

Panels on  
the craft  
and  
business of  
**WRITING**

**FIRST  
PAGES  
PANEL**

One-on-one  
meetings  
with  
**LITERARY  
AGENTS**

All-New  
**INTENSIVES**

**LUCY  
BOOTH**

*James River*

**W R I T E R S**

**conference 2018**  
october 12-14

**MASTER  
CLASSES**

**ABUZZ  
with  
POETRY**

**AWARD-  
WINNING  
SPEAKERS**

**AGENT  
DATING  
GAME**

Presentation  
of the  
**EMYL  
JENKINS  
AWARD**

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# About JRW

## OUR MISSION

James River Writers builds community by connecting and inspiring writers and all those in central Virginia with a love for the written word.

## OUR PAST

JRW was established in 2002 by a group of local writers who saw the need to support the growth of the region's literary community.

The James River Writers Conference began in 2003 as a two-day writing and publishing festival with seminars and lectures for aspiring and working writers. The program was a sell-out success, making clear what many already suspected: Richmond is a thriving city for writers. JRW strove to expand and now hosts a year-round calendar of literary programs plus a website and multiple newsletters about all things literary in central Virginia.

In January 2007, *Style Weekly* recognized the founding of JRW as one of the pivotal moments in the past quarter century of Richmond arts. JRW has been a recipient of a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and was awarded the Theresa Pollak Prize for excellence in the arts. James River Writers is honored to be recognized for all the ways the organization nurtures central Virginia's creative literary community.

The 2018 JRW conference is presented with special thanks to these generous sponsors:

- Virginia Commission for the Arts
- Dominion Energy

## On social media?

If you're sharing your conference experience with the world, please use **#JRW18** so we can easily find and boost your posts. You can also tag us on Twitter @jamesrvwriters.

The 2018 JRW conference is a proud participant in #artoberVA, a month-long celebration of arts and culture in Richmond and the Tri-Cities area.

artoberVA



Hello, wonderful conference attendee!

I need to tell you something. Come closer. I don't want to have to use all caps.

Are you ready?

Everyone here believes you're a writer.

That person in the seat next to you, the one up on stage, the one selling books, the one who checked you in—they all believe you're here because you're a writer.

I mention this for two reasons. First, no matter how far you've leveled up on this writing journey, you might occasionally suffer from imposter syndrome. Maybe on your second or third or forty-eighth draft, you begin to think that you're kidding yourself. So you need the reminder (and, okay, maybe our panel on "The Art of Revision").

Second, this everyone-believing-you're-a-writer thing is pretty cool. Maybe in your not-here life you've had to explain your desire to write to . . . others. They don't understand why or how or what, and they squint at you in puzzlement. They try to connect with you by saying things like, "I wish I had time for a hobby" or "Maybe you could look at my son's college essay." But they don't really comprehend the depths of your writerly commitment.

We do, though. This whole conference is full of people who love what you love. We get you, and we believe you're a writer. We're not going to make you prove it. We believe it because you took the time to show up.

I'm here to thank you for that. Thank you for showing up here today and being part of this literary community. By being here you are part of something magical, something carefully crafted for you by a truly mind-boggling number of amazing people. Just let that sink in for a moment: dozens of people, hundreds of hours of work, thousands of details. All for you.

Because you're a writer.

Katharine Herndon  
*Executive Director*



## 2018 Board of Directors

Erica Orloff, Chair  
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# 4 From the Conference Chair

*Ten years ago, I attended my first James River Writers Conference as a moderator.*

*The experience left me awed. As I sat on the steps of the Library of Virginia, eating my lunch in the sunshine, I basked in the glittering array of inspiration and expertise assembled in my own backyard. The warmth I felt from the impressive authors, agents, editors, and aspiring writers felt as glorious as the afternoon sun on my face.*

*Attendees, especially the award-winning speakers, were humble and helpful. I had found my tribe. The seeds planted that day burrowed into my soul a desire to one day help shape the annual conference, our signature event.*

*Fast-forward to the 16th Annual James River Writers Conference. I've tried my best—in concert with our magnificent conference committee—to create an educational, inspirational, and memorable two-day event. I hope this conference leaves you rejuvenated and better equipped to hone a craft that at its best finds the universal in the specific, building bridges that connect us all.*

*Whether you are writing, editing, or championing books as an agent, reader, or bookseller, I am optimistic that you will discover new friends, deeper knowledge, and enhanced skills while enjoying the gracious nature of our assembly.*



*May your experience at the 16th Annual James River Writers Conference be so fantastic that we'll see you next year. Thank you for attending.*

*Have a fabulous time!*

Robin Farmer  
*2018 Conference Chair*



## JRW Lucy Booth

The doctor is in! Do you have a unique narrator with a certain personality type or a specific mental illness? Do you have a character with addiction issues? Is your depiction true to reality? If you've ever wondered, come to the JRW LUCY BOOTH. Our "doctor" isn't actually Charlie Brown's friend, Lucy, but a team of professionals from the Richmond area. For just 5¢, Rashika Wallace, LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker); Dr. Rashida Gray (Psychiatrist); Brian Weakland (Award-winning Screenwriter); or Robert Toms (Retired Police Lieutenant) will analyze your character or situation and answer questions about personality, mental illnesses, crime scenes, etc. This is a one-of-a-kind conference opportunity to add depth to your character portrayals. No appointments necessary. Just drop by the booth when the doctor is in, and "Lucy"...um...a member of the Lucy Team will offer ten-minute sessions.

# Follow a Track

The James River Writers conference is designed to help you reach your writing goals, whatever they may be. To assist you in choosing from a variety of sessions, we've grouped them into tracks. You may want to follow a certain track throughout the conference to get an in-depth look at one aspect of writing. Or you might choose a few panels from each track to get a well-rounded experience. Then again, feel free to ignore the tracks altogether and follow your favorite speakers. As always, you select the sessions that are most relevant to your circumstances.

This year's tracks are **Methods of Storytelling**, **The Business of Writing**, **Elevating Your Voice & Craft**, and **21st Century Selfcare**. Find each panel's track listed in its description.

## What do you write?

Be proud of what you write and easily share your interests with nametag flair. We invite you to stop by the sticker table near the registration desk, find the stickers that correspond to your genre or target audience, and apply as many as your literary output demands. It's a great way to spot other attendees with similar passions and provides an easy conversation starter.



Comic Books/  
Graphic Novels



Memoir/  
Biography



Poetry



Fiction



Middle Grade/  
Young Adult



Romance/  
Erotica



Historical Fiction



Mystery/  
Suspense/  
Crime



SciFi/Fantasy



Horror



Nonfiction



Screen/  
Playwriting



Literary Fiction



Picture Books/  
Childrens'



Short Story

**8:00AM to 8:45AM**  
Registration & Breakfast

### First-time Attendee Mixer

When: 8:15-8:45

Facilitator: Lana Krumwiede

Room: E10C

**8:45AM to 9:15AM**  
Opening Ceremonies

Room: E10A-B

Poetry reading by Wendy DeGroat

**9:30AM to 10:30AM**  
Concurrent Sessions

### Writing Across Genres and Mediums

Speakers: Melanie Bishop, Clay McLeod Chapman, Sona Charaipotra, Pamela Samuels Young

Moderator: Douglas Jones

Room: E10A-B

Track: Methods of Storytelling

From short stories to screenwriting, this panel offers a primer on the techniques, tools, and discipline needed to be successful with different forms of writing, in case you don't want to write just one.

### Publishing Poetry

Speakers: Tyree Daye, Meg Kearney, Pavana Reddy

Moderator: Wendy DeGroat

Room: E10C

Track: The Business of Writing

Getting your poetry out in the world is a different process than publishing other forms of writing. Learn how to find the best markets, what makes houses that publish poetry unique, and what you can do to find your poetry an audience.

**9:30AM to 10:30AM**  
Concurrent Sessions

### Don't Trip over the Tropes

Speakers: Xhenet Aliu, David Coogan, Lamar Giles, Alex Gino

Moderator: Michael Paul Williams

Room: E11A

Track: Elevating Your Voice and Craft

People are complex and don't always fit into a convenient word package. Get tips on avoiding the stereotypes, defying expectations, and crafting narratives that reflect people, not archetypes.

### Bouncing Back from Rejection

Speakers: Rashida Gray, Leah Henderson, Lana Krumwiede, Rebecca Scherer

Moderator: Melissa Scott Sinclair

Room: E11C

Track: 21st Century Self-care

Learn methods for coping with rejection and self-sabotage, including dealing with procrastination, fear, and self-loathing.

