Welcome to Words & Music 2021!

I’m not going to lie. This has been a hard year for everyone. In addition to the stress of the ongoing global pandemic, many of us here in New Orleans are also dealing with the seemingly endless task of repairing our homes following Hurricane Ida. It gets exhausting some days.

Shortly after Ida, community partners and steering committee members had the opportunity to voice their preference for staying the course with our plans for an in-person festival or to pivot to a virtual format. The consensus overwhelmingly favored a virtual festival. First, this format allows our audience to enjoy the festival without worry for their safety. Second, it increases accessibility to our programming, as audiences nationwide can participate without the financial burden of travel, childcare, or parking fees. I am thankful to everyone who helped shape the vision for 2021.

I am also thankful to our sponsors. Because of their generosity, we are able to offer 19 of the 21 festival events free of charge, with donations gratefully accepted. Whether you donate $1 or $1000, it goes toward our larger goal to serve New Orleans’ literacy needs.

Funds raised during these four days serve our community year-round. Words & Music’s parent organization, One Book One New Orleans, provides literacy resources to low-literate adults and incarcerated adults and teens, as well as hosting free community programming. Since the pandemic began, we have given out over 6000 books, and we have produced more than a dozen free virtual events, held a book drive for incarcerated people, and hosted a community book giveaway during National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week.

Because our ultimate goal is to serve New Orleans, it is only fitting that local arts and artists are the heart of Words & Music. We hope to create a festival reflective of the diverse perspectives in New Orleans, a space where everyone’s voice is valued and validated.

Among these voices are keynote speaker Clint Smith, Louisiana Poet Laureate Dr. Mona Lisa Saloy, jazz legend Johnny Vidacovich, illustrator Hugo Martinez, former Louisiana Poet Laureates Jack Bedell and Brenda Marie Osbey, Louisiana Writer Award winner Fatima Shaik, fiction writer Eric Nguyen, musical ensemble Les Cenelles, and Keith Frazier of the Rebirth Brass Band—just to name a few! Their presentations come together under the theme “Our Stories, Our Time,” which invites audiences to reflect on how we tell stories to others, the stories we tell ourselves, and who has the power to decide which stories get told.

We are grateful that you have decided to spend this time with us, and we hope to see you in person in 2022.

Sincerely,

Megan Holt, Ph.D
Executive Director, One Book One New Orleans
CEO, Words & Music: A Literary Feast in New Orleans
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Workshop: “Writing Your Community’s History” with Fatima Shik ........................................ 2
The Ones Who Don’t Say They Love You with Maurice Carlos Ruffins and Sarah M. Broom ........... 3
This Life by Quntos Kunquest .................................................................................................................. 4
FemPoetiks in Americana Music ............................................................................................................. 5
For the Love of Form: 21st Century Ghazals ............................................................................................ 6
Keynote Event: How The Word Is Passed .................................................................................................. 8
Launch Party: Peauxdunque Review, Issues 5 & 6 .............................................................................. 9
Morning Music: Les Cenelles ................................................................................................................... 10
Water as Witness in Poetry and Prose ...................................................................................................... 10
Art, Verses, Artifacts ............................................................................................................................... 12
Words & Music Writing Competition Reading ..................................................................................... 14
Telling History through Graphic Novels ............................................................................................... 17
Lessons for Louisiana: Incarceration and Public History ..................................................................... 19
Eye-Opener: Café Brûlot with Sue Strachan and Liz Williams .............................................................. 22
Workshop: Navigating the Personal Essay with Athena Dixon ............................................................. 23
Midday Music: Johnny Vidacovich ......................................................................................................... 23
Crossroads: Intersections of History and Creative Writing ..................................................................... 24
“I Ain’t Much on Casanova” ................................................................................................................... 26
New Orleans Writers: The Next Generation ........................................................................................... 28
An Evening with Louisiana Poet Laureate Dr. Mona Lisa Saloy ........................................................... 28
Words & Music 2021 Steering Committee and Guest Curators ........................................................... 29
One Book One New Orleans Sustaining Members ............................................................................... 29
Words & Music Special Thanks ........................................................................................................... 30
One Book One New Orleans Board of Directors .............................................................................. 30
A Special Thank You to our Sponsors ................................................................................................... 31
Wednesday, November 17

5:30pm
Workshop: “Writing Your Community’s History”
with Fatima Shaik
Sponsored by Melba’s Old School Po’Boys

