Writers & Books’ Literary Conference 2022
Taking Care in Writing, Publishing & Building Community

On-Site Open House & Book Fair
Thursday, January 20, 6:30 – 9 PM
Ampersand Books | 740 University Avenue, Rochester

Virtual Conference Events
Friday - Sunday, January 21 - 23
## SCHEDULE

### Friday, January 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2:30 – 3:45 pm</td>
<td><strong>Big House, Small House</strong>&lt;br&gt;Elizabeth DeMeo, Beena Kamlani, Michael McGandy; Jeffrey Lependorf, moderator</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 pm</td>
<td><strong>Welcome</strong>&lt;br&gt;Alison Meyers</td>
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<td>4:15 – 5:30 pm</td>
<td><strong>Opening Reading</strong>&lt;br&gt;Destiny O. Birdsong, Meg Kearney, Ann Marie Macari, Brenda Peynando, Tim Seibles, Arisa White</td>
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<td>6 - 7:15 pm</td>
<td><strong>The Poet &amp; Their Publisher: BOA Editions &amp; Nightboat Books</strong>&lt;br&gt;Peter Conners, Rosamond King, Stephen Motika, Danni Quintos; Alison Meyers, Moderator</td>
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### Saturday, January 22

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>10 - 11:15 am</td>
<td><strong>Reading: Greater Rochester Poets &amp; Authors</strong>&lt;br&gt;Albert Abonado, Elizabeth Johnston Ambrose, Jessica Cuello, Tokeya Graham, Tony Leuzzi, Lytton Smith, Angelique Stevens</td>
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<td><strong>Agent Pitch Sessions</strong>&lt;br&gt;One-on-one 8-minute sessions by appointment</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 am - 12 pm</td>
<td><strong>Kwame Dawes: Keynote Address</strong>&lt;br&gt;ASL Interpreted</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:15 - 1:30 pm</td>
<td><strong>Keynote Breakout Discussion</strong>&lt;br&gt;Alison Meyers, moderator</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:45 - 3 pm</td>
<td><strong>4 over 50: Reading &amp; Conversation with Debut Authors</strong>&lt;br&gt;Desiree Cooper, Jimin Han, Jeffrey J. Higa, David Mihalyov; Alison Meyers, moderator</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>The Socially Challenged Body: Reading &amp; Conversation</strong>&lt;br&gt;Riva Lehrer &amp; Lennard J. Davis</td>
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<td><strong>Little Magazines: Trends &amp; Opportunities</strong>&lt;br&gt;Tony Leuzzi, Marjorie Tesser, Susan Harris; Jeffrey Lependorf, moderator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Session Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:15 - 4:30 pm</td>
<td>Non-Traditional Writing Opportunities</td>
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<td>Writing with Intention for Young Readers</td>
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<td>4:45 - 6 pm</td>
<td>Writing through Grief</td>
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<td>Art of the Memoir</td>
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<td>6:15 – 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Research-based Narratives</td>
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<td>Agent Pitch Clinic</td>
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<td>7:45 – 9 pm</td>
<td>Nightcap Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday, January 23</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 am – 12:45 pm</td>
<td>Writing Illness: Mental Health, Chronic Pain, &amp; Disability</td>
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<td>1 – 2:15 pm</td>
<td>Translation as Activism &amp; Taking Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:30 – 3:45 pm</td>
<td>Letterpress, Activism, Zines &amp; Community-Based Collaboration</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 – 5:15 pm</td>
<td>Beyond the Black and White Binary</td>
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PANELISTS’ BIOS

Albert Abonado is the author of the poetry collection Jaw (Sundress Publications, 2020). His poems have appeared in Boston Review, Pleiades, The Margins, Zone 3, and elsewhere. He holds an MFA from the Bennington Writing Seminars and has received a fellowship for poetry from the New York Foundation for the Arts. He hosts the poetry radio show Flour City Yawp on WAYO 104.3 FM-LP and teaches creative writing at SUNY Geneseo. He lives in Rochester, NY, with his wife.

Elizabeth Johnston Ambrose’s poetry and prose, nominated for three Pushcart Prizes, have appeared in The Atlantic, McSweeney’s, Feminist Formations, Women Studies Quarterly, and elsewhere. She is the author of two chapbooks, Imago Dei (2021 Rattle Chapbook Poetry Prize) and Wild Things (Main Street Rag, 2021). She teaches writing and women studies courses, and facilitates writing-as-therapy workshops for the Breast Cancer Coalition in Rochester, NY. Find her at ElizabethJohnstonAmbrose.com and on twitter @libbyjohnston74.

Doug Anderson grew up in Memphis, TN. He served as a combat medic in the Vietnam War, and after Vietnam, studied acting at the University of Arizona. He is the author of the poetry collections The Moon Reflected Fire (Alice James Books, 1994), winner of the Kate Tufts Discovery Award; Blues for Unemployed Secret Police (Curbstone Press, 2000); and Horse Medicine (Barrow Street Press, 2015). His memoir, Keep Your Head Down: Vietnam, the Sixties, and a Journey of Self-Discovery, was published by W. W. Norton in 2009. His awards include a grant from the Eric Mathieu King Fund of the Academy of American Poets, a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, and a Pushcart Prize. Doug has taught at the University of Connecticut, Eastern Connecticut State University, and the William Joiner Center for the Study of War and Its Social Consequences at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

makalani banede is an Affrilachian Poet and Cave Canem fellow currently attending the University of Kentucky in pursuit of an MFA in Creative Writing. The recipient of fellowships from the Kentucky Arts Council, Millay Colony, and Vermont Studio Center, he is a graduate of Shaw University with a Master of Divinity in Biblical Studies. His work has been published in several anthologies and widely in such print and online journals as African American Review, Killens Review of Arts and Letters, and Sou’wester. makalani’s first book of poems, hellfightin’, was published by Aquarius Press in 2011, and his second full-length collection, under the aegis of a winged mind, was awarded the 2019 Autumn House Press Poetry Prize. Find makalani online at makbande.com.

Jenny Bhatt is a writer, literary translator, book critic, and the founder of Desi Books. She teaches creative writing at Writing Workshops Dallas. Find her at jennybhattraveler.com.

Destiny O. Birdsong is a poet, novelist, and essayist whose work has appeared in Paris Review Daily, African American Review, and Catapult, among other publications. Her debut poetry collection, Negotiations (Tin House, 2020) was longlisted for the 2021 PEN/Voelcker Award. Her novel, Nobody’s Magic, is forthcoming in February 2022 from Grand Central Publishing. Find Destiny online at destinybirdsong.com.

Sally Bittner Bonn is a writer, performer, and teaching artist who promotes disability awareness through her writing (oscar-go.org). She served as both cast member and producer for Listen to Your Mother and currently is working on a memoir about raising her artist/activist son who navigates the world from a power wheelchair. Sally is the Director of Youth Education at Writers & Books and lives with her family in Rochester, NY.

Zoë Bossiere is the managing editor of Brevity: A Journal of Concise Literary Nonfiction and the co-editor of the anthology The Best of Brevity (Rose Metal Press, 2020). She is also an interview podcast host for the New Books Network. Find her online at zoebossiere.com and on Twitter @zoebossiere.
Valerie Boyd is the author of Wrapped in Rainbows: The Life of Zora Neale Hurston, winner of the Southern Book Award and the American Library Association’s Notable Book Award. Formerly the arts editor at The Atlanta Journal-Constiution, she has written articles, essays, and reviews for such publications as The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, Creative Nonfiction, Oxford American, Ms., and Essence. She is a professor of journalism and the Charlayne Hunter-Gault Distinguished Writer in Residence at the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Georgia, where she founded and directs the low-residency MFA Program in Narrative Nonfiction.

Wendy Call translated Mexican-Zapotec poet Irma Pineda’s In the Belly of Night and Other Poems and Nostalgia Doesn’t Flow Away Like Riverwater, both forthcoming in 2022. The author of the award-winning nonfiction book No Word for Welcome (Nebraska, 2011) and co-editor of the craft anthology Telling True Stories (Penguin, 2007), she has been a 2015 NEA Fellow in Poetry Translation, Fulbright Core (Faculty) Scholar to Colombia for 2018-20, and 2021 Cornell University Global South Translation Fellow. She teaches creative nonfiction in Pacific Lutheran University's MFA program and lives in Seattle oneced Duwamish land.

Victoria Chang is the author of five collections of poetry, most recently, OBIT (Copper Canyon Press, 2020), named a New York Times Notable Book and recipient of the Los Angeles Times Book Prize, the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award in Poetry, and the PEN/Voelcker Award. Her The Trees Witness Everything is forthcoming from Copper Canyon Press in 2022. Her nonfiction book, Dear Memory: Letters on Writing, Silence, and Grief (Milkweed Editions, 2021) was a Los Angeles Times Most Anticipated Book of Fall 2021 and A Literary Hub Most Anticipated Book of 2021. A Los Angeles resident, Victoria has received a Guggenheim Fellowship and is a Core Faculty member within Antioch’s low-residency MFA Program.

Cathy Linh Che (she/her) has worked in nonprofit administration, education, and publishing for over 15 years. Appointed Executive Director of Kundiman in 2016, she has taught at New York University, Fordham University, The Polytechnic University at NYU, and Sierra Nevada College. Cathy is the author of the poetry collection Split (Alice James Books, 2014), winner of the Kundiman Poetry Prize, Norma Farber First Book Award from the Poetry Society of America, and the Best Poetry Book Award from the Association of Asian American Studies.

Peter Conners is the Publisher and Executive Director of the award-winning independent publishing house BOA Editions. He is the author of 10 books of poetry, nonfiction, and fiction, including the prose poetry collections Of Whiskey and Winter and The Crows Were Laughing in Their Trees. He edited the prose poetry/flash fiction anthology PP/FF: An Anthology and was founding editor of Double Room: A Journal of Prose Poetry and Flash Fiction. He lives with his family in Rochester, NY. Find Peter online at peterconners.com

Desiree Cooper is a 2015 Kresge Artist Fellow; Pulitzer Prize-nominated journalist and community activist; and speaker on the themes of racial and gender equality, reproductive freedom, family-positive public policy, and the welfare of women and girls. A former attorney and full-time caregiver for her aging parents, she writes widely about women, self-care and reinvention. Her award-winning flash fiction collection, Know the Mother, was published by Wayne State University Press in 2016. Her poetry, fiction, and essays have appeared in Callaloo, Hypertext Review, The Best Small Fictions 2018, This is the Place, Michigan Quarterly Review, Best African American Fiction 2010, and elsewhere.

