

**2021  
SPEAKER  
PROGRAM**

THE EUGENE &  
MARILYN GLICK

**Indiana  
Authors  
Awards**

## janan alexandra, Poetry Shortlist Honoree

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janan alexandra is the author of the poetry collection *come from* (BOA Editions, 2025). As the daughter of a Lebanese mother and Beirut-born American father, janan's life has been peripatetic, with roots scattered in Cyprus, Lebanon, Pakistan, England, France, and many corners of North America. Her poems and essays have been published in *The Kenyon Review*, *New England Review*, the *Massachusetts Review*, *AGNI*, *Gulf Coast*, and elsewhere. Winner of the 2023 Adrienne Rich Award for Poetry, janan was a 2021–2022 Fulbright Arts Fellow and has received support for her writing from Hedgebrook, the Vermont Studio Center, the Mellon Foundation, the Fine Arts Work Center, and the Stadler Center for Poetry & Literary Arts.

alexandra moved to Bloomington in 2018 to pursue her MFA in Creative Writing at Indiana University. She left upon graduating and then returned (aka "Bloomeranged") a few years later, in 2024.

She currently teaches in the English department at Indiana University and at the Monroe County Correctional Center. Alongside writing, janan plays fiddle in a three-piece string band called The Ditch Tea Steepers and is a violinist in the Bloomington Symphony Orchestra.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [janan.alexandra@gmail.com](mailto:janan.alexandra@gmail.com)

## John David Anderson, Middle Grade Shortlist Honoree

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John David Anderson is the award-winning author of sixteen novels for young readers, including *Posted*, *Ms. Bixby's Last Day*, *Granted*, *The Greatest Kid in the World*, and *Dive*. John grew up in Indianapolis and graduated from North Central High School and Indiana University. Before becoming a middle-grade novelist, he taught at the University of Illinois.

John currently lives in Indianapolis and is the proud father of two. When he is not writing, you can find him reading outdoors, making his way through a box of Triscuits, and enjoying a cold Diet Coke.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [johndavidandersonauthor@gmail.com](mailto:johndavidandersonauthor@gmail.com)

## Mary Ardery, Debut Award Winner

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Mary Ardery is the author of *Level Watch* (June Road Press, 2025), a collection of narrative-lyric poetry that is based on her experience working as a wilderness guide for a substance-abuse treatment program. *Level Watch* won the 2026 IPPY Award Gold Medal in Poetry. Mary's poems have been featured on *The Slowdown* podcast with Maggie Smith and in literary journals such as *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Best New Poets*, *Poet Lore*, *Prairie Schooner*, *The Missouri Review* online, and elsewhere. Her prose and photography appear in publications such as *The Sun*, *DIAGRAM*, *The Indianapolis Review*, and *The Cincinnati Review*.

She earned a B.A. from DePauw University and an MFA from Southern Illinois University Carbondale, where she won an Academy of American Poets Prize. The recipient of a Lifelong Arts Fellowship from the Indiana Arts Commission, she was born and raised in Bloomington and now lives in West Lafayette, Indiana, with her husband, two sons, and a Boston Terrier named Bug.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [maryardery@gmail.com](mailto:maryardery@gmail.com)

## Bennett Ayres, Drama Award Winner

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Bennett Ayres is a playwright and museum educator whose work has been produced by Chicago's City Lit Theater, Franklin College, Wabash College, University of Southern Indiana, Otherworld Theatre of Chicago, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Newfields, Spirit and Place, and the Phoenix Theatre. He is a scholarship recipient for the Kenyon Playwrights Conference and recipient of an Arthur Jordan grant. Bennett is a 2020 Blue Ink finalist for Chicago's American Blues Theatre, and he currently produces educational theatre.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [bennettayres@hotmail.com](mailto:bennettayres@hotmail.com)

## Carolyn Boiarsky, Nonfiction Shortlist Honoree

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Carolyn Boiarsky is professor of English at Purdue University Calumet and founder and director of the Northwest Indiana Writing Project. She is the author of four books, including *Technical Communication: Contexts, Audiences, and Communities* and *Writings from the Workplace: Documents, Models, and Cases*; has published in numerous business and technical communication journals; and has received the Society of Technical Communication's Frank R. Smith Article of the Year Award.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [boiarsc@comcast.net](mailto:boiarsc@comcast.net)

## Marianne Boruch, Lifetime Achievement Award Winner

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Marianne Boruch has written twelve books of poetry, including *Bestiary Dark*, *The Anti-Grief*, *Eventually One Dreams the Real Thing*, and *Cadaver, Speak*. Her collection *The Book of Hours* received the Kingsley-Tufts Poetry Award in 2013. She's published a memoir, *The Glimpse Traveler*, and four essay collections. Her poems and essays have appeared in the *New Yorker*, *Narrative*, *American Poetry Review*, *The London Review of Books*, *New York Review of Books*, *The Paris Review*, and elsewhere.

