

September 15–18, 2016

kentucky  
women  
writers  
conference



Thursday, September 15

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*The Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning, 251 West 2nd Street*

6:00–7:30 p.m.

Sonia Sanchez Series performance and talk by **Ursula Rucker**, plus Q & A with **Patrice Muhammad**  
*free and open to the public*

Friday, September 16

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8:00–9:00 a.m.

*registration and complimentary continental breakfast*

9:00–10:00 a.m., plenary session

reading by **Natalie Diaz**, introduced by **Julia Johnson**  
*open to all registrants, first floor, Stuart Room*

10:15–11:15 a.m.

From Pitches to Platforms: How to Enlist an Agent  
with **Miriam Altshuler**  
*open to all registrants, first floor, Stuart Room*

10:15 a.m. –12:30 p.m. small group workshops  
*by reservation only*

Mining the Deep

workshop in poetry with **Natalie Diaz**, part 1  
*by reservation only, lower level, Sexton Room*

“It’s All About That Bass”

workshop in poetry with **Lisa Russ Spaar**, part 1  
*by reservation only, lower level, Caudill Room*

Dreamscapes

workshop in poetry with **Bianca Lynne Spriggs**, part 1  
*by reservation only, lower level, Brown Room*

11:30 a.m. –12:30 p.m.

reading by **Crystal Wilkinson**, introduced by **Lisa Williams**  
*open to all registrants, first floor, Stuart Room*

11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. and 3:15–4.15 p.m.

manuscript meetings with **Miriam Altshuler**  
*by reservation only, first floor, Writers Reference Room*

12:30–2:00 p.m.

*Boxed lunches will be available for all participants on the first floor.*

2:00–3:00 p.m.

Case Studies of Pitch Letters  
with **Miriam Altshuler**, moderated by **Sara Volpi**  
*open to all registrants, first floor, Stuart Room*

2:00–4:15 p.m. small group workshops  
*by reservation only*

Memoir Time

workshop in memoir with **Barrie Jean Borich**, part 1  
*by reservation only, lower level, Sexton Room*

Stories in Place

Workshop in fiction and nonfiction with **Danielle Dutton**, part 1  
*by reservation only, lower level, Brown Room*

Starting a Novel

workshop in fiction with **Dana Spiotta**, part 1  
*by reservation only, lower level, Caudill Room*

Belly & Heart

workshop in fiction with **Crystal Wilkinson**, part 1  
*by reservation only, second floor, Allen Room*

3:15–4:15 p.m.

Poetry and Community  
panel discussion with **Melissa Lozada-Oliva**, **Ursula Rucker**, and **Bianca Lynne Spriggs**, moderated by **Elizabeth Beck**  
first floor, Stuart Room, open to all registrants

4:30–5:45 p.m.

readings by **Lisa Russ Spaar** and **Bianca Lynne Spriggs**,  
introduced by **Kimberley Miller**  
*open to all registrants, first floor, Stuart Room*

5:30–7:00 p.m.

Writers Reception  
*ticketed event, King Alumni House, 400 Rose Street*

7:00–9:00 p.m.

keynote reading and remarks by **Mary Karr**,  
plus Q & A by **Dana Spiotta**, introduced by **Jennifer Bartlett**  
Singletary Center Recital Hall, 405 Rose Street  
*free and open to the public*

8:00–9:00 a.m.

*registration and complimentary continental breakfast*

9:00–10:00 a.m., plenary session

The Art of Memoir

craft talk by **Mary Karr**

*open to all registrants, first floor, Stuart Room*

10:15–11:15 a.m.

Independent Publishing

panel discussion with **Danielle Dutton** and **Sarah Gorham**,  
moderated by **Julie Wrinn**

*open to all registrants, first floor, Stuart Room*

10:15 a.m. –12:30 p.m. small group workshops

*by reservation only*

Mining the Deep

workshop in poetry with **Natalie Diaz**, part 2  
*by reservation only, lower level, Sexton Room*

“It’s All About That Bass”

workshop in poetry with **Lisa Russ Spaar**, part 2  
*by reservation only, lower level, Caudill Room*

Dreamscapes

workshop in poetry with **Bianca Lynne Spriggs**, part 2  
*by reservation only, lower level, Brown Room*

11:30 a.m. –12:30 p.m.

reading by **Barrie Jean Borich**, introduced by  
**Catherine Brereton**

*open to all registrants, first floor, Stuart Room*

12:30–2:00 p.m.

