

BALTIMORE'S 14TH ANNUAL



A DAY OF POETRY, FICTION AND NONFICTION

April 29, 2017

10am - 4pm



CITYLIT
PROJECT

University of Baltimore
11. W. Mount Royal Avenue

FESTIVAL SESSIONS & AUTHOR BIOS



2017 CITYLIT FESTIVAL SESSIONS & AUTHOR BIOS

SESSION: **WRITERS RESIST**
TIME OF SESSION: 10:00 - 10:45AM
HOST: **Ericka Blount Danois**
LOCATION: BC Auditorium

On January 15, 2017, Martin Luther King, Jr's birthday, writers from across the world convened at over 150 events in a call to action in defense of civil liberties. It stood as a momentous time in history to "re-inaugurate" a commitment to the fundamental principles of democracy and free expression. CityLit's *Writers Resist Baltimore: Voices United* was a standing room only event as poets and writers from different communities took to the stage confirming that Baltimore stands as many voices with one mission. Heard. Seen. Validated. CityLit Festival is pleased to present this condensed version of Writers Resist, including the voices of young and emerging talent: **Ann Bracken** representing 100 Thousand Poets for Change, **LindaJoy Burke**, **Jamesha Caldwell**, **Joey Reisberg**, **Rienne Jahnai Scott**, **Mejdulene B. Shomali**, hosted by **Ericka Blount Danois**. Join the conversation.

CityLit Festival invited Bowie State University's Professor **Jennifer White-Johnson** to present *Our Future is Us*. In response to the 2016 election results, Professor White-Johnson challenged her students to change the social and artistic landscape through the power of art & design activism. Post-election creative reactions were occurring on college campuses nationwide, and she asked her students: How can the HBCU art community effectively respond to the election results using art as a platform? Using the art of peaceful protest, Bowie State University Art & Design students created OUR FUTURE IS US, gathering in solidarity to promote unity, acceptance, love and anti-hate.

ANN BRACKEN representing 100 Thousand Poets for Change, is a writer, educator, and expressive arts consultant whose poetry, essays, and interviews have appeared in numerous journals and anthologies. She serves as the deputy editor for *Little Patuxent Review* and lives in Columbia, Maryland. Additionally, Ann offers poetry and writing workshops in prisons, community centers, and schools. Her latest book is *No Barking in the Hallways: Poems from the Classroom*.

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100 Thousand Poets for Change, a grassroots organization that brings communities together to call for environmental, social, and political change within the framework of peace and sustainability. An event that began primarily with poet organizers, 100 Thousand Poets for Change has grown into an interdisciplinary coalition with year-round events which includes musicians, dancers, mimes, painters and photographers from around the world.

<http://100tpc.org/>

LINDA JOY BURKE is a poet, writer, percussionist, picture maker, and activist with humanist leanings, currently on the staff of the Little Patuxent Review. Her work can be experienced on her blogs Moods Minds and Multitudes – www.lindajoyburke.blogspot.com - And I Grew Up to Be the Neighborhood Nosy Lady.
twitter @ljoybird.

JAMESHA CALDWELL is a multifaceted high school senior whose publications range from journalistic articles about Women in Color in sports to poetry that addresses politics, social concern and activism. While completing her senior year, she works on various STEM projects that target minority micronutrient deficiency and other STEM and activism related research. She is affiliated with **Writers in Baltimore Schools**, a program that provides low-income middle school students with a vibrant environment for literary development through in-school, after school, and summer creative writing workshops taught by Baltimore college students.
<https://www.facebook.com/WritersinBaltimoreSchools/>

JOEY REISBERG currently serves as the 2016 National Student Poet representing the Northeast. He is a junior at the George Washington Carver Center for Arts and Technology, where he studies Literary Arts. Catch his poems appearing or forthcoming in *Red Queen*, *Moledro*, *Sugar Rascals*, *Fissure*, and the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards website.
Instagram: @homoromeo.

RIENNE JAHNAI SCOTT is a high school ELA teacher at the SEED School of Maryland in Baltimore City, as well as SEED's GSA advisor. She also founded an LGBT community organization, known as The Black Rainbow, which hosts a monthly LGBT Open Mic called "OUTspoken", featuring local artists, allies, and businesses. The Black Rainbow is a local organization which focuses on providing alternative social and entertainment options for QPOC (Queer People of Color). It's mission is to highlight the arts, businesses, and civic engagements of QPOC in Baltimore City.

MEJDULENE B. SHOMALI is a teacher, writer, and researcher at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *The Feminist Wire*, *Mizna*, *Baltimore City Paper*, *Tinderbox*, and a number of academic journals.
Instagram: @mejdu

ERICKA BLOUNT DANOIS is an author and journalist who has written about a variety of topics from the Freddie Gray trial, to a book on the seminal show Soul Train, to interviewing Fidel Castro.
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SESSION: **RAISING OUR VOICES: WOMANIST
& FEMINIST WRITERS SPEAK**
 TIME OF SESSION: 10:00 - 10:45AM
 HOST: **Willona Sloan**
 LOCATION: BC 219

A powerful reading and panel discussion featuring gifted womanist and feminist writers who address issues of cultural identity, healing and self-love. Their efforts to empower young women and girls in their communities show up in innovative ways. **Andria Nacina Cole** created *A Revolutionary Summer*, an intensive critical reading and writing program dedicated to shifting the narratives about Black women and girls through both the meaningful study of and creation of art and the deliberate application of self-inquiry. **Hannah Sawyerr**, the second Youth Poet Laureate of Baltimore, whose debut work *For Girls Growing into Their Hips* is due to be published this spring. Poet and essayist **Elizabeth Hazen**'s work has appeared in several journals, including *Best American Poetry 2013*. Michael Collier describes her work as "this poet's "need" to ground her ideas in the body, which she tells us, "holds more mysteries/than the mouth can bring itself to speak." **Bilphena Yahwon** aka goldwomyn is a social justice advocate, born in Liberia, West Africa, and raised in Danané, Côte D'Ivoire, she writes of the immigrant experience, and is the creative director of Broken English. This panel is hosted by writer **Willona Sloan**.

ANDRIA NACINA COLE is co-founder of the critical reading and writing program *A Revolutionary Summer* (www.arevolutionarysummer.com), which exposes young African-American women to Black literary giants in an effort to push them headfirst into self-love. Her work has appeared in *Baltimore's City Paper*, *The Feminist Wire*, *Fiction Circus*, and *Hamilton Stone Review*, among others. *Ploughshares* recently published her novella *Men Be Either Or, But Never Enough*, available for download on Amazon and Audible. She is the recipient of five Maryland State Arts Councils awards, one of which was the organization's top prize for fiction. She is a 2016 Rubys Literary Arts grant recipient.

HANNAH SAWYERR is a twenty-year-old national youth poet. Along with being a National Medalist in the NAACP Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics in the category of poetry, Hannah has been featured in the British Broadcasting Channel's "World Have Your Say", as well as a part of the National Education Association's "Do You Hear Us" Campaign. Her written work has been featured in several publications such as *Teen Ink*, *Sesi*, and *Theories of HER*. She is a Baltimore City Youth Slam Team alum, co-founder of Morgan State University's "MSU Poets," She is also the current Youth Poet Laureate of Baltimore City. In this capacity, she represents Baltimore City on both a local and national level as well as publishing her first book of poetry *For Girls Growing Into Their Hips* through Penmanship Books in April of 2017.

