



CENTER
for
BLACK
LITERATURE

All That We Carry

Where Do We Go From Here?

17TH NATIONAL BLACK WRITERS CONFERENCE
(NBWC2024)

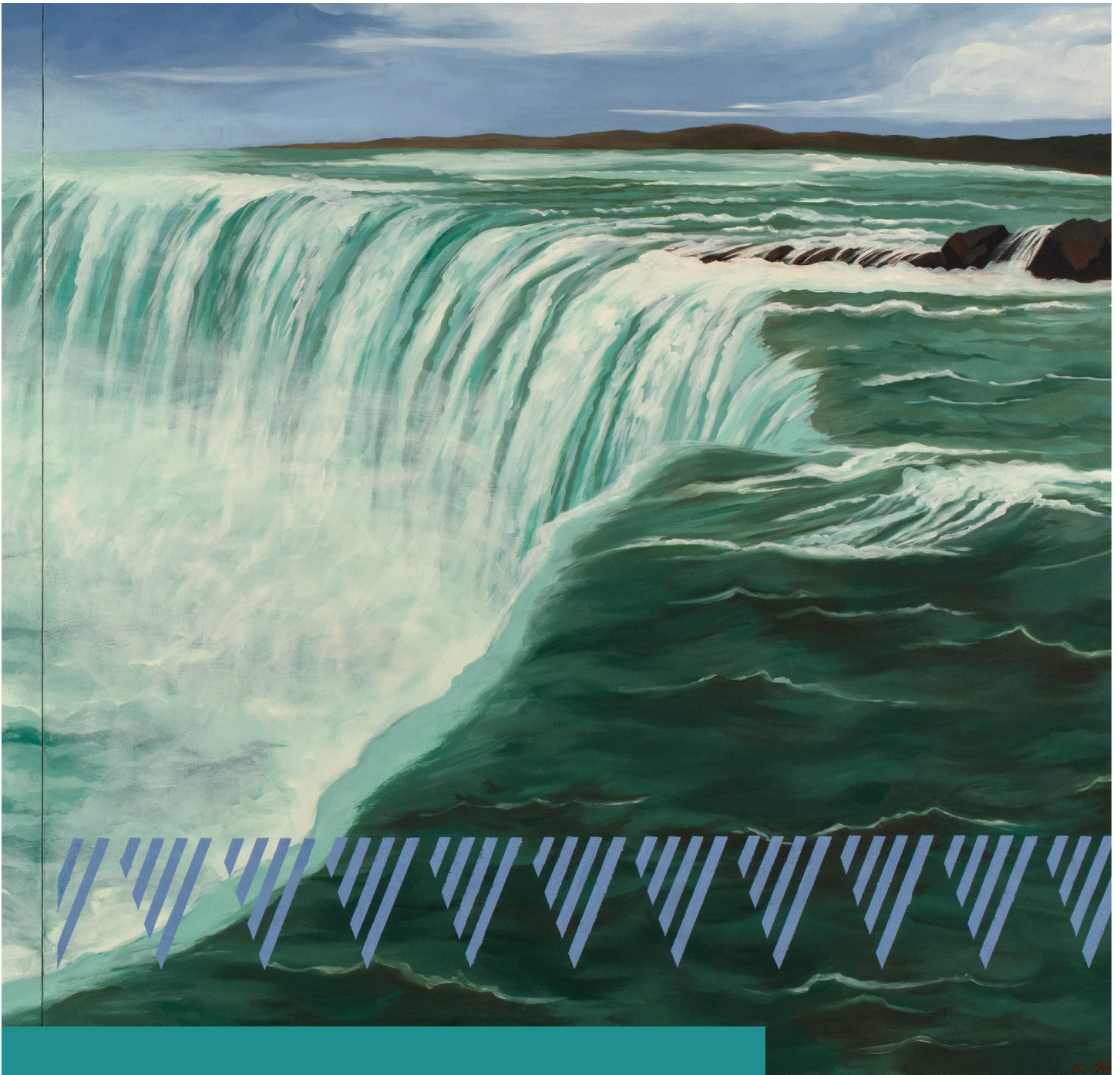
MEDGAR EVERS COLLEGE | BROOKLYN, NY

MARCH 20 - 23, 2024

John Oliver Killens
Founder
National Black Writers Conference
Est. 1986



Brenda M. Greene
Conference Director
National Black Writers Conference
Founder, Center for Black Literature



Kay WalkingStick / Hudson River School

“[R]eminds us that ‘we’re all living on Indian Territory.’”

—THE NEW YORK TIMES

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Dear Conference Attendees:

Welcome to ***The 17th National Black Writers Conference (NBWC): All That We Carry: Where Do We Go From Here?*** This Conference theme is drawn from the book by Tiya Miles, *All That She Carried, The Journey of Ashley's Sack, A Black Family Keepsake* (Penguin Random House, 2021). Miles' book illustrates the value of tradition and history and portrays how we move forward when all around us is in disarray.



Our writers and scholars have always caused us to uncover hidden truths and to critically assess and interrogate the books and information that we are exposed to, whether that be on the internet, in the media, at public forums, or in classrooms. We are in the midst of cultural and racial wars once again. The attempts to ban books, distort the history of the United States, erode reproductive rights, suppress voting rights, ignore environmental racism, criminalize our youth, and attack Black Studies and Ethnic Studies programs are just some of the forces at work to silence those voices that advocate for a democracy where all people and their cultural narratives and legacies are valued, respected, and heard. Our writers offer us a way forward through their literature and scholarship. They offer pathways for healing, surviving, and thriving and for how we can make a difference and effect change.

The writers, scholars, and poets in this Conference, a community gathering of the general public, students, youth, and literary professionals, will engage in conversations that raise awareness and our consciousness of social issues in our society. They will deliberate on trends in the literature produced by Black writers throughout the African diaspora, explore the value of history and legacy in literature, examine the impact of environmental and systemic racism, assess the impact of social media and the internet, investigate the world of publishing, reflect on the need for peace and emotional healing, and present readings and talkshops in fiction, poetry, memoir, and publishing.

It takes a village to produce a conference. I thank our writers, scholars, and poets who came when they received the "Call," our Center for Black Literature team, our National Black Writers Steering Committee, our sponsors and funders, our elected officials, our partners and supporters, and our volunteers. I also thank our MEC President and her leadership team, and our students, faculty, and staff who have helped us to keep alive John Oliver Killens' vision to host an annual Black Writers Conference.

Please support our writers by purchasing their books in our Conference Bookstore and support our vendors who are an important part of this community gathering. Please also see the documentation of past Conferences and the work of the Center for Black Literature by visiting our CBL online exhibit at www.centerforblackliterature.org. Additionally, visit the Charles Evans Innis Memorial Medgar Evers College Library, where you can view exhibits featuring our esteemed writers, artists, and civil rights leaders.

Have an inspiring conference.

Sincerely,

Brenda M. Greene

Brenda M. Greene, Professor
Founder and Executive Director
Center for Black Literature
Director, National Black Writers Conference

**Community Council
For Medgar Evers College, Inc.**

Salutes

*The Center for Black Literature
at Medgar Evers College, CUNY*

On the occasion of their

17th National Black Writers Conference

And, we congratulate this year's honorees

*Percival Everett,
Peniel Joseph,
Bernice McFadden, and
Paul Coates*

Over 50 years of Service to the College and the Community





Dear Conference Participants:

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 17th National Black Writers Conference: *All That We Carry, Where Do We Go From Here?*, where we celebrate national Black writers for their publications as they educate, brighten and lift the hearts of both young and older readers.

Medgar Evers College, a school birthed out of community advocacy with social justice in its DNA, is dedicated to creating opportunities for all who connect with us in the aspiration of a brighter future. The National Black Writers Conference is one of those opportunities.

At Medgar Evers College we value the impact that writers have in our communities, our state and abroad.

Their writings inform us about their unique experiences, families and other untold work. As we celebrate these wonderful writers, let them inspire us all to create and share our own stories.

A hearty congratulations to the honorees, **Percival Everett, Paul Coates, Peniel Joseph** and **Bernice McFadden** on being recognized for their passion of writing, as well as being acknowledged as national best-selling authors and award-winning black writers.

In closing, thank you to Dr. Brenda Greene for the amazing work that she and her team have done in planning the 17th National Black Writers Conference, as well as preserving the history of the conference at Medgar Evers College.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patricia Ramsey'.

Patricia Ramsey, Ph.D.
President

THE FLATEAU FAMILY

Extends Warmest Congratulations to Dr. Brenda Greene and

The Center for Black Literature

17th National Black Writers Conference ▪ March 2024



IN MEMORIAM

Dr. John Louis Flateau: MEC Professor. Political Strategist. Voting Rights Activist

Andrea Jeannette Flateau: Member, Community Council of Medgar Evers College

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The Center for Black Literature

17th National Black Writers Conference ▪ March 2024



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Founded in 2002 by Brenda M. Greene, the mission of the Center for Black Literature (CBL) is to expand, broaden, and enrich the public's knowledge and aesthetic appreciation of Black literature by people of the African Diaspora. The Center builds an audience for the reading, discussion, research, study, and critical analysis of Black literature through a variety of programs and partnerships. CBL was also established to institutionalize the National Black Writers Conference (NBWC), founded by John Oliver Killens in 1986 at Medgar Evers College, CUNY.

