



SAN MIGUEL
Writers' Conference
& Literary Festival



20TH ANNIVERSARY

P R O G R A M

12-16 FEB 2025

san miguel de allende, guanajuato, mx

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#smwc2025



For tent assignments check the hotel monitors.

MAP



-  BATHROOMS | SANITARIOS
-  BUS STOP | PARADA DE CAMIÓN
-  ATM | CAJERO AUTOMÁTICO
ON | EN CALLE STIRLING DICKINSON

Hotel Real de Minas (HRM)

Camino Viejo Al Panteón I, Colonia San Antonio 37700
(aka corner of Ancha de San Antonio and Stirling Dickinson)
San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, México

WELCOME

Dear San Miguel Writers' Conference Attendees,

We are elated to welcome you to the 2025 San Miguel Writers' Conference and Literary Festival, marking our momentous 20th anniversary! Prepare to be astonished by the multitude of surprises and the extraordinary lineup of speakers, faculty, and events.

We have meticulously curated an eclectic array of immersive workshops, inspiring speakers, and abundant networking opportunities, all crafted to ignite your creativity and hone your craft. We are confident that this conference will be a transformative experience for you.

This year, we commemorate two decades of literary excellence and an unwavering dedication to our mission: celebrating the art of writing and reading while forging literary connections across Mexico, the U.S., and Canada.

Our commitment to expanding our Spanish-speaking program has never been stronger, with more workshops and events than ever before. We will commemorate our 20th anniversary by honoring our beloved home country, Mexico! For the first time, all Spanish-speaking programs will be no cost to Mexican Nationals!

We are dedicated to making this a Conference to remember!

Our journey together is one of continuous growth and discovery. Through thought-provoking workshops and discussions, we aim to challenge your perspectives, stimulate your imagination, and provide practical insights that you can apply directly to your work.

As we eagerly anticipate the 2025 San Miguel Writers' Conference, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for choosing to embark on this journey with us. Your passion and presence are the driving forces behind our vibrant community, and we are excited to witness the beautiful mosaic of ideas, experiences, and narratives that will unfold during our time together.

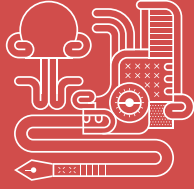
We cannot wait to welcome you and reconnect. Let's keep the spirit of writing alive and celebrate this pivotal moment in your literary journey!

Abrazos.

Susan Page, President

Jodi Pincus, Executive Director





Our logo, based on an Aztec codex, depicts the legend of the dog who found the fresh water springs that led Fray Bernardo de Cossin to reestablish San Miguel in its current location. This symbolic fountain of creativity has nurtured the arts and culture here for 500 years. It was designed by Martí Riba

VISION

The San Miguel Writers' Conference is a premier international literary event set in the vibrant cultural heart of Mexico. Our vision is to inspire and enrich the lives of writers and readers of all ages and backgrounds while fostering new personal and professional connections.

MISSION

To celebrate the art of writing and reading and forge literary connections across Mexico, the U.S., and Canada.

VALUES

Community

We foster a vibrant diverse community of writers and readers, promoting collaboration, mutual support, and engagement with each other and our local community.

Connection

We prioritize connection by nurturing a spirit of collaboration, empathy, and support, which contributes to the growth of our team members, volunteers, attendees, and broader community.

Inclusion

We are rooted in the principle of inclusion, in which differences are celebrated, all voices from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds are valued and heard, and all feel respected and empowered. We prioritize inclusivity in our programming and outreach efforts, welcoming attendees of all cultures, religions, languages, backgrounds, ages, sexual orientations, and gender identities.

Excellence

We embody a culture of excellence and uphold high standards, prioritizing professionalism, innovation, and continuous improvement.

Sense of Place

We strive to provide a unique conference experience that reflects the essence of San Miguel de Allende and celebrates its rich cultural history, heritage, and love of the arts.

Fun

We infuse joy and enthusiasm into our work and foster a lively and entertaining conference that celebrates literature and cultural exchange. We offer engaging activities, interactive sessions, and opportunities for laughter and connection.

SAN MIGUEL WRITERS' CONFERENCE TEAM

Susan Page	Founder and President
Jodi Pincus	Executive Director
Armida Zepeda GM	Spanish Program Director
Dorit Arazi	Treasurer
Alicia Falango	Conference Producer
Danielle Trussoni	Program Director
Laila Gutiérrez	Communications Manager
Diana Guerra	Registrar and Community Relations
Ben Widdicombe	Public Relations
Karla Parra	Marketing Associate
Catherine Marengi	Faculty Director
Jeanne Mills	Faculty Coordinator
Mary Molinaro	Executive Assistant
Patricia García	Web/Graphic Designer
Tania Paillot	Conference Artist
Susana Pagano	Spanish Program Assistant
Coatl S	Spanish Writing Contest
Judyth Hill	Contest Manager and Open Mic/Author Reading Host
Mary Norquist	Bookstore Manager
Mary Pippitt Cervantes	Bookstore Manager
Kim Malcolm	Book Buyer and Special Project

ADVISORY BOARD

Liliana Avilés	Judyth Jenya
Camila Sánchez Bolaño	Mark Prior
Pablo Rodríguez Cáceres	Horacio García Rojas
Luis Camarera	Alex MacLeod
Josh Chernikoff	Kim Malcolm
Debora Chu	Catherine Marengi
Tony Cohan	Elizabeth Moranz
Mary Finley	Ricardo Talavera Muñoz
Daniela Elena Franco	Beverly Nelson
Anna Knutson Geller	Karla Parra
Judith Gille	Oscar Plazola
Sally Avigdor Grezemkovsky	Ellen Sharp
Duncan Tonatiuh Smith Hernández	Ben Widdicombe
Judyth Hill	Luis Miguel Yamin
Anne Marie Jackson	Rosi Zorilla

Guide to the San Miguel Writers' Conference

Whether this is your first time attending the Writers' Conference or you've been coming to San Miguel for years, you're sure to find some useful information in this guide. If you have a question which isn't answered here, checkout the FAQs page on the website.

What to Expect

The 2025 Writers' Conference will be a significant gathering of writers and those who love literature. You can expect to experience incredible authors in the ballroom, stimulating workshops and advanced classes where you will hone your craft, and amazing opportunities for you to connect with other readers, writers and industry experts. 2025 is also about choice. You can choose your own adventure with a wide array of events, workshops, panels, and speakers to select from. This year's program will engage, invigorate, and stimulate you!

Badges

If you've purchased a package, you will need to pick up your badge the day before or first day of the conference at the registration table. Badges will be available in the HRM Ballroom on Tuesday, February 11 from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Wednesday, February 12 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Changing Your Schedule

You can swap a 90-minute workshop for another as long as there are seats available. Please contact us through our online Contact form and we will make the changes for you.

Concierge

We will have a concierge station open throughout the conference where you can ask questions and get support.

Digital Downloads

Some workshops and panels have digital downloads of handouts available. You may want to download these ahead of time so you can have them on your laptop or print them. You can see if your workshops have digital downloads by going to your account on our website and checking if there are downloads available. On our website you will need to click on My Account from the top menu.

Printing Services

There are no printing services at the Hotel Real de Minas. If you need to print out a manuscript or other documents, there are two print shops near the venue. Araiza Computación is at Ancha de San Antonio 119-B. Further up the street and around the corner you'll find a papelería at Mario Talavera 1.

Bookstore

We will have our wonderful bookstore setup as always. Books by our keynote speakers, faculty, and Literary Sala authors will be featured. The bookstore will be cashless. You will need a credit card to purchase items. The bookstore will close during the keynote events and reopen for the book signing following each keynote event.

Late-Night Live Events

Each evening the Conference will host off-site events in the evenings including open mics, dining out at local restaurants, receptions, and our famous Mexican Fiesta! Doors for these events will open at 8:00 p.m. These events are included in your packages or you can purchase them using our a la carte menu.

Ticket Sales

Packages and tickets are available online and at the registration table at the Conference.

Excursions and Post-Conference Offerings

Be sure to check out our amazing list of off-site excursions and post-conference workshops and retreats that will help you enjoy and explore all that San Miguel has to offer as well as enhance your writing.

Accommodations

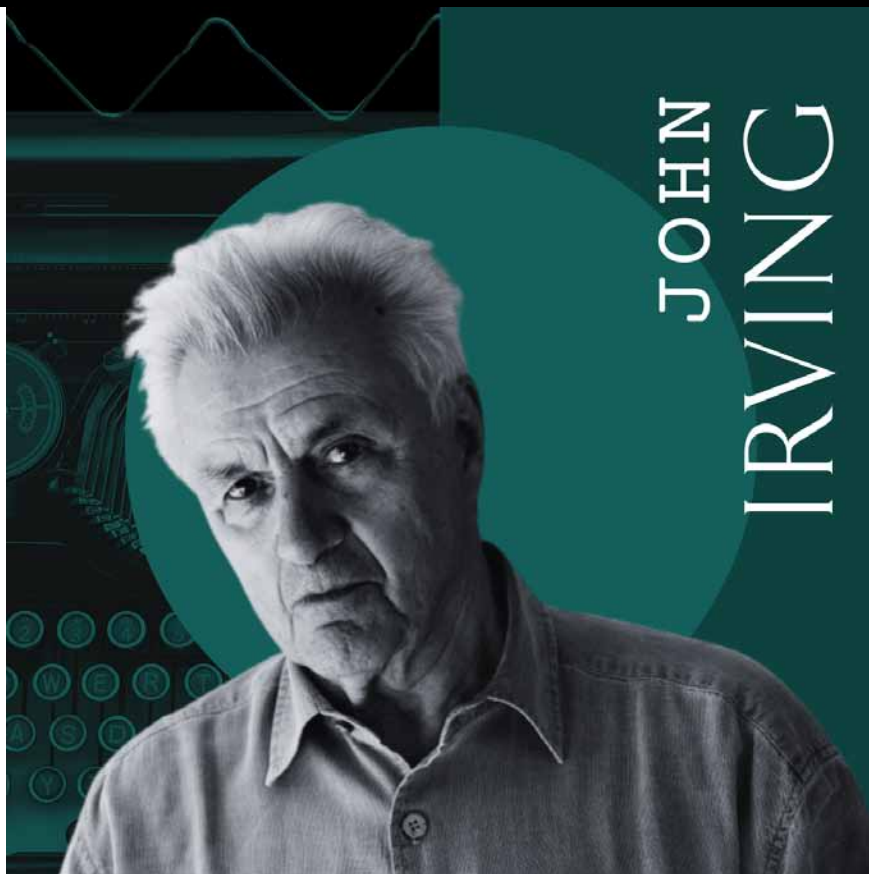
Packages do not include accommodations. To make a reservation (special rates + breakfast) at the Hotel Real de Minas, you must contact the hotel directly via telephone at 011(52) 415 152 2626 or 011(52) 415 980 0191, or email at both reservaciones1@realdeminas.com and reservaciones2@realdeminas.com. Make sure to mention this promo code: SMAWC. More details on our website.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

REGISTRATION:
 Tuesday, February 11, 11:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
 Wednesday, February 12, 9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

TIME	WED FEB 12	THR FEB 13	FRI FEB 14	SAT FEB 15	SUN FEB 16
8:00-9:00 a.m. <i>Storytellers Sunrise</i>	WELLNESS OFFERINGS, COFFEE & TEA BAR HRM Gardens	WELLNESS OFFERINGS, COFFEE & TEA BAR HRM Gardens	WELLNESS OFFERINGS, COFFEE & TEA BAR HRM Gardens	WELLNESS OFFERINGS, COFFEE & TEA BAR HRM Gardens	WELLNESS OFFERINGS, COFFEE & TEA BAR HRM Gardens
9:00-10:30 a.m. <i>Artistry Hour</i>	OPEN PLENARY SESSION WELCOME HRM Ballroom	WORKSHOP SESSION 2 HRM Tents	WORKSHOP SESSION 4 HRM Tents	<i>Adventure Day EXCURSIONS</i> 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. INTENSIVE CLASSES HRM Tents	WORKSHOP SESSION 6 HRM Tents
10:30-10:45 a.m. <i>Chapter Break</i>	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK		BREAK 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. MERCADO CULTURAL HRM Jardines
10:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m. <i>Artistry Hour</i>	BIG READ HRM Terrace	WORKSHOP SESSION 3 HRM Tents	WORKSHOP SESSION 5 HRM Tents	12:00-2:30 p.m. Bilingual Teen Workshops	WORKSHOP SESSION 7 HRM Tents
12:15-2:15 p.m. <i>Midday Muse</i>	<i>Affinity Groups</i> LUNCH On your own	LUNCH On your own	LUNCH On your own	LUNCH On your own	LUNCH On your own
2:15-3:30 p.m. <i>Literary Assembly</i>	AGENT PANEL HRM Ballroom	KEYNOTE JOHN VAILLANT HRM Ballroom	KEYNOTE JENNIFER CLEMENT HRM Ballroom	2:00-5:00 p.m. INTENSIVE CLASSES HRM Tents	KEYNOTE GILLER SPOTLIGHT HRM Ballroom
3:30-6:00 p.m. <i>Wanderlust: Chart Your Own Afternoon</i>	3:30-5:00 p.m. WORKSHOP SESSION I HRM Tents	<i>Poetic Pause On the lawn</i> HRM Gardens:	<i>Poetic Pause On the lawn</i> HRM Gardens:	<i>Poetic Pause On the lawn</i> HRM Gardens:	4:00-5:30 p.m. KEYNOTE PANEL HRM Ballroom
	COFFEE & CONNECTION CORNER, MERCADO CULTURAL HRM Gardens	COFFEE & CONNECTION CORNER, MERCADO CULTURAL AGENT PITCH SESSIONS, INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATIONS	COFFEE & CONNECTION CORNER, MERCADO CULTURAL AGENT PITCH SESSIONS, INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATIONS	COFFEE & CONNECTION CORNER, MERCADO CULTURAL	
	3:30-4:30 p.m.	ROUND TABLES, DISCUSSION CIRCLES, AUTHOR READINGS/ OPEN MIC	ROUND TABLES, DISCUSSION CIRCLES, AUTHOR READINGS/ OPEN MIC	DISCUSSION CIRCLES, AUTHOR READINGS/ OPEN MIC	
4:30-5:30 p.m.		THE AMERICAS READ: CANADA	THE AMERICAS READ: MÉXICO	THE AMERICAS READ: USA	
5:00-6:00 p.m. <i>Writer's Whimsy Hour</i>	OPENING RECEPTION HRM Gardens	HAPPY HOUR ----- FREE EVENT IN SPANISH HRM Ballroom	HAPPY HOUR FREE EVENTS IN SPANISH	HAPPY HOUR FREE EVENTS IN SPANISH	HAPPY HOUR FREE EVENTS IN SPANISH HRM Gardens
6:30-8:00 p.m. <i>Verse Visionaries</i>	KEYNOTE JOHN IRVING HRM Ballroom	CONTEST READING KEYNOTE RUTH REICHL HRM Ballroom	TEEN REPORT KEYNOTE JORGE F. HERNÁNDEZ HRM Ballroom	CONTEST READING KEYNOTE KAVEH AKBAR HRM Ballroom	KEYNOTE PERCIVAL EVERETT HRM Ballroom
8:00-9:00 p.m. <i>Lit Festivities</i>	DINNER On your own	DINNER On your own	FIESTA	DINNER On your own	CLOSING RECEPTION HRM Gardens
9:00-10:30 p.m. <i>Tales & Stars</i>	BILINGUAL STORYTELLING 8:00-10:00 p.m. POETRY FIRE CIRCLE	BILINGUAL AUTHOR READINGS		BILINGUAL AUTHOR READINGS	





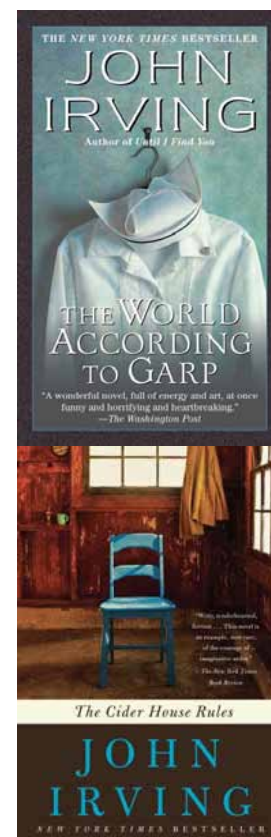
“My Sixteenth Novel: Queen Esther”

Dr. Larch, the obstetrician and abortionist in *The Cider House Rules*, is also a character in *Queen Esther*, my new novel. Larch is younger than you remember him, and there’s a different cast of characters among the unadopted orphans in Maine. This time, there’s a Jewish orphan—born in Vienna in 1905. Her father died on board the ship from Germany; her mother was murdered by anti-Semites in Portland.

