MLA’S KATHERINE SINGER KOVACS PRIZE AWARDED TO NANCY J. GATES MADSEN FOR TRAUMA, TABOO, AND TRUTH-TELLING; AMBER BRIAN AND PAUL A. SCHROEDER RODRÍGUEZ TO RECEIVE HONORABLE MENTIONS

New York, NY – 5 December 2017 – The Modern Language Association of America today announced its twenty-seventh 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 Nancy J. Gates Madsen, of Luther College, for her book **Trauma, Taboo, and Truth-Telling: Listening to Silences in Postdictatorship Argentina**, published by the University of Wisconsin Press. Amber Brian, of the University of Iowa, has received an honorable mention for **Alva Ixtilxochitl’s Native Archive and the Circulation of Knowledge in Colonial Mexico**, published by Vanderbilt University Press. Paul A. Schroeder Rodríguez, of Amherst College, has received an honorable mention for **Latin American Cinema: A Comparative History**, published by the University of California 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 6 January 2018, during the association’s annual convention, to be held in New York City. The members of the selection committee were Rolena Adorno (Yale Univ.); Bernardita P. Llanos (Brooklyn Coll., City Univ. of New York), chair; Kathleen McNerney (West Virginia Univ., Morgantown); Jesús R.Velasco (Columbia Univ.); and Lisa Vollendorf (San José State Univ.). The committee’s citation for Gates-Madsen’s book reads:

Nancy J. Gates Madsen’s *Trauma, Taboo, and Truth-Telling: Listening to Silences in Postdictatorship Argentina* presents new ways to look at central questions of suffering in authoritarian and postauthoritarian societies and a fresh approach to historical memory and cultural trauma. The work weaves together the silences that surround the Argentine dictatorship while giving voice to their several meanings, revealing silence as an expressive phenomenon rather than oblivion or absence. The book also revisits complicity and betrayal as well as the use of memory for political gain and explores the boundaries of fiction and nonfiction by using imaginative works as testimonials, combining a sophisticated critical framework on memory accounts of past political violence in Argentina. This is an original, well-written, and important contribution to the body of research on memory and trauma studies in Latin America.

Nancy Gates Madsen is an associate professor of Spanish at Luther College. She received her MA and PhD from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Gates Madsen has published articles and book chapters about the legacies of authoritarianism in Argentina on topics ranging from monuments and memorials to the representation of torture. She is the translator, with Kristin Dykstra, of *Violet Island and Other Poems*, an anthology of the work of the Cuban poet Reina...
María Rodríguez. Her current research explores the intersections between ecological issues and human rights in Latin American cultural production.

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

Amber Brian’s Alva Ixtlilxochitl’s Native Archive and the Circulation of Knowledge in Colonial Mexico is a fundamental achievement in understanding how the history of the indigenous archive has shaped the archive. Sophisticated and probing, this strongly analytic book represents the next generation of nuanced thinking about the full scope of colonial experience and intellectualism of a multicultural population. Brian demonstrates—through careful, impressive archival and textual research—that intellectual relationships were a two-way street among criollos and indigenous mestizos, that they had far-reaching, multigenerational consequences, and yet that they were born of such everyday enterprises as the legal defense of claims to ancestral lands. This is an original contribution to interdisciplinary Hispanic studies.

Amber Brian is an associate professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Iowa, where she also directs the Latin American Studies Program. She is editor and translator, with Bradley Benton and Pablo García Loaeza, of The Native Conquistador: Alva Ixtlilxochitl’s Account of the Conquest of Mexico. Brian is collaborating with Benton, García Loaeza, and Peter Villella on a major translation project, for which they received a Scholarly Editions and Translations Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (2014–17). They are translating and annotating the Historia de la nación chichimeca, an important Spanish-language chronicle of pre-Hispanic central Mexico based on indigenous written and oral sources and authored by Alva Ixtlilxochitl.

The committee’s citation for Schroeder Rodríguez’s book reads:

In his impressively well-researched Latin American Cinema: A Comparative History, Paul A. Schroeder Rodríguez shows how cinema has been at the intersection of politics and modernity in Latin America and remained an important form of cultural and social media in the region, from silent films to present-day movies. The book is a tour de force that explores the cultural, economic, and artistic evolution of Latin American cinema as compared with that of Hollywood. This is a timely and excellent contribution to the field, demonstrating breadth and a deep knowledge of the medium’s social and cultural contexts.

Paul A. Schroeder Rodríguez is a professor of Spanish at Amherst College. He received his PhD in Spanish from Stanford University. Schroeder Rodríguez is the author of Tomás Gutiérrez Alea: The Dialectics of a Filmmaker and is an editorial board member of the journals Chasqui: Revista de Literatura Latinoamericana, Cinegogía, and Fuera de campo. He is chair of the film studies section of the Latin American Studies Association and cochair of the Translation Committee of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies. His most recent research project centers on artists of the Latin American Baroque—Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Aleijadinho, and José Kondori.

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;
this year’s convention in New York City 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 Rolena Adorno, Nicolás Wey Gómez, Lisa Beth Voigt, Stephanie Merrim, E. Michael Gerli, Joanne Rappaport and Tom Cummins, Mabel Moraña, Stephanie Sieburth, Enrique Fernandez, and Anne Lambright. 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, 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 her MA and 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.