

2017 AWP Conference Schedule

Thursday, February 9, 2017

9:00 am to 10:15 am

R112. [The Long and Winding Road: Book-Length Poems and Poetic Sequences](#)

Marquis Salon 9 & 10, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Two

(Matthew Thorburn, Shanna Compton, [R. Erica Doyle](#), [John Gallaher](#), Katrina Vandenberg)

The long poem is experiencing a renaissance as ambitious poets seek a wider space in which to explore multiple narratives, voices, themes, and experiences, and reflect the complexity of both private and public life. Discussing their recently published and forthcoming books, the panelists share creative strategies, discuss their influences (other poets and poems, other works of art), and provide inspiration for those considering or already undertaking this creative journey.

R113. [Uneasy Alliances: Poets Laureate & Government Agencies](#)

Marquis Salon 12 & 13, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Two

(Patricia Clark, [Jeff Knorr](#), Joyce Sutphen, L.S. Klatt, JoAnn Balingit)

Poets laureate of US cities, a county, and two states will share projects and successful agendas as well as challenges. Are these roles merely official spokespersons for city, county, or state? Or are there ways to be a subversive force for art, youth, and culture? Hear ideas of how these positions may be used as platforms for civic change. Panelists (various ages and geography) share plans for keeping poetry in the public eye—as diverse and inclusive platforms for the literary arts.

R121. [Writing in a Time of Terror and Environmental Collapse](#)

Archives, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Four

(Imad Rahman, Jacob Shoes-Arguello, [william wenthe](#), Anne Sanow, Jacqueline Kolosov)

How do writers give shape to the experiences of war, terrorism, and the disregard for life endemic on this planet? Muriel Rukeyser believed that denying the responsiveness to the world could bring forth "the weakness that leads to mechanical aggression... turning us inward to devour our own humanity, and outward to sell and kill nature and each other." Given global terrorism and the spoliation of the planet, the stakes in being able to respond are terribly high. Writers working in poetry, prose, and hybrid forms, will discuss their ways of meeting this challenge in their works past and present, including the difficulties they face and the sources from which they take inspiration.

R130. [Contemporary Mythopoetics](#)

Room 204AB, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

(James Allen Hall, Jennifer Chang, Sarah Blake, Jehanne Dubrow, [Gary Jackson](#))

Reginald Shepherd wrote that myths "are a reservoir of cultural knowledge, hopes, fears, and passions... charged materials that each poetic generation can mine and remake." By remaking these "charged materials," the poet reforges the cultural forces that delineate what it means to be human. The panel explores the craft of myth and archetype in our own work and in poems we love, to better understand how re/making myths can change and expand our concept of the mythopoetic and of the self.

R131. [Know Your Place: Great Lakes Literary Arts Organizations on the Impact of Location](#)

Room 204C, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

(Karen Schubert, [Kelly Fordon](#), Janine Harrison, Lee Chilcote, [David Hassler](#))

As literary arts centers, we consider ways we are shaped by community. How does our landscape frame the search for funding? What local problem might we take on? Who is our target audience, and what idiosyncratic barriers might they face? How does information move? Should we avoid duplicating other organizations? What is the artistic context and density of our place? Join nonprofits, new to seasoned, for a discussion on knowing the neighborhood and being responsive to a local community.

R134. [AWP Program Directors' Plenary Assembly](#)

Room 207B, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

All AWP program directors should attend this meeting to represent their programs. Ira Sukrungruang, Chair of the Professional Standards Committee, will present the results of AWP's survey of students and alumni. David Haynes, Chair of the Inclusion Initiative Committee, will report on the committee's work. The plenary assembly will be followed by regional council meetings of program directors for further discussions of the survey and Inclusion Initiative.

