

NEWSLETTER

literary arts fest

2020

EXCEPT WHERE NOTED OTHERWISE, ALL EVENTS HELD IN GRIFFIN GATE, BLDG. 60.

MON APR 20

11 AM-12:15 PM **WHY LIT MATTERS** panel
2 - 3:15 PM **STUDENT POETRY SLAM**
emceed by **GILL SOTU**
7 -8:15 PM poet **CHRIS BARON** reading & book signing

TUE APR 21

7 -8:15 PM **NEW VOICES** student reading (venue for this event only: Room 26-220)

WED APR 22

12:30 - 1:45 PM novelist, memoirist **ROB ROBERGE** reading & book signing
7 - 8:15 PM poet, essayist, fairytale writer **LILY HOANG** reading & book signing (plus, Writing Contest winners)

THU APR 23

12:30 - 1:45 PM fiction writer & novelist **JULIA DIXON EVANS** reading & signing
7 - 8:30 PM student poets of Point Loma High
THEN ...
poet and author **DANEZ SMITH** reading and book signing

FESTIVAL AND PROGRAM CO-COORDINATORS



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Literary Arts Festival archives, as well as info about our Program's workshops and degree certificate, are on our English Department website: www.grossmont.edu/english/cw.

GROSSMONT-CUYAMACA COLLEGE DISTRICT

8800 Grossmont College Drive, El Cajon, CA 92020 | 619-644-7000 www.grossmont.edu | www.gcccd.edu | CHANCELLOR: Lynn Ceresino Neault, Ed.D. | GOVERNING BOARD: Elena Adams, Linda Cartwright, Bill Garrett, Debbie Justeson, Brad Monroe. STUDENT MEMBERS: Amy Bianchi (Grossmont), Sonia Mendoza-Reyes (Cuyamaca) | GROSSMONT PRESIDENT: Nabil Abu-Ghazaleh, Ed.D.

MON., APRIL 20, 11 AM - 12:15 PM WHY LITERATURE MATTERS

STUDENT/FACULTY PANEL

Hosted by Professors Lisa Ledri-Aguilar and Sarah Martin, this annual, student-favorite event, features a panel of Grossmont College students sharing moving and powerful personal accounts of the role literature has played in their journeys, advocating the relevance of literature and its potential to inspire change, cultivate humanity, and serve us in, both, personal and global ways. Past WLM panelists have included PUENTE students, history professor Dr. Sue Gonda, author Maria Rybakova, Dean Agustin Albarran, Dr. Oralee Holder, Dr. Pete Schmidt, students Raphael Umphres-Piscitelli, Adilene Delgado, and Creative Writing Program alumnae Cassidy Lynch and Felicia Williams.

MON., APRIL 20, 7 - 8:15 PM POET CHRIS BARON

Poet Chris Baron reads from his recently launched and critically acclaimed *ALL OF ME* (FEIWEL & FRIENDS/MACMILLAN 2019), a middle-grade novel in verse about Ari, an overweight boy who loves cryptozoology and role-playing games, but who is plagued by body-image issues. As Ari faces the demise of his parents' marriage, he also feels himself changing, both emotionally and physically, learning to accept the imperfect in oneself as well as in life. *ALL OF ME* is a nominee for the Association of Library Service to Children Notable Children's Books of 2019.



Baron is a Professor of English at San Diego City College and the director of the Writing Center. His first book of poetry, *UNDER THE BROOM TREE*, was part of *LANTERN TREE: FOUR BOOKS OF POEMS* (CityWorks Press



2012), winner of the San Diego Book Award for best poetry anthology. Baron has published numerous poems and articles in magazines and journals around the country, performed on radio programs, and participated in many readings, lectures, and panels.



MON., APRIL 20, 2 - 3:15 PM 4TH ANNUAL POETRY SLAM HOSTED BY GILL SOTU

Open to all Grossmont College students, poets battle for the bragging rights of being crowned the Grand SLAM champion of Grossmont College. Writer, dj, musician, and performance poet, Gill Sotu, hosts the competition, limited to 12 participants, from which the top six are selected to advance to Round Two.



Teacher and social advocate Gill Sotu is 2006 Grand Slam Poetry Champion of Ventura County and a three-time winner of the Borders Poetry Slam, and has been named 2012 and 2013 San Diego Raw Performing Artist

of the Year. He facilitates poetry workshops within San Diego County's juvenile detention center, and teaches Shakespeare to inmates in a maximum security prison. Sotu is also a teaching artist with The Old Globe Theatre, as well as the Artist In Residence at Makers Church in San Diego. He has just finished an Artist In Residence at the Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation.