*Group lunches at nearby restaurants: look for board members  
in the Carnegie Center lobby who will gather and lead parties to  
these restaurants.*

2:00–3:00 p.m.

Gabehart Prize winners readings by **Jessica Hindman**,  
**Laura Nagle**, and **Amie Whittemore**, introduced by  
**Susan Kroeg**

*open to all registrants, first floor, Stuart Room*

2:00–4:15 p.m. small group workshops

*by reservation only*

Memoir Time

workshop in memoir with **Barrie Jean Borich**, part 2  
*by reservation only, lower level, Sexton Room*

Stories in Place

Workshop in fiction and nonfiction with **Danielle  
Dutton**, part 2  
*by reservation only, lower level, Brown Room*

Starting a Novel

workshop in fiction with **Dana Spiotta**, part 2  
*by reservation only, lower level, Caudill Room*

Belly & Heart

workshop in fiction with **Crystal Wilkinson**, part 2  
*by reservation only, second floor, Allen Room*

3:15–4:15 p.m.

Readings by the Young Women Writers

*open to all registrants, first floor, Stuart Room*

4:30–5:45

readings by **Danielle Dutton** and **Dana Spiotta**,  
introduced by **Jeffory Clymer**  
*open to all registrants, first floor, Stuart Room*

5:30–7:00 p.m.

*dinner on your own*

7:30–9:00 p.m. Wild Women of Poetry Slam

A spoken word competition with audience judging,  
emceed by **Sara Volpi**, with feature poet and celebrity  
judge **Melissa Lozada-Oliva**. Poets **Siaara Freeman**,  
**Ashlee Haze**, **Kyla Lacey**, **Sha’Condria Icon Sibley**,  
**Rheonna Thornton**, and **Rachel Wiley** will compete for  
the \$500 Faith A. Smith Poetry Prize.

*free and open to the public, Carrick Theatre, Transylvania  
University, 300 N. Broadway (see map on p. 5)*

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Sunday, September 18

*The Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning, 251 West 2nd Street*

10:00–11:30 a.m. Stars of the Commonwealth

readings by **Sarah Gorham**, **Julie Hensley**, and **Bobbie Ann Mason**,  
with introductions and Q & A by **Julie Wrinn**

*free and open to the public, first floor, Stuart Room*

### Poetry Workshops

Natalie Diaz. **Mining the Deep: Discovering Our Emotional Images.** This generative workshop will explore our notion of image—image is more than a thing you can see. Images are the vessels of story, history, mythology, action, and emotion, among other things. Using previous knowledge of our images of obsession, we will do a series of exercises to help discover and mine our new, emotional images. To paraphrase painter Francis Bacon, we will return the image to our nervous systems more violently—meaning, we will build images that make us and our readers *feel*.

Lisa Russ Spaar. **“It’s All About That Bass”: Creating Depth & Getting Beyond Surfaces, Knee-Jerk Habits, and Mono-Registers in Poems.** All serious writers run the risk of falling into certain familiar, “successful” sonic, syntactic, thematic, figurative, rhythmic, and other gestures that, if we’re not careful, can keep us from fully developing our poems or that allow us to shut our poems down too soon. How can we recognize these habits and avoid offering just the “melody,” the plot line, the treble or surface of a poem? This workshop will be generative, encouraging its participants to explore and deepen into their obsessions (what Emily Dickinson would call their “flood subjects”) even as they experiment beyond modes, habits, and stylistic gestures that may have become knee-jerk or comfortable. To the first class meeting, students should bring 16 copies of a poem BY SOMEONE ELSE that they feel works on ALL registers successfully (story, image, music, structure). These poems can range from Keats’s “Ode to Melancholy” to Paisley Rekdal’s “Why Some Girls Love Horses.” Students should bring a poem of their own that needs work because it is not adequately plumbing registers that might deepen and illuminate its complexity, its stereoscopy, and what is at stake in the text. Over the course of two sessions, we will consider what it means to risk making forays outside of our comfort zone as poets. In addition to revising one problem poem, each student will write at least one new poem during the course of the class.

