**2025 AWP Conference & Bookfair**

March 26-29, 2025, Los Angeles, CA

Los Angeles Convention Center

**Tentative List of Accepted Events for #AWP25**

This list of accepted events for the 2025 AWP Conference & Bookfair is tentative as we wait to receive confirmation from all event organizers and participants. We are also working to ensure that each participant does not participate in more than two events. Event titles and descriptions have not yet been edited for grammar or content. The final conference schedule will be posted later this year.

The list is organized by event style: in-person events (pg. 3) and virtual events (pg. 162). Within these sections, events are separated into panel discussions and readings, then alphabetized by title. Events marked as in-person will be held onsite at the Los Angeles Convention Center, and some may include a mix of in-person and virtual presenters. Events marked as virtual will be prerecorded and made available to view on-demand online during the conference and for one month after #AWP25. A select number of in-person events will also be livestreamed on the virtual conference platform, and these events will be released when the full schedule is posted later this year. Please note that due to limited staff and resources, not all in-person events can be livestreamed for virtual audiences.

The AWP Conference & Bookfair reflects the broader literary community, with all of its creativity, passion, and diversity evident on the programming schedule. AWP’s mission is to create space for all writers to be represented, and to that end, we are committed to supporting as diverse and inclusive a slate of panels as possible. Each year, AWP assembles an independent subcommittee to adjudicate proposals, and we use aggregate evaluations to identify the strongest proposals for acceptance onto the conference schedule. We acknowledge that perspectives put forth by individual programs and speakers may not be shared by everyone, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the AWP Board, staff, literary partners, sponsors, or each conference attendee. For more information about the proposal adjudication process or for information on the subcommittee, please visit the [How Events Are Selected page](https://s2.goeshow.com/awp/annual/2025/how_events_are_selected.cfm) and the [2025 Conference Subcommittee page](https://s2.goeshow.com/awp/annual/2025/subcommittees.cfm).

AWP’s conference subcommittee worked hard to shape a diverse schedule for #AWP25, creating the best possible balance among genres, presenters, and topics. Every year, there are a number of high-quality events that have to be left off the schedule due to space limitations. Although the pool of submissions was highly competitive, we did our best to ensure that the conference belongs to AWP’s numerous and varied constituencies. From 1,597 proposals, we tentatively accepted 369 events involving more than 1,800 presenters.

Please feel free to contact us at events@awpwriter.org with any questions you may have about this list. For more information about the 2025 Conference & Bookfair, including information about registration, hotels, travel, or the Bookfair, please visit our [conference website](https://s2.goeshow.com/awp/annual/2025/index.cfm).

**In-Person Events**

**Panel Discussions:**

**A Desert Full of Color: Creating and Supporting BIPOC Spaces in LA** (Peter Woods, Romeo Guzman, Sarah Rafael Garcia, traci kato-kiriyama)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Can a handful of established institutions serve the communities of a sprawling desert properly? Should BIPOC talent and labor be used to fight for access to PWI or are we better served by creating and building our own spaces? Four writers, publishers, teachers and community builders from the Los Angeles area discuss who benefits from inclusion into historically white spaces and whose work gets co-opted and ultimately wasted when BIPOC communities don’t build their own institutions.

**A Lyric Freedom: Asian Americans, Racial Legibility, and Poetic Subjectivity** (Kimiko Hahn, Haolun Xu, Sandra Lim, Hana Widerman, Derek Chan)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

The Asian American poet (and more broadly the racialized subject) is expected to occupy a legible, ethnographic, and autobiographical position. How can we wield the lyric to complicate normative assumptions of racial/ethnic subjectivity and representation? How can we be at once intellectual and embodied, unlocated and specific? In this panel, a diverse group of Asian American poets discuss how they champion their racialized subjectivities even as they revolt against performative pressures.

**A Poetics of Radical Parenting** (Brandon Som, Saddiq Dzukogi, Stacey Waite, Hope Wabuke)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

For writers, becoming a parent can be the occasion of an intense reckoning and re-envisioning of the self, the communities one is a part of, and the work of writing. Poet parents who locate themselves within complex intersections of racial, sexual, and gender identification discuss the radical work of writing and parenting with a vision toward reimagining ties of kinship and reimagining artistic institutions that undervalue the domestic sphere.

**A Singing Wound: Poetry of the Ukrainian Diaspora since 2014** (Olga Livshin, Julia Kolchinsky Dasbach, Valya Dudycz Lupescu, Judith Baumel, Olena Jennings)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Descendants of those who left Ukraine in the middle of traumatic events exist in-between: one foot in our current home, and one foot in the ancestral home. These writers and translators speak to the trauma of displacement, identity and cultural fragmentation due to ongoing war. What language, imagery, and literary traditions help speak the unsayable? How does the multilingual Ukrainian diaspora speak? What can we do as poets, writers, essayists, and translators to bridge, connect, and heal?

**A Tribute to Brenda Hillman: Meditations on a Radical Poet and Advocate** (Rachel Morgan, Brian Teare, Major Jackson, Suzanna Tamminen, Craig Morgan Teicher)

In-person event

Event category: Tributes

A formally innovative poet, Brenda Hillman’s poetry pushes boundaries of lyricism using meditation, collage, and activism to interrogate the act of experimentation. A poet of possibilities, Hillman invokes the environment, politics, theory, and religion to “open the lyric” (Hillman). This panel will explore Hillman’s forty years of verse that has given contemporary American poetry new perspectives on form and craft, and will consider her contribution to teaching, poetry, and publishing.

**A Tribute to Elizabeth Arnold (1958-2024)** (Elizabeth Countryman, Katy Didden, Kiyanna Hill, Jenny Mueller, Lindsay Bernal)

In-person event

Event category: Tributes

A tribute to Elizabeth Arnold (1958–2024), whose innovative oeuvre, vital scholarship, and intensive and generous teaching continues to enrich American poetry and the poetry of illness. The author of six volumes of poetry, from 1999’s The Reef to 2023’s Wave House, Arnold taught in the MFA program at the University of Maryland for over two decades and helped elevate Flood Editions, her press. Former students, friends, and colleagues will read from Arnold's work and remark on her legacy.

**Abroad as an Escape: International Exchange and Trauma-Informed Writing** (Anesce Dremen, Eve Vang, Elisabet Raquel García, Sophia Babai, Lili Sarayrah)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Trauma travels with us abroad and in our writing, too. Nomadic writers will speak about how their long term experiences via international exchange informs their creative writing in relation to trauma. How do we take care of ourselves when we are underrepresented in both study abroad and the publishing industry? Panelists will discuss how their creativity is influenced abroad, what healing means, ethically engaging with one’s host country, and tips for aspiring nomadic writers.

**Activating the Experimental Impulse: Prompts & Provocations** (Sheryda Warrener, Danielle Vogel, Lucy Ives, Jess Arndt, Diana Khoi Nguyen)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Writing prompts are a staple of creative writing classrooms, but are we tapping its potential to inspire new modes of thinking, seeing, and making? What happens when we orient generative exercises within an expansive interdisciplinary framework? Guided by experimental pedagogies, these five panelists will share material, conceptual, and embodied provocations that honour conceptual thinking, ambiguity, not-knowing, deep attentiveness, and surprise as vital elements of creative practice.

**Adjunct Writers Caucus** (Stephanie M. Lindberg, Joseph Hess, Cara Diaconoff, Mike Spry, Elizabeth Donald)

In-person event

Event category: Caucus

Are you an adjunct or part-time instructor at a college or university? Do you support adjuncts, maybe as a former adjunct yourself? Join us! The Adjunct Writers Caucus provides a space for writers who are also instructors to connect with others to learn and grow in their personal and professional lives. The caucus strives to provide visibility for this large subset of instructors, as well as space for discussion, support and resources for its members.

**Advancing Craft and Community: Different Literary Center Approaches & Strategies** (G.E. Patterson, Marianne Manzler, Marissa Morrow, Rebecca Makkai, Kathryn Kysar)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Given their common goal of engaging diverse audiences, amplifying marginalized voices, and promoting the connective power of the arts, how do the Loft Literary Center, Lighthouse Writers Workshop, and StoryStudio Chicago converge and diverge in their approaches? Administrators and teaching artists across a range of viewpoints, ethnicities, and geography will discuss their experiences working with writers of all backgrounds through local and digital programming and look to what's next.

**Advocating for your story in YA as a BIPOC author** (Clare Osongco, Trinity Nguyen, Ream Shukairy, Alex Brown, Jade Adia)

In-person event

Event category: Children’s & Young Adult Literature

We are a group of BIPOC authors who’ve published novels in different genres of young adult—romance, thriller, contemporary, and horror—and we’re proposing a panel where we’ll discuss different nuances and challenges of navigating the YA world in traditional publishing as BIPOC authors, and ways that we’ve had to advocate for our stories at different points throughout the process, from querying through the editorial process, all the way to marketing.

**Affect and Act: Environmental and Climate Storytelling Across Diverse Mediums** (Cynthia Reeves, Melody Cooper, Nina Schuyler, Carmiel Banasky, Carol LaHines)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

To paraphrase climatologist Judith Curry, storytelling is “a way of smuggling” environmental and climate concerns into readers’ consciousness; moreover, it can compel them to imagine past, present, and future impacts of human action on the environment. What does pioneering research reveal as the most “affective” ways for storytellers to respond to the eco-crises we face? If our writing is meant to influence cultural-social-political change, what creative approaches best accomplish that goal?

**Afterwards: Veteran Writers Reflect on Reintegration, Mental Health, and Healing** (Bronson Lemer, Jacqlyn Cope, Lauren Kay Johnson, Michael Ramos, Ricardo Ruiz)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Feelings of isolation and a missing sense of belonging have become familiar to many during the COVID-19 pandemic, as have challenges around reintegrating back into “normal” society. Join five veterans as they discuss writing about what comes after life-changing experiences. Panelists reflect on surprises and difficulties in writing about mental health, advocating for wellbeing through storytelling, how these issues intersect and clash with cultural norms, and the myriad forms healing may take.

**AI-Proofing the Creative Writing Classroom** (Amorak Huey, Chris Haven, Carlia Sofia Ferreira, Michael Dean Clark, Dionne Irving-Bremyer)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

The emergence of generative AI and its increasing use by students may force a reckoning from writing teachers everywhere. So let's reckon with it! This panel will move beyond complaint and handwringing and fearful policing of student work to reconsider and name what it is we value. We'll discuss strategies for designing curricula, learning outcomes, assessments, assignments, and overall course structures that focus on habits of mind and creative expression and can't be circumvented with AI.

**Alchemizing a Code of Belonging Outside of Academia: How to Navigate the Literar** (Camari Hawkins, Liz Marquez, Natasha Moni, Elontra Hall, Camille Hernandez)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Will my voice be heard? Do I get to be here/play in this space? Writers of color ask these questions as they enter workshops, the publishing industry, and beyond. This internal dialogue deepens in the absence of “the right degrees” that provide access and permission to question belonging in spaces not designed for them. This panel features cross-genre authors of color as they examine how to navigate the publishing industry on their own terms, while alchemizing a code of belonging.

**All Mixed Up: The Experience of Writing Mixed Race/Ethnicity** (Latifa Ayad, Jennifer Maritza McCauley, Sophia Khan, Kimberly Quiogue Andrews, Summer J. Hart)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Mixed writers have a powerful cultural placement, able to understand and access the experiences of multiple races/ethnicities. Yet, those of mixed race/ethnicity often struggle with a sense of identity and belonging. Five mixed writers discuss the challenges they’ve faced in defining their identities, how they have navigated being mixed on the page, how their work illuminates the experience of being mixed, and speculate about the future place of mixed-race writers in the literary canon.

**Alternative Funding Options for Literary Magazines and Presses, Sponsored by CLMP** (Montana Agte-Studier, Alyson Sinclair, Maria Maloney, Diane Goettel)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

Publishers cannot live on sales alone. In this panel, hear from presses and magazines that have found success pursuing creative strategies for generating revenue, including membership/subscription models, crowdfunding campaigns, merch sales, and local business partnerships. Join us to learn how to set up and pursue alternative funding strategies to support your publishing work for years to come.

**Amplifying Filipino American Voices in YA Fiction** (Alex Brown, Clare Osongco, Shannon Price, Ana Ellickson)

In-person event

Event category: Children’s & Young Adult Literature

Building on the fact that there is more to marginalized people than their pain, these authors of young adult books go beyond identity-centered-trauma narratives and explore nuanced Filipino/Filipino American experiences through horror, fantasy, contemporary, and futuristic lenses. This panel will discuss how and why marginalized authors infuse elements of their backgrounds into their work and how Fil/FilAm characters and world building have (or have not) fit into traditional publishing.

**An Early Spark: Writing Poems with Young People** (Catherine Pierce, C.T. Salazar, Matt Mason, Kai Coggin, Meg Leonard)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Writing poems teaches children confidence in their own voices and imaginations, and is an early way for them to experience firsthand the joys of language. But what writing prompts will really engage young poets? How should we modify our teaching for different ages? How can we connect with and support our communities? Panelists who have written poetry with children from kindergartners through middle schoolers will share stories, prompts, and practical advice.

**Anti-Racist Pedagogy: Creative Writing Workshops at Community Colleges** (Shinelle L. Espaillat, Gail Upchurch-Mills, Keith O'Neill, Brenda Squires)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

How do panelists center voices of students from underrepresented groups, and teach published work from underrepresented groups. Panelists will share best practices and discuss the mechanics of leading anti-racist discussions within the academy. Discuss the tensions between art for art’s sake and art that’s socially conscious. What are the challenges? What are the rewards? What do panelists consider when creating the course?

**Around the World: Incorporating Translation into a Creative Writing Class** (Wendy Chen, Yilin Wang, Takami Nieda, Rohan Chhetri, Maryam Ala Amjadi)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Translations offer students new and exciting ways to engage with literature from around the world and incorporate diverse perspectives into the classroom. How can educators initiate and introduce conversations on translations with intention? What best practices should educators consider when crafting assignments on translation? In this session, panelists discuss inclusive strategies for bringing the art and study of translations into a creative writing class.

**Art & Craft of Speculative Memoir** (August Owens Grimm, Jami Nakamura Lin, Carmen Maria Machado, Shannon Gibney, Vanessa Angelica Villarreal)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

Writing outside the boundaries of the verifiable in memoir can feel like being lost in the woods. But speculative memoir provides the space to interrogate truths through fabulism, folklore, imagined lives, hauntedness, and other slanted lenses. Authors will discuss how the speculative operates in their own books, the philosophy of their choices, the definitions of the genre, and the freedom it offers marginalized communities to challenge and renegotiate society’s definition of reality.

**Art School Writing Faculty Caucus** (Lee Griffith, Amy Lemmon, Darlene Gold, Tyler Gillespie, Janée Baugher)

In-person event

Event category: Caucus

The Art School Writing Faculty Caucus provides a forum for writers to consider issues unique to art and design environments, their students and curricula. This year we welcome new members and guests to an open-forum discussion of topics including pedagogy, technology, and craft. We also seek input concerning the coming year's caucus programming, executive board elections, and the needs of our caucus members and their respective institutions.

**Artistic Skill or Buzzkill?: Grammar in the Poetry Workshop** (Ellen McGrath Smith, Amy Kierzek Ash, Laura Lee Washburn, Karen Paul Holmes, Ellen McGrath Smith)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

This panel explores creative ways to introduce grammar conversations in the poetry workshop, with an emphasis not on prescriptive grammar but, rather, on empowering writers to establish their poems' particular grammars through conventional or other means. Panelists will offer exercises and ideas for treating grammar as a set of aesthetic choices that underwrite a poet's intentions and mitigate the disconnect that can occur between sentence and line, vision and execution, in poem drafts.

**Asian American Caucus** (Devyn Manibo, Gina Chung, Neela Banerjee, Jason Bayani)

In-person event

Event category: Caucus

What is literature’s role in liberation? How do we as Asian American and Pacific Islander writers and readers steward spaces of care, emergence, legacy, and belonging? How can we think expansively about what it means to be Asian American and what it means to be a writer?

**Away From Her: Canadian Writers on the Work and Evolving Legacy of Alice Munro** (Kevin Chong, Holly Flauto, Kasia Van Schaik, Dionne Irving, Kathryn Mockler)

In-person event

Event category: Tributes

Shortly after Alice Munro’s death in 2024, a family history of child sexual abuse and silence was revealed by the Nobel Laureate’s daughter, Andrea Robin Skinner. A year later, fiction writers from her home country reflect on the life and suddenly contentious legacy of an artist once described by New Yorker critic James Wood as “our Chekhov.” In what ways have they been influenced by her portrayals of domestic lives and Canada? Can they continue to read and teach her writing? And if so, how?

**Babel at the Table: How to run a successful multi-language translation workshop** (Judy Halebsky, Alana Marie Levinson LaBrosse, Mira Rosenthal, Angela Pnueman)

In-person event

Event category: Translation

The multi-language translation workshop is a seminar in world literature grounded in specificity. The work is to breathe again into a text and let it live again. When teaching translation workshops, we ground the discussion in relation to key theories of praxis while emphasizing the process as a cross-cultural endeavor – or transcreation – that draws attention the subtleties of language and requires creative experimentation.

**Bad to the Bone? Crafting Deviant Characters** (Myriam Gurba, Francesca Lia Block, Maurice Carlos Ruffin, Kayla Ancrum, Sarah Sunfire)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

In Criminal Justice, the opposite of Deviance is Conformity. By definition, then, all activism is a deviant act. Still, predators are deviants too. How does this rich and unpredictable concept enliven our work? What can we learn from inhabiting a deviant's mind? What does deviance mean when law-enforcers crack down on activists and marginalized people? Four multi-genre authors discuss how and why they develop deviant characters, from fierce sympathetic LGBTQ+ rule-breakers to heinous villains.

**Becoming a Debut Novelist: The Journey From Agent Queries to Book Launch** (Laura Spence-Ash, Megan Cummins, Denne Michele Norris, Lilliam Rivera, Jemimah Wei)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

The path from finishing a book draft to launching a debut novel into the world is thrilling and exciting, but it is also long and full of twists and turns. This panel of debut novelists—with publication dates in 2024 and 2025—will discuss all aspects of this journey, including finding an agent, selling the book, working with an editor, and navigating marketing and publicity. The aim of the panel is to be transparent and to provide helpful advice for all debut novelists to come.

**Behind the Acronym: Empowering Ethnic Voices - Launching a Literary Non-Profit** (Shahe Mankerian, Ellina Kevorkian, Zeyn Zeyn Joukhadar)

In-person event

Event category: Writers’ Conferences & Centers

What does it mean to be a literary non-profit dedicated to a specific ethnic group? What are the benefits of highlighting diverse voices within a community that others see as defined by their cultural background? Hear from founders and arts administrators of the International Armenian Literary Alliance, Mizna, and Radius of Arab American Writers on the importance of visibility, diversity, and practicalities in launching and maintaining a successful non-profit.

**Beyond Anthropomorphism: Reimagining Animals in Literature** (Eleanor Henderson, Erica Berry, Gina Chung, Roy G. Guzmán, Henry Hoke)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

What is the role of nonhuman animals in literature today? How do we represent them on the page, and what do those representations reveal about humans, other animals, and our shared, imperiled planet? Are animals Others? Heroes? Symbols? Mirrors? Five writers of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry discuss their approaches to writing about other species—from wolves to cows to bugs to octopi to a queer LA mountain lion—and how doing so might grow the human imagination and redefine our own animality.

**Beyond Beaches and Colonialism: Writers from the Caribbean Diaspora** (Tanya Rey, Jaquira Diaz, Yalitza Ferreras, Fabienne Josaphat, Lilliam Rivera)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

One of the most ethnically diverse regions worldwide, the Caribbean is an area defined by colonization, immigration, and a history of violence. As writers from the diaspora, how do we contend with that history in an American context? Whose stories are we beholden to, and how do we balance the responsibility to represent our communities with that of representing ourselves? Writers from various diasporas read from their work and discuss how these histories and identities inform their choices.

**Beyond Blind Prophets and Saintly Sufferers: Writing Disability in YA** (Sophie Trist, Nikki Lyssy, Natalia Sylvester)

In-person event

Event category: Children’s & Young Adult Literature

Millions of teens live with disabilities both visible and invisible, but they almost never see themselves accurately represented in the fiction they read. This panel features three disabled women who write about disabled teens in contemporary, historical, and fantastic settings. Each author will read briefly from her work an discuss the joys and pitfalls of writing disability in YA, with a focus on how we shatter ableist stereotypes and function in YA spaces as disabled authors.

**Beyond ChatGPT: How Human Beings Are Creating Subtle Literature with AI** (Laird Harrison, Sasha Stiles, K Allado-McDowell, Jesse Damiani)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

In the two years since ChatGPT first chirped onto the scene, many writers have recoiled from its trite poetry and flat fiction. But chatbots are at the bland end of the AI writing spectrum. Approached in the spirit of combinatory literature, bespoke AI tools can produce surprising and affecting texts. While acknowledging real concerns, a poet, an essayist, a fiction writer, and a literary critic will describe how interacting with the large language models has enhanced their work.

**Beyond Definitions of Diaspora – Korean Women Poets Breaking & Building Poetics** (Sarah Audsley, Rosanna Oh, Tiana Nobile, Marci Calabretta Canio-Bello, Ae Hee Lee)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Korean American women poets will offer their insights on what it means to break and build poetic identities, to move beyond perceived definitions of Korean diaspora, displacement, kinship, and (un)belonging. Korean women poets’ contributions to contemporary American poetry will be highlighted through their individual contributions, and will demonstrate how their work advances the field. Each poet will read a poem, which will be followed by a moderated discussion.

**Beyond English: Multilingual Creative Writing Pedagogies** (José De Pierola, Sarah Lumba-Tajonera, Francezca Kwe, James Shea)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Multilingual creative writing programs and pedagogies remain quite rare, but they do exist. Ranging from universities in El Paso, Hong Kong, and Manila, such unique programs allow students to express themselves across more than one language and more than one culture. This diverse panel of educators from around the world explores the nature of multilingual creative writing pedagogies with an eye toward their value for students and their resistance to the global dominance of English.

**Beyond large PR budgets: Launching a Book and Reaching your Readers** (Namrata Poddar, Myriam Chancy, Susannah Rodriguez Drissi, Madhushree Ghosh, Ruchika Tulshyan)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

Writers from diverse background share ways in which authors can attract and nurture the intended audience for their work, especially within an industry documented to be predominantly white at the highest levels of gatekeeping. This panel is especially geared toward writers who are finishing or shopping a manuscript or are about to publish a book through a traditional publisher, and who do not have access to a large budget—their own or their publisher's—to pay for book-promotion services.

**Beyond Nostalgia: Writing and Rewriting Diaspora** (Jane Alberdeston, Grisel Yolanda Acosta, Zeina Hashem Beck, Marianne Chan, Luisa Igloria)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Five poets explore the different tactics they call on in order to expand on received notions of writing in the diaspora. How does nostalgia inform or redefine our ideas of home and belonging? How do we seek to rewrite dominant, colonial histories from within, while navigating the obstacles of erasure and rejection? Through shared personal experiences and insights on craft, this panel aims to illuminate the richly unfolding complexities of diasporic literature and its transformative power.

**Beyond Our Labor: Writing Our Lives as Farmworkers** (Miguel M. Morales, Oswaldo Vargas, Aideed Medina, Allison Adelle Hedge Coke, Manuel Muñoz)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Driven to honor farmworker creativity and resiliency, especially in the current political climate, contributors to The Common magazine's Farmworker Portfolio (issue 26) invite you to witness our farmworker pasts and to explore and celebrate texts that influence our writings and pedagogical choices in traditional and nontraditional classrooms. We're diverse in age, education, location, orientation, and stages of our writing careers. We'll also share our #FarmworkerLit inspirations and aspirations

**Beyond Syd Field: Decolonizing the Screenwriting Workshop** (Sara Graefe, Zac Hug, Kathryn Mockler, Fabio Montanari)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Since the publication of Syd Field’s seminal text Screenplay in 1979, three-act dramatic structure has been the cornerstone of screenwriting pedagogy. But as literary circles engage in conversations around race, diversity and inclusion (i.e. with Chavez’s The Anti-Racist Writing Workshop and Salesses’ Craft in the Real World), is it time for screenwriters to have the same moment of reckoning? Join four screenwriting instructors as they discuss approaches to make their classrooms more inclusive.

**Beyond the Linear: Supporting “Non-traditional” Memoirs by BIPOC Voices** (Lorena Hernandez Leonard, Anri Wheeler, Anjali Mitter Duva, Theresa Okokon, Artress Bethany White)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

Writers of fragmented/non-linear memoirs face unique challenges, from workshop feedback to finding agents; pressured to fit into “traditional” packaging to be more palatable. But this comes at high cost, especially for BIPOC writers. We write as we do because the structures often taught as “cannon” don’t serve our stories. BIPOC writers (one who launched a publishing company) will discuss staying true to our voices. By disrupting dominant narratives, we aim to reshape the literary landscape.

**Beyond the Slush: Engaging Students in Literary Publishing** (Paul Jaskunas, Gerald Maa, Dora Malech, Emily Everett, Anna Lena Phillips Bell)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

College-based literary journals have traditionally tasked students with reading the slush pile, but there are alternative, and perhaps preferable, ways that students can contribute to the enterprise. How can journals better serve students, allowing them to develop diverse skills and interests? How can faculty work with student staff to inject fresh vitality and new perspectives into their publications? Hear from five editors who are working with students in innovative, interdisciplinary ways.

**Beyond Tiger Moms and Model Minorities: Imagining the Asian American Family** (Kim Liao, Kirstin Chen, Jimin Han, Beth Nguyen, Matt Salesses)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

When crafting family dynamics in literature, avoiding stereotypes is paramount; but what if you had a tiger mom? What if you played both piano and violin? How can we render the experiences of our cultural upbringings in ways that are both broadly recognizable and uniquely specific? In a lively discussion, Asian American fiction and nonfiction authors will tackle this important writing question: how to give voice to cultural family values that feel both authentic and universal?

**Beyond Translation: Two Writers, Two Languages** (S.L. (Sandi) Wisenberg, Mary Hawley, Silvia Goldman, Michael Warr, Chun Yu)

In-person event

Event category: Translation

A community workshop for African-American and Chinese writers. An exchange between two bilingual poets, one American, one Uruguayan-born, who translate and respond to one another's poems with more poems. A collaboration between a French professor and a creative writer based on prison letters written by a female Resistance fighter. We describe our experiences, projects, and our processes in creating our own new work, and teaching others to create new work.