Twitter & Instagram: @HannSawyerr,
 Facebook: Hannah V. Sawyerr

ELIZABETH HAZEN is a poet and essayist whose work has appeared in *Best American Poetry 2013*, *Southwest Review*, *The Threepenny Review*, *The Normal School*, and other journals. *Chaos Theories* is her first book. She teaches at Calvert School of Maryland, and was

recently awarded an Individual Artist Award from the Maryland State Arts Council.
<http://www.elizabethhazen.com>

BILPHENA YAHWON is a Baltimore-based writer and social justice advocate born in Liberia, West Africa and raised in Danané, Côte D'Ivoire. Yahwon is the owner and curator of goldwomyn.com, the author of '*teaching gold-mah how to heal herself*.' and the creative director at Broken English Co. She writes of the immigrant experience, of blackness, of healing, of African women made from flowers and breathing fragility.
goldwomyn.com
Instagram & Twitter: [goldwomyn](#)

WILLONA SLOAN is a writer and a literary host. She has published fiction, nonfiction, and poetry in numerous publications and she has hosted literary events and writing workshops in the United States, Iceland, and Canada. Willona has received an Artist Fellowship award from the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities and artist residencies at the Banff Centre for the Arts and Spark Box Studio.
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SESSION:	WRITING FROM THE MOUNTAINTOPS
TIME OF SESSION:	10:00 - 10:45am
HOST:	Gregg Wilhelm
LOCATION:	BC 221

Discover two authors writing from different sides of the West Virginia mountains. Appalachia is a complex place, and hardly a homogeneous one, despite national perceptions. Poet and essayist **Doug Van Gundy's** work sees the region for what it is: beautiful and historic, impoverished and under a state of siege from economic, anti-intellectual, and anti-environmental forces, but there remains every reason to be in love with the reality of what contemporary Appalachia is, as it is, without falling in love with a manufactured mythology. Van Gundy's latest work is an anthology, *Eyes Glowing at the Edge of the Woods: Contemporary Writing from West Virginia*. **Jonathan Musgrove's** poems explore the differences in farm life - the struggle with the romantic version of farming versus reality, and city life. He spent his first 30 years in Baltimore, and 20 in southwestern Virginia, but considers himself an embedded observer of Appalachian culture living between two worlds. While he currently owns a farm with goats, cattle, chickens, and horses, he wasn't born into this rural culture. In his youth, he had never even mowed a lawn. His latest collection, *A Hand in Place of a Hand*, poet Grace Cavalieri writes, "his lyricism will wrap your heart around these poems."

DOUG VAN GUNDY teaches in both the BA and MFA writing programs at West Virginia Wesleyan College where he also directs the undergraduate Honors Program. His poems, essays and reviews have appeared in many journals, including *The Oxford American*, *Ecotone*, *Appalachian Heritage*, and *Poetry Salzburg Review*. His first collection of poems, *A Life Above Water* is published by Red Hen Press. He is co-editor of the forthcoming anthology *Eyes Glowing at the Edge of the Woods: Contemporary Writing from West Virginia*. Doug also plays fiddle, guitar, mandolin, and harmonica in the old-time string band, [Born Old](#).

JONATHAN MUSGROVE's poems have been published in numerous magazines, journals and anthologies including *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Ploughshares*, and *Shenandoah*. A registered nurse, he has worked in critical care and hospice. Jonathan lives on a farm with his wife Martha in the Blue Ridge of Virginia. Somondoco Press published his recent collection, *A Hand In Place Of A Hand* in 2016.
Somondocopress.com

SESSION:	WRITER AS ACTIVIST
TIME OF SESSION:	10:00 - 10:45am
HOST:	Nia Johnson
LOCATION:	BC 143

Writers, **Saida Agostini, Nancy Lord Lewin, Kevin Shird, Tariq Toure'**, represent individuals and organizations (FORCE, Broken English, New Day Campaign) which confront harsh realities, like being led to sports and not language, balls and not books; what re-entry looks like for the disenchanted, and finding success in a society that works to devalue you; how the masks of addiction and mental illness plague individuals and families to the point the only way out is a way into understanding it; Exactly what rape culture looks like, ways to define it and the concept of a woman's worth. Their poetry and stories are poignant. Their actions demonstrative of the human spirit to strive to want more and to do better. Writers converge to read and discuss their work as activists, how writing becomes a necessary tool to gain ground and encouragement. The power of words to transform lives, to create new kinds of freedom, to create hope where hope may not reign. Truth-telling 101 with host, poet and SunSets Baltimore's **Nia Johnson**.

SAIDA AGOSTINI is a queer Afro-Guyanese poet and trash talker. She hails Luther Vandross as the one and only king of silky smooth R&B. A Cave Canem Fellow, her work is featured and forthcoming in the *Delaware Poetry Review*, *Pluck - The Affrilachian Journal of Arts and Culture*, *TORCH Literary Arts*, and the *Black Ladies Brunch Collective Anthology*, *Not Without Our Laughter: Poems of Humor, Joy and Sexuality*. She is currently working on her first collection, *uprisings in a state of joy*.

NANCY LORD LEWIN is a writer and social entrepreneur. She is the Principal and Communications Strategist at Asana Consulting, the business she started to honor her entrepreneurial and creative spirit, and her 20-year career in communications and public health. Her clients are nonprofit and social impact organizations seeking to use communications to spark growth, secure investment, and expand impact.

Nancy writes creative non-fiction and short stories that carve out space for witnessing the complex, challenging, and sacred truths of the human experience, observing the wonder of the natural world, and testifying to the capacity of everyday people to do extraordinary things with transformative outcomes. Her writing is inspired by her belief that following your heart and honoring your story are the most radical acts possible in the human experience. She has written about living with and in recovery from mental illness, alcoholism, and post-traumatic stress as well as her father's Vietnam War experience as a soldier and veteran, and of losing him to suicide in 2000. *Mindset + Mission: The Winning Approach to Nonprofit Communications*, a book for nonprofit leaders, will be published in late 2017. Nancy currently serves on the advisory board of the New Day Campaign. She is the recipient of the Open Society Institute-Baltimore Community Fellowship and the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship. Nancy is also a yoga practitioner and teaches yoga to children and adults.