John Irving has written sixteen novels over the course of his prolific career, the majority of which have been international bestsellers, and which have been translated into more than thirty-five languages. His beloved titles include *The World According to Garp*, which won the National Book Award; *Cider House Rules*; *A Widow for One Year*; and *A Prayer for Owen Meany*, which is his bestselling novel in every language. Irving won an Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay for *Cider House Rules*. His first novel, *Setting Free the Bears*, was published in 1968 when he was twenty-six years old.

Irving was also a competitive wrestler for twenty years. He coached wrestling until he was forty-seven. In 1992, he was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Irving lives in Toronto and is a dual citizen of the United States and Canada.





“The Art of Contemporary Fiction”

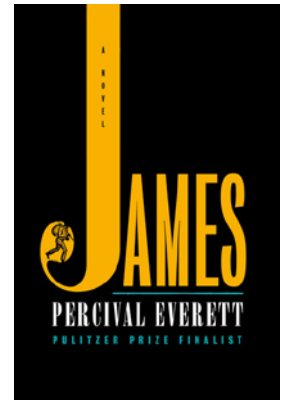
Percival Everett is a master at taking well-known literary styles and flipping them on their heads to help readers view the world through creative new lenses. In this engaging talk, he will share fascinating anecdotes about how he created his diverse bibliography. We will discover the historical events, societal issues, and literary influences that have inspired the range of subjects he tackles in his works and how and why he takes a unique approach to the creative process.

Percival Everett, one of the most innovative writers in contemporary American literature, is the Distinguished Professor of English at the University of Southern California.

He has written more than thirty books including novels, poetry, and short story collections which have won numerous prizes and international accolades. His captivating and immensely diverse collection of genre-bending literary works challenges and inspires readers to contemplate and reconsider the societal and cultural forces that shape our worldviews.

His most recent books include *James*, an instant *New York Times* bestseller and named a best book of the year by the *New York Times Book Review*; *Dr. No*, finalist for the NBCC Award for Fiction and winner of the PEN/Jean Stein Book Award; *The Trees*, finalist for the Booker Prize and the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction; *Telephone*, finalist for the Pulitzer Prize; *So Much Blue*; *Erasure*; and *I Am Not Sidney Poitier*. He has received the NBCC Ivan Sandrof Life Achievement Award and The Windham Campbell Prize from Yale University. *American Fiction*, the feature film based on his novel *Erasure*, was released in 2023.

Everett lives in Los Angeles with his wife, the writer Danzy Senna, and their children.



Percival Everett's novel, *James*, has been short listed for both the 2024 National Book Award and the 2024 Booker Prize.



**“We Read and Write for
the Benefit of Memory
and Imagination”**

Jorge’s personal account of remembrance and invention, the insane sanity of a reader, and the healthy malady of writing. He will tell anecdotes from his experience as a writer with the aim of finding different ways to work with inspiration, and transform ideas into an endearing text.

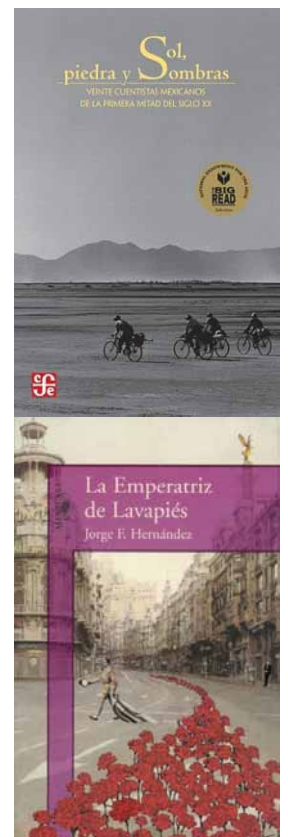
Jorge F. Hernández is the author of five novels, three short story collections, and numerous essays and newspaper columns over many years. Of special interest to us in San Miguel, he wrote *Microhistory of the Sanctuary of Atonilco*, for which he won the Atanasio G. Saravia National Prize for Banamex Regional History.

His anthology entitled *Sun, Stone and Shadows: Twenty Mexican Short Story Writers from the First Half of the 20th Century* was chosen for the United States government reading program as a book in The Big Read of the National Endowment for the Arts, in its English translation.

He has taught at various institutions in both Mexico and Spain including UNAM, ITAM, Universidad Anáhuac, the Hellenic Cultural Center, and the Foundation for Mexican Letters.

As a radio personality, he was host of the “Golpe de dados,” a cultural news program on channel 22 of Mexican television during 2010. He collaborated with Leo Zuckerman and Julio Patán on the program “Artículo Sexto” on Radio Formula in 2012 and 2013.

Jorge F. Hernández was Minister of Cultural Affairs of the Mexican Embassy in Spain and Director of the Cultural Institute of Mexico in Madrid. He also helped to rescue the oldest bookstore in Madrid, which had been destined to become a pizza parlor! He was born in Mexico City and spent his childhood in Cologne, Germany, and Washington, D.C. where his father was a diplomat for Mexico’s foreign service.





“Writing Paris: When a City Becomes a Character”

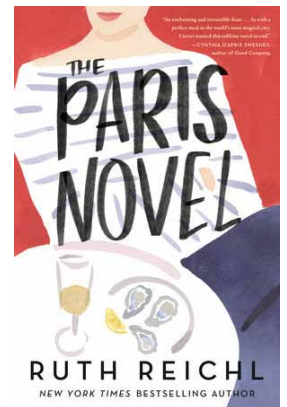
It was a surprise to me when my latest novel turned into a love letter to the city. What is it about Paris? The art, the food, the fashion and literature? It's more than that. As I wrote *The Paris Novel*, I discovered that the City of Light holds a special place in our collective imagination.

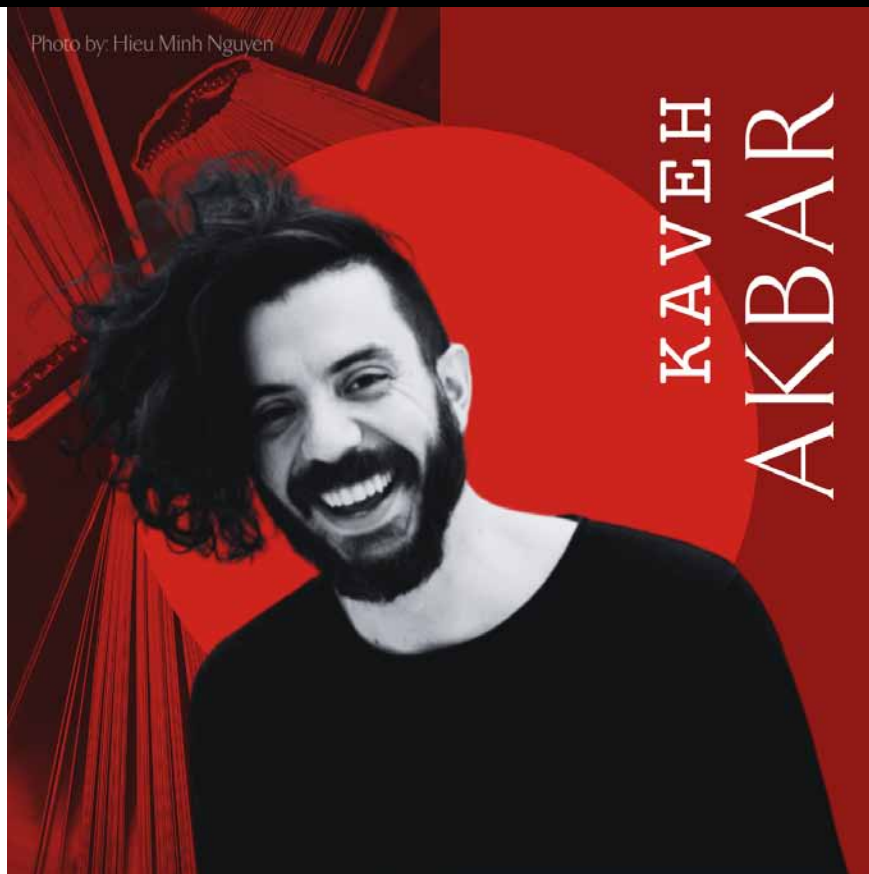
Ruth Reichl is an American chef, food writer and editor who, for ten years, was the editor-in-chief of *Gourmet Magazine*. In addition to two decades as a food critic for the *Los Angeles Times* and the *New York Times*, Reichl has also written cookbooks, memoirs and novels. She was culinary editor for the Modern Library and has won six James Beard Foundation Awards.

Reichl was co-producer of PBS's *Gourmet Diary of a Foodie* and was host of PBS's *Gourmet's Adventures with Ruth*.

Her memoirs are *Tender at the Bone: Growing Up at the Table* (1998), *Comfort Me with Apples: More Adventures at the Table*, *Garlic and Sapphires: The Secret Life of a Critic in Disguise*, *Not Becoming My Mother*, and *Save Me the Plums: My Gourmet Memoir* (2019). In 2009, she published *Gourmet Today*, a 1,008-page cookbook containing over 1,000 recipes.

She published her first novel *Delicious!* in 2014 and, in 2015, published *My Kitchen Year: 136 Recipes That Saved My Life*, a memoir of recipes prepared in the year following the shuttering of *Gourmet*. Her most recent novel is entitled *The Paris Novel*.





**“The Word Dropped Like
a Stone: Sacred Poetics
Under the Reign of the
Money God”**

Interesting poetry awakens us, asks us to slow down our metabolization of language, to become aware of its materiality, how it enters into us. Sacred poetry, from antiquity to the present, teaches us to be comfortable sitting in mystery without trying to resolve it, to be skeptical of unqualified certitudes. In discussing poems across the centuries—from “Hymn to Inanna” to Szyborska—Akbar reminds us that language has history, density, complexity. Such poetry, Akbar says, becomes a potent antidote against an empire that would use “the raw overwhelm of meaningless language” to cudgel us into inaction.

Kaveh Akbar’s poems appear in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *Paris Review*, *Best American Poetry*, and elsewhere. He is the author of two poetry collections: *Pilgrim Bell* (Graywolf 2021) and *Calling a Wolf a Wolf* (Alice James 2017), in addition to a chapbook, *Portrait of the Alcoholic* (Sibling Rivalry 2016). He is also the editor of *The Penguin Book of Spiritual Verse: 100 Poets on the Divine* (Penguin Classics 2022).

In 2020 Kaveh was named Poetry Editor of *The Nation*. The recipient of honors including multiple Pushcart Prizes, a Civitella Ranieri Foundation Fellowship, and the Levis Reading Prize.

Kaveh was born in Tehran, Iran, and teaches at the University of Iowa and in the low-residency MFA programs at Randolph College and Warren Wilson. In 2014, Kaveh founded *Divedapper*, a home for dialogues with the most vital voices in American poetry. With Sarah Kay and Claire Schwartz, he wrote a weekly column for the *Paris Review* called “Poetry RX.”

Kaveh Akbar is known for his poetry, and now his 2024 debut novel *Martyr!* is garnering rave reviews:

“So stunning, so wrenching, and so beautifully written that reading it for the first time, I kept forgetting to breathe.” — John Green

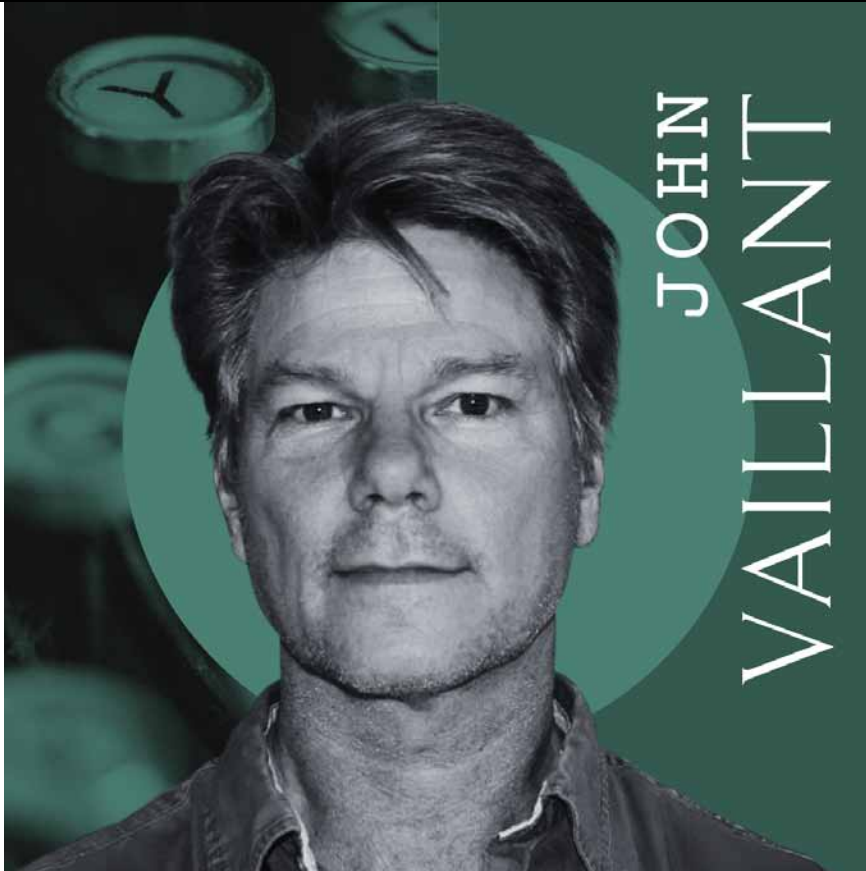
From previous San Miguel Writers’ Conference keynoters:

“I haven’t loved a book this much in years.” — Tommy Orange

“Kaveh Akbar has given birth to a hilarious marvel of a novel. Rip-roaringly funny. Wise and wise-assed.” — Mary Karr



Kaveh Akbar’s novel, *Martyr!*, has been short listed for the 2024 National Book Award.



“Fire and Oil: Coming to Terms With a More Flammable World”

Humans, aided by the fossil fuel industry (the “fire industry”), have altered the chemistry of our planet and its atmosphere in profound, life-changing ways. As a result, we are now, in real time, crossing a threshold into a new climate regime marked by previously unimagined extremes and whipsawing instability. How we conceptualize and respond to this unprecedented challenge is of immediate and paramount importance, not just to our psyches and our souls, but to the future of everyone on Earth.