10:30 am to 11:45 am

R139. [Which Comes First, Activism or Artist?](#)

Marquis Salon 5, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Two

(George Higgins, [Reginald Dwayne Betts](#), Martin Espada, Airea D. Matthews, Eleanor Wilner)

Confronted with social wrongs, should we, as writers, feel obligated to use our art to advocate for our gender, race, or a political cause? What goes into that choice and what is at stake? If we do so use our art, how do we face injustice and still craft aesthetically compelling poems? Five poets explore the question raised at Fisk in 1966 between Robert Hayden and the Black Arts movement—Am I a poet first, or am I a black poet?—and explore how this question applies to all of us today.

R143. [Singular Opportunity: Teaching Creative Writing to One-Time Learners](#)

Marquis Salon 12 & 13, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Two

(Luke Rolfes, [Jeff Hess](#), Jess Bowers, Jenny Yang Cropp, Christopher Merkner)

How do instructors approach students who may or may not receive more creative writing education in their lifetimes? Sometimes bright-eyed, sometimes skeptical nonmajors and elective-takers arrive on day one of many writing workshops and courses. These one-time learners may have enrolled to chase a hidden passion, go for an easy A, or simply try their hand. Panelists will discuss expectations for what we can offer these learners and strategies to help our teaching resonate in the long term.

R163. [AWP Program Directors' Southern Council](#)

Room 204C, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

If you are a program director or codirector of an AWP member creative writing program in the following regions, you should attend this session: Alabama, Arkansas, Caribbean Islands, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Your regional representative on the AWP Board of Trustees, Ira Sukrungruang, will conduct this meeting.

12:00 pm to 1:15 pm

R169. [Imagining the Essay](#)

Marquis Salon 1 & 2, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Two

(Rebecca McClanahan, Lia Purpura, Ander Monson, Lauret Savoy)

Imagination, which might be defined as unfettered curiosity, a hunger for inner adventure, and a willingness to incarnate in the other, is at the heart of the essayist's craft. On this panel, four essayists/teachers of the form (representing personal, lyric, narrative, and hybrid subgenres) discuss ways to imagine into one's work by reconceiving structure and time, inviting contradictions and collisions, attending to the strangeness of fact, and moving aurally and physically with language.

R187. [Bite Hard: A Tribute to Justin Chin](#)

Salon F, Washington Convention Center, Level One

(Jeffrey McDaniel, Timothy Liu, Beth Lisick, [David Daniels](#), Adrienne Su)

Five poets/teachers engage Chin's work from a wide range of angles, including his association with performance art and slam poetry, his tangling with issues of Asian identity and sexuality through his poetry and hybrid prose, his tactical use of humor to disarm the reader as he explored illness and living with AIDS, his zeroing in on where the personal becomes political, and his Baudelaire-like blending of the elegant and profane.

R192. [The Poet Confronts History: The Art of Research for Creative Writing](#)

Room 202B, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

([Robert Strong](#), [Cole Swensen](#), [Brian Teare](#), Jessica Jacobs, Honorée Fanonne Jeffers)

Writers are increasingly exploring historical events and archives for material, often to engage with the diverse, and sometimes silenced, voices of our past. Our panelists, poets known for their work with history, discuss creativity in the research process, venues for publication, and strategies for landing research-oriented writing fellowships. Moderated by the editor of the Poetic Research column at *Common-place*, the journal of early American history and culture.

R197. [We All Have to Start Somewhere: How Bad Writing Gets Good](#)

Room 207A, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

(Melissa Stein, [Richard Bausch](#), [Tayari Jones](#), Natalie Diaz, Nick Flynn)

Five intrepid poets and fiction writers defy shame to share work they thought they'd put far behind them, at the same time exploring: How do we know what's good or bad, in our writing or in others'? What does it mean to outgrow our own work, and what can we learn from the writers we used to be? What leads us to write dreadful stuff, even now? And what alchemy turns cringeworthy words into strong, enduring work? Warning: This panel promises to be immensely entertaining.

