



2025 AWP Conference & Bookfair

Los Angeles Convention Center
Los Angeles, California
March 26-29, 2025

THURSDAY, MARCH 27

9:00 – 10:15 a.m.

T113. [Hell-Bent Hope: Poets Holding Fast During This Time of Ecological Crisis](#)

Moderator: Nickole Brown

Presenters: David Baker, Aimee Nezhukamatathil, Matthew Olzmann (P 2009, fac), CMarie Furman

Concourse Hall 152, Level One, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

T118. [Crafting Powerful Stories \(with Difficult Topics\) for Young Readers](#)

Moderator: Rex Ogle

Presenters: Aaron Aceves, Elise Bryant, Abdi Naziman, Paula Yoo (F, 2002)

Room 405, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

T123. [You Call That a Book Review?!: On Poetry Criticism and/as Creative Practice](#)

Moderator: Nanya Jhingran

Presenters: Cristina Correa, Summer Farrah, Esther Lin, Dujie Tahat (P, 2020-22)

Room 409AB, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

T131. [Electric Conduit: Poetics, Translation & the Digital Age](#)

Moderator: Alana Levinson-LaBrosse (P, 2012)

Presenters: Matthew Timmons, Omar Pimienta, David Shook, Alan Sabrino

Room 513, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

10:35 – 11:50 a.m.

T142: [Understories & Mycocosms: Tapping Hidden Networks](#)

Moderator: Sarah Audsley (P, 2019)

Presenters: Leslie Wheeler, Anna Maria Hong, Amarnath Ravva, Asali Solomon

Room 403A, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

T149. [Navigating Intersectional Identities in Book Marketing](#)

Moderator: Laura Leigh Morris

Presenters: Neema Avashia, Jonathan Corcoran, Sarah Cypher (F, 2020)

Room 408B, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

T159. [The Matrilineal Saga: Redefining Generational Histories](#)

Moderator: Lauren Alwan (F, 2008)

Presenters: Ilze Duarte, Lillian Howan, Montez Jennings, Peg Alford Pursell (F, 1996)

Room 514, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

T161. [Birthing Books & Babies: Navigating the Double Bind of Caregiving & Writing](#)

Moderator: Kaitlin Solomine

Presenters: Natasha Dion, Camille Dungy, Marie Matsuki Mockett, Daniel Tam-Claiborne (F, 2020)

Room 515B, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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 the publication journey share their experiences and provide new frameworks for conversation and engagement on this nuanced subject matter.

12:10 – 1:25 p.m.

T173. [Celebrating Seventy-Five Years of the Beloit Poetry Journal](#)

Moderator: Rachel Contreni Flynn (P, 2001)

Presenters: Kim Alabi, Eduardo Corral, Katie Farris, Michael Wasson

Room 404AB, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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 seventy-five years of continuous publication and discuss the journal's seven decades of dedication to expanding the definition of the term "American poetry."

T177. [Irresistible Openings: The High-Wire Act of a Novel's First Pages](#)

Moderator: Danielle Harms

Presenters: Lauren Francis-Sharma (F, 2023), Ramona Ausubel, Marie-Helene Bertino, Gene Kwak

Room 408A, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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 on the stories behind the words that audiences eventually saw in print.

T178. [Older & Wiser or Older & Invisible? Five Authors Reflect](#)

Moderator: Valerie Miner

Presenters: Lorna Dee Cervantes, Lex Williford, Nancy Lord, Gary Lilley (P, 2002)

Room 408B, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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?

T181. [When Words Are Not Enough: Graphic Literature & Diasporic Histories](#)

Moderator: Kelcey Ervick

Presenters: Teresa Wong, Tessa Hulls, Erica Isomura, Victoria Chang (P, 2005)

Room 411, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

T186. [Mizna Presents: Arab Time—Hybridizing Form, Language & Temporality](#)

Moderator: George Abraham

Presenters: Zeina Hashem Beck, Sarah Aziza, Jameelah Lang, Abdelrahman ElGendy

Room 511AB, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

T190. [Big & Bodied: Writing Against Fatphobia](#)

Moderator: Emma Copley Eisenberg

Presenters: Carmen Maria Machado, Isle McElroy, Mecca Jamilah Sullivan, Renee Watson

Room 515B, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

T201. [Rewriting the West](#)

Moderator: Taylor Brorby

Presenters: Nina McConigley, Camille Dungy, Jennifer Sahn

Room 403B, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

This panel will explore the increasingly diverse writing of the American West with three multigenre writers as well as an editor from *High Country News*. 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 lie ahead for writers interested in the issues that face one of the most exciting geographies of American writing.

