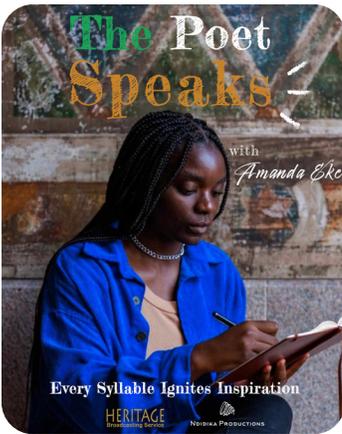




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## WINTER 2026 VISITING AUTHOR READINGS AT THE DWC & WRITERS VOICE ONLINE



### Friday, January 23, 7:00 p.m. • DWC/HYBRID Poet and Filmmaker **AMANDA EKE**

**Amanda Eke** is a Nigerian-American spoken-word poet, filmmaker, and journalist who uses storytelling to explore cultural identity and social issues. In 2024, she became the first Black woman to create and host a standalone show on The Archaeology Channel with her groundbreaking docu-series *The Poet Speaks with Amanda Eke*—also the first made-for-series on the Heritage Broadcasting streaming platform. A Fulbright Fellow, United Nations Artistry Award recipient, and Guinness World Record holder, Eke's journey is rooted in resilience. She did not learn to read until the age of seven, yet went on to build a body of work that bridges art, education, and advocacy. Her internationally recognized, globally touring poetry workshop *The Poet Speaks*, and her award-winning podcast of the same name, have inspired audiences worldwide to experience poetry as both

personal expression and collective power. *The Poet Speaks with Amanda Eke* travels the world to uncover how poetry transforms lives and preserves cultural memory... and our Writers Voice audience will get a preview screening of the show's upcoming new season from Amanda Eke at this special event!

### Thursday, January 29, 7:00 p.m. DWC/HYBRID

*The Syracuse University Humanities Center, in the College of Arts and Sciences, presents as part of the 2025-26 Syracuse Symposium™ on Creativity*

### Is Writing Enough? Creativity, Incarceration, and Trauma

Conventional wisdom says that creative self-expression is a path to healing and recovery for those who have experienced harm, particularly when that harm is compounded by the criminal legal system. Many of us can recall the power and poetry of prose and verse penned by incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people. But is this power sometimes overstated? While creativity is a human impulse that empowers and can facilitate healing, many justice-impacted people have experienced harms through systems that cannot be surmounted simply through the act of creative self-expression. **Dr. Moira Marquis** and **Johnny Page** will begin with a conversation on the complexity of creativity for justice-impacted people before sharing examples of creative expression.



**Dr. Moira Marquis** is the Manager of Higher Education Partnerships at the Petey Greene Program, which delivers educational programming to justice-impacted people throughout the country. She has a PhD in English from UNC Chapel Hill, and her book *Thought Threats* is forthcoming from UNC Press.

**Johnny Page** is a storyteller, a systems thinker, and Executive Director of ConTextos Chicago, where he leads initiatives that use personal narrative, storytelling, and collective authorship to disrupt cycles of violence, uplift lived experiences, and promote healing-centered engagement.

**Friday, February 6, 7:00 p.m. • DWC/HYBRID**  
**2026 Writers Voice Benefit Reading**  
**with Poet JESSICA CUELLO**

Join us to celebrate Jessica Cuello's brand-new book of poems *While Percival Fell* (the first English translation of Canadian poet Tania Langlais's original French volume *Pendant que Perceval tombait*) and support the important work of the DWC and Writers Voice Online! *This event will be live at the DWC, but if you cannot join us in person, a Zoom link will be made available to you when you purchase your ticket.*



**TICKETS:** Tickets will become available starting January 14th. General Admission tickets are a tax-deductible minimum contribution of \$25. Individuals who donate \$50 or more will receive a free, signed copy of *While Percival Fell...* and if you donate \$75 or more, you'll also be able to choose a second free book from a selection of titles from recent Writers Voice events or our friends at Tiger Bark Press. Your gift helps ensure that the Writers Voice's important literary mission continues to thrive. Click Jessica's picture to purchase tickets on or after January 14th!

