



August 10th - 13th, 2023

The Quills Conference is our premium writer's weekend set in the beautiful mountains of Utah at Marriott University Park, Salt Lake City and streamed online for virtual attendees.

Come learn from industry professionals what you need to be successful in writing and publishing.

Whether you're looking for traditional publishing or exploring indie publishing, find insider tips from top professionals.

Covid Policy

The Quills Conference is a hybrid event. For the safety of speakers and attendees, we highly recommend COVID vaccinations and antigen testing before attending. Masks are also strongly recommended. If you are experiencing flu-like symptoms, or you've been exposed to anyone with a respiratory illness, we ask that you attend virtually the day of the conference. (Subject to change based on current public health policies and infectious disease statistics).

Notice of Filming and Photography

The League of Utah Writers will take photos of attendees throughout the Quills Conference. These photos are for League use only and may appear on

the League website, newsletter, conference brochures, social media outlets, or other future League promotional material.

This also includes photos uploaded using the League conference app. By virtue of your in-person attendance, you agree to usage of your likeness in such media.

2023 Keynotes



Gabino Iglesias
Keynote



E.K. Johnston
Keynote



RJ Walker
Poetry Keynote

Registration

Add-on options include: Bootcamps and Agent Pitches

Super-Early Bird discounts and Holiday Conference Bundle sales ended December 31, 2022

Early-bird registration opens Feb 1, 2023

Regular pricing starts on June 14th, 2023

The deadline for the Quills Scholarship has now passed.

Registration Add-ons Now Available

Saturday-only tickets \$150 - with the option to add pitches, headshots, and Saturday meals (includes access to on-demand content)

Quills Banquet only \$50 - with the option to add on Poet's Breakfast brunch (only available through Aug 5)

Poet's Breakfast Brunch only - \$30 with the option to add on Quills Banquet (only available through Aug 5)

All meal selections close at 11:50pm on August 5th, any changes or extra guests must be requested before that day - no exceptions.

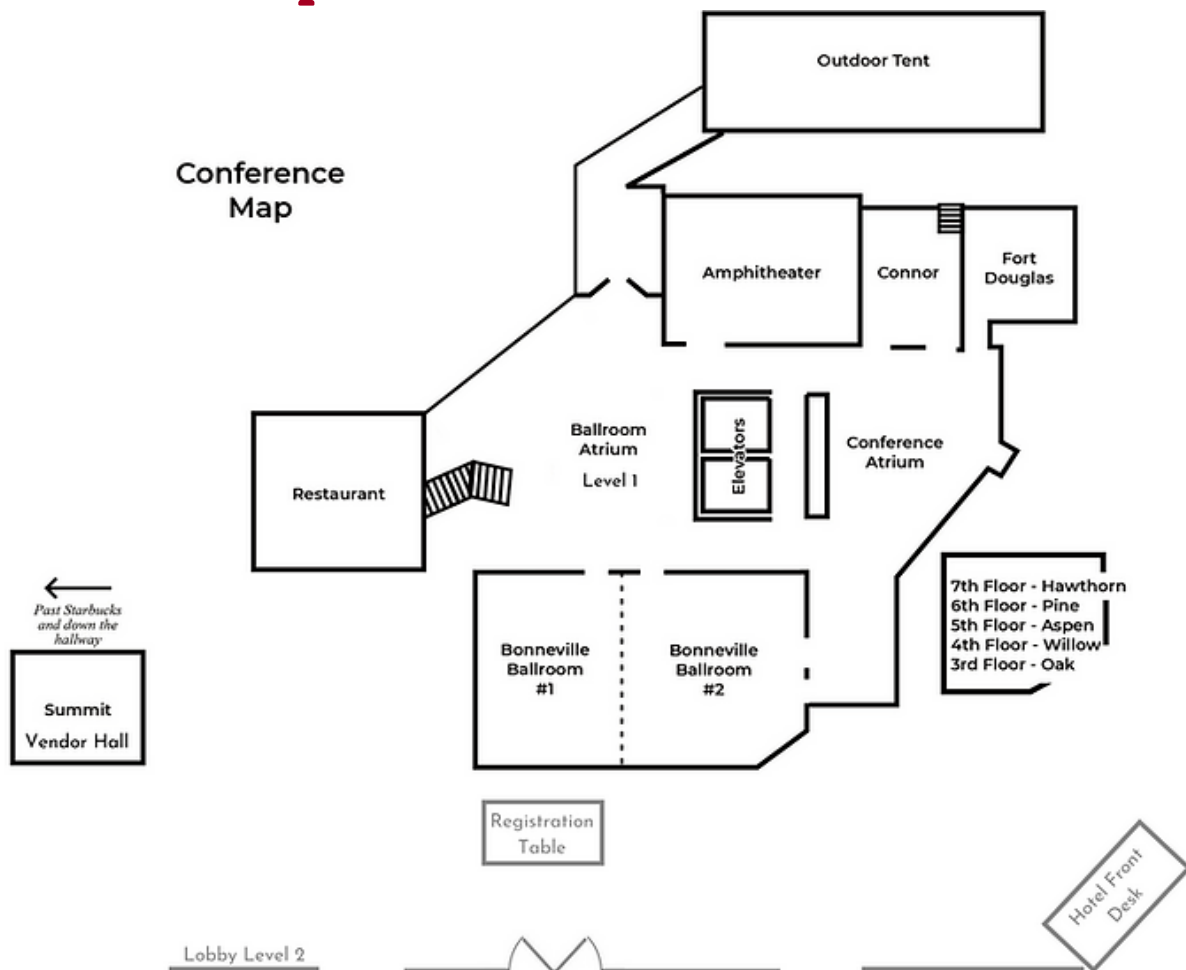
Early Bird Member		Full Conference Including Meals	\$325
Early Bird General Public		Full Conference Including Meals	\$375
Early Bird General Public		Full Conference No Meals	\$300
Early Bird Member		Full Conference No Meals	\$250
Regular	General	Full Conference	\$375
	Public	No Meals	
Regular	General	Full Conference	\$450
	Public	Including Meals	
Regular	Member	Full Conference	\$325
		No Meals	

Regular	Member	Full Conference Including Meals	\$400
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Discounted Hotel Registration

Book your 2023 conference stay at a discounted nightly rate of \$140 USD with our host, Marriott. The last day to register for this discounted rate is July 17th... don't wait!

Conference Map



Schedule At-A-Glance

Thursday

For an easier to read and printable Thursday schedule, [click here](#)

Schedule At-a-Glance: Thursday, August 10					
Time	Ballroom 1	Ballroom 2	Amphitheater	Connor	Ft. Douglas
9:00am-10:30am	Separate Ticket Required Traditional Publishing Prep Bootcamp Bryan Young, Katherine Monasterio, Aminah Mae Safi	Separate Ticket Required Indie Publishing Prep Bootcamp Jodi L. Milner, Willow Dawn Becker, C.R. Langille	Workshop: Spreadsheet Editing Callie Stoker		
10:45am-11:30am					
11:45am-12:30pm					
12:30pm-1:50pm	Lunch Break - on your own				
2:00pm-5:00pm	Workshop: You Don't Have to Kill the Dog: How to Effectively Use Violence in Fiction Gabino Iglesias		Workshop: Fools in Love Aminah Mae Safi	Workshop: Let's Write About Sex Alex Jay Lore	Workshop: Punch Up Your Prose: Crafting Knockout Syntax Katherine Monasterio
5:00pm-7:00pm			LUW Board Meeting		
7:00pm-9:00pm	Opening Mixer - Cash Bar				

Friday

For an easier to read and printable Friday schedule,
[click here](#)