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KEVIN SHIRD, the author of *Lessons of Redemption* and *Uprising in the City*, is having a remarkable impact on young people worldwide with his amazing life story. Recognized as an international author, national youth advocate and inspirational speaker -- Kevin is dedicated to helping youth understand the perils of street culture that destroys so many lives. Through this collaboration, he lectures to students at colleges and universities across America on the issues of substance abuse prevention, public health policy, prison re-entry and incarceration. He tells his personal story of "Redemption" and how a person can literally walk through fire and emerge on the other side to insure better lives for others. This year he donated 500 books to students in the Baltimore City public schools.
kevinshird.com

TARIQ TOURE' is an award-winning Muslim Artist & Activist born and raised in West Baltimore, Maryland. Tariq has a Master's Degree in Social Work at Howard University. As a citizen writer Toure covers Social justice, Black Muslim Narratives, Arts and Current events. As an Activist Toure spent his adolescent life organizing programs for at-risk populations within the Baltimore and D.C. region. Touré's 2016 poetry debut *Black Seeds* was awarded Best Poetry Book of 2016 by City Paper. Tariq is an awardee of the MPower100 Muslims fighting for Social Justice, HBCU Top 30 under 30 Alumni and Baltimore Magazine's Rising Community Voices.
BrokenEnglish.com

NIA JOHNSON began her professional career as a social worker; graduating from Morgan State University with a Masters in Social Work. In 2013 she returned to her initial passion, writing, and created the LesB Inn book series. LesB Inn explores the lives and loves of a group of friends working at a queer bed & breakfast in Baltimore, MD. She is the creator of GetShitDone, a consulting business that assists people with reaching their goals and enhancing their overall quality of life, and is the co-creator and co-producer of SunSets, a monthly gathering for creatives. Nia continues to work in the field of social work and currently serves as an adjunct professor at Morgan State University.
#GetShitDone #SunSetsbmore #LesBInn @njthedreamer
niajohnson.net

SESSION: **PROSTITUTE LAUNDRY: The Landscape of Women's Personal Writing**

TIME OF SESSION: 11:00 - 11:45am

HOST: **Jessica Anya Blau**

LOCATION: BC Auditorium

Charlotte Shane received national attention after her addictive serial memoir *Prostitute Laundry* expanded to over 5500 devoted email subscribers. Throughout the project's duration, it was featured in outlets like NPR's On The Media, The New York Times, The Washington Post, and New York Magazine, and touted as radically altering the way many writers use newsletters. The Guardian likened Prostitute Laundry to work by Charles Dickens, and Vice called it "addictive [and] intimate." It continues to be a touchstone in conversations about the mutable landscape of women's personal writing. Acclaimed novelist **Jessica Anya Blau**, author of *The Trouble with Lexie*, introduces Shane, whose session will delve into encouraging women to open channels of intimate expression. Shane is the co-founder of TigerBee Press, an independent publisher, and proud to have been a co-founder of Tits and Sass, which is still the only website by and for sex workers. Shane runs a monthly series called *Bad Advice For Bad Women*, most times in New York City. This session is for writers who want to brave the boundaries in their own ways, and to learn how Shane, a self-described introvert, grapples with writing poetically and humanely about sexual encounters, and how her readers become firmly invested in her characters.

CHARLOTTE SHANE is the author of *Prostitute Laundry* and *N.B.*, and co-founder of TigerBee Press. She contributes regularly to *Bookforum* and *The New Republic*, and her work has appeared in many other outlets including *The New Inquiry*, *Hazlitt*, *Matter*, and *Fusion*. Since May of last year, she's hosted *Bad Advice From Bad Women*, a popular monthly reading series based in New York City.

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JESSICA ANYA BLAU's latest novel, *The Trouble with Lexie*, is out now! Jessica is also the author of *The Wonder Bread Summer*; *Drinking Closer to Home*; and the national bestseller, *The Summer of Naked Swim Parties*. Jessica's books have been featured on CNN, NPR, The Today Show and in *Vanity Fair*, *Oprah.com*, *Cosmo*, *Bust* and other national media. Jessica's books have been optioned for film and television and she co-wrote the film *Love on the Run* starring Francis Fisher and Steve Howey. Jessica also works as a ghostwriter; her latest was a memoir recently featured in *People Magazine*. Jessica grew up in Southern California and currently divides her time between Baltimore and New York.

SESSION: **EDITING 101: TIPS & TRICKS TO EDIT YOUR WORK**
TIME OF SESSION: 11:00 - 11:45AM
HOST: **Chris Stewart**
LOCATION: BC 219

It is a truth universally acknowledged that a writer in possession of a manuscript must be in want of an editor. Why? Because a writer is too intimately involved with their work to see the gaps and goofs, the structural, character, and plot issues. Writers sometimes write a different book than they intended. A good editor keeps the writer's voice and vision in mind and helps the book reach its highest potential. In this session, established local manuscript editors **Christine Stewart, Rachel Hicks, Jen Grow, and Jonathan Adams** will demystify the various types of editing--copy editing, line editing, developmental editing, critique--and offer tips and tricks to help you improve your craft and catch some of your own mistakes before you hire a professional. There will be handouts!

JONATHAN ADAMS has been a writer and editor for more than 25 years. He has written three works of nonfiction and a novel, and has edited dozens of books, articles, reports, websites, and blogs. Jonathan has graduate degrees in science journalism and conservation biology.
www.pangolinwords.com
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JEN GROW's debut collection, *My Life as a Mermaid*, was the winner of the 2012 Dzanc Books Short Story Collection Competition. She also received the 2016 Mary Sawyers Baker Prize for her work. Her fiction and nonfiction have appeared in *The Writer's Chronicle*, *Other Voices*, *The Sun Magazine*, *The GSU Review*, *Hunger Mountain*, *Indiana Review*, and many others including the anthologies *City Sages: Baltimore* and *Amid the Roar: An Anthology of Towson University Authors*. She's received a Rubys Award for the project "*My Father's House*" (to be exhibited by Stevenson University in 2017); two Individual Artist Awards from the Maryland State Arts Council; and her stories have earned nominations for Best New American Voices and a Pushcart Prize. She lives in Baltimore and can be reached at www.jengrow.com.
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RACHEL HICKS is a freelance copyeditor whose clients include companies, non-profit organizations, and individuals. She copyedits and proofreads online content, print advertisements, training materials and manuals, video scripts, reports, and more. She is also a writer whose poems have appeared in *Pen In Hand*, *Welter*, *St. Katherine Review*, *Off the Coast*, *Gulf Stream Magazine*, and other journals. A former high school English and homeschool teacher, she volunteered with an international relief and development organization in China.
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CHRIS STEWART is editor-in-chief of Del Sol Press (@DelSolPressBks). Chris is the recipient of a Ruth Lilly Fellowship and a Pushcart Prize nominee. Some of her publications include *Poetry*, *Ploughshares*, *Five Points*, *Blackbird*, *The Cortland Review*, and *Smartish Pace*. She has recently joined the faculty at the Algonkian Writer Retreat and Novel Workshop in Virginia.

Chris tweets @EditorStewart and provides manuscript editing and critiques. Find tips, tools, information, and inspiration on her website: www.therealwriter.com. Facebook at www.facebook.com/ChrisStewartTheRealWriter.

SESSION: **DANGEROUS PLACES: How Setting Becomes a Character in Fiction**
 TIME OF SESSION: 11:00 - 11:45AM
 HOST: **Marion Winik**
 LOCATION: BC 221

Three very different books from three highly accomplished novelists. Danger reigns in an invented town in Maryland, a fictionalized, magical realist Jim Crow South, and an underwater experience that is at once gripping and confining. Lead by **Marion Winik**, a reading and discussion of how three novelists confirm setting to be as much a character as the people that define their stories. **Rion Amlicar Scott's** *Insurrections*, a debut short story collection about African-American residents in the fictional town of Cross River, won the 2017 PEN / Robert W. Bingham Prize. **Elise Levine's** *Blue Field* plunges us into a fantastical world of cave diving. **Suzanne Feldman's** *Absalom's Daughters*, her debut coming of age tale of teen-aged half sisters, one self-educated and black and one illiterate and white, who hitch their dreams to an expected inheritance and embark on a 1950's road trip in an old junk car through the deep south.