**10:45AM to 11:45AM**  
Concurrent Sessions

### Think Like a Word-Entrepreneur

Speakers: Sona Charaipotra, Pavana Reddy, Laurie Gwen Shapiro

Moderator: Erica Orloff

Room: E10A-B

Track: The Business of Writing

The world of freelance writing and independent journalism is competitive these days, but writers can make healthy earnings with the right mindset and business practices. Learn how.



**10:45AM to 11:45AM**  
Concurrent Sessions

## Stop Shortchanging Short Stories

Speakers: Melanie Bishop, Lina Maria Ferreira  
Cabeza-Vanegas, Virginia Pye

Moderator: Kristin Swenson

Room: E10C

Track: Methods of Storytelling

Have you heard of *The New Yorker* story "Cat Person" and the seven-figure deal the author landed? This panel explores why short stories matter, what writing them can do for emerging and established writers, and where to send them.

## The Art of Revision

Speakers: Alex Gino, Victoria Christopher  
Murray, Latoya Smith

Moderator: Patty Smith

Room: E11A

Track: Elevating Your Voice and Craft

Rewriting is the heart of the creative process. How do you ensure that your final literary product—short story, poem, novel, essay, or screenplay—exhibits your best thought, best feeling, and best technique? How many drafts are needed?

## How to Create and Heighten Suspense

Speakers: Lamar Giles, Rebecca Scherer,  
Steven Smith, Pamela Samuels Young

Moderator: Bill Blume

Room: E11C

Track: Methods of Storytelling

Learn how to keep readers on edge with panelists who will share tips on creating impending danger and escalating tension for characters readers care about. Effective elements of suspense writing include infusing desire, apprehension, anxiety, countdowns, and threats into the story.

**11:45AM to 12:45PM**  
Buffet Lunch

## One-on-One Sessions

We are excited to, once again, offer one-on-one sessions during the conference. This year includes meetings with agents from a full spectrum of genres and feedback sessions with all three of JRW's co-founders: Phaedra Hise, Dean King, and David L. Robbins.

Please arrive fifteen minutes before your scheduled meeting time and check in at the desk outside room E11B.



Saturday Schedule Continues



**12:45PM to 1:45PM**  
Concurrent Sessions

NEW THIS YEAR: Hands-on workshops focused on actionable items and concrete takeaways. Leave with inspiration and new skills.

## **Book Reviewing Basics with Kristina Wright**

Room: E10C

You love to read and talk about books. Maybe you run a book club or have a book blog. Or maybe you're a writer who wants to pick up a book reviewing gig or an academic who has spent years studying a particular genre. Are books in your blood? Have you ever wondered how to break into book reviewing? Are you interested in getting free books, seeing your book reviews published, and even getting paid to write book reviews?

## **Editing Tips and Tricks with Kris Spisak**

Room: E11A

You want your work in top shape before sharing with others, but how do you effectively self-edit something you've read a hundred times? What are some tricks to check your work for errors, whether that's in big-picture content or inline edits? How do you incorporate suggestions from others without losing your message or voice?

## **Strategies for Successful Public Readings with Iman Shabazz**

Room: E11C

Do you get in your own way when reading your work to an audience? Have you ever mumbled, stumbled, or raced across the page? It's not just you. Writers often fail to do justice to their books, poems, essays, and other forms of prose at public readings. Effective readings demand practice. Whether it's a work-in-progress or a published piece, holding the audience's attention requires preparation. This session will share techniques and presentation tips to engage your audience and honor your work during public readings.

\*Bring a page to practice and read for critique.

**2PM to 3PM**  
Concurrent Sessions

## **You Have a Book Contract, Now What?**

Speakers: Jessica Felleman, Lana Krumwiede, Chad Luibl

Moderator: Kristi Tuck Austin

Room: E10A-B

Track: The Business of Writing

Your work doesn't end with your signature on that book contract. Next up, working with an editor, creating a marketing plan, and building your platform. Get your questions answered on how to navigate the challenges ahead.





**2PM to 3PM**  
Concurrent Sessions

### Manipulating Time: Using Young Adult Novels as a Template

Speakers: Sona Charaipotra, Lamar Giles, Meg Kearney

Moderator: A.B. Westrick

Room: E10C

Track: Methods of Storytelling

Pacing is a defining element in YA. Young readers have no patience for long descriptive passages, and many adults have gravitated toward YA because of the high-quality storytelling. How do you pick up the pace of a story? Is there ever value to slowing down? How do you get this ingredient just right?

### From the Page to the Screen

Speakers: Clay McLeod Chapman, Rebekah L. Pierce, Laurie Gwen Shapiro, Brian Weakland

Moderator: Kristin Swenson

Room: E11A

Track: Elevating Your Voice & Craft

Many authors dream of seeing their stories on the screen. But the road to a film or Netflix series is often long and complex. Get tips and tools for the journey from award-winning writers.

### Strategies for Managing Beta Readers

Speakers: David Coogan, Leah Henderson, Virginia Pye

Moderator: Shawna Christos

Room: E11C

Track: 21st Century Self-care

From tapping readers with specific expertise or sensitivities to knowing which feedback to incorporate, learn how to get what you need from the readers you trust with your drafts.

**3:15PM to 3:30PM**  
Plenary Session

### Announcement & Presentation of the Emyl Jenkins Award

Room: E10A-B

**3:30PM to 4:30PM**  
Plenary Session

### A Conversation with Melissa Febos

Sponsored by [EmotionallyNaked.com](http://EmotionallyNaked.com)

Speakers: Melissa Febos, Roben Farzad

Room: E10A-B

Melissa Febos, author of *Abandon Me* and *Whip Smart*, discusses her writing journey and her lessons learned along the way with NPR host Roben Farzad.

## Abuzz with Poetry

**5:30PM to 6:45PM**

### A Showcase of Poets from the James River Writers Conference

Speakers: Lina Maria Ferreira Cabeza-Vanegas, Pavana Reddy, Meg Kearney, Tyree Daye, Wendy DeGroat

Location: Blue Bee Cider, in historic Scott's Addition, 1320 Summit Ave, Richmond, VA 23230

Grab a glass of cider, pick up dinner from LowCo Low Country Cuisine food truck, and listen to a range of engaging poets read their work.

**8:45AM to 9AM**  
Opening Ceremonies

Room: E10A-B

**9AM to 10AM**  
Plenary Session

### First Pages

Speakers: Melanie Bishop, Moe Ferrara, Dara Kaye, Latoya Smith

Moderator: Bill Blume

Room: E10A-B

Three agents and one editor across a broad spectrum of publishing listen to and critique first pages, read on the spot so the audience can hear their initial reactions. First pages should grab and not let go. Listen to the insights and gentle criticism from the experts. Will someone be "discovered" this year?

**10:15AM to 11:15AM**  
Concurrent Sessions

### Publishing Trends

**Sponsored by Tuck Austin Associates**

Speakers: Sona Charaipotra, Beth Phelan, Victoria Christopher Murray

Moderator: Shawna Christos

Room: E10A-B

Track: The Business of Writing

You may have heard the advice to never chase a trend, but how do you find out what's hot and what's not? Learn what our publishing experts have on their radars.

**10:15AM to 11:15AM**  
Concurrent Sessions

### Writing Young: Capturing the Middle Grade Voice

**Sponsored by Meg Medina and Maya Smart**

Speakers: Clay McLeod Chapman, Alex Gino, Leah Henderson, Steven Smith

Moderator: Melissa Scott Sinclair

Room: E10C

Track: Methods of Storytelling, Elevating Your Voice & Craft

Middle Grade novels are usually aimed at children aged eight to twelve. But there's a big difference in an eight-year-old and a twelve-year-old. How does a writer (who's older than their demographic) craft a compelling and authentic voice for that age range and stay true to their audience?

### Writing the Unfamiliar

Speakers: Lamar Giles, Virginia Pye, Laurie Gwen Shapiro

Moderator: Patty Smith

Room: E11A

Track: Elevating Your Voice & Craft

We've all heard "write what you know," but what if you want to write about a time or place you've never experienced? How do you find and employ the right details to infuse your work with authenticity and make it come alive?

### Replenishing Your Creativity Tool Kit

Speakers: Lina Maria Ferreira Cabeza-Vanegas, Moe Ferrara, Pavana Reddy

Moderator: Kris Spisak

Room: E11C

Track: 21st Century Self-care

As a writer you should aim to always have a new project underway. Learn inspirational and practical tips to foster creative breakthroughs as well as ways to relax and defeat writer's block. Acquire tools to check work for flow, logic, and typos.

**11:15AM to 12:45PM**  
Lunch & The Agent Dating  
Game



Have you ever heard of the goofy 70s game show where a bachelor or bachelorette was matched with one of three mystery dates? Well, we've brought back the popular James River Writers version for a third year!