T209. [Beyond Definitions of Diaspora: Korean Women Poets Breaking & Building Poetics](#)

Moderator: Sarah Audsley (P, 2019)

Presenters: Marci Calabretta Canio-Bello, Ae Hee Lee, Tiana Nobile (P, 2017), Rosanna Oh

Room 410, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

T215. [The Sky Above the Roof: Community & Creativity in Carceral Environments](#)

Moderator: Alison Pelegrin

Presenters: Jane V. Blunski, Geffrey Davis, Nik de Dominic, Sally Keith

Room 511AB, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

T219. [Writers and/as Artists Seizing the Image](#)

Moderator: Ronaldo V. Wilson

Presenters: Angela Penaredondo, Addie Tsai (P, 2005), S. Erin Batiste, Paul Cunningham

Room 518, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

3:20 – 4:45 p.m.

T222. [Nurturing a Green Heart: Staying Soft in the Face of Adversity, Sponsored by Alice James Books](#)

Moderator: CM Burroughs

Presenters: Joshua Jennifer Espinoza, Ayokunle Falumo, Dorianne Laux

Petree Hall C, Level One, Los Angeles Convention Center

Alice James Books presents four celebrated writers to share their most recent work and engage in conversation. Joshua Jennifer Espinoza and Ayokunle Falomo will read from their 2024 books, and Dorianne Laux from her book *Life on Earth*. The event is led by CM Burroughs, who will guide the conversation as the group grapples with an important question—in a world of unrelenting violence, how does one tend a green heart? How do we refuse to harden in conditions where becoming hard seems so natural?

T243. [Nonfiction as Poem, Photograph, Song, or Fable](#)

Moderator: Samuel Ace

Presenters: Brian Blanchfield (P, 1999), Lily Hoang, Aisha Sabatina Sloah, Caryl Pagel

Room 503, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

FRIDAY, MARCH 28

9:00 – 10:15 a.m.

F114: [Women of a Certain Age on Sex & Death: “I Took the Lake Between My Legs”](#)

Moderator: **Rebecca Foust (P, 2010)**

Presenters: *Ellen Bass, Susan Browne, Julia Levine, Mahogany Browne*

Concourse Hall 153 ABC, Level One, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

F129. [Pedagogy of the Distressed: Mental Health in the Postpandemic Writing Classroom](#)

Moderator: *Lisa Page*

Presenters **Joseph J. Capista (P, 2016)**, *Ianan Alexander*, **Fay Dillof (P, 2015)**,

Room 502B, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

Chronic absence, disengagement, and trauma in workshop: How has our postpandemic 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 will speak to writing’s efficacy as a tool for healing and wellness. Bring questions, anecdotes, and ideas!

F130. [Eyes Wide: Exploring the Extended Ekphrastic](#)

Moderator: *Tess Taylor*

Presenters: *Allison Rollins*, **Victoria Chang (P, 2005)**, *Tyree Daye*, *Dean Rader*

Room 503, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

10:35 – 11:50 a.m.

F139. [California Counternarratives: Stories That Remap the State](#)

Moderator: *Keenan Norris*

Presenters: *Jean Guerrero*, **Vanessa Hua**, *Susan Straight*, *Alex Espinoza*

Concourse Hall 151, Level One, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

F143. [Novels in Stories, Fragments & Constellations](#)

Moderator: *Helen Georgas*

Presenters: *Nicole Haroutunian*, **Yiming Ma (F, 2023)**, *Sequoia Nagamatsu*, *Ra*

Room 403A, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

F156. [The Pedagogy of Climate Change](#)

Moderator: Lawrence Coates

Presenters: Laura-Gray Street (P, 1997), Pamela Uschuk, Alison Adelle Hedge Coke, Ann Fisher-Wirth

Room 502B, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

12:10 – 1:25 p.m.