Boruch's accomplishments don't stop at publications. Along with a national Indiana Authors Award in 2015, she has received Pushcart Prizes; fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts; residencies at the Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Center, MacDowell, and Yaddo; as well as stints as artist-in-residence at two National Parks: Isle Royale and Denali. In May, she was awarded the 2026 Jackson Poetry Prize.

In 2012, Boruch was a Fulbright/visiting professor in the U.K. at the University of Edinburgh; and in 2019, a senior research Fulbright scholar at the University of Canberra in Australia. In 1987, Boruch established the MFA Program at Purdue University, directing it for many years before "going rogue" and emeritus in 2018. She has a forthcoming Fulbright in Norway at the University of Oslo's Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Rhythm, Time, and Motion. She currently lives with her husband in West Lafayette, where they raised their son.

Available for virtual and in-person events during July – December 2027.

Contact: [mboruch@purdue.edu](mailto:mboruch@purdue.edu)

## Maurice Broaddus, Genre Shortlist Honoree

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An award-winning Afrofuturist, editor, and librarian, **Maurice Broaddus** has had more than a hundred short stories published in such places as *Lightspeed Magazine*, *Black Panther: Tales from Wakanda*, *Out There Screaming* (edited by Jordan Peele), *The End of the World As We Know It: New Tales of Stephen King's The Stand*, *Asimov's*, *Weird Tales*, *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, and *Apex Magazine*. Broaddus has more than a dozen novels in print; his latest include *Black Panther: T'Challa Declassified*, *Unfadeable*, *Sweep of Stars*, *Breath of Oblivion*, and *A City Dreaming*. Born in London, he moved to Franklin, Indiana, when he was six years old and to Indianapolis a couple years later.

Available for in-person events.

Contact: [mauricebroaddus@gmail.com](mailto:mauricebroaddus@gmail.com)

## A'Lelia Bundles, Nonfiction Shortlist Honoree

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A'Lelia Bundles is the award-winning author of four books of nonfiction, including *Joy Goddess: A'Lelia Walker and the Harlem Renaissance* (Scribner, June 2025), the first major biography of her great-grandmother, and *On Her Own Ground: The Life and Times of Madam C.J. Walker*, a *New York Times* Notable Book and bestseller about her great-great-grandmother, an early 20th-century hair care industry entrepreneur and philanthropist.

Bundles is also the founder of the Madam Walker Family Archives, the largest private collection of Walker photographs, memorabilia, and ephemera. She worked in network television news for thirty years, first at NBC News, where she was a producer for news and magazine programs, and then at ABC News, where she was a *World News Tonight* producer, Washington, D.C., deputy bureau chief, and director of talent development.

Bundles grew up in Indianapolis and attended North Central High School.

Available for virtual and limited in-person events.

Contact: [abundles@gmail.com](mailto:abundles@gmail.com)

## Brian Allen Carr, Fiction Shortlist Honoree

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Brian Allen Carr is from Texas and lives with his family in Indiana. His books include *Opioid, Indiana, Bad Foundations*, and *Sip*, along with several novellas and story collections. He is the winner of a Wonderland Book Award and a *Texas Observer* Story Prize. His short fiction has appeared in *Granta*, *Ninth Letter*, *Hobart*, *Boulevard*, and other publications.

Available for **virtual** and **in-person** events.

Contact: [carr.ba@gmail.com](mailto:carr.ba@gmail.com)

## Phillip Cox & Niall Cronin, Nonfiction Award Winners

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Phillip Cox is a writer and native Hoosier from Indianapolis. He now lives in New York City, where he previously worked for the design firm Pentagram. He is also the co-author of *Speak Data: Artists, Scientists, Thinkers, and Dreamers on How We Live Our Lives in Numbers* (Chronicle Books).

Born in Indianapolis, **Niall Cronin** is a New York-based photographer working primarily in the fields of architecture, design, and construction. After graduating from The College of Wooster in 2016 with a B.A. in Urban Studies, Niall spent the summer at the Harvard Graduate School of Design building a portfolio in Urban Planning. His personal work investigates the formal, physical urban landscape within the social context of cities and their cultures. *What A Building Does: The Hoosier Modernisms of Evans Woollen* (a collaboration with writer Phil Cox) is Niall's first book.



Available for **virtual** events.