Here's how it works . . .

Sometime between Saturday morning and Sunday at 10:00 AM, you can drop your name in a bowl, indicating your willingness to participate and selecting which category best describes your current work. Categories will include Nonfiction, Young Adult/Middle Grade, Mystery/Crime/Suspense, Women's Fiction, Historical Fiction, Literary Fiction, and Horror. You may put your name in more than one bowl, but you'll only be invited up to the stage once. If your name is drawn a second time, we'll go on to the next contestant. We'll do our best to get to all seven categories, but no guarantees.

Now the fun begins. An agent will take a chair, and our MC will select three names from the bowl. If your name is called, take a seat in one of the mystery date chairs. Our agent will ask each writer a question (for instance, "What would be your main character's idea of a perfect date?" or "What does your protagonist want most of all?") The three writers will be given the chance to respond. After a few follow-up questions, our MC will encourage the agent to select a winner. Winners of each round will have their proposal and first chapter read (nonfiction), or their synopsis and three chapters read (fiction).

The audience will gain insights into the thinking of agents—and who knows? One of our own attendees just might find the perfect relationship.

Speakers: Jessica Felleman, Moe Ferrara,  
Dara Kaye, Chad Luibl, and Rebecca  
Scherer

MC: Brian Rock  
Room: E10A-B



Sunday Schedule Continues

**1PM to 2PM**  
Concurrent Sessions

## The Self-publishing Journey

Speakers: Pavana Reddy, Steven Smith, Pamela Samuels Young

Moderator: Kristi Tuck Austin

Room: E10A-B

Track: The Business of Writing

There are many pieces to put in place if you want to experience self-publishing success. These experts can help make the journey go more smoothly.

## Essay-writing Essentials

Speakers: Xhenet Aliu, Melissa Febos, Laurie Gwen Shapiro

Moderator: Ellen Brown

Room: E10C

Track: Methods of Storytelling

Essays capture human experience and help us connect with our communities. How do you boil big human emotions down into a small space, and just how much of it has to be true?

## But Is it Funny? How to Infuse Humor

Speakers: Clay McLeod Chapman, Alex Gino, Beth Phelan

Moderator: Kris Spisak

Room: E11A

Track: Elevating Your Voice & Craft

Effective humor eases tension, surprises readers, and humanizes characters. You don't need to be a comedian to make people laugh. Learn how to incorporate humor into your writing.

**1PM to 2PM**  
Concurrent Sessions

## Coping with Deadline Hell

Speakers: Melanie Bishop, Tyree Daye, Virginia Pye

Moderator: Michael Paul Williams

Room: E11C

Track: 21st Century Self-care

Looming deadlines can make your anxiety feel like it is on steroids. Mistakes easily occur when time is running out. Learn techniques, tips, and the essential checklists to review before hitting send.

**2:15PM to 3:15PM**  
Concurrent Sessions

## Memorable Memoir

**Sponsored by Constance Costas**

Speakers: David Coogan, Melissa Febos, Jessica Felleman

Moderator: Annette Marquis

Room: E10A-B

Track: Methods of Storytelling

What makes memoir compelling enough to find an audience in the wider world? How do you balance the relating of facts with vivid story-telling? How can you write your truth when other people might get hurt? Our panelists weigh in on these and other elements that make memoir appeal to readers.





**2:15PM to 3:15PM**  
Concurrent Sessions

### Protect Your Rights

Speakers: Ashley Brooks, Lina Maria Ferreira Cabeza-Vanegas, Dara Kaye

Moderator: Erica Orloff

Room: E10C

Track: The Business of Writing

What do you need to know before you sign a book contract? How are foreign rights or rights for translations different? What do you need to know to protect yourself and treat your writing like the business it is?

### What Makes a Story Timeless? Emotional Truth

Sponsored by Robert Sexton in Loving Memory of Emyl Jenkins

Speakers: Xhenet Aliu, Meg Kearney, Chad Luibl

Moderator: Douglas Jones

Room: E11A

Track: Elevating Your Voice & Craft

Every family has a story to tell. Is your story compelling enough to have an audience in the wider world? Does it have a unique point of view and a platform that will appeal to a large demographic? Our panelists weigh in on the elements of creative nonfiction that bring you readers.

### First Drafts: The Secret Sauce

Speakers: Lana Krumwiede, Victoria Christopher Murray, Pamela Samuels Young

Moderator: A. B. Westrick

Room: E11C

Track: 21st Century Self-care

How do you write a first draft? You work on it until it's finished. Panelists will share mind-hacks, games, and tricks of the trade to get you there as quickly and painlessly as possible.



## Chat Room

Room E10D

NEW THIS YEAR! Anchored by an old manual typewriter for the first JRW round-robin story, the Chat Room is the place to meet, mingle or mellow out.



Sunday Schedule Continues



**3:30PM to 4:30PM**  
Concurrent Sessions

NEW THIS YEAR: Hands-on workshops focused on actionable items and concrete takeaways. Leave with inspiration and new skills.

### **Mood and Tone in the Short Story with Melanie Bishop**

Room: E10C

This class will utilize exercises to help writers attend to the often-neglected aspects of craft: mood and tone. How does the mood or mindset of a point-of-view character shape your story and color its ending? What is your attitude toward the material you are writing? What effect do you want this story to have on a reader? Do you want your reader laughing at the end of the story, or frightened, or heartbroken? Exercises help participants to understand the difference between tone and mood, and to utilize both subtly and effectively.

### **Beyond Google: Web Treasures for Writers with Wendy DeGroat**

Room: E11A

Do you need to establish a credible setting for your narrative or tune your characters' dialogue to the language of an era? Would you like to enrich your writing with fresh metaphors related to a specific place or time? This class will leave you energized about the potential of lesser-known online resources to inform your work (or spark new work) and give you tips for making the most of these treasures.

### **It's Alive!: Bringing Your Characters to Life with Bill Blume**

Room: E11C

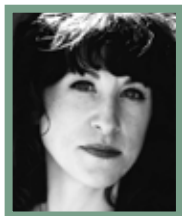
Find out what it takes to create characters that readers want to journey with. You'll learn why some characters never rise above a cliché and how to keep them active throughout your story. Author Bill Blume will show how he built the cast for his *Gideon Keep*, *Vampire Hunter* series, what he's gotten right (and wrong), and how to use it to improve your stories.

**4:35PM to 4:50PM**  
Closing Ceremonies

Room: E10A-B

Join us for your chance to win a free ticket to the 2019 conference! You must be present to win.





**Xhenet Aliu's** debut novel, *Brass* (Random House, 2018), was named a Spring 2018 Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers selection and was included in must-read and best books lists from *The New York Times*, *Elle*, *Southern Living*, *Real Simple*, *Huffington Post*, *Book Riot*, *Elite Daily*, *Bustle*, *The Millions*, *Christian Science Monitor*, and more. Her previous story collection, *Domesticated Wild Things and Other Stories*, won the Prairie Schooner Book Prize in Fiction.



**Kristi Tuck Austin** waded New York City sewers, ran from trains, and slid through a water pipe to the Harlem River while researching her novels. She's celebrated Thanksgiving in the Paris catacombs, hiking, crawling, wading (again), and dining by candlelight. In her daily life, which is dry and above ground, she's founder of Tuck Austin Associates, a literary and media services company that helps authors connect with readers. She's a former board chair of James River Writers and JRW conference chair. @KristiAustin



**Melanie Bishop** (MFA) taught creative writing for twenty-two years at Prescott College and founded their literary magazine, *Alligator Juniper*, three-time winner of the AWP Directors' Prize. Her young adult novel, *My So-Called Ruined Life* (Torrey House Press, 2014), was a top-five finalist for CLMP's Firecracker Awards and Binghamton University's John Gardner Award. Currently, Bishop offers instruction, editing, coaching, and retreats in Prescott, AZ, and Carmel, CA. She reviews books for *Carmel Magazine*, *Huffington Post*, and *New York Journal of Books*. @MelBishopWriter



**Bill Blume** discovered his love for the written word while in high school and has been writing ever since. He's the author of the young adult *Gidion Keep*, *Vampire Hunter* series. His short stories have been published in many fantasy anthologies and various ezines. Just like the father figure in his first novel, Bill works as a 911 dispatcher and has done so for more than fifteen years. @BillTheWildcat



**Ashley Brooks** is a partner at a nationally known entertainment firm, Schroder Brooks PLC. Ashley focuses her practice on media, marketing, and advertising law and works with clients in a range of industries including writing, publishing, advertising, animation, and production.