Schedule At-a-Glance: Friday, August 11									
Time	Ballroom 1	Ballroom 2	Amphitheater	Connor	Ft. Douglas	Willow	Aspen	Pine	Tent
8:00am-8:50am	New Attendee Orientation Terra Luft and Rachael Bush				Morning Meditation and Writer Wellbeing: The Mindful Author - Johnny Worthen				
9:00am-9:50am	Opening Ceremony Terra Luft (MC), Bryan Young, Rachael Bush								
10:00am-10:50am	Agent Intro Malaga Baldi, Stacey Konda, Ronald Gerber, Ben Miller-Calihan		Words to Fit Your World Catie Stoker	"And then I'd kick her, sir!" Writing humorous fights K.B. Wagers	Living in the Face of Death Brandon Callor, Office of the Medical Examiner	Creative Critique Groups that Deliver Kendra Griffin	Wait, Can I Do That? Christina Allen	How to Hurt Your Heroes Jodi L. Miner	Yoga for Writer Resuscitation Pat Thomas
	Editor Intro C.R. Langille, Alan Bahr, Kyrro Dean, Alexis Powell, Willow Dawn Becker, Rhett Steadman								
11:00am-11:50am			Pitch, Please! (Writing your best query letter) Ben Miller-Calihan	Traumatizing your Characters w/o Traumatizing You Anna F. Marasco	Making Tropes & Cliches Fresh Theresa Braun	Heinlein's 5 Rules of Writing Johnny Worthen	Taking the Mystery Out of Mystery Shannon Baker	Do Your Settings Work As Hard As You Do? Kelley J. P. Lindberg	Archery Hunting Elk in the Rocky Mountains C.R. Langille
12:30pm-1:00pm	Separate Meal Ticket Required Box Lunch								
1:00-1:50pm	Presenter Book Signing Event								
2:00pm-2:50pm			Mastering the In-Person Pitch Ronald Gerber	Decomp 101: Describing Death Rae Smith	Publishing 101 Alexis Powell	Gender Identity in Fiction Theresa Braun	Kidlit 101 Christina Allen	Learning From Kurt Vonnegut's Writing Rules Bryan Young	
3:00pm-3:50pm	Writing for a Living Cassidy Ward (moderator), E.K. Johnston, Aminah Mae Saff	Separate Ticket Required Pitch Block A Malaga Baldi, C.R. Langille, Stacey Konda, Kyrro Dean, Alexis Powell, Rhett Steadman, Ben Miller-Calihan, Alan Bahr, Willow Dawn Becker (virtual), Amy Michelle Carpenter (virtual), Ronald Gerber (virtual)	First Chapter Essentials Catie Stoker	Interactive Storytelling R.J. Walker	Crimes & Corpses: What Happens Next? Rae Smith	Lure Readers with Enchanting Prose Anna F. Marasco	Lucid Dreaming: Unlock Your Creative Potential Jodi L. Miner		
4:00pm-4:50pm	Putting Science in Your Fiction Cassidy Ward (moderator), E.K. Johnston, K.B. Wagers	Separate Ticket Required Pitch Block B C.R. Langille, Kyrro Dean, Stacey Konda, Willow Dawn Becker, Ronald Gerber, Alexis Powell, Ben Miller-Calihan, Rhett Steadman, Malaga Baldi (virtual), Amy Michelle Carpenter (virtual)	Forensic Science Andrew Pacejka, Samantha Hammond, Michele Marfori	Milestones to Reach in Your First Chapter Katherine Monasterio	Writers block and Poem Set Up Sammi Walker	The Anatomy of a Trial Pat Thomas		Justifiably Evil Antagonists Dax Levine	Introduction to Sword fighting for Writers Jordan Hindkley with Wasatch HEMA
5:00pm-5:50pm	RPG With Writers Liveplay Alan Bahr (Game Master), EK Johnston, Gabino Iglesias, RJ Walker, Aminah Mae Saff	Separate Ticket Required Pitch Block C Malaga Baldi, Rhett Steadman, Ronald Gerber, C.R. Langille, Stacey Konda, Willow Dawn Becker, Ben Miller-Calihan (virtual), Amy Michelle Carpenter (virtual)		Unblocking Your Story Kendra Griffin	How to Get More Reviews Theresa Braun	Fighting the Good Fight Shannon Baker	Why Write Short Stories John M. Olsen	How to Begin Your Story the Right Away! Cambria Williams	
6:00 pm - 6:50 pm									
7:00pm-8:30pm	Separate Meal Ticket Required Keynote Dinner Don't Quit Your Day Job E.K. Johnston								
9pm-9:50pm			Romance After Dark Alex Jay Lore (moderator), Rachael Bush, Aminah Mae Saff, K.B. Wagers	Horror After Dark C.R. Langille (moderator), Terra Luft, Willow Dawn Becker, Gabino Iglesias, Theresa Braun, Johnny Worthen					

Saturday

For an easier to read and printable Saturday schedule, [click here](#)

Schedule At-a-Glance: Saturday, August 12									
Time	Ballroom 1	Ballroom 2	Amphitheater	Connor	Ft. Douglas	Willow	Aspen	Pine	Tent
8:00am-8:50am	Welcome Session Terra Luft (MC)				Morning Meditation and Writer Wellbeing: The Feeling Author Johnny Worthen				
9:00am-9:50am	The Agent Hour: Tips, Tricks, and Trends - Bryan Young (moderator), Malaga Baldi, Stacey Kondia, Ronald Gerber, Ben Miller-Callihan		Otherness in Fiction: Getting it Right Gabino Iglesias	Authentic Dialogue Kendra Griffin	Stick the Landing: How to Nail Your Novel's End Katherine Monasterio	Love Without Love Sammi Walker	Cosmic Horror 101 C.R. Langile	It's Got Good Bones -- Novel Structure Shannon Baker	Yoga for Creativity Pat Thomas
10:00am-10:50am	The Writer/Editor Relationship Bryan Young (moderator), Katherine Monasterio, Callie Stoker, C.R. Langile, John M. Olsen, Janci Patterson		No more tears: a query letter writing workshop Malaga Baldi		20 Years of Research Brandon Callor, Office of the Medical Examiner		Let's Talk Covers Kyro Dean	Conflict Driven Characters Dax Levine	Introduction to Sword fighting for Writers Jordan Hinchley with Wasatch HEMA
11:00am-11:50am				Ask An Agent Stacey Kondia	Working and adapting fiction to game publishing Alan Bahr	Quick Sand Sammi Walker	Helping Characters through Tough Transitions Jodi L. Milner	Point of View Workshop Kyro Dean	
12:30pm-1:50pm	Separate Meal Ticket Required Keynote Lunch Anger and Passion: Writing Dangerously Gabino Iglesias								
2:00pm-2:50pm			Writing Cool Stuff That Sells: Genre Nonfiction Willow Dawn Becker	Is an MFA Right for You? Rhett Steadman	A Day in the Life of a Body Removal Technician Rae Smith	Critique Like a Boss: Tips for Critique Groups Kelley J. P. Lindberg	Description - Why, When, and Writing Exercises Cambria Williams	The Art of a Silver Tongue Kyro Dean	Separate Ticket Required Headshot Block A Heidi Explin
3:00pm-3:50pm	Editing for the Best Story Possible Callie Stoker (moderator), C.R. Langile, Katherine Monasterio, John M. Olsen	Separate Ticket Required Pitch Block D Malaga Baldi, Rhett Steadman, Ronald Gerber, Alexis Powell, Ben Miller-Callihan, Stacey Kondia, Willow Dawn Becker, Alan Bahr (virtual), Kyro Dean (virtual), Amy Michelle Carpenter (virtual)	Forensic Science Andrew Pacejka, Samantha Hammond, Michelle Marfori	Structure in Fiction: lead so readers can follow with Janci Patterson	Wendig's Damn Fine Story Theresa Braun		Writing Horses Anna F. Marasco	Comedy (seriously) Christina Allen	Separate Ticket Required Headshot Block B Heidi Explin
4:00pm-4:50pm	Gaming to be a Better Writer Alan Bahr (moderator), Dax Levine, Alex Jay Lore	Separate Ticket Required Pitch Block E Malaga Baldi, C.R. Langile, Kyro Dean, Ronald Gerber, Rhett Steadman, Alexis Powell, Ben Miller-Callihan, Willow Dawn Becker, Stacey Kondia (virtual), Amy Michelle Carpenter (virtual)		They're at the Door: Getting Comfortable with Gender Neutral Pronouns in Writing K.B. Wagers	Freelancers: Building a Business Mindset Callie Stoker	Editing Beyond "Gut Feel": A Checklist for Success Kelley J. P. Lindberg	Keep Calm, Creative, and Confident as a Writer Cambria Williams		Separate Ticket Required Headshot Block C Heidi Explin
5:00pm-5:50pm									
6:00pm-8:00pm	Separate Meal Ticket Required Quills Awards Ceremony Banquet								

Sunday

For an easier to read and printable Sunday schedule, [click here](#)

Schedule At-a-Glance: Sunday, August 13					
Time	Ballroom 1	Ballroom 2	Amphitheater	Connor	Ft. Douglas
8:00am-8:50am	Welcome & Mimosa Panel Terra Luft (MC), Bryan Young (moderator), Katherine Monasterio, E.K. Johnston, Gabino Iglesias, R.J. Walker, Aminah Mae Safi				Morning Meditation and Writer Wellbeing: The Thoughtful Author Johnny Worthen
9:00am-11:50am			Workshop: World Building In The Opposite Of A Vacuum E.K. Johnston	Workshop: Indigo League: Poems About Pokemon Trainers R.J. Walker	Workshop: Choosing the Right Point of View Bryan Young
12:00pm-1:50pm	Separate Meal Ticket Required Keynote Poets Breakfast Open Mics, Writers, and Building Community R.J. Walker				
2:00pm-2:30 pm	Closing Ceremony - Terra Luft (MC), Bryan Young, Rachael Bush				

Vendor Tables

Vendor tables are now available to purchase for the Quills Conference, click the sales button for more details.

Agents and Editors

*Please note, life sometimes happens.

Agents and Editors are subject to change.

To sign up for pitches, log in to your registration and hit next until you find the listed pitch sessions.



Alan Bahr

Publisher Gallant Knight Games / Raven Canticle Press

Alan Bahr is the award-winning and best-selling lead designer and founder of Gallant Knight Games, as well as publisher of upcoming speculative fiction imprint Raven Canticle Press.

Looking for:

Fiction, Horror and Dark Fantasy; Fiction, Prose and Poetry; Fiction, Tabletop Gaming



Alexis Powell
Editorial Associate at Torrey House Press

Alexis is the Editorial Associate at Torrey House Press. She's passionate about environmental fiction written by BIPOC and LGBTQ+ writers.