To achieve its mission, CBL offers literary programs and educational workshops for the public, students of all ages, teachers, writers, and artists. Among its core programs are the National Black Writers Conference, Re-Envisioning Our Lives through Literature (ROLL), the Wild Seeds Writers of Color Retreat, the Dr. Edith Rock Writing Workshop for Elders, the John Oliver Killens Reading Series, and the weekly Writers on Writing Radio Program. The Center also publishes the peer-reviewed *Killens Review of Arts & Letters*, and other journals generated from its youth and elders programs.

For over 20 years, the public and academic programs of the Center have been highly revered and have had a dynamic impact in the literary field. The author readings and book signings, journals, symposia, conferences, panel discussions, and writing workshops—and the Center's intellectual and accessible approach to programming—form an integrative approach that sets CBL apart from others. CBL's body of work is known for the way in which it ensures that Black literary scholarship and conversations are valued and sustained.

The Center for Black Literature serves as a vehicle for nurturing and cultivating the critical reading and writing habits of a cross-generation of readers and writers and provides university, community and

public institutions with various literary programs. Funding and support for Center programs have been provided by the public and private sector and include organizations such as the National Endowment for the Arts, the Nathan Cummings Foundation, Humanities New York, Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation, the New-York Historical Society, Poets & Writers, and the Brooklyn Community Foundation, as well as support from local and state elected officials.

Housed in Medgar Evers College's School of Professional and Community Development, the Center collaborates with educational, literary, cultural arts, and media organizations—both locally and nationally. It partners with Medgar Evers College, the City University of New York, local high schools, as well as with the Center for Law and Social Justice, PEN America, the Brooklyn Literary Council, the Brooklyn Public Library, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, RestorationART at Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, Brooklyn Museum and many other entities.



PAUL COATES

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR **FATHER**, PAUL COATES ON RECEIVING THE
NATIONAL BLACK WRITERS CONFERENCE
MARGARET T. BURROUGHS CULTURAL HISTORIAN AWARD

HE'S ALWAYS A WINNER IN OUR EYES!

§

WITH LOVE,
YOUR CHILDREN



The Institute of the Black World 21st Century's Black World Media Network would like to congratulate the Center for Black Literature, organizers, speakers and honorees on this seventeenth National Black Writers Conference.

Don Rojas
General Manager,
Black World Media Network
www.blackworldmedia.net

Dr. Ron Daniels
President, Institute of the
Black World 21st Century
www.ibw21.org

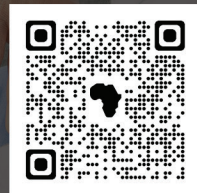


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W. Paul Coates is the founder and director of Black Classic Press, which specializes in republishing obscure and significant works by and about people of African descent.

Born in West Philadelphia, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and served in Vietnam from 1965 to 1967. Coates later received his B.A. degree in community development from the Homestead Montebello Center of Antioch University in Baltimore, Maryland.

After he returned from Vietnam, Coates settled in Baltimore, Maryland and began volunteering for the community breakfast program organized by the Baltimore chapter of the Black Panther Party. In 1970, Coates became defense captain of the Baltimore Black Panthers, where he oversaw the management of all Panther activities in Maryland, including implementing free clothing and free food programs and housing assistance, before leaving the organization in 1971. He subsequently established the George Jackson Prison Movement to bring Afrocentric literature to inmates. By 1978, the program had transitioned into the Black Classic Press (BCP), which Coates founded to publish books by and about people of African descent. After receiving his MLS degree from Clark Atlanta University, Coates joined the staff at Howard University's Moorland-Spingarn Research Center and was instrumental in the establishment of the Black Panther Party Archives at Howard University.

A leader in the field of small publishers, Coates founded BCP Digital Printing in 1995 to produce books and documents using digital print technology.

Coates is co-editor of *Black Bibliophiles and Collectors: Preservers of Black History* (Howard University Press, 1990). He formerly owned and operated The Black Book (1972-1978), a Baltimore-based bookstore. His experience with the purchase, sale collection, and publishing of books by and about Blacks is a love affair that has continued for more than three decades.

Coates is the father of nine children: Kelly, Jonathan, Malik, Menelik, Ta-Nehisi, Darius, Jared, Damani and Kristance, including two additional adult children through marriage.



Percival Everett is the author of more than thirty novels and story collections, including *James* (2024), *Dr. No* (2022); *The Trees* (2021), which won the 2022 Ainsfield-Wolf Book Award for fiction and was shortlisted for the 2022 Booker Prize; *Telephone* (2020), which was a finalist for the 2021 Pulitzer Prize in fiction; *So Much Blue* (2017); *Glyph* (2014); *Percival Everett by Virgil Russell* (2013); *I Am Not Sidney Poitier* (2009); and *Erasure* (2001). All are published by Graywolf Press. *Erasure* was used as the basis of the 2023 studio release of the Oscar-winning film *American Fiction* starring Jeffrey Wright. Everett won the Ivan Sandrof Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Book Critics Circle, the Dos Passos Prize, the PEN Center USA Award for Fiction, the PEN Oakland/Josephine Miles Literary Award, the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award for Fiction, the 2010 Believer Book Award, the Premio Gregor von Rezzori, a Creative Capital

Award, and the Arts and Letters Award in Literature from The American Academy of Arts and Letters. He is also the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship.

Everett's stories have been included in the Pushcart Prize Anthology and Best American Short Stories, and they are often featured on Selected Shorts, a radio program aired on NPR from Symphony Space in NYC. In 1989, he was invited to address the South Carolina State Legislature, but during his speech refused to continue because of the presence of the Confederate flag, thus touching off a controversy that ended with the flag being removed from the Capitol building some years later. He was inspired by this experience to write his powerful and funny story, *The Appropriation of Cultures*.

Everett is currently a Distinguished Professor of English at the University of Southern California. He lives in Los Angeles.



Peniel E. Joseph holds a joint professorship appointment at the LBJ School of Public Affairs and the History Department in the College of Liberal Arts at The University of Texas at Austin (UT). He is the founding director of the LBJ School's Center for the Study of Race and Democracy. His career focus has been "Black Power Studies," which encompasses interdisciplinary fields such as Africana studies, law and society, Women's and Ethnic studies, and political science. Prior to joining the UT faculty, Joseph was a professor at Tufts University, where he founded the school's Center for the Study of Race and Democracy to promote engaged research and scholarship focused on the ways issues of race and democracy affect people's lives.

Joseph's most recent book is *The Third Reconstruction: America's Struggle for Racial Justice in the Twenty-First Century*. In addition to being a frequent commentator on issues of race, democracy, and civil rights, Joseph wrote the award-winning books *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America* and *Dark Days, Bright Nights: From Black Power to Barack Obama*. His book *Stokely: A Life*, has been called the definitive biography of Stokely Carmichael, the man who popularized the phrase "Black Power." Joseph's book credits include the editing of *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era* and *Neighborhood Rebels: Black Power at the Local Level*.



Bernice L. McFadden is the author of ten critically acclaimed novels including *Praise Song for the Butterflies*, (which was long-listed for the 2019 Women's Prize in Fiction), *Sugar*, *Loving Donovan*, *Nowhere Is a Place*, *The Warmest December*, *Gathering of Waters* (a New York Times Editors' Choice and one of the 100 Notable Books of 2012), *Glorious*, and *The Book of Harlan* (winner of a 2017 American Book Award and the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work, Fiction). She is a four-time Hurston/Wright Legacy Award finalist, as well as the recipient of four awards from the BCALA. McFadden is also an essayist and short story writer and has written five novels of humorous erotica under the pseudonym Geneva Holliday.

Her most recent novel, *Glorious*, is set against the backdrops of the Jim Crow South, the Harlem Renaissance, and the Civil Rights era. Blending the truth of American history with the fruits of McFadden's rich imagination, this is the story of Easter Venetta Bartlett, a fictional Harlem Renaissance writer whose tumultuous path to success, ruin, and revival offers a candid portrait of the American experience in all its beauty and cruelty. *Glorious* is ultimately an audacious exploration into the nature of self-hatred, love, possession, ego, betrayal, and, finally, redemption.

McFadden is an Assistant Professor of English at Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana. Over the years, she has been a featured guest speaker at the Center for Black Literature's National Black Writers Conference.

Pre-Conference Events
Tuesday, March 19, 2024

Film Presentation and Discussion

Sponsor: African Voices

This is a FREE Event

Celebrating its 27th year, Reel Sisters of the Diaspora Film Festival & Lecture Series returns to the National Black Writers Conference to screen another series of thought-provoking films followed by a moderated discussion and audience Q&A.

Art, Play & Joy: A Revolutionary Act of Faith & Healing

Join us for an evening of short films representing the art of finding joy in our lives. From the games we played as young girls to the use of art to heal during challenging times, women hold space for themselves and their community in this selection of girl power films!

Edison O. Jackson Auditorium

6:00 pm to 8:00 pm ET

NBWC2024 Poetry Slam

Sponsor: Office of Student Life at Medgar Evers College

This is a FREE Event

This event is presented in partnership with the **Office of Student Life at Medgar Evers College**. Get ready for a night of unforgettable performance, good vibes, and endless inspiration at our annual open mic night!

Medgar Evers College Welcome Center

6:00 pm to 8:00 pm ET

NBWC2024 Day One
Wednesday, March 20

Opening Keynote: All That We Carry: Where Do We Go From Here?

Farah Jasmine Griffin in conversation with **Michael Eric Dyson**

Emcee: **Dr. Brenda M. Greene**

This is a FREE Event

Drawing on the theme of the Conference, *All That We Carry: Where Do We Go From Here?*, Griffin will engage Michael Eric Dyson in a conversation on how we move forward in a public space characterized by environmental racism, social injustice, an attack on the Black body, domestic violence and terrorism, and an absence of empathy and peace.