Bianca Lynne Spriggs. **Dreamscapes: Surreal Imagery for Creating Memorable Poems.** In this generative workshop we’ll create fresh, startling, memorable images through exploring surrealism, a subgenre of speculative poetry. We will read and analyze classic and contemporary poems that incorporate surreal imagery by Kim Addonizio, Kathleen Driskell, Rachel McKibbens, and Cecilia Woloch and then work to craft resounding images of our own. Creating lasting images and sensory-oriented experiences will ensure that readers think about your work long after they’ve read it.

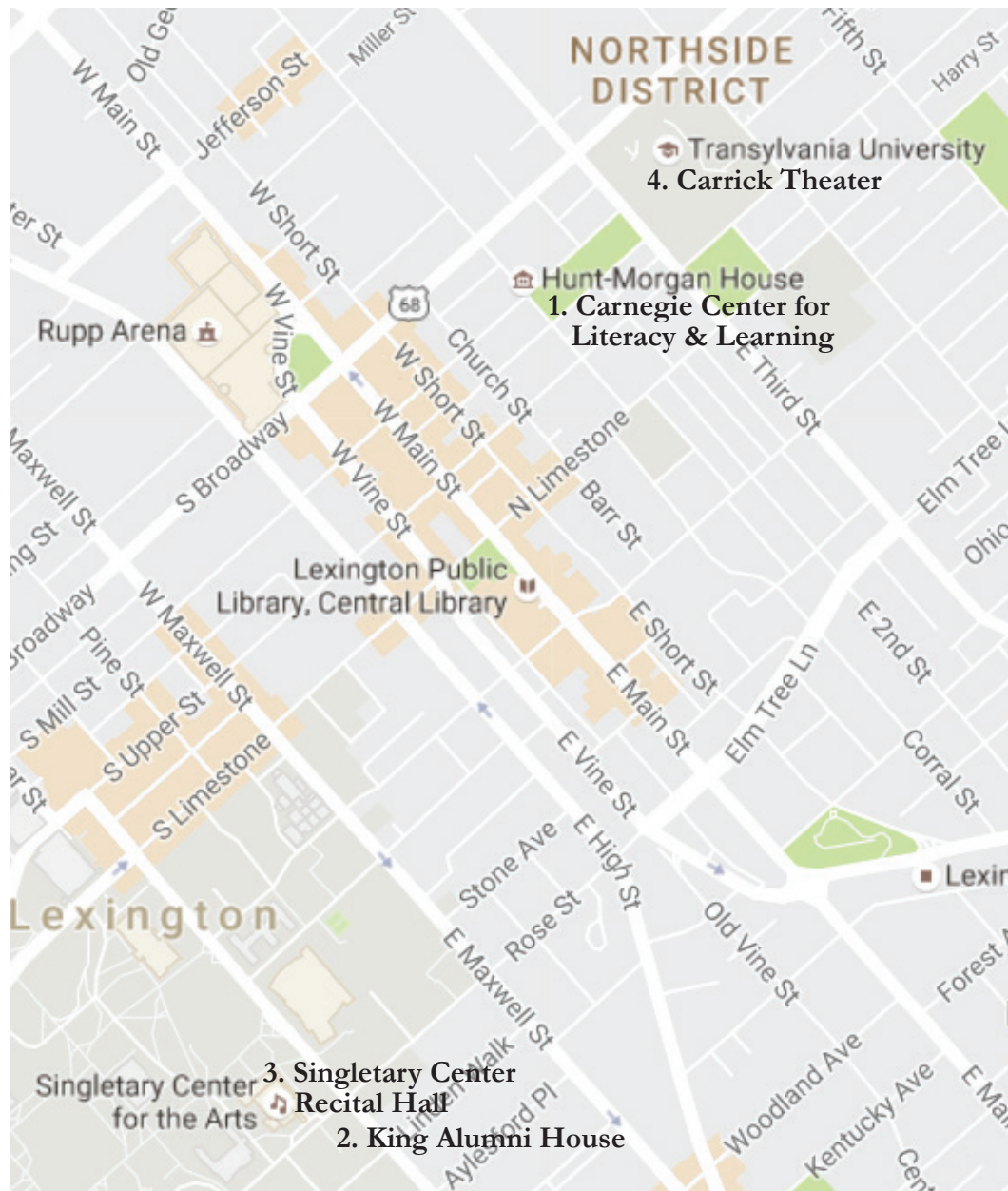
### Prose Workshops

Barrie Jean Borich. **Memoir Time: workshop in creative nonfiction.** All memoir is about time. What’s the difference between writing about the past and the present? What is the “now” and the “then” of our nonfiction stories? Do our memories, and therefore our memoirs, change over time? How do we both summarize lifetimes and recreate spectacular hours? This generative workshop will examine how memoirists manage time, manipulate time, and use time as a formal device in their memoirs and narrative essays. Why are so many memoirs nonlinear, what is the impact of compressing, extending, or fragmenting time on the page, and why do memoirists summarize years while lingering for pages over just a few moments of experience? Students will examine and discuss a wide array of examples and try out various narrative time management strategies and structures. Participants will depart with new maneuvers and fresh pages.

Danielle Dutton. **Stories in Place.** This will be a generative workshop designed to get you started on several new projects. Drawing examples from all around us, from maps to architecture to our own memories, we’ll look at many ways that “place”—the particularities of a space—might create meaning and form in our stories. Readings will include stories/snippets from Rebecca Solnit, Georges Perec, Melinda Moustakis, and others. We’ll be primarily focused on fiction, but nonfiction writers are also welcome to use the readings and exercises toward their own ends.

Dana Spiotta. **Starting a Novel: a generative workshop in fiction for writers at all levels.** We’ll look at several novel openings and analyze them. Then each student will write her own opening in 2–3 pages. We will read these and start to imagine the first chapter and the potential book that could emerge from a powerful opening. Depending on time available, we might then look what happens after the first chapter in a few famous novels, and see if we can make that leap in what we have generated.