**Big & Bodied: Writing Against Fatphobia** (Emma Copley Eisenberg, Carmen Maria Machado, Isle McElroy, Renee Watson, Mecca Jamilah Sullivan)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

In a world where fat bodies are disdained and eating disorders are stigmatized, how can fiction illuminate what it feels like to live and hunger in a body today? How do the answers to these questions change when the bodies are also bodies of color and trans bodies? How do we navigate a fatphobic professional industry? Five fiction writers of recent and critically acclaimed novels and short story collections with a focus on bodily experience read from their work and discuss their strategies.

**Birthing Books and Babies: Navigating the Double Bind of Caregiving and Writing** (Kaitlin Solimine, Marie Mutsuki Mockett, Natashia Deon, Daniel Tam-Claiborne, Camille Dungy)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

The double bind of caregiving and artistic pursuit can feel incongruous—yet why does the metaphor of “birthing a book” exist and is that what publishing is like? Are parenting and writing in competition with one another or can both identities exist simultaneously, and, dare we consider, fruitfully? Published authors at diverse stages of child rearing and publication journey share their experiences and provide new frameworks for conversation and engagement on this nuanced subject matter.

**Book Tours: Wisdom & Warning from Those Who've Gone Before** (Minna Dubin, Maggie Smith, Susan Ito, Curtis Chin, Brad Balukjian)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

"Unless you're selling out stadiums like Michelle Obama, presses don't pay for book tours" is a common sentiment heard by new authors. But is it true? With wisdom won from experience, this panel will share mistakes, successes, & advice learned from our own in-person & virtual tours. We'll talk money, travel choices, tactics for filling seats, what to do when only 2 people show up, tricky audience members, conversation partners, whether to bring family along, & how to not burn out.

**Books of Purpose—From Empathy to Activism** (Viet Dinh, Sunu Chandy, Jeffrey Dale Lofton, Christine Maul Rice, Jody Hobbs Hesler)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

Most good books foster empathy. Some cross into advocacy and activism. What’s different about writing and promoting books of purpose? How can we steward our messages with accountability and integrity? Panelists, representing a range of disciplines and lived experiences, will detail the role advocacy plays in their events and work and will describe how they ensure that their work is helpful and sensitive to the communities and causes they’re writing about.

**Breaking All the Rules: Un-governing the Contemporary Sex Poem** (Keetje Kuipers, Chen Chen, Eric Tran, Luther Hughes, Erika Meitner)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Reflecting on sex and literature, Melissa Febos writes, “When something seems difficult, in writing and in life, we tend to make rules around it.” But rules were made to be broken—or re-invented—and this panel will share strategies for writing poems that push back against cultural norms that attempt to govern sex on and off the page, as well as the ways that allowing a fuller sexual existence into our poems can create more space for explorations of humor, grief, play, and even our deepest rage.

**Breaking Walls: Heirs of Angel Island Write Against the Anti-Chinese West** (Jeffrey Thomas Leong, Teow LIm Goh, Brandon Som, Claire Hong, Tom Lin)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Against the legacy of the Chinese Exclusion Act which set the xenophobic tone of current US immigration policy, and the harsh detentions at Angel Island, five writers of Chinese descent grapple with personal and collective history. From different generational stances as immigrants and mixed-race persons, they employ multiple genres—poetry, fiction, memoir and translation—to interrogate injustice. They’ll discuss strategies for subverting racial tropes and engaging lyric language to true a past.

**Building a Creative Writing Program: A Student's Perspective** (Josh Wood, Anika Desai, Olivia Le, David Bae, Sam Holt)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

The Creative Writing Conservatory at the Orange County School of the Arts (OCSA) is the largest high school writing program in the country, with 180 students and 30+ semester courses. Graduates include YoungArts Presidential Scholars, a Yale Clapp Award recipient, and countless regional award winners. OCSA's sister campus in the San Gabriel Valley houses a similar conservatory of 100. Current students will discuss the curriculum and events that help them develop their voices best.

**But It Wasn’t Written in English: Translated Literature in the CW Classroom** (Bonnie Chau, May-lee Chai, Jennifer Tseng, C Dylan Bassett)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

What happens when creative writing syllabi include texts not originally written in English? What new dimensions does translated literature add to conversations about writing process, craft, language, and revision? This panel’s writer-teachers discuss the meaningful insights that emerge when questions about translation are invited to the college CW classroom. They address concerns about teaching non-English texts, share advice, and reflect on what translation brings to their writing and teaching.

**California Counternarratives: Stories that Re-Map the State** (Keenan Norris, Susan Straight, Alex Espinoza, Vanessa Hua, Jean Guerrero)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

This panel will feature award winning writers Alex Espinoza, Jean Guerrero, Susan Straight and Vanessa Hua in a dialogue about how their narratives, fictional and real, have countered prevailing understandings of the state from the 1980s through the present. Keenan Norris will moderate the panel.

Looking beyond their work, the writers will discuss how emerging writers based in the state continue to recast California.

**Callaloo Literary Journal: The Revitalization of a Legacy** (Vievee Francis, Jacinda Townsend, Crystal Wilkinson, Kyla Kupferstein Torres)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

Dr. Charles H. Rowell founded Callaloo in 1976. It quickly emerged as the most essential journal for African American and African Diaspora studies worldwide. Upon his retirement, the journal struggled to continue publishing, but is now undergoing a revitalization. This panel will feature a conversation with Callaloo contributors and editors, past and present, about the challenges faced by small publications, particularly those that are run by and champion the work of Black people.

**Can Creative Writing Save the English Department?** (Nicholas Taylor, Keenan Norris, Micheline Marcom, Brendan Mathews, Tommy Mouton)

In-person event

Event category: Program Development

In 2023, Nathan Heller’s essay “The End of the English Major” caused a panic when it described humanities enrollments “in free fall.” Indeed, the overall number of English majors is down, but interest in creative writing remains strong. We examine how the rise of creative writing as an academic discipline has changed the English department and offer suggestions for what we might do as writers and faculty members to preserve the place of literature in our institutions.

**Can I Write That? At the Crossroads of Social Change and Conscious Language** (Stephanie Lenox, Kavita Das, Sonya Huber, Paisley Rekdal, Karen Yin)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Writers know words matter, but they are not all that matters. Our craft exists within a personal, social, historical, and cultural framework. We face constant linguistic change and concerns about cultural appropriation, tokenism, stereotypes, and other harmful representations. This session investigates how we can adopt inclusive, socially responsible approaches to creative projects. Presenters steeped in how writing inspires change will explore creative freedom and cultural sensitivity.

**Can Writers “Live The Dream”?: On Paying the Bills While Doing What You Love** (Namrata Poddar, Erika Wurth, Jennifer Baker, Ari Honarvar, Bruna Dantas Lobato)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

This panel confronts the controversial relationship between Art and money, and the many ways in which writers support themselves financially on the path, pay their bills, navigate publishing (that isn’t known to be transparent with money, numbers, book advances and outreach), advocate for themselves, ask for fair compensation for their labor, and do the work they love. This conversation is especially geared toward writers who don’t have access to generational, family or spousal wealth.

**Cancer and Creativity: Turning Personal Challenges into Plays** (Catalina Florescu, Alice Cohen, Susan Miller, Lia Romeo)

In-person event

Event category: Playwriting & Screenwriting

Panelists discuss how they bring their experience with cancer into playwriting, using humor, theatricality, and magic realism to engage with the overwhelming real-life drama of a medical diagnosis. Using personal experience with cancer as a springboard for theatrical or non-realistic storytelling for the stage, these intergenerational playwrights share approaches to writing about cancer's effect on relationships with family and with self, and ways of conjuring the internal drama of the body.

**Combining Community and Mentorship to Help Build a Screenwriting Career** (Colette Sartor, Lisanne Sartor, Winnie Kemp, Patrick Tobin, Eirene Donohue)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

As solitary as writing can be, it also requires a supportive community of peers and mentors, particularly for emerging TV and screenwriters, who must master not only the craft of writing for the screen but also the intricacies of the entertainment business and a writer’s place in it. This panel will discuss how emerging TV and screenwriters can establish a community of writers, producers, development executives, managers, and agents who can support and mentor them throughout their careers.

**Come to Play: Incorporating Play and Games in the Creative Writing Classroom** (Chloe Rodriguez, Esther Okonkwo, LI ZHUANG, Gwen Niekamp)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

In 1996, Harvard educator Colette Daiute pointed out the critical role of play in teaching writing. By integrating playful activities like storytelling games, role-playing, and collaborative writing exercises, teachers can create more interactive and supportive workshops. In this panel, four multi-genre, college-level instructors/writers from the United States, Nigeria, and China discuss the specific ways they incorporate play into hands-on activities, and cultivate a learner-centered classroom

**Conflict—Hell Is Story-friendly; Put Your Protagonist among the Damned** (Kristina Gorcheva-Newberry, Caroline Kim, Matthew Lansburgh, Raul Palma, Maurice Carlos Ruffin)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Conflict remains essential to any work of fiction. It propels the story forward as the characters struggle to seek resolution and solicit empathy. Five diverse award-winning authors of realistic and speculative fiction will discuss different types of conflict, underscoring various principles and techniques that can effectively improve and/or define it and make the story as charged and compelling as possible.

**Confronting the Divine: Writing Through and About Religious Trauma** (Andrew J Romriell, Nicole Hardy, Nick White, Denne Michele Norris, Melissa Faliveno)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Writing is a place of sanctuary, and amidst worldwide growing religious extremism, this has become especially true for those writing through religious trauma. Doing so can incite a range of powerful emotions: anger over what’s been done, grief over what’s been lost, or fear over what confronting these institutions might lead to. In this cross-genre panel, five writers from varying religious backgrounds discuss how they generate writing that confronts, disrupts, heals, and redefines spirituality.

**Connecting Communities through Creative Writing** (giovanni singleton, Lauri Scheyer, Aldon Lynn Nielsen, Will Alexander, Mike Sonksen)

In-person event

Event category: Program Development

At Cal State LA, Creative Writing is integral to the university's mission and history as a means to build internal and external community. In 2025, Statement Magazine, a past winner of the AWP Program Directors Prize, celebrates its 75th anniversary, and the Center for Contemporary Poetry & Poetics celebrates its 20th anniversary. A variety of stakeholders discuss ways that creative writing strengthens universities and builds beneficial bonds with the community using Cal State LA as an example.

**Craft for Crafters: How Fiber Arts, Book Arts, and More Shape Our Writing** (Meg Cass, Felicia Rose Chavez, Emrys Donaldson, Genevieve Kaplan, Sarah Minor )

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Crafts such as sewing, quilting, and collage can enrich creative writing. Working across genres, we explore how our practices with form and language, fabric and scissor, overlap and expand one another. We consider the direct connections between revising prose and the physicality of fiber arts, how freely crocheted garments can offer a story structure, how a knot can be a period, how book arts can inspire creative nonfiction and more. Through craft(ing), we find new ways to be writers.

**Crafting Flash Narratives: Empowering Student Voices Through Micro Storytelling** (Britta Stromeyer, Kim Culbertson, Ran Walker, Grant Faulkner, Darien Hsu Gee)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

In its concise form, flash fiction offers expansive practice for creative writers. Micro storytelling offers a trove of treasures for effectively teaching a variety of literary devices, terminology, writing voice, and process in a targeted way. Teaching writing with flash fiction is a pedagogy of craft and specificity while honoring writing students’ narratives and unique voices. Learn how to invigorate your teaching approach (and your own writing!) Inspire with the magic of flash narratives.

**Crafting Powerful Stories (with difficult topics) for Young Readers** (Rex Ogle, Paula Yoo, Aaron Aceves, Abdi Nazeman, Elisa Bryant)

In-person event

Event category: Children’s & Young Adult Literature

Modern readers are living in difficult times--luckily, stories offer an escape. But books also act as mirrors and windows for young readers to see themselves and come to better understand others. Creating strong narratives with universal emotional arcs is no easy feat, especially in a time when we need more diversity in our media as book bans flourish.

Join authors Paula Yoo, Abdi Nazemian, Elise Bryant, Aaron Aceves and Rex Ogle as they discuss culture, identity, and a love of story.

**Crafting the Memoir in Essays** (Nicole Graev Lipson, Freda Epum, Emily Raboteau, José Vadi, Eiren Caffall)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

The memoir in essays has taken off as a form in recent years, appealing to writers and readers alike. What distinguishes this genre from its closest siblings—the memoir and the essay collection—and what are its unique imaginative possibilities? Is there something about our current age that lends itself to this nonlinear storytelling mode in particular? In this panel, five authors discuss their journeys conceiving, developing, and publishing their memoirs in essays, sharing what they’ve learned.

**Creating Literary Community in an Isolating Landscape** (Brian Dunlap, Cati Porter, Marilynn Montano, Eddy M. Gana)

In-person event

Event category: Writers’ Conferences & Centers

In a city and region famous for being so spread out, Southern California can be a lonely and isolating place. So, how does one build and sustain community, much less a literary community that is authentically supportive and inclusive? What are the issues the literary community faces in building such a community and how can it improve? A panel of authors and arts administrators from across the region discuss how they help to build and sustain the literary community in such an isolating region.

**Creating Your Own Solo Show** (Steve Budd, Joyful Raven, Kenny Yun, Heather Dowling, Mark Kenward)

In-person event

Event category: Playwriting & Screenwriting

Do you have a story you’d like to take from the page to the stage? Our panel of award-winning solo performers, writers, directors, and producers will speak about how to get to the heart of your story; how to turn narration into scenes and dialogue; how to create distinct characters using dialogue, physicality, and vocal changes; and, most importantly, how to tell an engaging story that needs to be told. Other topics to be discussed: working with a director and taking your show on tour.

**Creative Confinement: Using Constraints to Amplify Your Work** (Tom McAllister, Kathleen Rooney, Darien Hsu Gee, Sharon De La Cruz, Naomi Cohn)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Though it may seem counterintuitive, one of the best ways to generate and shape material is to impose constraints on your work. These multi-genre panelists will discuss various restrictions they’ve applied to their writing, both in early drafts and in revisions, and will discuss techniques that apply to poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and graphic literature. This panel will also offer methods for bringing generative constraints into the classroom to help students develop their work.

**Creativity as Armor: Crafting Narratives of Power and Resilience** (Rafael Agustin, Julissa Arce, Reyna Grande, Christopher Rivas)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

This panel brings together a diverse panel of Latino screenwriters, cultural critics, and memoirists to explore how writing can serve as a powerful tool to challenge dominant narratives, amplify overlooked stories, and inspire collective action in troubling times. Panelists will share insights into their creative process, the joys and challenges of crafting their personal stories, and their approach to finding strength through their art.

**Criminalized Lit** (Amber Dawn U, Casey Plett, Danny Ramadan, Lindsay Wong, Janine Joseph)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

There is inherent risk in writing about our lives. What if our lives and our stories are criminalized, banned, in violation of immigration or civil law, or strip us of the right of return to our country of origin? This panel speaks to so-called incriminating admissions in our writing. We will share experiences of writing with this level of risk, and strategies for working with other criminalized writers in our roles as educators, publishers and queer, trans and displaced community-based artists.

**Crowned with Laurels: The Role of the Poet Laureate in a Contemporary Age** (Oliver de la Paz, Patricia Spears Jones, Mag Gabbert, Tess Taylor, Jennifer Militello)

In-person event

Event category: Program Development

The first Poet Laureate was named to office in 1315. But what does it mean to be a Poet Laureate in 2024, amid a digital age marked by political unrest, widespread threats to the arts, and a continually evolving poetic landscape? How do laureates build and sustain literary community? Address access and representation? What is the state of poetry in their jurisdictions? Five poets representing various states, cities, and counties will discuss what it takes to champion this enigmatic genre.

**Damaged Bodies in a World: Jewish Poets Writing the Body and the Body Politic** (Owen Lewis, Jessica Jacobs, Jehanne Dubrow, Yehoshua Novemnber)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

In “Contradictions: Tracking Poems,” Adrienne Rich explains that the challenge of being a poet is to find links between “the pain / of any one’s body with the pain of the body’s world.” How do Jewish poets write about the experience of living in Jewish bodies, all while connecting to larger experiences of trauma? Five poets from diverse Jewish literary traditions will discuss approaches they use to balance the intimate bodily stories with large-scale narratives that lie beyond the self.

**Dark-Lit Awakening: Rethinking the Lyric Moment** (Francesca Bell, Luke Johnson, dion oreilly, Jessica Cuello, Farnaz Fatemi)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

The lyric moment might be described as a moment of ecstatic awe when time stops. Rilka's "You must change your life" comes to mind. But what about those time-stopping moments that feel hopeless or horrible? Regardless of labels like brutal, confessional, or trauma-laden—any emotion can trigger the lyric moment and possess its own beauty. We will discuss aspects of craft and attitude that--despite difficult content--facilitate the ignition of the lyric moment.

**Dear Yusef: Quotes, Notes, and Anecdotes For and About One Mr. Komunyakaa** (John Murillo, Didi Jackson, Major Jackson, Adrian Matejka, Nicole Sealey)

In-person event

Event category: Tributes

Yusef Komunyakaa is not only one of the most influential poets of the last half century, but also one if its most beloved teachers and mentors. This panel features fellow poets, friends, and former students reading from the anthology gathered in his honor, Dear Yusef: Letters, Poems, and Essays For and About One Mr. Komunyakaa.

**Debunking Myths around Getting Started in Translation, Sponsored by ALTA** (Amanda L. Andrei, Diana Arterian, Elisa Wouk Almino, KB Thors)

In-person event

Event category: Translation

What is literary translation? How does one begin? For the uninitiated, the monolingual, and the curious, translation can feel dauntingly niche. Yet it is a vital and enriching practice with the potential to connect people across the globe. In this panel, we will share our journeys of translating prose, poetry, and drama from finding that first text to publication. We will debunk myths surrounding the craft and provide insights into how to responsibly and ethically begin translating.

**Debut You! How to Bring Your Poetry Book to Market** (Katie Prince, Sarah Ghazal Ali, Megan Pinto, Ally Ang, Margot Kahn)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

Five poets publishing debuts in 2024-25 will discuss the resources, time, and tactics with which they approached book promotion. With day-job expertise ranging from strategic marketing and grant writing to editing and communications, they’ll share how to divide time between writing and publicity, create a budget, send cold emails when you’re a stone-cold introvert, plan readings, pitch reviews, and more. If you’ve got a book on the way or in the works, this panel is for you.

**Diasporic Dreaming: Anti-Zionist Jewish Writers On and Off the Page** (Emma Copley Eisenberg, Sam Cohen, noam keim, Qian Julie Wang, Temim Fruchter)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

As anti-Zionist Jewish writers, our writing provides a space for us to dream of a diasporic world where our Jewishness is about liberation and solidarity, and not bound up in a nation-state. As we bear witness to genocide in Gaza, centering anti-Zionist values in our work feels essential. What can an anti-Zionist Jewish literature look like? Five Jewish writers discuss how anti-Zionism shows on our pages, in our navigation of the literary landscape, and in our imaginations.

**DISABILITY & THE RESIDENCY EXPERIENCE** (Monika Burczyk, Leslie McIntosh, Orchid Tierney, Kay Ulanday Barrett, Beth Weeks)

In-person event

Event category: Program Development

As residencies seek to expand inclusion and widen engagement, how do those who identify as disabled navigate the expectations, facilities and cohort combinations so that they can engage fully in the residency experience? What are best practices for organizations in providing essential accommodations as well as meaningful stipends to offset travel and associated costs of a residency?

We will explore these questions through the experiences of four writers who self-identify as disabled.

**Disabled & D/deaf Writers Caucus** (Cade Leebron, Jess Silfa, Emily Rose Cole)

In-person event

Event category: Caucus

The Disabled & D/deaf Writers Caucus allows for those who are disabled or living with chronic illness, and their allies, to network and discuss common challenges related to identity, writing, and teaching while professionally leading a literary life. By meeting annually at the AWP conference, we aim to archive our interests, challenges, and concerns in order to increase our visibility and emphasize our importance both to this organization and to the communities where we live, teach, and work.

**Disaster Gays and Messy Femmes** (Nic Anstett, K-Ming Chang, Mariah Rigg, Puloma Ghosh, Kayla Upadhyaya)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Join five female writers in a discussion and celebration of writing self-destructive and unlikable queer women in fiction. Panelists will explore what draws them to reading and writing about flawed women, the unique societal pressures and expectations placed on queer fiction, and how to craft a compelling gay disaster.

**Disrupting the Composition Classroom: Strategies from BIPOC Creatives** (Cynthia Guardado, Michelle Brittan Rosado, bridgette bianca, Arielle Jones, Simona Supekar)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

How can creative writers bring their expertise to the composition classroom? This panel will discuss how women of color/genderqueer creative writers challenge “traditional” white supremacist frameworks in college-level composition courses. Panelists will discuss creative teaching strategies that center racial justice, and promote supportive spaces for all voices. We will share assignments that engage collective knowledge and allow students to see the power they already possess as writers.

**Do the Hustle: How to Publicize Your Book** (Sasha Vasilyuk, Ruth Madievsky, Kathy Daneman, Elise Hu, Rasheed Newson)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

In today’s crowded publishing landscape, getting publicity for your book is essential for reaching readers, supporting sales, and increasing your chances of publishing your next book. Yet many in-house publicists—if you’re lucky to be assigned one—are stretched thin, making it essential for writers to learn how to garner publicity. Come get PR tips and tricks from 4 debut authors and a freelance publicist, including building media contacts, placing op-eds/essays, and using social media for PR.

**Dwelling in Possibility: How Libraries Can Help Your Writing Career** (Elizabeth Galoozis, Cybele García Kohel, Lisa Eve Cheby, Lauren Salerno)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Libraries are not just for readers. Libraries -- including K12, public, and academic libraries -- are excellent resources that should be on every writer’s list of support. This multi-genre panel of writer-librarians - Cybele García Kohel, Lauren Salerno, Elizabeth Galoozis, and Lisa Eve Cheby - will share their knowledge, strategies, and best practices for how writers can connect with libraries and librarians for research, community, workshops, and book promotions.

**Ecopoetics in a Time of Grief: Queer and Trans Perspectives** (Cass Donish, Paul Tran, S. Yarberry, Elijah Guerra, Luther Hughes)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

What is queer and trans about ecopoetics? In this panel, five poets—with intimate connections to L.A.—will respond to the conditions of our shared world. We’ll explore relationships between queer poetics, trans grief, colonial violence, and environmental justice to arrive at why we must queer our contact with a suffering planet and its communities. We’ll consider speculative aesthetics, genre hybridity, and prosody as resistance, and as forms of engagement with bodies and climates in transition.

**Electric Conduit: Poetics, Translation & the Digital Age** (Mathew Timmons, David Shook, Alan Sobrino, Omar Pimienta, Alana Levinson)

In-person event

Event category: Translation

In an era of digital glut, translation offers an engaging experience across cultures by literally making us think in another's language and syntax. This panel explores translation as an art, focusing on the translator's choices as a pathway through cultural difference and an opportunity to create new connections. Panelists will discuss balancing form and content, the cultural and political implications of translation, and how to ensure translation remains viable in the digital age.

**Everybody gets a stage: Starting a reading series that builds community** (Katie Lee Ellison, Jessica Johnson, Wil Turner, Jen Winston, Jason Koo)

In-person event

Event category: Program Development

As we lose so many essential and communal literary pillars, writers and readers seek ways to find each other, learn from each other, and hear new work. The emergence of reading series nationally in the last few years reveals a desire for connection that won’t be left unfed. Join us to learn how to start your own reading series, grow one you’ve already started, and hear from both new and established events series founders about how to build a new community from scratch and keep it thriving.

**Excuse My Beauty: Queer Indigenous Poetics, Story, and Time** (Jake Skeets, No'u Revilla, Michael Wasson, Billy-Ray Belcourt)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

"Excuse My Beauty" is a phrase borrowed from the late Stephanie Yellowhair. Excuse my Beauty will be a celebration of the diverse and vibrant work of queer Indigenous poets who span landscape, waters, and histories. The poets will read from their own work and the work of others, while engaging in a vital discussion on how time and story are entangled in poetry and how they each invigorate Indigenous sovereignty both here in the United States and abroad.

**Experiments in Time** (Hillary Brenhouse, Jaquira Díaz, Sasha Fletcher, Shze-Hui Tjoa, Elissa Washuta)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Across genres, writers interested in formal experimentation have arrived at new layers of emotion and meaning by playing with time. In this panel, authors of time-bending fiction, nonfiction, and poetry will discuss how they've resisted linearity and also why—whether it's to more authentically represent the workings of memory, to challenge colonial story structures, to capture alternate histories, to conjure other worlds, or to demonstrate the circularity of trauma and desire.

**EYES WIDE: EXPLORING THE EXTENDED EKPHRASTIC** (Tess Taylor, Dean Rader, Victoria Chang, Allison Rollins, Tyree Daye)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Ekphrasis— "adding commentary”— traditionally lets a poet meditate on a single work of art. But increasingly poets are upending and enlarging ekphrastic forms, extending the ekphrastic to include art practices, artist’s lives, and historic, familial and personal archives. Extended ekphrastic touches other forms— autobiography, memoir, criticism, documentary poetry. In this panel, five poets with diverse working methods will examine the challenges and rewards of extending the frame.

**Failing Again, Failing Better: the Joys of Revision** (Chris Feliciano Arnold, RO Kwon, Ingrid Rojas Contreras, Lauren Markham, Camille Rankine)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Must revision be all tax and toil? How might it be a process of exaltation and discovery, of further connecting with the thing we’re making to better understand what it needs of us? This cross-genre panel featuring widely published writers of poetry, memoir, journalism, essays and fiction will engage with the challenges and demands of revision, and offer insight into their own revision strategies, including before and after samples and visual portrayals of their revision processes over time.

**Family Secrets: A Storyteller's Bounty, or Curse?** (Aimee Liu, Colette Sartor, David Francis, Toni Ann Johnson, Elle Johnson)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Many writers use their families’ most closely held mysteries and secrets as subject matter. But not all relatives cooperate. And not all stories make sense when pulled from hiding. Vital pieces may be missing, essential informants deceased. Transforming artifacts and shards of memory into literature that rings true can be both vexing and seductive. In this panel, five award-winning fiction and nonfiction authors and screenwriters discuss the perils and rewards of writing around family secrets.

**Feeling FATastic: The Poetics of Pleasure, Sexuality, and Liberation** (Claudia Cortese, Emilia Phillips, Ysabel Gonzalez, Omotara James, Diamond Forde)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

This panel explores the craft of writing fat pleasure and joy. Narratives about fat people often center harm–eating disorders, bullying, body shaming. These topics are important components of the fat experience, but reducing people to their trauma is ultimately dehumanizing. The panelists will discuss how to use sensory details, musicality, voice, lineation, and storytelling to write poems that celebrate the pleasures of eating, sexuality, embodiment, belonging.