Fatima Shaik Fatima Shaik is the author of the Kirkus-starred Economy Hall: The Hidden History of a Free Black Brotherhood, which The New York Times described as “so inviting that the true depth of its scholarship is revealed only in its bibliography, which lists dozens of archival and other sources. Shaik’s monumental book… is lyrical and mysterious and always captivating.” She has written six books of highly acclaimed fiction including the novel Melitte, among YALSA’s best books of 1997, and The Mayor of New Orleans: Just Talking Jazz, her 1987 debut, “a terrific charging solo,” according to NPR. Shaik’s work is anthologized in Streetlights: Illuminating Tales of the Urban Black Experience (Penguin) and Breaking Ice: An Anthology of Contemporary African American Fiction (Penguin-Viking). Her writing also appeared in The Southern Review, Callaloo, Tribes, The Root, In These Times, the Review of Contemporary Fiction, and The New York Times. She is the recipient of grants from the NEH, LEH and the Kittredge Fund and the subject of an upcoming documentary, The Bengali, by director Kavery Kaul. She founded the Communication Department at Saint Peter’s University and retired from a tenured assistant professorship in 2020. A member of The Writers Room, Shaik is the co-chair of the Children’s and Young Adult Books committee for PEN America.
Thursday, November 18

12:30pm
The Ones Who Don’t Say They Love You

Supported in part by Poets & Writers

Maurice Carlos Ruffin is the author of The Ones Who Don’t Say They Love You, which was published by One World Random House in August 2021. It is a New York Times Editor’s Choice. His first book, We Cast a Shadow, was a finalist for the PEN/Faulkner Award, the Dayton Literary Peace Prize, and the PEN America Open Book Prize. It was longlisted for the 2021 DUBLIN Literary Award, the Center for Fiction Prize and the Aspen Words Literary Prize. The novel was also a New York Times Editor’s Choice. Ruffin is the winner of several literary prizes, including the Iowa Review Award in fiction and the William Faulkner–William Wisdom Creative Writing Competition Award for Novel-in-Progress. His work has appeared in The New York Times, The LA Times, The Oxford American, Garden & Gun, Kenyon Review, and Four Hundred Souls: A Community History of African America. A New Orleans native, Ruffin is a professor of Creative Writing at Louisiana State University, and the 2020-2021 John and Renee Grisham Writer-in-Residence at the University of Mississippi.

Sarah M. Broom is a writer whose work has appeared in the New Yorker, New York Times Magazine, Oxford American, and O Magazine, among others. She is the recipient of the National Book Award for Nonfiction and the John Leonard Prize for Best First Book for her memoir, The Yellow House. A native New Orleanian, she received her Master’s in Journalism from the University of California, Berkeley in 2004. She was awarded a Whiting Foundation Creative Nonfiction Grant in 2016 and was a finalist for the New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Creative Nonfiction in 2011. She has also been awarded fellowships at Djerassi Resident Artists Program and The MacDowell Colony. She lives in Harlem.
Zachary Lazar is the author of five books, including the novels *Sway*, *I Pity the Poor Immigrant*, a *New York Times* Notable Book, and *Vengeance*, the 2019 selection of One Book One New Orleans. His honors include a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Hodder Fellowship from Princeton University, and the John Updike Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters for “a writer in mid-career whose work has demonstrated consistent excellence.” A frequent contributor to the *New York Times Book Review*, Lazar’s journalism has also appeared in the *New York Times Magazine*, NPR’s *All Things Considered*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and elsewhere. He is on the faculty at Tulane University, where he teaches creative writing classes that bring together students from Tulane and incarcerated students in Louisiana jails. Lazar also serves on the advisory board of the PEN America Writing for Justice Fellowship and the selection committee for the National Book Foundation’s Literature for Justice program. His novel *The Apartment on Calle Uruguay* will be published in February of 2022.

A.E. Rooks hopes to always be a student of history, which hasn’t stopped her from studying everything else. While her forthcoming debut, *The Black Joke: The True Story of One Ship’s Battle Against the Slave Trade*, explores a little discussed facet of the transatlantic slave trade, previous writing credits include *Between the Briefs*, for which she won two national awards for sex positive journalism. A two-time *Jeopardy!* champion whose schooling spans theatre, law, library and information science, education, human sexuality, Rooks’ literary passions are united by what the past can teach us about the present, how history shapes our future, and above all, really interesting stories.

Quntos KunQuest was born in Shreveport, Louisiana in 1976. Since 1996, he has been incarcerated at the Louisiana State Prison in Angola. He is a musician, rapper, visual artist, and novelist.
Thursday, November 18

3:30pm
FemPoetiks in Americana Music

Linda Nicole Blair is an Associate Teaching Professor at the University of Washington, Tacoma where she teaches a variety of literature courses as well as an interdisciplinary course on the relationships between literature and music. She holds a BA in Music (1979), an MA in English (1982), and a Ph.D. in English (1989), as well as a Graduate Certificate in Blues Studies from Delta State University (2017). She has authored two books, *Virginia Woolf and the Power of Story: A Literary Darwinist Reading of Six Novels* (McFarland, 2017) and most recently, *FemPoetiks in American Poetry and Americana Music: A Woman’s Truth* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2021). Also a singer-songwriter, she recorded two CDs of original music (*Little Queenie*, 2016) and *No Limits* (2017) and plans to release a third in 2022.