Crystal Wilkinson. **Belly & Heart: Writing Sacred Stories.** In this fiction workshop we will generate new material by mining stories that are lying at the bottom of our bellies and on the top of our hearts. Everyone has within them an automatic piece of fiction. What do we tell? What do we keep to ourselves? We’ll write toward a balance of the sacred and the memorable. Each participant will leave this workshop with the impression of a new story—one that is deeply felt—ready to be crafted. Both days will include some generative and some craft work.



**1. The Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning**

Thursday night, Fri.–Sat. daytime, and Sunday morning  
 251 West Second Street, 859-254-4175  
 Street parking is free and plentiful on evenings and weekends. On Friday during business hours, parking is available in several nearby lots courtesy of Transylvania University. To obtain your parking pass for those, please visit the front desk at the Carnegie Center.

**2. Writers Reception**

Friday night  
 King Alumni House, 400 Rose Street  
 Free parking is available after 5 p.m. in any lot marked “E,” including those near Memorial Coliseum

**3. Keynote with Mary Karr and Dana Spiotta**

Friday night  
 Singletary Center Recital Hall, 405 Rose Street  
 Free parking is available after 5 p.m. in any lot marked “E,” including those near Memorial Coliseum

**4. Wild Women of Poetry Slam**

Saturday night  
 Carrick Theater, Mitchell Fine Arts Center,  
 Transylvania University  
 300 North Broadway  
 Free parking is available in the lot behind Carrick Theatre, entrance on 4th Street at North Broadway





**Miriam Altshuler** began her career at Russell & Volkening, where she worked for twelve years with such writers as Anne Tyler, Eudora Welty, Joseph Campbell, Nadine Gordimer, and Bernard Malamud. In 1994 she established her own agency, which she ran for twenty-one years until she joined DeFiore and Company in early 2016. Miriam specializes in adult literary and commercial fiction, narrative nonfiction, and books for children. First and foremost, she responds to voice and stories that are character-driven. She searches for books that draw her in and give her a new perspective on a world she doesn't know, or make her think more deeply about a world she does know. Miriam seeks books with a heart and writers with wonderful storytelling abilities.