**Jessica Cuello's** most recent book of her own poems, *Feral*, is forthcoming from JackLeg Press in 2027. Her other books include *Yours, Creature* (JackLeg Press, 2023), *Hunt* (The Word Works, 2017), *Pricking* (Tiger Bark Press, 2016) and *Liar*, selected by Dorianne Laux for The 2020 Barrow Street Book Prize, and honored with The Eugene Nassar Prize and The CNY Book Award. She is poetry editor at *Tahoma Literary Review* and teaches French in a public high school.



**Friday, February 13, 7:00 p.m. • DWC/HYBRID**  
**Poets BRUCE SMITH and JULES GIBBS**

**Bruce Smith** is the author of eight books of poems, most recently *Hungry Ghost*. His other collections include *The Common Wages*, *Silver and Information*, *Mercy Seat*, *The Other Lover*, *Songs for Two Voices*, *Devotions*, and *Spill*. He is a recipient of the 2012 William Carlos Williams Award from the Poetry Society of America, and his books have been

named as finalists for the National Book Award, the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Critics Circle Award, and the *LA Times* Book Award. He lives in Syracuse, NY.

**Jules Gibbs** is the author of two full length poetry collections—*Snakes & Babies*, and *Bliss Crisis*, both published by The Sheep Meadow Press—and a chapbook, *The Bulk of the Mailable Universe*. Her work has been supported by The Saltonstall Foundation, The Dorothy Sargent Rosenberg Foundation, Virginia Center for Creative Arts, and Ucross Foundation. Recent poems have appeared in *Plume Poetry*, *Gulf Coast*, *Ambit*, *Verse Daily*, *Poetry Daily*, *The Poetry Project*, and *The Antioch Review*. She serves as poetry editor for *The Progressive Magazine*, and for Corresponding Voices, the poetry series run through Point of Contact in Syracuse, NY. She's taught at Hamilton College, Colgate University, and the YMCA's Downtown Writers Center, and currently teaches creative writing at Syracuse University.

All Writers Voice events are free and open to the public. All start times are Eastern. Events labeled **DWC** are held in-person at the Downtown Writers Center, located in the Downtown YMCA at 340 Montgomery St. in Syracuse. Events labeled **ONLINE** are held only on Zoom. Events labeled **HYBRID** are offered at the DWC and also on Zoom. To reserve your spot in the online audience for any **ONLINE** or **HYBRID** event, click the author photo for a link to the Zoom registration page.

**Friday, February 20, 7:00 p.m. • DWC/HYBRID**  
**Poets PATRICK LAWLER & DAVID LLOYD**

In 2025, **Patrick Lawler** had his second novel, *Conversations with Extinct Animals*, published by University of Alabama Press (FC2), had his eighth book of poetry, *Dance in the Dirthouse*, published by Doubly Mad Books, and had his second feature-length film, *The Arrow at Rest in Every Instant of Its Flight*, filmed by Director Ted Schaefer. He is the Writer in Residence in Creative Writing at LeMoyne College.



Poet, fiction writer, and translator **David Lloyd** is the author of twelve books of poetry and fiction, most recently *The Last Season* (Tiger Bark Press, 2025), and the editor of several anthologies. His poems, translations, and stories have appeared in many journals, including *Crab Orchard Review*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Image*, *Massachusetts Review*, *Poetry Wales*, and *Virginia Quarterly Review*. In 2000, he received the Poetry Society of America's Robert H. Winner Award, judged by W. D. Snodgrass. In 2022 he received the inaugural Paula Svonkin Creative Arts Award. He held two Fulbright Scholar awards: at Bangor University, Wales (2001), and at Cardiff University, Wales (2022). He is Professor of English at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, NY. <https://www.davidlloydwriter.com/>