Maggie Cooper is an agent with Aevitas Creative Management, representing adult fiction and select nonfiction projects. She holds a degree in English from Yale University, attended the Clarion Writers Workshop, and earned her MFA in fiction from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Maggie actively seeks adult literary and book club fiction; beach reads and romance; creative nonfiction; and select reported and prescriptive nonfiction projects, with an emphasis on queer voices, non-white perspectives, and writers from communities traditionally not centered by mainstream publishing. She
loves imaginative writing, language that makes the reader pause over its peculiar specificity, and books that embody a sense of humor, tenderness, or joy.

Charles Coté’s collection of elegies about his son’s illness and death, I Play His Red Guitar (Tiger Bark Press, 2019), has been lauded by Kim Dower as “remarkable and gorgeous poems, by turns tragic and joyful.” His previous collection, Flying for the Window, was published by Finishing Line Press in 2008. His work has appeared in Barrow Street, Big City Lit, Segue, Salamander, The Cortland Review, Connecticut River Review, Upstreet, Connotation Press, Ducts, Terminus, Quiddity, and elsewhere. A clinical social worker in private practice in Rochester, NY, Charles serves on the boards of BOA Editions and 13thirty Cancer Connect.

Jessica Cuello is the author of three collections of poems, most recently, Liar, selected by Dorianne Laux for the 2020 Barrow Street Book Prize. Her fourth book, Yours, Creature, is forthcoming from JackLeg Press in spring 2023. She has been awarded The 2017 CNY Book Award, The 2016 Washington Prize, The New Letters Poetry Prize, a Saltonstall Fellowship, and The New Ohio Review Poetry Prize. Jessica teaches French in Central NY and is a poetry editor at Tahoma Literary Review.

Lennard J. Davis is Professor in the English Department in the School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Professor of Disability and Human Development in the School of Applied Health Sciences of the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Professor of Medical Education in the College of Medicine. The director of Project Biocultures, he is the author of a novel; a collection of essays; two books on the novel; several notable works on disability; and a memoir, My Sense of Silence, selected for the National Book Award in 2000. He was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for Obsession: A History. Lennard is a co-founder of the Modern Language Association’s Committee on Disability Issues in the Profession and serves on the boards of several academic journals.

Kwame Dawes is the award-winning author of 20 books of poetry, most recently City of Bones: A Testament (Northwestern University Press, 2017), as well as many books of fiction, criticism, and essays. Often called “the busiest man in literature,” he is Glenna Luschei Editor of Prairie Schooner; teaches at the University of Nebraska and the Pacific MFA Program; and is Director of the African Poetry Book Fund and Artistic Director of the Calabash International Literary Festival.

Sopan Deb is a writer for The New York Times and a New York City-based stand up comedian. He reported on Donald Trump’s presidential campaign from start to finish as a campaign embed for CBS News; covering hundreds of rallies in more than 40 states, he was named a “breakout media star” of the election by Politico. He won an Edward R. Murrow Award for “Larger Than Life,” a documentary he produced for the Boston Globe on NBA Hall of Famer Bill Russell’s complicated relationship with the city of Boston. Sopan’s memoir, Missed Translations: Meeting the Immigrant Parents Who Raised Me, was published by Dey Street Books in 2020.

Elizabeth DeMeo is the Associate Editor at Tin House, acquiring fiction and literary nonfiction. She holds an MFA in fiction from the University of Arkansas, where she was Managing Editor of the Arkansas International and Director of the Arkansas Writers in the Schools program. Authors she has worked with include Raymond Antrobus, Destiny O. Birdsong, Ethan Chatagnier, Talia Lakshmi Kolluri, Jo Lloyd, Rachel Long, Nina Mingya Powles, Ben Shattuck, Bianca Stone, and Jane Wong. Originally from New Hampshire, Elizabeth lives in Providence, Rhode Island.

Athena Dixon is a poet, essayist, and editor living in Philadelphia. She is the author of The Incredible Shrinking Woman (Split/Lip Press, 2020) and No God In This Room, winner of the Intersectional Midwest Chapbook Contest (Argus House Press, 2018). Three times a Pushcart nominee, a Best of the Net nominee, a Callaloo fellow, and a V.O.N.A. fellow (2018), she is the recipient of a fellowship from The Martha’s Vineyard Institute of Creative Writing and a residency from Tin House. She is a member of the Moving Forewords Memoir Writers Collective.
Omar El Akkad is a journalist and the author of the novels American War (2017), an award-winning international bestseller translated into 13 languages, and What Strange Paradise (Knopf, 2021). He was born in Egypt, grew up in Qatar, moved to Canada as a teenager, and now lives in the United States. The start of his journalism career coincided with the start of the war on terror, and over the following decade, he reported from Afghanistan, Guantanamo Bay, and many other locations from around the world. His work has earned a National Newspaper Award for Investigative Journalism and the Goff Penny Award for young journalists. His fiction and non-fiction writing has appeared in The New York Times, The Guardian, Le Monde, Guernica, GQ, and elsewhere. His short story “Government Slots” was selected for the anthology Best Canadian Stories 2020.

Kathy Engel is a poet, essayist, educator, and activist who has worked in many of the social justice, peace, and human rights movements in the U.S. and in solidarity with those around the world. She has co-founded and led organizations, including the women’s rights’ group MADRE.org. Her books include The Lost Brother Alphabet (Get Fresh Books, 2020), Banish the Tentative, a chapbook; Ruth’s Skirts; The Kitchen, in collaboration with artist German Perez; and We Begin Here: Poems for Palestine and Lebanon. Her collaborative video Whowillkne4you appears on The Root. Currently, she is working on a new poetry collection, a memoir, and a word and image collaboration with artist Ellen Driscoll. Kathy teaches in the Department of Art & Public Policy, Tisch School of the Arts, NYU. Find her at kathyengelpoet.com.

Anjali Enjeti is a former attorney, organizer, and award-winning journalist based near Atlanta. She is the author of the critically acclaimed Southbound: Essays on Identity, Inheritance, and Social Change (University of Georgia Press, 2021) and The Parted Earth (Hub City, 2021). Anjali’s writing has appeared in Oxford American, The Bitter Southerner, Poets & Writers, Harper's Bazaar, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Publisher’s Weekly, and elsewhere. A former board member of the National Book Critics Circle, she teaches in the MFA program at Reinhardt University.

Robin L. Flanigan is a national award-winning journalist for magazines and newspapers and the author of M is for Mindful, a children’s book published by Good Nature Press in 2019, and the coffee-table book Rochester: High Performance for 175 Years. The recipient of awards from the Education Writers Association, the Maryland-Delaware-D.C. Press Association, and the New York Newspaper Publishers Association, her essays have appeared in The Sun, Motherwell, and other literary magazines and anthologies. Robin lives in Upstate New York and can be found at thekineticpen.com or on Twitter: @thekineticpen.

Sarah Freligh is the author of four books, including Sad Math, winner of the 2014 Moon City Press Poetry Prize and the 2015 Whirling Prize from the University of Indianapolis, and We, a micro-fiction chapbook published by Harbor Editions in 2021. Her recent work has appeared in the Cincinnati Review micRo series, SmokeLong Quarterly, Wigleaf, Fractured Lit, and in the anthologies New Micro: Exceptionally Short Fiction (Norton, 2018) and Best Microfiction (2019-21). Sarah is the recipient of a 2009 poetry fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts and grants from the Saltonstall Foundation and the New York State Council for the Arts.

Sarah Fuentes joined Fletcher and Co. as Associate Literary Manager in 2016. She represents a range of literary and upmarket fiction and nonfiction, including narrative nonfiction, memoir, cultural criticism, history, and popular science writing. She studied Literature and Art History at Vassar College and began her publishing career at The Wylie Agency. Find Sarah at fletcherandco.com/team/sarah-fuentes.

Margaret Gibson, Poet Laureate of Connecticut, is the author of 13 collections of poems from LSU Press, most recently, The Glass Globe (2021), as well as a memoir, Prodigal Daughter (University of Missouri Press, 2008). Her work has been published widely in such journals as Georgia Review, Gettysburg Review, Southern Review, and Image Journal. Her awards include the Lamont Selection for Long Walks in the Afternoon, the Melville Kane Award (co-winner) for Memories of the Future, and the Connecticut Book Award for One Body. The title poem of her book Broken Cup won a Pushcart Prize. Margaret is Professor Emerita, University of Connecticut, and lives in Preston, CT. Find her at margaretgibsonpoetry.com

BIOS | 4
Patrice Gopo is an award-winning essayist whose work has appeared in a variety of publications, including Catapult, Creative Nonfiction, and Charlotte Magazine. She is the author of All the Colors We Will See, (Thomas Nelson, 2018), a Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers selection. Her debut picture book, All the Places We Call Home, illustrated by Jenin Mohammed, is forthcoming from WorthyKids in June 2022. Patrice lives with her family in North Carolina. Find her at patricegopo.com.

Tokeya C. Graham is the founding owner of Soulstainable Living, a whole-person wellness movement that includes a weekly radio program. She also founded We All Write, a groundbreaking collective of award-winning Black women educators, creatives, and activists. A published author whose work appears in many different formats, from the page to the stage, she is a tenured Associate English Professor at Monroe Community College’s Downtown Campus. Tokeya’s scholarship and activism focus on Black Studies; Creative Writing; Women’s Issues; Literature and Language; and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. She is a doctoral candidate in Educational Administration from the University of Rochester (May 2022). A Rochester, NY native, she is married with three children.

Jimin Han was born in Seoul, Korea, and grew up in Providence, Rhode Island; Dayton, Ohio; and Jamestown, New York. Her writing can be found or is forthcoming in Platypus Press’s Digital Shorts Series, Catapult, Poets & Writers, Electric Literature, Entropy, The Rumpus, Hyphen Magazine, Pleiades Blog, Kartika Review, KoreanAmericanStory.com, NPR’s “Weekend America,” and elsewhere. Her debut novel, A Small Revolution (Little a, 2017), was among Entropy’s Best Fiction of 2017, Pleiades Editors’ Choice 2017, Redbook’s 20 Books By Women You Must Read This Spring, and Electric Literature’s list of 34 Books By Women of Color To Read This Year. Jimin teaches at The Writing Institute at Sarah Lawrence College and Pace University, and lives outside New York City with her husband and children.