Contact: [phicox@gmail.com](mailto:phicox@gmail.com); [niallwcronin@gmail.com](mailto:niallwcronin@gmail.com)

## Acamea Deadwiler, Nonfiction Shortlist Honoree

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Acamea Deadwiler's early years in Gary, Indiana, serve as the backdrop in her memoir *Daddy's Little Stranger*, which has been featured by *Literary Hub*, *The Creative Nonfiction Podcast*, and deemed "arresting" by *The BookLife Prize*. Her prose has appeared in *StoryQuarterly*, *Bellevue Literary Review*, *North American Review*, and elsewhere. Acamea holds an MFA from Randolph College, where she was selected as a Blackburn Fellow. Deadwiler teaches creative writing at East-West University in Chicago.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [acameald@gmail.com](mailto:acameald@gmail.com)

## Melissa Fraterrigo, Nonfiction Shortlist Honoree

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Melissa Fraterrigo's memoir, *The Perils of Girlhood*, was published by the University of Nebraska Press in Fall 2025 and named by *Literary Hub* as one of "100 Notable Small Press Books of 2025." She is also the author of the novel *Glory Days* (University of Nebraska Press), which was named one of "The Best Fiction Books of 2017" by the *Chicago Review of Books*, as well as the short story collection *The Longest Pregnancy* (Livingston Press). Her fiction and nonfiction have appeared in numerous literary journals and anthologies, from *storySouth* and *Shenandoah* to *Notre Dame Review*, *Sou'wester*, and *The Millions*. She has been a finalist for awards from *Glimmer*

*Train* on multiple occasions, twice nominated for Pushcart Awards, and was the winner of the Sam Adams/Zoetrope: All Story Short Fiction Contest.

She teaches creative writing at Purdue University and is also the founder and executive director of the Lafayette Writers' Studio in Lafayette, Indiana, where she offers classes on the art and craft of writing. She lives with her husband and two daughters in West Lafayette, Indiana, and can be found at [melissafraterrigo.com](http://melissafraterrigo.com) and at *Between the Lines* on Substack.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [melissafraterrigo@gmail.com](mailto:melissafraterrigo@gmail.com)

## Helen Frost, Children's Shortlist Honoree

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Helen Frost was born in Brookings, South Dakota, and spent her teenage years growing up in Wilbraham, Massachusetts. She attended Syracuse University where she received a degree in Elementary Education with a concentration in English. After that, she moved frequently, living and teaching in Vermont, Colorado, Alaska, Oregon, California, and Scotland. She settled in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and has lived there for 35 years while working with the Fort Wayne Dance Collective, the YWCA, and Fort Wayne Youth Theater.

Helen writes a variety of books for children, teens, and adults, including novels-in-poems for middle grade readers, picture books, poetry collections, anthologies, plays, and a book about teaching writing. She won the Women Poets Series Competition in 1993 for her first collection, *Skin of a Fish, Bones of a Bird*, and was awarded a Michael L. Printz Honor for her young adult novel *Keesha's House*. She has also received the Boston Public Library Literary Lights for Children Award, a National Endowment for the Arts Literature Fellowship in Poetry, and the Children's History Book Prize from the New York Historical Society, among others.

When Helen is away from her writing desk, she enjoys traveling with her husband, Chad, and their two sons as well as maintaining her pollinator garden for birds and monarch butterflies.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [helenfrost@comcast.net](mailto:helenfrost@comcast.net)

## James A. Glass, Nonfiction Shortlist Honoree

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James A. Glass holds a Ph.D. in architectural history and historic preservation planning from Cornell University, an M.A. from Cornell in the history of urban development, an M.A. in Latin American history from Indiana University, and a B.A. in history and Spanish from the University of Indianapolis. He is a 1970 graduate of Marion (Indiana) High School.

He has completed a fully illustrated two-volume history of architecture in Indianapolis between 1820 and 1920, published by Indiana University Press. Volume 1 covers the period 1820–1900, and Volume 2 covers the period 1900–1920. He is co-author of the book *The Gas Boom of East Central Indiana* (Arcadia Press, 2005) and has published articles on the Gas Boom in the *Indiana Magazine of History* and *Traces of Indiana and Midwestern History*. He is also the author of *The Beginnings of a New National Historic Preservation Program, 1957 to 1969* (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1990). From 2003 to 2019, Glass wrote a monthly column on Indianapolis and Indiana heritage for the *Indianapolis Star*.

Subjects included columns for the Indiana Bicentennial on early Indiana communities, such as Vincennes, New Harmony, Corydon, New Albany, Madison, and Richmond; the modern architectural legacy of Columbus, Indiana; the former Coca-Cola Bottling plant in Indianapolis; the evolution of the City Market; the ethnic heritage of Whiting, Indiana; Indianapolis ranch-style houses of the 1950s; surviving motels on US 40; and Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Festival of Bean Blossom, Indiana.

Since 2013, Glass has presented illustrated public lectures on the architecture of other countries, based on his travels and research: Spanish Architecture, Architecture in Greece and Turkey, Roman and Renaissance Architecture, Chinese Architecture, Architecture in Mexico, and Architecture in London.

Available for in-person events.

Contact: [jglass1952@gmail.com](mailto:jglass1952@gmail.com)

## Aine Cain & Kevin Greenlee, Debut Shortlist Honorees

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Indiana resident **Aine Cain** is a journalist who previously worked as a senior reporter for *Business Insider*, where her beat included business-related crimes. Cain is originally from New York's Westchester County and studied history at the College of William & Mary.