John Vaillant’s acclaimed, award-winning nonfiction books, *The Golden Spruce* and *The Tiger*, were national bestsellers. His debut novel, *The Jaguar’s Children*, was a finalist for the Rogers Writers’ Trust Fiction Prize and the International Dublin Literary Award. Vaillant has received the Governor General’s Literary Award, British Columbia’s National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction, the Windham-Campbell Literature Prize, and the Pearson Writers’ Trust Prize for Nonfiction. He has written for, among others, *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, *National Geographic*, and *The Walrus*. He lives in Vancouver.



**"The Promised Party:
The Fury, Ecstasy and
Danger of '70s Mexico
City and '80s New York"**

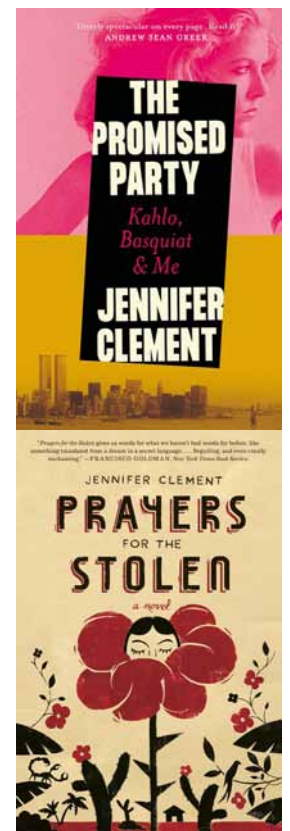
Jennifer Clement lived an unorthodox and bohemian childhood in Mexico City, living next door to Frida Kahlo's house and alongside artists, communists, revolutionaries and poets. Leaving behind the revolutions in Latin America for the burgeoning counter-culture scene in '80s New York, Clement quickly became a fixture on the art scene, inhabiting the world of Jean-Michel Basquiat, Keith Haring, Colette Lumiere and William Burroughs. Clement will talk about this memoir as a portrait of the artist as well as being a portrayal of two great cities and their artists.

Jennifer Clement is the author of five novels, two memoirs, and several books of poetry. Two of her novels were *New York Times* Editor's Choice books. Both *Elle Magazine* and the French Ministry of Education awarded prizes to her novel *Prayers for the Stolen*, which was made into a movie in 2021. Her novel *Gun Love* was an Oprah Book Club selection and was a finalist for the National Book Award. *Time Magazine* and several other publications named it one of the ten best books of 2018. Her books have been translated into thirty-eight languages.

Clement is the only woman to hold the office of President of PEN International, 2015 to 2021. Under her leadership, the groundbreaking PEN International Women's Manifesto and The Democracy of the Imagination Manifesto were created. When she was President of PEN Mexico, she was instrumental in changing the law to make the crime of killing a journalist a federal crime.

Jennifer Clement has received awards for both her writing and her humanitarian work, including fellowships from Guggenheim, NEA, MacDowell and Santa Maddalena; a Hispanics in Philanthropy Award for her contribution to Latino Communities; the 2023 Freedom of Expression Honorary title for World Press Day in Brussels; and numerous other awards.

Clement was raised in Mexico City. Together with her sister Barbara Sibley, she founded and ran Poetry Week every January in San Miguel de Allende for many years.





Once again, we are proud to provide the stage for the Scotiabank Giller Prize winner, who will be selected and announced in November.

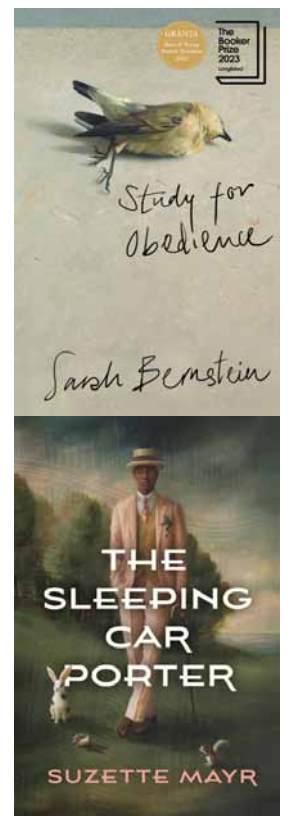
PRIZE HISTORY

The Giller Prize was founded in 1994 by Jack Rabinovitch in honor of his late wife, literary journalist Doris Giller, who passed away from cancer the year before. The award recognized excellence in Canadian fiction—long format or short stories—and endowed a cash prize annually of \$25,000.00, the largest purse for literature in the country.

The launch of The Giller Prize coincided with a growing recognition of Canadian authors and literature both at home and abroad. Acclaimed writers such as Alice Munro, Margaret Atwood, Michael Ondaatje and Mordecai Richler were winning honours and accolades around the world. The time seemed ripe to celebrate the success of these and other homegrown writers within these borders, with a bold statement of support and recognition.

The Giller Prize, along with many other awards that came before and after, is in part responsible for the continued growth of Canadian literary talent. The prize has so far endowed more than three-quarters of a million dollars to Canadian writers from coast to coast.

Past Winners



PANELS

Literary Agent Panel: What's Next for the Publishing Industry?

Wednesday, February 12 | 2:15–3:30 p.m. | HRM Ballroom



Moderator: Anna Knutson Geller | Panelists: Michael Carr, Susan Golomb, Sam Hiyate, Rita Rosenkranz

In this panel, five seasoned literary agents will discuss all the ways they have seen the publishing industry change since they got into the business, and will speculate on coming trends and tendencies, including the rise of audiobooks, the use of AI, new publishing models, and the shifting landscape of book promotion.

Keynote Panel

Free and open to the public

Sunday, February 16 | 4:00–5:30 p.m. | HRM Ballroom



Panelists: John Irving, Percival Everett, Jorge F. Hernández, Ruth Reichl, Kaveh Akbar, John Vaillant, Jennifer Clement

It is rare in the literary world for so many famous authors to appear together in one event. In this lively panel, all of our illustrious keynote speakers will engage in discussions in a Q & A format. Questions from attendees will be gathered during the week, and the authors will be encouraged to engage in discussions with each other as well.

This event is free and open to the public, offering those who don't attend individual keynote addresses the opportunity to meet these distinguished writers.

INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATIONS

Publishing, Marketing & Faculty Consultations

Members of our distinguished faculty will be offering one-on-one consultations in their respective areas of expertise. Consultations will be held on Thursday and Friday afternoons from 3:30 to 6:00 p.m. They are thirty minutes long and cost US\$80. Please see the individual descriptions below to see what is on offer.



SARA DIVELLO

Sara DiVello is the author of *Broadway Butterfly: A Thriller*, an *Entertainment Weekly* Most Anticipated Book. In her former corporate career, Sara built and ran PR programs for multibillion-dollar companies. Sara currently co-chairs the Nantucket Book Festival, directs social media strategy for ITW (International Thriller Writers), and hosts the Mystery and Thriller Maven Author series in collaboration with Murder by the Book, one of the oldest independent bookstores in the U.S. She has hosted 450 interviews with authors from debuts to celebrities.

Marketing expert Sara DiVello is available to advise on creating and building your author brand, social media analysis and recommendations, and historical research tools and tips. You will learn how to best position yourself to acquire an agent and/or editor, and ultimately sell more books.



CHERYL J. FISH

Cheryl J. Fish, who has been Fulbright professor in Finland, published her debut novel *Off the Yoga Mat*, in 2022. She is the author of poetry collections, *The Sauna Is Full of Maids* and *Crater & Tower*, and coeditor with Farah Griffin of *A Stranger in the Village: Two Centuries of African-American Travel Writing*. Fish's poems appear in *Hanging Loose*, *Terrain*, *Mom Egg Review*, and *New American Writing*. Her short fiction appears in *Cheap Pop*, *Iron Horse Literary Review*, and *Gargoyle*.

Cheryl J. Fish advises on getting your poetry published, publishing with indie and small presses, and developing multiple point-of-view characters in novels and short fiction.



JUDYTH HILL

Judyth Hill, poet, editor, author of nine poetry books and the world-famous poem, "Wage Peace," is chair of the PEN International Women Writers Committee, San Miguel PEN President Emerita, editor-in-chief of Wild Rising Press, codirector of Poetry Mesa, and an Anusara Yoga special subjects instructor. Described by the *St. Helena Examiner* as "energy with skin" and by the *The Denver Post* as a "tigress with a pen," she leads writing workshops and Muse on the Move global literary adventures.

Poet and editor Judyth Hill advises on how to fast-track your memoir, from writing and revising to publishing and marketing; the best path to designing and publishing your poetry book; and dynamic literary stagecraft tools to perform your work with verve and passion.



KAREN TIBER LELAND

Karen Tiber Leland is the president of Sterling Marketing Group, a branding and marketing strategy firm helping CEOs and C-suite executives build their personal, team, and business brands. Her clients include LinkedIn, Google, Apple, and Oracle. Karen has presented to many audiences, including Harvard, Yale, TEDx, YPO, American Management Association, and American Marketing Association. Karen is the best-selling author of twelve books, which have sold over 450,000 copies. She has been featured in the media, including MSNBC, Fox Business News, *Fortune*, *Inc.*, *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, and *Time*.

Karen Tiber Leland will conduct an expert, on-the-spot evaluation of your current platform, covering online presence (i.e. social media and website), offline activities (i.e. PR, and public speaking) and AI readiness as it pertains to search. By the end of the consultation, you'll know exactly which of the four stages of brand building you're in, what the most crucial next steps are, and you'll leave with a basic brand marketing plan tailored to your unique needs.

INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATIONS

Publishing, Marketing & Faculty Consultations

Members of our distinguished faculty will be offering one-on-one consultations in their respective areas of expertise. Consultations will be held on Thursday and Friday afternoons from 3:30 to 6:00 p.m. They are thirty minutes long and cost US\$80. Please see the individual descriptions below to see what is on offer.



LISA SHARKEY

Lisa Sharkey is the senior vice president and publisher of the new HarperCollins imprint, Harper Influence, where her team acquires high profile non-fiction spanning popular culture, from general lifestyle and entertainment to stories of survival and inspiration. Whether in the fields of science, medicine, nature, music, lifestyle, spirituality, cooking, design, or news-driven narratives, the defining theme of her books surrounds cultural impact and relevance. A creative pioneer across multiple media, Lisa has overseen the acquisition and publication of more than seventy-five *New York Times* Bestsellers.

Lisa Sharkey will be consulting on author platforms with an aim to help people to come out from behind their laptops and into the public eye.



BROOKE WARNER

Brooke Warner is publisher of She Writes Press and SparkPress, president of Warner Coaching Inc., and author of six books, including three on memoir. Also a TEDx speaker and weekly podcaster (*Write-minded* with cohost Grant Faulkner of NaNoWriMo), she publishes a weekly newsletter, *Writerly Things*, on *Substack* at brookewarner.substack.com and writes a regular column for *Publishers Weekly*.

Brooke Warner will be consulting on pathways to publishing, fiction or memoir concept and positioning, and publishing paths.



LESLIE ZEMECKIS

Leslie Zemeckis is a best-selling author, actress, and award-winning documentarian. Critically acclaimed films include *Behind the Burlly Q*, the true story of old-time burlesque in America which ran on Showtime; the award-winning *Bound by Flesh*, and *Mabel, Mabel, Tiger Trainer* and *Grandes Horizontales*. She has acted in film and television opposite Steve Carell, Tom Hanks, Richard Lawson, Colin Firth and Mickey Rourke. Nov 2024 she will be seen in Miramax's highly anticipated film *Here*.

How to Spice Up Your Book events, Ace Interviews and Talk to Media from an award-winning Author, Filmmaker and Book Reviewer.

AGENT PITCH SESSIONS

Curious about whether your project is ready for an agent? Agents will be hearing pitches from writers on Thursday and Friday afternoons from 3:30 to 6:00 p.m. Each pitch session is fifteen minutes long and costs US\$80. Please browse through the participating agents and their specializations to see what they are currently looking to represent.



MICHAEL CARR

Michael Carr is a literary agent with a background in editing and writing, based in San Francisco. He represents writers in a variety of genres, especially historical fiction, mystery and suspense, and science fiction/fantasy. Michael works carefully with clients to produce the cleanest, most professional manuscripts and enjoys teaching at conferences to help develop emerging writers. He speaks Spanish, Portuguese, and French. Before joining Veritas, he had professions as diverse as programming simulators for nuclear submarines and innkeeper in Vermont.

Michael Carr represents writers in a variety of genres, especially historical fiction, mystery and suspense, and science fiction/fantasy.

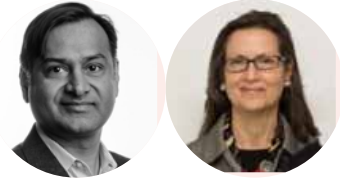
ANNA KNUTSON GELLER

Anna Knutson Geller has over twenty years of experience in the publishing industry, ranging from editor to literary scout to rights director to agent. In 2016, she founded Write View, a literary agency with a focus on practical nonfiction, spirituality, and inspirational memoir. She previously worked at Maria B. Campbell Associates and at The Book Group, and she has been on the faculty of the Columbia Publishing Course since 2011.

Anna Knutson Geller represents nonfiction, particularly spirituality, personal development and well-being, parenting, finance, and inspirational memoir.

SUSAN GOLOMB

Susan Golomb has been an agent of literary fiction and non-fiction for over 30 years. She founded the Susan Golomb Literary Agency in 1988 with Jonathan Franzen as her first client and joined Writers House in 2015. Her other authors include award winners and bestsellers such as William T. Vollmann, Rachel Kushner, Danielle Trussoni, Imbolo Mbue, Noah Hawley, Nell Zink, Glen David Gold, Janelle Brown, Thomas Mullen, Charles Graeber, Harry Dent, Yvon Chouinard, Angie Kim, Stephen Markley, Wayetu Moore, Lexi Freiman, Mira T. Lee, and more.



SAM HIYATE

Sam Hiyate is keen to discover new voices and help writers prepare their works for market and build lasting careers. In his past two decades with The Rights Factory, he has seen hundreds of book deals turn into bestsellers both locally and internationally. The host of the podcast, *Agent Provocateur*, he regularly appears at writers' conferences and also teaches publishing (Toronto Metropolitan University) and creative writing (University of Toronto). Hiyate also worked as editor and publisher.

Sam Hiyate represents clients in memoir, literary fiction, cross-genre fiction, and graphic memoirs/novels.

RITA ROSENKRANZ

A well established agent, Rita Rosenkranz represents almost exclusively adult nonfiction titles. Her wide-ranging list includes health, history, parenting, music, self-help and how-to, popular science, business, biography, sports, popular reference, cooking, writing, humor, memoir, spirituality, illustrated books, and general interest titles. She represents both first-time and seasoned authors. Rosenkranz works with major publishing houses as well as regional publishers that handle niche markets.

Rita Rosenkranz represents adult nonfiction almost exclusively. She is also prepared to advise on the publishing process, including genres outside nonfiction.

EVENTS

Thu., Feb. 13-Sat., Feb. 15 | 4:30-5:30 p.m. | HRM Gardens

The Americas Read

We have a brilliant and accomplished faculty, but it's hard for each of us to meet all of them. Here's another chance for you to become acquainted with more faculty members in an intimate setting, hearing them read from their own works. Head to the gardens and listen to some of today's best writers present their work.



Thu., Feb. 13-Sat., Feb. 15 | 5:00-6:00 p.m. | HRM Gardens

Author Readings/Open Mic

Author Readings is our new event that blends the talents of our local authors with the engaging energy of our daytime open mic sessions. Enjoy captivating works from both accomplished local writers and conference attendees. Whether it's poetry, prose, or something in between, this is your chance to share your writing with the Conference community. These events are a crowd favorite and truly not to be missed.

