

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE • FROM FEMINIST PRESS • FEBRUARY 21, 2020

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“A groundbreaking, lyrical patchwork of historical research, imagined pasts and futures, and personal narrative. Many will feel this book in their cells and bones.”

—KAELYN RICH, executive director, Bitch Media

“Lane boldly investigates the connections between transgenerational trauma, personal love, and the burden of memory. Her heartfelt memoir will stay with you.”

—YZ CHIN, author of *Though I Get Home*

CASSANDRA LANE WINS 2020 LOUISE MERIWETHER FIRST BOOK PRIZE

NEW YORK, NY—The Feminist Press, *TAYO Literary Magazine*, and distinguished judges Jennifer Baker, Regina Brooks, YZ Chin, Bridgett M. Davis, Juli Delgado Lopera, Brontez Purnell, KaeLyn Rich, Melissa R. Sipin, and Jamia Wilson are honored to award the 2020 Louise Meriwether First Book Prize to Cassandra Lane for her book, *We Are Bridges*. Lane’s memoir weaves the story of her great-grandfather’s lynching with her experience of becoming a mother, attempting to unearth the lives of her ancestors and provide her child with a family record. The book will be published by the Feminist Press in the summer of 2021.

The Feminist Press and *TAYO Literary Magazine* established the award in 2016 to honor landmark African American feminist author Louise Meriwether and her 1970 classic, *Daddy Was a Number Runner*. One of the first American novels to feature a young Black girl as the protagonist, the book inspired the careers of writers like Jacqueline Woodson and Bridgett M. Davis, among countless others. The Louise Meriwether First Book Prize annually seeks the best debut work by women and nonbinary writers of color, and awards them a publishing contract at the Feminist Press and a \$5,000 advance prize.

“In this evocative memoir, Cassandra Lane deftly uses the act of imagination to reclaim her ancestor’s story as a backdrop for telling her own. She renders each interior life with such tenderness and toughness that the tradition of Black women’s storytelling leaps forward within these pages—into fresh, daring, and exciting new territory. Lane’s compelling

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voice couldn't be more timely," shares author Bridgett M. Davis. Adds writer and editor Jennifer Baker, "Lane's writing is beautiful and truly embraces readers."

"In the spirit of Louise Meriwether's landmark title *Daddy Was a Number Runner*, Cassandra Lane reimagines the horrors of the past while envisioning a transcendent present and future," says Feminist Press executive director and publisher Jamia Wilson. The previous winners of the Louise Meriwether First Book Prize are YZ Chin (*Though I Get Home*), Claudia D. Hernández (*Knitting the Fog*), and Melissa Valentine (*The Names of All the Flowers*).

Cassandra Lane has worked as a newspaper reporter, a high school English and journalism teacher, a college access advocate for underrepresented students in Los Angeles, a senior writer for an early-education nonprofit, and a community relations manager for the LA Dodgers. She is currently managing editor of *LA Parent* magazine. Her essays and stories have appeared in a variety of outlets, including *Fury: Women's Lived Experiences during the Trump Era*, *Writers Resist*, *Everything But the Burden*, *the Source*, *Entropy*, Expressing Motherhood's live storytelling show, and the *New York Times*' animated video series "Conception." A Louisiana native, she calls LA, where she now lives with her husband and son, her second home.

The submissions period for the 2021 prize will be open March 1, 2020, through June 30, 2020. For submissions guidelines, visit feministpress.org or email louisemeriwetherprize@gmail.com.