Looking for:

Fiction, including literary fiction, YA, and genre (mystery; thriller/horror; sci-fi/cli-fi; Indigenous futurism; afrofuturism; magical realism; fantasy; historical; romance; and/or nontraditional western, e.g. contemporary, urban, queer, etc.);



Amy Michelle Carpenter **Publisher**

Amy Michelle Carpenter is the publisher for Monster Ivy Publishing, a publishing house with award-winning, bestselling fiction. The Kiss List was filmed as a movie with Marvita, starring Megan Suri (Never Have I Ever), Parminder Nagra (ER), Emjay Anthony (Bad Moms) and Lachlan Watson (Chilling Adventures of Sabrina). Michelle has a MA in Publishing where she studied under Kevin J. Anderson, New York Times bestselling author in the Star Wars and Dune universes.

Looking for:

Monster Ivy Publishing publishes "edgy, clean" fiction, YA fiction grappling with tough issues at a PG13 or less rating. Amy Michelle Carpenter is currently on the lookout for gripping fantasy, gut-wrenching psychological thrillers, unusual Christian fiction, horrors with HEAs, and romantic comedies with depth. Send her something like Twilight, Wednesday, The Distance Between Us,



Ben Miller-Callihan
Agent at Handspun Literary Agency

Ben Miller-Callihan (he/him/his) joined Handspun Literary Agency as an agent in 2019, after working behind the scenes since the agency's founding in tech support and bookkeeping roles, as well as more than a decade teaching high school English. A graduate of the University of Kentucky (B.A., English), and New York University (M.A., English Education), he lives in San Diego with his human, canine, and kitchen appliance families.

Looking for:

I'm looking for fantasy and speculative fiction (especially decolonial sff), crossover fiction a la William Gibson and Erin Morgenstern, the macabre (for all ages), off-the-beaten-path folklore, Deaf culture and community, and anything food-related. Writers from marginalized communities are especially welcomed.



C.R. Langille
EiC/Owner

C.R. Langille spent many a Saturday afternoon watching monster movies with their mother. It wasn't long before they started crafting nightmares to share with their readers. They are a retired, disabled veteran with a deep love for weird and creepy tales. This prompted them to form Timber Ghost Press in January of 2021. They are an affiliate member of the Horror Writer's Association, a member of the League of Utah Writers, and they received their MFA: Writing Popular Fiction from Seton Hill University.

Looking for:

We are looking for novels, novellas, and collections that fall firmly within the horror genre. Specifically we are looking for weird, cosmic, and unsettling horror. No extreme gore or Splatterpunk. Zombies, vampires, and werewolves are a hard sell, but we're willing to take a look if it has a fresh spin.



Kyro Dean

Acquiring Editor for Eight Moons Publishing

Kyro Dean is owner and creative director of Eight Moons Publishing and author of the Rogue Royals series. She also co-authors the Fires of Qaf and owns VanillaGrass.com, a writing resource blog. Kyro has presented at conferences across the nation and loves helping authors and readers find their passions. When not writing, Kyro is playing with her delightfully curious children and talking to her plants, despite their often terrible advice.

Looking for:

Adult Fantasy in any of the genres of Romance, Epic, Mysteries, Adventure, Steampunk/Alternate History, Strong Heroines, and Intrigue. Also accepting YA fantasy. No contemporary please, and clean to soft steam for the romances.



Malaga Baldi

Malaga Baldi Literary Agency

The Baldi Agency is an eclectic agency specializing in literary fiction, memoir and cultural history. Baldi believes the strength of the author's voice and the heart of the story to be key when considering new work. Please review www.baldibooks.com

She worked as a cashier at Gotham Book Mart, in the Ballantine Books Publicity Department, as an associate at Candida Donadio & Associates and the Elaine Markson Agency before going out on her own. Baldi graduated from Hampshire College and lives in NYC. The Baldi Agency is an independent and eclectic agency specializing in literary fiction, memoir and cultural history. Baldi loves reading fiction filled with character and voice. The nonfiction list covers topics ranging from the history of New York City garbage; to Greenland ice shelf melts; Hollywood divas; gay male hustling; nautical sayings; social behavior and cultural attitudes in the Victorian novel; cultural history topics include horror, furies, gay film and culture, men's beards and awkwardness; biography, urban tantric sex practice; dog behavior; foodie culture; gender/queer/trans studies and a host of powerful memoirs.

Baldi is always looking for new work.

Interdisciplinary topics are key.

Looking for:

Commercial/General/literary fiction

Reference

Biography

History

Travel

Lifestyle

Cookbooks

Science

Memoir

Cultural history

Creative/hybrid nonfiction

Gay/lesbian/trans fiction

best to look at www.baldibooks.com



Rhett Steadman
Editor for Monster Ivy

Rhett is an editor for Monster Ivy and holds an MFA from UNR. Monster Ivy Publishing is a publishing house with award-winning, bestselling fiction. The Kiss List was filmed as a movie with Marvita, starring Megan Suri (Never Have I Ever), Parminder Nagra (ER), Emjay Anthony (Bad Moms) and Lachlan Watson (Chilling Adventures of Sabri). We focus on "edgy, clean" fiction at a PG-13 or less rating.

Looking for:

Monster Ivy Publishing is a publishing house with award-winning, bestselling fiction. The Kiss List was filmed as a movie with Marvita, starring Megan Suri (Never Have I Ever), Parminder Nagra (ER), Emjay Anthony (Bad Moms) and Lachlan Watson (Chilling Adventures of Sabri). We focus on "edgy, clean" fiction at a PG-13 or less rating.

Currently we are looking for young adult fiction in any genre. Fantasy and science fiction are always welcome. We are looking for anything that pushes toward edgy while still remaining clean. Anything beyond a PG-13 rating will not be accepted. A recent favorite book of mine is "A Face Like Glass." A strong female protagonist tackling a whimsical and dangerous world would be very welcome.

We are also focused on psychological thrillers right now. If you have anything that builds tension to the max, we would love to hear about it. Horror is welcome as well. The Netflix series "Lockwood and Co." has reignited my interest. I would love to see some comp titles in this area.



Ronald Gerber
Literary Agent at Lowenstein Associates

Ronald Gerber joined Lowenstein Associates as an agent 2019, after several years in literary scouting at Sanford J. Greenburger Associates and Maximum Films & Management and supporting two agents at Writers House. Ronald is a proud graduate of Bard College at Simon's Rock and Clark University. His clients include Sonja Thomas, whose debut *SIR FIG NEWTON & THE SCIENCE OF PERSISTENCE* (Aladdin/Simon & Schuster) is a 2023 Oregon Book Awards finalist, and Lorissa Rinehart, whose biography *FIRST TO THE FRONT* published from St. Martin's Press in July, 2023. Follow him on Twitter @RGerberAgent.

Looking for:

Thriller/mystery/crime, contemporary fiction, historical fiction, romance, grounded sc-fi, narrative nonfiction, memoir/biography, and middle grade



Stacey Kondla
Literary Agent at The Rights Factory

A life-long bibliophile, Stacey's experience includes working as a Field Representative for Scholastic Book Fairs, managing at Chapters/Indigo stores, freelance editing, and serving on the organizing committee of When Words Collide (A Festival for Readers and Writers). She joined The Rights Factory in 2018 and represents fiction and nonfiction authors across age categories and across genres. Stacey is drawn to strong narrative voices, innovative storytelling, feeling all the feels, laughing all the laughs, and also the dark and the weird.

Looking for:

Fiction – Contemporary, Fantasy (not epic and not colonial), Feminist, Graphic novel, Historical, Horror/Supernatural, Literary, Mainstream/Commercial (incl. magical realism), Middle Grade, Mystery/Crime, Romance (prefer RomCom's but would love a steamy queer Victorian romance), Science fiction, Speculative fiction/myths & fairy tales, Suspense/Thriller, Upmarket commercial/Book club, Women's fiction, Young Adult (preferably not fantasy)
Nonfiction – History/biography, Narrative nonfiction, Pop culture, Science, Women's issues

Not Looking for:

Erotica, Self-help, Inspirational, Nonfiction Politics, Trauma Memoirs, Picture Books, Chapter Books



Willow Dawn Becker **Weird Little Worlds Press**

Willow Dawn Becker is an author, marketing director, and award-nominated editor as well as the CEO of Weird Little Worlds Press. She has hundreds of publications about education, marketing, business, and has both fiction and nonfiction publications to her credit. You can find her fiction at Black Fox Literary Magazine, Space & Time Magazine, Irreantum, and the Story Hour Podcast, among others. Her first novel, *Leto's Children* was released in 2022, and her next novel, *Leto's Legacy*, will be released in December 2023. She lives in Utah and dreams about a world where summer never ends.

Looking for:

Weird Little Worlds Press is looking for weird, dark fiction, adventure-centric fantasy and science fiction, middle grade, young adult, adult, and nonfiction horror. She is always very open to fiction sprinkled with humor; protagonists of all genders, races, religions, orientations, and backgrounds; and complex characters that are far deeper than they seem. She is particularly interested in nonfiction science fiction, fantasy, adventure, and horror story pitches that are genre and fandom-adjacent or deal with high concept topics that are timely. We are also considering comic book/graphic novel pitches and picture books, and are interested to see both the story outline and first chapter (including art) if you are pitching either of these.

Weird Little Worlds Press is a PG-13 publisher, and we do not publish excessive profanity, idealized human-on-human gun violence, explicit sex, or extreme gore. As such, we don't accept splatterpunk, erotica, romance, grimdark, or purely literary work. We are also not looking to acquire any collections at this time.