Thu., Feb. 13-Sat., Feb. 15 | 3:30-4:30 p.m. | HRM Gardens

Discussion Circle Conversations

Participate in engaging and robust discussions on some of the most relevant topics of our time as they relate to literature. Explore themes such as the ethics of AI in literature, cultural appropriation, and more. These sessions are open to all attendees who wish to engage in thoughtful and provocative conversations. Join us to share your perspectives and learn from others in a welcoming and intellectually stimulating environment.



Thu., Feb. 13 + Fri., Feb. 14 | 3:30-4:30 p.m. | HRM Gardens

Keynote Round Tables

Exclusively for "The Works" package holders, join a small, intimate round table discussion with a notable keynote speaker. This is the opportunity of a lifetime to learn more about their work and insights through personal interaction and in-depth conversation.

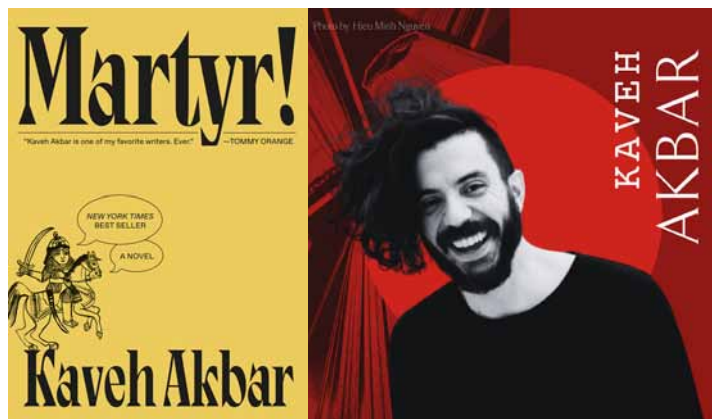
EVENTS

Wednesday, February 12 | 10:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m. | HRM Gardens

BIG Read

The Big Read is an opportunity for us all to immerse ourselves in a book by one of our esteemed keynote speakers. Read the book at your own pace, then join the book club event to discuss it with fellow attendees and gain deeper insights.

This year's book selection: *Martyr!* by Kaveh Akbar.



Wed., Feb. 12 + Thu., Feb. 13 + Sat., Feb. 15 | 9:00-10:30 p.m.

Bilingual Author Readings & Storytelling

Step outside the conference venue and into town for our lively and fun Bilingual Author Readings and Storytelling events! Hosted in both English and Spanish, these evenings will be filled with stories, poems, and creativity. Join us for an unforgettable night of community, entertainment, and cultural exchange in a welcoming atmosphere that celebrates language and creativity. OPEN TO ALL.

Lunch & Dinner

We are thrilled to unveil our enhanced dining experience for conference attendees, showcasing the vibrant culinary scene of San Miguel de Allende! We have organized lunch and dinner options in collaboration with local restaurants.

For lunch, attendees can enjoy diverse culinary delights from 10-20 restaurants around Real de Minas, with each restaurant offering a unique taste of the region.

In the evenings, we're excited to offer dinner nights out, providing attendees with the opportunity to sign up on our website by a specified date. We'll be partnering with local restaurants, offering attendees a chance to savor the flavors of San Miguel's iconic city center while getting to know other conference attendees.

We're committed to providing convenient and memorable dining options for our attendees while supporting local businesses and contributing to the cultural vibrancy of San Miguel de Allende. Join us as we celebrate the culinary richness of our host city during the conference!

EVENTS

Wednesday, February 12 | 5:00-6:00 p.m. | HRM Gardens

Opening Reception

Join us for a vibrant kick-off to the conference at our Opening Reception! Connect with fellow attendees, meet our esteemed speakers and faculty, and enjoy an evening filled with engaging conversations, delicious refreshments, and a warm, welcoming atmosphere. This is the perfect opportunity to set the stage for an inspiring and enriching conference experience.



Friday, February 14 | 8:00-10:30 p.m.

Fiesta

Immerse yourself in the vibrant spirit of San Miguel with our Mexican Fiesta! Enjoy a lively street food extravaganza featuring traditional flavors, savor tequila tastings, and dance to traditional music. Witness captivating traditional dances that celebrate Mexico's rich cultural heritage. This unforgettable evening promises a party like no other, filled with authentic experiences that embody the essence of San Miguel.

Sunday, February 16 | 8:00-9:00 p.m. | HRM Gardens

Closing Reception

Celebrate the conclusion of our eventful conference at the Closing Reception! Reflect on the memorable moments, share your experiences, and bid farewell to new friends and colleagues. Enjoy a delightful evening of entertainment, refreshments, and heartfelt farewells as we wrap up our time together in style. Don't miss this chance to toast to a successful conference and the lasting connections made.



Wednesday, February 12 | 8:00-10:00 p.m.

Poetry Fire Circle

Join us for an enchanting evening in the countryside, where we'll gather around a warm fire under the moon and stars to share poetry and savor delicious authentic Mexican cuisine. Tickets includes transportation, dinner, and poetry! Bring your favorite poem and immerse yourself in a night of creativity and connection.

Don't miss out on this magical experience!

ACTIVITIES

Every day | 8:00-9:00 a.m. | HRM Gardens

Wellness Offerings

For the first time, we're introducing wellness activities to enhance your conference experience. Begin each morning with yoga, breathwork, or meditation sessions by the reflection pond. These calming practices will help you center yourself and start your day with a sense of peace and clarity. You can also book special sessions with wellness practitioners such as tarot, Human Design, Mayan calendar reading, massage and more.



Wednesday, February 12-Saturday, February 15 | 3:30-6:00 p.m.
Sunday, February 16 | 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Mercado Cultural

Join us at the Mercado where you can experience the artistry and craftsmanship of San Miguel. The Mercado will offer you the opportunity to shop and explore a diverse range of offerings unique to San Miguel. Vendor offerings include local delicacies as well as local and indigenous arts and crafts. Additionally, we will feature our NGO partners, providing you with insights into local initiatives taking place in San Miguel.

Everyday | 5:00-6:00 p.m. | HRM Gardens

Happy Hour

Join us every evening for our exclusive Happy Hour from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m., where you can indulge in the finest selection of local beverages from our esteemed sponsors. Immerse yourself in the vibrant atmosphere of our Happy Hour, where you can mingle with fellow attendees and experience the rich diversity of San Miguel's local libations.



Wednesday, Feb. 12-Saturday, Feb. 15 | 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
Sunday, Feb. 16 | 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Bookstore + Coffee & Connection Corner

The hub of the Conference is the Bookstore and Coffee Lounge. A place to relax and connect with newfound friends and do some of the most interesting browsing you'll find anywhere. The bookstore will feature books by our keynote speakers, our distinguished visiting and local faculty members, and Literary Sala members. All items will be priced in Mexican pesos and may be purchased with a credit card.



Explore the dynamic culture and beauty of San Miguel de Allende with our range of excursions, available both before and after the conference, as well as during our Adventure Day on Saturday. Delve into the city's diverse experiences, from cultural immersions to thrilling outdoor adventures, tailored to suit every preference. Partnering with local vendors, we offer full-day and half-day excursions designed to showcase the best of San Miguel. Not only do these excursions enrich your conference experience, but they also contribute to the local economy. Create unforgettable memories of your time in San Miguel de Allende.

HALF-DAY HORSEBACK RIDING

The main canyon of the region and the ranches where our horseback adventures take place are located 30 minutes southwest from town. Once at the first ranch and after a comprehensive riding lesson, the ride begins. The first part of our excursion begins down in the mouth of the canyon and along the edge of the river. As we ride, we will have the opportunity to cross the river at several points, which is always great fun! Throughout the ride those who wish to have some exciting gallops will have several opportunities to do so. We also have a spectacular 20-minute rest stop halfway through this excursion, where we get to search for geodes along the riverbed or take photos right at the edge of its spectacular cliffs. It is also at this point that whoever wishes to will have the opportunity to rappel off the sheer 150 foot-high cliff faces! After the ride the ranch women will have a truly delicious, ranch-style meal waiting for us, which includes home-made tortillas, organic cheese & beans, quesadillas, nopales (cactus), rice, salad, guacamole & salsa, among other traditional dishes.

INTOWN HORSEBACK PUB CRAWL

If you really want to feel like cowboys of old then take a ride with us to explore the oldest and most historical traditional CANTINAS (swinging door saloons) in San Miguel on horseback! Be instantly transported back to times of old where you will enjoy San Miguel's urban landscape from this unique perspective. An experience truly reminiscent of the Wild West! We ride from one to the other, hearing funny anecdotes that the bartenders and the locals have to share and toasting to future adventures.

CAÑADA DE LA VIRGEN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

Join our expert guides on an exploration of the the amazing monuments left behind by an ancient civilization that reached these northernmost limits of what is known as Mesoamerica. There are more than 1,200 registered archeological sites in the state of Guanajuato, and of those sites Cañada de La Virgen is one of the most important and most highly visited. Come discover how the Cañada de La Virgen site served as a very important sacred ceremonial center, and as a burial ground for a very few and select elite. It also functioned as a highly precise solar and lunar clock and calendar! This amazing tour is followed up by a delicious ranch-style meal served by the ranch women.

HIKING AT THE CANYON

The hiking excursion takes a total of five hours to and from San Miguel, and includes transportation, two and a half hours of hiking time and rest stops, and one delicious ranch-style meal served right after the hike. The first part of this invigorating adventure takes us down along the canyon bottom for an amazing canyon river run. The rest stops are scheduled along the way at the most scenic locations so that guests can take full advantage of the most outstanding photo opportunities. The views from the cliffs upon reaching the canyon's rim are spectacular in every direction and are sure to take your breath away. The best thing of all might very well be the delicious, home cooked meal that the ranch women prepare for us at the end of our incredible journey!

HOT AIR BALLOON FLIGHT

We fly just about every day of the week, always in the early morning hours. We fly at sunrise to guarantee the best weather conditions. We meet at 6:00 a.m. (time and place to be confirmed). First, we take you to the edge of town where you will get to watch how the balloons and equipment are prepared. Once the Captain says we're ready, we launch into the sky floating effortlessly over San Miguel de Allende and its beautiful surrounding countryside. Sometimes we fly just a few meters from the ground and tree-tops, and other times we soar high above the clouds on different air currents.

VINEYARD (TRES RAÍCES)

The project was started in 2012 by planting the first vines, to start the wine production in 2016 and the construction of the main building to subsequently open its doors to the public in October 2018 when the first wine harvest was ready for consumption and commercialization. We are in the heart of the Bajío, where we promote enology, wine tourism, gastronomy and local development, which in conjunction allow us to delight each of your senses. Our restaurant with traditional cuisine is surrounded by more than 60 hectares between vineyards and a lake, to make your stay a delight to the senses.

ZIP LINES CIRCUIT

Another of the most exciting experiences you can have in San Miguel de Allende is our fantastic zip-line tour. An adventure full of exciting sensations and extraordinary emotions. Ride a total of seven zip lines and a suspension bridge. That's more than 1 km of adventure, between 70 and 80 meters high, in the most spectacular canyon of the "Los Picachos" volcano, the "Canyon of the Red Tail Eagle."

SAN MIGUEL WALKING TOUR

We will take a walk through the most interesting monuments of the city, which include the Parroquia de San Miguel Arcángel—the parish church—along with the incredible history of its architect Zeferino Gutiérrez. We will also visit the house of the great patriot Ignacio Allende. We will then visit the Temple of the Immaculate Conception and its old cloister, now known as Bellas Artes, today a school of fine arts. We will visit the Angela Peralta Theater and the old Plaza de la Soledad and the Paso del Camino Real. We cannot miss the Franciscan Monastic Complex and learning about the tireless work of early religious leaders. We will also talk about how the independence of Mexico was forged in the House of the Conspiracy. Experience San Miguel de Allende by walking through its streets full of magic and history.

HOT SPRINGS

You will be able to relieve your tensions and relax your muscles in one of the 10 hot spring pools of Escondido Place. In a luxurious environment, enjoy gardens, lakes and water lilies and, of course, relaxing pools, covered or out in the open. The spa has restaurant-bar service, although you can also bring your own food and use the barbecues in the picnic areas. There are also play areas for children. For a truly restorative experience, take advantage of the excellent spa and massage services available.

TRADITIONAL COOKING CLASS

In this unique culinary experience, we invite you to immerse yourself in the beauty of nature while enjoying a delicious home-cooked meal. Our picnic class takes place in a rural setting, surrounded by lush landscapes and fresh air. You'll be greeted by the tantalizing aromas of the food being prepared in our outdoor kitchen, where we use fresh, local ingredients to create authentic and flavorful dishes. During the class, you will learn traditional cooking techniques, such as grilling and slow cooking. Our star cook will guide you step by step in the preparation of classic country dishes, including tortillas, salsa, rice, flavored waters, etc. At the end of the class, you will sit down to taste the dishes that have been prepared with so much love and effort, while sharing laughter and conversations in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

ATOTONILCO

Known as Mexico's Sistine Chapel, the Santuario de Atotonilco is a vitally important church in the nearby hamlet of Atotonilco. Located 11 km north of San Miguel, Atotonilco is known for its role in the struggle for Mexican independence. National hero Ignacio Allende was married here in 1802, and eight years later he returned with Miguel Hidalgo and a band of independence rebels en route from Dolores to San Miguel to take the shrine's banner of the Virgin of Guadalupe as their flag. A journey to Atotonilco is the goal of pilgrims and penitents from all over Mexico, and the starting point of an important and solemn procession two weekends before Easter, when participants carry the statue of the Señor de la Columna to the church of San Juan de Dios in San Miguel. Inside, the sanctuary has six chapels and is vibrant with statues, murals and paintings. The church was named a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2008. It's free to visit the main part of the church, with its famous frescos, but a small entrance fee is required to visit the side-chapel with depictions of scenes from the Last Judgment.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Teen Workshops Program

Wed., February 12—Fri., February 14 | 3:00–6:00 p.m. | HRM Classrooms

The Teen Workshops are back at the San Miguel Writers' Conference! Sixty students from middle schools, telesecundarias, and high schools in San Miguel de Allende will take part in three days of writing workshops, a short-story writing contest, and reading activities. The best stories written by the students will be awarded e-readers. This year's selected book is *Liliana's Invincible Summer* by Cristina Rivera Garza, the Mexican winner of the 2024 Pulitzer Prize.

Interested in sponsoring this great youth program?
Send a message to directora@sanmiguelfestivalescritores.org



University Scholarship Program

For the third consecutive year, the San Miguel Writers' Conference is awarding scholarships to 25 university students from San Miguel de Allende to experience being part of an international conference. Students from UNAM Campus San Miguel, Universidad de León, and Instituto Sanmiguelense have reserved seats in the creative writing workshops, the keynote presentation by Jorge F. Hernández, the free events, and the open mics in both Spanish and English.

Interested in sponsoring this great scholarship program?
Send a message to directora@sanmiguelfestivalescritores.org

Free tickets/events

We are committed to expanding our Spanish-speaking program, with more workshops and events than ever before. We will commemorate our 20th anniversary by honoring our beloved home country, Mexico!

For the first time, all Spanish-speaking programs will be no cost to Mexican Nationals!

- 10 Free tickets for local writers and readers in San Miguel to attend two Spanish language workshop(s)/intensive(s).
- 200 free tickets to our local community to the Jorge F. Hernández keynote + 20 to all the other keynotes.
- Free events open to the public: panels, discussions, readings, The Americas Read

I11 Scene Building in Memoir and Fiction: Drafting a Dramatic Scene in Steps

SUSAN SUTLIFF BROWN | FICTION, MEMOIR

For those who have been trying to construct book-length projects in terms of chapters, Susan Brown, Ph.D., teaches the important distinction between a scene and a chapter. A “chapter” is made up of scenes, while a “scene” is a dramatic mini-narrative. We will study the essential elements in an effective dramatic scene and practice the steps for building one. This will save hours and hours and produce exciting results.