**Fighting The Muzzle: Literary Organizing For Palestine During Genocide** (Glenn Shaheen, George Abraham, Lana Barkawi, Susan Abulhawa)

In-person event

Event category: Program Development

The invasion and genocide of Gaza has cost the lives of almost 40,000 Palestinians. In the United States, even acknowledging this unconscionable atrocity has been labeled as “complicated.” The leaders of three prominent Arab/SWANA literary organizations (Mizna, RAWI, and Palestine Writes) discuss the ways they have been silenced trying to promote Palestinian, Arab, and Southwest Asian and North African literature, and the methods they’ve used to break through this silence.

**Filipino Writers on Diasporic Subjectivity & Postcolonial Prosodies** (Paula Mendoza, Alleliah Nuguid, Kimberly Garza, Oliver de la Paz, Kay Ulanday Barrett)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Panel discussion exploring the Filipino diasporic subject's relationship to/with the English language, our distinct positionalities, and how these inform our writing practice. What does the journey of understanding our colonial history, alongside embracing our creative vocation, look like? In what ways do our stories, characters, and poetics contend with the legacy of US imperialism? What accents our grief, curiosity, and joy? How do we think and write about tahanan or ‘home’?

**Find Your Submission Groove: Cultivate Radically Different Paths to Publication** (Michele Berger, Susan Lee, Elizabeth Silver, Julia Fierro)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Submission is a critical step toward publication. It is second only to writing, but writers are often ill-prepared for the submission process. Join us to hear our radically different paths to publication, and how you can use our submission strategies to support your publication goals. We discuss mindset, too. We draw upon our experiences as editors, multiple genre writers, and working with large publishers and small presses. Participants leave with 5-10 concrete ideas for a submission plan.

**Finding Today in the Past: Writing Relevant Historical Fiction** (Martha Conway, Elizabeth Costello, K.M. Soehnlein, Natashia Deone, Freeman Eng)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Historical fiction provides contemporary readers with more than an escape from current affairs — it illuminates the throughline of human experience. While we continue to change our environment, laws, and customs, our concerns and desires remain relatively constant. Five writers rooted in feminist, LGBTQ, Black, and Asian communities discuss their choice to set their work in a different time and their strategies for creating characters and situations that are relevant to today’s readers.

**Forms of Grief: The Craft of Writing Elegiac Poetry** (Kate Gaskin, Jim Whiteside, Amanda Gunn, Carolina Hotchandani, Cintia Santana)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

When writing contemporary elegies, how does utilizing a variety of forms—fixed, hybrid, broken, nonce, etc.— influence our individual poems, as well as our poetic projects as a whole? How do expressions of spirituality, sexuality, gender, and race intersect with elegiac forms? How can the act of writing poetry organize and provide structure for grief, if such a thing is even possible? Five poets discuss the intersection of craft, practice, and experience when writing in the elegiac mode.

**Fragmentos: Reclaiming Hybridity and Fragmentation Through Latine Narratives** (Ofelia Montelongo, Norma Cantu, Gloria Muñoz, Viktoria Valenzuela, Emilly Prado)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Latin American literature has a rich history of fragmented storytelling paved by Borges, Luiselli and other contemporary Latines. From the borderlands to Colombia, authors from the Latine diaspora are reframing Latin America’s rich history of fragmented storytelling. Fragmentation is a means of self preservation to stitch back-and-forth through time and space, echolocate personal truth and examine histories, and to help us protect ourselves while writing through layers of colonization.

**From Dusk ‘til Dawn: Exploring Nocturnes and Aubades** (Amy Ash, Amorak Huey, Tatiana Johnson-Boria, Curtis L. Crisler, Kevin McKelvey)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Nature’s voltas, dusk and dawn are periods of tension, anticipation, and dramatic change. As poems of beginnings and endings, longing and leave-taking, dreamlike wonder and song, the nocturne and the aubade engage liminal spaces of possibility and transformation. How do poets harness the power of these twilight periods? How do they draw from the inherent tensions of these poetic modes? This panel will explore the complexity and abundant offerings, the push and pull of these evocative poems.

**From Prose to Screen and Back Again** (Dani Hedlund, Hart Hanson, Charlie Jane Anders, Bart Nickerson)

In-person event

Event category: Playwriting & Screenwriting

How do writers transcend medium to bring impactful characters and gripping tales to the page and the screen? What challenges face a writer adapting their work, or simply shifting from the written to spoken word and vice versa. This panel will explore the meaningful differences between screenwriting and novel writing, the obstacles inherent to creating deep internal character arcs using dialogue and stage direction alone, and how writers mold their style for success in wildly different media.

**From Research to Recognition: Cultivating Public Visibility as an Academic** (Nanda Dyssou, Brittany Friedman, Stephanie Canizales, Donna Nicol)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

This presentation will offer a roadmap for academics interested in extending their influence beyond scholarly circles. Publicist Nanda Dyssou and panelists will focus on publicity and media engagement for academic and crossover books. Attendees will learn practical strategies for promoting their books, including best practices for media outreach, articulating research to the public, collaborating with non-academic organizations and individuals, and tactics for enhancing online visibility.

**From Satire to Dad Jokes: How Humor Can Be Literary, Political, and Funny** (Kathryn Fay, Kristen Arnett, K-Ming Chang, Alana Saab, Z. Hanna)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

As a fiction writer, how can you use humor to tell stories that describe human experiences, while also addressing forces such as racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia? What literary devices can you use? How do you work with editors who do not share your sense of humor? In this panel, four fiction writers—with different literary styles and types of humor—will share their new work and how they use humor in their novels and short stories.

**From Submission to Page—a Day in the Life of a Literary Magazine Editor** (Elizabeth Kadetsky, Emily Mitchell, Gerald Maa, Stephanie G'Schwind, Kyla Kupferstein Torres)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

In the movie version, the literary magazine editor is an alchemist who finds the soul in a manuscript. In real life, an editor also handles the nuts and bolts involved in the day to day running of a journal. In this panel, editors from five journals that regularly place work in the annual Best of... anthologies—Callaloo, Colorado Review, Georgia Review, and New England Review—discuss the fine points, from copyright issues to fact checking to bringing editing to the classroom.

**FUSE (Forum for Undergraduate Student Editors) Caucus** (Catherine Dent, Sarah Ledet, Emi Harris, Maggie Mauro)

In-person event

Event category: Caucus

How do we create, build, and sustain undergraduate literary magazines? How do we garner greater technical, administrative, and financial support? What editorial skillsets are most important, and how do we engage with the larger publishing scene?

Come meet other undergraduate writers, editors, and designers, and discuss the many opportunities and resources available to support you and your team.

**Future Forms: Inventing Literary Forms For the 21st Century** (Kai Carlson-Wee, Keith Wilson, Hua Xi, Alexandria Hall, Kate Folk)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

From the epic poem to the lyric essay, literary forms have often been used to reflect the spirit of their age. With the advent of AI and digital technologies, the way we imagine literary genre and poetic form is changing. Five award-winning writers will share their work and discuss the ways in which they have subverted traditional forms, blurred genres, incorporated technology into narrative, and invented new forms to reflect our contemporary moment.

**Getting Books into Reader’s Hands: Dare We Say Distribution?** (Madeleine Maillet, Suzi F. Garcia, Meg Reid, Casey Plett, Dan Wells)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

Distribution, the business of getting books into stores, is one of the most opaque aspects of small press publishing. Unfortunately, it’s also an important consideration to keep in mind when writers are going on submission, signing a deal, and promoting their book. Our panel of publishers will share the challenges that face self-distributed presses and writers, presses who were with SPD and have since gone to Asterism and Itasca, as well as those with big companies like Ingram and PGW.

**“Getting Out of Our Own Way”: Cultivating a sustainable writing practice** (Janet Fitch, Kali Fajardo-Anstine, Reyna Grande, Karen Connelly, Lorinda Toledo)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

How can writers cultivate a sustainable creative practice while paying the bills, growing a career, and accounting for domestic responsibilities? Award-winning authors with multiple books and diverse lived experiences discuss their ongoing journeys to do so—while also taking into consideration the roles of culture and institutions—as well as their best advice for tending to the mental, physical, and spiritual aspects of the writing life.

**Ghosting: The Privileges and Perils of Writing Someone Else’s Book** (Aimee Liu, Jennifer Carr, Amy Friedman, Victoria Veldhoen)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Ghostwriting plays a bigger role in the publishing ecosystem today than ever before. It’s not just celebrities who hire ghosts, but industry leaders and online influencers, as well as grandparents who want their story immortalized for future generations. There are even agents who specialize in matching writers with "authors." This panel of new and veteran ghostwriters share tips for securing a successful ghost project, as well as the professional pitfalls and rewards of this literary masquerade.

**Gil Cuadros: Queer Literary Love and AIDS in Latino/Chicano L.A.** (Terry Wolverton, Pablo Alvarez, Kevin Martin, Amy Scholder, Omar Gonzalez)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Trailblazing writer Gil Cuadros left an indelible mark on queer and Latinx literature with his groundbreaking 1994 book, City of God. Cuadros’ essential work continues to inspire and challenge. In 2024, City Lights released My Body Is Paper, a poignant collection of Cuadros’ previously unpublished writings. Powerful themes permeate Cuadros’ writing, including his unflinching portrayal of HIV/AIDS, his profound exploration of Chicanx identity, and the transformative potential of love and desire.

**Goin’ B(l)ack Home: Exploring Notions of Home, Migration and Return** (M Shelly Conner, Mecca Jamilah Sullivan, Marci Blackman, Deesha Philyaw, Sanderia Faye Smith)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

From “going down south” to going to the Motherland, Black writers have often been tasked with the discourse of home and belonging. But home has as much to do with place as it has to do with people– “who all over there?”

Five contemporary Black writers place their work in conversation with Toni Morrison, Audre Lorde and other Black canonical writers to examine narratives of leaving, returning and (un)belonging in home spaces; and home as a contested space for queer and marginalized bodies.

**Going Indie: Why and How to Work with Independent Publishers and Bookstores** (Lori Feathers, Yuka Igarashi, Alana Wilcox, Suzette Mayr, Corinna Vallianatos)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

How do independent presses and their authors collaborate throughout the process of publishing a book, from submission, acceptance, and editorial, to marketing, sales and beyond? How do these publishers work with distributors and indie bookstores to raise the profile of their authors and maximize sales? Representatives of indie presses in the US and Canada, their authors, and an indie bookstore owner share their practices and elaborate on their methods to foster a writer's work.

**Golem, Dybbuk, Leviathan, Azazel Goat: Jewish Folklore in Contemporary Fiction** (Maya Sonenberg, Anca Szilágyi, Thomas Balazs, Kate Bernheimer)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Biblical stories and Jewish folktales deploy what might be called “magical realism” to preserve Jewish customs and elucidate religious, cultural, political, and ethical concepts central to Judaism. While the connection may be to specific tales or solely stylistic, this panel explores the ways contemporary Jewish fiction writers deploy these tropes and allow the intrusion of the unexpected, the uncanny, or the mystical to capture the complexities of Jewish life.

**Good, Fast, Cheap: Short Film Screenwriting** (Austin Bunn, Ben Frahm, Taylor Vaughn Lasley, Tim Kirkman)

In-person event

Event category: Playwriting & Screenwriting

From Damien Chazelle ("Whiplash") to Taika Waititi ("Two Cars, One Night") to Andrea Arnold ("Wasp"), short film is where every great filmmaker starts. But the compelling short script is often overlooked in the pilot- or feature film-or-bust commercial market. Using excepts from unpublished, award-winning scripts, this panel brings together four working screenwriters to focus exclusively on the craft of the short: why they work, what mistakes to avoid, and what elevates one from good to great.

**Health, Healing and Hybridity: Crafting the Body Across Genre** (Jodi-Ann Burey, Jodi M. Savage, Renee Watson, Cynthia Manick)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

How do you love a body inhabiting a world that refuses to love them back? How do you render the body on the page when racism, fatphobia, sexism and other forms of institutional violence do not want these bodies to exist? From grief to love, cancer to disability, belonging to shape-shifting, haunting pasts and Afrofutures, four Black women authors within and across genre (poetry, memoir, novel, essays) discuss craft insights and healthful possibilities in centering the body in our stories.

**Hellbent Hope: Poets Holding Fast During This Time of Ecological Crisis** (Nickole Brown, David Baker, CMarie Fuhrman, Matthew Olzmann, Aimee Nezhukumatathil)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Now is a time of ecological crisis and mass extinction, so even if you don’t consider yourself a “nature” poet, all of us need to ask ourselves what the writer’s task is in this climate-changed world. Equally important is how to cope with despair, which can be incapacitating, threatening to silence us under its weight. Together, we’ll discuss how to bear witness to these coming storms and how to define hope in a way that might allow one to move forward with courage, awareness, and yes, even joy.

**Here and Now: Thoughts on The Second Indigenous Literary Renaissance** (Tiana Kahakauwila, Stacie Denetsosie, Kinsale Drake, Conley Lyons, Chelsea Hicks)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

The first Indigenous literary renaissance brought us thoughtful luminaries who influenced generations of writers with their craft and knowledge. Today, we're continuing that cultural movement as authors of many Native nations are writing dynamic, forward-thinking stories. Our panel discusses the craft of writing in our native languages, leveraging our unique perspectives & life experiences, and engaging in futurist thinking, all of which helps us shape the future for other Indigenous writers.

**Holy F\*\*k: Women, Faith, and Sex in Fiction** (Felicia Berliner, Aaliyah Bilal, Deesha Philyaw, Dantiel Moniz, Candice Marie Benbow)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Funny, offensive, or both—fiction that centers faith and sex breaks taboos on so many levels. For four authors writing about women and girls in various religious communities, the friction between religious beliefs and sexuality also offers a deeply generative context for revealing female protagonists’ identities. Panelists explore craft approaches to bringing the body and soul alive, together, on the page, and discuss strategies for navigating the public discourse about hot-button topics.

**Honoring California Indian poet Janice Gould: “Lungs Full of Indigenous Air"** (Deborah Miranda, Malea Powell, Jennifer Foerster, Kim Shuck, Ruth Nolan)

In-person event

Event category: Tributes

Janice Gould (1949–2019), an award-winning Koyangk'auwi Maidu writer, scholar and Two-Spirit, was a major force in the shaping of contemporary California Indian identity and literature. Born in San Diego, raised in Berkeley, Janice’s work is a post-genocide triumph of love. As Joy Harjo says, “Janice Gould was a real poet. [Her work] lays it all down, gives it up, and leans into the sound worlds of words.” We honor Janice’s legacy with tributes and selections from her forthcoming poetic memoir.

**How Do You Know When You’re Done - Poets on Revision** (James Fujinami Moore, Taneum Bambrick, Megan Pinto, Michael Dhyne, Diannely Antigua)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Are poems ever finished, or just abandoned? In this panel, five poets will explore the process of a single published poem from initial inspiration and drafting, through the process of revision, and focus on the moment they decided their work was finished - if it ever was. Focusing on works that experienced deep and significant changes throughout their writing, this panel will explore the way revision can reveal hidden rooms within an initial draft, and examine the moments those revisions end.

**How to Create, Become, and Flourish as a City Poet Laureate** (Chelsey Johnson, Tommy Archuleta, G.E. Patterson, Esther Belin, Steven Espada Dawson)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Poet laureate positions are on the rise in cities of every size and region, generating fresh and rich engagement with poetry. From the grassroots to the ceremonial to creative intersections with public life, these hyperlocal poets flex extraordinary versatility and cultural knowledge. Poets and program leaders share ideas, best practices, funding tips, and stories of impact. This panel is inspirational and practical for the poet laureate-curious and anyone invested in writing as social practice.

**How to Pitch Like Hollywood** (Karol Hoeffner, John Strauss, Michelle Gille, Ernie Bustamante)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

Mastering the art of pitching is essential for writers working in Hollywood to secure assignments, sell scripts and push projects forward. Four seasoned, diverse, award-winning screenwriters will divulge insider tips acquired from their experiences in the film industry trenches that apply to the publishing world. They will explore strategies on effectively selling yourself, your completed work, and your story concepts to industry professionals such agents, publishers, publicists and booksellers.

**How to Serve Queer & Trans Writing: Learning from Ten Years of Foglifter** (Kanika Agrawal, Chad Koch, Dior J. Stephens, Michal 'MJ' Jones, Rob Macaisa Colgate)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

With its award-winning literary journal, chapbooks, anthologies, readings, and community events, Foglifter has become a vital platform for uplifting LGBTQIA2S+ writers and writing since its founding a decade ago. Five staff members—Foggies—reflect on the joys and challenges of their work, highlighting what they've learned (and what they're still figuring out) about nurturing innovative writing and cultivating a queer literary community with profound commitments to its most marginalized members.

**How to teach Diné literature** (esther belin, sherwin bitsui, shania nez, natanya pulley)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Teaching Native American literature often incorporates concepts of culture, place and storytelling. This panel discussion will embrace those ideas including linguistic elements, sound symbolism, race, and institutional constructs that all have influenced how Indigenous writers story their complex narratives within this place called the United States. This panel signifies the importance of considering tribally specific literary histories which is critical toward decolonizing our classrooms.

**“I Am Still a Body in the World:” Disability and Chronic Illness in Poetry** (Teo Shannon, Katie Hartsock, Laura Passin, Michele Bombardier)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Disability has been described before as the “final frontier of the civil rights movement." In a world struggling with understanding accessibility and still reeling from a global pandemic, disability poetry offers an important and urgent lens through which to view our world. What does it mean to be disabled or to live with chronic illness? What does it mean for medical professionals who may not experience it personally? What are the borders of disability and illness? More

**I'll Tell You What I Want, What I Really, Really Want: Agents Explain MSWLs** (Roma Panganiban, Mina Hamedi, Natalie Edwards, Marin Takikawa, Michaela Whatnall)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

With so many agents, it's hard to know whom to query. How do you find that elusive "right fit" when you're cold-emailing strangers? Five agents who represent a broad range of books will discuss the purpose of manuscript wishlists (including #MSWL tweets) and where to find them, what thinking goes into crafting theirs, and how writers can use MSWLs to their advantage and maximize their chances of finding an agent who will be interested in, understand, and maybe even fall in love with their book.

**In Memoriam: Four Feminist Legacies of Poetry, Poetics, and ArtUntitled** (Chris Santiago, Margaret Rhee, Jen Scappettone, Cynthia Arrieu-King, Eileen G'Sell)

In-person event

Event category: Tributes

This panel pays tribute to the enduring influence of four feminist masters who challenged conventions and inspired generations over long careers, and whom we recently lost: Lyn Hejinian, Yong Soon Min, Helen Vendler & Marjorie Perloff. Each reshaped their respective disciplines and thrived in collaboration. Our panel will highlight the powerful contributions of these figures while not shying away from any difficult, controversial, or polarizing aspects of their work.

**Indigenous-Aboriginal American Writers Caucus** (Abigail Chabitnoy, MaryLeauna Christensen, m.s. RedCherries)

In-person event

Event category: Caucus

Indigenous writers & scholars participate fluidly in AWP by teaching & directing affiliated programs, working as independent writers/scholars, in language revitalization, & local community programming. Annually imparting field-related craft, pedagogy, celebrations, and concerns as understood by Indigenous-Native writers from the Americas and surrounding island nations is necessary. Essential program

development continues in 2025.

**Innovations in Arab American Fiction** (Betty Shamieh, Ghassan Zeineddine, Zeyn Joukhadar, Susan Muaddi Darraj )

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

A diverse panel of Arab American fiction writers discuss their work and the trajectory of their artistic journeys. What is the responsibility of a writer to represent their culture in a society where their people are often maligned and misrepresented? How does the experience of Arab American writers working in fiction differ from other communities in this current cultural moment?

**Irresistible Openings: The High Wire Act of a Novel’s First Pages** (Danielle Harms, Ramona Ausubel, Gene Kwak, Raul Palma, Marie-Helene Bertino)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

How do you get right to the good stuff in a novel so that a reader can’t help but devour the text and turn the page? These authors guide us through the openings of their published books, sharing their journeys to the first sentence, paragraph, and chapter. Learn how the work evolved across drafts and get a behind-the-scenes look at the approaches they tried, discarded, and embraced. Pull back the curtain to learn the stories behind the words that audiences came to see in print.

**Is That What You Meant?: Collaborative Editing for Inclusion and Belonging** (Chelsea Jackson, A. J. Bermudez, Katie Robinson, Keenan Norris, Diego Medina)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

In a publication landscape that has a ways to go in holding space for queer, diverse, and marginalized voices, what are the roles of editors and writers when potentially sensitive language or themes are at play? In this panel, editors will discuss revision processes that prioritize communication, creativity, and compassion. Panelists will also share times when collaborative editing strengthened the inclusivity and quality of the pieces published and deepened their relationships with writers.

**It Takes a Village: Blurbs, References, Editing, Organizing & more** (Rosamond S. King, Swati Khurana, JP Howard, Serena W. Lin)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Organizing readings, writing blurbs and reference letters, and editing journals are foundations of the literary world. But there’s not a lot of conversation or guidance for how to do these things well and ethically. Writers with years of experience provide tips and best practices whether you’re just getting started in literary service or looking for ways to do it better.

We include time to brainstorm ideas and meet other participants, so you’ll leave with useful information and new connections.

**It's Personal, Not Strictly Business: Networking for Writers** (Katie Manning, Jessica Jacobs, Elizabeth Dark, Abayomi Animashaun)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Some writers think “networking” means chasing after important people who might be useful for their career. (Spoiler: it’s not that.) Others think networking is just an obnoxious thing that business types do—writers are too introverted and devoted to the art to do that, right? (Also no.) Join our panel of writers who run workshops, readings, organizations, and publications for a discussion about networking: if it’s really about building relationships and community, how can writers do it well?

**Jack Gilbert: A Centennial Celebration** (Dan Albergotti, David Kirby, Dorianne Laux, Terry Kennedy, Crystal Williams)

In-person event

Event category: Tributes

This panel celebrates the achievement and influence of American poet Jack Gilbert near the 100th anniversary of his birth. Born in Pittsburgh in February 1925, Gilbert became one of the most accomplished poets of his generation. Though he avoided the limelight, his impact on readers and poets of all types has been immense and has only grown since his death in 2012. In this tribute, five poets discuss the influence of Gilbert on their work and teaching, followed by a Q and A with the audience.

**Jewish Writers Caucus** (Lauren Grodstein, Jessica Jacobs, Tova Mirvis, Josh Rolnick, Margot Singer)

In-person event

Event Category: Caucus

The Jewish Writers Caucus invites writers to meet each other, discuss challenges and opportunities, share resources, and suggest how AWP can better support Jewish writers, all in a space welcoming to Jews of all denominations, degrees of religious engagement, races, ethnicities, sexualities, genders, socioeconomic backgrounds, and political affiliations. An often-invisible minority–invisible at times even to each other–we aim to connect Jewish writers and celebrate the significance of our stories.

**Joyful Revision: Finding Hope in Change** (Alix Ohlin, Peter Ho Davies, Nina McConigley, Vanessa Hua, Allegra Hyde)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

To thoroughly revise a piece of writing is to believe in the possibility of change and transformation—a fundamentally optimistic act. In this panel, five distinguished writers will share ideas for finding joy in revision. They’ll discuss how to approach revision as a generative practice that invites discoveries and deepens meaning. The conversation will include both big-picture advice for tackling resistance to revision, and concrete strategies to make the process work.

**Judging by the Cover: Trends & Strategies for Designing Beautiful & Market-Worthy Books, Sponsored by CLMP** (Chelsea Kern, Mary Austin Speaker, Justin Carder)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

A beautiful cover on the bookstore shelf can attract readers and sell a book. How do publishers work with in-house and freelance designers to create cohesive, contemporary designs that represent the best of the work inside? What do small presses need to know about cover design on a budget? And how much should authors be involved in the process? Designers and marketing professionals will address these questions in discussing their approach to cover design for literary titles.

**K-12 Caucus** (Molly Sutton Kiefer, Allison Campbell, Jeremy Wilson)

In-person event

Event category: Caucus

The caucus creates a space where teachers in K-12 schools, as well as those who work part time with young writers, can share their classroom experiences with the hope of helping one another understand the complex and diverse needs of young writers in the 21st century. The meeting will feature presentations by caucus members to help generate discussion around issues of pedagogy and how to build a creative writing curriculum that is accessible to students no matter their identity or background.

**L.A. Confidential: Novelists on Noir** (David L. Ulin, Tod Goldberg, Steph Cha, Rachel Howzell Hall)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

What is it about Southern California that makes the perfect setting for so many noir novels? The noir authors on this panel have explored Los Angeles through stories of dark corners, vast deserts, and car chases that keep readers hooked. They will dive into how they came to write noir fiction, why they set their stories in Los Angeles, and what “noir” really means. Expect tips on crafting the perfect shady characters and a deep dive into Los Angeles’s most mysterious stories.

**L.A. Storytellers and Writing for the Stage** (Cara Lopez Lee, Kona Morris, Chris De La Cruz, Miyo Yamauchi )

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

L.A. has a diverse and vibrant community with some of the best storytellers in the world. Join us for a unique craft talk focusing on how to compose your personal life experiences for the timeless art of live storytelling! We will discuss the way this medium differs from other forms of literature, and how to adapt for distinct styles, such as for The Moth Radio Hour (NPR), the RISK! podcast, or for comedy and solo shows. Storytelling inspires memoir writing, and it strengthens all communication!

**Landing Literary Funding & Letting Go of Scarcity** (Emily Smith, Khalisa Rae, Bernardo Wade, Robin Miura, Stephen Motika)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

How do you contextualize your publishing program or literary festival in 1,000 compelling characters? Five arts leaders, publishers, editors, and writers representing Blair Publisher, Griot & Grey Owl Conference, Lookout Books, Nightboat Books, and Obsidian journal share their approaches to grants and fundraising. Learn best practices for identifying state and national opportunities, evaluating guidelines, preparing strong narratives and budgets, and collaborating with partners to build support.

**Latinx Writers Caucus** (féi hernandez, Amairani Pérez Chamu, Brenna Nuñez, Claudia Castro Luna, Casey Gabriella Almodovar Ramos)

In-person event

Event category: Caucus

Latinx writers are becoming increasingly visible in literary spaces. However, there is still work to be done to address inequalities in access and visibility. The Latinx Writers Caucus creates space for new, emerging, and established writers of varied Latinx identities to network, discuss obstacles to publication (e.g. active oppression and the cultural marginalization of Latinx writers), and to discuss panel and event planning that will increase Latinx participation at future AWP conferences.