Faculty List

*Please note, life sometimes happens.

Special guests and presenters are subject to change.

Listed in alphabetical order by first name.



Alan Bahr

Alan Bahr is the award-winning and best-selling lead designer and founder of Gallant Knight Games, as well as publisher of upcoming speculative fiction imprint Raven Canticle Press.

Presentations/Panels

Working and adapting fiction to game publishing, Gaming to be a Better Writer Panel



Alex Jay Lore

Alex Jay Lore (he/they) is a queer and trans author of science fiction and fantasy full of queerness with a chance of explosions. His debut, EMPIRE OF

LIGHT, written as Alex Harrow, is out now from NineStar Press with more books forthcoming. Alex is represented by Stacey Kondla at The Rights Factory.

Presentations/Panels

Romance After Dark Panel, Let's Write About Sex



Alexis Powell

Alexis is the Editorial Associate at Torrey House Press. She's passionate about environmental fiction written by BIPOC and LGBTQ+ writers.

Presentations/Panels

Publishing 101 with Alexis Powell



Andrew Pacejka, Samantha Hammond, Michele Marfori

Andrew "Andy" Pacejka, Samantha "Sam" Hammond and Michele Marfori are employed by the only full-service forensics laboratory in Utah, and caters to every federal, state and local law enforcement agency within Utah's borders, as well as periodically assisting law enforcement agencies outside of Utah. Andy is the supervisor of the Fingerprint section, Sam is a Forensic DNA analyst, and Michele is the Quality Assurance Manager for the entire laboratory system.

Presentations/Panels

Forensic Science



Anna F. Marasco, LCSW

Anna Marasco is the perfect 50/50 split of Gryffindor and Slytherin. Her natural chaotic neutral personality is probably why her favorite Winchester brother is Dean. Anna is a licensed clinical social worker with specialty in conceptualization and trauma. She also has an MFA in creative writing with emphasis in fiction. Her poetry and short stories have won awards nationally and internationally. When she is not working or writing, Anna enjoys adventuring in the wilderness, stargazing, discovering magic, and spending time with her ark—two cats, two dogs, and two horses.

Presentations/Panels

Writing Horses, Traumatizing your Characters w/o Traumatizing You, Lure Readers with Enchanting Prose



Ben Miller-Callihan

Ben Miller-Callihan (he/him/his) joined Handspun Literary Agency as an agent in 2019, after working behind the scenes since the agency's founding in tech support and bookkeeping roles, as well as more than a decade teaching high

school English. A graduate of the University of Kentucky (B.A., English), and New York University (M.A., English Education), he lives in San Diego with his human, canine, and kitchen appliance families.

Presentations/Panels

Pitch, Please! (Writing your best query letter) with Ben Miller-Callihan



Brandon Callor

Brandon Callor has worked for the Office of the Medical Examiner for over 22 years. He is a medical examiner assistant and manager of morgue operations. In conjunction with forensics, Mr. Callor is part of a suicide prevention research team. He wrote a book titled, "Life After Suicide: The Impact of Suicide on the Ones Left Behind," that details his personal experience with suicide from his perspective as a forensic scientist and suicide prevention researcher.

Presentations/Panels

20 Years of Research, Living in the Face of Death



Bryan Young

Presentations/Panels

Learning From Kurt Vonnegut's Writing Rules, The Agent Hour Panel, The Writer/Editor Relationship Panel, Choosing the Right Point of View Workshop



C.R. Langille

C.R. Langille spent many a Saturday afternoon watching monster movies with their mother. It wasn't long before they started crafting nightmares to share with their readers. They are a retired, disabled veteran with a deep love for weird and creepy tales. This prompted them to form Timber Ghost Press in January of 2021. They are an affiliate member of the Horror Writer's Association, a member of the League of Utah Writers, and they received their MFA: Writing Popular Fiction from Seton Hill University.

Presentations/Panels

Archery Hunting Elk in the Rocky Mountains, Cosmic Horror 101, Horror After Dark Panel



Callie Stoker

Callie Stoker is an editor with over fifteen years of experience and a knack for knowing what makes a story shine. Her business The Manuscript Dr supports writers by teaching skills to improve craft through coaching and editing services.

Callie has three children on the Autism Spectrum and ADHD and is a champion for neurodiverse representation. She was a guest on Brandon Sanderson's podcast Writing Excuses and is a member of the Editorial

Freelancers Association, League of Utah Writers, and DFW Writers Workshop. She currently resides in the Dallas, TX area.

Presentations/Panels

Freelancers: Building a Business Mindset, First Chapter Essentials, Words to Fit Your World; Editing for the Best Story Possible Panel



Cambria Williams

Cambria Williams believes that storytelling is a collective experience that is both limitless and timeless in its transformative nature. Cambria writes fantasy fiction that emphasizes the magic of hope. Her award-winning debut dark fantasy novel, *THE BEFALLEN*, promises a story of reckoning and redemption. The moon and its magic. Faith and found family. She teaches secondary creative writing and has presented at LTUE. Cambria loves traveling, reading, and taking walks with her husband and dog. Cambria has a Master of Fine Arts in writing and lives in Utah. To learn more about Cambria, find her on Instagram, Facebook, or her website: www.cambriawilliams.com.

Presentations/Panels

Description - Why, When, and Writing Exercises, How to Begin Your Story the Right Away! , Keep Calm, Creative, and Confident as a Writer



Cassidy Ward

Presentations/Panels



Christina Allen

Christina Allen (publishing as C.W. Allen) is a Midwestern transplant to rural Utah, where she serves as the League of Utah Writers newsletter editor and the president of the West Desert Wordsmiths chapter. She writes fantasy novels for tweens, picture books for children, and short stories for former children. Her middle grade novels *Relatively Normal Secrets*, *The Secret Benefits of Invisibility*, and *Tales of the Forgotten Founders* are out now, with many more stories waiting in the wings. Follow her latest projects at cwallenbooks.com.

Presentations/Panels

Kid Lit 101, Wait, Can I Do That?, Comedy (seriously.)



Dax Levine

Dax is a full-time professional Dungeon Master fascinated with the human mind. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and an Intercultural Peacebuilding Certificate at BYU-Hawaii. He studied conflict, culture, mediation, and forgiveness as part of his Machiavellian plan to write dark and heart-wrenching epic fantasy. Since founding Dungeon Master Direct in 2020,

he has mastered hundreds of online Dungeons & Dragons games for paying clients all over the world. At Dragonsteel Con 2022, his one-shot game of Honey Heist set in the Mistborn world raised over \$7,000 for charity (doubled to \$14,000 by Brandon Sanderson).

Presentations/Panels

Conflict Driven Characters, Justifiably Evil Antagonists, Gaming to be a Better Writer Panel



E.K. Johnston

EK Johnston is the New York Times bestselling, critically acclaimed author of several YA books. She is also a big fan of any nature documentary narrated by David Attenborough.

Presentations/Panels

Keynote - Don't Quit Your Day Job, World Building In The Opposite Of A Vacuum, Writing for a Living Panel, Putting Science in Your Fiction Panel, RPG With Writers Liveplay Panel



Gabino Iglesias

Gabino Iglesias is a writer, editor, professor, and book critic living in Austin, TX. He's the author of Zero Saints, Coyote Songs, and The Devil Takes You Home. His work has been nominated to the Bram Stoker Award, the Edgar Award, the Anthony Award, and won the Wonderland Book Award. His

reviews appear regularly in places like NPR, the Boston Globe, and other venues. He teaches creative writing at SNHU's online MFA program.

Presentations/Panels

Keynote - Anger and Passion: Writing Dangerously, You Don't Have to Kill the Dog: How to Effectively Use Violence in Fiction, Otherness in Fiction: Getting it Right



Jodi L. Milner

Jodi L. Milner is the author of the YA fantasy Shadow Barrier series, which includes Stonebearer's Betrayal, winner of the LUW Recommended Read award, and Stonebearer's Apprentice, winner of the LUW Silver Quill. When not chasing daydreams, she enjoys destroying movie plots, making amigurumi, and plotting to take over the world.

Presentations/Panels

How to Hurt Your Heroes, Helping Characters through Tough Transitions, Lucid Dreaming: Unlock Your Creative Potential, Indie Publishing Bootcamp

John M. Olsen

Presentations/Panels

Why Write Short Stories



Johnny Worthen

JOHNNY WORTHEN is an award-winning, multiple-genre, tie-dye-wearing author, voyager, and damn fine human being! Trained in literary criticism and cultural studies, he writes upmarket fiction, long and short, mentors others where he can, and teaches writing at the University of Utah.

His best-selling science fiction series beginning with OF KINGS, QUEENS & COLONIES, and now with OF CIVILIZED, SAVED & SAVAGES is an epic tale in the vein of Frank Herbert's DUNE. It is available from Flame Tree Press. Like Johnny's many other titles it is available wherever better books are sold.

Presentations/Panels

Heinlein's 5 Rules of Writing, Morning Zen and the Way of the Writer



K.B. Wagers

Presentations/Panels

"And then I'd kick her, sir!" Writing humorous fights; They're at the Door: Getting Comfortable with Gender Neutral Pronouns in Writing



Katherine Monasterio

Whether editing short or long fiction, RPG sourcebooks or podcast anthologies, Katherine lives for strengthening the written word. She hails from Cincinnati, Ohio, where her non-wordsmithing pastimes include playing video games and thinking about fictional characters a normal amount.