Jeffrey J. Higa is the great-grandson of Okinawan and Japanese immigrants who came to Hawaii at the turn of the 20th century to work on the sugar plantations. He inherited from them a love of their adopted land and the stories that sustained them. During his graduate education, Jeffrey taught, wrote, and worked with indigenous youth to tell their stories as he wandered through several writing programs until finding a home at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, where he earned his MA in creative writing. His play Futless won the Hawai’i Prize from the Kumu Kahua Theatre, and his story “The Shadow Artist” received an honorable mention in the Kurt Vonnegut Speculative Fiction Prize from the North American Review. Calabash Stories (LSU Press, 2021) is his debut short story collection. Jeffrey lives in Honolulu with his wife, the biologist Marguerite Butler; his daughter, the poet and actor Raine Higa; and their good dog Tim Tam.

Laura Warren Hill is Associate Professor of History at Bloomfield College. She is the co-editor of The Business of Black Power and has published in Journal for the Study of Radicalism and Journal of African American History. Her Strike the Hammer: The Black Freedom Struggle in Rochester, NY 1940-1970 (Cornell University Press, 2021) examines the unrest that radically changed the trajectory of the Civil Rights movement. Follow her on Twitter @Mohojolo.

Susan Harris is the editorial director of Words Without Borders (www.wordswithoutborders.org) and the co-editor, with Ilya Kaminsky, of The Ecco Anthology of International Poetry.

Beena Kamlani, a former editor at Penguin Random House (31 years), has edited a wide range of authors, including Paul Beatty, Kim Edwards, Peter Kramer, David Leavitt, Terry McMillan, Diane Middlebrook, Ruth Ozeki, and Jiang Rong; and was Saul Bellow’s editor for nearly two decades until his death in 2005. She worked with Robert Fagles for over 20 years on his translations of Homer’s Odyssey and Iliad and Virgil’s Aeneid. Beena taught book editing at New York University for 18 years and received the university’s award for teaching excellence in 2012. She is a Pushcart Prize-winning fiction writer whose work has appeared widely. She now works as a freelance editor.
Meg Kearney’s latest poetry collection, All Morning the Crows, was awarded the 2020 Washington Prize for poetry and spent seven months on SPD’s poetry bestseller list after its release in 2021. She is the author of An Unkindness of Ravens; Home By Now, winner of the PEN New England L.L. Winship Award; a heroic crown, The Ice Storm, published as a chapbook in 2020; and three verse novels for teens. Her award-winning picture book, Trouper, is illustrated by E.B. Lewis. Meg lives in New Hampshire and directs the Solstice MFA in Creative Writing Program in Massachusetts. Find her online at megkearney.com.

Jennifer R. Kellogg is a spiritual coach specializing in trauma-informed astrology. She holds a PhD in Modern Languages and Literatures from the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), Belgium. She has worked in academia and non-profits in a variety of administrative and leadership roles, including as Executive Director of the Greek America Foundation, 2016-2020. A poem from Jenny’s English translation from the Greek of 1963 Nobel Prize Laureate George Sefaris’s Book of Exercises II appeared in Kenyon Review in 2021.

Rosamond S. King is a creative and critical writer, performer, and artist whose work is deeply informed by the many cultures and communities she is part of, by history, and by a sense of play. Her honors include a Fulbright Award and fellowships from Poets House, the Franklin Furnace Fund, and the Woodrow Wilson, Mellon, and Ford Foundations. She is the author of the chapbook At My Belly and My Back; the award-winning Island Bodies: Transgressive Sexualities in the Caribbean Imagination; and two full-length collections of poems published by Nightboat Books, Rock | Salt | Stone (2017), winner of the Lambda Literary Award in Lesbian Poetry, and All the Rage (2021). Rosamond is an Associate Professor in the English Department at Brooklyn College, part of the City University of New York.

Riva Lehrer is an artist, writer and curator who focuses on the socially challenged body. Best known for representations of people whose physical embodiment, sexuality, or gender identity have long been stigmatized, her work has been exhibited at such sites as the National Portrait Gallery of the Smithsonian, Yale University, the United Nations, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and the DeCordova Museum. Her awards include, among others, a 3Arts MacDowell Fellowship for writing, a 3Arts Residency Fellowship at the University of Illinois, a Carnegie Mellon Fellowship at Haverford and Bryn Mawr Colleges, and a Prairie Fellowship at the Ragdale Foundation. Riva’s memoir, Golem Girl, was published by the One World imprint of Penguin Random House in October 2020. She is on faculty at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an instructor in the Medical Humanities Departments of Northwestern University.

Jeffrey Lependorf is a visual artist, composer, and a certified master of the shakuhachi, a traditional Japanese bamboo flute. A nationally recognized arts leader, he currently serves as Executive Director of The Flow Chart Foundation, which explores the interrelationships of various art forms to open new possibilities as guided by the legacy of poet John Ashbery. Previously, he was Executive Director of Small Press Distribution, America’s only nonprofit literary book distributor, and simultaneously, Executive Director of the Community of Literary Magazines and Presses.

Tony Leuzzi is a poet, critic, and art maker whose books of poems include Radiant Losses (New Sins, 2010), The Burning Door (Tiger Bark, 2014), and Meditation Archipelago (Tiger Bark, 2018). Passwords Primeval (BOA Editions, 2012) is a collection of his interviews with 20 American poets. He has received numerous teaching awards and the State University of New York’s Chancellor’s Award for Scholarship and Creativity. A staff writer for the “Books” section of The Brooklyn Rail, Tony’s interviews and criticism have been published in Lambda Literary, SCOUT Poetry, American Literary Review, Great River Review, The Kenyon Review (Online), The Poetry Society of America, and elsewhere.

Anne Marie Macari is the author of five books of poems, including Heaven Beneath (Persea, 2020) and Red Deer (Persea, 2015). Her first collection, Ivory Cradle, was selected in 2000 by Robert Creeley for the APR/Honickman First Book Prize. Her poems and essays have been widely published. Anne Marie founded the Drew University Low-Residency MFA Program in Poetry.

Steve Majors is a writer and author whose work has appeared in The New York Times, Washington Post, NBC Think, Huffington Post and Medium. He grew up in rural Western New York, the youngest of five raised by a single mother. His experiences growing up as a white appearing, mixed-race child in an all-Black family, as well as his life as a gay man raising two Black daughters in an interracial, interfaith family, have influenced his writings and talks on family.

Kathryn A. Mariner is Associate Professor of Anthropology and Visual and Cultural Studies at the University of Rochester. Trained in clinical social work, her research, writing, teaching, and activism address how historical and contemporary structures of power, such as race and racism, shape how people construct notions of family, community, and attachment in their everyday lives. Her book, Contingent Kinship: The Flows and Futures of Adoption in the United States, explores the visual, temporal, economic, and affective politics of transracial adoption. She is currently researching urban hypersegregation in Rochester, NY, and creates the annual fertile ground wine with Miguel A. Cardona.

Alison Meyers is a poet and fiction writer, twice nominated for a Pushcart Prize. Her work can be found in Hole in the Head Review, magazine, Freshwater Review, Stone Canoe, Mom Egg, and other literary journals, and in the anthology Gathered Light: Writers Respond to the Poetry of Joni Mitchell (Three O’Clock Press). The Executive Director of Writers & Books, Rochester, NY, she previously served as Cave Canem Foundation’s (Brooklyn, NY) Executive Director, 2006-2016, and Poetry Director and Director of Marketing & Communications at Hill-Stead Museum (CT). For many years she owned and managed indie bookstores. She serves on the board of Kweli Journal, presents at AWP and other conferences, serves frequently as a grants and awards panelist, and consults as a LitTAP mentor. Find Alison online at alisonmeyers.com

David Mihalyov’s poems and short fiction have appeared in the Concho River Review, Dunes Review, Free State Review, New Plains Review, San Pedro River Review, and other journals. His debut poetry collection, A Safe Distance, will be published by Main Street Rag Press in spring 2022. A peer reviewer for Whale Road Review, David works at SUNY Brockport, where he received his BA in Communications and MA in English. He has served on the board of Writers & Books since 2017. He lives near Lake Ontario in Webster, NY, with his wife, two daughters, and beagle.

Rajiv Mohabir’s debut collection of poems, The Taxidermist’s Cut, was selected by Brenda Shaughnessy for the Four Way Books’ Intro Prize in Poetry. He has received fellowships from V.O.N.A., Kundiman, and The Home School; and his second book, The Cowherd’s Son (Tupelo Press, 2017), won the 2017 Kundiman Prize. His latest collection, Cutlish, was published by Four Way Books in 2021. Rajiv received the Harold Morton Landon Translation Award from the Academy of American Poets for his translation of Lalbihari Sharma’s Even Regret Night (Kaya Press, 2019). Find him online at rajivmohabir.com.

Carley Moore is an essayist, novelist, and poet whose work has been widely published. Her books include 16 Pills, an essay collection; The Not Wives, a novel; Portal Poem, a poetry chapbook; and The Stalker Chronicles, a young adult novel. Carley is a queer, disabled, single, co-parenting mom, a sex-positive intersectional feminist, #catwife, and Vans lover. She is a Clinical Professor of Writing and Critical Creative Production in the Global Liberal Studies Program at New York University and a Senior Associate at Bard College’s Institute for Writing and Thinking. She lives in New York City. Follow Carley on Instagram @fragmentedsky.
Stephen Motika is the Director & Publisher of Nightboat Books. He was for many years on the staff of Poets House in New York City. The author of the poetry collection Western Practice (2012) and the poetry chapbooks Arrival and At Mono (2007), In the Madrones (2011), and Private Archive (2016), he is also the editor of Tiresias: The Collected Poems of Leland Hickman (2009) and co-editor of Dear Kathleen: On the Occasion of Kathleen Fraser’s 80th Birthday (2017).