**Leaving the Writing Cave: When, Why, and How to Pursue Representation** (Maggie Cooper, Lauren Scovel, Amy Bishop-Wycisk, Michaela Whatnall, Lucy Cleland)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

Most authors have heard that to get published, they need a literary agent. But is that true? And if it is, when should they start querying? In this panel, five agents will break down when to pursue representation and the scenarios in which authors might seek other paths to publication. We’ll also address at what stage of writing and/or conception authors should consider querying, how to find agents who feel aligned with their project, and how writers can put their best querying foot forward.

**LGBTQ+ Writers Caucus** (Belinda Kremer, Erin Sharkey)

In-person event

Event category: Caucus

The LGBTQ+ Writers Caucus provides a space for writers who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer to network and discuss common issues and challenges, such as representation and visibility on and off the literary page, and how to incorporate one’s personal identity into professional and academic lives. The Caucus also strives to discuss, develop, and increase queer representation for future AWP conferences, and serve as a supportive community and resource for its members.

**Literary Archives: Practices for Institutions, Communities, and Individuals** (Johanna Drucker, Quentin Ring, Greg Williams, Romeo Guzman, Jennifer Johnson )

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

Beyond Baroque, L.A.’s oldest literary institution, placed its literary archive at Cal State Dominguez Hills this year. This panel uses that acquisition as a case study for a broad discussion on preserving cultural production of literary movements. It brings together archivists, historians, institutional leaders, and book dealers to discuss the intellectual, physical, legal, cultural, and aesthetic considerations faced by communities and individual writers in preserving archival legacies.

**LITERARY LINEAGE/REIMAGINED REALITY: BLACK SPEC FIC WRITERS BUILD (REAL) WORLDS** (Nicole Shawan Junior, Sheree Greer, Zin E. Rocklyn, B. Sharise Moore, Erin E. Adams)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

We are at the end of a world. With any ending, a beginning advances. Part panel, part ancestral exchange, part communal ceremony, this offering merges revolutionary Black speculative fiction of the past and present. The panelists—contemporary speculative fiction authors—converse with and about the ancestors of their literary lineage whose revolutionary works influenced their writing. They discuss speculative fiction as a blueprint for future generations and a tool for birthing new worlds.

**Literary Magazine as Textbook: Teaching Periodicals & Publishing in the Classroom, Sponsored by CLMP** (Chelsea Kern, Erin Hoover, Susan Nguyen, Paul Jaskunas)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Literary magazines can be a stellar teaching tool for aspiring writers, editors, and readers of all kinds. But how can teachers integrate magazines into their curricula to maximum effect? And what should magazines know about reaching students, teachers, and classrooms? In this panel, three teachers who use literary magazines as part of publishing and creative writing courses discuss their strategies for incorporating journals into the curriculum.

**Literary Production During Authoritarian Governments** (Alexandra Lytton Regalado, Christopher Soto, Sally Wen Mao, Myriam Gurba, Emily Jungmin Yoon)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Panelists explore literary history and resistance tactics used during authoritarian governments that actively work to silence and exile writers. We consider the colonial and patriarchal histories of Korea, the authoritarian governments of El Salvador, and the looming warning signs in the US such as book banning. Panelists share their writing and discuss the work of notable authors to provide strategies for understanding, surviving, and resisting authoritarianism as it sprouts across the globe.

**Literary Rebels: Breaking and Remaking the Boundaries of Literary Genre** (Caroline Hagood, JP Howard, Jiwon Choi, Tariq Shah, Clarence A. Haynes)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

Despite new innovations and increasing interest in the fields of hybrid writing, many publishers, agents, and publicists remain resistant to these forms, leaving authors uncertain as to how to find their audience. Established members of the publishing industry will discuss navigating the rules—written and unwritten—of literary genre, and how to rebel against them effectively. We will discuss current trends in genre bending, blending, and experimentation, as well as opportunities for such work.

**Long Live Octavia Butler** (Nikki High, John Szabo, Niela Orr, Blaise Zerega)

In-person event

Event category: Tributes

Though she may have died in 2006, science fiction writer Octavia Butler's impact is all over the Los Angeles area, from bookstores to creator labs to the writing of authors working today. Today, Butler’s legacy lives on in the authors who look to her work for inspiration and the communities and spaces that benefit from her attitude toward innovation and creation. Join a conversation with authors and community makers honoring Butler’s legacy through their words each day.

**Losing Species: Integrating Conservation Science into the Writing Process** (Claire Wahmanholm, Donika Kelly, Ching-In Chen, Marco Wilkinson, Jane Wong)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

For those who want to write about biodiversity loss and extinction, engaging with scientific research can be an invaluable source of inspiration. A diverse range of writers across genres will discuss their process of integrating science into their contribution to Creature Needs: Writers Respond to the Science of Animal Conservation. They will present their work and explore what transpires when writers incorporate scientific research in all its complexity and precision.

**Magazine Archives and What to Do with Them, Sponsored by CLMP** (Montana Agte-Studier, Emily Wallis Hughes, Kevin Craft, Joy Garnett)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

Accumulating a sizable magazine archive is an impressive feat—a mark of longevity and success over years of publishing. Deciding what to do with a growing collection of old issues is another question. The magazines on this panel have found success in storing, sharing, monetizing, and/or digitizing their archives. Panelists will discuss how to store physical archives, options for monetizing back issues, how to undertake a digitization project, and more.

**Magic, Ghosts, and the Uncanny: The Hidden Logic of Fiction** (Raul Palma, Grace Butler, Claire Jiménez)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

 In this panel, authors will discuss how magic, ghosts, and the uncanny influence the stories they tell. They will explore the tensions between “genre-bending” narratives that set out to complicate conventions, with traditions and expectations firmly steeped in mystery, horror, and/or fantasy, considering, how do authors working in or outside of these traditions write compelling stories?

**Making a Literary Future with Artificial Intelligence** (Nick Montfort, Christian Bök, Dashiel Carrera, Amy Catanzano, Katy Gero)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

As artificial intelligence advances, its impact on writers, publishers, and readers is increasingly significant. This panel brings together authors who use AI. With backgrounds in art-science collaborations, computer science, and Human-AI co-creation, the panelists will discuss the benefits and risks posed by AI. How will AI reshape the relationship between writers, publishers, and readers? How can the literary world help direct the course of AI and ensure the future of literature?

**Making meaning out of work: the New American Labor Poetry** (Joshua Gottlieb-Miller, Ama Codjoe, Edgar Kunz, Joseph Rios, Rosanna Young Oh)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Labor–retail work, entrepreneurism–is entwined with the American Dream, shaping our values and informing our relationships with others. We equate our worth and identities to our jobs and may even reduce others to them. This panel features five poets who will discuss how poetry’s antagonism to capitalist structures can be a means to limit and expand personhood, as well as explore the impact of mechanization in daily life. How does writing about labor negotiate a poem’s aesthetics?

**Making the Cut: What Judging Story Collection Contests Taught Us** (Lori Ostlund, Toni Ann Johnson, Hasanthika Sirisena, Jenny Shank, Michael Wang)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

These 5 panelists—all of whom have published story collections—discuss what they learned from reading ~75 story collection submissions to the Flannery O’Connor Award for Short Fiction, an experience that one judge calls “transcendental.” The panel—which includes editors, reviewers, professors, and scholars—offers insight and advice for those working on or trying to publish story collections; trend observations; and thoughts on how and why reading for the contest altered their own work.

**Many Voices, One Novel: Fiction that Contains Multiple POVs and Truths** (Hannah Bae, Caro DeRobertis, Vanessa Chan, Hannah Michell, Michael David Lukas)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Drawing inspiration from classic polyphonic novels such as James Baldwin’s Another Country and Virginia Woolf’s Mrs. Dalloway, contemporary polyphonic novelists make music from overlapping and often conflicting voices. In this panel, four accomplished novelists explore how polyphonic narrative forms can be used to depict vibrant and sometimes contentious multi-ethnic societies like our own, and how they provide the tools to tell stories that might not otherwise be told.

**Media Mastery: Sharing Your Voice with the Public** (Nanda Dyssou, Hajar Yazdiha, Alexander Hamilton Cherin, Chuck Rosenthal)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

This presentation will serve as an introductory media training session for writers who wish to adequately prepare themselves for interviews with popular media outlets, from print and digital publications, to podcasts and radio, to YouTube and TV. Publicist Nanda Dyssou and a panel of local writers will offer case studies and invaluable insights on strategies they’ve used to effectively promote their books and author brands through the media.

**Meet Me Halfway: On Writing Other Cultures and Avoiding Self-Exoticization** (Dalia Azim, Chaitali Sen, Suchitra Gururaj, Alejandro Puyana, Jenny Tinghui Zhang)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

This panel will feature first-generation writers from historically marginalized groups whose work grapples with how to write for an American/Western audience. We celebrate bringing our cultures to life on the page, while assuming a diverse readership with varying degrees of knowledge of the worlds we build. When does cultural translation through stories tip toward self-exoticization? This panel discussion will explore the complexity of writing culturally diverse stories for American publishers.

**Minding the Gap: How We Navigate Hole in Our Memories, Histories, & Perspectives** (Marcela Fuentes, Yahdon Israel, Leila Nadir, Alexander Chee, Angelique Stevens)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

The holes in our awareness often translate to limitations in our individual, historical, psychological, metaphorical, and cultural blind spots in both fiction and nonfiction. How do we know where the limitations are? How do we redress absences in archives, create reliable narrators, or generate narratives without witnesses. The panelists will focus on developing narrative strategies to address the losses informed by racial, colonial, migrational, temporal, and spacial gaps.

**Mizna Presents: “Arab Time – Hybridizing Form, Language, & Temporality”** (George Abraham, Jameelah Lang, Abdelrahman ElGendy, Sarah Aziza, Zeina Hashem Beck)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

To write in relation to Arabic in the US is to confront problematic "east meets west" discourse through contrapuntal processes that unlock entire canons, forms, and genres. Intergenerational Mizna contributors from diverse backgrounds explore how hybrid language generates formal possibility that embraces orality and interrogates homogeneity. Panelists discuss how vast Arabophone traditions provide innovative techniques for attending to narrative structure, time, language, voice, and more.

**More Than Just Conversation: On Literary Interviews and Why They Matter** (Allison Wyss, Farah Ali, Bareerah Ghani, Ahsan Butt, Daniel Garcia)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

Literary interviews help readers find and more deeply connect with the books they love. But the interview is also an important form unto itself, a space for writers to grapple with issues of cultural and political significance and even challenge the status quo. Experienced interviewers, interviewees, and editors will discuss the beauty and function of the form and offer concrete strategies for conducting, crafting, and publishing interviews so more writers can join these important conversations.

**Moving Beyond Writing Prompts: Teaching Writing to K-12 in a Multi-Sensory Way** (Kim Purcell, Keren Taylor, Selvi Radia, Lana Colaco, Ava Lucas)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Engage your students by gamifying the writing experience and using multi-sensory experiments to inspire them.

Keren Taylor is the founder and director of WriteGirl LA, a creative writing and mentoring organization that was awarded the prestigious National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award. Acclaimed author Kim Purcell runs an international program teaching kids to write novels. They'll be joined by teen students, and together, they'll share what inspires great writing and what doesn't.

**Multilingual Poetics & Futures** (Rahat Kurd, Yilin Wang, Dominique Bernier-Cormier, Klara du Plessis, Khashayar Mohammadi)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Five poets based across Canada discuss the immense pleasures and rewards of deepening our relationships with inherited languages, and writing poetry in English from diverse multilingual perspectives. To sustain our fluencies, expand contemporary poetry readership to new audiences, and create thriving multilingual futures, we discuss the tools & supports we wish to see from publishers and literary communities within our predominantly Anglophone environments.

**Native Tongues 2: Teaching Creative Writing with Multilingual Students** (Huan Hsu, Wade Geary, Mieke Eerkens, Adam Zdrodowski)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Given how essential one's native language is to the experience and creative expression of their world, how does the negotiation between a multilingual writer's “home” language and their writing language (English) present both challenges and opportunities? In this important evolution of a discussion begun in 2023, we explore how multilingual students can be supported and encouraged, particularly in light of the rapidly developing influence of (English- and western-centric) gen AI tools.

**Navigating Intersectional Identities in Book Marketing** (Laura Leigh Morris, Sarah Cypher, Neema Avashia, Jonathan Corcoran)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

All identities are intersectional, but the publishing world often asks authors to define themselves in a more focused manner, “pitching” themselves in line with their books. This panel will bring together four fiction and nonfiction writers who have experienced the struggle of defining their various identities as they introduce their work to publishers and new audiences. They will offer personal experience and advice for other writers who seek to navigate these waters.

**New Literary Forms for a New Literary Los Angeles** (Claire Phillips, Steph Cha, Natashia Deón, Sesshu Foster, Audrey Shipp)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Five writers of genre-defying poetry, creative nonfiction, cultural criticism, and fiction consider what it means to effect social change. Paying homage to canonical 20th century literature, writers consider formal techniques specific to a new emerging Los Angeles cultural identity. How do invented archives, manifesto, “post card” texts, speculative futures, Neo noir, documentation, and cultural criticism serve as an antidote to historical erasure? What informs 21st century Los Angeles writing?

**New Styles for the Immigrant Novel** (Yuka Igarashi, Shubha Sunder, Bruna Dantas Lobato, Yuri Herrera, Nazli Koca)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

How can the familiar contours of the migrant narrative be reshaped? In this panel, four writers discuss how their recent novels find unique approaches to dialogue, detail, scene-setting, point of view, and other aspects of language and structure to tell a new story about an individual’s experience in a foreign country. They explore how they cast their characters not only as outsiders adapting to a culture but as participants in larger conversations about race, precarity, ambition, and kinship.

**No Excerpts; On the Long Poem** (Corey Van Landingham, Ama Codjoe, Rick Barot, Jennifer Chang, Jacques J. Rancourt)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Long poems pose many problems for the writer, reader, and teacher. How do poets, past and present, retain the attention of readers? How much does the market shape poem length? How can one teach poems concerned with endlessness in short class periods? The hope is that one may free oneself from these anxieties to make art that endures not just across pages, but across centuries. Dedicated to that long view, this panel features five poets who have written and/or taught long poems themselves.

**Nonfiction as Poem, Photograph, Song, or Fable** (Samuel Ace, Aisha Sabatini Sloan, Lily Hoàng, Brian Blanchfield, Caryl Pagel)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

The panelists will present and discuss their recent works of nonfiction, all of which obviate the boundaries of linear narrative and autobiographical account. What is made possible for an essay or memoir when it uses structures and devices more aligned with poetry, visual art, music, or fable? This conversation is an examination of cross-disciplinary techniques to achieve expansive and emotionally rich work that surpasses mere account.

**Not Cue Cards or Assignments: The Magic of Prompts in Poetry Workshops** (Tyler Mills, Taylor Byas, Traci Brimhall, Dorothy Chan, Joan Kwon Glass)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

The creative impulse is always inside you. Period. That is what this panel of poets and educators believe. Whether contemporizing forms or innovating image, prompts can have a pedagogical impact that reaches outside the walls of a classroom or Zoom room. Panelists will share favorite prompts, ways we have taught with prompts and used them in our own work, and offer a prompt to invite the audience to write a poem with us at the conference in Los Angeles.

**Novels in Stories, Fragments, and Constellations** (Helen Georgas, Nicole Haroutunian, Yiming Ma, Sequoia Nagamatsu, Rachel Yoder)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

What defines a novel? Publishing can be binary and risk-averse; it also rewards innovation. It’s confusing! These panelists’ published or forthcoming books play with form in “novel” ways. Each writer will address why a structural in-betweenness was essential to their work and the reception they’ve received from readers, agents, and editors. Hear reflections on form and craft from writers across speculative and realistic fiction, emerging and established voices, and small and big five presses.

**Obsidian at 50—Activating the Archive: Editors' Roundtable** (Duriel E. Harris, Alexis Pauline Gumbs, Douglas Kearney, Sheree Renée Thomas)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

Obsidian: Literature & Arts in the African Diaspora is marking its 50th anniversary of continuous publication. To celebrate the living legacy of Obsidian, editors past and present discuss their strategies for and experiences working with archival content as Black editors and writers/makers navigating publishing and artistic practice in contemporary climates of white supremacy as a means of activating past voices and blueprints of survival to create thriving, embodied presents.

**Of Many Tongues: Diverse Traditions in Anglophone Writing** (Shastri Akella, Sham-e-Ali Nayeem, Raghav Rao, Meher Manda, Ayesha Raees)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

South Asian writers writing in America, their English jostling alongside Hindi, Telugu, Urdu, and more, explore our instinctual turn to hybridized literature. Panelists will present excerpts of their work and share choices behind writing at the intersection of two or more languages for an English-reading audience. We will discuss whether such work dislocates English from western hold identifying its dialectical uses, bridges the gap toward global literature, or carves out a liminal third.

**Of Two Minds: Cultivating a Liminal Space of Poetry and Translation** (Kristin Dykstra, Vivek Narayanan, Laura Cesarco Eglin, Aaron Coleman, Daniel Borzutzky)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

In this panel, comprised of poets who are also translators, we explore how we shift through varied personas, both when we write poetry and when we translate. Does it change or expand our creativity as we are merging or moving between these personas? Does modeling the composition of poetry on translation – or vice versa – make deeper or more distinctive work possible? Can working at the intersection between poetry and translation enable us to move away from a dependence on “originality”?

**Older and Wiser or Older and Invisible?: Five Authors Reflect Untitled** (Valerie Miner, Nancy Lord, Gary Lilley, Patricia Jones, Jesse Lee Kercheval)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Is ageism the last “acceptable” prejudice? How does ageism affect the writing community? Zora Neale Hurston said, “There are years that ask questions and years that answer.” Five writers over 65 consider what answers they have found and whether a world focused on the new is willing to listen. What benefits and what obstacles come to writing lives with age? What can the voices of elders add to the diversity of human experience?

**On (Re-)Learning Our Place(s): Literary Citizenship In and Beyond the Workshop** (Shonda Buchanan, Jameelah Lang, Christopher Coake, Alexandra Kleeman, Barney Haney)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

The writing workshop necessitates a communal contract, and course outcomes are strongly contingent upon empathy and sympathy, often seen as organic by-products of collaboration. However, making literary citizenship explicit within classroom discourse, assignments, and course requirements emboldens students to build and foster communities both in and beyond the classroom. Through this practice, students can explore their subject-positions and contexts with an eye toward diversity and inclusion.

**On the Line: Ethical Approaches to Writing from the US-Mexico Border** (Jo Blair Cipriano, Raquel Gutiérrez, Sophia Terazawa, Logan Phillips)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

As writers, we are often told to be a “voice for the voiceless”—but what does this mean exactly? In this panel, award-winning alumni of U of Arizona's Southwest Field Studies in Writing—a summer research, writing & teaching program that sends fellows to collaborate with nonprofit community partners—will discuss the importance of reciprocal learning in art-making, writing in the borderlands, and how, no matter our location, grappling with borders affects each one of us as writers and as people.

**On Tiger Balm & Fourth Kingdom: How Korean American Writers Have Built Community** (Hannah Bae, Gene Kwak, Joseph Han, Marie Myung-Ok Lee, Alexander Chee)

In-person event

Event category: Tributes

The Korean American writers group, The Fourth Kingdom, has met annually at AWP for over a decade and the Korean American lit community has been ascending largely due to the writers who have been at its forefront. Inspired by The Fourth Kingdom, a Korean American writers group for early career writers, Tiger Balm, has recently materialized. This event will be a tribute to the founders and early members of The Fourth Kingdom while also discussing the next generation of Korean American organizers.

**On Translating Environmental Literature, Sponsored by ALTA** (Kathleen Maris Paltrineri, Jennifer Kwon Dobbs, Johanna Domokos, Eirill Falck)

In-person event

Event category: Translation

This panel brings together four translators to discuss the translation of Environmental Literature. We are interested in exploring the range of tasks and challenges that come with translating Environmental Literature—from needing specific ecological vocabularies to unpacking theoretical frameworks, and from exploring craft and formal demands to contextualizing works within their sociopolitical histories, including Indigenous rights movements.

**On Truth & Family Relationships In The Memoir: Bock, Qu, Khan, Lovato & Solomon** (Charles Bock, Anna Qu, Sorayya Khan, Roberto Lovato, Dorothy Solomon)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

Five well-known memoirists – Charles Bock, Anna Qu, Sorayya Khan, Roberto Lovato, and Dorothy Solomon – present examples from their work and discuss how each has negotiated the often difficult balance between writing the full truth and/or withholding because of sensitivities to family relationships. How faithful to truth must a memoir be when writing about family relationships? What are the ethics (if any) for when to tell all and when to withhold? Moderated by Dorothy Solomon, UNLV.

**Once Upon a Prompt: Including the Fantastic in Your Workshop** (Brooke Wonders, Jennifer Pullen, Alisa Alering, Diana Ma, Annah Browning)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Students want to write fantasy, but few academic programs prepare teachers to support these students. Five writers who have published fantastical work and taught it for decades will share classroom-tested resources that challenge students to write effective fantastical fiction, fabulist nonfiction, and speculative poetry. Audience members will leave with new tools and an appreciation for the unique pedagogy of the fantastic.

**Only Connect! Innovative & Effective Online Teaching in an Age of Distraction** (Christine Sneed, Karin Lin-Greenberg, Laura Warrell, Colette Sartor, Laura Pritchett)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

With more and more writing workshops now being offered online, the traditional in-person model has had to be adapted for asynchronous and synchronous instruction. Five writing professors who have each taught on-ground and online courses for many years will discuss strategies for ensuring the online environment maintains the immediacy and intimacy of the in-person model as well as its rigor and expansiveness. They will also share strategies for managing both the instructor and student workload.

**Our Dirty Little Secret: On How (and Why) to Find a Book Coach** (Rajpreet Heir, Steph Liberatore, Courtney Maum, Marita Golden, Eraldo Souza dos Santos)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

You’re at your desk, plugging away on a project you love. Shouldn’t it be easier? If you’re plagued by uncertainty and have been pushing around the same paragraphs for a year, or maybe ten, you are not alone. This is where the invaluable role of a book coach comes in. In this panel, writers who have found success using book coaches offer advice on making the most of the experience, and book coaches explain their personalized approaches to supporting writers.

**Our Memory Will Not Be A Weapon: on Jewish Writing after October 7** (Leora Fridman, Mónica Gomery, Maia Ipp, Solomon Brager, Moriel Rothman-Zecher)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

American Jewish writing has long been influenced by Holocaust memorialization. For decades, Jewish trauma has been weaponized to justify Israeli occupation of Palestine and military attacks on Gaza, and to censor dissent. As Jewish writers and organizers, we invite audiences to consider alternatives to militarized responses to genocidal histories. How does literature honor or mourn? How can we as writers grapple with collective inheritances without contributing to further harm?

**Our Own Name: Writing Jewishness Beyond Zionism, Assimilation & Fear** (Robin Beth Schaer, Moriel Rothman-Zecher, Irina Reyn, Courtney Zoffness, Jennifer Gilmore)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

How can contemporary poetry and prose trouble and disrupt associations, conflations, and assumptions about Jewish identity? In this panel, a diverse group of Jewish writers will grapple with the possibilities and limitations of writing about diasporic Jewish lives — beyond stereotype, assimilation, and Zionism. They will explore urgent and shifting questions about intention and audience for work that reflects the multiplicity of Jewish experience and confronts the weaponization of antisemitism.

**Our Voices Make a Movement: Storytelling as Anti-Racist Pedagogy** (Martin Rock, Felicia Rose Chavez, Matthew Salesses, Deborah Taffa, Adrienne Perry)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Conservative attacks on affirmative action and DEI programs across the country reinforce a legacy of erasure in academia. Still, we are power. Panelists will discuss how the writing classroom is essential to advancing equality, and how we can enable reflection and empathy among students as they build awareness of their own positionality, intersectionality, and communities. We'll also provide practical resources to help students engage in storytelling as a form of justice, equity, and self-care.

**Out in Public: 5 LGBTQ+ poets on writing at one of the nation’s oldest Pride par** (Brian Sonia-Wallace, Carla Sameth, Jireh Deng, Jose Rios)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

West Hollywood is a LGTBQ+ sanctuary city, and in 2019 became the first city to sponsor poets at their Pride parade to interview participants and write poems based on their stories. These five poets representing LA’s diverse identities, including three City Poet Laureates, examine queer community organizing through poetry. This combination discussion panel and reading will pair poems explore poetry’s ability to hold space where trauma is prevalent and joy and delight are desperately needed.

**Out of Many, One: Writers of Color Writing the Multiple-POV Novel** (Kimberly Garza, LaToya Watkins, Sidik Fofana, Rubén Degollado, Jonathan Escoffery)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Even in an industry that prizes novels over story collections, many writers of color turn to novels in stories, books comprised of multiple storylines. What can the multi-point of view book offer to us—and our stories about family, diaspora, and community—that maybe no other form can? Fiction authors with acclaimed multi-POV books discuss the powers and pitfalls of the mosaic novel, crafting distinct voices and characters, representation, and creating a larger narrative out of many.

**Outspoken: Accurately and Sensitively Representing Sexual Assault in YA Fiction** (Kim DeRose, Madeline Claire Franklin, Rocky Callen, Annie Cardi, Sonia Patel)

In-person event

Event category: Children’s & Young Adult Literature

In an era of book banning, it’s more important than ever to be outspoken about the difficult issues teens face, including sexual assault. But how do we write about it accurately and sensitively, making readers feel seen while simultaneously ensuring that the text isn’t unnecessarily triggering or gratuitous? These four writers will discuss how they each approached writing about sexual assault in their YA novels, why it’s so crucial, and the vital importance of centering the victim.

**Pain and Prose: Navigating Difficult Emotions in Storytelling** (April Davila, Steve Almond, Faith Adiele)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

This panel explores how writers can effectively portray emotionally challenging scenes in fiction and narrative non-fiction. Topics include embracing vulnerability, finding emotional truth, and navigating ethical considerations. Panelists will share techniques for rendering emotions on the page while protecting their own mental health. This discussion offers practical advice and heartfelt insights for writers of all levels.

**Parenting as a Creative and Creating as a Parent** (Karie Fugett, Zoe Bossiere, Erin Khar, Holly Taylor, Davon Loeb)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

In addition to creative work, parent writers take on the added work of teaching, parenting, and working. We act as though these roles are mutually exclusive but those who parent and create in any endeavor bring a difficult, exhausting, unsupported, and oftentimes unacknowledged amount of labor to their work. This panel is meant to bring working parents together for support, a safe space to listen and collaborate, share resources, and bring necessary attention to these interconnected roles.