Presentations/Panels

Milestones to Reach in Your First Chapter, Stick the Landing: How to Nail Your Novel's End, Punch Up Your Prose: Crafting Knockout Syntax



Kelley J. P. Lindberg

Kelley J. P. Lindberg writes award-winning adult and YA fiction, nonfiction, and how-to books. Kelley loves talking about writing with other writers and book lovers, and she leaves her audiences with plenty of take-away information they can use the very next day. When she isn't writing from her home in Colorado, she's traveling as far and as often as she can. She blogs about writing craft and the writing life on her website: www.KelleyLindberg.com. Follow her on Twitter at @KelleyLindberg1.

Presentations/Panels

Critique Like a Boss: Tips for Critique Groups, Do Your Settings Work As Hard As You Do?, Editing Beyond "Gut Feel": A Checklist for Success



Kendra Griffin

Kendra Griffin is a professor, developmental editor, and author who has never met a good dog or a good underdog she didn't love. She is addicted to writing (and reading) about quirky misfits and diverse ensemble casts. Kendra has taught college-level creative writing for nine years. She coaches authors of all levels through community programs, local libraries, and professional conferences, and she is an active member of RMFW and Borderlands Writers. Kendra wishes she could jump between parallel universes and find time to write every novel that has ever occurred to her.

Presentations/Panels

Authentic Dialogue, Creative Critique Groups that Deliver, Unblocking Your Story



Kyro Dean

Kyro Dean is an award-winning author of the Rogue Royals series and Owner and President of Eight Moons Publishing and the writing resource blog, www.vanillagrass.com. She has a passion for helping authors find their voice and succeed.

Presentations/Panels

Let's Talk Covers, POV Workshop, The Art of a Silver Tongue



Malaga Baldi

The Baldi Agency is an eclectic agency specializing in literary fiction, memoir and cultural history. Baldi believes the strength of the author's voice and the heart of the story to be key when considering new work. Please review www.baldibooks.com

She worked as a cashier at Gotham Book Mart, in the Ballantine Books Publicity Department, as an associate at Candida Donadio & Associates and the Elaine Markson Agency before going out on her own. Baldi graduated from Hampshire College and lives in NYC. The Baldi Agency is an independent and eclectic agency specializing in literary fiction, memoir and cultural history. Baldi loves reading fiction filled with character and voice. The nonfiction list covers topics ranging from the history of New York City garbage; to Greenland ice shelf melts; Hollywood divas; gay male hustling; nautical sayings; social behavior and cultural attitudes in the Victorian novel; cultural history topics include horror, furies, gay film and culture, men's beards and awkwardness; biography, urban tantric sex practice; dog behavior; foodie culture; gender/queer/trans studies and a host of powerful memoirs. Baldi is always looking for new work. Interdisciplinary topics are key.

Presentations/Panels

No more tears: a query letter writing workshop with Malaga Baldi



Pat Thomas

Patricia Bittel (writing as Pat Thomas) has been hearing and deciding primarily labor and employment disputes for over 35 years. She has served on the American Arbitration Association Employment Panel since approximately 1992, in addition to service on the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, National Mediation Board and a number of private panels. She is a past neutral co-chair of the American Bar Association Committee on ADR in Labor and Employment Law and has served on the Board of Governors of the National Academy of Arbitrators. Her most interesting international project was to work with the Senegalese judiciary towards incorporating mediation into their judicial system. She is a member of the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers. Ms. Bittel is a graduate of Emory College and The University of Virginia School of Law.

Pat Thomas is certified to teach yoga at the advanced, 500-hour level and has been teaching for 10 years. She was trained in Vinyasa and Kripalu yoga and teaches at Basin Recreation in Park City, Utah.

Presentations/Panels

Yoga for Creativity, The Anatomy of a Trial, Yoga for Writer Resuscitation



R.J. Walker

RJ Walker is a spoken word poet and playwright from SLC. He placed 4th at the National Poetry slam, 6th at the World Poetry Slam, and is a writer in residence at the Utah Arts Alliance.

Presentations/Panels

Indigo League, Poems about Pokémon Trainers; Open Mics, Writers, and Building Community; Interactive Storytelling Keynote



Rae Smith

Rae Smith is a retired body removal technician and professional vampire. She has been published in horror anthologies such as The Daughter of Darkness and is currently working towards her Bachelor's in Creative Writing at UVU. In her spare time, she enjoys ghost hunting and long walks through cemeteries at night.

Presentations/Panels

Decomp 101: Describing Death, A Day in the Life of a Body Removal Technician, Crime Scenes & Corpses: What happens next?



Rhett Steadman

Rhett is an editor for Monster Ivy and holds an MFA from UNR. Monster Ivy Publishing is a publishing house with award-winning, bestselling fiction. The Kiss List was filmed as a movie with Marvista, starring Megan Suri (Never Have I Ever), Parminder Nagra (ER), Emjay Anthony (Bad Moms) and Lachlan Watson (Chilling Adventures of Sabri). We focus on "edgy, clean" fiction at a PG-13 or less rating.

Presentations/Panels

Is an MFA Right for You? with Rhett Steadman



Ronald Gerber

Ronald Gerber joined Lowenstein Associates as an agent 2019, after several years in literary scouting at Sanford J. Greenburger Associates and Maximum Films & Management and supporting two agents at Writers House. Ronald is a proud graduate of Bard College at Simon's Rock and Clark University. His clients include Sonja Thomas, whose debut SIR FIG NEWTON & THE SCIENCE OF PERSISTENCE (Aladdin/Simon & Schuster) is a 2023 Oregon Book Awards finalist, and Lorissa Rinehart, whose biography FIRST TO THE FRONT published from St. Martin's Press in July, 2023. Follow him on Twitter @RGerberAgent.

Presentations/Panels

Mastering the In-Person Pitch with Ronald Gerber



Sammi Walker

Sammi is a local slam poet, she is on the Utah state leadership board, competes for the state of Utah with the team “butterfly effect”, teaches slam poetry to high schoolers and is a published author “a series of beautiful collisions”

Presentations/Panels

Love without love, Quick sand, Writers block and poem set up



Shannon Baker

Despite nearly daily declarations she’s giving up writing forever, Shannon Baker managed to have published fourteen novels in three mystery series, two stand-alone suspenses, and a few contemporary romances. A winner of the 2019 New Mexico/Arizona book award and two-time Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers Writer of the Year, Baker loves a cold cocktail at sunset on her Tucson deck, which is set on traditional Pascua Yaqui land, but she is, and always will be, a Nebraska Cornhusker.

Presentations/Panels

It's Got Good Bones -- Novel Structure, Fighting the Good Fight, Taking the Mystery Out of Mystery



Theresa Braun

Theresa Braun has a Master's degree in English literature and lives in South Florida where she has taught literature and writing for over 20 years. Traveling, ghost hunting, and all things dark are her passions. In 2018 Unnerving released her horror novel *Fountain Dead*, a coming of age ghost story. *The Broken Darkness*, her debut short story collection, came out in February of 2023. Her short works have appeared in *The Horror Zine*, *Sirens Call*, *Hardened Hearts*, and *Best Indie Speculative Fiction*: November 2018, *Double Barrel Horror* (Volume 3) and *Emporium of Superstition*.

Presentations/Panels

Gender Identity in Fiction, Wendig's Damn Fine Story, How to Get More Reviews, Making Tropes/Cliches Fresh



Willow Dawn Becker

Willow Dawn Becker is an author, marketing director, and award-nominated editor as well as the CEO of *Weird Little Worlds Press*. She has hundreds of publications about education, marketing, business, and has both fiction and nonfiction publications to her credit. You can find her fiction at *Black Fox*

Literary Magazine, Space & Time Magazine, Irreantum, and the Story Hour Podcast, among others. Her first novel, *Leto's Children* was released in 2022, and her next novel, *Leto's Legacy*, will be released in December 2023. She lives in Utah and dreams about a world where summer never ends.

Presentations/Panels

Writing Cool Stuff That Sells: Genre Nonfiction with Willow Dawn Becker

2023 Quills Classes

*Please note, life sometimes happens.

Classes are subject to change.

The Agent Hour: Tips, Tricks, and Trends with Bryan Young (moderator), Malaga Baldi, Stacey Kondla, Ronald Gerber, Ben Miller-Callihan

Publishing trends are ever-changing and evolving. In this panel, agents will share what trends they are currently seeing in the industry, as well as tips and tricks to make your submission stand out.

Presented by:

Malaga Baldi, Stacey Kondla, Ronald Gerber, Ben Miller-Callihan

Gaming to be a Better Writer with Alan Bahr (moderator), Dax Levine, Alex Jay Lore

All work and no play make for dry writing (at least sometimes!) Come find out how playing tabletop roleplaying games can spark creativity, help power through or overcome writers block, and open you up to new genres, experiences, and ideas that you might not have considered!

Presented by:

Dax Levine, Alex Jay Lore, Alan Bahr

RPG With Writers Liveplay with Alan Bahr (Game Master), EK Johnston, Gabino Iglesias, RJ Walker, Aminah Mae Safi

Come join award-winning and best-selling game designer Alan Bahr, as he guides our intrepid characters through a memorable (likely hilarious) adventure using Tiny Dungeon 2e! Audience participation will be encouraged.