**Kevin Greenlee** was born in Indianapolis and raised in Columbus. He is an attorney who received his bachelor's degree and J.D. from Indiana University. His

professional foray into true crime began in 2016, when he started investigating the Burger Chef murders and came to represent a victim's relative pro bono.



Greenlee and Cain founded *The Murder Sheet*, an investigative true crime podcast that has broken news on the Burger Chef murders and the Delphi murders. They published *Shadow of the Bridge: The Delphi Murders and the Dark Side of the American Heartland* in August 2025. They live in Indiana with their dogs, Nick and Nora.

Greenlee and Cain can present on Delphi murders, crime nonfiction, nonfiction writing, true crime podcasting, journalism, law, legal matters, the intersection of relevant social issues and crime, and true crime in general (including Hoosier cases like the Burger Chef murders, the murder of Laurel Mitchell, the murder of Harold Allen, historical cases, and more).

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [murdersheet.business@gmail.com](mailto:murdersheet.business@gmail.com)

## Mel Hammond & Teghan Hammond, Young Adult Shortlist Honorees

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Sisters **Mel and Teghan Hammond** started writing their debut novel to stay connected while Teghan was incarcerated at an Indiana men's prison. One of the few things Mel was allowed to send Teghan were books, but it didn't take long to run out of novels featuring trans women. So, they decided to write their own. After seven years of work, *Lucy, Uncensored* was published in 2024.

Long before they started co-writing, Mel and Teghan spent their childhoods visiting Michigan City, Indiana, where their grandparents and extended family lived. Teghan moved to the state in 2013 to attend Manchester University, and she now lives in Fort Wayne. Though Mel officially lives in Madison, Wisconsin, she makes the trip "home" to Fort Wayne many times each year to visit her parents and sister.

Besides writing, Teghan enjoys drinking excessive amounts of coffee and volunteering for LGBTQIA+ causes. When she's not tearing down gender norms, Teghan is probably watching cartoons or gaming. Mel spends a lot of her time walking in the woods and eating ice cream (not usually at the same time). Her next YA novel, *Where the Girls Are Kept*, comes out in summer 2027. Between the two of them, Teghan and Mel have five adorable cats.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [melhammond99@gmail.com](mailto:melhammond99@gmail.com); [teghanandromeda@gmail.com](mailto:teghanandromeda@gmail.com)

## Rob Harrell, Middle Grade Shortlist Honoree

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**Sarah Hollowell** is Rob Harrell is the author of the middle grade novel *Wink*, the *Life of Zarf* series, and the graphic novel *Monster on the Hill*, which was adapted into the animated film *Rumble*. In addition, Harrell created the comic strip *Big Top* and now writes and draws the daily strip *Adam@Home*.

Harrell recently wrote and illustrated the graphic novels *Batpig: When Pigs Fly*, *Batpig: Too Pig To Fail*, and *Batpig: Go Pig or Go Home*. His latest middle grade novel, *Popcorn*, came out in September 2024.

Born and raised in Bloomington, Indiana, Harrell now lives in Zionsville with his dog, Shepler.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [rob@robharrell.com](mailto:rob@robharrell.com)

## Jeremy Hartnett, Nonfiction Shortlist Honoree

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Jeremy Hartnett is Professor of Classics at Wabash College. His most recent book, *The Remarkable Life, Death, and Afterlife of an Ordinary Roman*, reconstructs the life of an everyday Roman from the deceased's funerary monument. Topics include banqueting, the afterlife, literacy, slavery, religion, and sexuality. The funerary monument resides in the Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields after a scandalous discovery below St. Peter's Basilica in Rome and an extraordinary odyssey to Indianapolis over the centuries.

Available for **virtual** and **in-person** events.

Contact: [Hartnetj@wabash.edu](mailto:Hartnetj@wabash.edu)

## Anna Lee Huber, Genre Shortlist Honoree

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Anna Lee Huber is the USA Today-bestselling and Daphne Award-winning author of more than twenty novels, including the Lady Darby Mysteries, the Verity Kent Mysteries, and the Gothic Myths series, as well as *Sisters of Fortune: A Novel of the Titanic* and the anthology *The Deadly Hours*. She is a summa cum laude graduate of Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee, where she majored in music and minored in psychology. Her novels have been translated into multiple languages, and she is a member of Mystery Writers of America, Sisters in Crime, and International Thriller Writers. Huber grew up living just over the border in Ohio and

traveling to Indiana almost every week to visit family or enjoy all that Fort Wayne had to offer. She has now lived in Indiana for more than 20 years.

Available for **virtual** and **in-person** events.