RION AMILCAR SCOTT's work has been published in journals such as *The Kenyon Review*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *PANK*, *The Rumpus*, *Fiction International*, *The Washington City Paper*, *The Toast*, *Akashic Books*, *Melville House* and *Confrontation*, among others. A story of his earned a place on the Wigleaf Top 50 (very short) Fictions of 2016 and 2013 lists, and one of his essays was listed as a notable in Best American Essays 2015. He was raised in Silver Spring, Maryland and earned an MFA from George Mason University where he won both the Mary Roberts Rinehart award and a Completion Fellowship. He is a Kimbilio fellow. His short story collection, *Insurrections* was chosen for *The Rumpus's* Book Club and won the PEN/Robert W. Bingham Prize. *Wolf Tickets* is forthcoming from Tiny Hardcore Press. Scott is a Lecturer at Bowie State University and Johns Hopkins University.

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SUZANNE FELDMAN is the recipient of The Missouri Review's Jeffrey E. Smith Editors' Prize and a finalist for the Bakeless Prize in fiction. She holds an MA in fiction from Johns Hopkins University and a BFA in art from the Maryland Institute College of Art. She is the author of award-winning science fiction titles such as *Speaking Dreams* and *The Annunciate*, published under the pen name, Severna Park. Her short fiction has appeared in *Narrative*, *The Missouri Review*, *Gargoyle*, and other literary journals. *Absalom's Daughters* was published in 2016. She lives in Frederick, Maryland.

<http://us.macmillan.com/absalomsdaughters/suzannefeldman/9781627794534>

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ELISE LEVINE is the author of the story collection *Driving Men Mad* and the novels *Requests* and *Dedications* and *Blue Field*. Her work has also appeared in publications such as *Ploughshares*, *Blackbird*, *PANK*, and *Best Canadian Stories*. She lives in Baltimore, MD, and directs the MA in Writing program at Johns Hopkins University.
 Director, MA in Writing program, Johns Hopkins University

MARION WINIK is a longtime All Things Considered commentator and the author of *First Comes Love*, *The Glen Rock Book of the Dead*, *Highs in the Low Fifties* and many other books. She is a professor in the University of Baltimore MFA program in Creative Writing and Publishing Arts, writes a monthly column at BaltimoreFishbowl.com, and reviews books for *People*, *Newsday*, *Kirkus Review* and her WYPR radio program, “The Weekly Reader.”
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SESSION: **Legends and Lore- Building a Paranormal/
Urban Fantasy World**
TIME OF SESSION: 11:00 - 11:45AM
HOST: **Rachel Rawlings**
LOCATION: BC 143

Legends and Lore- history is rich with opportunity, the author's playground becomes a reader's delight. A rich and diverse panel discussion with authors **Rachel Rawlings, R. A. Boyd, Rebecca Rivard, and Elizabeth Kirke** on using myth, magic, and other supernatural elements into world building. Because sometimes facts really are stranger than fiction. Avid readers of Paranormal/Urban Fantasy, Horror and Steampunk are invited to join members and Rawlings, the founder of **HallowRead** - an interactive book festival and mini-convention, held when the spirit moves them, for both authors and fans of those genres; raising money for literacy and the literary arts.

R. A. BOYD is a writer, and reader, of paranormal romance, horror and urban fantasy. She lives in Maryland with her husband, daughter and her massive collection of books. Seriously. Her books have their own room. She loves all things paranormal but dabbles in romantic comedies and hockey fights. When she's not writing at three in the morning she's binge-watching Netflix or plotting random scenes from her novels in the voice of her characters. It makes her daughter giggle but worries her husband.

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REBECCA RIVARD read way too many romances as a teenager. Little did she was preparing for a career. After a detour through various genres, she has returned to her first love and now spends her days with dark shifters, sexy fae and alpha vampires—which has to be the best job ever. *Seducing The Sun Fae* (#1, the Fada Shapeshifters series) was a 2016 EPIC Awards Finalist for Best Fantasy/Paranormal Romance, and her novella *Ensnared: A Vampire Blood Courtesans Romance* was a Night Owl Reviews 5-Star Top Pick. Affiliations: Fantasy, Futuristic & Paranormal Romance Writers; Maryland Romance Writers, Romance Writers of America
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Twitter: <https://twitter.com/@rivardromance>

ELIZABETH KIRKE wanted to be an author before she even knew what an author was. She used to say that she wanted to be an artist, but that was only because she was too young to write and had to tell stories with pictures instead. She hasn't stopped writing since she learned how. It wasn't long before she dreamed of becoming an author and couldn't be happier now that that dream is a reality. If she isn't writing...well, let's be honest; if she isn't writing she's probably on Facebook thinking that she should start writing. But, if she isn't writing or on Facebook, she's probably doing something involving books, baking, gardening, or yarn. In an ideal world, she'd be reading and knitting while something from the garden is in the oven. Then again, in an ideal world, she'd have a flock of ducks and a couple of goats.

<http://elizabethkirke.com/blog/>

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Twitter: more_than_magic

RACHEL RAWLINGS was born and raised in the Baltimore Metropolitan area. Her family, originally from Rhode Island, spent summers in New England sparking her fascination with Salem, MA. She has been writing fictional stories and poems since middle school, but it wasn't until 2009 that she found the inspiration to create her heroine Maurin Kincaide and complete her first full length novel, *The Morrigna*.

When she isn't writing paranormal romance, psychic romance suspense or about her psychic detective, Rachel can often be found with her nose buried in a good book. An avid reader of Paranormal/Urban Fantasy, Horror and Steampunk herself, Rachel founded Hallowread- an interactive convention for both authors and fans of those genres; raising money for literacy and the literary arts. She still lives in Maryland with her husband and three children.

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www.hallowread.com

www.facebook.com/Hallowread

<http://www.hallowread.blogspot.com/>

SESSION: **AIN'T I A WOMAN, TOO?**
TIME OF SESSION: 11:00 - 11:45AM
HOST: **Ava Pipitone**
LOCATION: BC 205

Join authors **Dane Edidi**, **Jamie Grace Alexander**, and clinical psychologist **Christa Lewis** hosted by **Ava Pipitone**, Executive Director of the Baltimore Transgender Alliance, and worker/owner of Red Emma's Bookstore and Coffeehouse, in a panel discussion on transgender women's literature, mental health counseling, and their distinct, but interrelated roles in countering institutional and ideological bias against trans women. Edidi, author of *Yemaya's Daughters*, is the director of global initiatives for Trans Women of Color Collective, and a 2016 Helen Hayes Award Nominee for her choreography in *Dontrell Who Kissed the Sea*. She is an African, Cuban, Indigenous trans cabaret performer, author and advocate. Alexander is a transfeminine poet and activist, and Lewis teaches psychology at Towson University.