**Ellen F. Brown** is an award-winning freelance writer whose work has appeared in many print and online publications, including the *Los Angeles Times*, *Virginia Living*, and *The Rumpus*. She co-authored the book *Margaret Mitchell's Gone With the Wind: A Bestseller's Odyssey from Atlanta to Hollywood* and is now working on a book about literary estates. She has a law degree and an MFA in nonfiction writing and is a member of the National Book Critics Circle. @Ellenfbrown



**Clay McLeod Chapman** is the creator of the rigorous storytelling session *The Pumpkin Pie Show*. Publications: *nothing untoward*, *rest area*, *miss corpus*, and *The Tribe* trilogy—*Homeroom Headhunters*, *Camp Cannibal*, and *Academic Assassins*. Film: *The Boy* (SXSW 2015), *Henley* (Sundance 2012), and *Late Bloomer* (Sundance 2005). Comics: *Lazaretto*, *Self Storage*, *Edge of Spider-Verse* and *Venomverse*, *The Avengers*, *Amazing Spider-Man*, and *American Vampire*. He is a writing instructor at The Actors Studio MFA Program at Pace University. @claymcleod



**Sona Charaipotra** spends much of her time poking plot holes in shows like *Riverdale*—for work, of course. As the co-founder of the boutique book packager CAKE Literary, Sona's mission is to get more diverse and deliciously high concept books for kids and teens onto shelves. She's co-author of the YA dance dramas *Tiny Pretty Things* and *Shiny Broken Pieces*, and author of the upcoming *Prognosis: Love & Death*. Sona is also a proud We Need Diverse Books team member. As a journalist, she has written for everyone from *The New York Times* to *TeenVogue*. @sona\_c

# 16 Speakers



**Shawna Christos** has written software manuals, etc. for a variety of companies, including a local Fortune 500 company, earning inter-company recognition and awards for graphics, art, computer, and database work. A long-time supporter of JRW, she has served on the board of directors and many different committees, including the conference committee. Currently she is at work writing novels—including young adult, middle grade, and adult—and dabbling with poetry, tweets, art, and more. @ywrite



**David Coogan** is an associate professor of English at Virginia Commonwealth University and the author of *Writing Our Way Out: Memoirs from Jail*, the creative culmination of a writing class in which ten men explore the conditions, traps, and turning points on their paths to imprisonment as well as the redemptive power of memoir.



**Tyree Daye** is a poet from Youngsville, NC. He is the winner of the 2017 APR/Honickman First Book Prize for his book *River Hymns* (APR, 2017). Daye is a 2017 Ruth Lilly Finalist and Cave Canem fellow and longtime member of the editorial staff at *Raleigh Review*. He received his MFA in poetry from North Carolina State University. Daye's work has been published in *Prairie Schooner*, *The New York Times*, and *Nashville Review*. Daye recently won the Amy Clampitt Residency for 2018 and The Glenna Luschei *Prairie Schooner* Award for his poems in the Fall 2015 issue.



**Wendy DeGroat's** poetry has appeared in *Cider Press Review*, *Rust + Moth*, *Common-place*, *Raleigh Review*, *Mslexia* and elsewhere. Her chapbook *Beautiful Machinery* was published in 2016 and she has a documentary poetry manuscript in progress. Wendy is a librarian in RVA, where she also teaches workshops and curates poetryriver.org, a resource site for contemporary American poetry and docupoetry. When she isn't writing, reading, or teaching, you'll find her on the river or in the woods. @poetryriver



**Roben Farzad** is the author of *Hotel Scarface: Where Cocaine Cowboys Partied and Plotted to Control Miami* (Penguin, 2017) and hosts *Full Disclosure* (available on NPR One and iTunes). Find him on the web at [HotelScarface.com](http://HotelScarface.com) and on Twitter @RobenFarzad.



**Melissa Febos** is the author of the memoirs *Abandon Me* and *Whip Smart*. Her work has appeared in *Glamour*, *Salon*, *The New York Times*, *Bitch Magazine*, and elsewhere. Her essays have won prizes from *Prairie Schooner*, *Story*, and The Center for Women Writers. She is Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at Monmouth University and MFA faculty at the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA), and serves on the Board of Directors for VIDA: Women in Literary Arts. @melissafebos



**Jessica Felleman** represents fun pop culture non-fiction, popular science, history, and psychology, as well as contemporary literary memoirs, graphic novels, commercial and literary fiction, historical fiction, and fiction that balances on the edge of genre—especially science fiction and fantasy. She loves fresh stories about magic, family, everyday people doing extraordinary things, and unforgettable places. Jessica began working at Foundry Literary + Media in 2015, where she is actively building her list. @jmfelleman



Becoming an agent was fitting for the girl who, as a small child, begged for a book because it "had a hard cover." **Moe Ferrara** had a difficult time finding YA books outside of Christopher Pike when she was growing up and instead tackled her mom's romance novels. Though her career path zigzagged a bit—she attended college as a music major, earned a JD from Pace Law School, then worked various publishing jobs—Moe was thrilled to join the BookEnds team in May of 2015 as a literary agent and their subsidiary rights director. @inthesestones





**Lina Maria Ferreira Cabeza-Vanegas** earned MFAs in creative nonfiction writing and literary translation from The University of Iowa. She is the author of *Drown*, *Sever Sing* and *Don't Come Back*, as well as co-editor of the forthcoming anthology *Essaying the Americas*. Her fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and translation work has been featured in *Bellingham Review*, *Chicago Review*, *Poets & Writers*, and *The Sunday Rumpus*, among others. She works as an assistant professor for Virginia Commonwealth University. @LMFCV



**Lamar Giles** is the author of the 2015 Edgar® Award Nominee *Fake ID*, the 2016 Edgar® Award Nominee *Endangered* from HarperCollins, and *Overtaken* from Scholastic Press, a Kirkus Reviews Best YA Novel 2017. His latest novels *Spin* (Scholastic), and *The Last Last-Day-of-Summer* (HMH/Versify) will publish in 2019. He is a founding member of We Need Diverse Books, and a faculty member in the Spalding University MFA program. He resides in Virginia with his wife. @LRGiles



**Alex Gino** loves glitter, ice cream, gardening, awe-ful puns, and stories that reflect the diversity and complexity of being alive. They would take a quiet coffee date with a friend over a loud and crowded party any day. A former LSAT tutor who never touched law school, Alex can still talk your ear off about sufficient and necessary conditions. They are a proud We Need Diverse Books team member. Born and raised on Staten Island, NY, Alex lives in Oakland, CA. @lrgino



**Dr. Rashida Gray** is a practicing psychiatrist in Richmond, VA, where she treats a range of mental health conditions affecting adults. She attended Xavier University of Louisiana for undergraduate studies, Drexel University College of Medicine, and the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania for her residency. She is happily married to her best friend and is the mother of a future film director and a future pediatric surgeon. She loves to be around creative people.



**Leah Henderson** is the author of *One Shadow on the Wall*, an Africana Children's Book notable book and a Bank Street "Best Book of 2017," starred for outstanding merit. Her work appears in the YA anthology *Black Enough: Stories of Being Young & Black in America* and her forthcoming picture books include *A Day For Rememberin'* and *Mamie on the Mound*. She volunteers for Kweli Journal and We Need Diverse Books events. Leah received her MFA from Spalding University and lives in Washington, D.C. @LeahsMark



**Phaedra Hise** is a lifelong journalist who started her career at *Inc Magazine*. She has written five books, and has worked with national publications including *Fortune*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Glamour*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. Phaedra currently works in brand publishing and heads the content department for Legacy Navigator. She also writes regularly about food, and lives in Richmond, VA, with her family. @hiphaedra



**Douglas Jones** has written and seen produced more than forty plays and screenplays, including the musical *Bojangles* (music by Charles Strouse, lyrics by Sammy Cahn), *The Turn of The Screw*, and his award-winning *Songs from Bedlam*, which will be performed at Firehouse Theatre in fall 2018. His film *1607: A Nation Takes Root* is on display at Jamestown Settlement & Yorktown Victory Center. He teaches at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and The Visual Arts Center, and is a member of The Dramatists Guild.



**Dara Kaye** is an agent and foreign rights director at Ross Yoon, a DC-based agency known for collaborative editing and award-winning adult nonfiction. Currently open to narrative nonfiction and sci-fi/fantasy, Dara is seeking projects that amplify underrepresented voices and thrive on unexpected intersections of styles and topics. Before joining Ross Yoon, Dara spent two years in South Korea on a Fulbright fellowship teaching English and researching the history of Shakespeare in Korea. @darakaye.