Contact: [anna@annaleehuber.com](mailto:anna@annaleehuber.com)

## Jonathan Janz, Genre Shortlist Honoree

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Long-time Indiana resident **Jonathan Janz** is an award-winning author of more than a dozen novels and numerous short stories. His work has been championed by authors like Joe R. Lansdale, Jack Ketchum, and Brian Keene. He has also been lauded by *Publishers Weekly*, *Library Journal*, and *School Library Journal*. His ghost story *The Siren and the Specter* was selected as a Goodreads Choice nominee for Best Horror. Additionally, his novel *Children of the Dark* was chosen by *Booklist* as a Top Ten Horror Book of the Year. Janz lives in West Lafayette, where he teaches at West Lafayette Junior/Senior High School. Jonathan's main interests are his

wonderful wife and his three amazing children.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [jonathanjanzwrites@gmail.com](mailto:jonathanjanzwrites@gmail.com)

## Bob Johnson, Fiction Shortlist Honoree

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Apart from his time at the Iowa Writers' Workshop, **Bob Johnson** has spent most of his life in Indiana. He was born in Middlebury, Indiana, taught school in Elkhart County, and worked in commercial television in South Bend. His short story collection, *The Continental Divide*, was published in 2025 by Cornerstone Press. It was long-listed for the PEN/Bingham Awards, named a finalist for the Society of Midland Authors Award and the NEIA Awards, and was included in *Literary Hub's* 100 Notable Small Press Books. The collection was also reviewed by Stuart Dybek in *The New York Times*. Johnson's work has appeared in *The Common*, *The Hudson Review*, Vol. 1

*Brooklyn*, *Barcelona Review*, and many other literary journals. He holds an MFA from the Iowa Writers' Workshop.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [robert.lawrence.johnson@gmail.com](mailto:robert.lawrence.johnson@gmail.com)

## Michael Koryta a.k.a. Scott Carson, Genre Award Winner

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Scott Carson is a pen name used by Indiana author Michael Koryta. He is a *New York Times*-bestselling author whose work has been lauded by Stephen King, Michael Connelly, Lee Child, Lisa Unger, Dean Koontz, James Patterson, Dennis Lehane, Laura Lippman, and Sandra Brown, among many others, and has been translated into more than 20 languages. His books have won or been nominated for the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize, Edgar® Award, Shamus Award, Barry Award, Quill Award, International Thriller Writers Award, and the Golden Dagger. They have been selected as "best books of the year" by publications including the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Amazon.com*, *O, The Oprah Magazine*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *People*, *Reader's Digest*, *iBooks*, and *Kirkus Reviews*.

Koryta was raised in Bloomington, Indiana, where he graduated from Indiana University with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice. Before turning to writing full-time, Michael worked as a private investigator, a newspaper reporter, and taught at the Indiana University School of Journalism.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [mjkoryta@gmail.com](mailto:mjkoryta@gmail.com)

## Kenneth Kraegel, Children's Award Winner

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Kenneth Kraegel grew up in Mishawaka, IN, and graduated from Mishawaka High School, where his imagination first sprang to life, nurtured by his friends, teachers, and the broader community. While attending college out of state to pursue a degree in theology, he spent his summers in his hometown, continuing to share the music, art, and writing that fueled his creative energy.

Kenneth's volunteer work and early professional career took him across the country and around the world. After graduation, he volunteered at an agricultural school in Honduras, helped refugees find jobs in Chicago, contributed to an NGO in Uganda, worked on construction sites in Wyoming, and labored on vegetable farms throughout the Midwest. As a writer, he has received numerous honors, including the *New York Times Book Review* Notable Children's Book of the Year designation, the Chicago Public Library Best of the Best Award, and *Kirkus Reviews* Best Book recognition. He now lives in Grand Rapids, MI, with his wife and family.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [kennethkraegel@gmail.com](mailto:kennethkraegel@gmail.com)

## Karol Lagodzki, Fiction Shortlist Honoree

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Karol Lagodzki is an exophonic, English-language author of fiction. His stories have appeared or are forthcoming in *Invisible City*, *Storm Cellar*, *Asimov's*, and elsewhere, and he has won *Panel Magazine's* Ruritania Prize. His first full-length book, *Controlled Conversations*, was a finalist for the 2025 PEN/Hemingway Award for Debut Novel.

He holds an MFA in creative writing, buys more books than he can read or afford – usually novels and short story collections, though he's been known to pick up an odd book of poetry or an accessible science book – and gives back to the literary community by serving as a reader for literary journals. In some of his work, Karol draws on his memories of growing up in autocratic, Soviet-controlled Poland.

Karol lives halfway down a Southern Indiana ravine with his wonderful family, a scurry of squirrels, a passel of possums, a gaze of raccoons, a descent of woodpeckers, and a large dog.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [klagodzki@gmail.com](mailto:klagodzki@gmail.com)

## Rebecca Lehmann, Poetry Shortlist Honoree

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Rebecca Lehmann is a poet and novelist. Her books include the poetry collections *The Sweating Sickness*, *Ringer*, winner of the 2018 Donald Hall Prize for Poetry, and *Between the Crackups*. Her debut novel, *The Beheading Game*, was a *New York Times* Best Books of Spring 2026 selection. Her writing has been featured in *Entertainment Weekly*, *The American Poetry Review*, NPR's *The Slowdown*, the New York Public Library's *Poem-in-Your-Pocket* program, the Academy of American Poets' *Poem-a-Day*, and other venues.