Presented by:

EK Johnston, Gabino Iglesias, RJ Walker, Aminah Mae Safi

Writing for a Living Panel, Putting Science in Your Fiction Panel

Presented by:

Cassidy Ward

Putting Science in Your Fiction with Cassidy Ward (moderator), E.K. Johnston, K.B. Wagers

There's science fiction and then there's SCIENCE fiction. Learn how to generate ideas from emerging research and incorporate realistic scientific elements into your stories.

Presented by:

E.K. Johnston, K.B. Wagers, Cassidy Ward

Ask an Expert - Beginner

Decomp 101: Describing Death

Sometimes people in our stories die. Let's talk about what that looks like, how we can write about it, and some common pitfalls to avoid when writing about what happens after life ends.

Presented by:

Rae Smith

Ask an Expert - Beginner

Forensic Science

The presentation will be a brief intro into the capabilities and limitations of the Forensic Sciences, most notably at full service laboratories, such as state-level crime labs. "Typical" casework will be discussed, as well as some adjudicated cases of notable interest. A one-hour presentation will be followed by an approximately one hour Q&A.

Presented by:

Andrew Pacejka, Samantha Hammond, Michele Marfori

Ask an Expert - Beginner

A Day in the Life of a Body Removal Technician

Body snatchers, funeral drivers, removal technicians. It's a dirty job but someone's gotta do it. What does a typical day look like in the life of a body removal expert?

Presented by:

Rae Smith

Ask an Expert - Beginner

Introduction to Sword fighting for Writers with Jordan Hinckley

In this course we will cover some basic myths about the history and use of sword fighting as well as doing some very basic hands on practice using Longsword as our foundation for understanding the larger context of swords in their historical context.

Presented by:

Jordan Hinkley

Ask an Expert - Beginner

Crime Scenes & Corpses: What happens next?

Let's take a peak behind the curtain and talk about the logistics of death. So you've found a body? What happens next?

Presented by:

Rae Smith

Ask an Expert - Intermediate

20 Years of Research

You will learn about the research being done by the Office of the Medical Examiner in suicide prevention. You will also gain insight into how forensic scientists cope with the strains of their work.

Presented by:

Brandon Callor

Ask an Expert - Intermediate

Living in the Face of Death

This presentation will provide insight into the world of forensics from the perspective of a medical examiner assistant and suicide prevention researcher. You will learn about the process of determining cause and manner of death which includes forensic autopsy and toxicology as well as other research efforts.

Presented by:

Brandon Callor

Bootcamp

Indie Publishing Prep Bootcamp with Jodi L. Milner, C.R. Langille, Willow Dawn Becker

The key to a successful book launch is preparation. Whether you are an indie author or a publisher running a small press, give yourself and your upcoming release a leg up with the Indie Publishing Prep Bootcamp. In this half-day session, experts Willow Dawn Becker (owner and managing editor of Weird

Little Worlds Press), C.R. Langille (indie author; owner and managing editor of Timber Ghost Press) and Jodi L. Milner (indie author and owner operator of Stone Orchid Press) will provide you with feedback and suggestions to improve your book description for retailers, content for the "Look inside!" feature on Amazon, and your author platform. You'll also get valuable input from your fellow attendees, all under the guidance of these experts. At the end of the bootcamp, you'll receive a packet of tools to help you plan your launch. To ensure individual attention, the bootcamp is limited to 15 participants, divided into three groups of five.

Here are the things you need to have ready to share when attending this boot camp :In .doc or .docx format (Shunn formatting preferred)

Amazon "Look Inside": your book's front matter and first chapter

Retailer book description: your book's description (AKA the back cover copy), your hook/tagline, and a list of 3 books/authors similar to yours that are in the top 100 in your genre on Amazon

Author platform: headshot, 3 versions of your bio (long, under 100 words, under 100 characters), social media handles and how long you spend each week on each site/app

Presented by:

C.R. Langille, Willow Dawn Becker, Jodi L Milner

Bootcamp

Traditional Publishing Prep Bootcamp with Bryan Young, Aminah Mae Safi, Katherine Monasterio

Three working industry professionals, bestselling authors Aminah Mae Safi and Bryan Young, and Shadowrun and BattleTech editor Katherine Monasterio, will take you personally through your first chapter, query letter, and synopsis to get them ready for publication.

Here are the things you need to have ready to share when attending this boot camp: first chapter, query, synopsis - all .doc files in standard manuscript format

More information on how to submit these items will be provided when you register for this boot camp.

Presented by:

Aminah Mae Safi, Katherine Monasterio, Bryan Young

Craft - Advanced

Conflict Driven Characters

What drives your protagonists to take risks? What motivates them to leave their comfort zone and venture into an unknown world? How do you reward their failure and sacrifice in a manner that is rewarding to the reader?

Presented by:

Dax Levine

Craft - Advanced

Making Tropes/Cliches Fresh

Learn how to switch up tropes/cliches and make them your own. You rework and combine some of these during class. We will share them and discuss. With any luck, you will harness the inspiration to turn your brainstorming into a story/novel. We will also cover how crucial it is to pick apart movies and read novels.

Presented by:

Theresa Braun

Craft - Advanced

Justifiably Evil Antagonists

Dive into the dark mindset necessary to write, perform, and even THINK like a true villain. It's easy because you do these things every single day. Craft antagonists that are deliciously evil and incredibly relatable. Master self-deception, conflict justification, objectification, and the hard road to redemption.

Presented by:

Dax Levine

Craft - Beginner

They're at the Door: Getting Comfortable with Gender Neutral Pronouns in Writing

Have you been wanting to make your writing more diverse but weren't quite sure how to go about it? Come chat with K.B. Wagers about writing gender neutral characters, some of the challenges, some of the joys, and some of the awkward moments. Bring your open minds and your questions.

Presented by:

K.B. Wagers

Craft - Beginner

Milestones to Reach in Your First Chapter

Explore the narrative beats you'll need to cover in the first 5-10% of your novel, including key character moments, plot points, foreshadowing, and more, all in the interest of keeping your readers reading.

Presented by:

Katherine Monasterio

Craft - Beginner

“And then I’d kick her, sir!” Writing humorous fights

Writing serious fights is difficult enough, but how do you write a fight between two characters who aren’t trying to kill each other? Join author K.B. Wagers as they talk about some of the best ways to get some character development onto the page – by throwing a punch!

Presented by:

K.B. Wagers

Craft - Beginner

Authentic Dialogue

This workshop will help you pinpoint and refine which words your characters should be saying as well as how they should be said. We’ll explore character voice, sentence types, style of expression, and knowing when to trim or use summarized speech. An excerpt of your own writing (for self-consultation) is helpful to bring.

Presented by:

Kendra Griffin

Craft - Beginner

Critique Like a Boss: Tips for Critique Groups

A critique group may be the most overlooked (and free!) way to make your manuscript stand out in this ultra-competitive market. Learn the 3 types of critique groups, guidelines for review sessions, tips for being a top-notch reviewer, and why critiquing others’ writing is one of the best ways to improve your own manuscript.

Presented by:

Kelley J. P. Lindberg

Craft - Beginner

Writing Horses

Horses can be found across the centuries in storytelling. However, a lot of the storytellers have written them wrong. Gain some random facts such as: why

do you mount from the left side? Why can't horses vomit? Learn how to avoid horse stereotypes in your writing. Bring all your questions for this interactive presentation.

Presented by:

Anna F. Marasco, LCSW

Craft - Beginner

Stick the Landing: How to Nail Your Novel's End

Gain confidence in the narrative beats, character moments, and payoffs your novel needs to finish with a bang and satisfy your reader to the last page.

Presented by:

Katherine Monasterio

Craft - Beginner

Horror After Dark with C.R. Langille (moderator) Terra Luft, Willow Dawn Becker, Gabino Iglesias, Theresa Braun, Johnny Worthen

Horror: hard to define, harder to put down. Our panelists will keep you up at night (literally) with a discussion about the evolution of the horror genre, why horror is more popular today than it's ever been before, and where horror is headed next.

Presented by:

Terra Luft, Willow Dawn Becker, Gabino Iglesias, Theresa Braun, Johnny Worthen, C.R. Langille

Craft - Beginner

Romance After Dark Panel

How do you spice up your sex and romance scenes to make them fresh and inclusive? Join several romance authors as they discuss tips, tricks, and ways to spice up your sex and intimacy scenes.

Presented by:

Alex Jay Lore

Craft - Beginner

First Chapter Essentials

First chapters are hard. So much information has to be front loaded in order to avoid info dumps and steep learning curves. Know what information is vital in a first chapter and the best techniques for layering this information in an interesting—not overwhelming—way.

Presented by:

Callie Stoker

Craft - Beginner**Description - Why, When, and Writing Exercises**

Have you ever read a descriptive passage you could just devour? Writing descriptions takes practice! In this session, we'll discuss the why and when to use descriptive writing before sinking our teeth into some delicious writing exercises that will help you write descriptions your audience will clamor to consume.

Presented by:

Cambria Williams

Craft - Beginner**Punch Up Your Prose: Crafting Knockout Syntax**

Excise fluff and powering up your word choices to create more effective, more interesting, and more pleasing prose.