**Barrie Jean Borich** is the author of *Body Geographic* (University of Nebraska Press/American Lives Series), winner of a Lambda Literary Award in Memoir, an IPPY Gold Medal in Essay/Creative Nonfiction and an IndieFab Bronze Award for Essays. Borich's previous book, *My Lesbian Husband* (Graywolf), won the American Library Association Stonewall Book Award. Her work has been cited in *Best American Essays* and *Best American Non-Required Reading*, she's the recipient of *The Florida Review* Editor's Prize in the Essay and the *Crab Orchard Review* Literary Nonfiction Prize, and her work has appeared in *Ecotone*, *The Seneca Review*, *Indiana Review*, *Hotel Amerika*, *TriQuarterly*, *The Washington Post*, and many anthologies.



**Natalie Diaz** was born and raised in the Fort Mojave Indian Village in Needles, California, on the banks of the Colorado River. She is Mojave and an enrolled member of the Gila River Indian Tribe. Her first poetry collection, *When My Brother Was an Aztec*, was published by Copper Canyon Press in 2012. Diaz's work has also appeared in *Narrative Magazine*, *Gnarlingo*, *The Rumpus*, and *Ploughshares*. Her poetry has garnered the Nimrod/Hardman Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry, the Louis Untermeyer Scholarship in Poetry from Bread Loaf, the Narrative Poetry Prize, the Holmes National Poetry Prize from Princeton University, a U.S. Artists Ford Fellowship, a Native Arts Council Foundation Artist Fellowship, and a Lannan Literary Fellowship.

**Danielle Dutton**'s fiction has appeared in magazines such as *Harper's*, *BOMB*, *Fence*, and *Noon*. In March 2016, Catapult published her novel *Margaret the First*. She is also the author of a collection of hybrid prose pieces, *Attempts at a Life*, which Daniel Handler in *Entertainment Weekly* called "indescribably beautiful," and the novel *SPRAWL*, a finalist for the Believer Book Award. In 2010, Dutton founded the small press Dorothy, a publishing project, named for her great aunt Dorothy Traver, a librarian who drove a bookmobile through the back hills of southern California. The press itself has been praised in the *New York Times* and *Chicago Tribune*, and Dutton has been interviewed in the *Paris Review*, *Kirkus*, and elsewhere for her work promoting innovative women writers.



**Sarah Gorham** is a poet, essayist, and book publisher. Her essay collection *Study in Perfect* won the AWP Award for Creative Nonfiction in 2014, and her new collection of essays, *Alpine Apprentice*, is forthcoming from University of Georgia Press in 2017. Her four collections of poetry are *Bad Daughter* (2011), *The Cure* (2003), *The Tension Zone* (1996), and *Don't Go Back to Sleep* (1989). Individual poems have appeared in *Best American Poetry*, *American Poetry Review*, *Pool*, *The Nation*, *Kenyon Review*, *Paris Review*, *Open City*, *Georgia Review*, and elsewhere. Gorham serves as editor-in-chief of Sarabande Books, which she co-founded in 1994. She lives in Prospect, Kentucky, with her husband, the poet Jeffrey Skinner.

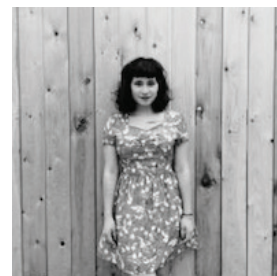
**Julie Hensley** is the author of *Landfall: A Ring of Stories* (2016), winner of the Ohio State University Press's Non/Fiction Collection Prize, and *Viable: Poems* (2015), and a chapbook, *The Language of Horses* (2011). An associate professor at Eastern Kentucky University and core faculty member in the Bluegrass Writers Studio Low-Residency MFA Program, she lives in Richmond, KY, with her husband, the writer R. Dean Johnson, and their two children.





**Mary Karr's** first memoir, *The Liars' Club*, is credited with sparking the memoir renaissance and won nonfiction prizes from PEN and the Texas Institute of Letters and was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. *Entertainment Weekly* recently rated it number four in the top one hundred books of the past twenty-five years. Her second memoir, *Cherry*, was also a hit bestseller and on the notable book list at the *New York Times*. Her third in this autobiographical series, *Lit*, is the story of her alcoholism, recovery, and conversion to Catholicism. In her latest book, *The Art of Memoir*, she synthesizes her expertise as professor and therapy patient, writer and spiritual seeker, recovered alcoholic and "black belt sinner," providing a unique window into the mechanics and art of the form. A Guggenheim Fellow in poetry, Karr has won Pushcart Prizes for both verse and essays. She is the Peck Professor of Literature at Syracuse University.