Founders Auditorium

6:30 pm to 8:30 pm ET

NBWC2024 Day Two
Thursday, March 21

Re-Envisioning Our Lives Through Literature (ROLL) Youth Program

Jennifer Nicole Baker in conversation with **Jason Reynolds**

For High School Students
Founders Auditorium
9:30 am to 12:00 pm ET

Renée Watson in conversation with **Cheryl Hudson** and **Wade Hudson**

For Elementary School Students
AB1 Dining Hall
9:30 am to 12:00 pm ET

The ROLL events are targeted to participating NYC schools in the ROLL program. For more information, please email Mara Prater, ROLL Program Director, at info@centerforblackliterature.org.

Virtual Scholarly Presentations on Conference Theme

Sponsor: African American Studies Committee of the College Language Association

This is a VIRTUAL Event

This virtual program is a presentation of scholarly papers submitted and accepted in response to a Call for Papers. Topics will examine how the NBWC2024 theme is connected to the Black experience or Black culture and how it is expressed or expanded in the works created by the honorees of the Conference.

11:00 am to 12:30 pm ET

Dramatic Reading from the Dr. Edith Rock Writing Workshop for Elders

The program will share our writing elders’ work that aligns with the Conference theme. As people of African descent who have lived through six or more decades, these writers are witnesses to the desecration of the natural world and the Black and Brown people who have lived in harmony with it. Their presentation will focus on the environment as they seek to answer the thematic question: *Where Do We Go From Here?*

Edison O. Jackson Auditorium
3:30 pm to 5:00 pm ET

NBWC2024 Poetry Café

Sponsor: Brooklyn Public Library

Poets from Medgar Evers respond to poetry from works by Cave Canem poets. The reading will present a “call and response” rendering of original poems from Cave Canem poets and the counter-response by Medgar Evers student poets.

Brooklyn Public Library (Central Library)
5:30 pm to 6:30 pm ET

(continued)

NBWC2024 Day Two
Thursday, March 21

Tiya Miles in conversation with Brenda M. Greene

Emcee: **Maria DeLongoria**

Drawing on award-winning Miles's historical works, Greene will engage the National Book Award winner in a conversation on the process she uses in her writing, including the work *All That She Carried*. Greene will also inquire about the challenges of using fiction to recreate history.

Edison O. Jackson Auditorium

6:30 pm to 8:00 pm ET

NBWC2024 Day Three
Friday, March 22
Roundtables

Technology, Social Media, and the Fight for Racial Justice

Speakers: **Marc Lamont Hill, Bettina Love, Wesley Lowery, and Emily Raboteau**

Moderator: **Jelani Cobb**

The speakers will focus on how technology, the visual media, a public pandemic, and environmental racism have shifted how we persist, teach, and talk about the impact of race and social justice in our educational institutions, communities, and public spaces.

Founders Auditorium

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm ET

The Healing Power of Literature

Speakers: **Patricia Spears Jones, Kalisha Buckhanon, Marita Golden, and Kevin Powell**

Moderator: **Rachel Eliza Griffiths**

This conversation will focus on how literature fosters empathy, provides solace, and inspires resilience. Drawing from their work, writers will discuss how they have used their voices and the lens of the "Beloved Community" to explore how we navigate life's challenges and fortify ourselves amid obstacles.

Founders Auditorium

3:00 pm to 4:30 pm ET

Black Writers' Letters to America

Speakers: **Victoria Christopher Murray, Pamela Newkirk, Thabiti Lewis, and Khalil Gibran Muhammad**

Moderator: **Donna Hill**

This roundtable will focus on how Black writers' texts may be viewed as letters that chronicle the history of America from what Toni Morrison calls a Black gaze. These texts provide intimate insight into the monumental changes and pivotal events that have impacted the history, politics, civil rights, achievements, and activism of Blacks in America.

Founders Auditorium

5:00 pm to 6:30 pm ET

(continued)

NBWC2024 Day Three
Friday, March 22

SUMMIT KEYNOTE

A Conversation with the 2024 National Black Writers Conference Honorees

Paul Coates, Percival Everett, Peniel E. Joseph, and Bernice L. McFadden

Moderator: **Gloria Browne-Marshall**

Emcee: **Wallace L. Ford II**

Founders Auditorium

7:00 pm to 8:30 pm ET

NBWC2024 Day Four
Saturday, March 23

Wild Seeds Reunion

(This event is reserved for alumni of CBL's Wild Seeds Retreat for Writers of Color.)

10:30 am to 12:30 pm ET

Talkshops

The Talkshops run concurrently

11:00 am to 12:30 pm ET

At the Center for Black Literature, a talkshop is similar to a writing workshop in that they are designed to enhance one's literary projects by providing strategies and working tools. Unlike a writing workshop, attendees are not required to bring or share writing samples. The talkshop leaders share their expertise and professional experience with attendees, helping to create a dynamic, engaging space that includes question-and-answer segments.

We proudly present these leading experts, specialists, and distinguished writers to the Conference. Come out to get the inside take and best practices.

Publishing Talkshop

Leader: **Tracey Sherrod** | Vice President; Executive Editor at Little, Brown

Book Proposals and Finding an Agent Talkshop

Leader: **Regina Brooks** | Founder and President of Serendipity Literary Agency

Poetry Talkshop

Leader: **Darrel Alejandro Holnes** | Afro-Panamanian American award-winning author of *Stepmotherland* and *Migrant Psalms*

Fiction Talkshop

Leader: **Kalisha Buckhanon** | Author of *Upstate* and *Speaking of Summer*

Memoir Talkshop

Leader: **Patrick Dougher** | Award-winning artist; author of *If By Some Impossible Miracle: Coming of Age in Underground New York*

(continued)

NBWC2024 Day Four
Saturday, March 23

The Power of Historical Narratives

Speakers: **W.B. Garvey, Maryemma Graham, Ayana Mathis, and A.J. Verdelle**
Moderator: **Diane Richards**

The discussion amongst these writers will focus on how their work provides a way to expand narratives that have omitted important literary, historical, social, and political events and people who have shaped the experiences of Black, Brown, White, and Indigenous peoples in America.

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm ET

Black Writers Crossing Boundaries and Borders

Speakers: **Edwidge Danticat, Stéphane Martelly, Kwame Dawes, and Patrick Nganang**
Moderator: **Jasmine Claude-Narcisse**

A focus on how African diasporic literature crosses boundaries and borders representing the complexity and intersections of race, culture, history, politics, gender, and the immigrant experience in the shaping and producing of diverse literary texts.

3:00 pm to 4:30 pm ET

Myth and Reality: The World of Publishing for the Black Writer

Speakers: **Regina Brooks, Karen Hunter, Christopher Jackson, Lisa Lucas, and Jamia Wilson**
Moderator: **Yahdon Israel**

Drawing from the premise of the need for a vibrant book culture and access to a wide range of books and diverse Black voices that contribute to the development of a critically conscious society, speakers on this roundtable will discuss the myths and realities of how Black writers are and can be supported by the mainstream publishing industry.

5:00 pm to 6:30 pm ET

17th National Black Writers Conference Awards Ceremony

NBWC2024 Awardees

Paul Coates
Percival Everett
Peniel E. Joseph
Bernice L. McFadden

Emcee and Host: **Jacqueline Woodson**

Opening Remarks: **President Patricia Ramsey, Medgar Evers College**

Closing Remarks: **Dr. Brenda M. Greene, Center for Black Literature**

7:00 pm to 7:45 pm ET

NBWC2024 PARTICIPANTS



Jennifer Nicole Baker is a publishing professional of 20 years, the creator/host of the Minorities in Publishing podcast, and a faculty member of the MFA program in Creative Nonfiction at Bay Path University and a writing consultant at Baruch College. Formerly a contributing editor to

Electric Literature, she received a 2017 NYSCA/NYFA Fellowship and a Queens Council on the Arts New Work Grant for Nonfiction Literature. Her essay “What We Aren’t” (or the Ongoing Divide), was listed as a Notable Essay in The Best American Essays 2018. In 2019, she was named Publishers Weekly Superstar for her contributions to inclusion and representation in publishing. Jennifer is also the editor of the all PoC-short story anthology *Everyday People: The Color of Life* (Atria Books, 2018) and the author of the YA novel *Forgive Me Not* (Nancy Paulsen Books, 2023). She has volunteered with organizations such as We Need Diverse Books and I, Too Arts Collective, and spoken widely on topics of inclusion, the craft of writing/editing, podcasting, and the inner-workings of the publishing industry. Her fiction, nonfiction, and criticism has appeared in various print and online publications. Her website is: jennifernbaker.com.



Regina Brooks is the founder and president of Serendipity Literary Agency in New York, New York. Her agency is the largest African-American-owned agency in the country and has represented and established a diverse base of award-winning clients in adult and young adult

fiction, nonfiction, and children’s literature. Her authors have appeared in *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, and the *Washington Post* as well as on Oprah, ABC, NBC, CBS, CNN, FOX, MSBNC, TV One, BET, and a host of other media outlets. *Writer’s Digest Magazine* named Serendipity as one of the top 25 literary agencies. Formerly, Brooks held senior editorial positions at John Wiley and Sons, and McGraw-Hill. She is the author of *Writing Great Books for Young Adults: Everything You Need to Know*, from *Crafting the Idea to Getting Published* (Sourcebooks), and *You Should Really Write a Book: How to Write, Sell, and Market Your Memoir* (St. Martin’s Press). Brooks is also a well-received blogger for the *Huffington Post*.



