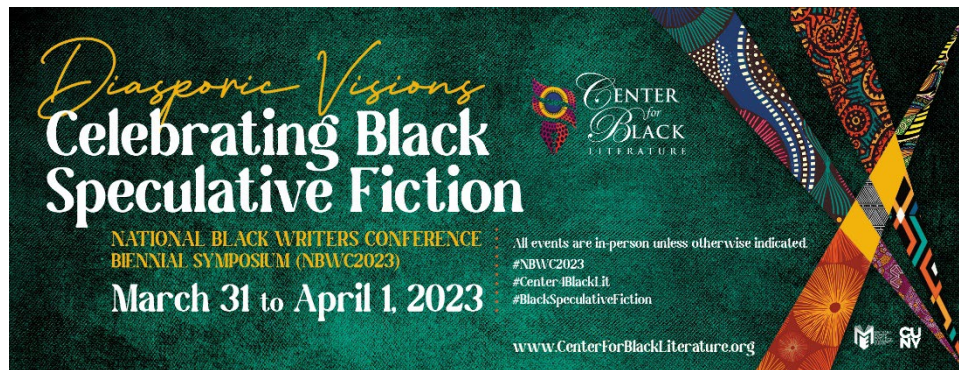




## MASTER PRESS RELEASE

For Planning Purposes and Immediate Release: March 8, 2023

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## The National Black Writers Conference Biennial Symposium Returns To Medgar Evers College In Brooklyn To Celebrate Black Speculative Fiction: March 31 – April 1, 2023 (IN-PERSON)

Brooklyn, NY --- The Center for Black Literature at Medgar Evers College of the City University of New York (CBL) announces that its National Black Writers Conference will return to the campus of Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn from Friday, March 31 to Saturday, April 1, 2023. The theme for this biennial symposium is *Diasporic Visions: Celebrating Black Speculative Fiction*. The public gathering will feature interactive events where writers and readers will discuss the genre at length, focus on emerging scholarship, and network with fellow enthusiasts from across the country. Also, the award-winning authors **Sheree Renée Thomas** and **Jewell Parker Rhodes** will receive the *Octavia E. Butler Award*, named after one of the most esteemed writers of the Black Speculative fiction genre. Other event highlights include special programming for primary, middle school, and high school students (both are pre-symposium events); scholarly presentations (a virtual event); online and on-location Black booksellers; and much more.

The National Black Writers Conference Biennial Symposium (NBWC2023) is open to the public and registration is required via Eventbrite.com. For more information, visit [www.CenterForBlackLiterature.org](http://www.CenterForBlackLiterature.org). Registration and general inquiries are directed to [nbwc@centerforblackliterature.org](mailto:nbwc@centerforblackliterature.org). Media inquiries are directed to Lea Byrd at [byrd@centerforblackliterature.org](mailto:byrd@centerforblackliterature.org) or (718) 756-8501 (office) and (917) 319-5449 (mobile).

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## SELECT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: APRIL 1, 2023



### ***Diasporic Visions: The Evolution of Black Speculative Fiction from Print to Film***

**11:00 am to 12:30 pm ET**

Confirmed Speakers: **Jewelle Gomez, Reynaldo Anderson** (pictured), and **Rasheedah Phillips**

Moderator: **L. Penelope**

*Speakers will discuss Black speculative fiction as an umbrella term for speculative texts with an emphasis on the people and culture of the African Diaspora. The discussion will explore how the genre includes science fiction, fantasy, magical realism, and Afrofuturism. The focus will be on the genre's origins, trends, and its emergence in print and films.*



### ***Black Speculative Fiction's Impact on Popular Culture***

**1:00 pm to 2:30 pm ET**

Confirmed Speakers: **Tim Fielders, Christine Taylor-Butler, Ytasha Womack** (pictured), and **Jesse J. Holland**

Moderator: **Jarvis Sheffield**

Sponsored by the **Black Science Fiction Society**

*Speakers will discuss the explosion of Black Speculative Fiction in popular culture, film, music, comic books, politics, video games, and literature. They will explore the reasons for this explosion, examine the impact of the internet and social media on Black Speculative Fiction, and reflect on how their writing represents the intersection of popular culture and speculative fiction.*



### ***The Presence of Africa in Black Speculative Fiction***

**3:00 to 4:30 pm ET**

Confirmed Speakers: **Wayétu Moore** (pictured), **Tananarive Due**, and **Anita Kopacz**

Moderator: **Deirdre Hollman**

*Speakers will discuss how Black speculative fiction centered on Africa features African protagonists and imagines new technologies. Also, they will explore how the genre blends spirituality and superpowers, envisions new worlds, and moves across geographical boundaries. Additionally, they will explore the themes in African-centered speculation fiction from the perspective of their own writing.*



## NBWC2023 HONOREES' SPOTLIGHT

*a conversation with*  
**Sheree Renée Thomas**  
and  
**Jewell Parker Rhodes**

5:00 pm to 6:00 pm ET

Moderator: Reynaldo Anderson

*Honorees Sheree Renée Thomas (left) and Jewel Parker Rhodes (right) will discuss their journey in writing and publishing Black Speculative Fiction, the overarching themes and emerging trends in Black Speculative Fiction, and the racial, historical, social, political, and Afrofuturistic influences and perspectives on their work.*

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### ABOUT THE NATIONAL BLACK WRITERS CONFERENCE

The National Black Writers Conference (NBWC) is a major program for the [Center for Black Literature at Medgar Evers College, CUNY](#). Literary giant **John Oliver Killens** founded the event in 1986 at Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn, New York. It is held during the last weekend of March each year and is attended by writers, readers, and scholars from the United States and the Caribbean, Africa, Europe, and Australia. The Conference has attracted some of today's most celebrated literary figures from all genres and generations. Our esteemed speakers are recipients of the NAACP Image Award and the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award, Nobel Prize winners, Pulitzer Prize winners, MacArthur "Genius" Fellows, New York Times best-sellers; poet laureates; and other distinguished guests.

### NBWC2023 SPONSORS

The 2023 National Black Writers Conference Biennial Symposium is supported by the following sponsors: Amazon Literary Partnership, Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration, Community Council for Medgar Evers College Inc., NYC Council Member Charles Barron, Literary Arts Emergency Relief Fund, National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts Rescue Plan, New York City Council, Brooklyn Delegation, New-York Historical Society, The Center for Fiction, and the Office of the President of Medgar Evers College, CUNY.

## ABOUT THE CENTER FOR BLACK LITERATURE

Founded in 2002, the mission of the **Center for Black Literature at Medgar Evers College of the City University of New York** (CBL) is to expand, broaden, and enrich the public's knowledge and appreciation of Black literature by people of the African Diaspora and the African continent. The Center builds an audience for the reading, discussion, research, study, and critical analysis of Black literature through a variety of programs and partnerships. To achieve its mission, CBL offers literary programs and educational workshops for the public, students of all ages, teachers, writers, and artists. It also publishes the peer-reviewed *Killens Review of Arts & Letters*, and other journals generated from its youth and elders programs.

## HOW TO CONTACT US

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■ **CBL DIGITAL DIRECTORY**

Website: [www.centerforblackliterature.org](http://www.centerforblackliterature.org)

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