in 2002 and *The King and Queen of Comezón* in 2014, Chávez crafts a proud sense of her community, which she carries through to her life as a Fronteriza activist, bookseller, and educator.

Albuquerque native **Leslie Marmon Silko**, a child of mixed Laguna Pueblo, Mexican, and Anglo heritage, also emerged in the 1970s as a voice expressing the unique diversity of the Southwest. Raised at Laguna Pueblo, she became a key figure in the so-called Native American Renaissance with her 1977 book, *Ceremony*, which gained acclaim as one of the first published novels by a Native American woman. A prestigious MacArthur Genius Award followed in 1981, as did several books of poetry, fiction, and memoir. Widely considered one of the most important contemporary Native American writers, Silko traverses the uneasy balance between Native American tradition and modern America with a commitment to revealing issues impacting indigenous communities, from racism to cultural imperialism to women's rights.

Poet and storyteller **Simon Ortiz** of Acoma Pueblo is another leading figure of the 1970's Native American Renaissance. His writings are known for conveying a strong

Native perspective on contemporary life rooted in the oral traditions of the past. From his first collection of poems, *Going for the Rain*, in 1976, Ortiz has charted decades of personal and cultural Native experience in his poetry and short story collections, often writing about other Native communities beyond Acoma. As an educator and one of the most widely read Native American poets, he has influenced generations to express and preserve traditions of language and the land.

Navajo/Diné poet **Luci Tapahonso** became the inaugural poet laureate of the Navajo Nation in 2013. She began writing in the late 1970s as a student of Leslie Marmon Silko, and quickly became known for poetry crafted in the distinctive rhythms of her native tongue before being translated to English. Her story and poetry collections, such as her acclaimed 1993 *Saánii Dahataal (the women are singing)* and her 1997 *Blue Horses Rush In*, often center the power and balance of the feminine in Navajo culture, while speaking to women everywhere. Written in both Navajo and English, she seamlessly crafts poetry and story, memory and contemporary experience, into a continuum of Native life.

Native oral tradition also inspired the journey of **Joy Harjo** of the Muscogee Nation, a poet, musician, and the first Native American to serve as three-term U.S. Poet Laureate. A former student and teacher at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, Harjo is considered a leading ambassador for American poetry for Natives and non-Natives alike. Her writings, including nine books of poetry, and two memoirs, evoke the myth, struggle, and pride of her people, while her work editing important anthologies of other Native American writers expands her impact beyond her personal experience.

**William deBuys** embedded himself in the northern New Mexico village of El Valle in 1975, drawn by the state's unique physical and cultural geography. He quickly became both student and steward of his surroundings, in 1985 publishing *Enchantment and Exploitation: The Life and Hard Times of a New Mexico Range*, a history of the Sangre de Cristo mountains. That was followed in 1990 by *River of Traps* in collaboration with photographer Alex Harris. The book was widely acclaimed for capturing New Mexico's cultural complexity through the eyes and wisdom of an old-time northeño, selected as both a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year and a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. Now a leading environmental, cultural, and social historian of the Southwest, deBuys continues to explore the beauty and vulnerability of the New Mexico ecosystem.

### Contemporary to Classic

From the mid-1980s to today, New Mexico has flourished with ever-more diverse contemporary voices, perspectives, and expressions in a range of themes and genres.

Themes of social justice fill the books of several Albuquerque authors. Poet and journalist **Demetria Martínez**, a committed activist, was in 1988 was indicted and tried for her role as a writer in the sanctuary movement charged with smuggling two Guatemalan refugee women into the U.S. In a landmark decision, she was acquitted on First Amendment grounds and her first novel, *Mother Tongue*, was loosely based on her story.

The writings of poet and activist **Margaret Randall**, whose works explore themes of



revolution and feminism in the U.S. and abroad, were also declared threatening to the U.S. in the mid-1980s, and resulted in her victorious legal battle against the threat of deportation. The Albuquerque-based writer has now published more than 150 books.

**Jimmy Santiago Baca**, an Albuquerque native of Chicano and Apache descent, began writing poetry while in prison, publishing the acclaimed *Martín and Meditations on the South Valley* in 1987. Subsequent works, including *Writing in the Dark* and *Dancing in the Light*, explore the lives of the marginalized and disenfranchised in the barrios of the American Southwest.

The mystique of New Mexico and the Southwest borderlands drew **Cormac McCarthy** to Santa Fe in 1985, where he wrote the first of many celebrated novels, *Blood Meridian*, considered by many to be the great American novel. It was the first of several internationally acclaimed works spanning the Western and post-apocalyptic genres and featuring McCarthy's unique writing style, graphic depictions of violence, and themes of loneliness and alienation. While McCarthy's books, including *All The Pretty Horses* and *No Country for Old Men*, have been made into films, and made him even more famous, the writer famously shuns celebrity.

The beauty and isolation of the Western landscape also set the scene for the mid-1990s launch of **Michael McGarrity's** bestselling New Mexico-based mysteries. The longtime Santa Fe resident and former law enforcement officer may be best known for his sweeping fictional New Mexico trilogy—*Hard Country*, *Backlands*, and *The Last Ranch*—which traces the family history of his protagonist Kevin Kerney from 1875 through the end of the Vietnam War.