Anastasia Nikolis, PhD, is the Visiting Artist-in-Residence at St. John Fisher College. Her academic research focuses on confession as a rhetorical device in post-1945 American poetry; and her poetry and creative nonfiction navigate the intersections of place, identity, and visual art. She is also the Poetry Editor at the award-winning literary translation press, Open Letter Books, where she advocates for the proliferation of contemporary world literature. Find Anastasia online at anastasianikolis.


Linda Sue Park is the author of many books for young readers, including the 2002 Newbery Medal winner A Single Shard; The New York Times bestseller A Long Walk to Water; and, most recently, Prairie Lotus, a historical fiction middle-grade novel. She has served as a panelist for such awards and grants as the Kirkus Prize, the National Book Award, the PEN Naylor grant, and the SCBWI Golden Kite Award. In her travels to promote reading and writing, she has visited more than 30 countries and 49 states. Linda Sue advocates for equity/inclusion in her work for We Need Diverse Books and the Society of Children’s Books Writers and Illustrators, and she serves on the advisory board of the Rabbit hOle national children’s literature museum project.

Brenda Peynado is a Dominican American writer of fiction, nonfiction, and screenplays. Her short story collection The Rock Eaters was published by Penguin Books in March 2021. Her work appears in Tor.com, The Georgia Review, The Sun, Three Penny Review, Epoch, Kenyon Review online, Pleiades, Prairie Schooner, and elsewhere. Her stories have won a Nelson Algren Award from the Chicago Tribune; an O. Henry Prize; a Pushcart Prize; inclusion in The Best American Science Fiction and Fantasy, Best Small Fiction, and Best Microfiction anthologies; and other awards. She teaches fiction and screenwriting at the University of Central Florida’s BA and MFA programs.

Larissa Melo Pienkowski received her MA in Publishing and Writing from Emerson College, where she worked with the likes of Beacon Press and Barefoot Books before becoming the assistant publisher of an independent feminist press. She joined Jill Greenberg Literary Management as an agent in 2020, representing a wide range of adult and children’s fiction and nonfiction. The daughter of Brazilian and Polish immigrants, Larissa speaks Portuguese and Spanish and has a deep-rooted passion for championing the stories of authors from historically excluded backgrounds. She lives in Philadelphia with her fiancée and very fluffy husky, Olaf. Visit jillgrinbergliterary.com.

Danni Quintos is the author of Two Brown Dots (BOA Editions, 2022), winner of the 20th A. Poulin Jr. Prize, and PYTHON (Argus House, 2017), an ekphrastic chapbook featuring photography by her sister, Shelli Quintos. She is a Kentuckian, a mom, an educator, and an Affrilachian Poet. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in Poetry, Cream City Review, Cincinnati Review, Best New Poets 2015, Salon, and elsewhere. Her knitting has appeared on the shoulders of many poets, writers, and artists, who are also friends and teachers. Danni lives in Lexington with her kid, farmer-spouse, and their little dog too. Find her online at danniquintos.com.
David Ruekberg is a poet, teacher, climate activist, and occasional cartoonist living in Rochester, NY. He has enjoyed a residency at Jentel Arts, and his poems have appeared in Barrow Street, Cimarron Review, Lake Effect, Mudfish, North American Review, and elsewhere. He has published two collections of poetry, Hour of the Green Light (FutureCycle Press, 2021) and Where Is the River Called Pishon? (Kelsay Books, 2018). Find David online at poetry.ruekberg.com.

Alex Sanchez has published 10 novels, including the American Library Association “Best Book for Young Adults” Rainbow Boys and Lambda Award-winning So Hard to Say. His novel Bait won the Tomas Rivera Mexican-American Book Award and the Florida Book Award Gold Medal for Young Adult fiction. You Brought Me the Ocean (2020), his graphic novel from DC Comics, was illustrated by Julie Maroh. His latest book, The Greatest Superpower, was published by Capstone Editions in 2021. Find Alex online at alexsanchez.com.

Celeste Schantz was a runner-up for the 2018 Stephen Dunn Prize in Poetry, judged by Terrance Hayes. Her essays and micro-essays can be found in Fugue and on PBS’s Next Avenue. Formerly an English instructor (29 years), she is the founder and editor of the literary magazine Mason Street Review, which placed in the 2021 finals of The Best of the Net. Celeste lives with her teenage son in Rochester, NY, where she supports his differently abled schooling and inclusion programs and champions autism rights.

Tim Seibles is the author of seven collections of poetry, including Fast Animal (Etruscan Press, 2012), recipient of the Theodore Roethke Memorial Poetry Prize and the PEN Oakland Josephine Miles Award; and, most recently, One Turn Around The Sun (2017), also from Etruscan Press. His latest book, Voodoo Libretto, will be released in February 2022. Tim’s work has been published in the Indiana Review, Black Renaissance Noire, Cortland Review, Ploughshares, Massachusetts Review, Beloit Poetry Journal, and numerous other literary journals and anthologies, including Best American Poetry. Formerly Poet Laureate of Virginia, he recently retired from his position as Professor of English at Old Dominion University. Find Tim online at blueflowerarts.com/artist/tim-seibles.

Purvi Shah won the inaugural SONY South Asian Social Service Excellence Award for her leadership fighting violence against women. Her second full-length book of poems, Miracle Marks (Curbstone Books 2, 2019), explores women, the sacred, and gender and racial equity. With artist Anjali Deshmukh, Purvi creates interactive art at https://circlefor.com/. Their participatory project, Missed Fortunes, documents experiences, celebrations, and pandemic rituals to create poetry and visual art, connection, and a community archive for healing. Learn more @PurviPoets.

Sejal Shah is a poet who works in prose, writing across genres and disciplines. She is the author of the award-winning debut essay collection, This Is One Way to Dance (University of Georgia Press, 2020). Her stories and essays have appeared in The Guardian, Brevity, Conjunctions, Guernica, Kenyon Review, Literary Hub, Longreads, and The Rumpus. The recipient of a 2018 New York Foundation for the Arts fellowship in fiction, Sejal recently completed a story collection with images; her newer writing is about friendship, school, and mental health. She lives in Rochester, NY.

Piper Sledge is Assistant Professor of Sociology and the Director of the Gender and Sexuality Studies Program at Bryn Mawr College. She is also affiliated with the Health Studies and Africana Studies Programs. Her research and teaching interests include gender, race, and embodiment. Piper’s Bodies Unbound (Rutgers University Press, 2021), is a book about the relationship between bodies and gender.

Lytton Smith is Professor of English & Creative Writing and Director of the Center for Integrative Learning at SUNY Geneseo. He is the author of the poetry collections The All-Purpose Magical Tent (2009) and While You Were Approaching the Spectacle But Before You Were Transformed by It (2013), both published by Nightboat Books; and the chapbooks My Radar Data Knows Its Thing (2018), Monster Theory (Poetry Society of America, 2008), and The Square, winner of the 2020 New Michigan Press/Diagram Chapbook Contest. A 2019 NEA Literature Translation Fellow, he has translated 15 books from the Icelandic, most recently Andri Snær Magnason’s On Time and Water.
Moheb Soliman is an interdisciplinary poet from Egypt and the Midwest. He has presented writing, performance, installation, and video work at diverse literary, art, and public spaces in the US and Canada with support from the Banff Centre, Pillsbury House, the Joyce Foundation, and Tulsa Artist Fellowship. Moheb has degrees from The New School and the University of Toronto and lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he was the program director for the Arab American literary journal and arts organization Mizna. His first collection of poems, HOMES (Coffee House Press 2021), dwells in the natural-cultural sprawl of the Great Lakes region as it reckons with issues of modernity, identity, place and belonging. Find Moheb online at mohebsoliman.info.


Angelique Stevens, Haudenosaunee, lives in Upstate New York where she teaches creative writing, literature of genocide, and race literatures. Her nonfiction can be found in LitHub, The New England Review, The Chattahoochee Review, and a number of anthologies. Her essay “Ghost Bread” won the Prism International Creative Nonfiction Contest, judged by Alexander Chee. Additional honors include an alumni fellowship from Bennington College’s MFA Program; fellowships from Bread Loaf, Tin House, Sewanee, and Kenyon Review Writers Workshops; and fellowships to the inaugural cohort of the Periplus Collective and The Lighthouse Writers Book Project. She currently is at work on a memoir about her experiences growing up in New York State. Find Angelique at angeliquestevens.com.

Megan Stielstra is the author of Everyone Remain Calm: Stories (Northwestern University Press, 2021); Once I Was Cool, selected by Roxane Gay for Salon as as one of the Top Ten Books of 2014; and The Wrong Way to Save Your Life: Essays (Harper), named the 2017 Nonfiction Book of the Year by the Chicago Review of Books. Her work appears in the Best American Essays, The New York Times, The Believer, Poets & Writers, Tin House, Longreads, Guernica, The Rumpus, and elsewhere. A longtime company member with 2nd Story, she has told stories for National Public Radio; Radio National Australia; the Museum of Contemporary Art; and theaters, festivals, and classrooms across the country. Megan teaches creative nonfiction at Northwestern University and is a Senior Fellow with the Annenberg Innovation Lab at the University of Southern California. Find Megan online at meganstielstra.com.

Marjorie Tesser is the editor of Mom Egg Review and co-editor of the anthologies Bowery Women: Poems; Estamos Aquí: Poems of Migrant Farmworkers; and Travellin’ Mama: Mothers, Mothering, and Travel (Demeter Press, 2019). She authored the poetry chapbooks THE IMPORTANT THING IS (Firewheel Award Winner) and The Magic Feather, and her poetry and fiction have appeared in several journals and anthologies. Visit momeggreview.com.

Stephen J. West is a practicing printer and book artist at Flower City Arts Center in Rochester, NY, where he produces the Undead Darlings literary broadside series. His writing has appeared in many literary magazines, including Brevity, PANK, and Zone 3. His artist’s book, DIY View-Master: Intimate Space, was published by Ninth Letter, and his first full-length book, Soft Boiled, is forthcoming from Kelson Books in May 2022. Stephen is a member of the English Department at St. John Fisher College where he teaches creative writing and is the faculty editor of ANGLES, a national undergraduate literary magazine. Find him at stephenjwest.com/index.html.