Gloria J. Browne-Marshall is the author of many articles and books that include *She Took Justice: The Black Woman; Law, and Power-1619 to 1969; Race, Law, and American Society: 1607 to Present; The Voting Rights War; and The Constitution: Major Cases and Conflicts*. She is also a playwright

of eight produced plays. Recently, her virtual Zoom staged readings of *SHOT: Caught a Soul and Dreams of Emmett Till* were chosen as official selections at film festivals. Her screenplay *Sgt. Freeman* was a finalist as well as an official selection at national and international film festivals.

Browne-Marshall is a tenured Professor of Constitutional Law at John Jay College (CUNY). She is the recipient of many awards including an Institute of Politics Harvard Kennedy School Fellowship, Pulitzer Center grant, Wiley College Woman of Excellence Award, NAACP Service Award, Emerging Screenwriter Award, and Frederick Lewis Allen Fellowship. She has appeared in several documentary films and speaks nationally and internationally about her books and issues of social justice.

Over the years, Browne-Marshall has been a guest speaker at the Center for Black Literature’s National Black Writers Conference.



Kalisha Buckhanon’s most recent novel is *Running to Fall*. Her novels, *Speaking of Summer*, *Solemn*, *Conception*, and *Upstate*, are honored by the American Library Association, Hurston/Wright Foundation, Friends of American Writers, and more. Kalisha’s stories,

essays, and books cross generations and genres, but all remain centered on African Americans, women, love, and justice. *Upstate* was selected as an inaugural National Book Foundation “Literature for Justice” title. Kalisha was an on-air commentator for true crime cases involving women from 2014-2018 on *BET*, *ID*, and *TV One*. She has been a guest of the Center for Black Literature’s Writers on Writing radio show and the Killens Reading Series. Her work is reviewed widely in media such as *ESSENCE*, *The Guardian*, *People*, *Time*, and *O Magazine*. | www.Kalisha.com



Jasmine Claude-Narcisse is assistant professor of Francophone and Creole Haitian Studies at York College, CUNY. Her research encompasses the rhetoric of the self in Haitian Francophone literature, Francophone Caribbean autobiography, Race and Identity politics, Translation theory and praxis, Caribbean post-coloniality, and Human Rights.

For over twelve years she led the Haitian Book Centre and curated the annual Haitian Book Day in New York, sponsored by York College. As an assistant to the director of the *Henri Peyre French Institute, CUNY* and then a member of its Board of Directors, she spearheaded the Institute's continuous programming on Haiti, including the Haiti Rencontres series in 2012, and the three-year seminar Impunity, Responsibility and Citizenship – HAITI that culminated with a three-day international conference in March 2016. Currently a member of the scientific committee of the academic *Haitian History Journal*, Dr. Claude-Narcisse is actively involved in the work of the collective Jean-Claude Charles which aims to revisit and promote his contribution to literature and global thought through conferences, symposia and publication of critical apparatus of his oeuvre. She is working on a critical translation of the essay *Le corps noir* of Jean-Claude Charles.

Dr. Claude-Narcisse is also the President of Haiti Futur US, a non-profit organization offering support to schools in disadvantaged areas of Haiti.



Jelani Cobb joined the Columbia Journalism School faculty in 2016 and became Dean in 2022. He has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 2015. He received a Peabody Award for his 2020 PBS Frontline film *Whose Vote Counts?* and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize

in Commentary in 2018. He has also been a political analyst for MSNBC since 2019.

He is the author of *The Substance of Hope: Barack Obama and the Paradox of Progress* and *To the Break of Dawn: A Freestyle on the Hip Hop Aesthetic*. He is the editor or co-editor of several volumes including *The Matter of Black Lives*, a collection of The New Yorker's writings on race and *The Essential Kerner Commission Report*. He is producer or co-producer on a number of documentaries including *Lincoln's Dilemma, Obama: A More Perfect Union* and *Policing the Police*.

Dr. Cobb was educated at Jamaica High School in Queens, NY, Howard University, where he earned

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a B.A. in English, and Rutgers University, where he completed his MA and doctorate in American History in 2003. He is also a recipient of fellowships from the Ford Foundation, the Fulbright Foundation and the Shorenstein Center at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.



Edwidge Danticat is an award-winning author of *Breath, Eyes, Memory; Krik? Krak!; The Farming of Bones; The Dew Breaker; Claire of the Sea Light*, and *The Art of Death*. Her memoir, *Brother, I'm Dying*, was a 2007 finalist for the National Book Award and a 2008 winner of the National Book Critics

Circle Award for autobiography. She is the editor of *The Butterfly's Way: Voices from the Haitian Diaspora in the United States*, *The Beacon Best of 2000*, *Haiti Noir*, *Haiti Noir 2*, and *Best American Essays 2011*. She has written seven books for children and young adults; a travel narrative, *After the Dance*; and a collection of essays, *Create Dangerously*. Her most recent book is *Everything Inside: Stories*, winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award, the Story Prize, and the 2020 Vilcek Prize in Literature.

Danticat is a 2009 MacArthur Fellow and is currently the Wun Tsun Tam Mellon Professor of the Humanities in the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies at Columbia University.

Danticat is a previous Center for Black Literature National Black Writers Conference honoree.



Kwame Dawes is the author of numerous books of poetry and other books of fiction, criticism, and essays. His most recent collection is *Sturge Town* (Peepal Tree Press, UK 2023). Dawes is a George W. Holmes University Professor of English and Glenna Luschei Editor of *Prairie Schooner*.

He teaches in the Pacific MFA Program and is the Series Editor of the African Poetry Book Series, Director of the African Poetry Book Fund, and Artistic Director of the Calabash International Literary Festival. He is a Chancellor for the Academy of American Poets and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. Kwame Dawes is the winner of the prestigious Windham/Campbell Award for Poetry and was a finalist for the 2022 Neustadt International Prize for Literature. In 2022 Dawes was awarded the Order of Distinction Commander class by the Government of Jamaica. Kwame Dawes is a previous Center for Black Literature National Black Writers Conference Honoree.

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Michael Eric Dyson is a distinguished professor, gifted writer, and prominent media personality. He has taught at some of the nation's most prestigious universities, including Princeton, Brown, and Georgetown, and is currently Centennial Chair and University Distinguished

Professor of African American and Diaspora Studies and University Distinguished Professor of Ethics and Society at Vanderbilt University. Dr. Dyson has authored more than 25 books, including seven New York Times bestsellers that include books on Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Tupac Shakur, Marvin Gaye, Bill Cosby, and Barack Obama. His book, *The Black Presidency: Barack Obama and the Politics of Race in America*, was described by *The New York Times* as "an interpretive miracle" and was a finalist for the 2016 Kirkus Prize.

Dyson's *New York Times* bestseller *Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon to White America* was called by *The New York Times* "one of the most frank and searing discussions on race" and was a finalist for the 2018 Southern Book Prize. His book *What Truth Sounds Like: RFK, James Baldwin and Our Unfinished Conversation on Race in America* was named by the Washington Post as one of the "50 notable works of nonfiction in 2018."

He has won numerous awards for his literary achievements, including the 2020 Langston Hughes Medal, the American Book Award, and two NAACP Image Awards.

In addition to his academic and writing pursuits, Dr. Dyson is a leading public intellectual, known for his thought-provoking insights on race, social justice, and contemporary culture.

Michael Eric Dyson is a frequent guest on television and radio programs, where he shares his insights and expertise on various topics related to race, politics, and culture. From appearances on news programs to interviews on podcasts, Dyson is a sought-after voice in the media. He is also a previous Center for Black Literature National Black Writers Conference honoree.



W.B. Garvey is a relative of the famous pan-Africanist and Jamaican National Hero, Marcus Garvey. He is the author of *White Gold and Panama Fever: Digging Down Gold Mountain*. His new and critically acclaimed novel, *Independence Blues*, draws on his early life in Los Angeles and

stories of his parent's experiences in the United States and Canada from 1946 through 1963. A classically trained violinist, Mr. Garvey has performed as a soloist with renowned symphony orchestras and as a recitalist in major U.S. concert halls. Garvey has played for over a hundred film scores including Martin Scorsese's *Age of Innocence*, Woody Allen's *Purple Rose of Cairo*, and

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Spike Lee's *Malcolm X*. His writing has appeared in several publications including the *Killens Review of Arts & Letters*. A University of Southern California graduate, Garvey now resides and writes in Phoenix, Arizona.



Marita Golden is an award-winning author of over 20 works of fiction and nonfiction, a master teacher of writing, coach, mentor, and a literary and creative writing consultant. Golden works with writers to help them skillfully and powerfully tell their story. In her workshops, her coaching,

and manuscript evaluation she enables writers to write in their most authentic, creative, and personal literary voice. She served as a faculty member in the MFA Creative Writing Programs at George Mason University, Virginia Commonwealth University, and at Johns Hopkins University and was a Writer-in-Residence at the University of the District of Columbia and Prince George's Community College. She has lectured and taught internationally at universities in Israel, Turkey, and Spain and at over 80 colleges and universities in the States, including Columbia College, Medgar Evers College, Brandeis University, Bethune-Cookman University, and Vanderbilt University.

Her articles and essays have been published in a variety of publications including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Essence*, and *The Root*.