1:30 pm to 2:45 pm

R202. [Asian-American Generations at Coffee House Press](#)

Marquis Salon 3 & 4, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Two

(Karen Yamashita, Bao Phi, Vi Khi Nao, [Sun Yung Shin](#), [Evelina Galang](#))

Since its founding, Coffee House has striven to make its publishing list as diverse as America. This has meant publishing many authors from "underrepresented" groups, but in particular it's become known for publishing some of the most exciting Asian-American writers in the country. Younger generations have been drawn to the press because they have been inspired by those mentors that came before them. These writers talk about influence and what it means to share a publisher and a community.

3:00 pm to 4:15 pm

R252. [Transforming Adverse Audiences to Verse: Lessons Learned from the NEA Big Read](#)

Room 102B, Washington Convention Center, Level One

([Melisa Cahnmann-Taylor](#), [Kimiko Hahn](#), Amy Stolls, Lisa Bowden, Joy Harjo)

What can poets and educators do to improve poetry's public image? How can we engage members of our community who say they don't read, like, or "get" poetry? The NEA Big Read celebrates its tenth anniversary as a federally funded program designed to help communities read and discuss a single book of literary merit. Panelists, including NEA Big Read grantees, directors, and writers, discuss creative and activist strategies that are inclusive of and attract diverse audiences.

R254. [Evidence Research and Imagination: Using Research to Illuminate, Shape, and Expand Creative Writing](#)

AWP Bookfair Stage, Exhibit Halls D & E, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

(Mary Rockcastle, Paisley Rekdal, Peter Geye, Joni Tevis)

Research can inspire writers to move beyond the limits of the self and to remain alert for knowledge. The panel will take a multigenre approach to writing creatively using research: as a source of inspiration; a tool for developing characters, plots, settings, and texture; a way into a deeper understanding of the material; a structural device; and a means to increase credibility. We will also share useful research practices and ways of integrating research effectively into the text.

R259. [Celebrating 15 Years of American Lives: A University of Nebraska Press Reading](#)

Room 203AB, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

([Joey Franklin](#), John W. Evans, [Sonja Livingston](#), [Barrie Jean Borich](#), [Joy Castro](#))

To celebrate fifteen years of publishing American voices, the University of Nebraska Press showcases five authors of literary nonfiction who represent the broad spectrum of backgrounds, generations, and writing styles indicative of the series. Working in diverse forms and points of view, these authors provide glimpses into singular American lives, and their work coalesces into a richly textured portrait of our contemporary culture.

4:30 pm to 5:45 pm

R274. [The Independent Press Anthology: Focusing, Editing, Organizing, Designing, Publishing, and Marketing](#)

Supreme Court, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Four

([Lucille Lang Day](#), Diane Lockward, [Bryce Milligan](#), Claire Ortalda, [Wendy Barker](#))

You have a great idea for an anthology but doubt that Penguin Random House will be interested. Will anyone publish it? How will you define and reach your audience? How will you and a publisher interact to create a book worthy of your vision? To address these questions, editors and publishers representing four independent presses—Scarlet Tanager Books, Wings Press, Terrapin Books, and PEN Oakland Publications/Heyday—will share their experiences ushering a wide range of anthologies into the world.

R288. [A Reading by 2016 Guggenheim Fellows in Poetry](#)

Room 202A, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

([Beth Bachmann](#), Rick Barot, Deborah Landau, [Jericho Brown](#))

Often characterized as "midcareer" awards, Guggenheim Fellowships are intended for men and women who have already demonstrated exceptional capacity for productive scholarship or exceptional creative ability in the arts. These recipients from the class of 2016 showcase the geographic, cultural, and aesthetic diversity of the latest fellows in poetry.

6:00 pm to 7:15 pm

R303. [Two-Year College Creative Writing Caucus](#)

Room 204C, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

([Kris Bigalk](#), Denise Hill, Simone Zelitch, Marianne Botos, Mary Lannon)

Are you teaching at a two-year college or interested in learning about two-year college teaching? Come to our

annual caucus meeting, where we discuss the issues you want to talk about: diversity, job opportunities, creative writing programs, pedagogy, literary magazines, and more.