**Parts of the Sum: Workshopping the Novel Excerpt** (Angela Pneuman, Daniel Orozco, Michelle Huneven)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Traditional workshops lend themselves most easily to short stories; when discussing novel excerpts, the group will not have read the entire manuscript. This can be a challenge, but the creative writing professors on this panel have led fiction workshops in MFA programs, at the Napa Valley Writers’ Conference, and for many other community writing programs; they have developed approaches to managing discussion of novel sections in ways most useful to the long-form writer.

**Passing the Torch (Back and Forth): Mentors & Mentees Discuss Effective Mentorin** (J Bruce Fuller, Juan Carlos Reyes, Theodora Ziolkowski, Julia Brown, Brad Modlin)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

How can faculty best support students whose interests & strengths extend past the classroom? How can faculty encourage students in extra projects? How to find time to grad school applications or extra stories? How to help students grow into their own skills? What about online students? Does mentoring end at graduation? Students and their professors—who have been on both sides of the equation--reflect on what practices are most helpful.

**Pedagogy of the Distressed: Mental Health in the Post-Pandemic Writing Classroom** (Lisa Page, janan alexandra, Marian Crotty, Fay Dillof, Joseph J. Capista)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Chronic absence, disengagement, and trauma in workshop: how has our post-pandemic pedagogy evolved in response to Gen C’s ongoing mental health struggles? Hear an array of creative writing instructors share instructional strategies designed to nurture creativity and to build competency while supporting student mental health needs. Joining us is a poet and psychotherapist who’ll speak to writing’s efficacy as a tool for healing and wellness. Bring questions, anecdotes, and ideas!

**Peeling the Layers of Race and Identity Through Narrative Craft** (Diana Diaz, Christine H Lee, Vincent Toro, Edward Gunawan, Stacie Evans)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

"The ethnic writer creates not only literature but also people." Toni Morrison

When writing characters outside of our own race, writers have to pay particular attention to ensure characters are three-dimensional and go beyond stereotypes. We all know that we should avoid two-dimensional characters when presenting the ethnicity or Identity of characters. How can writers push past imago (the first impression) and reveal the nuanced complexity of race and identity as it serves the narrative arc?

**Perfecting the Pivot: Starting Over (Or In The Middle) In Academia** (Amy Butcher, Brooke Champagne, Christopher Lowe, Rebecca Pelky, Molly McCully Brown)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

As universities across the nation endure the impacts of the impending enrollment cliff, many faculty feel forced to make the difficult decision to start over, often despite established careers, their own desires, and a sense of safety traditionally secured by tenure. In this panel, participants will discuss the way their careers have necessarily shifted in response to Higher Ed’s ever-evolving landscape and the insights they’ve gleaned that have helped them navigate the process of starting over.

**Performance and the Presentation of the Self: Identity On- and Off-the-Page** (Annie Wenstrup, Erin Marie Lynch, Kalehua Kim, M.S. RedCherries)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Workshop leaders and instructors encourage writers to mimetically recreate voice on the page and strive for authenticity in their representations of self and community. But how can one authentically express themselves when their identity is exoticized or othered, on and off the page? As Indigenous writers and poets, we’ll discuss craft strategies, including form and curation, as methods of deconstructing the concepts of the authentic other in poetry.

**Perspective & Perseverance in Writing Sobriety: Hemingway is Not the Only Way** (Caitlin McGill, Kerry James Evans, Paul Haney, Natalie Lima, Joy Priest)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Writing is better without alcohol for these award-winning, multi-genre writers. A sober perspective has unlocked epiphanies in their work, but sobriety isn’t easy. In this conversation, panelists celebrate community and encourage perseverance by reading their work about sobriety. They also discuss questions like, How do we write about our drunken pasts with honesty and kindness? How do we have fun alcohol-free at conferences and residencies? What do we do when writing—and life—get hard?

**Playful Yet Rigorous: Worldbuilding in the Creative Writing Classroom** (Jennifer Pullen, Chris Drew, Trent Hergenrader, Julialicia Case)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

The teachers on this panel will address what benefits worldbuilding brings to their classroom, their institution, and their teaching practice. Worldbuilding can build community, foster interdisciplinarity, increase engagement, and improve craft. Topics include the ethical dimensions of worldbuilding, as well as specific activities, and applications, from multimodal storytelling to study abroad or game based learning. The panelists encompass a variety of regions, instituition types, and ranks.

**Podcast Guesting: How to Get Booked & Be a Great Guest** (Dawn J. Fraser, Laura Davis, Annmarie Kelly-Harbaugh, Jia Rizvi, Elaine Appleton Grant)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

Podcast guesting is a great way to promote your book and grow your audience–but there’s an art both to getting booked and to being a great guest! This panel of award-winning podcast hosts and interviewers provides insight and strategies that will help you pitch yourself as a guest and be an engaging guest who prompts the host to invite you back and other podcasters to reach out.

**Poetic Fathers: On the Entanglements of Writing about Our Children** (Derek Sheffield, Nathaniel Perry, Gregory Pardlo, Joe Wilkins, Mathew Nienow)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

How do our identities as fathers influence our poems? And how, if at all, does our poem-making influence the way we parent? When our children enter our poems, what are the ethics involved? Five poets who are also fathers share and discuss their poems--and the poems of fellow poetic fathers such as Primus St. John and Robert Frost--that poignantly address these questions and more.

**Poetic License or Neurodivergence?** (Abriana Jette, Nazifa Islam, Robyn Lear, Leslie McIntosh, Nathan Spoon)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

As boundaries between poetic license and neurodivergent thinking are examined, what seems like deliberate choice might sometimes be the standard way of thinking for a dyslexic, autistic, or ADHD poet. From the leaping ADHD brain to autistic hyperfixation to the dyslexic languaging of E.E. Cummings’s “helves surling out of eakspeasies” or “you in win / ter who sit,” this panel investigates ways neurodivergent traits weave into poetic process while extending the understanding of poetry itself.

**Poetry & Climate: Building Eco-Resilience Through Poetry & Community Action** (Nickole Brown, David Hassler, Jane Hirshfield, Kimberly Blaeser, Sean Hill)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

How can poetry build resilience during the climate crisis by connecting us to one another and the more-than-human world, while giving us courage to act? Poets for Science founder Jane Hirshfield and three other poets will share initiatives and collaborations that bring poetry to the most urgent and evolving needs of our time. This panel will showcase multi-media creations stemming from research-based and scientifically informed approaches to poetry that use innovative methods to build community.

**Poetry at Large: The Joys and Perils of Translating Long Poems, Sponsored by ALTA** (Derick Mattern, Edith Adams, Katherine M. Hedeen, Mira Rosenthal, Conor Bracken)

In-person event

Event category: Translation

From Paterson to Omeros, from The Descent of Alette to Drafts, American poetry readers are all too familiar with long poems and their critical weight. Although long poems-in-translation have long been neglected in English, publishers have lately shown a resurgence of interest. This panel assembles a group of translators to discuss the joys and perils of their own work amid a recent slate of book-length poetic projects appearing for the first time in English.

**Poetry in Translation: Satisfactions and Discontents** (Fatemeh Shams, Armen Davoudian, Amir Ahmadi Arian, Huda Fakhreddine, Ahmad Almallah)

In-person event

Event category: Translation

This panel brings together writers/translators from Iranian, Lebanese, Palestinian, and Armenian backgrounds, all living in the American diaspora, and writing in their native tongues and in English. As poets, novelists, and literary scholars, the panelists tackle a wide array of issues including linguistic transgressions, gains and losses, dual identities, and politics of translation at times of calamity.

**Poetry of Empathy and the Art of Resistance and Dissent** (Kalpna Singh-Chitnis, Beau Beausoleil, Cynthia Atkins, Richard Modiano)

In-person event

Event category: Writers’ Conferences & Centers

We're living in a time marred by existential crises, such as wars, genocides, famine, pandemics, migration & climate change. We face ideological differences, racial, ethnic, and gender discrimination. Activism has become part of daily life, with protests common in public places and educational institutions. Yet, lasting solutions evade us. What are we lacking, and how are writers, poets, and activists responding? The panel "Poetry of Empathy & the Art of Resistance and Dissent" will discuss all.

**Poets in the City of Movies** (Suzanne Lummis, William Archila, Dorothy Barresi, Ramon Garcia, Ron Koertge )

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

As a compliment to the anthology to be published in 2025, Poetry Goes to the Movies (Pacific Coast Poetry Series, imprint of Beyond Baroque Books), five long-time poets and teachers/professors of poetry who've lived for decades in Los Angeles--William Archila, Dorothy Barresi, Ramon Garcia, Ron Koertge, and me, Suzanne Lummis, moderator, will explore the potential power of movies to generate poems, as well as the occasional influence imparted by the surrounding movie industry on our poetry.

**Poets Who Edit: The Joy and Conundrum of Wearing Two Hats** (Jill Bialosky, Shrikanth Reddy, Meghan O'Rourke, Walt Hunter, Major Jackson)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

Poetry editors from W. W. Norton, Yale Review, The Atlantic, Harvard Review, Paris Review discuss what it’s like to be both a poet and a poetry editor. Panelists will seek to answer questions such as, does one’s own poetics interfere or highlight the poets you publish? Do you see yourself primarily as an editor or a poet? What it's like to have to turn down so many labors of love? What are you looking to publish? How do you maintain your own poetic process while publishing other poets’ work?

**Poets’ Debut Nonfiction: Poetics, Process, and Things We Wish We’d Known** (JESSICA Johnson, Jane Wong, Chet'la Sebree, Michael Kleber-Diggs, Tyler Mills)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

Poets come to nonfiction with undeniable strengths, but a new genre–and a different publishing landscape–may ask poets to consider new approaches to craft and process. In this panel, poets will talk through the joys and growing pains of moving into nonfiction. How can poets unfold poetics across a book-length work of prose? What rewards and challenges come with writing and publishing autobiographical nonfiction? What do panelists wish they’d known at the beginning or middle of the process?

**Positionality in Publishing** (Andrew Hoe, Frankie Huang, Mary Fan)

In-person event

Event category: Writers’ Conferences & Centers

Panel discussion on how positionality (one's station as community member or earnest ally) informs the editorial and writing process. Marginalized authors have many stories of well-meaning yet problematic treatment by dominant gatekeepers (white editors, publishers, agents, etc). Even marginalized editors misstep dealing with other marginalized authors. In this panel, experienced authors advise publishers and authors on how positionality alleviates problematic decision-making and behaviors.

**Preparing Students for Life Beyond the Writing Program** (Marian Crotty, Katie Cortese, Amina Gautier, Jack Wang, Rochelle Hurt)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Many students leave writing programs with uncertainty about their careers and questions about how to keep writing and publishing after graduation. From developing marketable job skills to querying agents and applying for grants and residencies, this group of panelists will share practical strategies for teaching undergraduate and graduate students how to support their writing, publish their work, and maintain an active writing practice outside a writing program.

**Preserving Voices: Narrative Guardians of Identity and Resilience** (Bahar Momeni, Moniro Ravanipour, Manuel Luis Martinez, Clara Burghelea )

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

This panel brings together a diverse group of authors whose works embody the power of writing to preserve history and personal narratives. The discussion will explore how creative writing serves as a vessel for documenting marginalized communities and individuals' unseeable and silent experiences and the impact of historical and social changes on individual lives. The four panelists, each a creative author, will offer critical insights on this topic along with brief readings from their works.

**Publishing Paths 101: Big 5, Indie, Hybrid or DIY?** (Amy Brill, Donnaldson Brown, S. Kirk Walsh, Clifford Thompson, Chloe Caldwell)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

As landing a “traditional” book deal becomes ever more elusive, a range of publishing options, from hybrid models and tiny presses to self-publishing, has opened up for seasoned as well as debut authors to explore. What can a writer expect with regard to editorial process, design, marketing, publicity and sales? The panel includes memoirists, fiction (graphic novels, too), and nonfiction writers, who have taken each of these roads to market and will share their experiences and lessons learned.

**Queer Crip Worlds: Poetry as Portal for Transnational Solidarity** (Heidi Rhodes, Tala Khanmalek, Ashna Ali, Sami Ghaus)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

This panel brings queer and crip/disabled diasporic poets of color from Bangladesh, Colombia, Iran, and Pakistan, to consider the possibilities for using poetry as a portal connecting us from word to world. In the context of the US-backed genocide in Palestine and intersecting histories of conflict in our respective homelands, we will explore how poetry has been a vital queer and disability justice organizing tool and modality for building connection and solidarity across social movements.

**Queer IP: Books, Films, and Beyond** (tammy lynne stoner, Beth Marshea, M Shelly Connor, Phoebe Schmidt)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

IP, IP, IP. It’s all about Intellectual Property, whether it’s a book optioned for a series or a short story turned into a feature or a script reverse engineered into a graphic novel. Join us for a fun, inspirational panel with a literary agent whose slate is entirely marginalized voices, a film/IP manager, and two award-winning authors as we discuss contracts, how to get representation, what agents and managers DO, working as a queer screenwriter and novelist, and approaches to adaptation.

**Radical (Re)Vision: The Gift of Starting Not Quite New** (Sarah Blackman, Ray Levy, Vi Khi Nao, Angela Penaredondo, Jessica Alexander)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

The act of making is often thwarted by time constraints, life changes, or shifting perceptions on the society into which the piece once spoke. What to do when the piece’s original impetus has failed, or metamorphosed beyond recognition, but the author is in too deep to quit? Sometimes the solution is intentional unmaking, an act that allows for revelation. Panelists will share their experiences of radical revision, as well as a variety of techniques for reanimating old work with new revelations.

**Read Write South: Thirty Years of Hub City Press** (Kate McMullen, Carter Sickels, Neesha Powell-Ingabire, Meg Reid)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

Since it's founding in Spartanburg, SC in 1995, Hub City Press has grown from a publisher of local writers and history into the premier literary publisher in the South, putting out more than 100 high-caliber literary works and championing writers living and working in the South, our country's most diverse and least-funded arts center. Join Executive Director Meg Reid and Hub City authors Carter Sickels and Neesha Powell-Ingabire as they share their experience working with a nonprofit press.

**Reimagining Futures Through Innovative and Speculative Writing** (Danielle Pafunda, Ching-In Chen, Dior J. Stevens, Thirii Myo Kyaw Myint)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Writers know that who imagines the future and how they imagine it has a profound cultural impact on the eventual present moment. Just as Octavia Butler influenced 2024 when she set Parable of the Sower here in 1993, we BIPOC, LGBTQIA, and disabled innovative and speculative writers rescript those bleak futures spun from our present-day marginalization that have been imagined for us. We offer worldbuilding strategies to construct futures rooted in our resistance, liberation, safety, and joy.

**Remembering what is Vanishing: Poets on Ecology, History, & Race** (Mark Irwin, Douglas Manuel, Lynne Thompson, Tony Barnstone, Angie Estes)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

This panel explores aspects of erasure, evanescence, and loss, as in erasure of one’s identity and subjectivity through racial and historical lenses, as in the extinction of 150 species in an average day, and how poets can “knock on silence” in the words of Chinese poet Lu Ji so as to give voice to those rubbed out by ideology, history and time, to reach across the void instead of staring into it and becoming monsters.

**Reporting the Self: From Personal Curiosity to Research and Reporting** (Kristen Martin, Heather Radke, Andrew Leland, Sasha Bonet)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

Nonfiction writers often begin with personal questions before zooming out to consider the systems and histories that interact with their lives. Doing so poses questions: What are the limits of using the self as a lens? How do you decide which research and reporting to use? How do you structure a book that blends the micro with the macro? Five authors whose books braid memoir with research and reporting will discuss balancing these modes and the rewards of engaging deeply with the world.

**Resistance, Refusal, Silence and Life: When We Don't Write** (Susan Wheeler, Sophie Cabot Black, Roger Reeves, Bianca Stone, Gregory Pardlo)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Fallow periods are a feature of almost every poet’s practice. Sometimes procrastination, or balking, out of fear; sometimes the result of a lack of faith in the outcome, or in the endeavor itself; and sometimes an active choice, these fallow periods can be fraught or can be useful. Four quite different poets – in backgrounds, ages and approaches – discuss how silences have figured in their writing lives and, in some cases, have been used to their works' advantage.

**Revisions—Performing Heart Surgery on Yourself without Anesthesia** (Kristina Gorcheva-Newberry, Chris Dennis, Caroline Kim, Maria Kuznetsova, Sanjena Sathian)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

To be a successful writer one has to develop two essential yet opposite skills: generating a first draft and revising. Five prize-winning authors will lead a discussion on the often painful, often brutal process of revision, the choices they had to make whether on their own or while working with editors/publishers, as well as what determined those choices.

**(Re)Writing History: Disrupting Mythologies and Reclaiming Real Life Characters** (Suzanne Cope, Katie Gee Salisbury, Kidada E. Williams, Laurie Gwen Shapiro, Natasha Zaretsky)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

Nonfiction writers, by definition, reckon with the past. But how can authors research who and what has been under- and mis-represented in history books and scholarship? Using archives, interviews, on the ground investigation, and other forms of research, these recently published authors whose work covers diverse stories and time periods, will discuss how they have recreated lives and times on the page, forging a counter narrative that separates myth from truth, while navigating bias in research.

**Rewriting the West** (Taylor Brorby, Camille Dungy, Kali Fajardo-Anstine, Nina McConigley)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

This panel will explore the increasingly diverse writing of the American West with four multi-genre writers. Exploring the writing from the region, which has historically privileged the white, straight, able-bodied male gaze, this panel will reckon with the deeper history of the American West–its writing, and the opportunities that lay ahead for writers interested in the issues that face one of the most exciting geographies of American writing.

**Santa Fe’s School for Plays: Bilingual Adventures in Playwriting Education** (Maritza Sánchez, Norah Tullman-Kaltenbach, Jacob Kaltenbach)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

How do you build a playwright? What can playwriting mean to a new generation? As fears about AI complicated teaching plans, we encouraged our students to create in motion: to put down computers and phones, explore their communities, record words and impressions, and make plays in Spanish and English. The presenters will share tips drawn from training high school students in collaborative research, devising, and writing short Spanish, English, and bilingual plays rooted in shared experience.

**Saying the Unsayable: Writers and Editors on Experimental Forms** (Michelle Donahue, Felicia Zamora, Michael Ramos, Jason Daniels, Yuka Igarashi)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Writers often reach for experimentation when conventional forms cannot contain their work, when something more—or less—is needed to convey the tangled, traumatic, and expansive. In this panel, editors and writers across genres will discuss strategies and techniques to use experimentation to get at the unsayable in creative work, and how certain topics, like the climate crises, sociopolitics, trauma, and complicated identities lend themselves to experimental approaches.

**Scene Work Makes the Dream Work** (Marie-Helene Bertino, Mira Jacob, Manuel Gonzales, Tracy O'Neill, Ramona Ausubel)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

In the metaphorical ocean of the page, a writer must make a reader--usually a stranger-- feel the mist, notice the call of gulls, and (most impossibly) yearn. Scenes are where stories fail or soar. How does one calibrate character, detail, dialogue, and the crucial gestural level to render an affecting picture in a stranger's mind? Five acclaimed writers share practical guidance for constructing (and teaching) life's vivid moments by sharing scenes from their own work that failed and/or soared.

**Scripting into the Apocalypse – How Screenwriters Create for Global Change** (Maureen Medved, Tarique Qayumi, A.W. Hopkins, Mo Bradley, Zac Hug)

In-person event

Event category: Playwriting & Screenwriting

During this time of climate, political, human rights, and other crises, some screenwriters have chosen to use their talents as instruments for transformation. Five writers for screen and television will discuss their craft, creative process, and the decision to take creative and other risks to contribute to pertinent and difficult conversations. In addition to exploring craft, they will discuss the impact of their projects, and the challenges/rewards of writing for global change.

**Shaking Up the Three Percent: Publishing Transnational Genre Lit** (Neelanjana Banerjee, Rakesh Khanna, Jee Koh, Nadine Santoro)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

Only 3 percent of books published in the US annually are translated from other languages–limiting the type of literature chosen. These eclectic publishers share what it means to decenter American “literary” sensibilities and make bold choices to acquire genre writing (science fiction, pulp novels, graphic novels, and more) from around the world. Panelists talk about the joys, risks, and challenges of publishing this marginalized lit and its importance in this historic moment of global attention.

**Singing a Black Girl’s Song: Ntozake Shange's 50th Anniversary of the Choreopoem** (Monica Prince, Anya Pearson, Bryan-Keyth Wilson, Jasminne Mendez, jessica Care moore)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

In celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Ntozake Shange’s award-winning choreopoem, "for colored girls who have considered suicide / when the rainbow is enuf," this panel of choreopoets and choreopoem scholars will discuss the choreopoem legacy as a social justice mechanism. Comparing the original to current works in the genre, panelists will construct the “choreopoem universe” for audience members with readings and analysis of this Black, feminist, political genre.

**Small Press Ecologies: How Can We Make Them More Robust?** (Jee Leong Koh, Feliza Casano, Tonya Todd, Beth Castrodale, Lucas Mann)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

Small presses are essential, yet readers know little about them. Chain bookstores do not prioritize small presses, and libraries rarely offer a broad range of small press books. With the shuttering of SPD, small presses sustained devastating losses, and readers lost their best chance to discover wonderful new books and authors. What forms of literary citizenship could create a more robust small press ecology?How might that work further goals related to representation and inclusion?

**Somehow I Manage: Managing Editors Who Manage Editors** (Emily Stowe, duncan barlow, Stephanie G’Schwind, Siwar Masannat)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

The office of every literary magazine operates differently. Panelists discuss their experiences as managing editors, describing some of the challenges and triumphs of overseeing the publication of a literary magazine. They share practical tips, helpful resources, and necessary advice to ensure their magazines run smoothly, no matter the size of the staff. Topics include internal business processes, subscription and marketing campaigns, printing and distribution, website management, and others.

**Soul Searching in the Archives: How to Research A Memoir That Sells** (Susan Shapiro, Lee Oglesby, Michelle Bowdler, Marian Schembari, Shalene Gupta)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

A good memoir tells a story with universal appeal. Today, many editors request writers do this by adding research to create “hybrid memoirs.” In our panel, three authors and one editor from a major imprint will discuss how to use research to turn the story of one into the story of many. How do you comb through archives and conduct interviews? How do you stay true to your story as you juggle citations? We’ll discuss how we did our research, folded it into our work, and the lessons we learned.

**Sounding All Voices: Creative Writing in the Developmental English Classroom** (Ekaterini Kottaras, Wendy Silva, Daniel Ruiz, Tobin F. Terry, James B. De Monte)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

This panel explores different approaches to engaging community college developmental English students through creative writing. Topics include the diversity of the overall student population and their unique needs; barriers to their success, whether structural or personal; and how in-class creative writing exercises can lead to their overall self-efficacy and persistence. The panelists reflect on obstacles—some common, some unique—as well as creative solutions and opportunities.

**Speaking Volumes: Crafting Impactful Monologues in Your Scripts** (Leslie Kreiner Wilson, Andrea Baltazar, Rosanne Welch)

In-person event

Event category: Playwriting & Screenwriting

In this session, panelists offer examples and tips for writers who want to craft impactful monologues for stage, television shows, and movies. The event concludes with a workshop in which attendees read their monologues out loud while others in the room offer support, comments, encouragement, and notes.

**Still Surreal: A Poetics of Revolution** (C. Francis Fisher, Joyelle McSweeney, Will Alexander, Danielle Pafunda)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

This event considers US surrealist poetics. How do contemporary practitioners grow from, resist, or re-envision André Breton’s 1920s movement? What does it mean to be surrealist amidst the post-modern horror of climate collapse, hyperrealist global warfare, and absurdity of the 24-hour news cycle? Witness writers on the margins—women, BIPOC, LGBTQ+—adopt surrealist practice for personal and political expression, to engage its long-standing ideologies and revolutionize its anachronistic tactics.

**Strange Pilgrims: Asian Americans On Writing About Asia** (Kevin Chong, David Mura, Karen Tei Yamashita, Emmeline Chang, Christine Ma-Kellams)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

We’re all fascinated by our cultural heritage and ancestry, but what happens when we pursue that curiosity on the page? In this panel, we will talk to established and emerging Asian-American writers of fiction, YA, and nonfiction to talk about the rewards and challenges of writing about, or set in, Asia. Language and cultural barriers, taciturn parents, privilege, imposter syndrome, the commercial viability of Asian-American stories versus Asian ones, and other topics will be explored.

**Strength in Numbers: Southern California Women and Femme Organizers in Action** (Kelsey Bryan-Zwick, Danielle Mitchell, bridgette bianca, Natalie Graham, Jessica Wilson)

In-person event

Event category: Writers’ Conferences & Centers

You are not as alone as you think. This panel activates a diverse intersectional group of women and femme leaders in Southern California to share how we empower each other in the poetry community. Panelists will offer insights on literary activism, identity complexities, collaboration pitfalls, and best practices. Our hope is to acknowledge the work of women and femmes as well as ignite a new cohort of literary community leaders and organizers.

**Student-run literary magazines: don’t throw in the towel!** (Mihaela Moscaliuc, Kris Somerville, Catherine Dent, Dorothy Doyle, Sarah Ledet)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Student-run literary magazines function as more than platforms for showcasing undergraduate and graduate student work. They complement and inform classroom learning, create opportunities for professionalization as well as experimentation, and act as creative catalysts for the campus community. This panel of faculty advisors and students will share insights on successful practices and advise on how to secure funding and address institutional and other challenges.

**Sumud Motifs: Woven Inheritances in Arab Visual and Literary Storytelling** (Micaela Kaibni Raen, Ahimsa Timoteo Bodhrán, Doris Bittar, Samah Fadil, Marguerite Dabaie)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Award-winning Arab, Black, and Indigenous creators are weaving literary and visual elements, rendering multicultural multimedia modalities grounded in sumud/steadfastness and decolonial resistance to oppression. Award-winning Womanist/Queer/Trans creatives will share cutting-edge storytelling structures through graphic novels, installation art, poetry based on Palestinian Tatreez, dance/movement, graphic art, multilingual print making, and text within painting/audio/video/visual poetics.

**Survivors, Sluts, Sex Workers: Writing from Sexual Stigma** (Michelle Tea, Carley Moore, Naz Riahi, Myriam Gurba, Vera Blossom)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

This panel discussion engages writers whose work concerns the exploration of sexual stigma in its various forms. Engaging writers of memoir, essay, poetry and fiction, we will discuss challenges and value in excavating narratives that confront stigmatized sexual experiences, be they surviving assault, insisting upon a liberated sexuality, or utilizing one's sexuality to negotiate capitalism. Participants will speak to issues unique to such writing, from both craft and personal perspectives.