JAMIE GRACE ALEXANDER is a black transfeminine poet and activist currently working towards her BA in gender and women's studies. She's a firm believer in trans people's right to exist as citizens of this world and hopes to reflect that in her writing, through social media and in protest.

DANE FIGUEROA EDIDI is an African, Cuban, Indigenous trans choreographer, cabaret performer, author, and advocate. The director of global initiatives for Trans Women of Color Collective, she is a 2016 Helen Hayes Award Nominee for her choreography in *Dontrell Who Kissed the Sea*. She has performed at Round House Theater, the Kennedy Center, Theater for the New City, Arena Stage, and La Mama. Honored with the Pioneer Award for her work in the DC Trans community, she was the first trans woman of color in Washington DC to publish a novel, *Yemaya's Daughters*, whose protagonist was a trans woman, as well as the first trans playwright in Theater Alliance's Hot House New Play Reading Series. She is the Founder, Producer and Curator of La Ti Do's annual Celebration of Trans Artist and Capturing Fire's Alchemy. As well as the Cofounder of The Local Voices Bookstore Initiative which was created to combat the erasure of TGNC Creatives of Color from Artistic Spaces by centering and celebrating their work within Theatrical spaces.

Twitter: @TheLadyDane

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CHRISTA LEWIS works as a mental health therapist and research coordinator at a substance use facility in Baltimore. She helps to create and implement trans-affirming policy for substance use treatment facilities around Maryland. She also teaches psychology part time as an adjunct professor at Towson University. Christa has published work in the fields of problematic substance use, psychopharmacology and mindfulness. Her research has been presented both nationally and internationally. She holds a Masters in Clinical Psychology from Towson University. She will be completing her PhD in Clinical Psychology at UMBC where she is studying the intersections between pain processing, discrimination and trauma.

AVA PIPITONE is the Executive Director of the Baltimore Transgender Alliance (BTA) as well as a worker-owner at Red Emma's Bookstore and Coffeehouse. She brings experiences in building horizontal systems demonstrated through Red Emma's and applies them to the BTA to

intervene in the structures of marginalization from the inside out. Functioning as a collective of transgender parents, business owners, artists, and activists, the BTA lifts the voices of Baltimore's transgender and gender nonconforming communities and continually centers the conversation on those most marginalized; black transwomen. The BTA is the only peer run transgender advocacy organization in Baltimore.

WYPR'S TOM HALL IN CONVERSATION WITH NOVELIST / ESSAYIST CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE

Free, but registration required.

12:30 pm – 1:45pm at the John and Frances Angelos Law Center at 1401 N. Charles Street
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm Adichie book signing at the Business Center 11 W. Mt. Royal Avenue.

Tom Hall opens a conversation with celebrated author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in the Moot Courtroom, with a live-stream taping in the overflow room in the Business Center in the auditorium.



Nigerian writer **CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE** is the leading African writer of her generation. She grew up on the campus of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and left Nigeria for the U.S. at the age of 19. Among her many accolades, Ms. Adichie has been awarded a Hodder fellowship at Princeton University (2005-2006), and a fellowship at the Radcliffe Institute of Harvard University (2011-2012). In 2008, Ms. Adichie earned a coveted MacArthur Genius Award.

Ms. Adichie's work is read around the world, and has been translated into over thirty languages. Her first novel *Purple Hibiscus* won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, and her second novel, *Half of a Yellow Sun*, won the Orange Prize (now the Bailey's Women's Prize), which is the world's top prize for female writers. Her 2013 novel *Americanah* has received numerous accolades, including the US National Book Critics Circle Award. It was named one of *The New York Times* Top Ten Best Books of the Year. Ms. Adichie has been invited to speak around the world. Most notably her 2009 TED Talk, *The Danger of A Single Story*, is now one of the top ten most-viewed TED Talks of all time, with over five millions views. Her 2012 TED talk, *We Should All Be Feminists*, has started a worldwide conversation about feminism, especially after it inspired a song by Beyoncé. It was published as a book in 2014. Her most recent book is *Dear Ijeawele, or a Feminist Manifesto in Fifteen*.

Ms. Adichie leads an Annual Writers Workshop in Nigeria to support aspiring young writers. Her work *Purple Hibiscus* was recently chosen as the Maryland Humanities 2017 One Maryland One Book selection.

After 10 years as the Culture Editor and then host of Maryland Morning, **TOM HALL** became the host of Midday in September 2016. In his 35th year and final season as the Music Director of the Baltimore Choral Arts Society, he is a well-known performer, teacher, lecturer, and writer. He is frequently invited to speak to professional and community organizations, including the Oregon Bach Festival, the American Choral Directors Association, Chorus America, the College Endowment Association, the Baltimore Broadcaster's Coalition, The Johns Hopkins Brain Science Institute, and the Johns Hopkins Community Conversations Series. He has moderated panels and given presentations at the Baltimore CityLit Festival, the Baltimore Book Festival, the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Walters Art Museum, the University of Maryland, and MICA. He has also moderated Mayoral Debate panel at Light City in Baltimore, and at the Stevenson University Speakers Series.

SESSION: **MASTER CLASS: Writing Our Story:
Diverse Narratives Across America**
TIME OF SESSION: 2:00 - 3:30PM
HOST: **Gregg Wilhelm**
LOCATION: BC Auditorium ***\$10 Registration Fee Required***

This workshop will look at the way novelists, poets, essayists, and journalists tell stories that go against the common grain. We will look at how landscape, in particular cities, shape a community. We'll examine the role we as writers can play in expanding how our communities are defined. Handouts will be available.

DINAW MENGESTU came to the U.S. with his family from Ethiopia at the age of two. Since earning his MFA at Columbia University in 2005, he has published three novels, *How to Read Air* (2010), *The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears* (2007) and *All Our Names*, (2014), all of them *New York Times* Notable Books. A 2012 MacArthur Foundation Fellow, Mengestu also earned a 2007 National Book Foundation "5 Under 35" Award and was included on *The New Yorker's* "20 under 40" list in 2010. He is the recipient of a Lannan Fiction Fellowship, *The Guardian* First Book Award, the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize, among numerous other awards. Also, a freelance journalist who has reported from sub-Saharan Africa about life in Darfur, northern Uganda, and eastern Congo. Mengestu has had his work published in *Harper's*, *Granta*, *Rolling Stone*, *The New Yorker*, and *The New York Times*.

GREGG WILHELM is **Founder Emeritus and Publisher of CityLit Project**. His publishing career included roles as an acquisitions assistant, editor, marketer, production manager, and designer. Some of the presses he has worked for include Johns Hopkins University Press, Tidewater Publishers, Loyola University's Apprentice House, and Woodholme House Publishers, which he co-founded in 1996. He has published more than 150 books in diverse genres, such as memoir, fiction, drama, photography, and history. In 2004, he founded the nonprofit literary arts organization CityLit Project and in 2010 launched the organization's CityLit Press imprint. In 2014, Gregg graduated with an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Tampa. Since then, he has attended the Sewanee Writers' Conference, DISQUIET: International Literary Seminars in Lisbon, and the first-ever US publishers' delegation to Cuba, organized by *Publishers Weekly*. He recently won a Rubys Artist Project Grant (GBCA) and an Individual Artist Award (MSAC) for his fiction. As part of a planned succession process, Gregg became CityLit's founder emeritus in July 2016.