Friday, February 10, 2017

9:00 am to 10:15 am

F113. [I Survived—and Thrived: Conference Veterans Discuss the Benefits and Drawbacks of Writing Conferences](#)

Marquis Salon 12 & 13, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Two

([Eric Sasson](#), [Sian Griffiths](#), Todd Kaneko, Amina Gautier, [Rosebud Ben-Oni](#))

Ernest Hemingway said, "Writing, at its best, is a lonely life. Organizations for writers palliate the writer's loneliness but I doubt if they improve his writing." We're not so sure he's right. This panel assembles veterans of the Bread Loaf, Sewanee, Tin House, Kundiman, and other conferences to discuss what one can and cannot expect. Do the benefits outweigh the costs? Are these simply writing "summer camps," or can the writer anticipate tangible results to her craft, critique, and community?

F122B. [The Lyric Invitation: Readers as Collaborators](#)

Room 101, Washington Convention Center, Level One

(Julija Sukys, Travis Scholl, [Patrick Madden](#), Beth Peterson, Desirae Matherly)

To call a text a lyric essay is not to define its form or structure: like authors, lyric essays come in all shapes and sizes. Instead, the term lyric essay is a means of identifying a series of writerly moves: fragments, as in Maggie Nelson's *Bluets*; silences, as in Jenny Boully's *The Body*; and juxtapositions, as in Anne Carson's *Nox*; that invite a reader to make sense of a text. This panel asks if calling an essay lyric is a way of accepting a writer's invitation to collaborate.

F132. [Ecofiction: Spreading Ecological Literacy Through Stories](#)

Room 206, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

(Laura Hitt, Priyanka Kumar, Pamela Christie, Ann Pancake, [Elise Blackwell](#))

Stories are powerful tools for inciting social change. What role do stories play in spreading ecological literacy and scientific information? How do we craft narratives that foster ecological thinking and combat ecophobia? This panel will explore how several environmentally conscious writers address the natural world and our place within it through narrative, weaving ecological concepts seamlessly into novels and short stories that entertain, move, and inform.

10:30 am to 11:45 am

F144. [The Manifesto Project: A Reading and Conversation](#)

Supreme Court, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Four

([Tyler Mills](#), [Jillian Weise](#), Vandana Khanna, [David Groff](#), Rebecca Hazelton)

What does a poetic manifesto look like in a time of increased pluralism and relativism? How can a manifesto open a space for new and diverse voices? Forty-five contributors wrote manifestos and chose their own poems for The Manifesto Project, a new book from the University of Akron Press. Here, four contributors read their poems and discuss the act—their declarations of aesthetic and literary and political principles.

F157. [Four Way Books Poetry & Fiction Reading, Part 1](#)

Cody D. Todd Memorial Stage, Sponsored by USC, Exhibit Halls D & E, Convention Center, Level Two

(Karen Brennan, Jen Levitt, April Ossmann, Grace Bonner, Nathan McClain)

Reading with Four Way Books' authors of poetry and fiction.

F160. [National Monuments: The Poetry of Contested Spaces](#)

Room 202B, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

([Chris Santiago](#), Craig Santos Perez, [Aimee Suzara](#), [Heid E. Erdrich](#), [Brandon Som](#))

The US has 121 protected areas known as national monuments, many of which can be found in Washington, DC. A distinguished panel of poets considers these natural and man-made landmarks as conservation sites, as poetic subjects, and as contested spaces of living Native American, Mexican American, Asian American, and Pacific Islander cultures. The panel will also consider national monuments in the broader sense of the myth-making of nation states and ongoing struggles over canon formation.