Themes of history and adventure in the West and beyond is the realm of **Douglas Preston**, 32 of whose 38 books of fiction and nonfiction have landed on the *New York Times* bestsellers list. A Santa Fe resident since the mid-1980s, Preston is himself an explorer of historic landscapes, tracing the 1,000-mile route of Spanish explorer Francisco Coronado on horseback to write his 1992 *Cities of Gold* and traversing the treacherous jungles of Honduras to write the highly acclaimed 2017 *The Lost City of the Monkey God*. In addition to nonfiction, he regularly forays into fiction, collaborating with Lincoln Child on a series of highly lauded suspense novels.

Narrative historical nonfiction is the creative ground explored by **Hampton Sides**, a Santa Fe resident since the early 1990s. His 2006 *Blood and Thunder: The Epic Story of Kit Carson and the Conquest of the American West* launched a string of bestselling nonfiction books that have elevated him as a master of his genre. From the World War II narrative *Ghost Soldiers*, to *Hellhound on his Trail* about international manhunt for the murderer of Martin Luther King Jr., to *In the Kingdom of Ice*, which recounts the heroic polar voyage of the U.S.S. *Jeannette* during the Gilded Age, Sides tells gripping epic tales of adventure, discovery, and truth.

Another master of epic storytelling is Santa Fe resident **George R.R. Martin**, a novelist, screenwriter, and producer. Described as 'the American Tolkien' by *Time* magazine,

Martin is the imagination behind one of the most influential shows in television history, *Game of Thrones*. That was born out of his acclaimed fantasy fiction series of books, including *A Song of Fire and Ice*, *Fire and Blood*, *A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms* and *The World of Fire and Ice*. Martin's works of science fiction and fantasy are a gateway for engaging readers—especially youth—in the power of story and imagination.

Biography also has a firm hold in New Mexico, thanks in part to **Caroline Fraser** of Santa Fe, who was awarded the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for Biography with *Prairie Fires: The American Dreams of Laura Ingalls Wilder*. In it, Fraser charts the true story of the woman writer whose coming-of-age stories as a pioneer girl has held the imagination of readers for decades. The biographies of Santa Fe resident **James McGrath Morris** illuminates his mastery in writing about a range of diverse subjects, from *The Ambulance Drivers: Hemingway, Dos Passos, and A Friendship Made and Lost in War*, to the *New York Times* bestseller *Eye on the Struggle: Ethel Payne, The First Lady of the Black Press*, to *Pulitzer: A Life in Politics, Print, and Power*. Morris's most recent biography is *Tony Hillerman: A Life*.

Following in the footsteps of her acclaimed father Tony Hillerman is **Anne Hillerman**, who has assumed the mantle of his Navajo mysteries to her own significant success. From her 2013 debut novel, *Spider Woman's Daughter*, which received the Western Writers Spur Award as best first novel, to her 2022 *New York Times* bestseller *The Sacred Bridge*, Hillerman has evolved her father's characters and storylines to create her own literary legacy, including a popular television adaptation of *Dark Winds*, based on characters and stories created by her and her father.

A long line of poets have also called New Mexico home for generations. Among the most acclaimed is **Arthur Sze**, a second-generation Chinese American who served as Santa Fe's first Poet Laureate. Known for drawing on different streams of inspiration to create poems of clarity, connection, and compassion, Sze has been celebrated with countless honors. In 2019, his tenth poetry collection, *Sight Lines*, received the National Book Award for Poetry. Sze is also an educator, editor, and translator, and a professor emeritus at the Institute of American Indian Arts.

Another distinctive poet is **Levi Romero** of Embudo, a bilingual poet whose poetry is conveyed in the regional manito dialect of northern New Mexico. A former New Mexico Poet Laureate, his award-winning poetry collections include *A Poetry of Remembrance* and *The Gathering of Silence*. The title of his most recent book, *Querencia: Reflections on the New Mexico Homeland*, illuminates Romero's commitment to life and language steeped in the traditions of home.

The legacy of family and community is also the inspiration behind Albuquerque native **Kirstin Valdez Quade's** writings of New Mexico. Her short story collection, *Night at the Fiestas*, exploring themes of race, class, and coming of age in New Mexico, debuted in 2015 to great acclaim, including its selection as a *New York Times* most notable books of the year. A story in that collection led to her equally acclaimed first novel, *The Five Wounds*, in 2021. With vivid, honest, evocative prose, the book follows the multigenerational Padilla family through tests of faith, sacrifice, and redemption. The

novel earned several awards for first fiction, and led to the Valdez Quade's selection as one of the national book foundation's prestigious "5 under 35."

Another celebrated debut novel, *Shutter*, published in 2022 by Diné author **Ramona Emerson**, also mines the complexities of culture, character, and place in the vast New Mexico landscape. The author's suspenseful, fast-paced, cinematic narrative alternates between backdrops of Albuquerque and Tohatchi on the Navajo Nation, revealing Emerson's experience as an accomplished filmmaker. *Shutter*, the first of a trilogy, was longlisted for the National Book Award for Fiction.

For more information and for the full 2024 Santa Fe International Literary Festival program, go to [www.SFinternationallitfest.org](http://www.SFinternationallitfest.org) or contact Clare Hertel at 505-670-3090/[Clare@ClareHertelCommunications.com](mailto:Clare@ClareHertelCommunications.com)

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