**SWANA Writers' Caucus** (Sophia Babai, Pınar Banu Yaşar, Aliah Lavonne Tigh, Rabha Ashry, Tariq Luthun)

In-person event

Event category: Caucus

This will be a town-hall style meeting, creating a much-needed space for SWANA writers to build and connect within AWP. We invite established and emerging writers, editors, students, scholars, and organizers, and aim for the caucus to facilitate networking and exchange on literary endeavors, craft, publishing, poetics, and praxis. Our caucus seeks to empower and center the voices of underrepresented

Americans with roots in SWANA cultures and communities.

**Teaching Amidst Trauma: Practices for Our Times** (Miranda McLeod, Becca Klaver, Marcus Jackson, Maaza Mengiste, Diego Báez)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Creative writing classrooms can be repositories for artifacts of traumas both personal and public. As university instructors, how do we teach in a time of accelerating emergency? How can we effectively invite students into the time-honored tradition of making art in the face of existential crisis? How can we do so without turning workshop into group therapy? In this panel, we’ll share lesson designs, community practices, and tips for classroom management and self-care for teachers and learners.

**Teaching Financial Literacy And The Material Realities Of Being A Writer** (Lara Williams, Courtney Maum, Susan Meyers, Lucas Southworth, Sharlene Teo)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Financial literacy, candour and a focus on the material realities of making a living as writer, rarely makes the curriculum on a creative writing curriculum. With a panel consisting of four authors, plus a moderator, who all publish fiction, but who also make a living through editing, freelance journalism, teaching, corporate writing and content creation - we will interrogate how candid we have a responsibility to be about the material and financial realities of our writing lives.

**Teaching speculative fiction: a guide for the uneasy and the reluctant** (Anjali Sachdeva, Jac Jemc, Stephanie Feldman, Tobi Ugundiran)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Students love reading and writing speculative fiction (SF), but as an instructor, you may feel uncertain how to take a literary approach to swords-and-sorcery fiction or gory horror. In this panel, SF writers/teachers discuss best practices for teaching and workshopping sci-fi, fantasy, and other SF, even if you don’t write or read it yourself. The discussion covers using SF to teach craft, designing assignments across genres, sample writing exercises, and creating a reading list you love.

**That Thin Fire Racing Under Skin: Writing Sapphic Desire** (Claudia Cortese, Donika Kelly, Rachel M. Simon, M. Mick Powell)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

This panel explores the craft of writing lesbian desire. Poetry has long been an artform that expresses amorous passion–from Sappho’s songs of seduction in which a thin fire races under the speaker's skin to Petrarca’s sonnets of unrequited love. This panel evokes the tradition of erotic poetry in the context of contemporary queer identity, discussing how writers can use lyric elements–including image, metaphor, music, voice–to write sapphic pleasure, connection, obsession, passion, love.

**The ABCs of the Creative Writing PhD** (Thomas Renjilian, Gwen Niekamp, S Yarberry, Leesa Fenderson)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

PhD programs offer invaluable time and resources, but the requirements of a PhD and bias within academia can stifle writers’ creative practices. With attention to the ways students writing from the margins resist whiteness, heteronormativity, and ableism at each stage of the PhD, this panel of current PhD students addresses how to frame a course of study that complicates the canon, balance creative projects with the rigors of exams, and craft dissertations that innovate traditional scholarship.

**The Agent Plot: Authors on Finding and Working with the One** (Emma Komlos-Hrobsky, Amy Bishop-Wycisk, Holly Root, Jasmine Guillory, Nancy Jooyoun Kim)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

Nothing makes an aspiring author more jittery than the idea of a literary agent reading their manuscript. Queries (oh my!) seem like the first big step toward going "public." Bestselling authors Jasmine Guillory and Nancy Jooyoun Kim discuss finding and choosing agents in conversation with their agents, Holly Root and Amy Bishop-Wycisk. Learn about the lesser-known ways of connecting with agents and the ins and and outs of the writer-agent relationship, and have your burning questions answered.

**THE ALCHEMY OF ADAPTATION: THE SCREENWRITER'S APPROACH** (Beth Serlin, Patricia Meyer, Karol Hoeffner, Stacy Spruill)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

In a panel discussion, four professional screenwriters/educators will share their approach to the challenging alchemy of adaptation. Dramatic structure for screenplays and series is distinctive from other story forms. The panelists will share the tools they use to distill and transform source material into the cinematic form, no matter the format or genre. To illuminate the process, they will offer specific examples from their own experience adapting source material for the studios and networks.

**The Art of Noticing in the Age of Disappearance** (Brittany Torres Rivera, Mai Der Vang, Harryette Mullen, Marie Mutsuki Mockett, Robin Walter)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

This panel brings together writers whose new works in various genres perform intense observations of the world. The panelists discuss how careful acts of noticing—as in poems devoted to an endangered mammal in Laos and Vietnam and in a novel that begins with a sick tree in a California garden—give them an entry to contend with environmental exploitation and human isolation. They ask: what are the limits of language in describing and repairing our relationship to nature and to one another?

**The Art of the Uncanny** (Heather Scott Partington, Anita Felicelli, Rita Bullwinkel, Carribean Fragoza, Kate Folk)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Does “realism” carry the same weight as a genre that it once did? Increasingly, literary writers seek new techniques to represent our weird age. As a writer, how might you use elements of the speculative, the uncanny, the surreal, horror, and black comedy to speak to what it’s like to be alive today? Authors of fabulist literary fiction with varying backgrounds gather to discuss how they push boundaries and and excavate strange, fantastic, and absurd truths of experience in their work.

**The Black Ekphrastic Mode** (Nick Makoha, Malika Booker, Jason Allen-Paisant, Denise Saul)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Four UK award-winning Black Poets/Academics talk about the unique approach to ekphrasis in their latest poetry collections. From 4 different vantages of the black gaze, they fuse a relationship between poetry and the visual arts. They share both their poems and praxis.

Malika Booker - An Alternative History of Stones (TBC 2025)

Jason Allen-Paisant - Self-Portrait as Othello (Pavilion, 2023)

Denise Saul - The Room Between Us (Pavilion, 2022)

Nick Makoha - The New Carthaginians (Penguin 2025)

**The Broken World: Contemporary LGBTQ Writers on Research & the SFF Canon** (Maya Deane, Alina Boyden, Kai Cheng Thom, S.G. Demciri)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

As queer SFF writers dreaming freer ways of being, we work in the shadow of strange, powerful writers who wove disparate influences into compelling worlds. Join four groundbreaking LGBTQ SFF writers in drawing lessons for current writers from the transformative research of J.R.R. Tolkien, open homophobe Frank Herbert’s sincere engagement with Islamic knowledge transfer, Octavia Butler’s liberatory queer storytelling, & how contemporaries like Rebecca Roanhorse bring in once-excluded traditions.

**The Challenges to Speaking our Truth: Filipino Women Writing Nonfiction** (Grace Talusan, Jen Soriano, Jen Palmares Meadows, Meredith Talusan, Monica Macansantos)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

What craft techniques, including storytelling styles from our own culture, can we utilize to write into and around truth(s)? How can nonfiction subvert or defy expectations imposed on us as women and nonbinary people in underrepresented communities? Filipino women and femme nonfiction writers discuss the complexities and nuances of sharing their experiences, while confronting the uncomfortable truths of a culture that hasn’t always looked favorably on the act of public disclosure.

**The Comeback of the Short-Story Collection** (Gemini Wahhaj, Aruni Kashyap, Khem Aryal, Jennifer Maritza McCauley, Chaitali Sen)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

For too long, mainstream publishing has shied away from the short-story collection. Short-story collections have survived through small presses and contests. Freed from commercial stakes and standardized values, short stories have been free to take risks, explore form, and make room for writers left out of mass culture. Five writers of short-story collections will discuss the potential of the short story form and how they play with the conventions of the anglophone story story’s expectations.

**The Daily & Long-Term Nuts & Bolts of Writing a Novel** (Sally Wiener Grotta, Kim Coleman Foote, Elysha Chang, Roohi Choudry)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Step inside the minds of novelists to learn how they handle the daily and long-term challenges of their craft. What creative practices – and time management tricks – have worked for them? What methods do they use to plan and edit their books? How do they sculpt characters into flesh-and-blood individuals? What are their approaches to research and integrating fact into the fiction? This panel will offer hard-earned reality checks on writer’s block, plot twists, dialogue, and so forth

**The Explosion of Oral Storytelling: The Power of Moving from Page to Stage** (Beth Ann Fennelly, Andrea Askowitz, Zorina Frey, Jitesh Jaggi)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

What can we learn by standing spot lit before an audience and telling our truths with no notes, no book in hand? Four nonfiction writers who’ve successfully moved from page to stage will tell of their experiences with TED Talks, The Moth, spoken word, videos, and storytelling podcasts such as Writing Class Radio. We’ll explore what writers can learn from this most authentic form of storytelling, and we’ll provide craft tips for audience members who wish to give out loud storytelling a try.

**The Ghosts that Haunt Us** (Kate Maruyama, Chiwan Choi, Lisa Marie, Latoya Jordan, Xochitl Bermejo)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

How can hauntings be used to illustrate larger human stories? How can our own personal hauntings create and inspire stories that will haunt readers? From cities haunted by displacement and erasure, haunted battlefields, to family ghost stories, five writers discuss how hauntings, real and metaphorical have inspired their poetry and fiction.

**The Great Divide: Commercial, School & Library, and Building a Resilient Career** (Adib Khorram, Jen Ferguson, Julian Winters, Edward Underhill, Patricia Nelson)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

Four writers and a literary agent discuss the various shapes an author’s career can take and how that fits into the various “tracks” a publisher can set a book on. What’s a “commercial” imprint? Why does school & library marketing matter, and how does it differ from traditional marketing? We will discuss how an can author navigate the various parameters, expectations and pitfalls publishers can throw at them while they build a lasting career across age categories, genres and publishing tracks.

**The Heat of the Hybrid** (Jill Bialosky, David Baker, Nick Flynn, Kimiko Hahn, Tina Chang)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Systems that collide produce heat, energy. What’s true in physics is true in poetics. When systems converge, they produce heat and energy. Panelists consider the dynamic vitality of poetic hybridity—combining lyric poetry with “unpoetic” materials like science writing, journalism, medical research, and creative nonfiction. Such energetic collisions of genre can fuse into new literary forms, expanding boundaries of contemporary poetry in exciting formal, thematic, and narrative ways.

**The Hidden History Memoir: A Panel of Writers Who Were Never Meant to Speak** (Deborah Taffa, Brittany Means, Lenika Cruz, Jenisha Watts)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

This panel focuses on lived experiences, street smarts, and oral storytelling as an approach to memoir writing. How do marginalized writers—artists from humble backgrounds and/or geographic distances—bring nontraditional forms of wisdom to the page? Is a lived approach to craft particularly suited to the intertwining of personal and political topics? To write boldly, to speak from unique backgrounds, these panelists will address how they found their voices through embodied narratives.

**The Intersection of Language: Translating from the Diaspora, Sponsored by ALTA** (Wendy Chen, Yilin Wang, Jack Jung, Stine An)

In-person event

Event category: Translation

What does it mean to be a translator situated in the diaspora, and how does this shape one’s relationship with heritage languages, source literatures, and the act of translation? Join three translators working with Asian languages to discuss their translingual creative practices. They will reflect on how their positionality in the diaspora affect their translation decisions, discuss how their translations and writings intersect, and explore the benefits and joys of working across languages.

**The Intimate Podcast: A Path to Community** (Farnaz Fatemi, Roxi Power, Julia Chiapella, Julie Murphy, Dion O'Reilly)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

Members of The Hive Poetry Collective discuss the value of intimate conversations with poets on their weekly Santa Cruz radio show and podcast series. These conversations nurture community and their own poetic growth. Circumventing tribalism, the collective shares how their differences--identities, poetic tastes, interviewing techniques--are strengths. This woman-run collective in its 6th year will share examples, history, and conduct two lightning interviews of volunteer audience members.

**The Joy and Magic of Afrofantasy: Celebrating African Storytelling Traditions** (Karen A. Parker, Omari Richards, Didi Anofienem)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

From Nigeria to South Central, Afrofantasy presents readers and writers alike with the opportunity to overcome colonial histories and create new legacies. This conversation explores Afrofantasy’s origins in African oral storytelling traditions, folktales, and mythology. Through discussions of their works and the authors that inspired them, three panelists challenge Western storytelling conventions in the hopes of empowering future storytellers across the African diaspora.

**The Legacy of Lyn Hejinian** (Grant Matthew Jenkins, Jessica Lewis Luck, Anis Shivani)

In-person event

Event category: Tributes

Native Californian poet, professor, and activist, Lyn Hejinian died at 82 on Feb. 24 at her home in Berkeley. This panel pays tribute to her life and work by reflecting on her importance to contemporary poetry in the US and elsewhere. Panelists will reflect on her innovative use of poetic form as well as her philosophical essays that explore the nature of thought and human subjectivity, the significance of sex and gender to writing, and the ethical aspects of language.

**The Long and Short of Craft: Authors Publishing Novels and Flash Fiction** (Sherrie Flick, John Dufresne, K-Ming Chang, Venita Blackburn)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Many writers struggle with when and how to compress and expand their fiction. These panelists, expert in both the flash and novel form, will discuss tips and strategies to finding the best size for your story, what the two opposite ends of the writing spectrum have to learn from each other, and look at how stretching your expertise helps a career.

**The Long Haul: Sustainability for Small Literary Arts Nonprofits** (Helene Achanzar, B. Metzger Sampson, Matt Weinkam, Amanda Johnston, Erin Quick)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Join leaders of four small literary arts organizations as they discuss sustainability and their commitment to empowering communities. Learn how to offer expansive programming on a limited budget, forge capacity-building partnerships, and steward the next generation of writers with resources and opportunities outside of the MFA. With a history of innovation and reinvention, these organizations prove that inclusivity and community focus are vital to organizational longevity and success.

**The Love and the Work of the Short Story** (Dustin M. Hoffman, Heather Carr, Anne Valente, Emma Patterson)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Novels seem to get all the attention when it comes to book deals and publicity. Is there still a place for the short story and its collection? Are agents willing to champion these shorter works? This panel of fiction writers and agents will discuss the joys and challenges of this form and its value in the literary culture. The speakers will share strategies for making, selling, and marketing both collections and individual stories.

**The Matrilineal Saga: Redefining Generational Histories** (Lauren Alwan, Lillian Howan, Peg Alford Pursell, Ilze Duarte, Montéz Jennings)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Recent novels like Pachinko, Homegoing, and Girl, Woman, Other center family histories from a matriarchal perspective. What defines a matrilineal narrative? How do female lineage and kinship inform generational stories—and how, within the constraints of patriarchy, does the matriarch influence the family system? Writers whose fiction concerns family culture discuss domestic sagas, subverting traditional gender roles, and crafting diasporic and diverse family narratives that center women's lives.

**The Middle March: Novel Writing's Toughest Mile** (Maria Hummel, Maggie Shipstead, James Han Mattson, Lysley Tenorio, Jennifer duBois)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Many aspiring novelists don't reach publication because they struggle with the middle of the process--whether it's getting to the end of the first draft, or undertaking the multiple subsequent drafts required to refine their prose and ideas. How do you develop story, craft, and stamina at the same time? The five novelists on this panel will share tips and tales of survival from the "middle march" of writing their award-winning books, which range from historical novels to thrillers to horror.

**The Name Game: Literary Journals that Have Changed Names and Flourished** (Marianne Kunkel, Gary Jackson, Jonathan Bohr Heinen, Katie Mihalek, Viva Padilla)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

There are risks to a literary journal deciding to change its name, but with risks can come rewards. Five editors of journals that have recently undergone name changes—re-emerging as swamp pink, Redivider, sin cesar, and Kansas City Review—will discuss reasons for the new name, practical steps to make such a change, and positive effects on branding, funding, and growing an audience. A name signals a lot about a journal’s mission and values; changing it could be a solution for struggling journals.

**The Nuyorican Poets Cafe Founders Archive Project** (Joseph Caceres, Kendra Sullivan, Lois Griffith, Vallerie Matos, Jonathan Toro)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

This panel focuses on the hybrid literary works created by writers working in an Afro-Caribbean organization dedicated to preserving the 50-year legacy of the Nuyorican Poets Cafe—an Afro-Puerto Rican cultural organization located in Manhattan's Lower East Side—from being elided by revisionist history. These writers will discuss the difficulties of producing work that documents the lives of those silenced by colonial violence while highlighting the importance of such work in liberatory projects.

**The Pedagogy of Climate Change** (Lawrence Coates, Ann Fisher-Wirth, Alison Hedge Coke, Laura-Gray Street, Pamela Uschuk)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

In the era of climate change, how can teachers of creative writing introduce our concerns for the Earth, humans, animals, plants, into the classroom? How can we transform our pedagogy in a way that fosters student engagement with the urgent ecological issues of our times? Participants specializing in various genres will share strategies and approaches to encourage our students to be conscious and aware of the challenges we face, and to make that awareness integral to their own creative work.

**The Personal Archives** (Athena Dixon, Erica N. Cardwell, Mary-Kim Arnold, Aisha Sabatini Sloan, Maddie Norris)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

Creative nonfiction exists on a spectrum from internal to external, from “I” to “eye,” but what happens when we fit these together, when we approach the internal as external, turn the “eye” toward the “I”? These writers dig deep into life’s archives to find the truth of emotion, showing us the unique value of personal research. As panelists, they’ll discuss the practicalities of researching the personal, the ethics of doing so, and the craft involved in relaying the emotional truths unearthed.

**The Personal is Always Political** (Sumita Chakraborty, Rachel Mennies, Jericho Brown, Tariq Luthun, Ally Ang)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Confessional poetry and the phrase "the personal is political" have parallel histories. While some have claimed that autobiographical poetry is apolitical, that claim has always been fallacious—and never more so than in the poetry of the present. This panel gathers five poets to share their strategies for infusing even their most “private” or “interior” poems with their politics and their ethics, read brief examples of their own and others' work, and engage the audience collaboratively.

**The Poets Are Writing Novels** (Ruth Madievsky, Ben Purkert, Hala Alyan, Sally Wen Mao, José Olivarez)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

“Novels written by poets” are having a moment. Their recent critical and commercial successes demonstrate readers’ appetites for narratives with lyrical elements. How are today’s poets influencing fiction? What possibilities and challenges, from a creative and publishing perspective, does fiction afford them? Five poets who regularly publish fiction will try to identify that ineffable quality that writing in both genres brings to their work, and how they navigate walking two roads at once.

**The Politics of Imagining: Poetry as Social Practice** (Cindy Juyoung Ok, George Abraham, Courtney Faye Taylor, Solmaz Sharif, Issam Zineh)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

The political dimension penetrates every intimate aspect of human life—who is allowed to love whom and on what terms, who lives, who dies. Yet, “the political” is often relegated to subgenre rather than being seen as the primary field of experience out of which the poetic imagination arises. This panel considers poetry within “a web of other social practices historically weighted with enormous imbalances of power” (Rich) and argues for a liberatory poetics that centers political consciousness.

**The Publishing Process and Systemic Interventions for Equity & Justice**  (Minal Hajratwala, Maya Marshall, Nayelli Gonzalez, Nuola Akinde)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

Amidst rising awareness about disparities within the book industry, what about solutions? The panelists steer nonprofits that have created meaningful interventions toward equity: a press focused on social justice titles, a mentorship that places interns of color in publishing, and a publisher-affiliated foundation supporting equitable spaces for authors. In a frank discussion, they will demystify what authors need to know about making impact and progress in all stages of the publishing process.

**The Setting Gap: Deconstructing Patriarchal Environments Through Worldbuilding** (Gloria Muñoz, Nora Shalaway Carpenter, Nova Ren Suma, Alex Villasante, Sheree L. Greer)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Setting is more than vibes. For BIPOC, female-identifying, and queer writers, it’s a means of entering spaces that have been historically inaccessible and prohibitive. From the margins, setting is political and literary canons and societal gender norms have perpetuated these delineations. Authors from across genres discuss ways they build environments—real and fantastic—to close the setting gap, code switch, raise social questions, and reckon with the gendered politics of how worlds are built.

**The Sisterhoods: Friendship, Feminism, Lineage & Perseverance** (Jennifer Firestone, Harryette Mullen, Erica Hunt, Patricia Spears Jones, Tonya Foster )

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Four feminist avant-garde poets will discuss how "The Sisterhood," a network of black feminist writers and activists formed during the Black Arts Movement in the 1970s, deeply informs how they think about their own self-identified lineages and contexts today. The panelists will share how the Sisterhood, as documented in a 1977 photograph taken at June Jordan's home of writers and activists, catalyzed their contemporary enactment of a peer support system for black feminist avant-garde poetics.

**The Sky above the Roof: Community and Creativity in Carceral Environments** (Alison Pelegrin, Jane V. Blunschi, Geffrey Davis, Nik de Dominic, Sally Keith )

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Facilitating creative writing in carceral settings is vital work that demands flexibility and careful planning. This discussion will explore roadblocks one might encounter while setting up workshops as well as ways to foster community so that incarcerated writers can explore their own stories, invent and give shape to the kind of writing they would like to develop, and share their work in a supportive setting. Panelists bring a range of experience working with juveniles and adults.

**The Southern Lit Journal as Resistance** (Jamie Poissant, John Fleming, Lydia O'Donnell, Becka McKay, Heather Truett)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

With the southern political climate taking oppressive turns, literary journals can serve as artistic sites of resistance. How do literary journals maintain a progressive vision in the face of ongoing political violence? How can literary journals stand in solidarity with communities under perpetual attack? Editors from five literary journals in Florida and Alabama will discuss the lessons learned from publishing in the South as well as their experiences working with marginalized communities.

**The Translator’s Note: Bridging Linguistic and Cultural Chasms, Sponsored by ALTA** (Blas Falconer, Sandra Alcosser, Nancy Naomi Carlson, Armen Davoudian, Wayne Miller)

In-person event

Event category: Translation

The Translator’s Note is an indispensable companion to poetry in translation, acquainting readers with new poets, helping editors to evaluate poems, positioning a poet’s significance within a literary landscape, defining challenges in a particular piece, and more. Translating from Albanian, French, Persian, Portuguese, and Spanish, our panelists will address how the Translator's Note bridges linguistic and cultural chasms while fostering an understanding and appreciation for diverse voices.

**The Uncanonical Canon: Teaching Experimental Forms in a Traditional Curriculum** (Sarah Blackman, Michael Mejia, A. Rafael Johnson, Katie Jean Shinkle, Heather Green)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Eugene Lim defines experimental literature’s mandate as to, “destroy literary, social and psychological ideologies that are hidden from us,” but doing so from within systems that are often used to uphold or systematize these “invisible habits” of thought is a challenge for both teacher and student. Five author/teachers discuss hands-on strategies to both de-systematize the classroom and prepare their students for the necessary discomfort required to inhabit the deregulated space of experiment.

**The Virtual Workshop: Tips for Teaching Creative Writing Online** (Lisa Borders, Donald Quist, Kali White VanBaale, Kirsten Imani Kasai, David Maduli)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Asynchronous online writing workshops have existed for years, but how can instructors and students generate fruitful discussions of creative works without synchronous conversations? What approaches must instructors consider for virtual classrooms with diverse student populations? Five experienced educators from various institutions will discuss tips on generating community and engagement, inclusivity and equity, hybrid models, and best practices to build thriving virtual workshop spaces.

**Theories of Vastness: On Capaciousness in Poetry** (Issam Zineh, Jericho Brown, Kazim Ali, Brenda Hillman, Roger Reeves)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

What does it mean for a poetic work to be "capacious"? This term implies an expansiveness of scope and experience—the possibility for the primordial and the vatic to converge, the promise of poem as sprawling event. This panel explores the mysteries of the capacious poem, while demystifying capaciousness from a craft perspective. It asks what craft tools can be brought to bear to enact cultural, linguistic, and spiritual vastness in poetic space.

**They Only Call It Class War When We Fight Back** (Mark Danowsky, Christina Ward, Theodore Van Alst, Jr., Steve Bellin-Oka, Billy J. Stratton)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Moderator will lead panelists in a discussion, based on their lived experiences coming from working-class origins, on their pathway to building a literary and/or academic career. Panelists will share their respective methods for navigating intellectual spaces designed and built by those who rarely see or interact with the working classes while maintaining their respective identities. Participants include people in and outside of academia and in the publishing industry.

**Thieves or Transformers? - How Much of Fiction is Fiction** (Leslie Kirk Campbell, T Kira Mahealani Madden, Ananda Lima, Sidik Fofana, Lizbeth Hasse)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Works of fiction often come with a disclaimer: "any resemblance to actual persons, places or events is entirely coincidental," which is almost never true. A diverse panel of four fiction writers will discuss ways their fiction does, in fact, use actual persons, places and incidents and how they use these fictitiously. How does the imagination get involved? This panel includes an entertainment lawyer who will consider the benefits and risks of recounting some facts and fictionalizing others.

**This Beautiful Body: Writing into Illness** (Andrew J Romriell, Elissa Washuta, Lars Horn, Katherine Standefer, Patrick Milian)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

Our bodies hold influence over the way we write, what we write, and how we physically come to the page. While writing into illness and disability is often an act of liberation, it also raises difficult questions. How do we truthfully represent such personal experiences? How do we reclaim a narrative of illness steeped in erasure? How does writing about our bodies shape our relationship with them? In this panel, five writers discuss navigating the intersections of creativity, illness, and body.

**This Book is Free and Yours to Keep** (Katy Ryan, Ellen Skirvin, Steven Lazar, Destinee Harper)

In-person event

Event category: Publishing, Editing & Technology

Panelists introduce This Book is Free and Yours to Keep: Notes from the Appalachian Prison Book Project (APBP), a new collection of letters, creative writing, and art by imprisoned people. The book draws from twenty years of educational nonprofit work in West Virginia. APBP mails free books to people imprisoned in six states, creates book clubs in prisons, and awards scholarships to returning citizens. We describe the book’s extensive editing process and advocate for educational justice.

**This Centre Holds and Spreads: Writing and Learning in Northern Ireland** (Jenny Browne, Glenn Patterson, Dawn Watson, Stephen Sexton, Connie Voisine)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Acclaimed poets and scholars from Belfast, Northern Ireland will join together with two former Fulbright Distinguished Scholars at the Seamus Heaney Centre to discuss the cross-cultural work of the Centre, and options for U.S. students to pursue graduate work in creative writing there, as well as opportunities for the development of research and study abroad programs. The panel will also discuss a range of additional rich opportunities for Fulbright Scholars in creative writing around the globe.