F162. [Crafty: Four City University of New York MFA Graduates Read from Their Work](#)

Room 204AB, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

(Walter Mosley, Philip Klay, Helen Philips, [Kimiko Hahn](#), Rajiv Mohabir)

The playful, disruptive side of the imagination is embodied in the trickster figure and City University of New York MFA students and alumni take the trickster's lead, intent on shaking things up. They also continue the

university's legacy of diversity, from class and national origin to cultural background to subject matter. MFA program graduates from Brooklyn, City, Hunter, and Queens Colleges display their craftiness—after all, the mischief is in the telling.

12:00 pm to 1:15 pm

F177. [From the Margins to the Mainstream: Mixed Writers on Representation](#)

Monument, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Four

([Emily Perez](#), [Sun Yung Shin](#), Nina McConigley, Ammon Medina, Glenn Shaheen)

Writers who straddle multiple identities—Arab American, Ecuadorian/White, Indian/Irish, Mexican/White, Transnational Korean Adoptee—examine how race and culture translate into their work and writing communities. How do mixed identities compete and cooperate: for airtime, authority, and claims to authenticity? In what ways might mixed writers pass or pander? How might editors and publishers include mixed voices without either exoticizing or erasing minoritized positions?

F192. [American Smooth: A Tribute to Rita Dove](#)

Room 202B, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

([Aimee Nezhukumatathil](#), [Jericho Brown](#), Robin Coste Lewis, Natasha Tretheway, [Rita Dove](#))

For over forty years, Rita Dove's storied career earned her a Pulitzer Prize, the position of US Poet Laureate, a National Humanities Medal, and a National Medal of Art. Among Dove's many contributions to American letters is the vast and lasting impact on poets all over the nation. This diverse panel of poets celebrate and pay homage to Rita Dove's continued legacy and influence as poet, teacher, and trailblazer. Rita Dove herself finishes the session with a brief reading and speech.

1:30 pm to 2:45 pm

F201. [New Writers Award 45th Anniversary Reading](#)

Marquis Salon 1 & 2, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Two

([David James Poissant](#), [Tarfia Faizullah](#), Ander Monson, [Brad Watson](#), [Kim Addonizio](#))

The Great Lakes Colleges Association's New Writers Award is one of North America's oldest, most celebrated first book prizes. Now in its forty-fifth year, the award has launched the careers of Alice Munro, Louise Erdrich, and Jorie Graham, among many others. To commemorate the award, five winners from three decades read their poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. The reading is followed by a Q&A.

F203. [Looking Outward: Avoiding the Conventional Memoir](#)

Marquis Salon 5, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Two

(Steve Woodward, [Paul Lisicky](#), Belle Boggs, [Angela Palm](#))

All too often, memoir falls into a familiar, conventional pattern of confession and redemption. But how do you tell a personal story when life doesn't conform to that shape? And how can a writer with a variety of interests incorporate those subjects into a personal narrative? Three Graywolf Press nonfiction authors discuss their approaches to writing about life—and subjects as disparate as infertility, nature, friendship, science, grief, and art—in personal and intimate detail.

F214. [The Transnational Novel: Decolonizing Fiction](#)

Capital & Congress, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Four

([Robin Hemley](#), Lisa Ko, [Xu Xi](#), [Evan Fallenberg](#), [Sybil Baker](#))

In a time of the largest mass migration of humans since World War II, the transnational novel seems more relevant than ever. Four authors who have written transnational novels discuss the impetus behind writing in the form and its challenges and rewards. They also discuss how to approach perspective and craft when writing as well as the attendant writing life that often accompanies it.

F231. [Surviving the End Times: Finishing a First, Second, or Fifth Book](#)

Room 207A, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

([Michele Morano](#), [Philip Graham](#), Kathleen Rooney, James Canon, Sarah Dohrmann)

Most writers understand the warp of space and time by the way distance grows the closer we get to the end of a book manuscript. These five panelists, who have authored novels, memoirs, volumes of poetry, and essay and story collections, offer a variety of perspectives and practical tips for crossing the finish line. Panelists also draw on their experience with trade publishers, university presses, foreign rights, and movie options to discuss where and how to publish.