Arisa White is an assistant professor of English and Creative Writing at Colby College. She is the author of Who’s Your Daddy; co-editor of Home Is Where You Queer Your Heart; and co-author of Biddy Mason Speaks Up, the second book in the Fighting for Justice Series for young readers. The creator of the Beautiful Things Project, she serves on the board of directors for Foglifter and Nomadic Press. Find Arisa at arisawhite.com.
Mary-Frances Winters, founder and CEO of The Winters Group, Inc., a 37-year-old global diversity and inclusion consulting firm, is the author of six books, most recently, *Black Fatigue: How Racism Erodes the Mind, Body, and Spirit* (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2020); *Inclusive Conversations: Fostering Equity, Empathy, and Belonging Across Differences* (2020); and *We Can’t Talk about That at Work!: How to Talk about Race, Religion, Politics, and Other Polarizing Topics* (2017). The author of numerous articles, she holds a master’s degree in business administration from the William E. Simon Executive Development Program, University of Rochester. Find Mary-Frances online at wintersgroup.com/team/mary-frances-winters.

Leslie C. Youngblood is the author of the critically acclaimed *Love Like Sky* (2019) and *Forever This Summer* (2021), both published by Little Brown Books for Young Readers. A former assistant professor of creative writing at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, she has been awarded a host of writing honors, including a 2014 Yaddo’s Elizabeth Ames Residency, the Lorian Hemingway Short Story Prize, a Hurston Wright Fellowship, the Go On Girl! Book Club Aspiring Writer Award of 2010, and the Room of Her Own Foundation’s 2009 Orlando Short Story Prize. Her work has appeared in *Kweli Journal* and *Indiana Review*. Leslie works as a writing consultant for various businesses seeking assistance and individuals looking to hone their skills. Find her online at lesliecyoungblood.com.
PANELISTS’ BIOS

Albert Abonado is the author of the poetry collection Jaw (Sundress Publications, 2020). His poems have appeared in Boston Review, Pleiades, The Margins, Zone 3, and elsewhere. He holds an MFA from the Bennington Writing Seminars and has received a fellowship for poetry from the New York Foundation for the Arts. He hosts the poetry radio show Flour City Yawp on WAYO 104.3 FM-LP and teaches creative writing at SUNY Geneseo. He lives in Rochester, NY, with his wife.

Elizabeth Johnston Ambrose’s poetry and prose, nominated for three Pushcart Prizes, have appeared in The Atlantic, McSweeney’s, Feminist Formations, Women Studies Quarterly, and elsewhere. She is the author of two chapbooks, Imago Dei (2021 Rattle Chapbook Poetry Prize) and Wild Things (Main Street Rag, 2021). She teaches writing and women studies courses, and facilitates writing-as-therapy workshops for the Breast Cancer Coalition in Rochester, NY. Find her at ElizabethJohnstonAmbrose.com and on twitter @libbyjohnston74.

Doug Anderson grew up in Memphis, TN. He served as a combat medic in the Vietnam War, and after Vietnam, studied acting at the University of Arizona. He is the author of the poetry collections The Moon Reflected Fire (Alice James Books, 1994), winner of the Kate Tufts Discovery Award; Blues for Unemployed Secret Police (Curbstone Press, 2000); and Horse Medicine (Barrow Street Press, 2015). His memoir, Keep Your Head Down: Vietnam, the Sixties, and a Journey of Self-Discovery, was published by W. W. Norton in 2009. His awards include a grant from the Eric Mathieu King Fund of the Academy of American Poets, a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, and a Pushcart Prize. Doug has taught at the University of Connecticut, Eastern Connecticut State University, and the William Joiner Center for the Study of War and Its Social Consequences at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

makalani bandele is an Affrilachian Poet and Cave Canem fellow currently attending the University of Kentucky in pursuit of an MFA in Creative Writing. The recipient of fellowships from the Kentucky Arts Council, Millay Colony, and Vermont Studio Center, he is a graduate of Shaw University with a Master of Divinity in Biblical Studies. His work has been published in several anthologies and widely in such print and online journals as African American Review, Killens Review of Arts and Letters, and Sou’wester. makalani’s first book of poems, hellfightin’, was published by Aquarius Press in 2011, and his second full-length collection, under the aegis of a winged mind, was awarded the 2019 Autumn House Press Poetry Prize. Find makalani online at makbandele.com.

Jenny Bhatt is a writer, literary translator, book critic, and the founder of Desi Books. She teaches creative writing at Writing Workshops Dallas. Find her at jennybhattwriter.com.

Destiny O. Birdsong is a poet, novelist, and essayist whose work has appeared in Paris Review Daily, African American Review, and Catapult, among other publications. Her debut poetry collection, Negotiations (Tin House, 2020) was longlisted for the 2021 PEN/Voelcker Award. Her novel, Nobody’s Magic, is forthcoming in February 2022 from Grand Central Publishing. Find Destiny online at destinybirdsong.com.

Sally Bittner Bonn is a writer, performer, and teaching artist who promotes disability awareness through her writing (oscar-go.org). She served as both cast member and producer for Listen to Your Mother and currently is working on a memoir about raising her artist/activist son who navigates the world from a power wheelchair. Sally is the Director of Youth Education at Writers & Books and lives with her family in Rochester, NY.

Zoë Bossiere is the managing editor of Brevity: A Journal of Concise Literary Nonfiction and the co-editor of the anthology The Best of Brevity (Rose Metal Press, 2020). She is also an interview podcast host for the New Books Network. Find her online at zoebossiere.com and on Twitter @zoebossiere.
Valerie Boyd is the author of Wrapped in Rainbows: The Life of Zora Neale Hurston, winner of the Southern Book Award and the American Library Association’s Notable Book Award. Formerly the arts editor at The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, she has written articles, essays, and reviews for such publications as The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, Creative Nonfiction, Oxford American, Ms., and Essence. She is a professor of journalism and the Charlayne Hunter-Gault Distinguished Writer in Residence at the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Georgia, where she founded and directs the low-residency MFA Program in Narrative Nonfiction.

Wendy Call translated Mexican-Zapotec poet Irma Pineda’s In the Belly of Night and Other Poems and Nostalgia Doesn't Flow Away Like Riverwater, both forthcoming in 2022. The author of the award-winning nonfiction book No Word for Welcome (Nebraska, 2011) and co-editor of the craft anthology Telling True Stories (Penguin, 2007), she has been a 2015 NEA Fellow in Poetry Translation, Fulbright Core (Faculty) Scholar to Colombia for 2018-20, and 2021 Cornell University Global South Translation Fellow. She teaches creative nonfiction in Pacific Lutheran University’s MFA program and lives in Seattle on unceded Duwamish land.

Victoria Chang is the author of five collections of poetry, most recently, OBIT (Copper Canyon Press, 2020), named a New York Times Notable Book and recipient of the Los Angeles Times Book Prize, the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award in Poetry, and the PEN/Voelcker Award. Her The Trees Witness Everything is forthcoming from Copper Canyon Press in 2022. Her nonfiction book, Dear Memory: Letters on Writing, Silence, and Grief (Milkweed Editions, 2021) was a Los Angeles Times Most Anticipated Book of Fall 2021 and A Literary Hub Most Anticipated Book of 2021. A Los Angeles resident, Victoria has received a Guggenheim Fellowship and is a Core Faculty member within Antioch’s low-residency MFA Program.

Cathy Linh Che (she/her) has worked in nonprofit administration, education, and publishing for over 15 years. Appointed Executive Director of Kundiman in 2016, she has taught at New York University, Fordham University, The Polytechnic University at NYU, and Sierra Nevada College. Cathy is the author of the poetry collection Split (Alice James Books, 2014), winner of the Kundiman Poetry Prize, Norma Farber First Book Award from the Poetry Society of America, and the Best Poetry Book Award from the Association of Asian American Studies.

Peter Conners is the Publisher and Executive Director of the award-winning independent publishing house BOA Editions. He is the author of 10 books of poetry, nonfiction, and fiction, including the prose poetry collections Of Whiskey and Winter and The Crows Were Laughing in Their Trees. He edited the prose poetry/flash fiction anthology PP/FF: An Anthology and was founding editor of Double Room: A Journal of Prose Poetry and Flash Fiction. He lives with his family in Rochester, NY. Find Peter online at peterconners.com

Desiree Cooper is a 2015 Kresge Artist Fellow; Pulitzer Prize-nominated journalist and community activist; and speaker on the themes of racial and gender equality, reproductive freedom, family-positive public policy, and the welfare of women and girls. A former attorney and full-time caregiver for her aging parents, she writes widely about women, self-care and reinvention. Her award-winning flash fiction collection, Know the Mother, was published by Wayne State University Press in 2016. Her poetry, fiction, and essays have appeared in Callaloo, Hypertext Review, The Best Small Fictions 2018, This is the Place, Michigan Quarterly Review, Best African American Fiction 2010, and elsewhere.

Maggie Cooper is an agent with Aevitas Creative Management, representing adult fiction and select nonfiction projects. She holds a degree in English from Yale University, attended the Clarion Writers Workshop, and earned her MFA in fiction from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Maggie actively seeks adult literary and book club fiction; beach reads and romance; creative nonfiction; and select reported and prescriptive nonfiction projects, with an emphasis on queer voices, non-white perspectives, and writers from communities traditionally not centered by mainstream publishing. She
loves imaginative writing, language that makes the reader pause over its peculiar specificity, and books that embody a sense of humor, tenderness, or joy.

Charles Côté's collection of elegies about his son’s illness and death, I Play His Red Guitar (Tiger Bark Press, 2019), has been lauded by Kim Dower as “remarkable and gorgeous poems, by turns tragic and joyful.” His previous collection, Flying for the Window, was published by Finishing Line Press in 2008. His work has appeared in Barrow Street, Big City Lit, Segue, Salamander, The Cortland Review, Connecticut River Review, Upstreet, Connotation Press, Ducts, Terminus, Quiddity, and elsewhere. A clinical social worker in private practice in Rochester, NY, Charles serves on the boards of BOA Editions and 13thirty Cancer Connect.

Jessica Cuello is the author of three collections of poems, most recently, Liar, selected by Dorianne Laux for the 2020 Barrow Street Book Prize. Her fourth book, Yours, Creature, is forthcoming from JackLeg Press in spring 2023. She has been awarded The 2017 CNY Book Award, The 2016 Washington Prize, The New Letters Poetry Prize, a Saltonstall Fellowship, and The New Ohio Review Poetry Prize. Jessica teaches French in Central NY and is a poetry editor at Tahoma Literary Review.