**Melissa Lozada-Oliva** is a 2015 National Poetry Slam Champion, a Brenda Moosey Video Slam winner and the author of the chapbooks *Plastic Pájaros* and *rude girl is lonely girl!* She has been featured in *Bustle*, *Glamour Magazine*, *The Huffington Post*, *the Guardian*, and her mom's Facebook statuses. She is an editor for Pizza Pi Press and an occasional bookseller. She hasn't updated her iPhone in 52 weeks (and counting).



**Bobbie Ann Mason** is the author of *In Country*, *Clear Springs*, *Shiloh & Other Stories*, *An Atomic Romance*, and *The Girl in the Blue Beret*. A former writer-in-residence at the University of Kentucky, she is a member of the Authors Guild, PEN, and the Fellowship of Southern Writers. Mason's first book of fiction, *Shiloh and Other Stories* (1982), won the PEN/Hemingway Award and was nominated for the American Book Award, the PEN/Faulkner Award, and the National Book Critics Circle Award. She received an Arts and Letters Award for Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Mason's memoir, *Clear Springs* (1999), was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. Her book of linked stories, *Nancy Culpepper*, is inspired by this family, and she says that while the circumstances are different, this is the work of fiction most closely identified with her own life and sensibility.

**Ursula Rucker** is a Philadelphia-born poet, mother, activist and recording artist. She has toured throughout North America, Europe, Asia, Australia, New Zealand and Africa, sharing her poetry . . . her heart and soul. She is dedicated to art as/for social change and committed to freedom fighting, truth-telling and peace-making (and a little trouble) through her chosen art form. She has released five solo albums (*Supa Sista*, *Silver or Lead*, *ma'at mama*, *Ruckus Soundssystem*, *SHE SAID*) and collaborated on over 100 songs with producers King Britt, Bahamadia, The Roots, 4 Hero, Jazzanova, Louie Vega, and Incognito. She is the feature of a documentary short called *POET*. Last year she premiered her first one-woman show, the spoken word memoir *My Father's Daughter*, and is touring with it.



**Lisa Russ Spaar's** five poetry collections include the forthcoming *Orexia* (2017) and *Vanitas, Rough* (2012), both with Persea Books. She has edited three anthologies, including *Monticello in Mind: 50 Contemporary Poems on Jefferson* (UVA Press, 2016). Her essay collection is *The Hide-and-Seek Muse: Annotations of Contemporary Poetry* (Drunken Boat, 2013). Her awards include a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Rona Jaffe Award, the Carole Weinstein Poetry Prize, and the Library of Virginia Award for Poetry. She teaches at the University of Virginia.

**Dana Spiotta** is the author of four novels: *Innocents and Others*, published by Scribner in March 2016; *Stone Arabia* (2011), a National Book Critics Circle Award Finalist in fiction; *Eat the Document* (2006), a finalist for the National Book Award and a recipient of the Rosenthal Foundation Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters; and *Lightning Field* (2001). Spiotta was a Guggenheim Fellow, a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellow, and won the 2008–9 Rome Prize from the American Academy in Rome. She lives in Syracuse with her daughter, Agnes, and teaches in the Syracuse University MFA program.





## Featured Presenters

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Affrilachian Poet and Cave Canem Fellow **Bianca Lynne Spriggs** is a multidisciplinary artist from Lexington, Kentucky. Named as one of the Top 30 Performance Poets in the country by *The Root*, Bianca is the recipient of multiple grants and is a Pushcart Prize Nominee. Bianca is the author of *Kaffir Lily* (Wind Publications, 2010), *How Swallowtails Become Dragons* (Accents Publishing, 2011), *Call Her By Her Name* (Northwestern University Press, 2016), the forthcoming, *The Galaxy Is a Dance Floor* (Argos Books, 2016), and co-editor of numerous publications. Bianca is the Literary Arts Liaison for the Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning, creator and program director for *The Swallow/Tale Project: Creative Writing for Incarcerated Women*, as well as the Managing Editor for *pluck! The Journal of Affrilachian Art & Culture* and Poetry Editor for *Apex Magazine*.