Golden's many awards include the Barnes and Noble Writers for Writers Award presented by Poets and Writers, Distinguished Service Award from the Authors Guild, Maryland Author Award from the Association of Maryland Librarians, Award for Fiction from the Black Caucus of the American Library Association and induction into the International Literary Hall of Fame of Writers of African Descent at the Gwendolyn Brooks Center at Chicago State University.

As a literary activist, she co-founded the Zora Neale Hurston/Richard Wright Foundation with Clyde McElvene, which has supported the international community of Black writers for three decades. Marita Golden is a previous Center for Black Literature National Black Writers Conference Honoree.



Farah Jasmine Griffin is the William B. Ransford Professor of English and Comparative Literature and African American Studies at Columbia University, where she also served as the inaugural Chair of the African American and African Diaspora Studies. She is the author or

editor of eight books including *Who Set You Flowin?: The African American Migration Narrative* (Oxford, 1995), *If You Can't Be Free, Be a Mystery: In Search of Billie Holiday* (Free Press, 2001), and *Harlem Nocturne: Women*

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Artists and Progressive Politics During World War II (Basic Books, 2013); and *Read Until You Understand: The Profound Wisdom of Black Life and Literature* (W.W. Norton, 2021). Her most recent work is *In Search of a Beautiful Freedom: New and Selected Essays* (W.W. Norton, 2023).

Griffin collaborated with composer, pianist, Geri Allen, and director and actor S. Epatha Merkerson on two theatrical projects, for which she wrote the book. The first was “Geri Allen and Friends Celebrate the Great Jazz Women of the Apollo.” The second was “A Conversation with Mary Lou” featuring vocalist Carmen Lundy. Griffin is a 2021-22 Guggenheim Fellow and Mellon Foundation Fellow in Residence.

Griffin is a long-time supporter of the Center for Black Literature and has been a guest speaker at the Center for Black Literature’s National Black Writers Conference.



Rachel Eliza Griffiths is a multi-media artist, poet, and novelist. She has been widely published in journals, magazines, anthologies, and periodicals, including *The New Yorker*, *The Paris Review*, *The New York Times*, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *The Progressive*, *Black*

Nature: Four Centuries of African American Nature Poetry, *Best American Poetry* (2020, 2021), *The New York Review of Books*, *BOMB! Magazine*, and many others. Griffiths is the author of *Miracle Arrhythmia* (Willow Books, 2010), *The Requited Distance* (The Sheep Meadow Press, 2011), and *Mule & Pear* (New Issues Poetry & Prose, 2011). Griffiths’ recent collection of poetry and photography, *Seeing the Body* (W.W. Norton, 2020), was selected as the winner of the 2021 Hurston/Wright Foundation Legacy Award in Poetry, the winner of the 2021 Paterson Poetry Prize, and nominated for a 2020 NAACP Image award. Random House published her recent debut novel, *Promise*.



Donna Hill began her career in 1987 writing short stories for confession magazines. She has since published over 100 published titles, including her first novel, released in 1990. Hill is considered an early pioneer of the African American romance genre. Three of her novels have

been adapted for television. She has been featured in *Essence*, the *New York Daily News*, *USA Today*, *Today’s Black Woman*, and *Black Enterprise* among many others, and has received numerous awards for her body of work—which crosses several genres — as well as commendations for her community service. As an editor,

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she has packaged several highly successful novels, and anthologies. Donna is a graduate of Goddard College with an MFA in Creative Writing and is currently in pursuit of her Doctor of Arts in English Pedagogy and Technology. She is an Assistant Professor of Professional Writing at Medgar Evers College and lives in Brooklyn, NY, with her family. Her novel, *Confessions In B-Flat*, received a starred review from *Publisher’s Weekly* and is being adapted for the screen and executive produced by Academy Award winner Octavia Spencer. Her latest novel is *I Am Ayah—The Way Home*, which also received a starred review from *Publisher’s Weekly* has been compared to elements in Octavia Butler’s *Kindred* by *Kirkus Reviews*. She can be found at donnaohill.com.



Marc Lamont Hill

Dr. Lamont Hill is one of the leading intellectual voices in the country.

He is currently the host of *BET News*, *The Grio*, *Al Jazeera UpFront*, and the *Coffee & Books* podcast.

Dr. Hill is a Presidential Professor at the City University of New York Graduate Center, where he teaches courses in Anthropology, Urban Education, and Middle Eastern Studies. He is the author or co-author of eight books, including the award-winning *Beats, Rhymes, and Classroom Life*; *Nobody: Casualties of America’s War on The Vulnerable from Ferguson to Flint and Beyond*; *We Still Here: Pandemic, Policing, Protest, and Possibility*; *Except For Palestine: The Limits of Progressive Politics*; and *Schooling Against The Prison*. His current research and writing explore the relationships between race, culture, politics, and education in the United States and the Middle East.

An award-winning journalist, Dr. Hill has received awards from the National Association of Black Journalists, GLAAD, and the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences.



Cheryl Willis Hudson is an author, editor, and co-founder with Wade Hudson of Just Us Books, Inc, an independent publisher of Black-interest books for young people that recently celebrated its 35th anniversary. Her titles include the picture books *AFRO-BETS ABC Book*,

Bright Eyes, Brown Skin, *Hands Can, Recognize! An Anthology Honoring and Amplifying Black Life* (co-edited with her husband Wade) and *Brave Black Firsts: 50 Black Women Who Changed America*.

Photo Credit: Stephan Hudson Photography



Wade Hudson is president of Just Us Books, a children and young adult book publishing company he and his wife Cheryl founded in 1988. He is also the author of many books for young readers. His most recent titles are the coming-of-age-memoir, *Defiant*, *Growing Up in the Jim Crow South*,

the picture book *Invincible*, *Fathers and Mothers of Black* and *The Reckoning*, a middle grade novel. *Defiant* is the 2022 winner of the Malka Penn Award for Human Rights in Children's Literature.

Photo Credit: Stephan Hudson Photography



Karen Hunter is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, professor, publisher and "change agent," according to *Essence* magazine, which named her one of the "Woke100" of 2018. She was also selected to the 2020 *Ebony* magazine's Power 100 List. As a writer, Karen has co-authored

eight *New York Times* bestsellers. As CEO of Karen Hunter Publishing, an imprint of Simon & Schuster, she published more than 35 books, including No. 1 *New York Times* bestseller *True You* by pop icon Janet Jackson, as well as bestsellers with Kris Jenner and E. Lynn Harris. Karen has been named one of the 100 Most Important Radio Talk Show Hosts in America by industry bible *Talkers Magazine* every year since 2015. A New Jersey native, a Drew University graduate, Karen has been a full-time professor and Distinguished Lecturer in the Film & Media Department at Hunter College in New York City since 2004.

In 2020, during the pandemic, Karen launched Knarrative.com, which is home to the largest Africana Studies classroom in the world. She is also founder of thehub.news and theglobalmajority.com.



Yahdon Israel, a senior editor at Simon and Schuster, is an educator, entrepreneur, writer, and founder of Literaryswag, a cultural movement that intersects literature and fashion to make books cool. *The Literaryswag Book Club*, a Brooklyn-based subscription service and book

club, meets every last Wednesday of the month. He is the former editor-in-chief of *Brooklyn Magazine* and has written for *Avidly*, *The New Inquiry*, *LitHub*, *Poets & Writers*, and *Vanity Fair*.

Israel teaches creative writing at The New School and City College of the City University of New York. He has also served as a preliminary reader for both the Whiting

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Award and the Aspen Words Literary Award and has worked extensively with the board of the National Book Critics Circle.



Christopher Jackson is the publisher and editor-in-chief of One World, an imprint of Random House. From 2006 to 2016, he was executive editor of Spiegel and Grau before becoming head of One World. He is the editor of a wide range of award-winning and bestselling authors, including

Bryan Stevenson, Ta-Nehisi Coates, Jill Leovy, Trevor Noah, Nikole Hannah-Jones, Ibram X. Kendi, Valarie Kaur, and Eddie Huang. His own writing has appeared in *The Paris Review*, *Callaloo*, *The Atlantic.com*, and other outlets. Over his career, Chris has published a wide range of bestselling and award-winning authors. He is the recipient of the Center for Fiction Medal for Editorial Excellence, the Authors Guild Publisher Award for Literature that Inspires Change, and the Asian American Writer's Workshop Editorial Achievement Award.

Jackson is a frequent guest speaker at the Center for Black Literature's National Black Writers Conference.



Thabiti Lewis is a professor of English and interim associate vice chancellor of academic affairs at Washington State University, Vancouver. He is also the editor of *Conversations with Toni Cade Bambara* and *Ballers of the New School: Race and Sports in America*.

Lewis has published widely in the areas of American literature, masculinity, African American Studies, and popular culture (music and sports). His essay "The 1921 Tulsa Massacre - What Happened to Black Wall Street," co-authored with Kweku Larry Crowe, was published in the Winter 2021 edition of *HUMANITIES*, *The Magazine for the National Endowment for the Humanities*. Lewis is completing a book-length study about the liberation impulse that informs the art of the politics in the fiction of the writer Toni Cade Bambara, and is working on a study of the performance of heroism and the making of gender and race within four American sports museum spaces.