I12 Story Questions and Steppingstones: Generating Narrative Momentum in Novels, Memoirs and Screenplays

APRIL BOSSHARD | CRAFT OF WRITING

Without story momentum, readers stop turning pages. Whether writing a novel, memoir, or screenplay, writers need to design a structure that not only suits their particular project but also produces a falling-forward energy based on a reader’s desire to find out “what happens next.” This workshop introduces two powerful momentum-generating tools to help writers develop and control narrative momentum. Hands-on exercises will solidify understanding and guide writers to apply it to works-in-progress right away.

I13 Remembrance of Things Past: Making Memoir From Personal Experience

JENNIFER CLEMENT | MEMOIR

This class will discuss voice, structure, characterization, dialogue, and other literary tools that create art from personal experience. We will explore states of consciousness as part of the psyche, and discuss memoir—as opposed to biography—as a work of freedom. We will also discuss life experience—what T.S. Eliot called a “fragmentary whole.” Written work by participants will be workshopped, but an emphasis will be on creating new work in class through craft exercises and reading selections from renown memoirs.

I14 The Self and the World: Writing the Personal Essay

JOANNE B. MULCAHY | CREATIVE NONFICTION

What makes a personal story matter to readers? We can avoid the “so what?” question by reaching outward. Essayists often start with a story, then integrate exploration of diverse people and topics. We’ll write from our own experience and then turn to strategies that link our singular lives—the merely personal—to life in relationship to a broader world—the truly personal. We’ll look at the essay’s shape-shifting forms, including blogs, mosaics, and others by a range

I15 Leave Them Hanging: Creating Suspense in Crime and Mystery Novels

HOWARD SHRIER | FICTION

Crime and mystery is one of the most popular genres in contemporary fiction. In this workshop, led by a two-time winner of Canada’s highest crime-fiction prize, we’ll learn how to build suspense through careful plotting, taking our characters on a journey fraught with danger. We’ll explore a three-act dramatic structure allowing us to introduce our characters and plot elements, later fusing them together into a wild ride that leaves readers gasping for air as we approach the thrilling climax.

I 21 Social Media 101: How to Build Your Platform

SARA DIVELLO | PUBLISHING & MARKETING

Social media is a necessary, effective, and FREE tool that can be used to connect with readers. Having a solid social media platform and loyal followers not only makes an author more attractive to agents and publishers, but also helps sell books. Join PR-executive-turned-author Sara DiVello as she shares her favorite hacks on how to build an author brand and authentically engage with followers. She will demystify how to leverage this tool to meet our goals—what works, what doesn't, and why.

I 22 Embracing Uncertainty: A Generative Workshop of Discovery and Surprise

AMY GOTTLIEB | CRAFT OF WRITING

John Keats coined the term negative capability to describe the experience of “being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason.” When we invite a state of uncertainty into the writing process, we can find connections and resonances that can deepen our work. In this generative workshop, we'll consider the role of mystery in the writing process, following prompts leading us to places of discovery, surprise, and inspiration. This is an opportunity to slow down and discover new pathways in our work.

I 23 Let's Get Your Poetry Manuscript Finished, Polished, Published and Marketed: From Dream to Sales

JUDYTH HILL | PUBLISHING & MARKETING

Poet Judyth Hill will give us the nitty-gritty, low-down on the best, most necessary steps to organize, publish, and market a poetry manuscript, whether chapbook or full-length, with a special emphasis on new publishing models and opportunities. We'll discover how to expertly revise, select, and order our poems into an integrated, lively, and flowing manuscript. And we'll learn about new and traditional publishing paths, query letter/submission secrets, building our platform, and marketing as play and joy.

I 24 Live Edit: For Writers Ready, or Almost Ready, to Submit Their Work

ANN PATTY | CRAFT OF WRITING

A seasoned editor and publisher at major trade houses will “live edit” students' work, sentence by sentence, page by page and explain her suggestions for improvement. We will discuss the pages, submitted electronically in advance, as a group. Writers will observe how a professional editor assesses, judges and improves an author's work. It will be especially helpful for those who have a proposal or manuscript ready to show to agents or publishers. Since 30 minutes will be spent on each submission, class must be limited to 8 participants.

I 25 How to Write and Publish Your Children's Book

YING CHANG COMPESTINE | PUBLISHING & MARKETING

Ying Chang Compestine, leveraging her experience as a children's book author, will share strategies to help us embark on successful careers in children's book writing. We'll dive into the vibrant and inspiring world of children's book publishing as we learn about the different genres in children's literature, from picture books and chapter books to middle grade and young adult. We'll gain skills for crafting compelling stories and learn how to capture the voice of a child for our characters.

6-HOUR INTENSIVE CLASSES

Saturday, February 15
9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
(2-hr lunch break)
HRM Tents

I31 Finding Your True Story and Turning It Into Memoir

ANN HOOD | MEMOIR

Memoir is not autobiography. It is something more special, more personal. Autobiography tells the story of a famous or infamous person, from birth to the present, without culling the deeper stories within that life. Memoir finds those deeper, specific stories and the writer investigates them—what they mean, why they happened, why they matter. Through selected readings, writing prompts, and discussions of writing, memoirs, and your stories, we will find that story you need to tell and help you tell it.

I32 Defining Your Author Brand

LISA SHARKEY | PUBLISHING & MARKETING

Many authors have wonderful ideas for books, but most don't realize that every author is a brand. We'll learn how to figure out who is going to read your book and where to find your readers. Lisa Sharkey, SVP and Publisher at HarperCollins, has helped hundreds of authors hone brand-building skills to grow their audience in both fiction and non-fiction book publishing. We'll learn how to navigate the dynamic publishing landscape, structure your brand development, and frame your author platform for maximum exposure.

BILINGUAL TEEN WORKSHOPS

These Teen Writing Workshops are bilingual explorations of writing offered for teenage writers aged of all levels. Meant to introduce the fun of writing to younger writers, these workshops are led by writers who speak both English and Spanish and will allow students to write in the language they feel most comfortable. Come for the fun and joy of creativity and leave with a new outlook on writing!

WHEN: Saturday February 17, 2024 12:00–2:30

AGE: 12–18 years old

BILINGUAL: Spanish and/or English

COST: Sliding Scale from \$300–500 pesos for 2.5 hours. Proceeds go to support the Spanish speaking program.

Future Avatars and Meta Types in the World of Comics with Isis Rodríguez

ISIS RODRÍGUEZ | COMICS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS

Isis Rodríguez has over 20 years experience in comics and graphic novels. She will be giving a workshop in the creation of meta-types and avatars with the theme of “nepantla”. Nepantla is a Nahuatl word that means “in the middle of things,” and will be referencing this word with conflict and resolution. Isis will give a brief history of nepantla, meta-types and avatars. Examples of meta-types and avatars will be given to student where they will create their own interpretations. History and samples of typography and words will be introduced so that students can blend their meta-types and avatars with creative and unique letters and phrases to create imaginative pages of a comic.

A Look at Lyrical Poetry through Rap

OSCAR PLAZOLA | RAP AND POETRY

In this workshop we will analyze and discuss texts by poets from different eras, from Spanish classics such as Francisco de Quevedo to the Mexican Efraín Huerta. We will study poetic devices: metaphor, hyperbole, simile, hyperbate, etc. We will learn about the different forms of rhyme, as well as meter, and explore possible combinations, to finally create a poetic piece and set it to music. Learn how to use verse and rhyme. Write lyrics and put them to music. Learn more about great poets and rappers. This workshop is for anyone who likes Poetry and Rap.

W11 Intuitive Story Design: Creative Approaches to Narrative Structure

AMY GOTTLIEB | FICTION

When considering narrative structure, writers often lean on familiar models like Freitag's triangle, Save the Cat, Hero's Journey, and others. Yet structural choices are far more fluid, intuitive, and inventive. This workshop will introduce some innovative approaches to narrative, suggesting new ways to find the ideal structure for a book-length project. We'll have an opportunity to draft and share a visual map of our work-in-progress.

W12 The Perfect Storm: Devices for Creating Suspense in Literary Memoir and Fiction

SUSAN SUTLIFF BROWN | CRAFT OF WRITING

Literary fiction and memoir have always had less commercial success compared with commercial genre fiction, such as mysteries and romances. One way of making serious literature commercially viable is to take a page from mega-blockbusters and create enough suspense at the opening of a project to keep a reader up all night. Joyce scholar Susan Brown, also a student of trash lit, will show us effective devices for turning a serious literary project into a page-turner without sacrificing quality.

W13 Time in Memoir: A Chronology of Its Own

JUDY REEVES | MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY

This workshop looks at how writers control time in telling their story. Not every memoir is in chronological order. Most memoirs move both forward and backward in time, slip-sliding from past to present and back again. The most successful memoirs aren't simply a recounting of events, but the memoirist's discovery of the connections among events—not necessarily sequential—and the weaving of those events into a narrative that reveals a meaning deeper than a mere chronology of one thing happening after another.

W14 Maximize Your Literary Agent Pitch Session

ANNA KNUTSON GELLER | LITERARY AGENT

A literary agent who's been on the receiving end of many pitches will share tips and tricks on what makes a strong impression on agents, and what turns them off. Learn how to succinctly and professionally contextualize your book and pitch it authoritatively, improving your chances of receiving a request for material. Time will be allotted for practicing pitches, allowing you to go to your

pitch session with greater confidence and less nerves, and maybe even have a little fun while you're at it.

W15 Writing Through Grief: Bringing Our Broken-Open Heart to the Page

JUDYTH HILL | POETRY

Poetry often calls to us in transitional and difficult times: during times of loss, death, divorce. Our stories and emotions beg to pour onto the page. When we heal, we restore what feels broken to wholeness. Poetry can reknit the self: the process of choosing and weaving together words can re-story the self into a new wholeness: by giving our courageous, sorrowing hearts voice. Accompanied by transformative poetry, we'll write our way through grief ... to gift.

W16 Business Author's Workshop: Writing to Elevate Your Personal and Business Brand

KAREN TIBER LELAND | CREATIVE NONFICTION

This workshop is for business owners, entrepreneurs, executives, and CEOs aiming to elevate their brands through business writing. We'll learn to harness the power of books, blogs, and long-form social media for thought leadership, brand reach, and customer engagement. Through interactive exercises, we'll dive into motivations, best practices, and marketing strategies for our business content. We'll discover publishing pathways and engage in exercises to refine our narrative. Finally, we'll gain the confidence to use business writing effectively as a multifaceted branding tool.

W17 Joys of Mayan Poetry: Ancient and Contemporary

MICHAEL BAZZETT | PLEASURES OF READING

Our discussion, which will be full of examples and snippets of delightful work in translation, will illuminate how reading the poetry of the Maya, both ancient and contemporary, can cleanse our eyes and refresh our relationship with language. We'll begin with the ancient Mayan creation epic, "The Popol Vuh," and then vault forward into the 20th century to the work of Humberto Ak'abal, an indigenous K'iche' writer from the highlands of Guatemala.

W21 Learning to Love Revision

ANN HOOD | FICTION

The poet William Matthews said, “Revision isn’t cleaning up after the party; it IS the party.” When authors first start writing fiction, they might dread the revision process. However, revision is where all the magic happens in your stories. The early drafts, our “glorious messes,” need to be sloppy and shaggy, brilliant and confounding. Then revision begins. And that’s when writers make their stories sing. In this workshop, we will explore 10 practical tips for how to revise fiction.

W22 Speaking of Dialogue: Finding the Right Voice for Each Character

HOWARD SHRIER | FICTION

In this entertaining, informative workshop, acclaimed author Howard Shrier breaks down everything we need to write better dialogue that suits our characters and propels our stories. A former actor who trained at New York’s Circle in the Square professional workshop, Shrier will help us explore the influence of regional background, upbringing, education, job status, mental state, and situational awareness. We’ll come away better equipped to write scenes with glittering dialogue revealing our characters’ intentions on and beneath the surface.

W23 Essential Questions: Evoking Emotional Resonance With Your Readers From Ask to Answer

JENNIFER LEIGH SELIG | MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY

Essential questions are universal, archetypal questions that invite a reader to journey with the author toward satisfying and stimulating answers. In memoir, as well as fiction, they are questions authors are seeking to answer for themselves; for writers of fiction, they are questions each character carries with them, guiding their actions. In this workshop, we will define essential questions, argue for their crucial role in creating emotional resonance with readers, and offer participants a list of essential questions for their consideration.

W24 Ready, Set, Publish: Getting Your Writing (and Author Platform) Ready for Success

COURTNEY MAUM | PUBLISHING & MARKETING

From writing game-changing query letters to doing platform in a way that feels authentic (and even joyful) to dealing with feelings of envy in a notably competitive industry, author and book coach Courtney Maum will share the most important things she’s learned

from publishing her own books and working with ambitious writers. She’ll walk us through the most important milestones we’ll need to hit to meet our publishing goals.

W25 Books Are Movies: How to Use Screenwriting Tools to Write Your Novel

A.J. BERMUDEZ | SCREEN & PLAYWRITING

From concept to execution, this interactive workshop will explore how screenwriting tools can be effectively (and excitingly) leveraged toward other forms of writing, especially the novel. Among a number of key topics, we’ll explore everything from crafting initial materials to developing our project to making the sale. This workshop will help us leverage our natural proclivities toward cinematic writing, combining these with key industry tools. Ultimately, we’ll learn how to turn our most cinematic stories into cross-genre successes.

W26 Personal Essay as Resistance

TARA MCGUIRE | CREATIVE NONFICTION

There is so much injustice in the world, and it is the storytellers who will shape the narrative of history. Publishers of both news and literary publications are increasingly interested in the personal essay as a vital form of content that offers both political and artistic possibilities. In this workshop, we’ll explore how to integrate contemporary issues with craft to reach readers via an intimate lens. We’ll learn how our own life experiences and unique perspectives can inform a variety of narrative directions and structures.

W27 How the Light Gets In: Leonard Cohen’s Artistic Practice as Songwriter, Poet, and Novelist

AMY GOTTLIEB | PLEASURES OF READING

While Leonard Cohen is best known for his iconic songs, his poetry and fiction also shed light on his obsessions and influences. In this discussion, we’ll unpack selected song lyrics, poems, and prose, exploring how this beloved songwriter transcended boundaries of genre to deepen his artistic practice over a lifetime. We’ll work from a handout with lyrics, poems, and novel excerpts, inviting a discussion of how Cohen’s work in all these genres shaped his most iconic songs.

W3 1 Come Late, Leave Early: Building Scene Momentum with Timing

DANIELLE GIRARD | FICTION

In this intensely competitive publishing industry, a slow scene can be the death of an opportunity. Learning how to master the art of timing, of what the reader sees and when, can make a slow scene boil with tension. This skill can transform an average story into one that is compelling and highly marketable. We can practice this new skill on works in progress.

W3 2 Subtext: The Power of the Unspoken

ROBERT FALLS | CRAFT OF WRITING

Subtext, the hidden emotional truth in storytelling, enriches narratives across genres by engaging readers' minds. Led by theater director Robert Falls, this workshop explores techniques for creating layered narratives through writing exercises. We'll learn to add depth to scenes by incorporating undercurrents of meaning in action, dialogue, and characters' thoughts. By delving into characters' unreliability and what's left unsaid, we'll extend scenes beyond the written word, captivating readers with hidden layers of meaning.

W3 3 Craft Matters: Eight Tricks of the Trade Every Memoir Writer

Should Consider

JENNIFER LEIGH SELIG | MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY

Popular memoir teacher and award-winning author Jennifer Leigh Selig will focus on eight essential craft elements that make memoir pages come alive: sensory detail, dialogue, cultural references, interior monologue, tense and personal pronoun choices, metaphor, and the power of repetition. She'll illustrate each element with rich examples from popular memoirs. We'll leave the workshop with a toolkit of trade techniques to craft our memoirs-in-progress or polish our writing to make it shine even brighter.