F166. [Nightboat Books Through the Ages: A Twentieth-Anniversary Reading](#)

Moderator: Kazim Ali

Presenters: Dawn Lundy Martin, Brandon Som, Brian Teare, Jackie Wang

Petree Hall C, Level One, Los Angeles Convention Center

Over the last two decades, Nightboat Books has developed audiences for writers whose work resists convention and transcends boundaries, publishing more than two hundred books rich with poignancy, intelligence, and risk. To celebrate, a constellation of our authors—Dawn Lundy Martin, Brandon Som, Brian Teare, and Jackie Wang—together with our cofounder Kazim Ali, will read from their work as well as texts by other beloved Nightboat authors, from Etel Adnan and Fanny Howe to Assotto Saint and Lou Sullivan.

F189. [This Centre Holds & Spreads: Writing & Learning in Northern Ireland](#)

Moderator: Jenny Browne

Presenters: Glenn Patterson, Stephen Sexton, Connie Voisine, Dawn Watson

Room 513, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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 US 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.

F192. [Poets Who Edit: The Joy & Conundrum of Wearing Two Hats](#)

Moderator: Jill Bialosky

Presenters: Meghan O'Rourke (P, 2004), Srikanth Reddy, Major Jackson, Walt Hunter

Room 515B, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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?

1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

F196. [Like a Hammer: Poets On Mass Incarceration Book Launch, Sponsored by the University of Arizona Poetry Center](#)

Moderator: Diane Marie Delgado

Presenters: Vanessa Angelica Villareal, Angel Nafis (P, 2019), Marcel Hernandez Castillo, Tongo Eisen-Martin

Petree Hall D, Level One, Los Angeles Convention Center

Join us for launch reading of *Like a Hammer: Poets on Mass Incarceration*, an anthology of poems that unearths the shared traumas produced by America's carceral system. These powerful poems of witness address the oppressive systems that define the US prison-industrial complex, exposing cracks in a criminal justice system that often feels unchangeable. The impact of this system reverberates across generations. The poets gathered here foreground the real experiences of those affected, challenging dominant narratives, exposing injustice, and serving as a fulcrum for organizing communities. *Like a Hammer* explores how art and imagination can be vehicles for endurance, offering hope to envision a better future.

F206. [The Personal Is Always Political](#)

Moderator: Smita Chakraborty

Presenters: Tariq Luthun (P, 2018), Ally Ang, Jericho Brown, Rachel Mennies

Room 406AB, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

F213. [We Are Still Here: A Reading for Palestinian & Armenian Solidarity](#)

Moderator: Gina Srmabekian

Presenters: Nancy Agabian, Mai Serhan, Raffi Wartanian, Priscilla Wathington (P, 2024)

Room 501ABC, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

F222. [How Do You Know When You're Done? Poets on Revision](#)

Moderator: James Fujinami Moore

Presenters: Megan Pinto (P, 2018), Diannely Angigua, Tancrum Bambrick, Michael Dhyne

Room 518, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

3:20 – 4:35 p.m.

F225. [NBCC Fiftieth Anniversary: All-Stars Breaking New Ground in Fiction](#)

Moderator: Heather Scott Partington

Presenters: Justin Torres, Jonathan Escoffery, Jonathan Lethem

Petree Hall D, Level One, Los Angeles Convention Center

A special fiftieth-anniversary literary partner National Book Critics Circle featured reading at the 2025 AWP Conference & Bookfair in Los Angeles, with all-star fiction writers Jonathan Escoffery, Jonathan Lethem, and Justin Torres, three authors honored as NBCC finalists or award winners, whose work is breaking new ground. Readings and conversation, moderated by NBCC President Heather Scott Partington, will cover inspiration, research, influences on their work, writing in these times, and evolving forms.