She has an MFA in poetry from the Iowa Writers' Workshop, where she was a Maytag Fellow, and a PhD in creative writing from Florida State University.

She lives in Indiana with her family, where she is an associate professor of English and Gender and Women's Studies at Saint Mary's College.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [rebeccaslehmann@gmail.com](mailto:rebeccaslehmann@gmail.com)

## Alessandra Lynch, Poetry Shortlist Honoree

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Alessandra Lynch's fifth book of poetry, *Wish Ave*, was published by Alice James Books in 2024. She is the author of four other poetry collections: *Pretty Tripwire*, *Daylily Called It a Dangerous Moment* (winner of the Balcones Prize, finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Award and the UNT Rilke Prize, and listed as a *New York Times* top ten poetry book of 2017), *It was a terrible cloud at twilight*, and *Sails the Wind Left Behind*. Her work has appeared in *The American Poetry Review*, *The New England Review*, *The Kenyon Review*, *Ploughshares*, and other journals. Alessandra has received residencies from MacDowell, Yaddo, the Lannan Foundation, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and Vermont Studio Center. She has been the recipient of a Barbara Deming Award and a Creative Renewal Fellowship Award.

She has also been a featured blogger for the Poetry Foundation's *Harriet Books*. She has collaborated with musician Earl Townsend, composer Harriet Steinke, painter Richard Rosenblatt, and artist Carlos Rodriguez-Mendez.

Currently, Alessandra serves as Butler University's poet in residence, where she teaches in the undergraduate and MFA programs. Lynch has also facilitated workshops for poets in the community. Both of her children were born in Indianapolis.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [alessandralynch@aol.com](mailto:alessandralynch@aol.com)

## Janna Matthies, Children's Shortlist Honoree

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Janna Matthies is a picture book author and guitar-playing music teacher in Indianapolis. Her formative years were spent in southern Ohio and Chicago, where she practiced piano and violin and searched the garden as a budding entomologist. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Northwestern University and has called Indianapolis home for thirty years. Janna's children's titles have garnered recognition, including her 2022 picture book *Here We Come!*, which received a Junior Library Guild Gold Standard selection and a 2024 Indiana Authors Award. Her other award-winning works include *The Goodbye Cancer Garden* and *Two Is Enough*, and she also edits the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's "Teddy Bear Concert" picture book series. Today, Janna teaches early-elementary music and cares for her family, which includes a howling husky named Juneau.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [jannamatthies@gmail.com](mailto:jannamatthies@gmail.com)

## K. R. M. McEntire, Young Adult Shortlist Honoree

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K. R. S. McEntire is from the generation that dashed through Platform 9¾, fell in love with vegetarian vampires and motorcycle-riding werewolves, and took down a corrupt government during the Hunger Games. With a background in journalism and public relations, McEntire believes stories have the power to reveal truth and inspire meaningful change.

McEntire grew up on the East Side of Indianapolis and currently lives in Pike Township with her middle-school teacher husband and three sons. She has worked for The Indianapolis Public Library for almost six years. McEntire is an Indianapolis Public Schools (Key Learning Community) and Ball State University alum. At Ball State, she studied journalism and creative writing.

Presentation topics can include worldbuilding, writing for teens, and Self-Publishing 101 (a practical session that helps writers create a personalized roadmap for writing, publishing, and marketing their books, exploring topics such as choosing and registering ISBNs, finding an editor or cover artist, formatting, distribution, building a readership, and getting authentic reader reviews).

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [keshiamcentire@gmail.com](mailto:keshiamcentire@gmail.com)

## Michelle McGill-Vargas, Debut Shortlist Honoree

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Born and raised in Gary, Indiana, **Michelle McGill-Vargas** is a writer of speculative and historical fiction. Her work has appeared in *Splickety Magazine*, *The Copperfield Review*, *Typehouse Literary*, and *Short Fiction Break*. She serves as a board member of the Midwest Writers Workshop and the Historical Novel Society–North America. She is also a writing coach for Writing Day Workshops. By day, Michelle is a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing. Michelle lives in northwest Indiana with her family and fur babies. *American Ghoul* (Blackstone, 2024) is her debut novel.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [a\\_s\\_k\\_delta8@sbcglobal.net](mailto:a_s_k_delta8@sbcglobal.net)

## Derek Mong, Poetry Shortlist Honoree

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Derek Mong is the author of three poetry collections from Saturnalia Books: *Other Romes*, *The Identity Thief*, and *When the Earth Flies into the Sun* (2024), as well as a chapbook, *The Ego and the Empiricist*, from Two Sylvias Press. His individual poems, essays, and translations have appeared widely in the *LA Times*, the *Boston Globe*, *The Kenyon Review*, *New England Review*, *Pleiades*, *Booth*, and the *Indianapolis Review*.