W3 4 What Publishers Want (and Authors Need)

SAM HIYATE | LITERARY AGENT

Now my manuscript is complete, what do I do? How do I write a query letter that stands out? What are editors really looking for? Most importantly, how do I know my work is ready for submission? Sam Hiyate will answer these and many other questions as he tells us about the publishing market's needs, wants, and trends in the United States and internationally. There will be time to critique query letters from the class.

W3 5 Hinges, Swerves, and Voltas: How Poems Move

MICHAEL BAZZETT | POETRY

Given that "verse" comes from the Latin for "turn," the pivot at the end of the line is, on the most basic level, what makes a poem a poem. Using models both classic and contemporary, this playful, generative workshop will delve into the architecture of poems, from the possibilities opened by techniques as basic as enjambement to elements of reversal and surprise in content and point of view, where poems turn on a dime and open up whole new vistas.

W3 6 In Brief: Explorations in Short Nonfiction

JOANNE B. MULCAHY | MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY

Charles Simic calls them "memory fragments." Other writers describe "micro essays," "flash nonfiction," or simply "shorts." Like flash fiction and poetry, brief nonfiction is complete in itself, or it may be part of a larger structure. We'll read examples from several anthologies and the journal *Brevity* to see how different writers capture entire worlds in concise forms. We'll generate our own brief essays, memoirs, portraits, or travelogues.

W3 7 Transformative Eco-Poetry by Joy Harjo and Craig Santos Perez

CHERYL J. FISH | PLEASURES OF READING

In this workshop, we'll explore the powerful ecological and indigenous contexts of poets Joy Harjo, U.S. Poet Laureate and member of the Mvskoke Nation, and Craig Santos Perez, a native Chamoru (Chamorro) from the Pacific Island of Guåhan/Guam. Both poets meld experience with their ancestry, geographical situatedness, and spiritual and ecological accountability. With startling language and poetic magic that enlarges our relationship to plants, animals, and land, these poets have us reconsider assumptions.

W4 1 Perfect Your Beginnings: The First 500 Words

ANN PATTY | CRAFT OF WRITING

Most editors and agents, like most readers, make very quick decisions about whether to commit to a book. As an editor and publisher for major New York City trade houses for more than 30 years, Ann Patty sometimes rejected manuscripts without ever getting past the first paragraph or page. In this class, we'll discuss what makes a compelling beginning and analyze as a group the first 500 words of our own writing, submitted in advance. Class size is limited to 12 participants.

W4 2 Creating an Unforgettable Villain: What Writers Can Learn From Shakespeare

ROBERT FALLS | CRAFT OF WRITING

To master the art of creating a formidable antagonist, we turn to Shakespeare. In this workshop, led by award-winning director Robert Falls, we'll dissect Shakespeare's approach to villainy. We'll study iconic antagonists like Iago and Lady Macbeth to understand how their complex motives and actions create gripping narratives. Through character analysis and writing exercises, we'll learn to craft villains that challenge protagonists and captivate readers.

W4 3 Tell Me a Story: Using the Techniques of Fiction to Craft a Compelling Memoir

JUDY REEVES | MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY

When we say, "Tell me a story," what we really mean is "Transport me to another place and time where I can experience something interesting—maybe even captivating—with the characters." Memoir readers expect the storytelling qualities of fiction: character, plot, setting, description, dialogue, and scene. In this workshop, we'll explore such fiction techniques for defining story, theme, narrative arc, and point of view. We'll learn how to apply these techniques to our memoirs.

W4 4 Everyone's a Hero

MICHAEL CARR | LITERARY AGENT

It's said that everyone is the hero of his or her own story. However, the antagonist often wants the same thing as the protagonist. With a shift in storytelling, the antagonist could be our point-of-view character. Knowing this can help us write effective opposition to our protagonist. We will explore how to create villains who are

strong enough to stand up to our hero and who will stick with readers long after the last page has been turned.

W4 5 Writing for the Change You Want to See in the World: Be a Voice for What You Love

JUDYTH HILL | POETRY

This workshop is based on what inspired Judyth Hill to write the internationally famous poem "Wage Peace" and what she learned from writing it. It will be a high-energy, hands-on, how-to workshop with inspiring exercises and handouts jam-packed with stirring global poetry that speaks for, sings for, and brings change. We'll learn to write lyrically, passionately, and effectively for peace and climate attention; age, racial, and gender equality—whatever is important to us. We'll leave with exciting, usable tools to powerfully explore and offer our vision as activist-artists. Bring a work in progress (all genres welcome).

W4 6 Writing the Blank Spaces: Hybrid Forms and Autofiction in Memoir

TARA MCGUIRE | MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY

When Tara McGuire's son Holden died of an overdose, she felt compelled to write about the effect his death had on her—even though she didn't know what had happened. These "blank spaces" often block us from engaging with and completing personal narratives in which some facts are missing. This workshop will explore how to develop plot lines and shape scenes we've never witnessed. We'll learn craft devices to help navigate uncertainty and the ethical responsibility of personal stories.

W4 7 John Steinbeck: An American in Mexico

SUSAN SHILLINGLAW | PLEASURES OF READING

John Steinbeck's writings often explored cultural differences between the U.S. and Mexico. Over a third of his work is either about Mexico or includes Mexican characters, such as his 1935 novel *Tortilla Flat*. Steinbeck poses interesting questions about cultural engagement: from his 1940 trip to Baja with marine biologist Edward F. Ricketts, *Sea of Cortez* (1940), to three films he worked on, all located in Mexico: *The Forgotten Village* (1940), *La Perla* (1947), and *Viva Zapata!* (1952). We will explore Steinbeck's fascination with Mexico.

W5 1 The Eight-Point Plan: What Writers Need

to Know to Plot with Confidence

APRIL BOSSHARD | FICTION

Do you resist plotting? Does the process seem mysterious or intimidating? It doesn't need to be. Plotting can be one of the most creative and fun parts of the story-making process. With the underlying understanding that plots must meet the criteria of being causal, coherent, and credible, this hands-on workshop presents and plays with the eight essential elements we need to know before planning a plot, so we can move forward with clarity and confidence—and have some fun.

W5 2 Mining Personal Experience for Storytelling Gold

SHILPI SOMAYA GOWDA | FICTION

"Write what you know," an oft-repeated phrase, is an oversimplification, particularly if we hope to have long and varied careers. Instead, we must learn how to find those seeds of ideas in our personal lives and leverage our imaginations to amplify them into fully-fledged stories. In this workshop, we'll learn how to set our writing apart by telling the story that only we can tell—one uniquely steeped in our personal insights, perspective, and knowledge.

W5 3 Making Memoir Work: Tips for Creating Plot and Broadening Relevancy in Personal Narrative

COURTNEY MAUM | MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY

Whether you want to self-publish your memoir or you're aiming for a lucrative book deal with a major publisher, you'll leave this workshop understanding different approaches to structure for both essays and full-length books, as well as the "double timeline" approach for a propulsive plot.

W5 4 Plot Your Success: An Author's Guide to Crafting Your Winning Book Marketing Map

KAREN TIBER LELAND | PUBLISHING & MARKETING

In the competitive world of book publishing, success is often determined by an author's marketing prowess. This interactive workshop dives into proven book marketing strategies. We'll craft personalized marketing plans, leveraging online book tours, free and paid media coverage, podcasting, and social media to enhance our brand. We'll learn how to avoid common pitfalls and ethically embrace AI's power. We'll benefit from direct feedback on our

marketing ideas, preparing us to elevate our book's presence in the digital age.

W5 5 Creating a Writer's Life

LESLIE ZEMECKIS | PUBLISHING & MARKETING

No matter what stage of writing and publishing you're at, to have a sustainable career as a writer, one must create a writer's life. This workshop will prepare writers for a writing career beyond craft and will explore ways to develop a brand through social media, building a community, and learning to become comfortable doing publicity.

W5 6 Social Media for Shy Authors: How to Build Your Brand, Connect with Readers, and Sell More Books

SARA DIVELLO | PUBLISHING & MARKETING

What's a "brand," why do you need it, and how do you build one? What if social media feels icky, self-promotional, or too me-me-me? What should you post, how often, and when? What if you can't think of anything to say? How do you attract the #Bookstagram community (book influencers) and what about reaching readers? Whether you've been avoiding it, tentatively trying it, feel totally lost, or are actively looking to take your account to the next level, this workshop will empower you with the information and confidence to help you meet your goals. Having a solid grasp of social media and a flock of devoted followers will make you more attractive to agents and publishers, and, ultimately, help you sell more books.

W5 7 American Food Now: How We Became a Nation of Foodies.

RUTH REICHL | PLEASURES OF READING

Reichl has been called the Zelig of food. When Berkeley, California was becoming the gourmet ghetto in the early seventies, she was there. She moved to Los Angeles just in time to chronicle the creation of *California Cuisine*, and she was in New York as America discovered the joys of ethnic foods. Ruth Reichl has lived America's food journey, and she explores it all from a very personal perspective.

W6 1 Compose Like James Joyce: Save Time and Angst

SUSAN SUTLIFF BROWN | FICTION

Have you been tweaking the same opening 50 pages of your memoir or novel for months or even years? Save yourself potential angst and possibly years by following the steps used by the greatest writers to begin, revise, or accelerate a book-length project—memoir or fiction. Using models, prompts, and exercises, Dr. Susan Brown, a James Joyce scholar and sought-after writing coach, will guide you toward the freedom of a new and viable plan for approaching and completing your project.

W6 2 Your Hero's Journey: Revealing Character Through Action

HOWARD SHRIER | FICTION

In this fun, fast-paced workshop, we'll learn how to take protagonists on a journey, which, fraught with obstacles, makes them take actions revealing their character. We'll learn how to draw out their unique abilities, ideas, and values and show their hidden reserves of strength, resourcefulness, and will. We'll come away better equipped to turn our protagonists into living, breathing people who, with both abilities and flaws, climb past every difficulty until they have achieved their goals or fallen spectacularly short.

W6 3 Tackling Your Memoir: Seven Essential Steps to Courage and Craft

BETH KAPLAN | MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY

Memoir writers confront questions that can be paralyzing. Who am I to write a memoir? Which of many stories do I tell? Where do I start? What about family and friends, the painful stuff? What is the truth? Summoning both craft and courage can intimidate us. In this workshop, we'll learn how to pick our most compelling stories, get started, stay on track, and defeat the negative voices. We'll dig deep and write with power, clarity, and skill.

W6 4 Get Published: A Deep Dive into New Publishing Models and Author Pathways

BROOKE WARNER | PUBLISHING & MARKETING

In this workshop, Brooke Warner will walk us through what the new publishing landscape looks like. As one of the primary architects of the Independent Book Publishers Association's new Publishing MAP (Models and Author Pathways), which delineates nine different pathways for aspiring authors, Warner is uniquely positioned to provide us with a deeper understanding of what we need and want to know about book publishing, expenses, expectation-setting, the pros and cons of different models, and more.

W6 5 Kickstarting Your Creativity: Inspiring Yourself and Overcoming Writer's Block

MARSHA BARBER | CRAFT OF WRITING

We've all been there, even the most prolific of us. Some days the writing flows effortlessly. Other days ... well, you know. Fortunately there are exercises, prompts and techniques we can use to inspire great writing. In this workshop, we'll learn "freefall" and other techniques to enhance our creativity, get ideas flowing, and reengage with our work. After exercises designed to spark creativity, evocative prompts, and guided writing, we'll leave the workshop refreshed, with new ideas for creating future work.

W6 6 Building Authority: A Writer's Guide to Personal Branding

KAREN TIBER LELAND | PUBLISHING & MARKETING

This is a hands-on workshop for writers who want to distinguish themselves in an increasingly crowded marketplace. It emphasizes the importance of creating a consistent, compelling personal brand online and offline. Through the Brand Mapping™ process, we'll explore crafting authentic narratives, defining unique value propositions, and using strategic tools for creating a powerful personal brand. This workshop equips us with skills to enhance our visibility, connect with audiences, and protect and promote our writing, paving the way for professional success.

W6 7 How San Miguel Became an Arts Community

MAMIE SPIEGEL | PLEASURES OF READING

What brought hundreds of aspiring artists, young and old, to a tiny, little-known town in the remote mountains of Mexico in the second half of the 20th century? Why San Miguel de Allende? What was the magnet that transformed the village into a major center for the arts? We will learn how three men—a Mexican, a Peruvian, and an American—founded an art school that drove the dynamic for enriching the town. Mamie Spiegel, a gifted storyteller, will share her fascinating stories.

W7 1 Introduction to Deep Story Design: Story Structure and Character Development for Novels, Screenplays, and Memoirs

APRIL BOSSHARD | FICTION

Mastering the principles of story structure and character development is essential if we want to design stories with depth and resonance. In this workshop, we'll identify the steps underlying the basic story structure that applies to the novel, screenplay, and memoir, and we'll outline the stages of character growth that ensure a compelling and meaningful narrative. We'll be invited to apply these principles to our work in progress and will take away a solid understanding of our story's unique design.

W7 2 How to Write Exciting Scenes

PAMELA FINK | SCREEN & PLAYWRITING

What keeps a viewer glued to the seat? Through scene analysis, do's and don'ts, and creative exercises, we'll learn how to turn the dullest stories into something memorable. We'll leave with the tools we need to create scenes that stick to our audience's subconscious. By tapping into our sense of humor, empathy, and creativity, it is possible to transform our screenwriting and therefore the audience.

W7 3 Elevate Your Memoir: New Structures, Forms, Points of View, and Techniques in Memoir Writing

BROOKE WARNER | MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY

In this craft workshop, Brooke Warner will explore some of the outside-the-box writing we're seeing in memoir, inspiring us to take a new look at the structure, form, and approach to our stories. Memoir is evolving in revolutionary ways, and this class will use examples to showcase how we can integrate new types of thinking about craft into our own stories, motivating us to innovate on the page.

W7 4 Heart to Heart: Moving Your Poetry From Personal to Universal

MARSHA BARBER | POETRY

Have you ever written a poem about something close to your heart and wondered whether it would resonate with anyone else? A great irony of poetry writing is that work that digs deepest is often the most universal. When we share our humanity, others respond. This workshop will provide the tools to universalize poems that are close to the bone. We'll use interactive discussions, prompts, and writing exercises as we create poems that connect deeply with others.

W7 5 How to Write an Irresistible Nonfiction Book Proposal: Everything You Need to Know to Publish Successfully

RITA ROSENKRANZ | LITERARY AGENT

A nonfiction book proposal is one part art and one part science. There is a format and formula that gets enhanced by the individual writer's flair. The objective is to stand out from the deluge of proposals that prospective agents and ultimately editors get every day. This workshop will walk us through the process of crafting an irresistible proposal.

W7 6 Submitting and Dominating: A Toolkit for Getting Your Work Published

A.J. BERMUDEZ | PUBLISHING & MARKETING

In this highly informative session, we'll learn how to prepare, format, submit, organize, and track our work for publication. We'll cover key submission resources, platforms, documentation (cover letters, resumés, bios, artist statements), custom spreadsheets, and etiquette for addressing journal editors to effectively get work published.

W7 7 Reading Through the Literary Kaleidoscope: Novels With Rotating Perspectives

SHILPI SOMAYA GOWDA | PLEASURES OF READING

Reading a novel masterfully written from the perspectives of multiple family members can feel like piecing together a puzzle that parallels the complex reality of life. In this workshop, we'll cover several contemporary novels that enable us to learn about the complex ecosystem of a family through its multiple subjects. As readers, we'll learn how to hone our appreciation for stories that share perspectives within marriages, through generations, across borders, and even into the future.