SESSION: **THE BROWNS: A FAMILY OF SCRIBES**
TIME OF SESSION: 2:00 - 3:30PM
HOST: **Jen Michalski**
LOCATION: BC 205

CityLit Festival is honored to feature the Brown Family of Scribes, Sweet Briar College's director and *A Thousand Miles From Nowhere* novelist **John Gregory** and **Carrie Brown**, author of the most recent novel *The Stargazer's Sister*, and their poet daughter **Molly McCully Brown**, whose poetry collection *The Virginia State Colony for Epileptics and Feeble-minded*, debuted to critical acclaim. Author **Jen Michalski** engages this family of highly accomplished authors in a discussion about books, family, an intimate view of what the writing life looks like in one household, and the personal trials and tribulations of supporting the writing life.

JOHN GREGORY BROWN, born and raised in New Orleans, is the author of the novels *Decorations in a Ruined Cemetery*; *The Wrecked, Blessed Body of Shelton Lafleur*; *Audubon's Watch*; and *A Thousand Miles from Nowhere*. His honors include a Lyndhurst Prize, the Lillian Smith Award, the John Steinbeck Award, a Howard Foundation fellowship, and the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities Book of the Year Award. He is the Julia Jackson Nichols Professor of English at Sweet Briar College in Virginia, where he lives with his wife, the novelist Carrie Brown.

<http://jgb.blog.sbc.edu>

<https://about.me/johngregorybrown>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/jgregorybrown>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/johngregorybrown1>

CARRIE BROWN is the author of seven novels – *Rose's Garden*, *Lamb in Love*, *The Hatbox Baby*, *Confinement*, *The Rope Walk*, *The Last First Day*, and *The Stargazer's Sister* – as well as a collection of short stories, *The House on Belle Isle*. Her short stories and essays have appeared in a wide variety of literary journals, including the *Southern Review*, *Glimmer Train*, *Tin House*, the *Oxford American* and the *Georgia Review*.

Born in Connecticut in 1959, and a graduate of Brown University and the University of Virginia, Brown has been the recipient of numerous awards and fellowships, including a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship, the Barnes & Noble Discover Award for her first novel, *Rose's Garden*, the Janet Heidinger Kafka Prize for work by an American woman writer, the Great Lakes Book Award, and, twice, the Library of Virginia Award for the best work of fiction by a Virginia author. Her books have been chosen as community reads books in Iowa and Virginia, and her work has been translated into several languages. She has read and lectured at colleges, universities, and bookstores across the country.

She has taught creative writing for many years, including at Hollins University, where she was the Distinguished Visiting Professor of Creative Writing, the University of North Carolina-Greensboro, Deerfield Academy in Massachusetts, where she was the Wilson

Fellow, and, for most of her teaching career, at Sweet Briar College, where she and her husband, the novelist John Gregory Brown, make their home and where she is now the Margaret Banister Writer-in-Residence.

<http://authorcarriebrown.com/>

MOLLY McCULLY BROWN is the author of *The Virginia State Colony For Epileptics and Feeble-minded*, which won the 2016 Lexi Rudnitsky First Book Prize in Poetry and called “harrowing poems from a dark corner of American history”. Haunted by the voices of those committed to the notorious Virginia State Colony, epicenter of the American eugenics movement in the first half of the twentieth century, this evocative debut marks the emergence of a poet of exceptional poise and compassion, who grew up in the shadow of the Colony itself. Her poems and essays have appeared or are forthcoming in *Gulf Coast*, *The Adroit Journal*, *Image*, *TriQuarterly Online*, *Kenyon Review*, *The Rumpus*, *Meridian* and elsewhere. Raised in rural Virginia, she holds degrees from Bard College at Simon’s Rock and Stanford University. Currently, she is a John and Renée Grisham Fellow at the University of Mississippi. “Brown’s humbling and heartbreaking poems restore dignity to lives sacrificed in the name of perfection,” writes *Publisher’s Weekly* in a boxed, starred review.

<https://mollymccullybrown.com/>

Twitter: @mmccullybrown

JEN MICHALSKI is the author of the novels *The Summer She Was Under Water* and *The Tide King*, the collections *From Here and Close Encounters*, and a couplet of novellas called *Could You Be With Her Now*. She is the managing editor of *jmwand* and host of the monthly fiction reading series, *Starts Here!*

website: jenmichalski.com

Twitter: @MichalskiJen

jenmichalski.com/

SESSION: **GRANTS FOR WRITERS: NEA, MSAC, GBCA**
TIME OF SESSION: 2:00 - 2:45PM
HOST: **Steven Levya**
LOCATION: BC 219

Maryland remains a leader in supporting individual artists. With the National Endowment for the Arts, the Maryland State Arts Council, and the Greater Baltimore Culture Alliance, CityLit introduces three specific funding opportunities in this information-packed session. Hear from representatives **Mohamed Sheriff** from the NEA, **Steven Skerritt-Davis** from MSAC and **Sonja Cendak** from GBCA as they provide detailed information on ways to secure funding for your literary work. This panel is available to answer any question and provide valuable information meant to encourage you to engage, to prepare, and to apply. The NEA funds \$25,000 for different disciplines each year. This year alone MSAC awarded \$36,000 to 16 lucky poets. GBCA awards individual literary artists anywhere from \$1,000 to \$20,000. Next year that poet, writer could be you. Handouts will be available!

NEA: MOHAMED SHERIFF (Mo) manages the creative writing and translation fellowship programs at the National Endowment for the Arts. Prior to working at the NEA, he spent four years in the United States Marine Corps, and served in Korea, Kuwait, Japan, Marshall Islands, and Iraq. He received his MFA and arts management graduate certificate from American University. (Amy Stolls, Director of Literature at the National Endowment for the Arts will be present and available to assist with inquiries.)

<https://www.arts.gov/>

MSAC: STEVEN SKERRITT-DAVIS is the newly appointed Director of the Individual Artist Award, Community Arts Development, and Arts and Entertainment District programs at the Maryland State Art Council. Prior to joining MSAC, he served for three-and-a-half years as Director of Institutional Giving and External Relations at Lumberyard Contemporary Performing Arts (formerly American Dance Institute). During his time with the Rockville, Maryland-based performing arts presenter and residency site, Skerritt-Davis helped elevate the organization to national prominence, securing grants and partnerships to build and expand its core programs, implementing the Future Artists Initiative (a national scholarship program designed to increase diversity in dance education), and securing initial resources and partnerships for a creative placemaking project that will transform a former lumberyard in Catskill, New York into the organization's new home.

