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## **SISTERS IN CRIME ANNOUNCES WINNER OF 2018 ELEANOR TAYLOR BLAND CRIME FICTION WRITERS OF COLOR AWARD**

*The award benefits an emerging writer of color in the crime fiction genre*

August 1, 2018 – **Sisters in Crime (SinC)** announced today that the 2018 winner of the annual **Eleanor Taylor Bland Crime Fiction Writers of Color Award** is Mia Manansala, who also serves as the secretary for the Midwest Chapter of the Mystery Writers of America.

In a joint statement, judges Cynthia Kuhn, Tonya Spratt-Williams, and committee chair Maria Kelson said, “This was our unanimous choice. Manansala exhibits sophisticated genre awareness and playfulness with genre conventions and we believe the manuscript—which features a very funny, millennial, Filipina-American protagonist—makes a new, worthy, and worthwhile contribution to crime fiction.”

The award, which honors the memory of pioneering African-American crime fiction author Eleanor Taylor Bland with a \$1,500 grant to an emerging writer of color, was created in 2014 to support SinC’s vision statement that the organization should serve as the voice for excellence and diversity in crime writing. The grant is intended to support the recipient in such developmental and research activities as workshops, seminars, conferences and retreats, online courses, and other opportunities required for completion of their debut crime fiction work. Past recipients include Maria Kelson (2014), Vera H-C Chan (2015), Stephane Dunn (2016), and Jessica Ellis Laine (2017).

“I am so incredibly thrilled and honored to receive the 2018 Eleanor Taylor Bland Award from Sisters in Crime,” said Manansala, who is represented by Janet Reid of New Leaf Literary. “I want to thank the award committee for recognizing the marginalized writers in our field. I am excited to see what the future holds, both for me and for the crime fiction genre. My deepest gratitude to you all. Salamat po!”

**Eleanor Taylor Bland** (1944-2010) paved the way for fresh voices in crime fiction by showcasing complex characters that had previously been peripheral to or simply missing from the genre. *Dead Time* (1992), the first in her series of novels, introduced African-American police detective Marti MacAlister, an enduring and beloved heroine who overturned stereotypes that had been perpetuated in much of American popular culture. Bland also published several works of short crime fiction and edited the 2004 collection, *Shades of Black: Crime and Mystery Stories by African-American Authors*.

**Sisters in Crime (SinC)** was founded in 1986 to promote the ongoing advancement, recognition and professional development of women crime writers. Today, the organization boasts 3,600 members and 50 chapters worldwide and its initiatives also include other scholarships, grants for academic research into the roles of women and underserved voices in crime fiction; cash awards to libraries and bookstores; and surveys and monitoring projects which determine visibility and representation of women and diverse voices in the genre and across the marketplace.