# 18 Speakers



**Meg Kearney** is author of *Home By Now*, winner of the 2010 PEN New England LL Winship Poetry Award; *An Unkindness of Ravens*; three YA novels-in-verse: *The Secret of Me*, *The Girl in the Mirror*, and *When You Never Said Godobye*; and the award-winning picture book, *Trouper*. Her poetry has been featured on Ted Kooser's *American Life in Poetry* and Garrison Keillor's *A Writer's Almanac*. She directs the Solstice MFA Program at Pine Manor College in Massachusetts. @KearneyMeg



**Dean King** is the author of *The Feud*, which the WSJ called, "popular history as it ought to be written," and nine other books. His national bestseller *Skeletons on the Zahara* was translated into ten languages and optioned by Steven Spielberg. Dean is the chief story teller of two History Channel documentaries and a producer of its unscripted series *Hatfields and McCoys*. His writing appears in *Esquire*, *Granta*, *Outside*, and *The New York Times*. @deanhking



**Lana Krumwiede** began her writing career creating stories and poems for publications such as *Highlights*, *High Five*, *Spider*, and *Chicken Soup for the Child's Soul*. Her first novel, *Freakling*, was a finalist for SCBWI's Crystal Kite Member's Choice Award and an honor book for the International Reading Association's Intermediate Fiction Award. *Freakling* was followed by *Archon* and *True Son*. Lana also wrote the picture book *Just Itzy* and edited the anthology *River City Secrets: Stories from Richmond*. She lives with her husband and daughter in Midlothian, VA. @LanaKrumwiede



**Chad Luibl** is a literary agent at Janklow & Nesbit Associates. Previously he has worked at the National Endowment for the Arts and overseas as an ESL teacher in Hungary and Poland. He holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Virginia Commonwealth University. @chad\_luibl



**Annette Marquis** is the author of *Resistance: A Memoir of Civil Disobedience in Maricopa County*, and co-author of over twenty-five software books. Her writing has been anthologized in *The Women of Katrina: How Gender, Race, and Class Matter in an American Disaster*, *Struggling in Good Faith: LGBTQI Inclusion from 13 American Religious Perspectives*, and other collections. Annette works as Program Director for James River Writers and is the owner of Wordswomen.com. @annettemarquis



**Victoria Christopher Murray** attended Hampton University, then attended New York University where she received her MBA. With 30 novels, Victoria has received numerous awards including the Phyllis Wheatley Trailblazer Award, nine African American Literary Awards, and she has four NAACP Image Award nominations. In 2016, she won the Image Award for Outstanding Literature for her social commentary novel, *Stand Your Ground*. Several of Victoria's novels are optioned for movies, including her *Seven Deadly Sins* series. @VictoriaECM



**Erica Orloff** is the author of twenty-five novels, including the award-winning *Magickeepers* series (writing as Erica Kirov). Her books have been translated into thirteen languages, none of which she speaks unless you count high school French. An in-demand speaker and workshop presenter, Erica was the writer-in-residence at one of the nation's top high schools. She was nominated for the Pushcart for her essay "Choose Me" on motherhood following loss. She is this year's board chair of James River Writers. @ericaorloff



**Beth Phelan** has been working in literary agencies since 2010, holding positions at Scott Waxman Agency, Morhaim Literary, and The Bent Agency, before landing at Gallt & Zacker in late 2017. She represents mainly middle-grade and young adult fiction and gravitates toward stories and characters that inspire, and anything with a touch of humor and the bittersweet. Beth is also the creator of #DVpit, a Twitter pitch event for marginalized voices. @beth\_phelan





**Rebekah L. Pierce** is a playwright and author focusing on contemporary women and their search for purpose and identity. She received her MA in English from Virginia Commonwealth University, which is where she wrote her first play, *The Myth*. An African-American military veteran, she knows her purpose is to give a voice to women from all walks of life. She is also Founder & CEO of The Pierce Agency, LLC, as well as RLP Productions, and is a motivational speaker, English teacher, and mother. @rebekahpierce



**Virginia Pye** is the author of the short story collection, *Shelf Life of Happiness* (2018, Press 53) and two award-winning novels, *Dreams of the Red Phoenix* and *River of Dust* (2015 and 2013, Unbridled Books). Her essays and stories have appeared in *Literary Hub*, *The New York Times*, *The Rumpus*, *The North American Review*, *Tampa Review*, *Failbetter*, and elsewhere. Long-time former chair of JRW, she now lives in Cambridge, MA. @VirginiaPye



**Pavana Reddy** is an LA-based writer and poet. Her first book, *Rangoli*, features a collection of poetry which travels through the dynamics of diaspora and colorism across both borderlines and cultures. Her work has been featured by noteworthy luminaries such as Anoushka Shankar, who invited Pavana to write a song for her Grammy nominated album, *Land of Gold*. The track, "Remain the Sea," consists of a poem by Reddy read by the critically acclaimed actress, Vanessa Redgrave. @mazadohta



**David L. Robbins** began writing fiction in 1997 and has published fourteen novels, with repeated visits to the NY Times best-seller list. He is also an award-winning screenwriter, essayist, and playwright. David is a founder of James River Writers; co-founder of the Podium Foundation, which supports the practice of writing for Richmond area youth; and creator of The Mighty Pen Project, helping Virginia veterans turn their memories of service into written narratives. The Virginia Commission for the Arts named David one of the two Most Influential Literary Artists in the state for the last 50 years. @DavidLRobbins



**Brian Rock** writes funny books for kids. As a former teacher, he knows that kids are more apt to read what they like. According to the Kids & Family Reading Report, 70% of kids want to read a book that will make them laugh and 54% want books that allow them to use their imagination. So, all his books are at least 70% funny and 54% creative! @brianrockwrites



**Rebecca Scherer** began her career at the Jane Rotrosen Agency in 2012 after earning a BA in English Literature, Political Science, and German from the Macaulay Honors College at Hunter. At JRA, she was offered the unique opportunity to work within each agency department to gain a deep understanding of the business before going on to become an agent. She represents commercial fiction across genres, with particular interest in women's fiction, crime/mystery, suspense, book club fiction, and upmarket/literary-leaning fiction. @RebeccaLScherer



**Melissa Scott Sinclair** is an award-winning journalist and editor. Her recent work has appeared in *Richmond* magazine and the nonfiction anthology *Life In 10 Minutes*. Her short story "Everything Must Go," a ghost story set in the decaying corporate headquarters of Circuit City, was published in the anthology *Richmond Macabre*.



**Laurie Gwen Shapiro** is a native of New York City's Lower East Side, where she still resides. She has written articles for publications including *The New Yorker*, *New York Magazine*, *The Daily Beast*, *Slate*, *Aeon*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, and has her own history column focusing on unsung heroes for *The Forward*. Shapiro is also a documentary filmmaker who won an Independent Spirit Award for directing IFC's *Keep the River On Your Right: A Modern Cannibal Tale* and an Emmy nomination for producing HBO's *Finishing Heaven*. *The Stowaway: A Young Man's Extraordinary Adventure to Antarctica* is her first non-fiction book. @LaurieStories

# 20 Speakers



**Iman Shabazz** is a theatre artist whose professional career spans over two decades, encompassing acting, directing, writing, producing, dramaturgy, arts administration, public speaking, emceeing, dancing, and vocal percussion.

He is a student of the late theatrical legend Ernie McClintock and is quite active and influential in the performing arts culture of Richmond. Now Artistic Director of African American Repertory Theatre of Virginia, he seeks to use his talent as a tool for liberation and healing. @theimanshabazz



**Latoya C. Smith** has over a decade of editorial experience, having worked for publishers such as Teri Woods Publishing, Kensington Publishing, Grand Central Publishing, and Samhain Publishing. She is the winner of numerous awards and

provides editorial services and agenting through her company, LCS Literary Services. @GlamEditor\_Girl



**Patricia (Patty) Smith** is the author of the novel *The Year of Needy Girls* (Kaylie Jones Books/Akashic 2017), a finalist for the Lambda Literary Award. Her work has appeared most recently in *Parhelion Literary Magazine* and the anthologies

*Older Queer Voices: The Intimacy of Survival* and *Nine Lives: A Life in Ten Minutes Anthology*. She teaches American Literature and creative writing at the Appomattox Regional Governor's School in Petersburg, VA. @pattysmith711



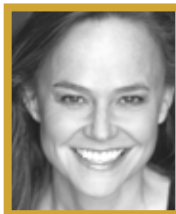
**Steven K. Smith** is the author of ten books including the middle grade series *The Virginia Mysteries* and *Brother Wars*. His other works include the parenting memoir *Splashing in the Deep End* and the adult fiction novel *Harborwood* (as Steven

Sawyer). His first book, *Summer of the Woods*, is in development for film. Steven lives in Midlothian, VA, with his wife and three sons. @stevenksmith1