Featured on NBC 7's Art Pulse TV, Sotu has partnered and performed with the San Diego Symphony, and hosted TEDx San Diego in 2017. In 2019, Sotu was featured on KUSI and CBS news for BE ABOUT IT, a show created/curated/hosted and performed by Sotu, himself; was named Program Director for Intrepid Theatre and Music Director for TEDx San Diego; and, has hosted/curated SD Artwalk's poetry stage and Neo Soul Tuesday's. His spoken word albums include NEO NOSTALGIA and FLAWED AMERICAN Male.



TUES, APRIL 21, 7-8:15 PM ROOM 26-220 NEW VOICES A STUDENT READING

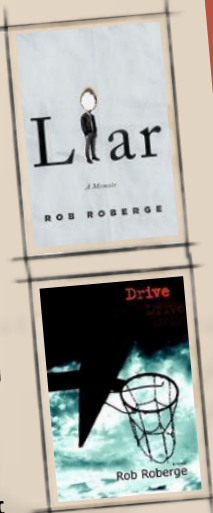
Exceptional writers from this semester's creative writing classes and workshops are invited by Creative Writing Program instructors to perform some of their best new and original works of fiction, literary nonfiction, poetry, drama, spoken word, mixed media word art, and other hybrid and innovative forms. Raw, well crafted, powerfully authentic—this student-centered semesterly event is always a crowd favorite for Grossmont faculty and students, alike.

WED., APRIL 22, 12:30 - 1:45 PM
ROB ROBERGE
 NOVELIST, MEMOIRIST

Rob Roberge reads from *LIAR*, a 2019 memoir about the mental illness, memory and storytelling: after learning he may have a progressive memory-eroding disease, Roberge attempts to preserve his identity by setting out to chronicle the most formative moments of his life, but the process of trying to remember his past only exposes just how fragile the stories that lay at the heart of our self-conception really are.

Roberge is also the author of several novels, including *THE COST OF LIVING: A NOVEL*, *MORE THAN THEY COULD CHEW*, and *DRIVE*, as well as the story collection, *WORKING BACKWARDS FROM THE WORST MOMENT OF MY LIFE*. His stories and essays have appeared in numerous journals and anthologies, and his dramatic

works have been staged in Southern California; his short film, *HONEST PETE*, has shown at a number of festivals. Currently, in addition to serving as a MFA faculty member at UCR/Palm Desert and advisor for the PEN Mark program, Roberge is a guitarist and vocalist with *The Urinals*, *The Danbury Shakes*, and *The Violet Rays*.



WED., APRIL 22, 7 - 8:15 PM
 POET, ESSAYIST, FAIRYTALE WRITER

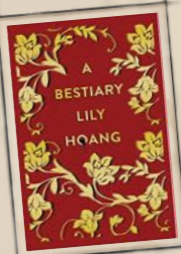
LILY HOANG

PLUS, LAF 24 WRITING CONTEST WINNER

Lily Hoang is the author of five books of prose, including 2016 winner of the Cleveland State University Poetry Center's Non-Fiction Book Prize, *A BESTIARY*. Winner of the 2015 Cleveland State University Poetry Center's Essay Collection, *A BESTIARY* is described by *KENYON REVIEW*'s Catherine Campbell as "a notable artistic leap while deftly navigating the boundaries between fact and fable. Thirteen linked essays explore the connections and gaps between familial identity, racial identity, feminism, addiction, friendship, memory, love, and reconciliation using pointillistic observations and fragmented narratives.... *A BESTIARY* moves fluidly between memory, reflection, fable, and myth without batting an eye... While exploring her evolving identity and internal/external challenges living as a second-generation Asian American, Hoang breaks up what could be a linear narrative into fragmented storylines throughout the collection."

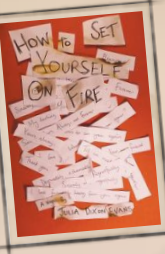
Hoang's first book, *PARABOLA* (2008), won the Chiasmus Press Un-Doing the Novel Contest. Her other novels include *CHANGING* (Fairy Tale Review Press 2008), which received a PEN Open Books Award, and *THE EVOLUTIONARY REVOLUTION* (Les Figues Press 2010), *OLD CAT LADY* (1913 Books 2016), and *THE BOOK OF MARTHA* (Insert Blanc Press 2017).