3:00 pm to 4:15 pm

F239. [Susan Sontag and the Authority of Authorship](#)

Marquis Salon 6, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Two

(Sven Birkerts, Eula Biss, Mara Naselli, Lynne Sharon Schwartz)

Susan Sontag was a celebrity intellectual, a writer of essays and fiction. Her searing mind and irrepressible appetite to understand the world shaped Sontag's authorial persona in ways that drew both admirers and

critics. As an essayist she feared neither aphorism nor provocation, and freely argued with herself over the course of her career. The panelists discuss Sontag's authorial strategies in the context of her time and her legacy for contemporary writers and essayists.

4:30 pm to 5:45 pm

F290. [Writers Organizing the Future](#)

Salon F, Washington Convention Center, Level One

([Kimiko Hahn](#), Zakia Henderson-Brown, [Elizabeth Bradfield](#), Christopher Shannon)

As the planet spins into deeper social and environmental crises, how can writers participate in finding solutions? Whether we care or not, our voices are out in the world. Panelists explore writers' unique tools and social connections and see what has worked in the past and what could be in the mix? Issues include the environment, labor, and grassroots organizations with or without a cultural component. Is action a writer's responsibility? No, no more than any other citizen.

F292. [Making Canons, Losing Friends: On Making, Revising, Critiquing and Reading Anthologies](#)

Room 202B, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

([Stephen Burt](#), John Kulka, Carmen Gimenez Smith, Cate Marvin, [Sina Queyras](#))

In theory, collecting new writing should be simple: you pick what you consider best. In practice, the practice involves complex, urgent questions about race, gender, style, privilege, geography, fairness, fame, and finances. It's also awkward: when can you pick your friends? Five writers, critics, editors, and publishers who have made US and non-US anthologies of poetry, essays, and fiction consider their pitfalls, secrets, and rewards.

F299. [Qualifying the Quantitative: Grading Methods and Alternatives](#)

Room 208AB, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

(Luke Rolfes, Robin Gallaher, Christopher Merkner, Ande Davis, Alyssa Striplin)

Instructors, especially new ones, often feel we can assess which submitted stories, creative essays, or poems should receive a grade of A, B, C, or D in our minds, but marking these scores on creative work carries far more anxiety, connotation, and weight. What substitutes exist for traditional grading methods? Panelists discuss how students respond to alternative and modified assessment modes, the research behind these methods, and how to choose a style that best suits an instructor's needs.

6:30 pm to 8:00 pm

F314A. [Reception for Salmon Poetry's Spring Titles](#)

Gallaudet Room, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level One

Salmon Poetry enters its 36th year with outstanding collections by Joyce Sutphen, Jon Tribble, Jeffrey Skinner, Robert Fanning, Adam Tavel, Alice Pettway, Art Stringer, Ron Houchin, Diann Blakely, Jo Pitkin, Adam Hughes, Drew Blanchard, Estha Weiner, Larry O. Dean, Jeffrey Thompson. A Celebration!

Saturday, February 11, 2017

9:00 am to 10:15 am

S117. [The International Writer-Teacher](#)

Liberty Salon L, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Four

([Raphael Dagold](#), Jane Lewty, Patty Paine, [Xu Xi](#), [Collier Nogués](#))

Increasingly, US writers recognize that writing and teaching exist in an international context. This panel of writers teaching in English-language universities in Hong Kong, Singapore, Qatar, Kyrgyzstan, and Amsterdam share insights about a range of issues raised by teaching abroad, including how an international setting affects creative writing pedagogy, institutional and cultural differences in teaching writing outside the US, and how one might seek such a job in the first place.

S131. [Social Media: Breaking Barriers for the Marginalized, the Remote, and the Academic Outsider](#)

Room 204C, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

([Kelly Thompson](#), [Sandra Gail Lambert](#), Vanessa Martir, Michele Filgate, [Alice Anderson](#))

Five authors who write from the edges present ways, both practical and emotional, that social media has advanced their careers and craft. Class, disability, gender, education, location, and race are among the barriers to accessing a writing community. But social media can connect those of us who exist at the margins or outside of the academic literary world to editors, publishers, journals, conference leaders, and other writers. It can even serve as an education in itself.