<https://www.msac.org/>

GBCA: SONJA CENDAK is the Grants Program Manager for Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance. As an arts manager she has over 15 years experience in program management, exhibition design, and nonprofit administration. In her current role at the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance, she values providing direct support to artists navigating the grant process. She has previously worked at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Los Angeles Craft and Folk Art Museum, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. She has consulted and collaborated on projects for the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition, the Venice Art Walk, and the California Museum of Photography. Sonja holds a B.A. from UCLA and M.A. from the University of California, Riverside.

www.baltimoreculture.org/

SESSION: **WRITING FROM YOUR ROOTS:
The Cultural Connections of Poetry**
TIME OF SESSION: 2:00 - 2:45PM
HOST: **Maritza Rivera**
LOCATION: BC 221

Expect this session to focus on commonalities across cultures. Poets **Abdul Ali**, **celeste doaks**, and **Lalita Noronha** discuss with poet/host **Maritza Rivera** what makes them tick and what influences their writing. Find out what these local poets have to say about “Writing From Your Roots”, and how they bridge race, culture and their traditions with their poetry. Topics include: food, work, family, love, loss, fear and other universally shared experiences. Prepare to hear an intimate conversation about writing difficult subject matters along with personal challenges of managing truths on the written page.

ABDUL ALI is the author of *Trouble Sleeping*, winner of 2014 New Issues Poetry Prize. His poems have appeared or is forthcoming in *Gargoyle*, *Plume*, *The Journal*, *Gathering of Tribes*, *New Contrast* (South Africa), *Poet Lore* and the new anthology, *Resisting Arrest*, among other publications. He is the recipient of two Literature fellowships from the DC Commission of the Arts and Humanities and is a fellow of the Cave Canem Foundation. He currently teaches High School English at a private college preparatory school in Baltimore, MD.

Website: www.abdulali.net

Twitter: @abdulali_

celeste doaks, poet and journalist, is the author of *Cornrows and Cornfields*, Wrecking Ball Press, UK. *Cornrows* was listed as one of the “Ten Best Books of 2015” by *Beltway Quarterly Poetry*. Doaks garnered a 2015 Pushcart Prize nomination. Her most recent poetry project is as editor of *Not Without Our Laughter*, Mason Jar Press (2017). Her poems have appeared in *Asheville Poetry Review*, *Chicago Quarterly Review*, and *Bayou Magazine* among others; Doaks currently teaches creative writing at Morgan State University.

website: www.doaksgirl.com

Twitter: @thedoaksgirl

Instagram: @thedoaksgirl

LALITA NORONHA came to the U.S on a Fulbright travel grant and earned her Ph.D in Microbiology/Biochemistry. She is a research scientist, writer, poet, teacher, editor for *The Baltimore Review*, past president of the Maryland Writers’ Association, and a Board Member of CityLit. Her work has appeared in literary journals and anthologies in India, Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. including *The Baltimore Sun*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *The Cortland Review*, among others. She is the author of a short story collection, *Where Monsoons Cry* (BlackWords Press) which won the Maryland Literary Arts Award, and two poetry books, *Her Skin Phyllo-thin* (Finishing Line Press) and *Mustard Seed: A Collage of Science, Art and Love Poems* (Apprentice House) Other credits include an Individual Artist Award and Pushcart prize nominations in poetry and creative nonfiction. Her work has been featured a few times on WYPR's *The Signal*. Her website/blog is

<http://www.lalitanoronha.com>

MARITZA RIVERA is the creator of a short form of poetry called **Blackjack**, the publisher of Casa Mariposa Press, and hosts the annual Mariposa Poetry Retreat at the Capital Retreat Center in Waynesboro, PA and the annual Mariposa Reunion Reading at the Writer's Center in Bethesda where she is also a workshop leader. She is the author of *About You, A Mother's War, A Baker's Dozen* and *Twenty-One: Blackjack Poems*. The *Blackjack Poetry Playing Cards* is her most recent publication in 2016. Rivera, also known as Mariposa, is a Puerto Rican poet and Army veteran who has lived in Rockville, MD since 1994. Website: mariposapoetry.org

SESSION: **Coming of Age in the Other America**
TIME OF SESSION: 3:00 - 3:45PM
HOST: **Greg Rienzi**
LOCATION: BC 219

Recent research on inequality and poverty has shown that those born into low-income families, especially African Americans, still have difficulty entering the middle class, in part because of the disadvantages they experience living in more dangerous neighborhoods, going to inferior public schools, and persistent racial inequality. In *Coming of Age in the Other America*, Johns Hopkins University editor **Greg Rienzi** introduces authors **Stefanie DeLuca** and **Susan Clampet-Lundquist** who show that despite overwhelming odds, some disadvantaged urban youth do achieve upward mobility. Drawing from ten years of fieldwork and in-depth interviews with 150 young adults, parents and children who resided in Baltimore public housing, they highlight the remarkable resiliency of some of the youth who hailed from the nation's poorest neighborhoods and show how the right public policies might help break the cycle of disadvantage. *Coming of Age in the Other America* challenges long-held myths about inner-city youth and shows how the process of "social reproduction"—where children end up stuck in the same place as their parents—is far from inevitable.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/04/kids-poverty-baltimore/476808/>

Stefanie DeLuca is an Associate Professor of Sociology at the Johns Hopkins University. Her research uses sociological perspectives to inform education and housing policy. She has conducted mixed-methods studies that incorporate qualitative research into experimental or quasi-experimental designs. Some of her work focuses on the long-term effects of programs to help public housing residents relocate to safer neighborhoods and better schools through housing vouchers. *Coming of Age in the Other America* (with Susan Clampet-Lundquist and Kathryn Edin), was named an Outstanding Academic Title from the American Library Association. Stefanie was awarded a William T. Grant Foundation Scholars Award to study residential mobility, neighborhoods and family life among very poor families in the South. Her work has also been funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the National Science Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Spencer Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, the Abell Foundation, among others. She contributes regularly to national and local media, including the *Baltimore Sun*, *Washington Post*, *Education Week*, *The Atlantic*, *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *Governing* and National Public Radio.

<http://www.russellsage.org/coming-age-other-america>

Twitter: Stefanie_DeLuca

Susan Clampet-Lundquist is an associate professor of sociology at Saint Joseph's University. Her research focuses on urban neighborhoods, families, adolescent risk behavior, and social policy. Much of her social policy work has focused on the effects of housing mobility initiatives for low-income families in Philadelphia and Baltimore. *Coming of Age in the Other America*, her new book written with Stefanie DeLuca and Kathryn Edin, examines urban inequality through the experiences of young adults in Baltimore.

Greg Rienzi currently serves as senior writer and editor in the Office of Communications at Johns Hopkins University. His primary role is associate editor of the *Johns Hopkins Health*

Review, an award-winning consumer health magazine launched in 2014. His stories have appeared in the *Connecticut Post*, *Howard County Times*, *Bossmagazine*, *Urbanite* magazine, *Johns Hopkins Magazine* and several other print and online publications. Rienzi has instructed journalism courses at Towson University since 2003. In addition to Journalism and New Media 1, he has taught Newswriting, News Reporting, and Writing for the Media. An avid runner, Rienzi is currently training for his sixth marathon. Go Philadelphia!

