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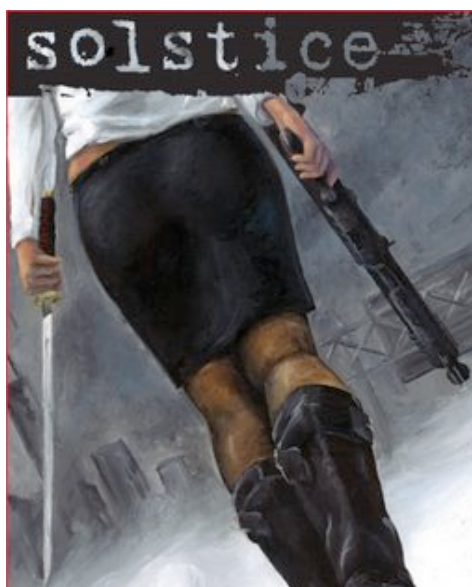
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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20

[Ulises Silva: Breaking Ground in Speculative Fiction](#)





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Ulises Silva is an emerging Latino author whose fusion of academia, mainstream influences, and vivid storytelling present a fresh entry and perspective into the genre of speculative fiction. A graduate of the University of Michigan, Silva's dissertation work focused on science fiction and its retelling of American colonialism, including the westward expansion and its war against Native America. In particular, Silva studied the ways in which mainstream science fiction re-imagined American history by inverting historical roles and political ideals—retelling the story of exploration and expansion as an inherently benevolent venture.

As a fan and student of science/speculative fiction and its ability to re-imagine historical and contemporary realities, Silva was influenced by the literary works of **H.G. Wells, Orson Scott Card, and Philip K. Dick**. Authors of color, including **Sandra Cisneros, Leslie Marmon Silko, Lucha Corpi, and Américo Paredes**, have influenced Silva's multicultural narrative approach.

Cinematic influences, such as George A. Romero's *Living Dead* films, Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*, and Danny Boyle's *28 Days Later*, which extrapolate the struggle of the human psyche under extreme and cataclysmic ordeals, played an equally large part in Silva's writing. He is fascinated by what he calls the "psychology of apocalypse," specifically the roles, actions, and decisions of characters in apocalyptic, end-of-the world scenarios. Indeed, the central question posited by his new novel, *Solstice*—"What would you do if you knew the world would end next week?"—looks to engage readers with the possibilities of such a scenario.

Taken together, Silva's academic, literary, and cinematic influences produce a brand of fiction that tells gripping stories from historically marginalized points of view. (In *Solstice*, for example, the main protagonist is a Mexican-Japanese woman.) Silva delves deep into the fractured psyches of his beleaguered characters to uncover broader questions of race, gender, and the conceptualization of recorded history.

Silva is a first-generation Mexican-American who grew up in New York City, spent five years in Buffalo, NY, and has since moved to Michigan. He is currently working on his next novel, a comedic satire about Hollywood's portrayal of Latino/as.

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Gente, take a look at at a description of this novel and you'll be hooked.

Words are murder.

Scribes have a gift. Whatever they write comes true. Misfortune. Theft. Even murder. Editors—covert specialists operating beyond the law—watch over them. Among the Editors, Io is the best, and the most ruthless. But on her way to her next assignment, something happens. Her phone rings—along with every other phone on the planet.

What would you do if you knew the world would end next week?

A single phone call to the world's population asks this question. The same message appears on walls, TV screens, even flesh. Confusion erupt into chaos. Violence spreads like wildfire. Io discovers a Scribe named Nadie sent the message. But the message is only the beginning.

The final winter solstice.

In two weeks, on the day of the winter solstice, Nadie promises a final judgment. Battling a world spiraling into mass hysteria and her own dark past, Io must race to stop Nadie. But as the world is engulfed in a series of supernatural catastrophes, Io uncovers a shocking possibility: Is Nadie writing humanity's extermination? And is Nadie linked to her past?

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Some personal notes on ***Solstice***:

First, on general principal I was excited to hear about this entry in the world of speculative fiction/sci-fi. I believe strongly that 'Chicano fiction' is what ever genre we choose, and I applaud Silva for pushing the envelope a little further. Secondly, as a writer myself, I was intrigued by the idea of warring 'Scribes vs. 'Editors.' It's a clever spin and a birthing of a universe equal to Dick's replicants and humans in ***Blade Runner***, or Marv Wolfman's skinwalkers and vampires in ***Blade***.

Silva creates a vibrant underground for his heroine, Io, and her

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adversary, Nadie. Like the core of Chicano history, Silva's scribes and editors emerge from a turbulent mix, in this case, both Mexican and Japanese. They duel in in a shadowy, dangerous, hybridized world, without room from hesitation or error. While Dick's influence is clear, Silva's terrain is a unique one, his style noirish, his female characters strong and tender, ruthless and unstoppable. And then there's the choice of the name Nadie. Brilliant, right up there with Matrix' Neo. There are definitely more tales to emerge from this first offering, more compelling struggles between dark words and the edits that hold chaos at bay.

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Tragical Mirth Publishing is an independent publisher headquartered in Troy, Michigan. Their vision is to promote the fictional work of new authors, especially authors of Latino/a and Asian descent, into the literary marketplace. With one novel slated for publication this year and two more in 2008, they plan to nurture the budding careers of new authors alongside our own company growth.

Tragical Mirth Publishing was founded on the belief that there is always a market for ethnic fiction. With more and more publishing houses focusing on the marketability of new fiction—oftentimes sacrificing literary quality for commercial appeal—too many aspiring authors of color are being shut out. **Tragical Mirth Publishing** hopes to provide a new generation of authors a real voice in the literary marketplace.

Customer Service

To Order *Solstice* directly:

service@verytragicalmirth.com

Media and Review Kits Available

To request a kit, review samples, schedule interviews, or for additional information: marketing@verytragicalmirth.com

ISBN: 978-0-9794513-0-0

Lisa Alvarado

Labels: [antihero](#), [Chicano](#), [Mexican](#), [novel](#), [novelist](#), [sci-fi](#), [speculative fiction](#)

posted by Lisa Alvarado | 12:01 AM  

1 Comments:

 **msedano said...**

interesting silva would make a confluence between mexican and japanese characters. william gibson, el mero mero of cyberpunk, has a mexican conecta who helps solve the big problem in his strange novel, IDORU.

8:06 PM

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