FACULTY

MARSHA BARBER

W65, W74 | CRAFT OF WRITING, POETRY

Marsha Barber is an award-winning poet and a full professor in The Creative School at Toronto Metropolitan University, Canada. She is the author of four books of poetry, most recently *Kaddish for My Mother* (Borealis Press). She has, in addition, published dozens of articles, book reviews, memoirs, and essays. Barber has been invited to feature her poetry worldwide, including in Asia, the Middle East, and Europe.

MICHAEL BAZZETT

W17, W35 | PLEASURES OF READING, POETRY

Michael Bazzett is the author of four books of poetry, including *The Echo Chamber* (Milkweed Editions, 2021) and the chapbook *The Temple* (Bull City, 2020). Recent work has appeared in *Granta*, *Agni*, *The American Poetry Review*, *The Sun*, *The Nation*, and *The Paris Review*. His verse translation of the Mayan creation epic, *The Popol Vuh* (Milkweed, 2018) was named one of 2018's best books of poetry by *The New York Times*. He is the recipient of an NEA Fellowship.

A. J. BERMUDEZ

W25, W76

SCREEN & PLAYWRITING, PUBLISHING & MARKETING

A. J. Bermudez is an award-winning author and filmmaker based in Los Angeles and New York. Her work has been featured at Sundance, SXSW, the Yale Center for British Art, and the LGBT Toronto Film Festival, as well as in a number of literary publications. She's a winner of the Iowa Short Fiction Award, the Diverse Voices Award, the Steinbeck Fellowship, the Alpine Fellowship Writing Prize, and the PAGE International Screenwriting Award.

APRIL BOSSHARD

W51, W71, I12 | FICTION, CRAFT OF WRITING

Often called a "story whisperer" or "story genie," Bosshard is a workshop facilitator and story coach who has helped hundreds of writers develop and complete their projects. She has written fiction and nonfiction for traditional and independent markets and contributed to *The Great Book of Journaling* (Conari, 2022). Besides teaching workshops internationally and online, she works with individual clients as a story coach and developmental editor.

SUSAN SUTLIFF BROWN

W12, W61, I11

CRAFT OF WRITING, FICTION, MEMOIR

Susan Sutliff Brown shares ways to merge the methods of the masters with the secrets of bestselling commercial writers without sacrificing quality. She brings to her sold-out workshops 35 years as a college creative writing teacher; decades as a professional private writing coach, editor, book doctor, and collaborator for

critically acclaimed fiction and memoir; and a reputation for helping unpublished and prize-winning writers bring their projects from concept to manuscript. Learn more at susansbrown.com.

MICHAEL CARR

W44 | LITERARY AGENT

Michael Carr is a literary agent with a background in editing and writing, based in San Francisco. He represents writers in a variety of genres, especially historical fiction, mystery and suspense, and science fiction/fantasy. Michael works carefully with clients to produce the cleanest, most professional manuscripts and enjoys teaching at conferences to help develop emerging writers. He speaks Spanish, Portuguese, and French. Before joining Veritas, he had professions as diverse as programming simulators for nuclear submarines and innkeeper in Vermont.

JENNIFER CLEMENT

I13 | MEMOIR

Jennifer Clement is an award-winning novelist, memoirist and poet. Her novels include *A True Story Based on Lies*, *The Poison That Fascinates*, *Prayers for the Stolen*, and *Gun Love and Stormy People*. In addition to several poetry books, Clement also wrote acclaimed memoirs *Widow Basquiat* on painter Jean-Michel Basquiat, and *The Promised Party* on her early years in Mexico City and New York. She is President Emerita of PEN International and the only woman to hold that office since the organization was founded in 1921.

YING CHANG COMPESTINE

I25 | PUBLISHING & MARKETING

Ying Chang Compestine is an award-winning author and a national authority on culture and cuisine. She skillfully negotiated a six-figure, three-book deal on her own. Her young adult novel, *A Banquet for Hungry Ghosts*, is being adapted into an animated anthology horror series by IO8 Media. Compestine is also an inspirational speaker and former food editor for Martha Stewart's *Whole Living* magazine. She has authored 20 diverse books ranging from fiction and picture books to cookbooks.

SARA DIVELLO

W56, I21 | PUBLISHING & MARKETING

Sara DiVello is the author of *Broadway Butterfly: A Thriller*, an *Entertainment Weekly* Most Anticipated Book. In her former corporate career, Sara built and ran PR programs for multibillion-dollar companies. Sara currently co-chairs the Nantucket Book Festival, directs social media strategy for ITW (International Thriller Writers), and hosts the Mystery and Thriller Maven Author series in collaboration with Murder by the Book, one of the oldest independent bookstores in the U.S. She has hosted 450 interviews with authors from debuts to celebrities.

FACULTY

ROBERT FALLS

W32, W42 | CRAFT OF WRITING

Renowned theater and opera director Robert Falls achieved acclaim with his Broadway hits *Death of a Salesman* and *Long Day's Journey into Night*, which earned seven Tony Awards. He also cowrote and directed Elton John's *Aida*, and adapted Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* and Bolaño's *2666*. Inducted into the Theater Hall of Fame in 2015, Falls led Chicago's Goodman Theatre from 1986 to 2023, fostering its rise to international prominence with innovative productions and community initiatives.

PAMELA FINK

W72 | SCREEN & PLAYWRITING

Pamela Fink created the first Mexican LGBT web series, whose great popularity led to projects for companies like Netflix, National Geographic, Björk Digital, Disney, Sony Music, and more. Fink is currently teaching in the Master's Degree in Screenwriting program at Universidad de La Comunicación in Mexico City after being selected for a writing program by Cartoon Network and Warner Bros Discovery. She is currently promoting her latest documentary in official selection festivals around the world.

CHERYL J. FISH

W37 | PLEASURES OF READING

Cheryl J. Fish, who has been Fulbright professor in Finland, published her debut novel *Off the Yoga Mat*, in 2022. She is the author of poetry collections, *The Sauna Is Full of Maids* and *Crater & Tower*, and coeditor with Farah Griffin of *A Stranger in the Village: Two Centuries of African-American Travel Writing*. Fish's poems appear in *Hanging Loose*, *Terrain*, *Mom Egg Review*, and *New American Writing*. Her short fiction appears in *Cheap Pop*, *Iron Horse Literary Review*, and *Gargoyle*.

ANNA KNUTSON GELLER

W14 | LITERARY AGENT

Anna Knutson Geller has over twenty years of experience in the publishing industry, ranging from editor to literary scout to rights director to agent. In 2016, she founded Write View, a literary agency with a focus on practical nonfiction, spirituality, and inspirational memoir. She previously worked at Maria B. Campbell Associates and at The Book Group, and she has been on the faculty of the Columbia Publishing Course since 2011.

DANIELLE GIRARD

W31 | FICTION

Danielle Girard is the *USA Today* and Amazon number 1 best-selling author of 16 novels. Her books have won the Barry Award and the RT Reviewers' Choice Award. *White Out* was in the top 100 bestselling ebooks of 2020. In addition, two of her titles have

been selected for screen. Girard is also the creator and host of the *Killer Women Podcast*.

SUSAN GOLOMB

LITERARY AGENT

Susan Golomb has been an agent of literary fiction and non-fiction for over 30 years. She founded the Susan Golomb Literary Agency in 1988 with Jonathan Franzen as her first client and joined Writers House in 2015. Her other authors include award winners and bestsellers such as William T. Vollmann, Rachel Kushner, Danielle Trussoni, Imbolo Mbue, Noah Hawley, Nell Zink, Glen David Gold, Janelle Brown, Thomas Mullen, Charles Graeber, Harry Dent, Yvon Chouinard, Angie Kim, Stephen Markley, Wayetu Moore, Lexi Freiman, Mira T. Lee, and more.

AMY GOTTLIEB

W11, W27, I22

FICTION, PLEASURES OF READING, CRAFT OF WRITING

Amy Gottlieb's debut novel, *The Beautiful Possible*, was a finalist for the Ribalow Prize, Wallant Award, and National Jewish Book Award. Her fiction and poetry have been published in many journals and anthologies, and she has presented her work at the Canberra Writers Festival, Sydney Jewish Writers Festival, AWP, New York Public Library, and elsewhere. She lives in New York City, where she teaches fiction workshops and works with individual writers on book projects.

SHILPI SOMAYA GOWDA

W52, W77 | FICTION, PLEASURES OF READING

Shilpi Somaya Gowda is *The New York Times* bestselling, award-winning author of four novels: *Secret Daughter*, *The Golden Son*, *The Shape of Family*, and *A Great Country*. Her novels, which deal in themes of culture, identity, immigration, family dynamics, and the American dream, have been translated into over 30 languages and have sold more than two million copies worldwide.

JUDYTH HILL

W15, W45, I23 | POETRY, PUBLISHING & MARKETING

Judyth Hill, poet, editor, author of nine poetry books and the world-famous poem, "Wage Peace," is chair of the PEN International Women Writers Committee, San Miguel PEN President Emerita, editor-in-chief of Wild Rising Press, codirector of Poetry Mesa, and an Anusara Yoga special subjects instructor. Described by the *St. Helena Examiner* as "energy with skin" and by the *The Denver Post* as a "tigress with a pen," she leads writing workshops and Muse on the Move global literary adventures.

FACULTY

SAM HIYATE

W34 | LITERARY AGENT

Sam Hiyate is keen to discover new voices and help writers prepare their works for market and build lasting careers. In his past two decades with The Rights Factory, he has seen hundreds of book deals turn into bestsellers both locally and internationally. The host of the podcast, *Agent Provocateur*, he regularly appears at writers' conferences and also teaches publishing (Toronto Metropolitan University) and creative writing (University of Toronto). Hiyate also worked as editor and publisher.

ANN HOOD

W21, I31 | FICTION, MEMOIR

Ann Hood is the author of over a dozen novels including best-sellers *The Knitting Circle*, *The Obituary Writer*, *The Book That Matters Most*, and *Somewhere Off the Coast of Maine*. Her five memoirs include *Comfort: A Journey Through Grief* and *The Stolen Child*. Her essays and short stories have appeared in *The Paris Review*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Atlantic*, *Food and Wine*, *National Geographic Traveler*, and many more. Hood teaches in the MFA in Creative Writing program at The New School.

BETH KAPLAN

W63 | MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY

Beth Kaplan is the author of five books: two memoirs, a memoir-in-essays, a biography, and a guide to memoir writing that is the textbook for the nonfiction writing courses she has taught for 30 years at two universities. A former actress and winner of University of Toronto's Excellence in Teaching award, she produces a curated nonfiction reading series and both a podcast and a Substack newsletter about memoir writing.

KAREN TIBER LELAND

W16, W54, W66

CREATIVE NONFICTION, PUBLISHING & MARKETING

Karen Tiber Leland is an author, media personality, speaker, and businesswoman. The founder of Sterling Marketing Group, a branding and marketing strategy firm, she is the best-selling author of 13 books, including the latest, *The Brand Mapping Strategy: Design, Build and Accelerate Your Brand*. She writes regularly for Inc.com and has been interviewed by *The Today Show*, *CNN*, *Fox Business News*, and *Oprah*. She has spoken for TEDx, Harvard, The American Society of Journalists and Authors, and *Forbes*.

COURTNEY MAUM

W24, W53

PUBLISHING & MARKETING, MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY

Courtney Maum is the author of five books, including the groundbreaking publishing guide that *Vanity Fair* recently named one of

the 10 best books for writers, *Before and After the Book Deal*, and the memoir *The Year of the Horses*, chosen by *The Today Show* as the best read for mental health awareness. A writing coach and educator, Maum's mission is to help people hold on to the joy of art-making in a culture obsessed with turning artists into brands.

TARA MCGUIRE

W26, W46

CREATIVE NONFICTION, MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY

Tara McGuire's first book, *Holden After & Before: Love Letter for a Son Lost to Overdose*, is a hybrid work in memoir and fiction exploring grief, motherhood, and the overdose crisis. It was a finalist for the City of Vancouver Book Award and a "Best Book of the Year" in *The Walrus*. Her essays have appeared in *Chatelaine*, *The Globe and Mail*, *Geist* and on CBC Radio.

JOANNE B. MULCAHY

W36, I14

MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY, CREATIVE NONFICTION

Joanne B. Mulcahy taught creative nonfiction at Lewis and Clark College in Portland and in community settings in the United States, Northern Ireland, and Mexico. Her writing appears in *Creative Nonfiction*, *Hyperallergic*, *The Writer's Chronicle*, and numerous anthologies. She has received awards from the British Council, Fulbright-García Robles, New Letters, and Oregon's Literary Arts. She authored *Remedios: The Healing Life of Eva Castellanoz*, *Writing Abroad: A Guide for Travelers* (with Peter Chilson), and *Marion Greenwood: Portrait and Self-Portrait* (2025).

ANN PATTY

W41, I24 | CRAFT OF WRITING

Ann Patty worked in New York trade publishing for 35 years. She was founder and publisher of The Poseidon Press (a Simon & Schuster imprint) and executive editor at Crown Publishers and Harcourt. She was the editor of Steven Millhauser's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Martin Dressler* and Yann Martel's Booker Prize-winning *Life of Pi*. Her memoir, *Living with a Dead Language: My Romance with Latin*, was published by Viking Penguin in 2016. Her essays have appeared in both print and online publications.

JUDY REEVES

W13, W43 | MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY

An award-winning writer and teacher, Judy Reeves has published four books on the craft, including *A Writer's Book of Days*, *Writing Alone/Writing Together*, and *Wild Women, Wild Voices*, and a memoir, *When Your Heart Says Go*. She previously taught at UCSD Extension and has led community-based writing practice groups for 30 years. A faculty member of the Southern California Writers' Conference, she teaches at writing conferences internationally and at San Diego Writers, Ink.

FACULTY

RUTH REICHL

W57 | PLEASURES OF READING

Ruth Reichl is an American chef, food writer and editor who, for ten years, was the editor-in-chief of *Gourmet Magazine*. In addition to two decades as a food critic for the *Los Angeles Times* and the *New York Times*, Reichl has also written cookbooks, memoirs and novels. She was culinary editor for the Modern Library and has won six James Beard Foundation Awards.

RITA ROSENKRANZ

W75 | LITERARY AGENT

A well established agent, Rita Rosenkranz represents almost exclusively adult nonfiction titles. Her wide-ranging list includes health, history, parenting, music, self-help and how-to, popular science, business, biography, sports, popular reference, cooking, writing, humor, memoir, spirituality, illustrated books, and general interest titles. She represents both first-time and seasoned authors. Rosenkranz works with major publishing houses as well as regional publishers that handle niche markets.

JENNIFER LEIGH SELIG

W23, W33 | MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY

Jennifer Leigh Selig is an LGBTQ+ teacher, book publisher, and author whose writing career spans nearly four decades. Her most recent book is *Deep Memoir: An Archetypal Approach to Deepen Your Story and Broaden Its Appeal*, a companion to her cowritten Nautilus Gold award-winning book, *Deep Creativity: Seven Ways to Spark Your Creative Spirit*. Her publishing company, Mandorla Books, is also home to several award-winning titles. Selig is frequently an invited speaker at international events.

LISA SHARKEY

I32 | PUBLISHING & MARKETING

Lisa Sharkey is the senior vice president and publisher of the new HarperCollins imprint, Harper Influence, where her team acquires high profile non-fiction spanning popular culture, from general lifestyle and entertainment to stories of survival and inspiration. Whether in the fields of science, medicine, nature, music, lifestyle, spirituality, cooking, design, or news-driven narratives, the defining theme of her books surrounds cultural impact and relevance. A creative pioneer across multiple media, Lisa has overseen the acquisition and publication of more than seventy-five *New York Times* Bestsellers.