**Kris Spisak** began her career as a college writing instructor; however, after six years in the classroom, she transitioned to professional writing and editing. Helping writers sharpen their craft was the driving force behind her book, *Get a Grip on*

*your Grammar: 250 Writing and Editing Reminders for the Curious or Confused* (Career Press, 2017), and the creation of her writing program, Grammartopia. Kris is on the board of directors of James River Writers and is the co-founder of Midlothian Web Solutions. @KrisSpisak



**Kristin Swenson, Ph.D.** is the author of *The Misunderstood Bible: On What's Forgotten, Ignored, or Just Plain Weird about the World's Most Famous Book* (forthcoming); *God of Earth: Discovering a Radically Ecological Christianity*; *Tell Mister*

*Lincoln*, and *Bible Babel: Making Sense of the Most Talked about Book of All Time*, among others and is blogging about the kitchen. She is associate professor at Virginia Commonwealth University (affiliate) and a fellow at the Virginia Humanities in Charlottesville, where she lives with a guy and a dog. @kristinswenson



**Robert Toms** retired from an almost thirty-year career in law enforcement to pursue writing and currently serves on the JRW board. While advancing to the rank of Lieutenant, he attended local, state, and federal government

training and wrote articles, which were published in trade magazines. His law enforcement career involved working in specialized fields, including patrol, criminal investigations, interstate criminal extraditions, executive protection, and command-level supervision.



# Speakers 21



**Rashika Wallace** is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) practicing in Richmond, VA, and surrounding areas. She has a private practice working with individuals, families, groups, and couples. She specializes in depression, anxiety, grief, and stress. Rashika has a passion for working with victims of trauma and adolescent to young adult females. She has over thirteen years of experience working with adults with mental illnesses, families, couples, and at-risk youths and their families.



**Brian Weakland** is an honors graduate of Penn State's School of Journalism. He has taught writing courses at Penn State and at the University of Pittsburgh. He lectures at Brown College, University of Virginia. Brian has authored three mystery novels and seven nationally award-winning screenplays. In 2013, he won the Writer's Guild award for best drama screenplay at the Austin Film Festival. He is represented by Madhouse Entertainment in Los Angeles, CA.



**A.B. Westrick** is the author of *Brotherhood* (Viking/Penguin Random House 2013), a YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults pick, and winner of the Jefferson Cup, Housatonic, Jane Addams Honor, and Notable Trade Book Awards. She lives near Richmond, VA, teaches in Western Connecticut State University's low-residency MFA program, and blogs monthly about the craft of writing. She's currently revising a contemporary middle grade novel set at summer music camp. @ABWestrick



**Michael Paul Williams** is a columnist for the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. A graduate of Virginia Union University and Northwestern University, he won Virginia Press Association awards for column writing in 1992, 1994, 2007, and 2014. During 1999-2000, he was one of a dozen U.S. journalists awarded a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard University. He was the 2010 recipient of the George Mason Award for outstanding contributions to Virginia journalism. He has also received a 2012 Humanitarian Award from the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities and the 2014 Will Rogers Humanitarian Award from the National Society of Newspaper Columnists. @RTDMPW



**Kristina Wright** lives in Virginia with her husband and their two sons. She's a freelance parenting and lifestyle writer whose work has appeared in dozens of print and digital publications such as *USA Today*, *Washington Post*, and *Charleston Style & Design*. She also has a monthly column for the *Washington Independent Review of Books*, reviews parenting books for *Your Teen Magazine*, and writes about books and entertainment for *BookBub*. @kristinawright



Author and attorney **Pamela Samuels Young** is best known for tackling important social issues in her fast-paced legal thrillers. Her novel *Anybody's Daughter* won the prestigious NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Fiction. Her many novels include two young adaptations, *#Anybody's Daughter* and *#Abuse of Discretion*, as well as an erotic suspense novella, *Unlawful Desires*, written under the pen name Sassy Sinclair. Pamela is a graduate of USC and also earned graduate degrees from Northwestern University and UC Berkeley School of Law. @authorPSY



# 22 JRW Programs



Inspiration.  
Motivation.  
Education.

The Writing Show is The Tonight Show with a literary bent.

In 2018, journalists, songwriters, poets, bestselling novelists, social media gurus, radio hosts, and others experts graced the stage of the Firehouse Theatre to entertain and educate attendees on the craft and business of writing.

Did you miss out? Join us in 2019 when we happily return to Firehouse Theatre for more writing wit and wisdom.

**FIREHOUSE**  
THEATRE



Where: Firehouse Theatre

When: The last Wednesday of the month,  
January through September

Cost: \$12 for JRW members,  
\$15 for non-members, \$5 students

Time: 6PM to 8:30PM



James River Writers and The Poe Museum welcome you back to the grand tradition of the literary salon—an intimate gathering centered around an inspiring host to “inform, educate, & delight.” Each evening features discussion with an expert creative and allows for dynamic interaction among participants. Whatever your genre or art, this will be a great way to connect with like-minded writers; to learn, philosophize, and leave inspired.

Where: Patrick Henry Pub & Grille

When: March 8 and

November 8, 2018

Time: 7PM to 9PM







Join James River Writers for our casual meet-and-greet for writers of every genre on the second Wednesday of each month, 5:30PM to 7:30PM. Spend time with live characters, make connections, and find inspiration.



Where: Ardent Craft Ales

When: Second Wednesday of each month

Time: 5:30PM to 7:30PM



In 2018, JRW sold out three single-session Master Classes and held six pre-conference Master Classes. In March, Sarah Glenn Marsh taught "The Business of Querying," in April, Dana Isokawa presented "The Path to Publication," and Patrick Dacey presented "Structuring a Novel" in August. We are planning one more Master Class for December. Keep an eye on the JRW website for details.



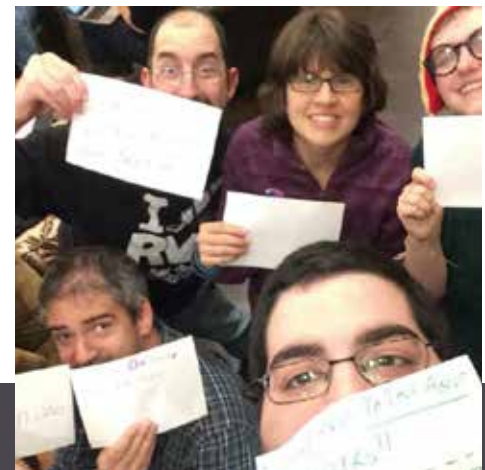
JRW is grateful to St. John's Parish Hall for the use of their space.

Watch the JRW website for updates on 2019's Master Classes!



Looking for some motivation? A place with friendly faces who will encourage you in your craft? Come write with us!

Bring your laptop or other writing paraphernalia, hang out, get a cup of coffee, get some words written, set your writing goals for the week, find a sympathetic ear, or all of the above!



Where: Urban Farmhouse Midlothian

When: Every Thursday

Time: 6PM to 8PM



## Shann Palmer Poetry Contest



**Fred Everett Maus**  
2018 winner

The Shann Palmer Poetry Contest is a partnership between James River Writers and *Richmond* magazine to encourage Virginia poets to share their best work.

The contest is named after Shann Palmer, a long-time JRW volunteer and board member, beloved poet, and a wild- and wise-hearted creative who shared her spirit and talents freely, inspiring and encouraging others in the literary community. She passed away in December 2013, and the contest (formerly "Best Poetry Contest") was renamed in her honor the following year.

Congratulations to the 2018 winner, Fred Everett Maus for his poem "How to Meditate."

The Shann Palmer Poetry Contest will return in 2021.



Shann Palmer

## Emyl Jenkins Award



**Valley Haggard**  
2018 winner

The Emyl Jenkins Award honors the memory of Emyl Jenkins by recognizing individuals who continue her legacy of inspiring a love of writing and writing education in Virginia. Jenkins, a JRW board member and former conference chair, was a mentor and champion of writers of all levels. She passed away in 2010 and continues to be missed.

The 2018 award goes to Valley Haggard, founder of both Richmond Young Writers and Life in 10 Minutes, a memoir project that is helping people discover their voices and share their stories ten minutes at a time.

JRW will begin accepting nominations for the 2019 award on May 1, with the entry deadline of June 30.



Emyl Jenkins

# Poe Inspires Flash Fiction and Poetry Contest

Edgar Allen Poe has been influencing authors for generations with his use of the grotesque, his theory of the unified effect, or his pioneering work in science fiction and detective stories. To celebrate his enduring legacy, JRW and the Poe Museum are partnering for the fourth annual Poe Inspires Contest. Submit your poetry or flash fiction that conjures a facet of Poe's influence.

**2017 winners:**

The 2018 submission period opens November 1.