**“This Is a Time for Mistral”: 80 Years Since Gabriela Mistral’s Nobel Prize** (Emilia Phillips, Claudia Cabello Hutt, M. Soledad Caballero, Anna Deeny Morales)

In-person event

Event category: Translation

Chilean poet Gabriela Mistral (1889–1957) won the Nobel Prize in Literature 80 years ago in 1945, but she remains mostly unread in English. This panel will engage with her rise from a rural educator to a poet, diplomat, and public intellectual; dictatorship propaganda about her and the reclamation of her image; archival evidence of her sexuality; the difficulties and rewards of translating her; and why more English readers—especially those interested in women’s and queer history—should know her.

**"Thou hast thy music too": The Poetry of Aging** (Owen Lewis, Cornelius Eady, Linda Susan Jackson, Myra Shapiro, Carlie Hoffman)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Every life stage offers unique challenges and possibilities and, as Keats wrote in To Autumn, its particular music. Aging brings its dilemmas: accentuation of losses, bodily and mental impairments, diminishing time. These same challenges are grist for new perspectives, wisdom, and awareness of the temporal and the enduring. In this panel, four poets (of a certain age) will speak to different aspects of aging as a stage of life lived in and with poetry. A younger poet will also reflect on age.

**Though it May Look Like Disaster: Poetic Forms to Save Your Life** (Marianne Kunkel, Melissa Fite Johnson, Faisal Mohyuddin, Ashley M. Jones, Matthew E. Henry)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Do poetic forms have life-saving properties? Five poets will discuss how meter, rhyme, syllable count and other constraints have been sources of constancy and control during personal and political upheaval: layoffs, death, addiction, religious trauma, racism and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They will examine the healing power of classic forms—sonnet, abecedarian and #ceasefire haiku—as well as remixed/invented forms, and share how forms can be a balm for a writer’s (or reader’s) heartbreak.

**To Publicist or Not to Publicist?** (Viet Dinh, Wendy J. Fox, Renee Sims, Jody Hobbs Hesler, Federico Erebia)

In-person event

Event category: Agents, Contracts, Contests & Marketing

Marketing & Publicity is a mystery to even seasoned authors, yet writers are expected to contribute significantly to book promotion, usually without guidance or expertise. What is involved in book promotion? What do publicists do? Why do some writers engage them? Can writers create a successful M&P plan on their own? Panelists, representing an array of backgrounds and disciplines, will address why they did or didn’t hire a publicist and will discuss the pros and cons of their choices.

**To Speak with Silence: Writing the Unsayable** (Kristen Millares Young, Jessamine Chan, Cameron Dezen Hammon, Sonora Jha, Kirsten Sundberg Lunstrum)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Writing requires that the writer locate a narrative voice and plumb its depths like a divining rod, pursuing the story it has to tell. But what about pursuing the silences, portraying the voiceless, and revealing the unspeakable? Five writers will discuss their experience of imbuing silence with meaning. Considering both fiction and nonfiction, they will share practical strategies for structure and technique while also revealing their intuitive work to uncover the mysteries held in the silences.

**“Traduttore, Traditore!”: Poets on Translation** (John Murillo, Forrest Gander, Mary Jo Bang, Valzhyna Mort, Shangyang Fang)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

In his 2004 memoir If This Be Treason, translator Gregory Rabassa describes the act of translating, at least in part, as an act of betrayal. Betrayal of language, author, and self. Was he right? If so, is this especially true when translating poems? This panel uses Rabassa’s argument as a jumping off point to discuss joys, challenges, and… impossibility?... of translation. The five poet-translators reading from recently publish translations from Chinese, Italian, Russian, and Spanish texts.

**Tricks of the Trade: Teaching Literary Editing and Publishing** (Jeremy Schraffenberger, Mary Ann Miller, Elijah Burrell, Jennifer Case, Sarah Matthes)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Five magazine editors offer advice and share their experiences of teaching project-based literary editing and publishing courses. The unique pedagogical and production challenges of involving students in this collaborative work are discussed. Panelists describe the benefits to students, teachers, departments, and institutions of including the publication of a literary magazine in the curriculum, outlining the most effective models for creating and sustaining a robust learning laboratory.

**Two-Year College Creative Writing Caucus** (Stephanie M. Lindberg, Courtney O'Banion Smith, James Ducat, Ethan Klein, Dan Kirk)

In-person event

Event category: Caucus

Do you teach at a two-year college? Interested in job opportunities at two-year colleges? Join us for our annual networking meeting. With almost half of all students starting at two-year colleges, and increasing numbers of MFAs landing two-year college teaching jobs, the future of creative writing courses and programs at our campuses looks bright. We will discuss teaching creative writing at the two-year college, hold a short business meeting, and provide tangible resources.

**Unapologetically Uncanny & Unsettling: Bending Reality in Short Fiction** (Marguerite Sheffer, Chelsea Sutton, Lena Valencia, Anjali Sachdeva, Cleo Qian)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Short fiction is a rich playground for the weird! Panelists—all of whom have published short fiction collections that bend reality and the border between “literary” and “speculative” genres—will share what attracts them to the uncanny and how they write (and publish) fiction that embraces the strange, wondrous, and unsettling in the short form. These five women writers will also discuss how weird fiction is a vehicle for expressing experiences of marginalization, gender, and sexuality.

**Uncertain Characters in Uncertain Times** (Annell Lopez, Jai Chakrabarti, Sheila Sundar, Andrew Boryga, Felicia Berliner)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

How do novelists craft characters who are coming into their own in a fractured and uncertain world? How do we infuse stories with the intimacy of characters' self-awareness and their emergent understanding of the social order?

Spanning the ultra-Orthodox community of Brooklyn, to contemporary South India, to the gentrifying Bronx, and post-World War II Poland, this panel brings together four novelists whose writing sheds light on the internal and external struggles of finding one’s way.

**Understories and Mycocosms: Tapping Hidden Networks** (Anna Maria Hong, Lesley Wheeler, Asali Solomon, Amarnath Ravva, Sarah Audsley)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

How do we tap into networks outside of established power structures in precarious times and spaces to connect with allies and advocates? What cues can we take from the remarkable pathways ignited by trees, fungi, and other species in activating our understories? Writers, editors, organizers, and producers will reveal literature’s Wood Wide Web, talking about the tales beneath the tales that animate our writing and how symbiosis can circumvent and subvert obstacles to nourish literary lives.

**Using Open Educational Resources in Literature and Creative Writing Courses** (Joseph Klemens, Genevieve Betts, Austin Eichelberger, Jared Valdez, Valerie Nye)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

This panel will explore the use of Open Educational Resources (OER) in literature and creative writing college courses. What are the legal limitations and best practices when it comes to using OER? What resources (such as podcasts, online videos, and free online textbooks) exist, and how can instructors use them in the classroom, both in person and online? What are the benefits of using OER versus textbooks and materials that students are required to pay for?

**Using Stories to Fight Over-reliance on AI in Community College Class** (Heather Hutcheson, Kakwasi Somadhi, Emmanuel Sigauke)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

AI is a reality in all aspects of modern life, including our writing classes. How do we prevent AI from becoming the voice of student writing? Allowing students to connect their personal and community stories to writing assignments is one way. Guiding students to discern differences between their ideas and AI-generated prose will nudge them to rely less on the artificial and more on their own creativity. This workshop will inspire participants on how to make AI part of the classroom responsibly.

**Videopoetry 101: Merged Mediums and New Possibilities** (Erin Scott, Amaranth Borsuk, Shin Yu Pai, Rana San, Michael V Smith)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

A videopoem is an accessible tool for media literacy and creative expression. The poetic thrives in the associative leaps between image, audio, and text, providing a dynamic platform for cultural impact. Five writers present guiding principles for making, teaching, distributing, and curating videopoems, from what they are and where to start, to practical pedagogy, to how videopoetry sets educators, students, artists, and audiences up to engage with and integrate the power of the written word.

**Wandering Jews: Poetics of Diaspora and Land** (Josette Akresh-Gonzales, Jacqueline Osherow, Hila Ratzabi, Dan Alter, Mónica Gomery)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

In a time of climate crisis and societal instability, diasporic Jewish poets contribute to the work of repair and healing with poems that connect to lands we live on and memorialize lands left behind. Repeated exiles and homecomings inform our poems on making home where we are. How do ecopoetics converse with histories of immigration? Our poems answer the call of unfolding catastrophe and explore challenges and opportunities of our cultural and political context.

**We Beautifully Outside: Informal Writing Collectives, Community, and Kinship** (Renee Simms, Monica West, Stephanie Bray, Shonda Buchanan, Kim Benjamin)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

This panel will discuss the significance of community-based writing spaces-- especially for marginalized writers--which are not necessarily attached to universities or foundations. What happens with our craft and careers when we simply organize with other writers? What is the history of such literary gatherings? The panelists are members of the Anansi Writers Workshop founded in 1990 in Los Angeles, and Black Women Write, a collective established in Sacramento in 2018 and in Seattle in 2023.

**What Is and What If: The Speculative in Creative Nonfiction** (Alex Marzano-Lesnevich, J. Nicole Jones, Emilly Prado, Adèle Barclay, Nisa Malli)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

Four authors consider the speculative as a deft and bold tool in creative nonfiction. Panelists read from their innovative creative nonfiction that pries at the real and imaginary and discuss how speculative, mythic, ghostly and otherwise more obviously imaginative modes wrangle events from life into narrative. This panel asks what's at stake in inviting speculation into our nonfiction and interrogates whether speculative creative nonfiction is a new genre or integral to the genre's lineage.

**What You've Heard Isn't True: Crafting New Salvadoran Myths and Futurities** (Janel Pineda, Reyes Ramirez, Ruben Reyes Jr., Leticia Hernández-Linares, Gina María Balibrera)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Contemporary writers of the Salvadoran diaspora use the speculative--the imaginative--to parse through the urgent sociopolitical issues affecting the U.S. and El Salvador. By collapsing past and present, and blending history and mythology, these writers force us to ask: what have readers misunderstood or overlooked about the country and its diaspora? If much of El Salvador’s past was documented by outsiders, its future will be written by these speculative writers and their contemporaries.

**When a Book Takes Forever to Write—How to Survive the Process** (Sabina Murray, Gina Apostol, Shakstri Akella, Jeff Parker, Margaret Lee)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

What happens when writing a book takes much longer than expected? How do you keep on going? Five published writers from a variety of backgrounds (journalism, creative writing, academia) and genres (historical fiction, memoir, short story, novella, translated) will share their experiences with long book projects—some spanning almost three decades—and offer practical advice on how they navigated the process.

**When I Was Straight: A Tribute to Maureen Seaton** (Nicole Tallman, Denise Duhamel, Dustin Brookshire, Diamond Forde, Caridad Moro-Gronlier)

In-person event

Event category: Tributes

This event honors the life and work of award-winning poet, professor, and LGBTQ+ activist Maureen Seaton (October 20, 1947-August 26, 2023), author of more than two dozen solo and collaborative books. Participating poets pay tribute to Maureen by reading favorite poems from her expansive collection, in addition to reading their own work from the new LGBTQ+ anthology When I Was Straight: A Tribute to Maureen Seaton, and discussing her craft, influence, and enduring contributions to the canon.

**When Words Are Not Enough: Graphic Literature & Diasporic Histories** (Kelcey Ervick, Victoria Chang, Erica H Isomura, Tessa Hulls, Teresa Wong)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

The blank spaces surrounding migration, diaspora, and intergenerational trauma can’t always be filled with words alone. Join four Asian American writers and artists who dove into their families’ lost histories and found stories that could only be told through a combination of text and image. From poetry to memoir to history, discover how the graphics medium brings richness and nuance to diasporic works, helping creators find their way into and out of their families’ complicated pasts.

**Where Poetry Lives, Where Poetry Thrives: Poems Community** (Desiree Dallagiacomo, Yesika Salgado, Olivia Gatwood, Alyesha Wise)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Poetry thrives outside the ivory tower, and this panel is filled with poets transcending the walls of academia. From viral readerships galvanized on Instagram to poems inside the confines of incarceration, these poets know a thing or two about the transformative magic of writing with and for the people and places we call home. We will grapple with the questions: how can poetry be an act of community and kinship, and where can poetry live and thrive among our loved ones?

**Whose Fault Is It, Anyway?** (David St. John, Maggie Nelson, Danzy Senna, Aimee Bender, Dana Johnson)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

When, in Julius Caesar, Cassius says, "Our fault, dear Brutus, lies not in our stars but in ourselves...", we see a question implicit in all genres of writing: do characters and history equal destiny? Does circumstance erase choice and personal agency? Four distinguished writers of fiction, poetry, and essay consider how, in their own work, the fault lines of experience intersect with both one's present and our collective pasts.

**Wishes, Lies, and Dreams: the Impact of Writers in the Schools, Sponsored by WITS Alliance** (Javan Howard, Shawntai Brown)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

In 1969 when Kenneth Koch wrote Wishes, Lies, and Dreams based on his experience teaching poetry in New York City schools, he introduced a radical idea: to see students as artists. Today, professional writers are inspiring students with a joy of writing in writer-in-the-school programs across the country. In this panel, you’ll hear from teaching artists and program directors about the many ways writer/teaching artists impact students, teachers, and schools.

**Women Writers Talk Shame in the Classroom, Academia, and their Writing Lives** (Uche Okonkwo, Joy Castro, Silvia Park, Tara Ballard, Alina Nguyen)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Women panelists discuss how they navigate feelings of shame as teachers, as functionaries in academic institutions, and as writers. How much of our performance and presentation in these spaces is shaped by shame? How complicit are institutional structures in shaming? What added dimensions of shame do marginalized folks experience in these spaces? How does shame affect the creative process? Can shame be a force for good in our work, or is it always destructive?

**Women's Caucus** (Rahima Ullah, Joan Gelfand, Jennifer White, Shalini Rana)

In-person event

Event category: Caucus

The Women's Caucus offers an inclusive space for networking, event planning, and discussing issues like resources, access to literary power structures, childcare, and publication obstacles. Welcoming diverse perspectives, we support women writers, enhance understanding of gender and creative writing, and expand literary dialogue across genres. We encourage feminist literary perspectives, advocate for equity, and provide support for women writers.

**Words That Sing** (Taylor Brorby, Arisa White, Todd Boss, Samiya Bashir, Melissa Studdard)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Think you're not a lyricist? Think again. Writers often limit themselves to publishing on the page, when, in fact, there's an exciting, lucrative world of performance holding its doors open to literary writers. Five poets whose libretti and lyrics have led them to Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, Grammy Awards, and beyond will discuss topics such as breaking into writing for musical composition, best practices for musical teamwork and collaborative revision, how to manage contracts, and more.

**Write Indigenously: Poets on Language Revitalization and Sovereignty** (Mary Leauna Christensen, Arielle Taitano Lowe, Kalilinoe Detwiler, Casandra Lopez, Annie Wenstrup)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Five Indigenous poets will share their creative work, while discussing how reclaiming their ancestral language has impacted their personal poetics and healing process. Fluidity within the genre of poetry allows room for the inclusion of Indigenous languages and the decentering of English, rendering the poem a space of active decolonization. Here, the contemporary Indigenous poet writes themselves within the contexts of their own mother tongue and by Indigenizing the colonizer’s language.

**Writers and/as Artists Seizing the Image** (Ronaldo V. Wilson, Addie Tsai, Angela Penaredondo, Paul Cunningham, S. Erin Batiste)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

How do writers working at the margins of race, gender, and sexuality seize the possibilities of the image in verbal language through visual art? This panel negotiates the interplay between drawing, collage, video, and graphic art against the usual means of writing: story, metaphor, and plot. This panel presents five writers who practice visual art to resist conscripted identities to present radical possibilities of the imagined across verbal and visual language via the image, icon, and picture.

**Writing (and Publishing!) Short Fiction in a World Built for Novels** (Jeremy Broyles, Lan Samantha Chang, Leslie Pietrzyk, Gwendolyn Paradice, Gina Chung)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

The publishing industry remains largely geared towards novels. Many writers, however, come to fiction through the short form. How, then, to reconcile the disconnect between what we feel called to write and what the industry prefers to publish? Whether attendees are seeking publication strategies or simply fresh, urgent discussion about the validity of the short form, this panel promises insightful conversation led by five writers with robust experience using four thousand words or fewer.

**Writing & Narrative Medicine: Study, Practice, and Teaching** (Joseph Eveld, Nicole Robinson, Nellie Hermann, Chris Adrian, Deepthiman Gowda)

In-person event

Event category: Pedagogy

Narrative Medicine is a quickly growing discipline practiced in healthcare, education, and beyond. It engages participants directly in literature and writing, as well as other facets of the arts and humanities. This panel of award-winning writers, physicians, poets, and scholars will explore the multifaceted role of writing as a cornerstone of narrative medicine practice, focusing on pedagogy and pathways for writers to utilize their skills in narrative medicine contexts for self and others.

**Writing Body H(awe)rror** (Maggie Nye, Nicole Rivas, Katie Flynn, Emrys Donaldson, Chana Porter)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

Abomination, decomposition, implantation, transformation. Body horror addresses the vast anxieties that result from being a human meatsack. But it does more than that: it enables readers to re-envision their relationships to their bodies, to overwrite pre-inscribed meanings, and to exsanguinate (or disembowel or perhaps incinerate) oppressive structures. This panel brings together four diverse fiction writers to discuss their fascination with body horror and its liberatory potentialities.

**Writing from the Inside: Writing as a Path to Freedom** (Tijanna O. Eaton, Suotonye deWeaver, Joe Loya, Nicole Shawan Junior)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

Writers who have served time inside prisons, jails, and immigration detention centers have vital stories to share. Five writers impacted directly by criminal justice systems talk about how their experiences have shaped their writing across genres. Panelists will discuss their stories, writing practices, and the ways that they think about craft and narrative across different forms.

**Writing Our Way: Career and Self-Care Insights from First-Gen Women** (Hannah Eko, Tanya Shirazi, Amanda Awanjo, Connie Pertuz)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Join us for "Writing Our Way: Career and Self-Care Insights from First-Gen Women"! This powerhouse panel features first-generation women of color sharing their real wisdom on thriving in the writing world. Expect unfiltered advice on breaking into the industry, juggling life and creativity, and essential self-care practices. It's not just about surviving—it's about thriving with savvy, wisdom, and a plan. Get ready to be inspired and empowered to chart your writing life, your way.

**Writing Political Conviction: A Discussion with Three Novelists** (Faisal Moyhuddin, Sheila Sundar, V.V. Ganeshananthan, Rachel Khong)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Craft & Criticism

This panel will address the subtle and overt ways novelists position characters to bear witness, from a student coming of age during the Sri Lankan Civil War, to an immigrant sociologist’s awakening to caste and nationhood, to a family navigating race and class against the backdrop of scientific ethics. We will discuss the creative process of political world-building, the balance of research and imagination, and the task of drawing readers into the emotional and ideological heart of the story.

**Writing Refuge** (Adrianne Kalfopoulou, Ewa Chrusciel, Helen Benedict, Gazmend Kapllani)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

This panel will engage with the topic of refuge --- from the word “refugee” that embeds refuge, to the prefix “re” that speaks to the recursive idea of a past one is ever moving, or fleeing, from. The panelists represent tragicomic, fictional, lyrical, and documentary approaches to the worlds of these narratives and poems. The ethics of speaking for those who may not otherwise have a voice, as well as how the writing itself crafts multivalent notions of belonging, will be subjects of discussion.

**Writing Sex Beyond Survival: From Traumatic To Erotic & The Awkward In Between** (Jeannine Ouellette, Gina Frangello, Natashia Dion, Rebecca Woolf, Lidia Yuknavitch )

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Gertrude Stein said, “Literature—creative literature—unconcerned with sex, is inconceivable." Maybe that's because sex itself is so creative, powered as much by our dreams and our divinity as by our animal needs and desires. Writing real sex reveals characters' fears and wounds, but also their secret yearnings and human vastness. Five multi-genre writers talk about writing that fully embodies and claims sex, with all its paradoxical harms, pleasures, and ecstasies of "life's longing for itself."

**Writing Towards Liberation: Asian American Cultural Organizing for Change** (Roohi Choudhry, Tamiko Beyer, Jason Bayani, Fabliha Yeaqub, Lawrence-Minh Bùi Davis)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

For decades, Asian American organizers have harnessed the arts to spur change. Joining this tradition, community literary organizations and teaching artists curate events for learning and to resist the status quo. Panelists will discuss the lineage of creative writing in Asian American action (including internal and external challenges); how writers use generative workshops to organize; and how such spaces provide frameworks for action and respite from the mainstream literary establishment.

**Writing Traumedy: How to Make Your Mother Cry at Your Life & Laugh at Your Death** (Brooke Champagne, Jill Christman, Brittany Means, Ashley C. Ford, Sue William Silverman)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

It’s hard to be human. If you want to write the tough stuff—illness, trauma, loss, disaster, life—in a way that takes readers to the darkest places, but also brings them up for air and lets them laugh, join us as we marry tragedy with comedy to conceive the love-hate child named “Traumedy.” We’ll offer tips for using irony, irreverence, and gallows humor to bring levity to heartbreak and explore life’s sorrows traumedically. Morphing pain with pleasure is ideal for any sadomasochist—or writer.

**Writing With/About Unruly Bodies** (Margeaux Feldman, Fariha Roisin, Amanda Choo Quan, Kai Cheng Thom, Carolyn Collado)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

What does it mean to write about and from an unruly body? In a world that controls and punishes bodies that are queer, trans, disabled, mad, sick, fat, and/or racialized, writing about our unruly bodies can be an act of resistance–but that act can come at a cost. How do we write about our unruly bodies in a way that supports our flourishing? Is such a practice possible and if not, what is needed to make it so?

**You Call That A Book Review?!: On Poetry Criticism and/as Creative Practice** (Nanya Jhingran, Summer Farah, Cristina Correa, Dujie Tahat, Esther Lin)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Poet-critics from Poetry Northwest’s Critics at Large program share how their critical practices shape and are shaped by their creative work, how criticism can offer rigorous and novel forms of witness to others’ poetic labors, and their expansive approaches to crafting creative, incisive cultural criticism that explores, complicates, and/or transforms how we read the relationship between poetry and the social, cultural, political, and relational worlds it assembles/dismantles.

**You’re So Money, and You Don’t Even Know It: Funding Your Creative Writing** (Julie Hensley, Charissa Menefee, Patricia Murphy, Ashley Blooms)

In-person event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

A panel of mid-career writers will discuss strategies for securing funding for creative writing projects, including community, state, and regional arts endowment awards; residency fellowships; travel grants; and free-lancing in correlation with a particular project. Participants will highlight resources for finding funding opportunities, offer advice on crafting effective proposals and applications, and share hacks for making funds go further.

**Young Adult & Middle Grade Short Stories: The Craft, The Market** (Aaron H. Aceves, Racquel Marie, Rex Ogle, Lauren T. Davila, Jen Ferguson)

In-person event

Event category: Children’s & Young Adult Literature

The process of writing and publishing short fiction for an adult audience and novels for young people has been often discussed, but what about those who find themselves penning short stories for young adult and middle grade audiences? Five professional kidlit short story writers are here to talk about how to write these types of stories but also where to place them (journals/magazines, anthologies, collections, re-released novels).

**Readings:**

**60 Years of Community at the UCLA Extension Writers' Program** (Charles Jensen, Cole Kazdin, Sehba Sarwar, Malia Marquez, Chris Terry)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

The UCLA Extension Writers' Program begins its 60th year of operation in 2025. In that time, we have helped thousands of writers find their voices and reach their writing goals in every genre of literature and screenwriting. To celebrate this achievement, join us for a reading of works by our distinguished instructors.

**A Reading from Recent Prizewinning Short Story Collections** (Mubanga Kalimamukwento, Terese Svoboda, Nina Sudhakar, Christian Moody, Marian Crotty)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Readings

Authors of four recently published prizewinning short story collections will read from their collections and talk about the process of publishing their books through contests. These collections use games or magic to explore relationships and have won the Drue Heinz Literature Prize, the Dzanc Books Short Story Collection Prize, the Juniper Prize for Fiction, and the Katherine Anne Porter Prize. Panelists will also answer questions and share strategies for marketing short story collections.

**Across borders: Latine writers respond to the crackdown on immigration** (Giannina Braschi, Carlos Labbé, Mónica-Ramón Ríos, Tess O'Dwyer)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Readings

Latine writers read original pieces to respond to the recent immigration wave from South America. This session proposes that literature, specifically fiction and hybrid genres, illuminate how labeling the movement as a "crisis" economically manages and attacks one specific population, Spanish speaking from the South of the Americas. We then reveal a long literary, geopolitical, racial, mythical, classed connection between Latin America and the US.

**Anywhere But Here and Now: California Writers Speculate on Our Past and Future** (micah perks, Karen Tei Yamashita, Kim Stanley Robinson, Cathy Thomas)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Readings

From reimagining the history of Japanese Internment to speculating on several possible California futures, both ugly and beautiful, four acclaimed California writers read from their work and discuss the ways speculating about our history and our future can inform our present. Join us in imagining what if things were otherwise.

**Authors and Actresses: Writing for the Stage and the Page** (Maggie Andersen, Jennifer Rumberger, Ines Bellina, Lindsey Trout Hughes, Sam Bailey)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Readings

Memoirs and personal essays require many of the same ingredients as live theater: voice, energy, trust, discipline. In this reading, five writers use the theater as a way to investigate themselves and the world around them through: the politics and Catholic schools of Latin America, a newly articulating disability, the highs and lows of motherhood, the joys and challenges of working as a Black artist, and living apart from a partner while pursuing an artistic career.

**Bad Belonging: Jewish & Muslim Poets Writing Against and Into Community** (Maya Pindyck, Mohja Kahf, Kaveh Bassiri, Taije Silverman)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Readings

How can poetry disrupt shared ideas about what it means to belong to an ethnic or religious group? What might it mean, especially, to write poems as a “bad Jew” or a “bad Muslim” at this time? This poetry reading and panel addresses tensions between belonging to a cultural group while making choices, as poets, that refuse or challenge that sense of communal belonging. Panelists will consider poetry’s capacities for writing both against community and into community at this moment in time.

**Beauty of the Unwanted: Exploring the New Literary Terrain of California** (Carribean Fragoza, Ruth Nolan, Jenise Miller, Melissa Hidalgo)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Readings

Pushing beyond clichés of the “California Dream,” the Golden State, as embodied in a new literary terrain, is deviant and recalcitrant, proud and humble, joyful and communal and powerfully honest as it reclaims the beauty of the unwanted, the quotidian, and the out-of-place. This panel represents distinct literary voices of several contemporary essayists from California who are drawn to re-envisioning “the spirit of a place" in ways that challenge and fulfill the literary imagination.