SESSION: **Borderlands & Crossroads: Writing the Motherland**
TIME OF SESSION: 3:00 - 3:45PM
HOST: **Jane Satterfield**
LOCATION: BC 221

British-American poet **Jane Satterfield** and Canadian author **Laurie Kruk** co-edited a unique anthology called *Borderlands & Crossroads: Writing the Motherland*. During this session, they'll join contributors reading and discussing this ever-important collection, which explores the journeys and maternal landscapes in relation to country and transitions touching on heritage, genealogy, emigration, war, exile and alienation. It relies on collective histories as much as intimate narratives, and features forty-three accomplished writers who, through poetry and prose, reflect on their complex familial identities and relationships, "the threads that connect humanity". *Baltimore Style Magazine's* editor in chief, **Betsy Boyd**, *Moses Unchained* author **Marilyn Moriarty**, and poet and blogger **Leslie Wheeler** will add to what promises to be a lively discussion on motherhood, how it crosses borders and defines crossroads, more than just originating in a body, Mothers are, "the countries we come from," as novelist Rachel Cusk has so aptly observed.

BETSY BOYD is a fiction writer, journalist and copywriter. She serves as editor-in-chief of *Baltimore STYLE Magazine* and is a faculty member in the Creative Writing and Publishing Arts MFA program at the University of Baltimore. Betsy spent more than a decade as a contributor to *Daily Variety*; she also served as senior editor of Baltimore's *PaperDoll Magazine* and of the news and entertainment site *Baltimore Fishbowl*, both published by Susan Dunn. She is the recipient of a Maryland State Arts Council award, an Elliot Coleman Writing Fellowship, a James A. Michener Fellowship and residencies through Fundación Valparaíso, the Alfred and Trafford Klots International Program for Artists and the Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts. Betsy's fiction has been published most recently in *Sententia*, *Shenandoah*, *Eclectica* and *Loch Raven Review*. Her short story "Scarecrow" received a Pushcart Prize.

LAURIE KRUK teaches at Nipissing University. She has published *The Voice is the Story: Conversations with Canadian Writers of Short Fiction* (Mosaic, 2003) and *Double-Voicing the Canadian Short Story* (Ottawa UP, 2016). She is also the author of three poetry collections: *Theories of the World* (1992), *Loving the Alien* (2006) and *My Mother Did Not Tell Stories* (2012).

MARILYN MORIARTY is the author of *Moses Unchained*, which won the A.W.P. Creative Nonfiction Award and was reissued as a paperback in 2012, and *Writing Science through Critical Thinking*, a textbook. Her creative nonfiction has been published in *The Antioch Review*, *Creative Nonfiction*, *The Kenyon Review* and in other literary journals and magazines. "Swerves" won the 2014 William Faulkner-William Wisdom Gold Medal for the essay. Another essay was named a 2016 "Notable" by the editors of *The Best American Essays* series. She is professor of English and Creative Writing at Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia.

LESLEY WHEELER's poetry collections include *Radioland*; *Heterotopia*, winner of the Barrow Street Press Poetry Prize; and *Heathen*, from C&R Press. Recent poems and essays appear in *Crab Orchard Review*, *Ecotone*, and *Poetry*, and she blogs at

<https://lesleywheeler.org/>. Wheeler is the Henry S. Fox Professor of English at Washington and Lee University and lives in Lexington, Virginia.

JANE SATTERFIELD is the author of four poetry collections—*Her Familiars*, *Assignment at Vanishing Point*, *Shepherdess with an Automatic*, and *Apocalypse Mix*, winner of the 2016 Autumn House Prize, as well as *Daughters of Empire: A Memoir of a Year in Britain and Beyond*. With Laurie Kruk, she is co-editor of *Borderlands and Crossroads: Writing the Motherland* (Demeter Press, 2016). Born in England, she lives in Baltimore and teaches at Loyola University Maryland.

SESSION: **Writing Identity: Arab American Women's Literary Voices**
TIME OF SESSION: 3:00 - 3:45PM
HOST: **Susan Muaddi Darraj**
LOCATION: BC 143

In the current political climate, many Arab Americans feel that their identities and cultures are under attack more than ever. Indeed, there are many misrepresentations of the Arab American community, and especially of women, being circulated and perpetuated. How does literature play a role in confronting anti-Arab sentiment? Can it? Should it? What impact does the political climate have on women's writing? How do intersectionality and identity inform the writing process and figure into completed work? In this panel, three Arab American women, **Mejdulene Shomali**, **Eman Quotah**, and 2016 American Book Award winner **Susan Muaddi Darraj**, will discuss their work and their writing process. Radius of Arab American Writers (RAWI) <https://arabamericanwriters.org/about/>

SUSAN MUADDI DARRAJ is the author of *The Inheritance of Exile*, which was named ForeWord Magazine's Book of the Year (Short Fiction). She is a fiction editor for Barrelhouse Magazine and co-founder of the annual Conversations & Connections Conference: Practical Advice on Getting Published. Her new book, *A Curious Land: Stories from Home*, was named winner of the AWP Grace Paley Award for Short Fiction and shortlisted for the Palestine Book Award. It also earned her a 2016 American Book Award. She is a two-time recipient of an Individual Artist Award from the Maryland State Arts Council.

Twitter: @SusanDarraj
www.SusanMuaddiDarraj

EMAN QUOTAH was born in Jidda, Saudi Arabia, and raised there and in Cleveland, Ohio. Her fiction has appeared in *Pindeldyboz*, *Gargoyle*, *Amazing Graces: Yet Another Collection of Fiction* by Washington Area Women (Paycock Press), and *Ms. Aligned: Women Writing About Men* (Aligned Press). Her nonfiction has appeared in the *Washington Post*, the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, the *Toast*, *Hello Giggles*, and other publications. She has been the John McClelland Historical Writing Resident at the Espy Foundation and received grants from the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County and the Maryland State Arts Council. She received an M.A. in fiction writing from the Johns Hopkins University Advanced Academic Programs. She lives in Rockville, Maryland, with her husband and two children, and works at Subject Matter, a Washington, D.C., communications firm.

MEJDULENE B. SHOMALI is a teacher, writer, and researcher at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *The Feminist Wire*, *Mizna*, *Baltimore City Paper*, *Tinderbox*, and a number of academic journals. Instagram: @mejdu

ENOCH PRATT POETRY WINNER ANNOUNCED:

STEPHEN ZERANCE’S “True Crime”

Enoch Pratt announces this year’s winner of the annual poetry competition, the 2017 Enoch Pratt / *Poet Lore* Poetry Contest, judged by *Poet Lore*. **Stephen Zerance** is the author of the chapbook *Caligula’s Playhouse* (Mason Jar Press, 2016). His poems have appeared in *West Branch*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Quarterly West*, *Assaracus*, and *Knockout*, among others. He has also been featured on the websites of Lambda Literary and Split This Rock. He received his MFA from American University, where he received the Myra Sklarew award. His first debut will be appearing from Indolent Books in 2018. Stephen lives in Baltimore, MD.

Honorable mentions:

James Carroll for “Morning Glory”

Dewey Fox for “Virga (Rapid City)”

Robert Schreur for “Leaving Baltimore”.

Enoch Pratt Library page announcement is live here:

<http://www.prattlibrary.org/poetrycontest/>

Social Media Info for Stephen:

<https://www.instagram.com/zerance/>

<https://twitter.com/stephnz>

<https://www.facebook.com/StephenZerance>

Social Media Info for Poet Lore:

<https://twitter.com/PoetLoreMag>

<https://www.facebook.com/PoetLore/>