He and his wife, Anne O. Fisher, received the Cliff Becker Translation Award for *The Joyous Science: Selected Poems of Maxim Amelin* (White Pine Press). Together, they run *At Length*, an online literary journal devoted to long work.

Derek moved to Crawfordsville, Indiana, in 2016 to begin his work at Wabash College, where he is currently an associate professor of English. Born in Portland, Oregon, and raised outside of Cleveland, Ohio – with stints as the Halls Poetry Fellow at the University of Wisconsin, the Axton Poetry Fellow at the University of Louisville, and various other Midwest and West Coast locales – he currently lives with his wife and son in West Lafayette. He is a contributing editor for *Zócalo Public Square*.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

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## Christian Moody, Fiction & Debut Shortlist Honoree

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Christian Moody's stories have appeared in *Esquire*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, and in the anthologies *Best New American Voices* and *Best American Fantasy*. He received his MFA from Syracuse University and PhD from the University of Cincinnati and spent years as a creative writing professor. He now works as a brand director and lives in Indianapolis with his two kids and his wife, memoirist and illustrator Margaret Kimball.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

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## Isabelle Popp, Debut Shortlist Honoree

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While she currently lives in Bloomington, **Isabelle Popp** was born and raised in upstate New York. She holds a degree in Astronomy from Cornell University, an M.A. in Secondary Mathematics Education from The City College of New York, and an MFA in Creative Writing from San Francisco State University. She arrived in Bloomington, Indiana, in 2013 as the trailing spouse of an academic. The life and community she has built in Indiana inspired the setting of her debut romance, *Let's Give 'Em Pumpkin to Talk About*, as did her childhood as a competitive 4-H kid eager to win blue ribbons at the state fair. When she's not writing romance, she

works as a freelance writer and fiber arts teacher.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [malia.jackson@gmail.com](mailto:malia.jackson@gmail.com)

## Shifa Saltagi Safadi, Middle Grade Award Winner

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**Shifa Saltagi Safadi** is an author and former English teacher currently living in Valparaiso, Indiana. Originally from Damascus, Syria, Shifa immigrated to the United States as a teenager and first lived in Fishers after her father became a pulmonologist in Indianapolis. The lack of Muslim books around her at the time and her personal struggles with her identity as both Syrian and American inspired her to write stories that provide a mirror and window to readers. She attended IUPUI for a few years, but after getting married and moving to northwest Indiana, she graduated from Indiana University Northwest with an English degree and

began teaching middle school students.

Shifa has written several middle grade and children's picture books, including the *Amina Banana* series – about a young refugee looking to make friends at a new American school – and *The Gift of Eid*, an illustrated retelling of *The Gift of the Magi*. She also won the National Book Award for *Kareem Between*, a story of a Syrian American boy working to make his middle school football team while navigating the challenges of his shared identity.

When Shifa is not writing, she loves to cook copycat recipes from her favorite restaurants at home for her four children and visit schools to share her love for reading.

Available for virtual and limited in-person events in northwest Indiana or greater Indianapolis.

Contact: [shifasafadi@gmail.com](mailto:shifasafadi@gmail.com)

## Barbara Shoup, Young Adult Shortlist Honoree

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**Barbara Shoup** is the author of nine novels for adults and young adults, most recently *An American Tune* and *About Grace*, and a memoir, *A Commotion in Your Heart*. She is the co-author of *Novel Ideas: Contemporary Authors Share the Creative Process* and *Story Matters*. Her short fiction, poetry, essays, and interviews have appeared in numerous small magazines, as well as in *The Writer* and *The New York Times* travel section.

Shoup is the recipient of numerous grants from the Indiana Arts Commission, two creative renewal grants from the Arts Council of Indianapolis, the 2006 PEN Phyllis Reynolds Naylor Working Writer Fellowship, and the 2012 Eugene and Marilyn Glick Regional Indiana Author Award. Her young adult novels, *Wish You Were Here* and *Stranded in Harmony*, were selected as American Library Association Best Books for Young Adults. *Vermeer's Daughter* was a *School Library Journal* Best Adult Book for Young Adults.

Barbara Shoup graduated from Indiana University Bloomington with a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a master's degree in secondary education. She taught creative writing to high school students for more than twenty years. Currently, she is the Writer-in-Residence at the Indiana Writers Center and a creative writing faculty member of Art Workshop International in Assisi. She hosts the Substack newsletter *Book Pilgrim*.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

Contact: [barbshoup@gmail.com](mailto:barbshoup@gmail.com)

## Sid Shroyer, Nonfiction Shortlist Honoree

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Born in Marion, Indiana, in 1953, **Sid Shroyer** grew up in rural Grant County and graduated from Indiana University Bloomington in 1975. Shroyer spent his career in radio, where he was a local on-air host of *All Things Considered* for the NPR affiliate WVPE in the South Bend, Indiana, media market. After taking a shot at living in Phoenix and then Chicago, Shroyer and his wife, Judy, settled in her hometown, South Bend, where they have lived since 1977.