Lennard J. Davis is Professor in the English Department in the School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Professor of Disability and Human Development in the School of Applied Health Sciences of the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Professor of Medical Education in the College of Medicine. The director of Project Biocultures, he is the author of a novel; a collection of essays; two books on the novel; several notable works on disability; and a memoir, My Sense of Silence, selected for the National Book Award in 2000. He was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for Obsession: A History. Lennard is a co-founder of the Modern Language Association’s Committee on Disability Issues in the Profession and serves on the boards of several academic journals.

Kwame Dawes is the award-winning author of 20 books of poetry, most recently City of Bones: A Testament (Northwestern University Press, 2017), as well as many books of fiction, criticism, and essays. Often called “the busiest man in literature,” he is Glenna Luschei Editor of Prairie Schooner; teaches at the University of Nebraska and the Pacific MFA Program; and is Director of the African Poetry Book Fund and Artistic Director of the Calabash International Literary Festival.

Sopan Deb is a writer for The New York Times and a New York City-based stand up comedian. He reported on Donald Trump's presidential campaign from start to finish as a campaign embed for CBS News; covering hundreds of rallies in more than 40 states, he was named a “breakout media star” of the election by Politico. He won an Edward R. Murrow Award for “Larger Than Life,” a documentary he produced for the Boston Globe on NBA Hall of Famer Bill Russell’s complicated relationship with the city of Boston. Sopan’s memoir, Missed Translations: Meeting the Immigrant Parents Who Raised Me, was published by Dey Street Books in 2020.

Elizabeth DeMeco is the Associate Editor at Tin House, acquiring fiction and literary nonfiction. She holds an MFA in fiction from the University of Arkansas, where she was Managing Editor of the Arkansas International and Director of the Arkansas Writers in the Schools program. Authors she has worked with include Raymond Antrobus, Destiny O. Birdsong, Ethan Chatagnier, Talia Lakshmi Kolluri, Jo Lloyd, Rachel Long, Nina Mingya Powles, Ben Shattuck, Bianca Stone, and Jane Wong. Originally from New Hampshire, Elizabeth lives in Providence, Rhode Island.

Athena Dixon is a poet, essayist, and editor living in Philadelphia. She is the author of The Incredible Shrinking Woman (Split/Lip Press, 2020) and No God In This Room, winner of the Intersectional Midwest Chapbook Contest (Argus House Press, 2018). Three times a Pushcart nominee, a Best of the Net nominee, a Callaloo fellow, and a V.O.N.A. fellow (2018), she is the recipient of a fellowship from The Martha’s Vineyard Institute of Creative Writing and a residency from Tin House. She is a member of the Moving Forewords Memoir Writers Collective.
Omar El Akkad is a journalist and the author of the novels *American War* (2017), an award-winning international bestseller translated into 13 languages, and *What Strange Paradise* (Knopf, 2021). He was born in Egypt, grew up in Qatar, moved to Canada as a teenager, and now lives in the United States. The start of his journalism career coincided with the start of the war on terror, and over the following decade, he reported from Afghanistan, Guantanamo Bay, and many other locations from around the world. His work has earned a National Newspaper Award for Investigative Journalism and the Goff Penny Award for young journalists. His fiction and non-fiction writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *Le Monde*, *Guernica*, *GQ*, and elsewhere. His short story “Government Slots” was selected for the anthology *Best Canadian Stories* 2020.

Kathy Engel is a poet, essayist, educator, and activist who has worked in many of the social justice, peace, and human rights movements in the U.S. and in solidarity with those around the world. She has co-founded and led organizations, including the women’s rights’ group MADRE.org. Her books include *The Lost Brother Alphabet* (Get Fresh Books, 2020), *Banish the Tentative*, a chapbook; *Ruth’s Skirts*; *The Kitchen*, in collaboration with artist German Perez; and *We Begin Here: Poems for Palestine and Lebanon*. Her collaborative video *Whowillkne4you* appears on *The Root*. Currently, she is working on a new poetry collection, a memoir, and a word and image collaboration with artist Ellen Driscoll. Kathy teaches in the Department of Art & Public Policy, Tisch School of the Arts, NYU. Find her at kathyengelpoet.com.

Anjali Enjeti is a former attorney, organizer, and award-winning journalist based near Atlanta. She is the author of the critically acclaimed *Southbound: Essays on Identity, Inheritance, and Social Change* (University of Georgia Press, 2021) and *The Parted Earth* (Hub City, 2021). Anjali’s writing has appeared in *Oxford American, The Bitter Southerner, Poets & Writers, Harper’s Bazaar*, the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Publisher’s Weekly*, and elsewhere. A former board member of the National Book Critics Circle, she teaches in the MFA program at Reinhardt University.

Robin L. Flanigan is a national award-winning journalist for magazines and newspapers and the author of *M is for Mindful*, a children’s book published by Good Nature Press in 2019, and the coffee-table book *Rochester: High Performance for 175 Years*. The recipient of awards from the Education Writers Association, the Maryland-Delaware-D.C. Press Association, and the New York Newspaper Publishers Association, her essays have appeared in *The Sun, Motherwell*, and other literary magazines and anthologies. Robin lives in Upstate New York and can be found at thekineticpen.com or on Twitter: @thekineticpen.

Sarah Frelich is the author of four books, including *Sad Math*, winner of the 2014 Moon City Press Poetry Prize and the 2015 Whirling Prize from the University of Indianapolis, and *We*, a micro-fiction chapbook published by Harbor Editions in 2021. Her recent work has appeared in the *Cincinnati Review* miCRo series, *SmokeLong Quarterly, Wigleaf, Fractured Lit*, and in the anthologies *New Micro: Exceptionally Short Fiction* (Norton, 2018) and *Best Microfiction* (2019-21). Sarah is the recipient of a 2009 poetry fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts and grants from the Saltonstall Foundation and the New York State Council for the Arts.

Sarah Fuentes joined Fletcher and Co. as Associate Literary Manager in 2016. She represents a range of literary and upmarket fiction and nonfiction, including narrative nonfiction, memoir, cultural criticism, history, and popular science writing. She studied Literature and Art History at Vassar College and began her publishing career at The Wylie Agency. Find Sarah at fletcherandco.com/team/sarah-fuentes.

Margaret Gibson, Poet Laureate of Connecticut, is the author of 13 collections of poems from LSU Press, most recently, *The Glass Globe* (2021), as well as a memoir, *Prodigal Daughter* (University of Missouri Press, 2008). Her work has been published widely in such journals as *Georgia Review, Gettysburg Review, Southern Review*, and *Image Journal*. Her awards include the Lamont Selection for *Long Walks in the Afternoon*, the Melville Kane Award (co-winner) for *Memories of the Future*, and the Connecticut Book Award for *One Body*. The title poem of her book *Broken Cup* won a Pushcart Prize. Margaret is Professor Emerita, University of Connecticut, and lives in Preston, CT. Find her at margaretgibsonpoetry.com
Patrice Gopo is an award-winning essayist whose work has appeared in a variety of publications, including *Catapult, Creative Nonfiction*, and *Charlotte Magazine*. She is the author of *All the Colors We Will See*, (Thomas Nelson, 2018), a Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers selection. Her debut picture book, *All the Places We Call Home*, illustrated by Jenin Mohammed, is forthcoming from WorthyKids in June 2022. Patrice lives with her family in North Carolina. Find her at patricegopo.com.

Tokeya C. Graham is the founding owner of Soulstainable Living, a whole-person wellness movement that includes a weekly radio program. She also founded We All Write, a groundbreaking collective of award-winning Black women educators, creatives, and activists. A published author whose work appears in many different formats, from the page to the stage, she is a tenured Associate English Professor at Monroe Community College’s Downtown Campus. Tokeya’s scholarship and activism focus on Black Studies; Creative Writing; Women’s Issues; Literature and Language; and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. She is a doctoral candidate in Educational Administration from the University of Rochester (May 2022). A Rochester, NY native, she is married with three children.

Jimin Han was born in Seoul, Korea, and grew up in Providence, Rhode Island; Dayton, Ohio; and Jamestown, New York. Her writing can be found or is forthcoming in *Platypus Press’s Digital Shorts Series, Catapult, Poets & Writers, Electric Literature, Entropy, The Rumpus, Hyphen Magazine, Pleiades Blog, Kartika Review, KoreanAmericanStory.com, NPR’s “Weekend America,”* and elsewhere. Her debut novel, *A Small Revolution* (Little a, 2017), was among Entropy’s Best Fiction of 2017, *Pleiades* Editors’ Choice 2017, Redbook’s 20 Books By Women You Must Read This Spring, and Electric Literature’s list of 34 Books By Women of Color To Read This Year. Jimin teaches at The Writing Institute at Sarah Lawrence College and Pace University, and lives outside New York City with her husband and children.

Jeffrey J. Higa is the great-grandson of Okinawan and Japanese immigrants who came to Hawaii at the turn of the 20th century to work on the sugar plantations. He inherited from them a love of their adopted land and the stories that sustained them. During his graduate education, Jeffrey taught, wrote, and worked with indigenous youth to tell their stories as he wandered through several writing programs until finding a home at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, where he earned his MA in creative writing. His play *Futless* won the Hawai‘i Prize from the Kumu Kahua Theatre, and his story “The Shadow Artist” received an honorable mention in the Kurt Vonnegut Speculative Fiction Prize from the *North American Review. Calabash Stories* (LSU Press, 2021) is his debut short story collection. Jeffrey lives in Honolulu with his wife, the biologist Marguerite Butler; his daughter, the poet and actor Raine Higa; and their good dog Tim Tam.

Laura Warren Hill is Associate Professor of History at Bloomfield College. She is the co-editor of *The Business of Black Power* and has published in *Journal for the Study of Radicalism* and *Journal of African American History*. Her *Strike the Hammer: The Black Freedom Struggle in Rochester, NY 1940-1970* (Cornell University Press, 2021) examines the unrest that radically changed the trajectory of the Civil Rights movement. Follow her on Twitter @Mohojolo.