10:30 am to 11:45 am

S137. [Does Gender Matter? Wrestling with Identity and Form in the Golden Age of Women's Essays](#)

Marquis Salon 1 & 2, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Two

(Jocelyn Bartkevicius, [Marcia Aldrich](#), [Barrie Jean Borich](#), Kyoko Mori, Jericho Parms)

In 2014, *The New York Times* asked if it's a golden age for women essayists. Cheryl Strayed gave a qualified yes. But while a wave of women's essays is shaping the literary scene, women are underrepresented in journals and the standard-bearer, *Best American Essays*. Our panel explores the literary fallout from this paradox, the shape-shifting nature of essays, why it's tricky to identify as a woman writer, the effects on our work when asked to write as women, and the complications of invisibility.

S160. [Orion's 35th Anniversary: Nature Writing at the Edge](#)

Room 202B, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

(H. Emerson Blake, Pam Houston, [Aimee Nezhukumatathil](#), [Dorianne Laux](#), Beth Ann Fennelly)

For thirty-five years, *Orion* has become a focal point in an extraordinarily rich period of nature writing. *Orion* magazine was founded with the conviction that humans are morally responsible for the world in which we live, and that the individual comes to sense this responsibility as he or she develops a personal bond with nature. These diverse writers read work that shares this conviction and share thoughts about *Orion's* place in the past, present, and future of our natural and literary landscapes.

12:00 pm to 1:15 pm

S177. [Breaking the Silence: Writing Infertility and Pregnancy Loss](#)

Monument, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Four

(Molly Spencer, Donna Vorreyer, [Marcene Gandolfo](#), Sally Rosen Kindred, Kelly Hansen Maher)

There are losses for which language seems inadequate or risks being too sentimental, and this particular loss bears a history of silence. Join five writers of diverse backgrounds who will discuss poetry as a way to embody the ambiguity that makes this grief unlike other grief. Poetry often addresses death, but this is the poetry of threshold, of disrupted beginnings, and the darkness that also presides at the gates of life. A panel with readings explores the remarkable language for this loss.

S197. [The Librotraficantes: Defying the Censorship of Banned Books](#)

Room 207A, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

(Gianna Mosser, Martin Espada, [Luis Rodriguez](#), Tony Diaz)

In 2010, Arizona state legislators signed into law HB 2281, a ban on teaching Mexican American Studies. In Houston, Texas, a group of Chicano writers, poets, artists, and activists hatched an idea: They would bus those banned books into Tucson. "Librotraficantes," they'd call themselves—book smugglers. Tony Diaz will speak about founding the movement, and Luis Rodriguez and Martín Espada will relate how their works were banned by the Arizona legislation as well as read from the banned books.

1:30 pm to 2:45 pm

S227. [We Go On Saying Thank You: A Tribute to W.S. Merwin](#)

Room 204AB, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

([Michael Wieggers](#), Naomi Shihab Nye, [Maurice Manning](#), [Chase Twichell](#))

A celebration of W.S. Merwin, whose poetic works have won praise and high honors over seven decades. Poets will pay tribute to Merwin with a discussion of his work and career, including readings from two new books: *Garden Time*, a new collection which Merwin composed via dictation to his wife after losing his sight, and a new edition of Merwin's 1967 collection *The Lice*.

S232. [Best Reading Ever: Crafting Literary Events in Nontraditional Spaces](#)

Room 208AB, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

(Timothy Denevi, Andre Perry, Sarah Baline, Chris Maier, Emma Snyder)

Is there a secret to pulling off a successful literary event? Why do so many well-planned readings fall flat? How can we rethink traditional assumptions of structure and venue in fresh, invigorating ways? Panelists will share their extensive professional experiences and provide practical advice. Topics of discussion include cultural salons, writing festivals, literary-outreach at nonprofit foundations, and event-planning for independent booksellers.