**Crystal Wilkinson**'s new novel, *The Birds of Opulence* (University Press of Kentucky, 2016), is a lyrical exploration of love and loss centering on several generations of women in a bucolic southern black township. Her two previous novels are *Blackberries*, *Blackberries*, winner of the Chaffin Award for Appalachian Literature, and *Water Street*, a finalist for both the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award. The winner of the 2008 Denny Plattner Award in Poetry from *Appalachian Heritage* magazine and the Sallie Bingham Award from the Kentucky Foundation for Women, she serves as Appalachian Writer-in-Residence at Berea College and teaches in the Spalding University low residency MFA in Creative Writing. Wilkinson is also the co-owner of an independent bookstore, Wild Fig Books and Coffee, which has become a cornerstone of a revitalized neighborhood in downtown Lexington, Kentucky.



## Special Guests

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**Catherine A. Brereton** is a freelance writer and the former editor-in-chief of *Limestone: Art. Prose. Poetry*. Her work appears in over 50 national and international publications, with her most recent work found in *Electric Literature*, *Prairie Schooner*, *VIDA*, *Narratively*, *The Establishment*, *Story|Houston*, and *Litro*. Her essay "Trance" was recognized as a Notable Essay in *Best American Essays 2015*, she is a nominee for a 2016 Best of the Net award, and she is 2015 winner of *The Flounce's* Nonfiction Writer the Year award. Originally from England, Catherine moved to the United States in 2008 and earned an MFA in creative nonfiction at the University of Kentucky. She lives in Lexington, Kentucky, with her wife and their teenage daughters.

**Jessica Chiccehitto Hindman** teaches creative writing at Northern Kentucky University. Her writing has appeared in *Brevity*, *O: The Oprah Magazine*, and *Dogwood: A Journal of Poetry and Prose*. She has recently completed a memoir about touring the world as a fake violinist, a job she's happy to tell you more about, if you're curious.

**Laura Nagle** is a student the Bluegrass Writers Studio at Eastern Kentucky University. She lives in the woods of Berea, Kentucky, and is currently working on a novel set in a 1920s asylum.

**Sarah Volpi** is a writer and artist working as the Literary Outreach and Southern Kentucky Book Fest Coordinator at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Kentucky, where she graduated with her an MA in Rhetoric and Composition in 2014. She is one of an estimated 377,199 Sara/h's born between 1980–89, and one day she'll write about it.

**Amie Whittemore** is the author of the poetry collection *Glass Harvest* (Autumn House Press) and co-founder of the Charlottesville Reading Series in Virginia. Her poems have appeared in *The Gettysburg Review*, *Sycamore Review*, *Smartish Pace*, *Cimarron Review*, and elsewhere. She teaches English at Middle Tennessee State University.

**Julie Kuzneski Wrinn** became director of KWWC in 2007 after serving for three years on its board. She was managing editor at several publishers in Washington, D.C., most notably Counterpoint Press, where she worked on books by Wendell Berry, Guy Davenport, Nancy Lord, Carole Maso, W. S. Merwin, Gary Snyder, and Therese Svoboda. She holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the University of Virginia and is pursuing an MFA in creative writing at the University of Kentucky.



The first time I attended the Kentucky Women Writers Conference in 2002, I was a writer living in a rural area and teaching at a small college. The assembly of writing talent was amazing, and I was ready to absorb it all. Little did I know that that weekend of writing would spark a desire to start a women's studies program at my school, Lindsey Wilson College. The women at KWWC gave me the encouragement needed and built a link of support that answered so many questions, until another faculty member and I made the dream a reality.

When I attended KWWC again in 2008, I came for the women's studies connection, but I left with a deeper appreciation for literature. What a revelation to hear and speak with someone like Joyce Carol Oates, whose work I had taught for years, or poet Natasha Trethewey before she became U.S. Poet Laureate. These experiences added layers to the printed word and were valuable lessons for me as a teacher, a writer, and a woman.