Susan Harris is the editorial director of Words Without Borders (www.wordswithoutborders.org) and the co-editor, with Ilya Kaminsky, of *The Ecco Anthology of International Poetry*.

Beena Kamlani, a former editor at Penguin Random House (31 years), has edited a wide range of authors, including Paul Beatty, Kim Edwards, Peter Kramer, David Leavitt, Terry McMillan, Diane Middlebrook, Ruth Ozeki, and Jiang Rong; and was Saul Bellow’s editor for nearly two decades until his death in 2005. She worked with Robert Fagles for over 20 years on his translations of Homer’s *Odyssey* and *Iliad* and Virgil’s *Aeneid*. Beena taught book editing at New York University for 18 years and received the university’s award for teaching excellence in 2002. She is a Pushcart Prize-winning fiction writer whose work has appeared widely. She now works as a freelance editor.
Meg Kearney’s latest poetry collection, All Morning the Crows, was awarded the 2020 Washington Prize for poetry and spent seven months on SPD’s poetry bestseller list after its release in 2021. She is the author of An Unkindness of Ravens; Home By Now, winner of the PEN New England L.L. Winship Award; a heroic crown, The Ice Storm, published as a chapbook in 2020; and three verse novels for teens. Her award-winning picture book, Trouper, is illustrated by E.B. Lewis. Meg lives in New Hampshire and directs the Solstice MFA in Creative Writing Program in Massachusetts. Find her online at megkearney.com.

Jennifer R. Kellogg is a spiritual coach specializing in trauma-informed astrology. She holds a PhD in Modern Languages and Literatures from the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), Belgium. She has worked in academia and non-profits in a variety of administrative and leadership roles, including as Executive Director of the Greek America Foundation, 2016-2020. A poem from Jenny’s English translation from the Greek of 1963 Nobel Prize Laureate George Seferis’s Book of Exercises II appeared in Kenyon Review in 2021.

Rosamond S. King is a creative and critical writer, performer, and artist whose work is deeply informed by the many cultures and communities she is part of, by history, and by a sense of play. Her honors include a Fulbright Award and fellowships from Poets House, the Franklin Furnace Fund, and the Woodrow Wilson, Mellon, and Ford Foundations. She is the author of the chapbook At My Belly and My Back; the award-winning Island Bodies: Transgressive Sexualities in the Caribbean Imagination; and two full-length collections of poems published by Nightboat Books, Rock | Salt | Stone (2017), winner of the Lambda Literary Award in Lesbian Poetry, and All the Rage (2021). Rosamond is an Associate Professor in the English Department at Brooklyn College, part of the City University of New York.

Riva Lehrer is an artist, writer and curator who focuses on the socially challenged body. Best known for representations of people whose physical embodiment, sexuality, or gender identity have long been stigmatized, her work has been exhibited at such sites as the National Portrait Gallery of the Smithsonian, Yale University, the United Nations, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and the DeCordova Museum. Her awards include, among others, a 3Arts MacDowell Fellowship for writing, a 3Arts Residency Fellowship at the University of Illinois, a Carnegie Mellon Fellowship at Haverford and Bryn Mawr Colleges, and a Prairie Fellowship at the Ragdale Foundation. Riva’s memoir, Golem Girl, was published by the One World imprint of Penguin Random House in October 2020. She is on faculty at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an instructor in the Medical Humanities Departments of Northwestern University.

Jeffrey Lependorf is a visual artist, composer, and a certified master of the shakuhachi, a traditional Japanese bamboo flute. A nationally recognized arts leader, he currently serves as Executive Director of The Flow Chart Foundation, which explores the interrelationships of various art forms to open new possibilities as guided by the legacy of poet John Ashbery. Previously, he was Executive Director of Small Press Distribution, America’s only nonprofit literary book distributor, and simultaneously, Executive Director of the Community of Literary Magazines and Presses.

Tony Leuzzi is a poet, critic, and art maker whose books of poems include Radiant Losses (New Sins, 2010), The Burning Door (Tiger Bark, 2014), and Meditation Archipelago (Tiger Bark, 2018). Passwords Primeval (BOA Editions, 2012) is a collection of his interviews with 20 American poets. He has received numerous teaching awards and the State University of New York’s Chancellor’s Award for Scholarship and Creativity. A staff writer for the “Books” section of The Brooklyn Rail, Tony’s interviews and criticism have been published in Lambda Literary, SCOUT Poetry, American Literary Review, Great River Review, The Kenyon Review (Online), The Poetry Society of America, and elsewhere.

Anne Marie Macari is the author of five books of poems, including Heaven Beneath (Persea, 2020) and Red Deer (Persea, 2015). Her first collection, Ivory Cradle, was selected in 2000 by Robert Creeley for the APR/Honickman First Book Prize. Her poems and essays have been widely published. Anne Marie founded the Drew University Low-Residency MFA Program in Poetry.

Steve Majors is a writer and author whose work has appeared in The New York Times, Washington Post, NBC Think, Huffington Post and Medium. He grew up in rural Western New York, the youngest of five raised by a single mother. His experiences growing up as a white appearing, mixed-race child in an all-Black family, as well as his life as a gay man raising two Black daughters in an interracial, interfaith family, have influenced his writings and talks on family.

Kathryn A. Mariner is Associate Professor of Anthropology and Visual and Cultural Studies at the University of Rochester. Trained in clinical social work, her research, writing, teaching, and activism address how historical and contemporary structures of power, such as race and racism, shape how people construct notions of family, community, and attachment in their everyday lives. Her book, Contingent Kinship: The Flows and Futures of Adoption in the United States, explores the visual, temporal, economic, and affective politics of transracial adoption. She is currently researching urban hypersegregation in Rochester, NY, and creates the annual fertile ground wine with Miguel A. Cardona.

Alison Meyers is a poet and fiction writer, twice nominated for a Pushcart Prize. Her work can be found in Hole in the Head Review, magazine, Freshwater Review, Stone Canoe, Mom Egg, and other literary journals, and in the anthology Gathered Light: Writers Respond to the Poetry of Joni Mitchell (Three O’Clock Press). The Executive Director of Writers & Books, Rochester, NY, she previously served as Cave Canem Foundation’s (Brooklyn, NY) Executive Director, 2006-2016, and Poetry Director and Director of Marketing & Communications at Hill-Stead Museum (CT). For many years she owned and managed indie bookstores. She serves on the board of Kweli Journal, presents at AWP and other conferences, serves frequently as a grants and awards panelist, and consults as a LitTAP mentor. Find Alison online at alisonmeyers.com

David Mihalyov’s poems and short fiction have appeared in the Concho River Review, Dunes Review, Free State Review, New Plains Review, San Pedro River Review, and other journals. His debut poetry collection, A Safe Distance, will be published by Main Street Rag Press in spring 2022. A peer reviewer for Whale Road Review, David works at SUNY Brockport, where he received his BA in Communications and MA in English. He has served on the board of Writers & Books since 2017. He lives near Lake Ontario in Webster, NY, with his wife, two daughters, and beagle.

Rajiv Mohabir’s debut collection of poems, The Taxidermist’s Cut, was selected by Brenda Shaughnessy for the Four Way Books’ Intro Prize in Poetry. He has received fellowships from V.O.N.A., Kundiman, and The Home School; and his second book, The Cowherd’s Son (Tupelo Press, 2017), won the 2017 Kundiman Prize. His latest collection, Cutlish, was published by Four Way Books in 2021. Rajiv received the Harold Morton Landon Translation Award from the Academy of American Poets for his translation of Lalbihari Sharma’s Even Regret Night (Kaya Press, 2019). Find him online at rajivmohabir.com

Carley Moore is an essayist, novelist, and poet whose work has been widely published. Her books include 16 Pills, an essay collection; The Not Wives, a novel; Portal Poem, a poetry chapbook; and The Stalker Chronicles, a young adult novel. Carley is a queer, disabled, single, co-parenting mom, a sex-positive intersectional feminist, #catwife, and Vans lover. She is a Clinical Professor of Writing and Critical Creative Production in the Global Liberal Studies Program at New York University and a Senior Associate at Bard College’s Institute for Writing and Thinking. She lives in New York City. Follow Carley on Instagram @fragmentedsky.
Stephen Motika is the Director & Publisher of Nightboat Books. He was for many years on the staff of Poets House in New York City. The author of the poetry collection Western Practice (2012) and the poetry chapbooks Arrival and At Mono (2007), In the Madrones (2011), and Private Archive (2016), he is also the editor of Tiresias: The Collected Poems of Leland Hickman (2009) and co-editor of Dear Kathleen: On the Occasion of Kathleen Fraser’s 80th Birthday (2017).

Anastasia Nikolis, PhD, is the Visiting Artist-in-Residence at St. John Fisher College. Her academic research focuses on confession as a rhetorical device in post-1945 American poetry; and her poetry and creative nonfiction navigate the intersections of place, identity, and visual art. She is also the Poetry Editor at the award-winning literary translation press, Open Letter Books, where she advocates for the proliferation of contemporary world literature. Find Anastasia online at anastasianikolis.


Linda Sue Park is the author of many books for young readers, including the 2002 Newbery Medal winner A Single Shard; The New York Times bestseller A Long Walk to Water; and, most recently, Prairie Lotus, a historical fiction middle-grade novel. She has served as a panelist for such awards and grants as the Kirkus Prize, the National Book Award, the PEN Naylor grant, and the SCBWI Golden Kite Award. In her travels to promote reading and writing, she has visited more than 30 countries and 49 states. Linda Sue advocates for equity/inclusion in her work for We Need Diverse Books and the Society of Children’s Books Writers and Illustrators, and she serves on the advisory board of the Rabbit hOle national children’s literature museum project.

Brenda Peynado is a Dominican American writer of fiction, nonfiction, and screenplays. Her short story collection The Rock Eaters was published by Penguin Books in March 2021. Her work appears in Tor.com, The Georgia Review, The Sun, Three Penny Review, Epoch, Kenyon Review online, Pleiades, Prairie Schooner, and elsewhere. Her stories have won a Nelson Algren Award from the Chicago Tribune; an O. Henry Prize; a Pushcart Prize; inclusion in The Best American Science Fiction and Fantasy, Best Small Fiction, and Best Microfiction anthologies; and other awards. She teaches fiction and screenwriting at the University of Central Florida’s BA and MFA programs.