3:00 pm to 4:15 pm

S237. [Wayfaring Stranger: Writing Away from Our Experience](#)

Marquis Salon 7 & 8, Marriott Marquis, Meeting Level Two

(Michael Croley, [Richard Bausch](#), [Brad Watson](#), Anne Valente, Laura van den Berg)

Fiction that goes beyond the self—the kind that strays from one's own gender, ethnicity, class, and personal experience—may be the truest form of storytelling and our greatest act of empathy as artists. Five writers

discuss and share the challenges posed both in writing and publishing wayfaring stories and the process they use to allow themselves the courage to write about what they don't know.

**S249. [Minimalist, Maximalist, Memoirist: Sarah Manguso, Albert Goldbarth, Paul Lisicky](#),
[Sponsored by Graywolf Press](#)**

Ballroom B, Washington Convention Center, Level Three

(Fiona McCrae, [Sarah Manguso](#), [Paul Lisicky](#), Albert Goldbarth)

What does it mean to contract, expand, and elucidate a line or a life in one's personal writing? Three remarkable and very different writers will read from their recent works, and then discuss these questions and how they approach the writing of nonfiction by coming to it through other forms and genres. Which one is the minimalist? Which one is the maximalist? Are any—or all—of them the memoirist? Introduced and moderated by Graywolf Press director and publisher Fiona McCrae.

S256. [Trio House Press Poetry Reading](#)

Cody D. Todd Memorial Stage, Sponsored by USC, Exhibit Halls D & E, Convention Center, Level Two

([Chard deNiord](#), Mary Cisper, Tara Betts, Matt Mauch, Joe Osterhaus)

Trio House Press presents the 2016 Louise Bogan Award winner, Joe Osterhaus, the Trio Award winner, Mary Cisper, and as well as poets Tara Betts and Matt Mauch. All will be reading from their new Trio House Press titles.

Judges Chard deNiord and Bisham Bherwani will introduce the poets and read from their recently published work.

S258. [The Art of War: The Power and Role of the Writer in Times of Crisis](#)

Room 202A, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

([Pireeni Sundaralingam](#), Viet Thanh Nguyen, [Lidia Yuknavitch](#), David Shields)

As an increasing percentage of the world is plunged into conflict, our panel brings together award-winning novelists, poets, and nonfiction writers to explore how creative writing can shape, distort, and challenge the way we understand war. Drawing on examples from our own work and the work of others, we will discuss the power of the written word in relation to image and other forms of propaganda, and share our personal experiences of how our books have influenced a wider political discussion.

S264. [Religious Metaphors in Nonreligious Poetry](#)

Room 207A, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

([Jennifer Michael Hecht](#), [Kim Addonizio](#), Matthew Zapruder, Timothy Liu)

Poets who are not religious still may use religious words, such as heaven, prayer, sin, sabbath, hell, soul, ghosts, karma, or nirvana. "Ghosts" may be a way to talk about grief. "Soul" can mean one's truest inner self. "God" isn't "God," yet the word shows up. What do these metaphors help us to see and what do they hide? The panel members—poets from diverse worlds also well known for their insight on poetry—talk about it, reference poetry, and read our own poetry that relates.

S265. [Literary Hybrids: Transgressing the Traditional](#)

Room 207B, Washington Convention Center, Level Two

([Nickole Brown](#), Casandra Lopez, [Ching-In Chen](#), [Julie Marie Wade](#), [Lee Ann Roripaugh](#))

What is it about hybrid writing that lends itself to diversity, that makes way for the work of queer writers and those marked by multiplicity—of mixed culture, race, and class? Through readings and discussion, this panel of four authors will investigate how (and why) the in-between, liminal space offered by cross-genre writing provides various communities the freedom to more adequately express themselves, transgressing the traditional boundaries of discourse and genre.