In addition to teaching in the MFA program at New Mexico State U as Associate Department Head, Hoang is Editor of *Jaded Ibis Press* and Executive Editor of *HTML GIANT*. She has also served as Prose Editor at *Puerto del Sol* and Non-Fiction Editor at *Drunken Boat*, and she has co-edited the anthology *The Force of What's Possible: Writers on Accessibility and the Avant-Garde*. In 2017, she was Mellon Scholar in Residence at Rhodes University in South Africa. Currently, Lily Hoang is a Visiting Assistant Professor of English and Women's Studies at Saint Mary's College in Indiana.



THU., APRIL 23, 12:30 - 1:45 PM
 FICTION AUTHOR AND NOVELIST
JULIA DIXON EVANS

Winner of the 2019 Magazine Award for Fiction, fiction writer Julia Dixon Evans reads from her debut novel, *HOW TO SET YOURSELF ON FIRE* (Dzanc Books, 2018). Her short fiction and essays have appeared in a variety of anthologies and journals, including *McSWEENEY'S*, *HOBART*, *PAPER DARTS*, *BARRELHOUSE*, *LITERARY HUB*, *PITHEAD CHAPEL*, *THE RADVOCATE*, *FLAPPERHOUSE*, *SAN DIEGO HORROR PROFESSIONALS*, and others.



As a journalist, Julia Dixon Evans has penned the culture report for *VOICE OF SAN DIEGO* and currently covers the local arts and culture scene for *KPBS*. She has been a contributing writer to *SAN DIEGO CITYBEAT*, *THE A/V CLUB* and more. She is also the founder and host of *LAST EXIT*, an online journal, workshop and reading series dedicated to building literary community in San Diego. Dixon Evans has also served as editor to locally based literary horror journal *BLACK CANDIES*.

THU., APRIL 23, 7 - 8:30 PM
 POET **DANEZ SMITH**

PLUS, STUDENT POETS OF POINT LOMA HIGH SCHOOL

The finale of the LAF 24 opens with a reading of student poets of Point Loma High School under the direction of PLHS Creative Writing instructor Darren Samakosky.

Then, black, genderqueer, poz writer and performer, Danez Smith takes the stage with a reading from their newly released third collection of poems, *HOMIE* (Graywolf Press 2020). Rooted in the loss of one of Danez Smith's close friends, *Homie* emerges from Smith's search for joy and intimacy within a nation where both can seem scarce and

becoming even scarcer. In poems of rare power and generosity, Smith acknowledges that in a country overrun by violence, xenophobia, and disparity—and in a body defined by race, queerness, and diagnosis—it can be hard to survive, even harder to remember reasons for living.

Danez Smith's other books are *DON'T CALL US DEAD* (Graywolf Press 2017), winner of the Forward Prize for Best Collection and a finalist for the National Book Award; and *[INSERT] BOY* (YesYes Books 2014), winner of the Kate Tufts Discovery Award and the Lambda Literary Award for Gay Poetry and finalist for the Norma Farber First Book Award from the Poetry Society of America.

A Pushcart Prizewinner, Danez Smith's work has featured in *POETRY MAGAZINE*, *BUZZFEED*, *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, *PBS NEWSHOUR*, *BEST AMERICAN POETRY*, and *THE LATE SHOW WITH STEPHEN COLBERT*. Listed in *Forbes'* annual 30 Under 30 list, Smith is a founding member of the Dark Noise Collective and co-hosts *VS* (with Franny Choi, a podcast sponsored by the Poetry Foundation and Postloudness. They have received fellowships from the Poetry Foundation, the McKnight

Foundation, the Montalvo Arts Center, Cave Canem, and the NEA. Their writing has appeared widely in journals and anthologies, including *POETRY MAGAZINE*, *BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL*, *BUZZFEED*, *BLAVITY*, and *PLOUGHSHARES*. A 2014 Ruth Lilly & Dorothy Sargent Rosenberg Fellow, a Cave Canem and VONA alum, they are a two-time Individual World Poetry Slam finalist, placing second in 2014.



The events of the 24th ANNUAL LITERARY ARTS FESTIVAL are made possible in large part by funding it receives from external sources and grants, without which we would not be able to bring living literature and authors to our campus and community, free of cost. Our heartfelt thanks to Grossmont College's **WORLD ARTS & CULTURES COMMITTEE**, the generously giving patrons of the **FOUNDATION FOR GROSSMONT AND CUYAMACA COLLEGE'S CREATIVE WRITING FUND**; and our **FALL 2019 CREATIVE WRITE-A-THON** participants and sponsors. Thank you for all your support!