Presented by:

Katherine Monasterio

Craft - Beginner**Lure Readers with Enchanting Prose**

Make your work stand out by writing enchanting prose that will lure your readers and not allow them to put your stories down. What makes magical prose? Learn to utilize syntax, diction, and tone to develop unique voices to hook your readers and hold them hostage until "the end."

Presented by:

Anna F. Marasco, LCSW

Craft - Beginner**Comedy (seriously.)**

No matter your audience, genre, or format, applying the principles that make comedy writing work can take any project from predictable to un-put-downable! This presentation is geared toward writers of any level of experience, with writing from laugh out loud to deathly dramatic.

Presented by:

Christina Allen

Craft - Beginner

Cosmic Horror 101

Learn the history, attributes, and genre tropes of cosmic horror, as well as hands-on experience as we workshop how to write cosmic horror.

Presented by:

C.R. Langille

Craft - Beginner

How to Begin Your Story the Right Away!

Your story's beginning is paramount to grabbing and keeping your readers' attention. But where and how to begin? In this presentation, learn how to begin your story the right way. We'll explore story expositions, opening lines, and how to engage your readers with your main character right away so they'll turn the page!

Presented by:

Cambria Williams

Craft - Beginner

The Anatomy of a Trial

This session will give the non-lawyer an overview of how a trial works, with pointers about situations where scene, character or plot development can get rich. There will be colorful stories and funny excerpts from actual transcripts.

Presented by:

Pat Thomas

Craft - Beginner

Otherness in Fiction: Getting it Right

In this presentation, I discuss some of the most important elements of writing characters that don't share our positionality as well as the importance of diversity in fiction.

Presented by:

Gabino Iglesias

Craft - Beginner

Fools in Love

Character is what makes a romance memorable. Character is why we go back and re-watch. Why we re-read. And why we invest in stories for years to come. And that is the goal of this seminar, to help you create characters with

depth and heart, so that your reader roots for them from the moment they appear on the page.

Presented by:

Aminah Mae Safi

Craft - Beginner

Taking the Mystery Out of Mystery

In this session we'll not only explore what makes a mystery a mystery and readers' expectations, we'll also discuss creating compelling characters, structuring a novel, point of view, and voice.

Presented by:

Shannon Baker

Craft - Intermediate

Wendig's Damn Fine Story

Take a tour of Chuck Wendig's book *Damn Fine Story: Mastering the Tools of a Powerful Narrative*. We will examine his key points for writing fiction readers crave--hook your audience with unforgettable storytelling.

Presented by:

Theresa Braun

Craft - Intermediate

POV Workshop

Tired of hearing your character povs are too distant? This class is a deep delve into methods you can use to tighten your book's point of view. We'll be doing several rounds of practical application, so come prepared with pen, paper, and (if you'd like) some examples you need help workshopping.

Presented by:

Kyro Dean

Craft - Intermediate

Choosing the Right Point of View with Bryan Young

Every story lives or dies by who the protagonist and POV character is. Sometimes, it's obvious, other times you can pick any character in the narrative and tell an equally thrilling story. This class will show you all the different options of choosing the right POV and what POV to actually write in.

Presented by:

Bryan Young

Craft - Intermediate

Do Your Settings Work As Hard As You Do?

If your settings aren't doing double duty, they're not working hard enough. Settings can go beyond place and time to reveal characters' personalities, enhance conflict, and establish mood and atmosphere—all without slowing down your story. Learn how to make settings an important tool in your “show, don't tell” toolbox.

Presented by:

Kelley J. P. Lindberg

Craft - Intermediate

Learning From Kurt Vonnegut's Writing Rules with Bryan Young

Vonnegut had 8 rules for writing and they're all still useful. Author Bryan Young will walk through these 8 rules and other writing advice from Kurt Vonnegut and show how to apply them best to modern storytelling in the world of short stories and novels, as well as other lessons learned from the classic author.

Presented by:

Bryan Young

Craft - Intermediate

Helping Characters through Tough Transitions

The best stories root themselves in conflict which means your characters are going to suffer. This presentation will explore how to use the Kubler-Ross grief cycle to help your characters work through the toughest of the turmoil you toss at them.

Presented by:

Jodi L. Milner

Craft - Intermediate

Editing Beyond "Gut Feel": A Checklist for Success

Revising your own work (or critiquing others' stories) can be overwhelming. Without specific elements to look for, it's easy to fall back on our “gut feel,” which is hard to articulate and even harder to trust. Learn how to evaluate 17 aspects of storytelling to edit and strengthen any manuscript, including your own!

Presented by:

Kelley J. P. Lindberg

Craft - Intermediate

It's Got Good Bones -- Novel Structure

A brain surgeon wouldn't grab a scalpel and dig in without years of training. A CPA couldn't file your taxes without first learning the basics of a balance sheet. In the same way, writers don't shoot from the womb knowing how to craft a novel. In this workshop we'll explore tested way to structure novels.

Presented by:

Shannon Baker

Craft - Intermediate

Let's Write About Sex

This workshop will go over why sex and intimacy can be important to your story (even if you aren't writing romance!) and how to make these scenes not only vivid and fresh, but inclusive of diverse characters across all genders, sexualities, backgrounds, and ability levels.

Presented by:

Alex Jay Lore

Craft - Intermediate

World Building In The Opposite Of A Vacuum

No matter where your book takes place, you get to build the world it takes place in. We'll discuss prejudice and presupposition, and also taking real places and fictionalizing them.

Presented by:

E.K. Johnston

Craft - Intermediate

Traumatizing your Characters w/o Traumatizing You

Trauma has become more openly utilized as a component in storytelling, however, accurately portraying it tends to require complex considerations. Develop a strong understanding for trauma and how to portray it compassionately. This presentation is for those who want to delve deep into characterization and story development.

Presented by:

Anna F. Marasco, LCSW

Craft - Intermediate

You Don't Have to Kill the Dog: How to Effectively Use Violence in Fiction

In this class we explore the most popular types of violence in fiction and work on bringing together elements of horror, crime, and a plethora of other genres while learning to use violence as a tool to improve storytelling and develop empathy. We look at some of the most common violence types in contemporary fiction—physical, emotional, and sexual—and explore their do, don'ts, and grey areas in between. We also explore the role of empathy in violent narratives, which means we discuss Otherness, physicality, and other core elements of great character development. We talk about the explosive, messy nature of violence and how to pace it to serve our writing while also looking at the role of language and studying the violence formula and our power—and need—to subvert it in order to create gripping fiction.

Presented by:

Gabino Iglesias

Craft - Intermediate

The Art of a Silver Tongue

Why are bad guys so convincing when written correctly? It's all about their silver tongue. In this class, we'll be going over how villains win people over, and how you can use that in your writing through an analysis of the differences in psychology and word choices between heroes and their arch-nemesis.

Presented by:

Kyro Dean

Craft - Intermediate

Unblocking Your Story

Whether you're trying to finish a novel or work through a sticky plot point, this session will help you recognize and name the blocks plaguing you. We'll do reflective exercises to help you seek answers from unexamined resources. Participants will leave with a list of strategies for a variety of blocks.

Presented by:

Kendra Griffin

Craft - Intermediate

Words to Fit Your World

The characters in your unique world need to speak in a way that matches that worldbuilding. Learn common time period, gender role, and social

communication “rules” of our world to apply those guidelines to your story. From idioms to swear words, find the words and phrases that will give authenticity to your creations.

Presented by:

Callie Stoker

Craft - Intermediate

Interactive Storytelling

Whether it's games, immersive theatre, or digital lit. Audiences love to be part of the storytelling process. This presentation will discuss the ways in which audiences would love to interact with your writing, the ways they already do, and how you can make space for that in your writing process.

Presented by:

R.J. Walker

Marketing - Advanced

Let's Talk Covers

Come to this interactive class where we'll go over covers for each genre and what makes them sell, then look at examples from the class and talk about what they did right and what can be improved. This is hands-on class, so be prepared to learn and interact!

Presented by:

Kyro Dean

Marketing - Advanced

Heinlein's 5 Rules of Writing

A discussion of Robert Heinlein's (Starship Troopers, Stranger in a Strange Land) Famous “Five Rules of Writing.” These pragmatic, practical and practiced directives are for the working author and are the very career-enabling tips that steered a blue collar scribbler to becoming one of the seminal voices of his age.

Presented by:

Johnny Worthen

Marketing - Advanced

How to Get More Reviews

Calling all self-published and traditionally published authors, and everyone in between. Want more reviews for your work? Join us in discussing all the ways to increase your number of ratings and reviews.

Presented by:

Theresa Braun

Panel**Editing for the Best Story Possible with Callie Stoker (moderator), C.R. Langille, Katherine Monasterio, John M. Olsen**

The purpose of editing is to improve your work, but how do you take that to the max for the best possible story? Join our panel of freelance and small press editors as they tackle the question of how to get the most out of a manuscript.

Presented by:

C.R. Langille, Katherine Monasterio, Callie Stoker

Panel**Writing for a Living with Cassidy Ward (moderator), E.K. Johnston, Aminah Mae Safi**

If you're like us, you've spent countless hours daydreaming of clocking out from your day job for the last time. Supporting oneself through writing is a dream for so many of us, but it can also feel forever out of reach. Learn ways to earn money with words from a panel of professional writers.