Bettina Love
Dr. Bettina L. Love is the William F. Russell Professor at Teachers College, Columbia University and author of the *New York Times* bestseller *Punished for Dreaming: How School Reform Harms Black Children and How*

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We Heal. In 2022, the Kennedy Center named Dr. Love one of the Next 50 Leaders making the world more inspired, inclusive, and compassionate. A co-founder of the Abolitionist Teaching Network (ATN), whose mission is to develop and support teachers and parents fighting injustice within their schools and communities, she has overseen over \$250,000 in grants to abolitionists around the country. She is also a founding member of the Task Force that launched the program In Her Hands, one of the largest guaranteed income pilot programs in the U.S., which has distributed more than \$15 million to Black women living in Georgia. Dr. Love is a sought-after public speaker on a range of topics, including abolitionist teaching, anti-racism, Hip Hop education, Black girlhood, queer youth, educational reparations, and art-based education to foster youth civic engagement. She is also the author of the bestseller *We Want To Do More Than Survive*. Dr. Love has also provided commentary for various news outlets including NPR, PBS, *Washington Post*, *The Daily Beast*, *Time*, *Ed Week*, *The Guardian*, and the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.



Wesley Lowery is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, author and on-air correspondent. He is the executive editor of the Investigative Reporting Workshop, a non-profit newsroom based at American University. He is also a contributing editor at The Marshall Project and a

Journalist-in-Residence at the CUNY Newmark Graduate School of Journalism. In nearly a decade as a national correspondent, Lowery has specialized in issues of race, justice and law enforcement. He led the *Washington Post* team awarded the Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting in 2016 for the creation and analysis of a real-time database to track fatal police shootings in the United States. His project, “Murder with Impunity,” is an unprecedented look at unsolved homicides in major American cities, and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 2019. His first book, *They Can’t Kill Us All: Ferguson, Baltimore, and a New Era in America’s Racial Justice Movement*, was a *New York Times* bestseller and awarded the Christopher Isherwood Prize for Autobiographical Prose by the *LA Times* Book Prizes. His second book, *American Whitelash*, was released in June 2023 and was an instant *New York Times* bestseller.



Lisa Lucas is the Senior Vice President & Publisher of Pantheon and Schocken Books at Penguin Random House. Previously, Lucas was the Executive Director of the National Book Foundation for five years. Prior to joining the Foundation, she served as

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the Publisher of *Guernica*, a non-profit online magazine focusing on writing that explores the intersection of art and politics with an international and diverse focus. Prior to that, she served as Director of Education at the Tribeca Film Institute, on the development team at Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and as a consultant for the Sundance Institute, San Francisco Film Society, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, and ReelWorks Teen Filmmaking. Lucas also serves on the literary council of the Brooklyn Book Festival. Find her on Twitter at @likaluca.



Stéphane Martelly

Writer, painter and scholar, Stéphane Martelly was born in Port-au-Prince and now lives in Montreal. Through a profoundly transdisciplinary approach, she confronts theory, critical reflection, and art in her work. She has published poetry [*La Boîte noire*

suivi de Départs 2004]] and children’s tales [*Couleur de rue*, 1999 and *L’Homme aux cheveux de fougère*, 2002]. Her pictorial works are showcased in the digital art book *Folie passée à la chaux vive* (Madness spent in quicklime) (Publie.net, 2010).

Her scholarly work notably includes working in the Montreal based *Life Stories Of Montrealers Displaced By War, Genocide And Other Human Rights Violations* as a researcher and coordinator. She also wrote a monography on Haitian poet Magloire-Saint-Aude (*Le Sujet opaque*, 2001) and several articles on Caribbean literature.

Her recent publications include *Inventaires* (Triptyque, 2016) and *L’enfant gazelle* (Remue-Ménage, 2018) and *Little Girl Gazelle* (2020) Martelly is an Affiliate Professor in the Theatre Department and Main Coordinator for the Centre of Oral History and Digital Storytelling, at Concordia University. Her continuing interest remains the possibility and limits of creation and interpretation.



Ayana Mathis

is the author of *The Twelve Tribes Of Hattie* (Knopf, 2012) and most recently, *The Unsettled* (Knopf, 2023), which was named a *New York Times* and *Washington Post* Notable Book of 2023, a Best of 2023 by *The New Yorker* and *Publisher’s Weekly*, an *Oprah Daily* Best Novels of

2023, and a *Kirkus Reviews* Best Books of 2023. Mathis’s essays and criticism have been published in *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, *T Magazine*, *The Financial Times*, *Rolling Stone*, *Guernica*, and *Glamour*. Currently pursuing her Master of Divinity at Union Theological Seminary, Mathis’s most recent nonfiction explores the intertwining of faith and American literature in her five-part *New York Times* essay series “Imprinted By Belief.”

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Her work has been supported by the New York Public Library's Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers, the Civitella Ranieri Foundation, and the Bogliasco Foundation. She currently teaches at Hunter College in the MFA Program.



Tiya Miles is the author of seven books, including four prize-winning histories about race and slavery in the American past. Her latest history, *All That She Carried: The Journey of Ashley's Sack, a Black Family Keepsake*, was a *New York Times* bestseller that won eleven historical and

literary prizes, including the 2021 National Book Award for Nonfiction and the 2022 Cundill History Prize. *All That She Carried* was named A Best Book of the Year by *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Atlanta-Journal Constitution*, NPR, *Publisher's Weekly*, *The Atlantic*, *Time*, and more. Her other scholarly works include: *The Dawn of Detroit*, *Tales from the Haunted South*, *The House on Diamond Hill*, *Ties That Bind*, and the forthcoming *Wild Girls: How the Outdoors Shaped the Women Who Challenged a Nation*. Miles publishes essays in *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Atlantic*, and other media outlets, and she has consulted with colleagues at historic sites and museums on representations of slavery, African American material culture, and the Black-Native intersectional past, including, most recently, the Fabric of a Nation quilt exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Her work has been supported by a MacArthur Foundation "Genius" Award, the Mellon Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Miles's newest book is her debut time-bridge novel, *The Cherokee Rose*, a ghost story set in the plantation South and based on historical events. She was born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, and she is currently the Michael Garvey Professor of History and Radcliffe Alumnae Professor at Harvard University.



Khalil Gibran Muhammad is the Ford Foundation Professor of History, Race, and Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School. He directs the Institutional Antiracism and Accountability Project and is the former Director of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, a division of the

New York Public Library and the world's leading library and archive of global black history. Khalil's scholarship examines the broad intersections of racism, economic inequality, criminal justice, and democracy in U.S. History. He is co-editor of "Constructing the Carceral State," a special issue of the *Journal of American History*, and contributor to a National Research Council study, *The Growth of Incarceration in the United States: Exploring*

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Causes and Consequences (2014). He is also the award-winning author of *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*, which was awarded the John Hope Franklin Publication Prize from the American Studies Association in 2011. He is currently co-directing a National Academy of Sciences study on reducing racial inequalities in the criminal justice system.

Giban's writing and scholarship have been featured in national print and broadcast media outlets, such as *The New Yorker*, *Washington Post*, *The Nation*, *National Public Radio*, *PBS Newshour*, *Moyers and Company*, *MSNBC*, and *The New York Times*.



Victoria Christopher Murray

is the *New York Times* and *USA Today* best-selling author of more than 30 novels, including *The Personal Librarian* and *The First Ladies*. Both novels were co-written with Marie Benedict. Originally self-published, her first novel, *Temptation*, was eventually

published by Time-Warner. *Temptation* remained on the *ESSENCE* bestsellers list for nine consecutive months and in 2001, it received the NAACP Image Award nomination for Outstanding Literature.

Victoria has received numerous awards including the Phillis Wheatley Trailblazer Award, the Delta Sigma Theta Osceola Award for Excellence in the Arts, Go On Girl Book Club Author of the Year, eleven African American Literary Awards and five NAACP Image Award nominations. In 2016, she won the Image Award for Outstanding Literature for her social commentary novel, *Stand Your Ground*. In addition to being a *New York Times* Bestseller, *The Personal Librarian* was a *Good Morning America* Book Club selection and named a Best Book of the Year by NPR. *The First Ladies* was Target's 2023 Book of the Year.

Five of Murray's *Seven Deadly Sins* novels have been made into Lifetime movies produced by TD Jakes, Shaun Robinson and Derrick Williams. *The Personal Librarian* has been optioned by AI Roker Entertainment to become a mini-series. With almost three million books in print, Victoria is one of the country's top African American contemporary authors.



Pamela Newkirk

Author, journalist, and professor Pamela Newkirk is a multifaceted scholar who has published a variety of works: *Within the Veil: Black Journalists, White Media*; *A Love No Less*; *Letters from Black America*; *Spectacle: The Astonishing Life of Ota Benga*, and

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her most recent book, *Diversity, Inc.: The Failed Promise of a Billion-Dollar Industry*, present multidimensional portraits of African American life.

In 1990, she was awarded the International Reporting Award from the New York Association of Black Journalists. In 1992, Pamela received a Pulitzer Prize as a part of the *New York Newsday* reporting team for Spot News for coverage of a fatal subway crash. In 1993 Pamela joined the faculty at New York University and continued contributing articles to numerous publications including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, *The Nation*, *Artnews*, *ESSENCE*, and civil rights blog, *The Defenders Online*.

She is the extremely proud mother of Marjani and Mykel Nairne and lives in New York City with her husband Michael and dog Miso.



Patrice Nganang was born in Cameroon and is a novelist, poet, and essayist. His novel, *Mount Pleasant*, was translated into many languages, including Norwegian, German, and Arabic. He is also the author of *Dog Days*, an award-winning novel telling the story of a people's struggle

for more freedom, which has also been translated into many languages. His historical trilogy about Cameroon includes *A Trail of Crab Tracks* (2022), and the previous novels *Mount Pleasant* (2011) and *When the Plums Are Ripe* (2013).