In 2015 I came to the conference for the literary experience and left with a stronger sense of community. The workshops were intense, insightful writing adventures, staying with me long after the conference ended. What impressed me the most though, and what I needed the most, was the sense of belonging, of finding a place of shared experience and wholeness. For decades, the Kentucky Women Writers Conference has provided a much-needed haven for women to discover validation and self-worth. The mission of service and commitment to feminism remains constant. This nurturing community celebrates art, variety, and societal concerns while being an ever-evolving source of engagement and outreach.

Now a board member, I have witnessed the planning, attention to detail, and passion for new ideas these women strive for each year. From wonderful interactive activities like the Yellow Wallpaper Project to creating free writing workshops to preserving a core of feminism that respects its past while embracing its future, the KWWC is a vital and exciting part of the local, state, and national literary landscape. It's because of charitable contributions like yours that we are able to offer high-quality presenters and programs year after year. Each gift helps more writers and readers make valuable connections. Please join me in supporting the literary arts in the Bluegrass with a gift of \$100, \$250, \$500, or other amount.

What did you come to the conference for, and what will you leave with?

Sincerely,  
Sylvia Ahrens, Board of Advisors

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## Stay in Touch

To receive our bi-monthly e-newsletter, email us at [kentuckywomenwriters@gmail.com](mailto:kentuckywomenwriters@gmail.com) and don't hesitate to include feedback in your note. We are also on Facebook and Twitter.

contact: Julie Wrinn, director

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Web site: [www.kentuckywomenwriters.org](http://www.kentuckywomenwriters.org)

Facebook: Kentucky Women Writers Conference

Twitter: @KYwomenwriters

## Prizes and Scholarships

### Faith A. Smith Poetry Prize

This top honor in the Wild Woman of Poetry Slam was established by Frank X Walker in memory of his mother and awards \$500 to the winner. **Siarra Freeman, Ashlee Haze, Kyla Lacey, Sha'Condria Icon Sibley, Rheonna Thornton, and Rachel Wiley** will compete on Saturday night, with **Melissa Lozada-Oliva** as the featured poet and celebrity judge, and **Sara Volpi** as emcee. Don't miss this extraordinary event.

### 2016 Betty Gabehart Prizes

Congratulations to **Jessica Hindman** of Covington, KY, for her memoir excerpt from *Sounds Like Titanic*; to **Laura Nagle** of Berea, KY, for her short story "Planet of One"; and to **Amie Whitemore** of Charlottesville, VA, for "The Animal Eyes Grow Dark" and other poems. Judged by our Board, each winner receives \$200, conference admission for herself and one guest, and the opportunity to read her winning manuscript at the conference. Their reading is at 2 p.m. on Saturday. The submission deadline is always June 1.

### Postgraduate Scholarships

Congratulations to our 2016 scholarship recipients **Lin Kaatz Chary, Jessica Guzman, and Lisa Low**. If you are enrolled in graduate school and living on limited funds, this scholarship is for you. It provides free general admission to the conference, including enrollment in a workshop, a \$200 value. Applications of a cover letter and a five-page writing sample are due June 1 and are reviewed for merit and need by a committee of the director and one advisor.

### Family Care Center

Many thanks to Ashley Gomez, English instructor for the FCC, for bringing 15 students for a Friday field trip to our conference. Scholarships and a complimentary book by a conference author were provided to each student by our Board of Advisors.

### Prize for Women Playwrights

We award a biennial playwriting prize to bring more scripts by women to the stage. Congratulations to **Lydia Blaisdell** of Austin, TX, whose winning script, *The Silent Woman*, premiered on November 5–7, 2015 in Lexington, produced and directed by Eric Seale. The next submission period will be in November 2016, for a production in fall 2017.

## Recommended Reading

*Body Geographic*

Barrie Jean Borich

*When My Brother Was an Aztec*

Natalie Diaz

*Margaret the First*

Danielle Dutton

*Study in Perfect*

Sarah Gorham

*Landfall: A Ring of Stories*

Julie Hensley

*Lit*

Mary Karr

*Plastic Pájaros*

Melissa Lozada-Oliva

*Clear Springs*

Bobbie Ann Mason

*Vanitas, Rough*

Lisa Russ Spaar

*Innocents and Others*

Dana Spiotta

*Call Her by Her Name*

Bianca Lynne Spriggs

*The Birds of Opulence*

Crystal Wilkinson



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