

Tuesday, May 3, 2016

Dear Committee,

I am submitting my novel, *The Ghost of Milagro*, published by Algonquin in 2010, in consideration for The Foundation Prize.

In 2009, The National Endowment of the Arts awarded me a fellowship for writing and research based on an excerpt from the as yet unpublished manuscript of *The Ghost of Milagro Creek*. These highly competitive fellowships are awarded biannually and reviewed solely on the basis of artistic excellence and artistic merit.

*The Ghost of Milagro Creek* tells the story of a curandera (medicine woman) struggling to raise her grandson in an impoverished and culturally diverse barrio outside of Taos, New Mexico. It won the 2010 New Mexico Book Award, and I have been nominated for the Georgia Author of the Year in 2011.

Publicity generated by *The Ghost of Milagro Creek* includes an interview on NPR's "The Leonard Lopate Show" in New York City in July 2010

<http://beta.wnyc.org/shows/lopate/2010/jul/15/melanie-sumners-emghost-milagro-creekem/%20%20%20%20>

and an interview on the Fox News television show, "Good Day Atlanta" in July 2010.

[http://www.myfoxtlanta.com/subindex/good\\_day\\_xtra](http://www.myfoxtlanta.com/subindex/good_day_xtra).

My book tour for *The Ghost of Milagro Creek* featured readings and workshops on the east coast as well in New Mexico. Notable events include a reading at the McNally Jackson bookstore in New York City, readings at the Georgia Center for the book, The Decatur Book Festival, and three Barnes and Noble bookstores in Georgia. In New Mexico, in addition to making several radio appearances, I was a featured writer and workshop leader in the SOMOS (Society of the Muse of the Southwest) Summer Writers Series and the featured speaker at a benefit for the Albuquerque Symphony sponsored by the Bookworks bookstore. In the fall of 2011, I participated in the University of Georgia Vox Writers Series in which I spent at weekend in Athens with professors and graduate and undergraduate students from UGA. In the fall of 2012, I will be a featured writer at the Southern Women Writers Conference hosted by Berry College in Rome, Georgia.

As a writer and a representative of Kennesaw State University, I have extended my outreach to include the nonprofessional community by speaking to book clubs in Rome and Calhoun and volunteering to help the seventh graders at Berry College Middle School in an extensive writing project. This spring I will be the featured speaker at the Berry College Elementary and Middle School "Young Authors Day."

*The Ghost of Milagro Creek* has received considerable attention from reviewers, including NPR "Books We Like", *Atlanta Magazine*, *The Oxford American Review*, *The Los Angeles Times*

*Review, Time Out Chicago, The Atlanta Journal and Constitution, Publishers Weekly, Bostonia Review, and The Albuquerque Journal Review.* I have included a sample of these reviews in the enclosed supporting documents.

My website, [www.melanie-sumner.com](http://www.melanie-sumner.com) featuring an award-winning trailer of *The Ghost of Milagro Creek*, draws recognition to *The Ghost of Milagro Creek*, my other two published works of fiction, *The School of Beauty and Charm* and *Polite Society*, and my work as a writer and a teacher. Visitors to the site often subscribe to my newsletter, *Milagros*.

<http://www.mynewsletterbuilder.com/email/newsletter/1410717113>

Two Kennesaw State University graduate students in the Masters of Professional Writing Program have helped me create the newsletter, with a current readership of 800, which features my writing as well as their own.

Thank you for considering *The Ghost of Milagro Creek* for the KSU Foundation Prize in 2011.

Sincerely

Melanie Sumner

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