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**Friday, March 13, 7:00 p.m. • DWC/HYBRID**  
**Poet MERRILL OLIVER DOUGLAS**  
**& Author VIRGIE TOWNSEND**



**Merrill Oliver Douglas's** first full length collection, *Persephone Heads For the Gate*, won the 2022 Gerald Cable Book Award from Silverfish Review Press. She is also the author of the poetry chapbook *Parking Meters into Mermaids* (Finishing Line Press, 2020). Her poems have appeared in *Baltimore Review*, *Barrow Street*, *Tar River Poetry*, *Stone Canoe*, *SWWIM Every Day*, *Verse Daily* and *Whale Road Review*, among others. She lives near Binghamton, New York.

**Virgie Townsend** is the winner of the 2022 CNY Book Award for Fiction for the short story collection *Because We Were Christian Girls*, inspired by her own experiences growing up in and leaving Christian fundamentalism. She has written for *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *The Sun Magazine*, *HuffPost*, and other outlets. Visit her online at <https://virgietownsend.com/>.

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**Friday, March 20, 7:00 p.m. • ONLINE**  
**Poet JOAN KWON GLASS**

**Joan Kwon Glass** is a diasporic, mixed-race, Korean American poet, author of the poetry collection *Daughter of Three Gone Kingdoms* (Perugia Press, 2024) which won the Paterson Poetry Prize & the Eric Hoffer Book Award for Poetry & was a finalist for the Balcones Poetry Prize. Her book *Night Swim* won the Diode Book Prize. Joan's poems are forthcoming or have been featured on NPR, *Poetry Daily*, *Best American Poetry* & *The Slowdown* & in *Poetry*, *Passages North*, *Poetry Northwest*, *Korea Quarterly*, *Split Lip*, *Prairie Schooner* and elsewhere. She is a 2025 SWWIM writer in residence. She teaches workshops at writing centers such as Brooklyn Poets, Poets House, and Hudson Valley Writers Center, and lives in Milford, CT.



**Friday, March 27, 7:00 p.m. • ONLINE**  
**Poet MEG KEARNEY**

**Meg Kearney's** ninth book, *Cardiac Thrill*—a heroic crown of sonnets—was published in September 2025. Meg's *All Morning the Crows*, winner of the Washington Prize, spent six months on SPD's poetry bestseller list in 2021. Meg is also author of *Home By Now*, winner of the PEN New England L.L. Winship Award; *The Ice Storm* (another heroic crown, now in its 4th printing); an award-winning picture book; and three verse novels for teens. Her poetry has been featured on Garrison Keillor's "A Writer's Almanac" and Ted Kooser's "American Life in Poetry." Meg lives in New Hampshire and is founding director the Solstice MFA in Creative Writing Program at Lasell University.



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Shipping is \$4 for any number of books purchased... order more and save! Prices include sales tax.

### WINTER 2026 TITLES:

Jessica Cuello, *While Percival Fell* - \$20 (Note: also included with \$50+ Benefit Reading tickets!)

Bruce Smith, *Hungry Ghost* - \$20

Jules Gibbs, *Snakes & Babies* - \$15 (Note: past Book Club selection, not included this season)

Patrick Lawler, *Dance in the Dirt House* - \$18

David Lloyd, *The Last Season* - \$18

Virgie Townsend, *Because We Were Christian Girls* - \$10

Merrill Oliver Douglas, *Persephone Heads for the Gate* - \$20

Joan Kwon Glass, *Daughter of Three Gone Kingdoms* - \$18

Meg Kearney, *Cardiac Thrill* - \$10

**EMAIL [PMEMMER@YMCACNY.ORG](mailto:PMEMMER@YMCACNY.ORG) TO ORDER**

## THANK YOU

The Writers Voice of the YMCA of Central New York is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts, and with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency, with the support of the office of the Governor and the NYS Legislature. Additional support is provided by Onondaga County and CNY Arts.



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