SUSAN SHILLINGLAW

W47 | PLEASURES OF READING

Susan Shillinglaw has written extensively on the life and work of John Steinbeck, including *Carol and John Steinbeck: Portrait of a Marriage*, *On Reading The Grapes of Wrath*, and *A Journey into Steinbeck's California*. She recently edited a collection

of essays on *Travels with Charley* and completed a study of Steinbeck's landscapes, forthcoming from Timber Press. She is Professor Emerita of English at San Jose State University, where she taught for 37 years, and, for 18, was Director of the Center for Steinbeck Studies.

HOWARD SHRIER

W22, W62, I15 | FICTION

Howard Shrier is a two-time winner of Canada's highest crime fiction prize for best first novel (*Buffalo Jump*, 2008) and best novel (*High Chicago*, 2009). A native of Montreal, Shrier was named Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine's "top find of 2012." His six books of fiction have received starred reviews in *Library Journal* and *Publishers Weekly*. He has taught creative writing at University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies and now mentors writers working on manuscripts.

MAMIE SPIEGEL

W67 | PLEASURES OF READING

Mamie Spiegel is an artist, historian, and long-time resident of San Miguel de Allende. She authored a carefully researched and lavishly illustrated book, *San Miguel de Allende: Colonial Society and the War of Independence*, available at the Biblioteca Publica de San Miguel. Like her lectures, the book is as much a visual experience as it is an intellectual one. Mamie has lectured on the colonial society of San Miguel, the life and work of David Alfaro Siqueiros, and the remarkable poet Sor Juana Inez de la Cruz.

BROOKE WARNER

W64, W73

PUBLISHING & MARKETING, MEMOIR & PERSONAL ESSAY

Brooke Warner is publisher of She Writes Press and SparkPress, president of Warner Coaching Inc., and author of six books, including three on memoir. Also a TEDx speaker and weekly podcaster (*Write-minded* with cohost Grant Faulkner of NaNoWriMo), she publishes a weekly newsletter, *Writerly Things*, on *Substack* at brookewarner.substack.com and writes a regular column for *Publishers Weekly*.

LESLIE ZEMECKIS

W55 | CRAFT OF WRITING

Leslie Zemeckis is a best-selling author, actress, and award-winning documentarian. Critically acclaimed films include *Behind the Burly Q*, the true story of old-time burlesque in America which ran on Showtime; the award-winning *Bound by Flesh*, and *Mabel, Mabel, Tiger Trainer* and *Grandes Horizontales*. She has acted in film and television opposite Steve Carell, Tom Hanks, Richard Lawson, Colin Firth and Mickey Rourke. Nov 2024 she will be seen in Miramax's highly anticipated film *Here*.

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SOCO AGUILAR

TE2, TE6 | SCREENWRITING

Soco Aguilar is an independent writer, film and animation producer, and screenwriter working from San Miguel de Allende, Mexico City, and Austin. She is an award-winning Mexican filmmaker who writes and produces live-action and documentary feature films.

Soco's experience includes producing documentary content for PBS, BBC, and Discovery Channel, as well as other independent projects. In 2008, she won the Ariel (the Mexican equivalent of the Oscar) for Best Animated Production for *La leyenda de la Nahuala* (2007), which has become a classic on Netflix. The film influenced a series acquired by Disney in 2021. Universal Pictures distributed two other feature films: a live-action film, *Todo Incluido / All Inclusive* (2009), and a 2D animated film, *Nikté* (2009).

The first documentary Soco produced solo, *No Turning Back* (1994), was filmed in Chiapas, Mexico, and focused on the genesis of the Zapatista movement. In 2020, *The New Yorker* named *El diablo nunca duerme* (1995) by Lourdes Portillo as one of the 62 films that have shaped the art of documentary. Lourdes was her mentor, and this was the first film she helped produce. Today, Soco is marketing her latest project: *Si quieres que te amen, ama*, a live-action feature film she wrote and will produce, created to appeal to a broad, intercultural audience. Soco is also an adjunct professor of film and an advisor at the Tecnológico de Monterrey.

VERÓNICA FLORES, VF LITERARY AGENCY

TE2, TI2 | PUBLISHING

Verónica Flores began her professional career as a reporter, editor, and director of various cultural media outlets. She is the author of the book *Eduardo Mata a varias voces* (2005). During her journalistic career, she interviewed notable figures such as Octavio Paz, E.M. Cioran, Rufino Tamayo, Gabriel García Márquez, Juan Goytisolo, Juan Soriano, Salvador Elizondo, and Esther Seligson, among others.

For 16 years, she served as the editorial director of Tusquets Editores México, where she edited emblematic collections for contemporary literature such as *Andanzas*, *Tiempo de Memoria*, *La Sonrisa Vertical*, *Ensayo*, *Metatemas*, *Comic*, and *MAXI*.

In 2015, she founded VF Literary Agency, the only agency of its kind in Mexico, representing over 60 authors. She teaches literary workshops and has been invited to give talks, keynote lectures, and diplomas on editing and the trade of copyright in renowned institutions.

DANIEL GUTIÉRREZ

TI1 | SONGWRITING

Daniel Gutiérrez is a musician, composer, and vocalist of the rock band La Gusana Ciega. Passionate about music, especially rock, he started playing guitar at the age of 15 and realized it was his passion, leading him to enter the music scene in a cover band. At 18, he decided to form his own rock band, which is now internationally recognized. Currently, Daniel is also the creative director of the publishing house Soy Hit Publishing, co-founder of the recording studio Naranjada Records, and director of Pasión y Futuro A. C., an organization that helps young bands establish themselves as small businesses. Daniel has composed music for films such as *El Cielo en tu mirada*, *A la mala*, and *Abolición de la propiedad*. La Gusana Ciega was formed in the late '80s and has since had a long history of recognition, tours, and productions, maintaining it as a reference in Spanish rock. In 1996, they recorded their first album, *Merlina*. Their discography includes more than eleven studio albums, with Latin Grammy nominations in 2015 and 2022 for Best Rock Album. The band consists of Daniel Gutiérrez (vocals), Germán Arroyo (drums), and Luis Ernesto Martínez Novelo (guitar).

CAMILA SÁNCHEZ

TE, TE5 | MEMOIR

Born in Mexico City in 1990, Camila Sánchez holds a degree in journalism, with diplomas in journalism and human rights from the Tecnológico de Monterrey and Harvard. She has a master's degree in creativity and literary appreciation. She began her professional career as part of the editorial team at Foro Tv. She was a broadcaster for the news program *Hipervínculo* on MVS Noticias and the director of cultural content at Ibero 90.9. From 2018 to 2022, she hosted the program *Inspira* on Ibero 90.9, promoting the country's emerging cultural scene.

For years, she has written reports and articles on topics related to feminism, gender violence, the decriminalization of marijuana, and the preservation of indigenous cultures. Since 2022, she has been the editorial director of *Newsweek en Español*, with monthly distribution in Mexico, and oversees the editorial content for associated countries: El Salvador, Guatemala, and Argentina. She currently hosts the podcast *Busca el Cómo*, about creativity, available on streaming platforms like Spotify, YouTube, and Apple Podcast.

In 2022, she opened the bookstore *Una boutique de libros* in San Miguel de Allende, aiming to create a haven for the reading

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community through a curation focused on literary works by Latin American women writers. In 2023, she published her first novel, *Oídos de palo*, which focuses on the central theme of child sexual abuse and its inevitable terrible aftermath. In 2024, she is set to publish her non-fiction book *Busca el Cómo*, about creative consciousness, aiming to encourage creativity in everyone and to demystify creativity as something exclusive to artistic careers.

RAFAEL SEGOVIA

TE4, TI3 | POETRY, TRANSLATION

Rafael Segovia is a Mexican poet, writer, and translator with extensive experience in teaching, cultural management, social activism, and the practice of arts, including writing and stage directing. As a cultural manager, he has held positions such as the director of Casa del Lago at UNAM, cultural attaché in Montreal, Canada, director of Teatro Ocampo in Cuernavaca, and State Coordinator of Performing Arts in the State of Morelos. He has been an active teacher in literature, languages and translation, history of ideas, communication, film and audiovisual, photography, and theater at universities, colleges, and cultural dissemination institutions.

He has received several awards, including the National Independent Theater Prize, a Research Grant from the Institute of Philological

Research at UNAM, a Literary Translation Grant from FONCA, and a Cultural Co-investment Grant from FONCA, and he has been selected for the International Seminar on Literary Translation at IFAL, translation and writing residencies at ECLA Aquitaine, France, translation residencies at CNL/CITL in France, the First Inter-American Prize for Literary Translation from the University of Veracruz/Aquelarre Publishing, and a Residency Grant from Überschätzen Looren, Switzerland.

His works include *Travesía de la noche* (1979/2023), *Doble espejo* (poetry, unpublished), *El retablo de los poetas* (theater, 1986), *La belleza que matamos* (novel, unpublished, 2023), and theatrical productions such as *Diálogos con dioses olvidados* (1984), *Cábala poética* (1985), *La importancia de llamarse Ernesto* (1986), *Pascua* (1987), and *Excepto las nubes* (1992).

Rafael has published texts including literary and theatrical criticism, poetry, essays, cultural analysis, and cultural policy. His writings can be found in magazines such as *Plural*, *Revista de la Universidad*, *Semanario Cultural de Novedades*, *Revista de Bellas Artes*, *Les Cahiers du Chemin* (Gallimard), *La Orquesta*, *Escénica*, *Revista Palos*, *Tópala*, *Letras Libres*, *Gaceta UNESCO*, *Media International Australia*, *IDC de Sao Paulo*, Brazil, among others.



Want to stay in San Miguel longer? Want to continue honing your craft? Want the inspiration to continue? Check out our post-conference retreats, where you can immerse yourself in intensive workshops, connect with fellow creatives, and explore the vibrant culture of San Miguel. Whether you're looking to refine your skills, gain new insights, or simply recharge, our retreats offer the perfect opportunity to deepen your experience and keep the momentum going. Don't miss this chance to extend your journey and make the most of your time in this beautiful city!

The Literary Blockbuster: James Joyce Meets Judith Krantz

with Susan Sutliff Brown | 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. + 6:00-8:00 p.m. | 17 people max.

Where is the deep and meaningful novel that's also an addictive page-turner? Give your beautifully crafted and thematically significant narrative the chance to also be a mega-blockbuster. Are you the writer the world is waiting for who can merge the metaphysics and craft of *Moby Dick* with the page-turning power of *Jaws*? This workshop will inspire you to be that writer and show you how to begin. With Susan Brown, PhD, learn how to transcend the artificial and fathomless polarity between commercial writing (which sells and has a wide readership) and profound and stunning literary fiction (which can be difficult to publish and has a minute readership) to create what readers want and haven't seen in eighty years—a literary blockbuster. Study the secret handshakes of the greatest authors and the best-selling commercial writers and learn to combine the best practices of both without sacrificing quality. With models, prompts, exercises, and feedback sessions, Susan Brown will guide you to begin a new project or revise your existing novel into what readers really want: a prize-winning literary narrative that's also an addictive read. The morning sessions will be devoted to an interactive class and then writers will be invited to share their work-in-progress in an optional reading session at night.

Deep Poetry: Writing Wild Adventure in San Miguel! Writing WILD San Miguel Jaunt!

with Poet, Judyth Hill | Mon-Wed: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.; Thr-Fri: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. + 4:00-6:00 p.m. | 12 people max.

A fabulous Poetry Adventure designed to offer profound leaps in your poetry skills & Judyth-curated FAB experiences in my FAV places!! All Genres Welcome! This innovative and inspiring Writing Adventure will galvanize the luscious journey of developing your Voice, style, whether novel, memoir or poetry or essay collection. Vitalize and refresh your work and yourself, as journals and pens in hand, we meet in the sweet morning air for a deep dive into poetry craft—building attention to image and musicality, practicing traditional poetry forms—& my jampacked handouts! Then we embark on lively quests to fine tune our seeing, listening, scent awareness, and sense of touch, so the exquisite, vivid textures of our place come into our writing. Plus! I'll be sharing San Miguel history and stories...offering us an intimate, vivid experience of our place to weave into our work! We'll get easy with coming to the page, develop practices of verbal alertness, of generosity, passion, and vision. We'll eat while writing, write while walking; pour ourselves onto the page! You'll leave with a thick bundle of fresh approaches, ready and invigorated to hop aboard the freight train of your literary longing, and ride successfully to your desired destination!

Our Adventures May Include: El Charco del Ingenio Botanical Gardens, Instituto Allende, ArtWrite at the galleries of Fabrica La Aurora, Candelaria at Parque Juarez, Toy Museum, Galería Atotonilco and the Sanctuary of Atotonilco, Nirvana, Bellas Artes, Chocolates y Churros San Agustín, La Santísima Trinidad, Hotel Villa Santa Mónica, the Jardín, a noted Rooftop.

Plus! Each writer will receive hour of **personal mentoring time** with me, either in person, or as online editing on a project of their choice.

I bring diverse literary experience and a large skillset to the table: poet, performer, cookbook author, memoirist, newspaper columnist, and food writer, life-long writing teacher and editor: I offer you my energy, capabilities, and insight ... and to these I add a rich and succulent feast of San Miguel adventures to inspire us, to write within, and invite you to fill pages and pages with vivid, inventive, lyrical writing that crosses genres, ignites up your creativity, adds profound tools to your toolbox!

Recharge your Soul Tanks and amp your skills on our WildWriting Adventure!

Discover the Perfect Balance: 5-Day Women, Wellness & Writing Retreat in San Miguel de Allende

Alicia Falango, Jodi Pincus, Danielle Trussoni | Monday at 3:00 p.m. to Friday at 2:00 p.m. | 11 people max.

Join us for an immersive 5-day wellness retreat in the breathtaking heart of San Miguel de Allende. This retreat is specifically designed for writers who seek mindfulness and meaning while deepening the craft of writing. This unique retreat combines the tranquility of a wellness experience with the creative inspiration of a writing workshop, providing you with the perfect environment to nurture body, mind, spirit while expanding your creative and artistic practice.

Set in a stunning location, our retreat offers a serene escape from your everyday routine, recenter and make discoveries about yourself and your writing. Throughout the retreat, you will engage in daily mindfulness practices, guided meditation, yoga sessions and more to promote self-care and mental clarity. Our expert facilitator, *New York Times* bestselling author Danielle Trussoni will lead interactive writing workshops that inspire creativity, encourage reflection, sharpen your craft as you discover deeper meaning in your work.

Highlights of the retreat include:

Daily Mindfulness Practices: Start each day with calming meditation and yoga to center your mind and body.

Interactive Writing Workshops: Danielle will be leading her popular workshop “Writing the Story of Your Life,” an intensive exploration of writing and self that will deepen craft, inspire ideas, and create the conditions for new projects.

Self-Care Tools: Learn practical methods to take care of your mental and physical well-being, ensuring you can sustain your writing journey.

Inspirational Surroundings: Immerse yourself in the beauty and cultural richness of San Miguel de Allende, a UNESCO World Heritage site, providing endless inspiration for your writing.

Community: Connect with like-minded writers and form lasting friendships in a supportive and nurturing environment. A safe space for women to heal and grow into the next chapter of their lives and work.

Whether you're an experienced writer or just beginning your journey, this retreat offers a transformative experience that combines creativity, self-care, and mindfulness. Embrace the opportunity to rejuvenate your mind, body, and soul while taking your writing to new heights.

Reserve your spot today and embark on a journey of self-discovery and creative exploration in the heart of San Miguel de Allende.

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