

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Joan Magruder

Writer Viramontes to Receive Luis Leal Literature Award

Helena María Viramontes, a writer and professor of English at Cornell University, is the recipient of this year's Luis Leal Award for Distinction in Chicano/Latino Literature, given annually by the University of California, Santa Barbara, the Santa Barbara Book & Author Festival and Santa Barbara City College.

Considered one of the country's premier Latina writers, Viramontes is the author of "The Moths and

Other Stories" and "Under the Feet of Jesus," a novel about a migrant farming family, which is now in its fourteenth printing.

Her new novel, "Their Dogs Came With Them," will be published in 2007.

She is the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including the John Dos Passos Award for Literature.

Her short stories and essays have been widely anthologized and her writings have been adopted for classroom use and university study.

With María Herrera-Sobek, associate vice chancellor for diversity, equity, and academic policy at UC Santa Barbara, Viramontes is co-editor of two collections: "Chicana (W)rites:

On Word and Film" and "Chicana Creativity and Criticism."

"Viramontes is one of the most innovative and poetic of contemporary Latino writers in the United States, and one whose work deserves even greater recognition," says Mario Garcia, professor of Chicano studies and history at UCSB,

who is the organizer of the annual Leal Award.

The award is named after Luis Leal, professor of Chicana/Chicano Studies at UCSB, who is internationally recognized as one of the leading scholars of Chicano and Latino literature.

He will celebrate his 99th birthday this year.

Viramontes will be presented with the Luis Leal Award at the Santa Barbara Book & Author Festival on September 30 at 4 p.m. at the Faulkner Gallery in the Santa Barbara Public Library.

Previous recipients of the Leal Award include Oscar Hijuelos, Rudolfo Anaya, and Denise Chávez.

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[Viramontes Web Page](#)

[Biographical Profile](#)

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