Presented by:

E.K. Johnston, Aminah Mae Safi, Cassidy Ward

Panel**Editor Intro with Bryan Young (moderator), C.R. Langille, Alan Bahr, Kyro Dean, Alexis Powell, Willow Dawn Becker, Rhett Steadman**

Introductory session with acquiring editors who will be taking pitches at Quills 2023. Find out what each is looking for and tips for how to be successful.

Moderated by Bryan Young.

Presented by:

C.R. Langille, Alan Bahr, Kyro Dean, Alexis Powell, Willow Dawn Becker, Bryan Young

Panel

The Writer/Editor Relationship with Bryan Young (moderator), Katherine Monasterio, Callie Stoker, C.R. Langille, John M. Olsen

Writers and Editors have been working together since the dawn of publishing. Some popular depictions describe this relationship as a combative one, but our panelists talk about best practices to work as a team to tell the best story possible and avoid those needless fits of ego.

Presented by:

Katherine Monasterio, Callie Stoker, C.R. Langille, Bryan Young

Panel

Agent Intro with Bryan Young (moderator), Malaga Baldi, Stacey Kondla, Ronald Gerber, Ben Miller-Callihan

Introductory session with acquiring agents who will be taking pitches at Quills 2023. Find out what each is looking for and tips for how to be successful. Moderated by Bryan Young.

Presented by:

Malaga Baldi, Stacey Kondla, Ronald Gerber, Ben Miller-Callihan, Bryan Young

Poetry - Beginner

Indigo League, Poems about Pokémon Trainers

RJ Walker performs a full reading of his book Indigo League. This reading will be interactive with the audience decided which poems to read. There is a poem for each type of Pokémon trainer in Gen1 Pokémon.

Presented by:

R.J. Walker

Poetry - Beginner

Writers block and poem set up

This is to help people who would like to get into poetry, or are currently writing poems but want more detail about how Slam is formatted and also some tips for writers block

Presented by:

Sammi Walker

Poetry - Intermediate

Love without love

Learning how to avoid cliches! And work around them

Presented by:

Sammi Walker

Poetry - Intermediate

Quick sand

Talk about and explore how your writing can affect people and how to explore more heard hitting topics

Presented by:

Sammi Walker

Practical Applications - Beginner

Freelancers: Building a Business Mindset

Owning and running your own business as a freelancer and an author is not only about the logistics of finances, running a website, and marketing but also includes a foundational philosophy to focus the decisions that will affect your business and your brand.

Presented by:

Callie Stoker

Practical Applications - Beginner

How to Hurt Your Heroes

A practical guide to killing your darlings for writers! This class will cover everything from head injuries to bloodloss in a straightforward and fact oriented way. Note: there will be frank discussion of blood and injury, but no images of graphic injury.

Presented by:

Jodi L. Milner

Practical Applications - Beginner

Archery Hunting Elk in the Rocky Mountains

Learn the ins and outs of hunting elk in the Rocky Mountains with a bow. Includes pre-season activities, what to do on the hunt, how to locate elk, shot placement, and how to field dress the animal. Useful if you have bow-hunters in your fiction.

Presented by:

C.R. Langille

Practical Applications - Beginner

Yoga for Creativity

This yoga session is designed to fire up the creative energy of the writers attending through breathwork and a focus on the second chakra, which is the energetic source of creativity located in the hips.

Presented by:

Pat Thomas

Practical Applications - Beginner

Lucid Dreaming: Unlock Your Creative Potential

Ever want to test an idea using immersive VR, but can't afford the set up? Have no fear, that's what our awesome brains are for! This class teaches how to unlock untapped creativity in your sleep through lucid dreaming.

Presented by:

Jodi L. Milner

Practical Applications - Beginner

Is an MFA Right for You? with Rhett Steadman

As someone who just finished the grueling experience an MFA in Creative Writing creates for writers, I hope to give insight into them. MFAs can sharpen one's craft and give chances to work closely with professionals. They aren't perfect but can be very rewarding. Q&A plus some general tips on making MFAs great.

Presented by:

Rhett Steadman

Practical Applications - Beginner

Fighting the Good Fight

How do you stay inspired when your creative wheels are stuck in the mud? This workshop will give you hacks, tips, and mind *% to keep you at the keyboard and away from Netflix.

Presented by:

Shannon Baker

Practical Applications - Beginner

Yoga for Writer Resuscitation

This session offers yoga stretching and toning plus breathing exercises designed to recharge the conference bleary attendee or presenter.

Presented by:

Pat Thomas

Practical Applications - Beginner**Keep Calm, Creative, and Confident as a Writer**

Being a writer can feel like a balancing act, especially when you're juggling "real life." How do you stay calm enough to be creative? How do you foster your creativity so you can build confidence? This course gives tips and tricks you can introduce and establish in your life so you can keep calm, creative, and confident.

Presented by:

Cambria Williams

Practical Applications - Intermediate**Pitch, Please! (Writing your best query letter) with Ben Miller-Callihan**

Congratulations! After years of hard work, you finally have a manuscript you want to see published. Now what? If you want an agent, you'll need a Query Letter. In this workshop, you'll learn how to get started "selling" your work to a potential publishing partner. We'll discuss genres, comp titles, word count and more.

Presented by:

Ben Miller-Callihan

Practical Applications - Intermediate**Creative Critique Groups that Deliver**

In this session, you'll learn how to establish and maintain a strong critique group that serves your genre needs. We'll also discuss how to both receive feedback and how to frame our ideas to offer critique partners useful, detailed, and tactful suggestions for revision.

Presented by:

Kendra Griffin

Practical Applications - Intermediate**Spreadsheet Editing with Callie Stoker**

Self-editing can be daunting, but if you like spreadsheets and methodical systems you'll love this method. This workshop will break down the steps to editing your own work, how to approach it, and what to look for while avoiding overwhelm and burnout. Spreadsheet is based on the editing methods the

teacher uses for her clients and can be applied in part or as a step-by-step approach to breaking down your own revision process into focused, manageable steps.

Attendees may submit ten pages of their work to be used as an example during the workshop. Submitting means you are willing to share your work with the class, see it be edited in real-time during the workshop, and be asked questions about your work in front of the class. Submitting doesn't guarantee your work will be used. Those interested can submit

to: thedoctor@themanuscriptdr.com, please title the email: Quills Workshop Submission.

Presented by:

Callie Stoker

Practical Applications - Intermediate

Morning Zen and the Way of the Writer

Join author Johnny for discoveries in eastern philosophy with their application to the life of an author with its many disappointments. Sessions include directed mindfulness meditation and lecture on concepts that directly speak to the writer's journey.

Presented by:

Johnny Worthen

Publishing - Beginner

Kid Lit 101

Want to write for kids? Here's everything you'll need to know to get started. This overview of the current children's literature landscape, from picture books to YA, highlights unique considerations for writing, querying, publishing, and marketing kids' books.

Presented by:

Christina Allen

Publishing - Beginner

Mastering the In-Person Pitch with Ronald Gerber

Pitching in person can be daunting, but it doesn't need to be! Ronald Gerber will provide tips on how to make the most of your time with an agent or editor at conferences like Quills and take any questions you may have about the process.

Presented by:

Ronald Gerber

Publishing - Beginner

Publishing 101 with Alexis Powell

Publishing 101 to learn about the industry and how to pitch your idea to a publisher.

Presented by:

Alexis Powell

Publishing - Beginner

Wait, Can I Do That?

A beginner's introduction to publishing contracts, copyright, public domain, fair use, and other legal concerns for writers. From fan fiction to brand names and everything in between, come learn what's allowed, how to stay out of trouble, and how to protect your rights as a creator.

Presented by:

Christina Allen

Publishing - Beginner

No more tears: a query letter writing workshop with Malaga Baldi

The point of a query is to get your foot in the door, to have the slush reader request your manuscript. This is a hands-on session where the class will review and critique query letters. Malaga will offer helpful criticism and pointers on how each letter can be improved. Find out the answers to these questions and more: Who reads the query letter? What goes into a query letter? When do you write a query letter? How do you write a query letter? Why is it so important? To participate fully in this workshop, please bring your query letter describing your novel/book proposal/work omitting your name, address, or anything that might compromise your identity.

Presented by:

Malaga Baldi

Publishing - Intermediate

Writing Cool Stuff That Sells: Genre Nonfiction with Willow Dawn Becker

Nonfiction is the bestselling market in the US, but very few people write it. In this presentation, learn how to make money through genre-fiction-adjacent nonfiction and find a great publisher for your work.

Presented by:

Willow Dawn Becker

Publishing - Intermediate

Working and adapting fiction to game publishing

Have you ever wanted to adapt your fiction to the world of tabletop gaming? Publisher and award-winning designer Alan Bahr will walk you through the ins and outs of the process, what to expect and how to go about ensuring you can!

Presented by:

Alan Bahr

Publishing- Beginner

Why Write Short Stories

No matter your skill level and success as a novelist, there are benefits to writing short stories. We'll explore those benefits and how to make effective use of short stories.

Presented by:

John M. Olsen

Screenwriting - Intermediate

Gender Identity in Fiction

We will explore the binary gender stereotypes and generalizations present in our culture and how they have presented themselves in fiction. Then we will challenge those perceptions and explore how we as writers can expand our character identities and traits.

Presented by:

Theresa Braun