Nganang states that, as a scholar, he investigates the diverse ramifications of violence. He is particularly interested in what is commonly referred to as the “colonial archive” (pictures, books, instruments). He has published and lectured extensively on numerous topics related to postcolonial African literature, theatres, and cultures.

For the last twenty years of his career, he has navigated three continents as a writer and a professor, starting in Germany. He is currently a Professor of Literary and Cultural Theory at Stonybrook University.



Kevin Powell is a writer, human and civil rights activist, and one of America's most celebrated political, cultural, literary, and hip-hop voices. Powell is also a 2024 GRAMMY-nominated poet, journalist, and the author of 16 books, including *When We Free The World*, a short

essay collection about freedom, justice, and equality in America; his critically acclaimed autobiography, *The Education of Kevin Powell: A Boy's Journey into Manhood*, which is being adapted for the screen, and his most recent *The Kevin Powell Reader: Essential Writings and Conversations*.

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Powell has penned articles, essays, and blogs for a wide range of newspapers, magazines, and major websites, including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *CNN*, *The Nation*, *NPR*, *ESPN*, *ESSENCE*, *EBONY*, *Rolling Stone*, *Esquire*, *HuffPost*, *Utne Reader*, *The Guardian*, *The Baffler*, *The Progressive*, *Complex*, and *British GQ*.

He has traveled, worked, and lectured in all 50 American states and five of the world's seven continents. He is directing, writing, and producing his first documentary film, *When We Free The World*, about healthy versus toxic manhood and fathers and sons. He is the playwright of an upcoming stage play based on his writings, speeches, and conversations about what it is to be a man.

Over the years, Powell has been a featured guest speaker at the National Black Conference and at the Center for Black Literature public programs.



Emily Raboteau writes at the intersection of social and environmental justice, race, climate change, and parenthood. Her most recent work is *Lessons for Survival: Mothering Against the Apocalypse*, a memoir on race, climate, and environmental justice. Her previous books are

Searching for Zion (2013), the winner of an American Book Award and a finalist for the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award, and the cult classic novel, *The Professor's Daughter* (2005). She is a contributing editor at *Orion Magazine* and a regular contributor to *The New York Review of Books*.

Raboteau's essays have appeared and been anthologized in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *New York Magazine*, *The Nation*, *Best American Science Writing*, *Best American Travel Writing*, and elsewhere. Her distinctions include an inaugural Climate Narratives Prize from Arizona State University, the Deadline Club Award in Feature Reporting from the Society of Professional Journalists' New York chapter, and grants and fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts, the Bronx Council on the Arts, the Robert B. Silvers Foundation, the Lannan Foundation, and Yaddo. She is a full professor at the City College of New York (CUNY). She lives in the Bronx with her husband, the novelist, Victor LaValle, and their two children.



Jason Reynolds is a #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of many award-winning books, including *Look Both Ways: A Tale Told in Ten Blocks*, *All American Boys* (with Brendan Kiely), *Long Way Down*, *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You* (with Ibram X. Kendi), *Stuntboy, in*

the Meantime (illustrated by Raúl the Third), and *Ain't*

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Burned All the Bright (with artwork by Jason Griffin). The recipient of a Newbery Honor, a Printz Honor, an NAACP Image Award, and multiple Coretta Scott King honors, Reynolds is also the 2020-2022 National Ambassador for Young People's Literature. He has appeared on *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*, *Late Night with Seth Meyers*, *CBS Sunday Morning*, *Good Morning America*, and various media outlets. He is on faculty at Lesley University, in the Writing for Young People MFA Program and lives in Washington, DC.



Diane Richards, playwright, performer, and producer, serves as Executive Director of the Harlem Writers Guild, the world's oldest, continuously operating African American Writers Guild. Her play, *Sowa's Red Gravy*, was produced in 2012 by Woodie King Jr. of the New Federal Theater

and starred Tony Award-nominated actress Lonette McKee. *The New York Times* called it "an irresistible, lusty celebration of passions." Her fiction and poetry have appeared in *Beloved Harlem: A Literary Tribute to Black America's Most Famous Neighborhood*, *ESSENCE Magazine*, and the Harlem Writers Guild Press. In 2015, she co-produced Amiri Baraka's final play—*Most Dangerous Man in America* — based on the life of W.E.B. Dubois. Her debut novel, *Ella*, a reimagining of the life of Ella Fitzgerald, will be published in May 2024.

Over the years, Richards has been a guest speaker for various programs for the Center for Black Literature.



Renée Watson is a #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of children's literature. Over the past decade, she has authored more than fifteen books for young readers, which have collectively sold more than a million copies. She received a Coretta Scott King Award, a Newbery Honor

for *Piecing Me Together*, and high praise for the picture book, *1619 Project: Born on the Water*. Her picture book, *Harlem's Little Blackbird: The Story of Florence Mills* (Random House Books for Young Readers, 2012), received several honors, including an NAACP Image Award nomination in children's literature.

Watson is a member of the Academy of American Poets' Education Advisory Council. She was a writer in residence for more than twenty years, teaching creative writing and theater in public schools and community centers throughout the nation. She founded I, Too Arts Collective, a nonprofit housed in Langston Hughes's home from 2016 to 2019. Watson is on the Council of Writers for the National Writing Project and is also a writer in residence in the Solstice low-residency creative writing program at Pine Manor College.



Jamia Wilson is an award-winning feminist activist, writer, speaker, and podcaster. She joined Random House as vice president and executive editor in 2021. As the former director of the Feminist Press at the City University of New York and the former VP of programs at the

Women's Media Center, Jamia has been a leading voice on women's rights issues for over a decade. Her work has appeared in numerous outlets, including *The New York Times*, *The Today Show*, *CNN*, *Elle*, *BBC*, *Rookie*, *Refinery 29*, *Glamour*, *Teen Vogue*, and *The Washington Post*. She is the author of *This Book Is Feminist*, *Young, Gifted, and Black*, the introduction and oral history in *Together We Rise: Behind the Scenes at the Protest Heard Around the World*; *Step Into Your Power: 23 Lessons on How to Live Your Best Life*; *Big Ideas for Young Thinkers*; *ABC's of AOC*, and the co-author of *Roadmap for Revolutionaries: Resistance, Advocacy, and Activism for All*. Jamia is passionate about mission-driven organizations and serves on the Omega Institute, ERA Coalition and Center for Reproductive Rights boards, and the St. Timothy's School Advisory Council. She is also the co-host of the second season of the Anthem Award-winning podcast, *Ordinary Equality*.



Jacqueline Woodson is an American writer of books for adults, children, and adolescents. She is best known for her National Book Award-winning memoir, *Brown Girl Dreaming*, and her Newbery Honor-winning titles *After Tupac and D Foster*, *Feathers*, and *Show Way*. Her

picture books, *The Day You Begin* and *The Year We Learned to Fly*, were *New York Times* bestsellers. She also authored the adult books *Red at the Bone*, a *New York Times* bestseller, and *Another Brooklyn*, a 2016 National Book Award finalist. Her most recent novel, *Remember Us*, is set in the Bushwick section of Brooklyn.

After serving as the Young People's Poet Laureate from 2015 to 2017, she was named the National Ambassador for Young People's Literature by the Library of Congress for 2018–2019. She was awarded the Hans Christian Andersen Medal in 2020. Later that same year, she was named a MacArthur Fellow. Woodson is also the recipient of a 2023 Guggenheim.

The MacArthur Foundation describes Jacqueline Woodson's work as follows: "In nearly thirty publications that span picture books, young adult novels, and poetry, Woodson crafts stories about Black children, teenagers, and families that evoke the hopefulness and power of human connection even as they tackle difficult issues such as the history of slavery and segregation ..."

Woodson is a previous Center for Black Literature National Black Writers Conference honoree.



A.J. Verdelle

Writing is A.J. Verdelle’s second career, or third, depending on how you count. When *The Good Negress* was published in 1995, it won five national prizes—including from the American Academy of Arts & Letters, the Bunting Institute at Harvard

University, the American Library Association, and finalist prizes at the *Los Angeles Times*, the IMPAC/Dublin Award, and the PEN/Faulkner Foundation. *The Good Negress* has been in print continuously for twenty-five years, which is rare, and is used as a novel text in colleges and universities nationally. The book is currently in its 17th paperback printing. On publication, Toni Morrison called Verdelle’s novel “truly extraordinary.”

Verdelle’s most recent work is *Miss Chloe: A Memoir of a Literary Friendship with Toni Morrison*, a testimony in praise and consideration of Toni Morrison, who served as a mentor to Verdelle.

Verdelle has been a writer and a working mother for twenty-five years. She teaches creative writing to undergraduate students at Morgan State University in Baltimore and teaches graduate students in the MFA program at Lesley University in Cambridge, MA.

Poetry Café Presenters



Reginald Harris

Born in Annapolis, Maryland, and raised in Baltimore, Reginald Harris won the 2012 Cave Canem/ Northwestern University Press Poetry Prize for *Autogeography*. His first book, *10 Tongues*, was a finalist for a Lambda Literary Award. His fiction, reviews,

and articles have appeared in numerous anthologies, journals, and websites, including *African-American Review*, *Sou’wester*, *Of Poetry and Protest: Emmett Till to Trayvon Martin*, and *This is the Honey: An Anthology of Contemporary Black Poets*. He and his partner live in Brooklyn. (Instagram: @reginald.harris)



Anastacia-Reneé is an award-winning cross-genre queer writer, educator, interdisciplinary artist, TEDX speaker and former Seattle Civic Poet. She is the author of *Side Notes from the Archivist*, (v.), and *Forget It*. Her mixed media art has been exhibited at the Fry Art Museum and her

installation, “Don’t Be Absurd (Alice in Parts),” was chosen by NBC as one of the “Queer Artist of Color Must See LGBTQ Arts Shows.” She has received fellowships and residencies from Cave Canem, Hedgebrook, VONA, Artist Trust, Ragdale, Mineral School and others. Renee’s poetry, fiction and nonfiction has been anthologized and published widely. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.