F229. [Beyond Nostalgia: Writing & Rewriting Diaspora](#)

Moderator: Jane Alberdeston

Presenters: Marianne Chan, Grisel Yolanda Acosta, Luisa Igloria

Concourse Hall 153 ABC, Level One, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

F235. [The Politics of Imagining: Poetry as Social Practice](#)

Moderator: Issam Zineh

Presenters: Courtney Faye Taylor, Cindy Juyoung Ok, Solmaz Sharif, George Abraham

Room 406AB, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

F238. [Joyful Revision: Finding Hope in Change](#)

Moderator: Alix Ohlin

Presenters: Allegra Hyde, Nina McConigley, Vanessa Hua, Peter Ho Davies

Room 408B, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

F244. [Goin’ B\(0\)ack Home: Exploring Notions of Home, Migration & Return](#)

Moderator: M Shelly Conner

Presenters: Marci Blackman, Deesha Philyaw, Sanderia Faye Smith, Mecca Jamilah Sullivan

Room 502B, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

5:00 – 6:15 p.m.

F252. [SWANA Writers Caucus](#)

Moderator: Aliah Lavonne Tigh

Presenters: Rabha Ashry, Tariq Luthun (P, 2018), Pina Banu Yasar, Sophia Babai

Room 501ABC, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

SATURDAY, MARCH 29

9:00 – 10:15 a.m.

S111. [A Lyric Freedom: Asian Americans, Racial Legibility & Poetic Subjectivity](#)

Moderator: Hana Widerman

Presenters: Derek Chan, Kimiko Hahn, Sandra Lim, Haolun Xu

Concourse Hall 150 ABC, Level One, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

S123. [For the Love of the Novella: A Reading & Conversation](#)

Moderator: Anne Elliott (F, 2021)

Presenters: Matt Bell, Sasha Hom (F, 2021), Ashley Honeysett, Rion Amilcar Scott
Room 409AB, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

S127. [Writing \(& Publishing!\) Short Fiction in a World Built for Novels](#)

Moderator: Jeremy Broyles

Presenters: Lan Samantha Chang, Gwendolyn Paradise, Leslie Pietrzyk, Gina Chung
Room 502A, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

10:35 – 11:50 a.m.

S142. [Read Write South: Thirty Years of Hub City Press](#)

Moderator: Kate McMullen

Presenters: Meg Reid, Neesha Powel-Ingabire, Carter Sickels, Halle Hill
Concourse Hall 153 ABC, Level One, Los Angeles Convention Center

Since its 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.

S144. [A Tribute to Brenda Hillman: Meditations on a Radical Poet & Advocate](#)

Moderator: Rachel Morgan

Presenters: Major Jackson, Suzanna Tamminen, Brian Teare, Craig Morgan Teicher
Room 403A, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

S150. [Out of Many, One: Writers of Color Writing the Multiple-POV Novel](#)

Moderator: Kimberly Garza

Presenters: Ruben Degollado, Jonathan Escoffery, Sidik Fofana, LaToya Watkins
Room 408B, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

12:10 – 1:25 p.m.

S168. [Debut You! How to Bring Your Poetry Book to Market](#)

Moderator: Ally Ang

Presenters: Margot Kahn, Sarah Ghazal Ali, Megan Pinto (P, 2018), Katie Prince

Concourse Hall 152, Level One, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

S184. [The Heat of the Hybrid](#)

Moderator: Jill Bialosky

Presenters: Kimiko Hahn, Tina Chang, Nick Flynn, David Baker

Room 502B, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

S200. [A Tribute to Elizabeth Arnold \(1958–2024\)](#)

[Elizabeth Arnold was a 1996 graduate in poetry and was a poetry faculty member between 2004-07.]

Moderator: Lindsay Bernal

Presenters: Elizabeth Countryman, Katy Didden, Kiyanna Hill, Jenny Mueller

Room 404AB, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.

3:20 – 4:25 p.m.

S236. [Our Voices Make a Movement: Storytelling as Anti-Racist Pedagogy](#)

Moderator: Martin Rock

Presenters: Rita Banerjee, Adrienne Perry (F, 2013), Deborah Taffa, Matt Salesses

Room 502A, Level Two, Los Angeles Convention Center

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.