**Launce Reed Barber**  
poetry winner



**Shawn Hambright**  
fiction winner

For more information on these contests see [www.jamesriverwriters.org](http://www.jamesriverwriters.org)

## Best Self-published Novel Contest

will return in 2019.



**Jo Allison**  
2016 winner

James River Writers and *Richmond* magazine recognizes the writing talents and entrepreneurial skills of indie authors by continuing The Best Self-Published Novel Contest, which we started in 2014.

The next contest opens January 1, 2019, and closes February 28, 2019.

To submit an entry, the author must be a resident of Virginia, a student at a Virginia college or university, or a member of JRW.

Note that this contest is for fiction only. See the James River Writers website for full submission details and rules.

## Best Unpublished Novel Contest

will return in 2020.

Updates will be posted on [jamesriverwriters.org](http://jamesriverwriters.org) as the contest approaches.



**K.T. Sparks**  
2017 winner

# Shop the Online JRW Shop



[www.jrw.threadless.com/](http://www.jrw.threadless.com/)



## Staff

James River Writers' three part-time staff members are dedicated to helping our members and JRW reach their greatest potential. However, they are grateful for the efforts of numerous volunteers and generous board members that help run our programs and reach out to our community. Thank you to everyone who is a part of the JRW family!



Katharine Herndon,  
Executive Director



Annette Marquis,  
Program Director



Phillip Hilliker,  
Membership Coordinator

## EVENTS AND WRITING CLASSES

Volunteer Janet Wooldridge maintains a complete Meetup calendar of upcoming literary events, including readings, book signings, and workshops. Thank you, Janet!

## RESOURCES

At [JamesRiverWriters.org](http://JamesRiverWriters.org), members can gain access to exclusive publishing insights and find information about all their membership benefits, including promo codes for online discounts.

You can also learn about and register for all of our upcoming programming including Master Classes and Writing Shows.

## BLOCKBUSTER (\$10,000+)

BrownGreer

## AWARD WINNER (\$2,500+)

Dominion Energy  
Virginia Commission for the Arts  
Carole Weinstein

## NOTEWORTHY (\$1,000+)

C. Ryan Frazier  
Mary Scott

**emotionally  
naked**  
emotionallynaked.com

## PAGE TURNER (\$200+)

Anonymous  
Gigi Amateau  
William & Ellen Armstrong  
Carole Christman  
Robin Farmer  
Helen Foster  
Phaedra Hise  
Paul Jackson  
Meg Medina  
Chris & Dena Moore

Kevin O'Hagan  
Virginia Pye & John Ravenal  
Pamela & William Royall, Jr  
In Loving Memory of Emyl Jenkins  
by Robert M. Sexton  
Ellen Shuler  
Maya Payne Smart  
Barbara & James Ukrop  
George Wickham  
Kendra Wood

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*Tuck Austin*  
ASSOCIATES

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Jon Kukla  
Dan Noffsinger

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Zoa





**Dominion  
Energy<sup>SM</sup>**

**VIRGINIA  
COMMISSION**  
FOR THE



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF RICHMOND



**BOOK &  
AUTHOR  
Event**

**Spring 2019**

Event proceeds directly support women and families in Richmond. Visit [jlrichmond.org](http://jlrichmond.org) for more details about the event and the mission of the Junior League.

— AUTHORS TO BE ANNOUNCED EARLY 2019 —



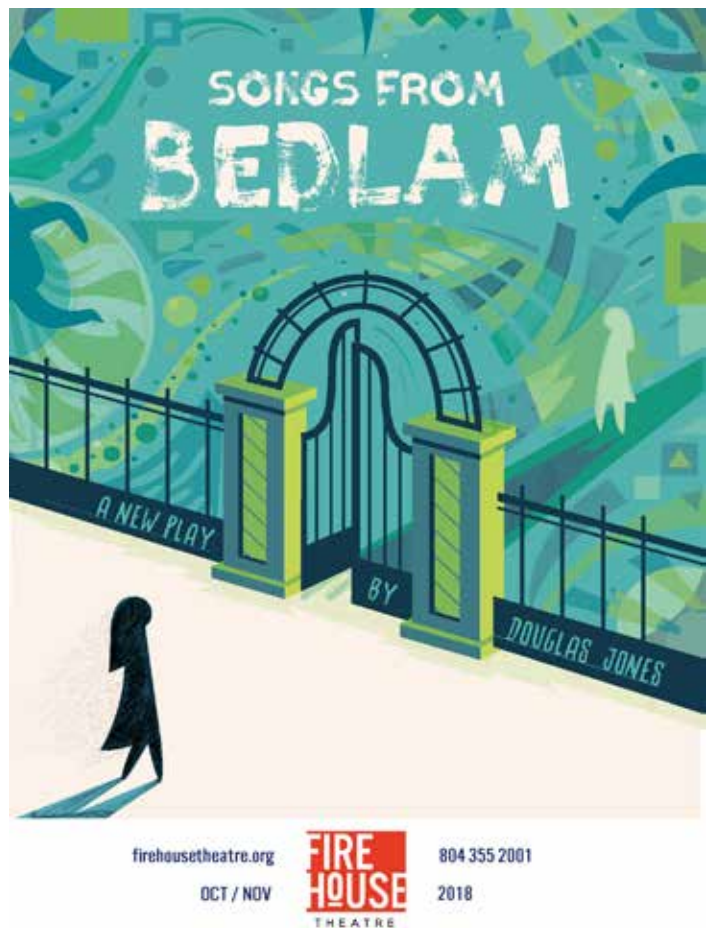
*proudly supports*

*James River*





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naked**  
emotionallynaked.com



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**WILLIAMSBURG, VA • APRIL 5–7, 2019**

Author Guest of Honor:

**Melinda Snodgrass**

Music Guests of Honor:

**The Library Bards**

**For more information visit [RavenCon.com](http://RavenCon.com)**



James River Writers envisions a community enriched by the literary arts. This community aims to be welcoming, inclusive, respectful, and safe for all. To that end, James River Writers has adopted the following code of conduct and terms and conditions.

By attending any James River Writers ("JRW") events, the participant automatically agrees to the terms and conditions set forth below. Any person, guest, student, media representative, speaker, or exhibitor who is present is considered a participant. Thank you for making JRW a safe, enriching, inspiring community.

JRW is committed to providing an environment free from harassment, intimidation and coercion based on race, gender, religion, national origin, immigrant status, veteran status, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, or any other classification protected by applicable law. No participant shall engage in any action that may constitute harassment. Examples of such behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Offensive or abusive physical contact;
- Repeated or persistent unwanted physical contact;
- Use of slurs or offensive nicknames or terms of endearment;
- Unwelcome comments about a person's clothing, body, or personal life;
- Offensive jokes or unwelcome innuendo;
- Other conduct based on referring to a protected classification, even if not objectionable to some participants, which creates an environment that others may reasonably find hostile, offensive, or uncomfortable

Participants are expected to act in a civil and collegial manner at all times. While it shall not be cause for removal merely because a participant disagrees with the majority on one or more issues, both the "dissident" participant and the majority are expected to continue to treat each other in a civil and respectful manner so that all sides of any issue may be carefully considered. A persistent disregard of this principle may constitute cause for removal. Personal disagreements and differences of opinion are not harassment.

## Reporting An Issue

Participants finding themselves in a situation where they feel their safety or comfort are at risk or who become aware of a participant not in compliance with this code of conduct should contact a JRW staff person or director so that the matter can be resolved. Staff and directors are identifiable by a name badge and ribbon or by a nametag. At the annual conference, they can often be found at the registration desk. Communications can be sent to Katharine Herndon, Executive Director, at [executivedirector@jamesriverwriters.org](mailto:executivedirector@jamesriverwriters.org) or (804) 433-3790 or to the Board Chair at [chair@jamesriverwriters.org](mailto:chair@jamesriverwriters.org). Reports can be made at any time. JRW requests that a report be filed as soon as possible, especially if you believe the offending party might continue to harass you and/or other participants. Reports will be taken seriously and handled appropriately regardless of when they are made.

Retaliation in response to asking a question, raising a concern in good faith, or participating in an investigation will not be tolerated. Knowingly making a false report or reporting with malice or disregard for the truth is also prohibited.

## Consequences of Harassing Behavior

Participants asked to stop harassment are expected to comply immediately. If a participant engages in harassing behavior, the JRW organizers may take any action they deem appropriate and necessary to safeguard the safety of participants, including warning the offender or expelling the offender from the event with no refund.

At the reporter's discretion, reports of harassment will be referred to JRW's board of directors, which will hear all sides and recommend whether to bar the offender from attending any additional events organized by JRW and/or to strip the offender's membership. In determining the appropriate response, the safety of all participants will be paramount.