For potential presentations, Shroyer is especially interested in sharing about his book, *When Once Destroyed: A Historical Memoir of the Life and Death of a Small Town*, as well as focusing on opportunities for local history research and the significance of diverse perspectives in nonfiction storytelling.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

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## Bruce Snider, Poetry Shortlist Honoree

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Bruce Snider is the author of four poetry collections: *Blood Harmony* (University of Wisconsin Press, Fall 2025), *Fruit* (University of Wisconsin Press, Spring 2020), *Paradise, Indiana* (Pleiades Press, 2013), and *The Year We Studied Women* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2003). He is co-editor of *The Poem's Country: Place & Poetic Practice* (Pleiades Press, 2018). His poems and essays have appeared in *The American Poetry Review*, *Best American Poetry*, *Harvard Review*, *Iowa Review*, *The Kenyon Review*, *New England Review*, *Poetry*, *Threepenny Review*, *UTNE*, and *ZYZZYVA*, among others.

His awards include a 2023 NEA fellowship, a James A. Michener Fellowship, a Wallace Stegner Fellowship, the Jenny McKean Writer-in-Washington Award, the Lena-Miles Wever Todd Poetry Prize, the Felix Pollack Prize in Poetry, and the Four Lakes Prize in Poetry, as well as residencies from Yaddo, the Millay Colony, the Amy Clampitt House, the James Merrill House, VCCA, and the Bogliasco Foundation. He lives in Baltimore and teaches in the Writing Seminars at Johns Hopkins University.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

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## Rosanne Tolin, Middle Grade Shortlist Honoree

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Rosanne Tolin grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, with four siblings. As a little girl, she was inspired by Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*, the *Paddington Bear* series, and Judy Blume books to write novels for middle grade readers. After graduating from Indiana University, she moved to Chicago to attend law school, but soon decided to pursue journalism instead – becoming the managing editor of a children's magazine and winning a Hoosier State Press Award for her feature writing.

Her debut book, *More Than Marmalade*, is the first biography of the persistent author behind the *Paddington Bear* series, Michael Bond. *Freedom's Game* was the 2025 National Council for the Social Studies Children's Book Council Award winner.

She lives in Chesterton, Indiana, with her husband. When not writing, she can be found hiking with her dogs in the Indiana Dunes or Colorado's Tenmile Range.

Available for virtual and in-person events and prefers offering workshop-style events.

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## Samrat Upadhyay, Fiction Shortlist Honoree

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Samrat Upadhyay moved to Indiana in 2003 to teach at Indiana University Bloomington, where he is the Martha C. Kraft Professor of Humanities. His first book, the short story collection *Arresting God in Kathmandu* (Houghton Mifflin, 2001), was translated into French and Greek, received a Whiting Writers' Award, and was selected for the Barnes & Noble Discover Great Writers Program in 2001. His stories have been broadcast on National Public Radio and published widely, including in *The Best of the Writing Workshops* and *The Best American Short Stories 1999*. He has written many of his books in Bloomington cafés. Originally from Nepal, Upadhyay is

proud to call himself a Hoosier.

Available for virtual and in-person events.

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## Arriel Vinson, Young Adult Award Winner

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Arriel Vinson is an Indianapolis-born author who writes about being young, Black, and in search of freedom. Her debut YA novel-in-verse, *Under the Neon Lights*, is a 2026 Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe New Talent Award winner, a Reese's Book Club LitUp selection, and a Junior Library Guild Gold Selection.

Arriel earned her MFA in Fiction from Sarah Lawrence College and is a Tin House YA Scholar, Highlights Foundation scholarship recipient, and Walter Grant recipient.

Her sophomore novel, *If This World Were Mine*, is forthcoming on January 26, 2027. You can connect with her on social media at @arriwrites and find her work at [arriwrites.com](http://arriwrites.com).

Available for virtual and in-person events.

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## Jenna Voris, Young Adult Shortlist Honoree

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Jenna Voris is the award-winning author of multiple books for all ages, including *Every Time You Hear That Song*, *Say A Little Prayer*, and *The Long Con*. Voris was born and raised in central Indiana, where she also attended high school and college. The Midwest is in her blood, and it comes out in her YA stories – books about queer girls in small southern or Midwestern towns trying to find their place in the world. She now lives in Washington, D.C., where she spends most of her time perfecting her road trip playlists and desperately trying to keep her cat from eating her houseplants.

Available for virtual and limited **in-person** events.

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