Larissa Melo Pienkowski received her MA in Publishing and Writing from Emerson College, where she worked with the likes of Beacon Press and Barefoot Books before becoming the assistant publisher of an independent feminist press. She joined Jill Greenberg Literary Management as an agent in 2020, representing a wide range of adult and children’s fiction and nonfiction. The daughter of Brazilian and Polish immigrants, Larissa speaks Portuguese and Spanish and has a deep-rooted passion for championing the stories of authors from historically excluded backgrounds. She lives in Philadelphia with her fiancée and very fluffy husky, Olaf. Visit jillgrinbergliterary.com.

Danni Quintos is the author of Two Brown Dots (BOA Editions, 2022), winner of the 20th A. Poulin Jr. Prize, and PYTHON (Argus House, 2017), an ekphrastic chapbook featuring photography by her sister, Shelli Quintos. She is a Kentuckian, a mom, an educator, and an Affrilachian Poet. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in Poetry, Cream City Review, Cincinnatı Review, Best New Poets 2015, Salon, and elsewhere. Her knitting has appeared on the shoulders of many poets, writers, and artists, who are also friends and teachers. Danni lives in Lexington with her kid, farmer-spouse, and their little dog too. Find her online at danniquintos.com.
David Ruekberg is a poet, teacher, climate activist, and occasional cartoonist living in Rochester, NY. He has enjoyed a residency at Jentel Arts, and his poems have appeared in Barrow Street, Cimarron Review, Lake Effect, Mudfish, North American Review, and elsewhere. He has published two collections of poetry, Hour of the Green Light (FutureCycle Press, 2021) and Where Is the River Called Pishon? (Kelsay Books, 2018). Find David online at poetry.ruekberg.com.

Alex Sanchez has published 10 novels, including the American Library Association “Best Book for Young Adults” Rainbow Boys and Lambda Award-winning So Hard to Say. His novel Bait won the Tomas Rivera Mexican-American Book Award and the Florida Book Award Gold Medal for Young Adult fiction. You Brought Me the Ocean (2020), his graphic novel from DC Comics, was illustrated by Julie Maroh. His latest book, The Greatest Superpower, was published by Capstone Editions in 2021. Find Alex online at alexsanchez.com.

Celeste Schantz was a runner-up for the 2018 Stephen Dunn Prize in Poetry, judged by Terrance Hayes. Her essays and micro-essays can be found in Fugue and on PBS’s Next Avenue. Formerly an English instructor (29 years), she is the founder and editor of the literary magazine Mason Street Review, which placed in the 2021 finals of The Best of the Net. Celeste lives with her teenage son in Rochester, NY, where she supports his differently abled schooling and inclusion programs and champions autism rights.

Tim Seibl is the author of seven collections of poetry, including Fast Animal (Etruscan Press, 2012), recipient of the Theodore Roethke Memorial Poetry Prize and the PEN Oakland Josephine Miles Award; and, most recently, One Turn Around The Sun (2017), also from Etruscan Press. His latest book, Voodoo Libretto, will be released in February 2022. Tim’s work has been published in the Indiana Review, Black Renaissance Noire, Cortland Review, Ploughshares, Massachusetts Review, Beloit Poetry Journal, and numerous other literary journals and anthologies, including Best American Poetry. Formerly Poet Laureate of Virginia, he recently retired from his position as Professor of English at Old Dominion University. Find Tim online at blueflowerarts.com/artist/tim-seibl.

Purvi Shah won the inaugural SONY South Asian Social Service Excellence Award for her leadership fighting violence against women. Her second full-length book of poems, Miracle Marks (Curbstone Books 2, 2019), explores women, the sacred, and gender and racial equity. With artist Anjali Deshmukh, Purvi creates interactive art at https://circlefor.com/. Their participatory project, Missed Fortunes, documents experiences, celebrations, and pandemic rituals to create poetry and visual art, connection, and a community archive for healing. Learn more @PurviPoets.

Sejal Shah is a poet who works in prose, writing across genres and disciplines. She is the author of the award-winning debut essay collection, This Is One Way to Dance (University of Georgia Press, 2020). Her stories and essays have appeared in The Guardian, Brevity, Conjunctions, Guernica, Kenyon Review, Literary Hub, Longreads, and The Rumpus. The recipient of a 2018 New York Foundation for the Arts fellowship in fiction, Sejal recently completed a story collection with images; her newer writing is about friendship, school, and mental health. She lives in Rochester, NY.

Piper Sledge is Assistant Professor of Sociology and the Director of the Gender and Sexuality Studies Program at Bryn Mawr College. She is also affiliated with the Health Studies and Africana Studies Programs. Her research and teaching interests include gender, race, and embodiment. Piper’s Bodies Unbound (Rutgers University Press, 2021), is a book about the relationship between bodies and gender.

Lytton Smith is Professor of English & Creative Writing and Director of the Center for Integrative Learning at SUNY Geneseo. He is the author of the poetry collections The All-Purpose Magical Tent (2009) and While You Were Approaching the Spectacle But Before You Were Transformed by It (2013), both published by Nightboat Books; and the chapbooks My Radar Data Knows Its Thing (2018), Monster Theory (Poetry Society of America, 2008), and The Square, winner of the 2020 New Michigan Press/Diagram Chapbook Contest. A 2019 NEA Literature Translation Fellow, he has translated 15 books from the Icelandic, most recently Andri Snær Magnason’s On Time and Water.
Moheb Soliman is an interdisciplinary poet from Egypt and the Midwest. He has presented writing, performance, installation, and video work at diverse literary, art, and public spaces in the US and Canada with support from the Banff Centre, Pillsbury House, the Joyce Foundation, and Tulsa Artist Fellowship. Moheb has degrees from The New School and the University of Toronto and lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he was the program director for the Arab American literary journal and arts organization Mizna. His first collection of poems, HOMES (Coffee House Press 2021), dwells in the natural-cultural sprawl of the Great Lakes region as it reckons with issues of modernity, identity, place and belonging. Find Moheb online at mohebsoliman.info.


Angelique Stevens, Haudenosaunee, lives in Upstate New York where she teaches creative writing, literature of genocide, and race literatures. Her nonfiction can be found in LitHub, The New England Review, The Chattahoochee Review, and a number of anthologies. Her essay “Ghost Bread” won the Prism International Creative Nonfiction Contest, judged by Alexander Chee. Additional honors include an alumni fellowship from Bennington College’s MFA Program; fellowships from Bread Loaf, Tin House, Sewanee, and Kenyon Review Writers Workshops; and fellowships to the inaugural cohort of the Periplus Collective and The Lighthouse Writers Book Project. She currently is at work on a memoir about her experiences growing up in New York State. Find Angelique at angeliquestevens.com.

Megan Stielstra is the author of Everyone Remain Calm: Stories (Northwestern University Press, 2021); Once I Was Cool, selected by Roxane Gay for Salon as as one of the Top Ten Books of 2014; and The Wrong Way to Save Your Life: Essays (Harper), named the 2017 Nonfiction Book of the Year by the Chicago Review of Books. Her work appears in the Best American Essays, The New York Times, The Believer, Poets & Writers, Tin House, Longreads, Guernica, The Rumpus, and elsewhere. A longtime company member with 2nd Story, she has told stories for National Public Radio; Radio National Australia; the Museum of Contemporary Art; and theaters, festivals, and classrooms across the country. Megan teaches creative nonfiction at Northwestern University and is a Senior Fellow with the Annenberg Innovation Lab at the University of Southern California. Find Megan online at meganstielstra.com.

Marjorie Tesser is the editor of Mom Egg Review and co-editor of the anthologies Bowery Women: Poems; Estamos Aquí: Poems of Migrant Farmworkers; and Travellin’ Mama: Mothers, Mothering, and Travel (Demeter Press, 2019). She authored the poetry chapbooks THE IMPORTANT THING IS (Firewheel Award Winner) and The Magic Feather, and her poetry and fiction have appeared in several journals and anthologies. Visit momeggreview.com.

Stephen J. West is a practicing printer and book artist at Flower City Arts Center in Rochester, NY, where he produces the Undead Darlings literary broadside series. His writing has appeared in many literary magazines, including Brevity, PANK, and Zone 3. His artist’s book, DIY View-Master: Intimate Space, was published by Ninth Letter, and his first full-length book, Soft Boiled, is forthcoming from Kelson Books in May 2022. Stephen is a member of the English Department at St. John Fisher College where he teaches creative writing and is the faculty editor of ANGLES, a national undergraduate literary magazine. Find him at stephenjwest.com/index.html.

Arisa White is an assistant professor of English and Creative Writing at Colby College. She is the author of Who’s Your Daddy; co-editor of Home Is Where You Queer Your Heart; and co-author of Biddy Mason Speaks Up, the second book in the Fighting for Justice Series for young readers. The creator of the Beautiful Things Project, she serves on the board of directors for Foglifter and Nomadic Press. Find Arisa at arisawhite.com.
Mary-Frances Winters, founder and CEO of The Winters Group, Inc., a 37-year-old global diversity and inclusion consulting firm, is the author of six books, most recently, Black Fatigue: How Racism Erodes the Mind, Body, and Spirit (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2020); Inclusive Conversations: Fostering Equity, Empathy, and Belonging Across Differences (2020); and We Can’t Talk about That at Work!: How to Talk about Race, Religion, Politics, and Other Polarizing Topics (2017). The author of numerous articles, she holds a master’s degree in business administration from the William E. Simon Executive Development Program, University of Rochester. Find Mary-Frances online at wintersgroup.com/team/mary-frances-winters.

Leslie C. Youngblood is the author of the critically acclaimed Love Like Sky (2019) and Forever This Summer (2021), both published by Little Brown Books for Young Readers. A former assistant professor of creative writing at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, she has been awarded a host of writing honors, including a 2014 Yaddo’s Elizabeth Ames Residency, the Lorian Hemingway Short Story Prize, a Hurston Wright Fellowship, the Go On Girl! Book Club Aspiring Writer Award of 2010, and the Room of Her Own Foundation’s 2009 Orlando Short Story Prize. Her work has appeared in Kweli Journal and Indiana Review. Leslie works as a writing consultant for various businesses seeking assistance and Individuals looking to hone their skills. Find her online at lesliecyoungblood.com.