**Bennington Writing Seminars @ 30: A Celebratory ReadingUntitled** (Mark Wunderlich, Puloma Ghosh, J. Mae Barzio, Shawna Kay Rodenberg, Moriel Rothman-Zecher)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

The Bennington Writing Seminars—one of the oldest and best known low-residency MFA programs anywhere—teaches creative writing through a process of intimate correspondence and brief periods of intense togetherness. Founded in 1994, the Writing Seminars celebrates 30 years of helping writers to realize their literary ambitions, publish countless books, and participate in literary communities. Four distinguished Bennington alumni will read from their books and new work as we look to the future.

**Beyond a Homeland: Celebrating Iranian-American Women Writers** (Shideh Etaat, Marjan Kamali, Porochista Khakpour, Jasmin Darznik, Sahar Delijani)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Readings

How do writers make sense of the Iranian diasporic experience? This reading highlights Iranian-American women fiction authors all with incredibly varied connections to Iran. How do their relationships with a homeland that has been taken from them help shape the stories they tell? This is Iran beyond the news headlines. Discussion will follow the reading.

**Cane & Malunggay: M\_noa Journal Explores South Asian Coolie & Philippine History** (Subramanian Shankar, Rajiv Mohabir, Laurel Flores Fantauzzo, Vinod Busjeet, Rachelle Cruz )

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

Mānoa Journal’s two most recent issues present writing emerging from the South Asian Coolie Diaspora and Philippine political resistance. The event will combine readings and conversation to showcase this powerful writing in the context of the vibrant literary community the journal has facilitated for three decades. The panel will explore tradition, belonging, identity, land, and the oceans that connect us all. It will explore how we document survival and create a roadmap for the future.

**Celebrating 75 Years of the Beloit Poetry Journal** (Rachel Contreni Flynn, Eduardo Corral, Kemi Alabi, Michael Wasson, Katie Farris)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Readings

Since 1950, the Beloit Poetry Journal has published poetry that speaks complex, necessary truths in startling, beautiful ways, producing literary magazines and chapbooks beloved by a diverse community of poets and readers. Join BPJ editors and contributors as they celebrate a remarkable 75 years of continuous

publication and discuss the journal’s seven decades of dedication to expanding the definition of the term “American Poetry.”

**Celebrating the Golden State: A Reading by Poets Laureate from California** (Lee Herrick, Lynne Thompson, Tongo Eisen-Martin, Joseph Rios, Yosimar Reyes)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Readings

What do a queer undocumented immigrant, a former packinghouse worker, an organizer around issues of extrajudicial killings of Black people, a Korean adoptee, and a lawyer by training have in common? They are all poets laureate from various parts of California. These poets celebrate California but also challenge positions of power and privilege. The laureates will discuss their roles, read from their books, and engage in a Q & A with the audience.

**Coach House Books 60th Anniversary Reading** (Suzette Mayr, Ian Williams, Derek Beaulieu, Susan Holbrook, Adam Dickinson)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

Coach House Books has been publishing cutting-edge literary fiction, poetry, and nonfiction since 1965, meaning that 2025 marks our 60th anniversary. To celebrate this milestone, we will showcase some of our most celebrated authors, including Giller Prize winner Suzette Mayr (The Sleeping Car Porter) and poets Ian Williams, Adam Dickinson, Derek Beaulieu, and Susan Holbrook. The readings will be hosted by Editorial Director Alana Wilcox.

**Color/Line/Collage: Readings at the Edge of Comics** (Mita Mahato, Sarah Leavitt, Johnny Damm)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

This reading features cartoonists who use poetry, abstraction, and collage to push the boundaries of the comics medium. The trio will read from their work and discuss the importance of formal experimentation when dealing with complex and rapidly evolving issues such as climate catastrophe, state-sanctioned police violence, and medical assistance in dying. The reading will showcase how hybrid forms open space for multiple perspectives, alternate realities, and new vocabularies.

**Concatenations of L.A.** (Ruben Martinez, Raquel Gutierrez, Vickie Vertiz, Alex Espinoza, Yxta Maya Murray)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

Our point of departure is author Raquel Gutierrez's seminal essay "A Concatenation of Sprawls," which explores the 90s queer Latine underground in L.A. as a site of creative liberation on the margins of the raced, hetero-normativized city. We propose to explore literatures that reveal the under-, alt-, DIY and organic communities that gather in clubs, ethnic enclaves and other diverse subcultures. We bring together poets, novelists and essayists to conjure an oft-hidden geography.

**Crossing Genres Crossing Worlds: Women of Color in Speculative Literature** (Quincy Scott Jones, Sam Chanse, Muriel Leung, Tananarive Due, Vanessa Angélica Villarreal)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

 "The Future is Female" except in sci-fi, where after a century of visionaries like Octavia Butler and Begum Rokeya, it still appears white and male. What happens when women of color not only reimagine the barriers of genre, but of time and space as well? Four writers speculating across fiction, playwriting, nonfiction, and poetry share their work and discuss how their experiences serve, in Butler’s words "as guides to the kind of world we seem to be creating" – not only our future, but our now.

**Divergent Writers: A New Bloomsbury Anthology on Neurodivergence & Ableism** (Christie Collins, Saul Lemerond, Said Shaiye, Leigh Camacho Rourks, K. Iver)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Readings

Creative writing spaces are largely engineered for abled bodies. Attitudes surrounding disability, illness, and neurodivergence range from reluctance to complete disregard. These writers are often romanticized, erased, or both, as the writing world has little interest in accommodating those who do not fit neatly into ableist paradigms. Our panel of exceptional authors will discuss our forthcoming anthology. In doing so, we will share our relevant experiences and suggest interventions.

**Fighting Tropes, Changing Narratives: BIPOC Adoptee Writers Break Out** (Susan Kiyo Ito, Angela Tucker, Alice Stephens, Lee Herrick)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

BIPOC adoptee writers who write against popular adoption tropes challenge deeply ingrained yet damaging narratives. Adoption is a popular literary theme, addressing what it is to be human and have a family. Yet adoption-focused writing has been dominated by adoptive parents or the adoption industry, leaving adopted people marginalized. This diverse panel of BIPOC adoptee writers will read poetry, memoir, fiction and nonfiction and discuss why and how they write to reframe the adoption narrative.

**For the Love of the Novella: A Reading and Conversation** (Anne Elliott, Matt Bell, Rion Amilcar Scott, Sasha Hom, Ashley Honeysett)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Readings

The novella is a form that is in-between—not quite a short story, not quite a novel. Perhaps that in-betweenness is the reason fans of the form are so devoted; or, as Debra Spark suggests, “The novella is a Goldilocks form, not too much this and not too much that but just right.” This panel celebrates the form with readings by four novella writers, followed by a discussion of craft possibilities and challenges, favorite novellas to use as models, and the publication landscape.

**Future Work / Beauty Work: A Reading Featuring New Diné Poets** (Esther Belin, Chris Hoshnic, Jalen Charley, Jalen Smallcanyon, Yitazba Leigh)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Readings

Future Work / Beauty Work will feature a panel of exciting, new, and bold voices in Diné poetry—a school of poetics grounded in Hozhó. Diné poets are beginning to receive national acclaim and recognition and it is vital to begin illuminating the histories and futures of Diné literature and poetry. The event will include a reading from four exciting poets from the Navajo Nation as they map new worlds for us and a brief Q & A at the end of the event to help introduce these necessary voices.

**Hybrid Selves, Hybrid Form: Queer and Feminist Possibilities of the Prose Poem** (Julie Marie Wade, Allison Blevins, Vi Khi Nao, Dawn Lundy Martin, Sophie Klahr)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Readings

The prose poem is often first (or entirely) encountered in straight and masculine contexts, associated with Charles Baudelaire’s 19th century pronouncement, “Always be a poet, even in prose.” This panel revises that pronouncement to read: “Always be a poet, especially in queer and feminist prose.” Five queer women panelists reveal through reading and conversation an alternative and empowering legacy for the prose poem.

**Library of America and Rigoberto González present: Latinx Poetry Then and Now** (Rigoberto González, Laurie Ann Guerrero, Eduardo C. Corral, Alexandra Lytton Regalado, Brandon Som)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Readings

Latino Poetry: The Library of America Anthology is an unprecedented collection that brings together more than 180 poets whose work testifies to the multifaceted past and present of Latinx poetry–its linguistic inventiveness, and its critical reimagining of questions of exile, language, ancestry, identity, and place. In a reading and conversation moderated by editor Rigoberto González, four poets read from the anthology and discuss the ongoing impact of Latinx poetry on American literature.

**New Mythologies in South Asian Literature** (Jafreen Uddin, Vaishnavi Patel, Aparna Verma)

In-person event

Event category: Fiction Readings

What happens when South Asian futurities and mythologies collide? How do we envision that which has yet to exist? This panel of Speculative Fiction, Science Fiction, and Post-Colonial Writers from South Asia and the South Asian Diaspora will collectively share their practices and processes for reimagining, remixing, and re-understanding mythologies, including South Asian folklore, legends, and epics through and beyond time.

**Not Your Papi's Utopia: Latinx Visions of Radical Hope** (Sara Rivera, Amanda Torres, Matthew Goodwin, Richie Narvaez, Rolando Lopez)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

Not Your Papi's Utopia (Mouthfeel Press 2024) is the final installment of our Latinx speculative fiction trilogy. The panel, comprised of two editors and three authors, will discuss the goal of the anthology to envision alternate forms of utopian thinking that focuses not on a perfect society but a society trying to be more in harmony with the environment and with more equitable political systems. The discussion will be followed by fiction and poetry readings from the book.

**Persea Books 50th Anniversary Poetry Reading** (Molly McCully Brown, Patrick Rosal, Gabrielle Calvocoressi, Lisa Russ Spaar, Cameron Awkward-Rich)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Readings

Since its founding, Persea Books has centered poetry in its mission to discover essential literary voices. It has introduced readers in the United States to indispensable poets like Molly McCully Brown, Paul Celan, Gabrielle Calvocoressi, Nazîm Hikmet, Thylias Moss, Les Murray, Marie Howe, Patrick Rosal, and many others. This reading brings together five of the Persea’s core contemporary poets. Each will read their own work as well as that of others published by Persea in the past half century.

**Poetry as Preservation: Other Californias and Beyond** (Emily Fernandez, Michelle Rosado, Cynthia Guardado, Steven Sanchez, Gina Duran)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Readings

Believing a poem can be a vessel for preservation, this reading will gather poets writing about “other Californias” often overlooked and underrepresented. Along with a slideshow of rich visual representations, panelists will share their poetry and discuss the preservation of histories, environments, and cultures of the Sacramento Valley, the eastside of Los Angeles, Inglewood in the South Bay, the Inland Empire, and the San Joaquin Valley, as well as family histories of migration.

**Predictable Unpredictability: Celebrating The Poetry of Reginald Shepherd** (Jericho Brown, Kevin Prufer, Timothy Liu, Camille Rankine, Charles Stephens)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Readings

The Pitt Poetry Series is honored to celebrate the poetry of Reginald Shepherd with the recent publication of The Selected Shepherd, selected and with an introduction by Jericho Brown. Drawing from all six of his collections, The Selected Shepherd offers a new retrospective on the work of an important and sometimes controversial Black, gay poet. Five poets will read poems from the collection and share the impact Shepherd had on the poetry community.

**Rewriting L.A.: Literature from the Modern Working Class** (Vickie Vertiz, Jenise Miller, Tanzila Ahmed, Steve Gutierrez, JOELLE MENDOZA)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

Los Angeles is forever idealized as a glittering diorama of would-be actors and Hollywood palm trees. But this multi-genre, inter-generationa panel focuses on a working-class literary Los Angeles that makes the glint possible, tasking us to rewrite our city’s imaginings or get written out. Through fiction, poetry, screenwriting, and nonfiction, these writers craft a diverse, gritty, tangled city, capturing the complex interchanges of Los Angeles’s cultural and social history.

**Spirit Work: Talking (with) Sacred Texts through Poetry** (Philip Metres, Angela Penaredondo, Padraig O Tuama, Jessica Jacobs, Sarah Ghazal Ali)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Readings

Drawing upon inherited or chosen faith traditions as we face our contemporary world and its spiritual predicament, poets Sarah Ghazal Ali, Jessica Jacobs, Philip Metres, Angela Peñaredondo, and Padraig O Tuama will offer brief remarks and readings of poems (their own and others') that wrestle with God and religion, the architecture of awe and belief, of grief and unbelief, offering new ways of thinking of poems as spiritual practice—through imaginative contemplation, midrash, and ritual.

**Stories of Mental Health from the Margins** (Jafreen Uddin, Mimi Khúc, Prachi Gupta, Nina Sharma)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Readings

Healthcare and wellness, notions once believed to be self-evident, have in recent years become increasingly fraught sites of critical reconceptualization. This panel will upend received beliefs regarding our contemporary understanding of both concepts, discussing the systematically ignored psychic lives of marginalized groups in the United States, the belief that sickness is the aberrant alternative to healthfulness, and the overlooked events in people’s lives that have lasting consequences.

**Tales of the Town: Writers Speak To Oakland's Resilient Urban Culture** (Nayomi Munaweera, Thaddeus Howze, Aimee Suzara, Nazelah Jamison, Norma Smith)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

Urban environments play a special role in American culture, providing safety, sanctuary, and community for many, including immigrants, people of color, low-income and LGBTQ people. This intergenerational group of authors and activists with deep roots in the East Bay and involved in ecological and social justice movements will temper some media pundits' "doom loop" narrative of fear and despair with tales of cultural survival and innovation. We speak from our experiences and read from our work.

**The Cost of Assimilation: Asian Diaspora Writers on Losing Their First Language** (Grace Prasad, Annie Tan, Brian Truong, Geetha Iyer)

In-person event

Event category: Nonfiction Readings

Being a child of the Asian diaspora means living at the intersection of cultures and languages. Assimilation offered safety–stepping out of the leaky boat of immigrant identity onto the solid ground of Americanness. Nothing could be done about our faces, so we did the next best thing: mastered new languages, lost our accents, focused on the future. But what happens when we examine our parents’ lives and homelands, and how do we reclaim our lost languages and selves in borrowed tongues?

**The Defiance of Pink Poetry Books** (Xochitl-Julisa Bermejo, Chen Chen, jason b. crawford, Yesenia Montilla, Anatalia Vallez)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Readings

To see the world through rose-colored glasses means to have a positive outlook that may be naive or weak. But in a violent world, it is an act of defiance to choose love and joy over alienation and uncertainty. Celebrating titles that feature the color pink on their covers, poets will read work that highlights the intersections of gender, sexuality, race, and identity, and discuss how pink came to be a prominent element of their book, and what the color means to them and their writing.

**The Poetics of Grief: Private to Public** (Julie Carr, Serena Chopra, Gillian Conoley, Erica Lewis, Quenton Baker)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Readings

From Catullus to Creeley, from Dickinson to Audre Lorde, poets have always used their art to lament the outrage of death. In this panel, five innovative poets read from recent works that trouble the border between the private sorrow of losing a loved one and the public grief over climate catastrophe, gun violence, and war. How do our personal losses press up against larger systemic crises? How does lament turn to demand, cry to outcry?

**The Velvet Air of Gaza: Protest and Beauty** (Samina Najmi, Lena Mubsutina, Deema Shehabi, Samah Fadil)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

This multigenre reading by mostly Palestinian writers focuses on what it means to write in the face of genocide and the global student protests against it. How do our words transcend mere empathy and reach beyond it to achieve active solidarity? What is the relationship between beauty and protest? Between protest and language? How do these relationships inform love in the tradition of Black radical love? Our readings will illuminate some possible answers to these urgent questions of our time.

**Twenty Years of Reimagining Place: An Ecotone Anniversary Reading** (Oindrila Mukherjee, Rebecca Makkai, Patricia Smith, Geoffrey Brock, Jennifer Tseng)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

Ecotone was founded in 2005 with a mission to reimagine place. Over the past twenty years, the magazine has created a welcoming space for a wide range of place-based writing and art. To celebrate this milestone, contributors will read from their work, and contemplate the value and the responsibilities of a magazine of place and environment in a time of climate crisis.

**Veins & Tributaries: A Reading with Diasporic Burmese American Writers** (Audrey Williams, Maw Shein Win, Michelle Dunn Marsh, Kenneth Wong, Thirii Myo Kyaw Myint)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

Explore literary tributaries branching from the Burmese diaspora with poetry, fiction, and memoir. Five intergenerational authors, each drawing from their deep ancestral roots in Myanmar, explore the intricate geo-political themes of identity, displacement, and legacy. Join us for a vivid dialogue on how the shadows of post-independence Burma shape notions of time, space, and self.

**Voices From the "Other" California - A Sense of Place: Belonging and Divisions** (Juan Felipe Herrera, Susan Straight, Lee Herrick, Isabel Quintero, Mas Masumoto)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

Often lost and overlooked are the hidden and "other" voices - specifically from Inland California. Voices of outsiders that are marginalized: rural, working class, mixed race families, agrarian, communities of color - all explore a new meaning of diversity. A unique sense of place and history are woven into the voices from these hidden perspectives - with a brutal honesty from those who live in a different world in the shadows of the established. Connect with revealing legacies.

**We Are Still Here: A Reading for Palestinian and Armenian Solidarity** (Gina Srmabekian, Nancy Agabian, Raffi Wartanian, Mai Serhan, Priscilla Wathington)

In-person event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Readings

IALA (International Armenian Literary Alliance) presents a reading of multi-genre writers of Palestinian and Armenian descent. Their works in prose, poetry, and nonfiction examine culture and heritage in the diaspora despite ongoing campaigns of silencing by colonialist and fascist governments. In the face of exile and violence, our coalition fights for the recognition of our peoples' safety and autonomy while celebrating writing as a continued form of resistance and survival.

**Women of a Certain Age on Sex and Death: “I took the lake between my legs”** (Rebecca Foust, Ellen Bass, Susan Browne, Zeina Hashem Beck, Julia Levine)

In-person event

Event category: Poetry Readings

In her poem “Morning Swim,” Maxine Kumin defies societal expectations that sexuality is exclusively for the young. In this reading, five award-winning poets aged from mid-40s to mid-70s will share frankly erotic work that makes a bulwark of bodily sensuality against death, time and our aging selves. Shoring these fragments against our ruins can be exhilarating, painful, or painfully funny. Sometimes it nurtures a rare and fierce flame, building beauty that lasts.

**Virtual Events:**

**Panel Discussions:**

**Adaptation: The Art, Craft and Business of Literary Re-Birth** (Brighde Mullins, Erin Cressida Wilson, Phyllis Nagy, Mark Richard)

Virtual event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Adaptation is big business in Hollywood. There is a professional, technical aspect to adaptation. Nevertheless, an adapter's relationship to their material also contains the adapter's own style. This panel will bring together successful screenwriters who are also playwrights and novelists. How do they express their originality through what they choose to adapt and how they approach the adaptation? We will look at issues of fidelity in translation along with strategies of adaptation.

**Art Belongs to Everyone: Giving Literature and Art a New Voice** (Morgan Christie, NaBeela Washington, Mel Sherrer, Dorian Nash)

Virtual event

Event category: Writers’ Conferences & Centers

The arts should belong to everyone. Lucky Jefferson is excited to present research from ongoing focus groups and the surveying of Black-identifying writers and artists in Chicago and the U.S. With support from Illinois Humanities, this research is a step towards advancing creative communities of color by raising awareness about the harms that continue to exist in publishing. Participants will be able to learn new insights and co-partner with us offline to develop new communities of practice.

**Between the Night and Its Music: The Poetry of A. B. Spellman** (Lauri Scheyer , A. B. Spellman, Tracie Morris, Fred Moten, Evie Shockley)

Virtual event

Event category: Tributes

A lively discussion among poet-scholars situates A. B. Spellman’s poetry in the context of his roles as a leading figure in the Black Arts Movement, a jazz critic, and a senior arts administrator at the NEA, where he had a lasting impact on funding for inner city, rural, and tribal communities. Spellman (a recent Grammy winner) will also read a selection of his poetry, which is infused with an awareness of community and other artistic practices, including sculpture, painting, dance, and music.

**BIPOC Disabled Narratives and Disability Representation** (Alice Wong, Akemi Nishida, Mimi Khuc, Jen Soriano, Walela Nehanda)

Virtual event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

How many BIPOC disabled authors have published books in the past 5 years? We don’t know, because no one tracks it (yet). As Alice Wong writes, there is a wonderful set of new books by disabled authors, yet “the percentage of books published by disabled authors is still disproportionate and paltry.” What can disabled authors do to support each others’ paths to publication? What can the industry do to bring greater disability representation? Join these disabled authors to discuss and conspire!

**Cripping Neverland: a Neurodiverse Reimagining of Cognition and Poetics** (J. Michael Martinez, heidi andrea restrepo rhodes, Courtney Caldwell, Bekah Lazar)

Virtual event

Event category: Poetry Craft & Criticism

Exploring the unexpected coalitions, and mixed methods occurring in their creative writing, our panelists critically reflect on how their neurodiversity and/or disabilities influence their creative expression. This panel brings together a dynamic group of poets and scholars whose work challenges conventional narratives and celebrates the rich tapestry of neurodiverse and crip thought.

**Fat, Flawed, & Fabulous: Writing Fat & Queer Narratives in Fiction & Nonfiction** (Tiff Joshua TJ Ferentini, C. Adán Cabrera, Samantha Puc, Leah Harris, August Grimm)

Virtual event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Trans and queer fats are waiting for their “moment,”, as it’s still radical to include characters that positively represent us in fiction and nonfiction. This panel explores the challenges and rewards of writing while fat, creating fat characters, how to create positive narratives for fat readers living at the intersection of their queer identities and fatness, and other craft issues. Panelists will offer ways to transform negative narratives around fatness and queerness into positive ones.

**Finding Your Own Rhythm: Writing Practices For Neurodivergent/Disabled Writers** (Christopher Norton, Leticia Escalera, Gregory Luce, Asha Dore, Paul Pedroza)

Virtual event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

It's not always possible for neurodivergent writers or those with physical or mental disabilities to follow popular writing advice. These authors share strategies and workarounds that help them research, complete, revise, and submit writing projects. They also address ways to maintain professional relationships when attending events or communicating with others - and urge the publishing and literary worlds to embrace and celebrate the distinctive contributions of the disabled and neurodivergent!

**Leveraging Humanities Skills for Entrepreneurial Success in Publishing** (Dan Blank, Nick Courtright, Cathy Mazak, Kathleen Schmidt, Jennie Nash)

Virtual event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

In this challenging job market, starting your own business can be a viable alternative to waiting for opportunities from institutions. Individuals with a background in the humanities possess unique skills and talents that are invaluable for running a business in the publishing space. These include telling compelling stories, communicating authentically, and understanding what drives people. In this event, entrepreneurs share how they use their humanities training to help them succeed in business

**Making the Literary Ecosystem More Equitable for The Global South's Writers** (Mugabi Byenkya, Tazrian Rahman, Anwuli Ojogwu, Deusa De Africa, Sandra Tamele)

Virtual event

Event category: Artistic & Professional Development

Writers in the Global South face institutional barriers to accessing resources that help many writers further their careers. This panel of writers, publishers, editors, and a translator, from different countries and different genres, will outline and explore ways that the literary worlds of both the Global North and the Global South can make publishing opportunities, as well as fellowships, residencies, grants, and post-graduate programs, more equitable for writers regardless of national origin.

**OMG It's Out! Love and Craft in Queer Horror** (Lauren Brazeal Garza, Luna Rey Hall, Hailey Piper, Paula D. Ashe, Rae Wilde)

Virtual event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

This multigenre panel explores ways in which queer writers of horror, at various stages of their careers, uniquely interact with haunting, dread, and conceptions of queerness in their work. Focuses include queering the horror genre, how “dread,” and “terror” manifest in each panelist’s writing, and in what ways the ever-changing queer experience plays a role in our work. Panelists will also offer insight into how writers of any genre might approach terror and dread in their writing.

**Reshaping the Motherhood Plot** (Diana Xin, Angela Garbes, Amanda Montei, Jazmina Barrera, Julie Phillips)

Virtual event

Event category: Nonfiction Craft & Criticism

Art monster or administering angel. Madwoman or supermom. Motherhood is a confining narrative yet within its tedium is a struggle to define our social relationships and community structures. The writers in this panel reach for past examples to explore ways to better care for our children, our art, and our communities. Through memoir, biography, and cultural criticism, they excavate history, science, and family legacy to trouble the stories we are told and to revise for future possibility.

**Rewriting Motherhood: Fresh Takes on Parenting in Literature** (Leena Prasad, Jing Li, Aqueila Lewis-Ross, Noelia Cerna)

Virtual event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

These poetry and prose writers' work grapples with how to mother in new situations for which there is no road map. They're breaking generational legacies of trauma, reconnecting after estrangement, parenting a small child after age 50, or adapting wisdom from different times and cultures for today. Their work re-purposes or re-invents traditional literary forms to present complex and nuanced takes on what it means to raise another human being.

**Tribute to Poet & Disability Rights Activist Kathi Wolfe** (Sarah Browning, Cornelius Eady, Natalie Illum, Moira Egan, Jim Ferris)

Virtual event

Event category: Tributes

Kathi Wolfe wrote brilliant, funny poems that upended society’s expectations of queer blind and disabled people. She has also been a powerful advocate for accessibility within literary and queer communities. Her activism, humor, challenge, and big heart have had a profound influence on writers and advocates in the Washington, DC area, where she made her home for decades, and nationwide. Poets who knew her well will read Kathi’s poems and pay tribute to her poetry, activism, and many charms.

**Words That Build Bridges: Writing Across Political Divides** (Anisa Rahim, Phyllis Skoy, Mary Mackey, Ava Homa)

Virtual event

Event category: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

A critic once said that Isabel Allende's work "embraced the cause of humanity," as her perspective was broad enough to touch the hearts of many without watering down her clearly stated values and beliefs. This panel explores how several novelists and poets have advocated for human rights, gender equality, democracy and anti-fascism, and ecological sustainability in ways that help readers feel respected and included, starting from common ground to build bridges toward expanded empathy for others.

**Readings:**

**Multiple Registers: Matwaala Poets Assert Democracy in Difference** (Pramila Venkateswaran, Zilka Joseph, Indran Amirthanayagam, Kashiana Singh, Usha Akella)

Virtual event

Event category: Poetry Readings

Currently in the United States, authors are being banned and educational institutions are facing a backlash against diversity and inclusion. But we have a plurality of literary voices, as seen in Matwaala South Asian Diaspora Poets which thrives in its diversity. This panel will present poems representing religious, linguistic, regional and cultural diversity in South Asian American poetry. These multiple voices signify our democracy, thus standing against censorship and suppression of DEI.