Linda Susan Jackson is the author of *Truth Be Told* (Four Way Books) and *What Yellow Sounds Like* (Tia Chucha Press), a finalist for the National Poetry Series and the Paterson Prize. She has received fellowships from the Cave Canem Foundation, the New York Foundation for

the Arts, Calabash International Literary Festival, Soul Mountain Writers Retreat and The Frost Place. Her work has appeared in *Brilliant Corners*, *Harvard Review*, *Los Angeles Review*, *Obsidian* and *Ploughshares*, among others, and has been featured on The Academy of American Poets *Poem-a-Day* series and *Poets on Poetry* series. She is a retired associate professor of English from Medgar Evers College/CUNY.

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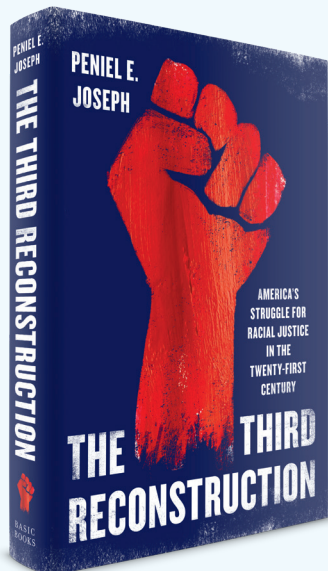
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Octavia E. Butler
Parable of the Sower

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Workshop Leader

Eisa Nefertari Ulen is the author of *Crystelle Mourning*, a novel described by *The Washington Post* as “A call for healing in the African American community from generations of hurt and neglect.” Eisa is the recipient of a Frederick Douglass Creative Arts Center Fellowship for Young African American Fiction Writers, a Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center Fellowship, and a National Association of Black Journalists Award. Her essays on African American culture have been widely anthologized, most recently “Black Parenting Matters” in *Who Do You Serve? Who Do You Protect?* (Haymarket), which won the Social Justice/Advocacy Award for 2017 from the *School Library Journal's* In the Margins Book Committee. Eisa has contributed to *The Hollywood Reporter*, *Essence*, *Parents*, *The Washington Post*, *Ms. Health*, *Ebony*, *Readers Digest*, *The Huffington Post*, *Pen.org*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *The Root*, *Truthout*, *The Defenders Online*, *The Grio*, and *Creative Nonfiction*. Eisa graduated from Sarah Lawrence College and earned a master’s degree from Columbia University. She has taught literature at Hunter College and The Pratt Institute, and she teaches fiction writing at Baruch College. A founding member of ringShout: A Place for Black Literature, she lives with her husband and son in Brooklyn.



The Dr. Edith Rock Writing Workshop for Elders celebrated the launching of its fifth volume of *Tales of Our Times: An Anthology (The Year 2020: Looking Back for Healing, Looking Forward with Hope)* on Wednesday, December 7, 2022, at Medgar Evers College. Contributors who read at the celebration include (left to right): Claudette Joy Spence, Teresa M. Snyder, Glenda Pollard, Shirley V. H. Cooper, Joan Corbett, Ernie Jackson, and Elder Flournoy II.



The Elders

In Memoriam

William "Bill" Craig

Carolyn Gray

Lurline Martineau

Cynthia Goodison Tompkins

Readers

Ebun Adelona

Shirley V. H. Cooper

Joan Corbett

Nancy Francis

Ernie Jackson

Glenda Pollard

Teresa Snyder

Claudette Joy Spence

PREVIOUS NBWC CONFERENCES AND HONOREES

Presented by The Center For Black Literature

• **March 2002**

Center for Black Literature Opening Celebration.
A Tribute to Calvin C. Hernton.
Featured Presenter: Avery Brooks.

• **March 2003**

Sixth National Black Writers Conference,
“Literature as Access: Connecting to Ourselves,
Our Communities, Our Histories.”
Featured Writers: Amiri Baraka, Linda Susan
Jackson, Louis Reyes Rivera, and Tracy K. Smith.

• **March 2004**

Seventh National Black Writers
Conference, “A Tribute to and Symposium on
John Oliver Killens: The Culture & Politics of
Black Literature.” Keynote Address: Gil Noble.

• **March 2006**

Eighth National Black Writers
Conference, “Black Literature: Expanding
Conversations on Race, Identity, History,
and Genre.” Honorary Chair: Dr. Myrlie Evers-Williams;
Honorees: Samuel Delany, Marita Golden,
Haki Madhubuti, and Walter Mosley.

• **March 2007**

National Black Writers Symposium,
“Redemption Song: A Tribute to Bob Marley.”
Keynote Address: Kwame Dawes.

• **March 2008**

Ninth National Black Writers
Conference, “Black Writers: Reading and
Writing to Transform Their Lives and the World.”
Honorary Chair: Susan L. Taylor; Honorees:
Randall Robinson, Sonia Sanchez, Cornel West,
and Cheryl and Wade Hudson. This Conference
was dedicated to the centennial of author
Richard Wright.

• **March 2014**

12th National Black Writers
Conference, “Reconstructing the Master
Narrative.” Honorees: Derek Walcott,
Margaret E. Burroughs, Maryse Condé,
Walter Mosley, Quincy Troupe. A Tribute to
Audre Lorde and Esther Cooper Jackson.
Featured Presenter: Angela Davis.

• **March 2013**

National Black Writers Conference
Biennial Symposium, “A Tribute to the Life and
Works of Toni Cade Bambara.”

• **March 2012**

11th National Black Writers
Conference, “The Impact of Migration, Popular
Culture and the Natural Environment in the
Literature of Black Writers.” Honorees:
Dr. Howard Dodson, Nikki Giovanni, Ishmael Reed,
and Ngugi wa Thiong’o.

• **March 2011**

National Black Writers Conference
Biennial Symposium, “Honoring the Work and Life
of Award-Winning Playwright August Wilson.”

• **March 2010**

10th National Black Writers
Conference, “And Then We Heard the Thunder:
Black Writers Reconstructing Memories and
Lighting the Way.” Toni Morrison, Honorary Chair;
Honorees: Amiri Baraka, Kamau Brathwaite, and
Edison O. Jackson.

• **March 2009**

National Black Writers Conference
Biennial Symposium, “Honoring the Work and Life
of Octavia E Butler.”

PREVIOUS NBWC CONFERENCES AND HONOREES

Presented by The Center For Black Literature

- **March 2015** National Black Writers Conference Biennial Symposium, “Voices of Liberation and Resistance and Tribute to Danny Glover.”
- **March 2016** 13th National Black Writers Conference, “Writing Race, Embracing Difference.” Honorary Chair: Rita Dove; Honorees: Edwidge Danticat, Michael Eric Dyson, Charles Johnson, and Woodie King Jr.
- **March 2017** National Black Writers Conference Biennial Symposium, “Our Miss Brooks: A Centennial Celebration.” A Tribute to Gwendolyn Brooks.
- **March 2018** 14th National Black Writers Conference, “Gathering at the Waters: Healing, Legacy, and Activism in Black Literature.” Honorary Chair: Dr. Myrlie Evers-Williams; Honorees: Steven Barnes, Kwame Dawes, Tananarive Due, David Levering Lewis, Eugene B. Redmond, Susan L. Taylor, and Colson Whitehead. A Tribute to Louise Meriwether.
- **March 2019** National Black Writers Conference Biennial Symposium, “Playwrights and Screenwriters at the Crossroads: A Tribute to Ntozake Shange.”
- **March 2024** 17th National Black Writers Conference (NBWC2024), “All That We Carry: Where Do We Go From Here?.” Honorees: Paul Coates, Percival Everett, Peniel E. Joseph and Bernice L. McFadden
- **March 2023** National Black Writers Conference Biennial Symposium (NBWC2023), “Diasporic Visions: Celebrating Black Speculative Fiction.” Honorees: Jewell Parker Rhodes and Sheree Renée Thomas.
- **March 2022** National Black Writers Conference, “The Beautiful Struggle: Black Writers Lighting the Way.” Honorees: Herb Boyd, Eddie Glaude, Jr., Tracy K. Smith and Jacqueline Woodson.
- **March 2021** National Black Writers Conference Biennial Symposium, “They Cried I Am: The Life and Work of Paule Marshall and John A. Williams, Unsung Black Literary Voices.”
- **November 2020** 15th National Black Writers Conference, “Activism, Identity, and Race: Playwrights and Screenwriters at the Crossroads.” Honorees: Carl Clay, Dominique Morisseau, Stanley Nelson, Voza Rivers, and Richard Wesley. A Tribute to Chadwick Boseman and Toni Morrison. Co-Presented by AKILA WORKSONGS

ALL THAT WE CARRY: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? | NBWC2024

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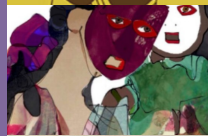
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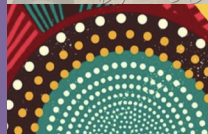
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