JRW will handle all reports with equal consideration and will not be influenced by factors such as the social status or event role of anyone involved in the situation. JRW will provide procedures for addressing violations upon request and/or when a report arises.

## Terms and Conditions

Participant in violation of rules and/or who behave in an unsafe or careless manner may be asked to leave and will be held responsible for their actions. Participant acknowledges that such violations may result in the attendee being removed from the event or forum and barred from returning without refund of the participant's registration fee.

Participant likewise acknowledges and agrees that all participants have the right to enjoy JRW programs equally. Disruptive behavior that interferes with the conduct of reasonable business, or any other attendee's safety or comfort, may result in the participant being removed from the event/forum and barred from returning without refund of the participant's registration fee.

**Indemnity.** To the extent permitted by law, the participant agrees to protect, indemnify, defend, and hold harmless JRW, the event venue(s) and convention centers where the event is being held, and their respective employees, officers, directors, and agents against all claims, losses, or damages to persons or property, governmental charges or fines, and costs (including reasonable attorney's fees) arising out of or connected to the actions or failure to act in accordance with the Terms and Conditions by participant, its employees, officers, directors, or agents, except those claims arising out of the other party's gross negligence or willful misconduct.

**Access Guidelines.** JRW is committed to making all reasonable arrangements that will allow participants to participate in events. All rooms at the conference are wheelchair accessible. In order to help JRW better prepare, please submit requests for special services, equipment, or accommodations in advance of the event. Please submit your request to [programdirector@jamesriverwriters.org](mailto:programdirector@jamesriverwriters.org). Participants who require special onsite assistance during events should request it from personnel at the registration desk or the event host.

**Lost Registration Badge.** Participant's registration badge must be worn at all times during the annual conference. Access to the conference facilities will not be granted to those without proper credentials. If a participant loses, misplaces, or forgets his or her name badge, a replacement badge can be obtained from the registration desk. A small fee may be required for the creation of a new registration badge. Once the new registration badge is released to the participant, the lost badge will become invalid.

**Modification of the Event.** Sometimes unforeseen circumstances arise. JRW reserves the right to modify the event, speakers, panels, etc, which are published online and in print as an indication only.

**Salvatory Clause.** If there is a determination that any part of the Terms and Conditions is ineffective or impracticable, then the validity of the Terms and Conditions remaining is not impaired.

**Photography & Filming.** Professional photographs, audio, and video will be captured during the events. Participants hereby grant JRW and its representatives permission to photograph and/or record them at the event, and distribute (both now and in the future) the participant's image and/or voice in photographs, videotapes, electronic reproductions, and sound recordings of such events and activities. Participants may not use professional recording, photography, or film equipment without authorization from JRW, whether digital or analog, and should refrain from interfering with the speakers, presenters, panelists, staff, and attendees and their enjoyment and participation in JRW events.

**Force Majeure.** Attendance at the event is subject to acts of God, government authority, disaster, or other emergencies, any of which make it illegal or impossible for JRW, the event venue(s), or convention centers to provide the facilities and/or services for the event, or make it illegal or impossible for the participant to utilize the hotels, convention centers, or venues for the event. A registration may be cancelled for any one or more of such reasons by written notice from JRW to the participant without liability on the part of JRW.

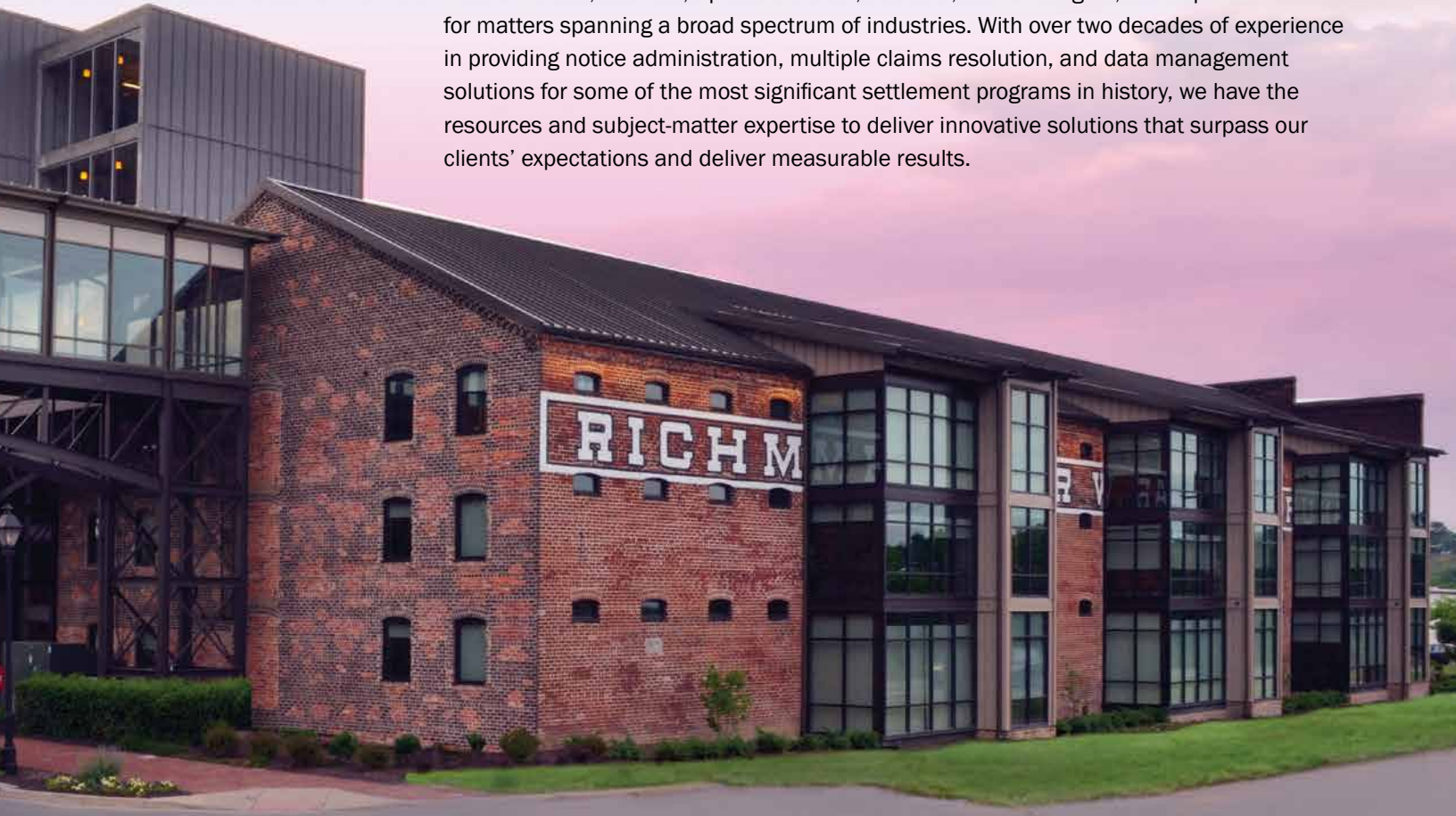
**Cancellation.** In the event the conference cannot be held or is postponed due to events beyond JRW's control, JRW shall not be liable to participant for any damages, costs, or losses incurred, such as transportation costs, accommodations costs, or financial losses. Under such circumstances, a participant may choose to have their registration fee refunded in full.

Do not use JRW's website or JRW's social media accounts for any unauthorized purpose.



## A NEW CHAPTER IN MASS CLAIM MANAGEMENT.

BrownGreer is an industry leader in providing settlement administration and litigation management services to law firms, corporations, and government agencies. We are claims administrators, trustees, Special Masters, advisors, data managers, and expert witnesses for matters spanning a broad spectrum of industries. With over two decades of experience in providing notice administration, multiple claims resolution, and data management solutions for some of the most significant settlement programs in history, we have the resources and subject-matter expertise to deliver innovative solutions that surpass our clients' expectations and deliver measurable results.



## MDL CENTRALITY: THE NEXT GENERATION SOLUTION TO MDL AND MASS ACTION MANAGEMENT.



Management of MDL and mass action cases in the information age requires a sophisticated, intelligent approach. As leaders in the industry for years, we understand the problems and pitfalls associated with managing massive amounts of data and documents, communicating with counsel across the country, and reviewing plaintiff submissions for completeness and accuracy. Using lessons learned from working on some of the largest cases in history, we created MDL Centrality as a comprehensive litigation management tool that modernizes the administration of MDL and mass action cases. MDL Centrality replaces inefficient and outdated information exchange practices with modern data management tools that save time and money.



REINVENTING MASS CLAIMS