Beth McKee Art and activism. It’s hard to tell where one ends and the other begins with traveled Orlando musician Beth McKee. But these days, that separation matters less and less. Musician Beth McKee is the gestalt of all the places she’s settled. From her native Mississippi where she learned the blues firsthand from Malaco Records session musicians to her immersion in the scenes of Austin, New Orleans, and now Orlando, Florida and Winston Salem, North Carolina – all their musical terroir is in her sound. But those influences, too, have become less distinct in the distillation of Beth’s aesthetic. Find out more about her at info@bethmckee.com.

For more than 20 years, Lynn Drury has honed her singing and songwriting skills in New Orleans. Originally from Mississippi, she’s got one foot firmly planted in her country roots and the other ducking into dive bars and music clubs across town. Dreamy and stark, Lynn’s distinct voice has been heard across the country and in Europe as well. Her music and melodies get in your head and under your skin - sultry hot funky and funny, they stick to you and with you like a long night out. She calls her music Nolamericana, and there’s a little bit of something for everyone in her catchy tunes.
Thursday, November 18

5:00pm
For the Love of Form: 21st Century Ghazals

Sponsored by the Poetry Matters Project
Supported in part by Poets & Writers

Daniel WK Lee is the author of the Anatomy of Want, published in November 2019 by Rebel Satori Press’ Queer Mojo imprint. A third-generation refugee of Cantonese-Chinese background, he was born in Kuching, Malaysia, raised in Chicagoland, grew the fuck up in New York City, embraced the outdoors and spinsterhood in Seattle, and now resides in the magical city of New Orleans with is his aesthetic powerhouse of a dog Camden. He earned his MFA in Creative Writing at The New School and has been widely published in online and print publications, including the Lambda Literary Award-nominated anthology Take Out: Queer Writing from Asian Pacific America, the Lambda Literary Award-winning anthology I Do/I Don’t: Queers on Marriage, and most recently: LoveJets: Queer Male Poets on 200 Years of Walt Whitman, as well as Berkeley Poetry Review, Floating Bridge Review, White Stag, Fourteen Hills, and the UK’s Oxford Poetry and Agenda. Find out more about him at danielwklee.com.

Brad Richard is the author of four collections of poetry—Habitations, Motion Studies, Butcher’s Sugar, Parasite Kingdom—and three chapbooks, The Men in the Dark, Curtain Optional, and Larval Songs. Recipient of numerous awards for his writing and teaching, he was named the 2015 Louisiana Artist of the Year. Retired chair of the creative writing program at Lusher Charter School, he teaches for the Kenyon Review summer workshops and for New Orleans Writers Workshop. He lives and writes in New Orleans.
Mark Neely—Moderator

Mark Neely is the author of *Beasts of the Hill*, and *Dirty Bomb*, both from Oberlin College Press. His third book, *Ticker*, won the Idaho Prize for Poetry and was published by Lost Horse Press in 2021. His awards include an NEA Poetry Fellowship, an Indiana Individual Artist Grant, and the Field Poetry Prize. He is a professor of English at Ball State University and a senior editor at *River Teeth: a Journal of Nonfiction Narrative*. More about him, including links to his writing, can be found at www.markneely.com.

Tiana Nobile


Elizabeth Gross

Elizabeth Gross is the author of *this body/that lightning show*, selected by Jericho Brown for the Hilary Tham Capital Collection of The Word Works Press (2019) and *DEAR ESCAPE ARTIST, ARTIST*, a chapbook in collaboration with artist Sara White (Antenna 2016). Their poem, “Ghazal at the end of the world,” was selected by Beth Ann Fennelly as the Poetry Contest Winner for the Words and Music Festival in 2020 and is forthcoming in the *Peauxdunque Review*. Other poems have appeared in *Painted Bride Quarterly, Fairy Tale Review*, and a wide array of journals and anthologies. In 2015, they co-translated and produced an interdisciplinary adaptation of Euripides’ *Bakkhai* at the Marigny Opera House. They teach interdisciplinary humanities for the Honors Program at Tulane University and also co-organize The Waves Reading Series, which showcases the voices of LGBTQ+ writers.
Thursday, November 18

6:30pm
Keynote Event: How The Word Is Passed

Sponsored by PEN America

David Robinson-Morris, Ph.D is a scholar, author, philosopher, social justice and human rights advocate-activist, educator, philanthropist, community organizer, DEI practitioner, and administrator. He is the Founder and Chief Reimaginelutionary at The REImaginelution, LLC, a strategic consulting firm working at the intersections of imagination, policy, practice, and prophetic hope to radically reimagine diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) toward racial justice and systemic transformation by engendering freedom of the human spirit; and catalyzing the power of the imagination to reweave organizations, systems, and the world for collective healing and liberation. David holds a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Research with a dual concentration in Higher Education Administration and Curriculum Theory, and an Education Specialist (Ed. S.) Certificate in Educational Leadership with a focus on applied research, measurement, and evaluation both from Louisiana State University (LSU). David is actively engaged in several civic, educational, and human rights organizations throughout the city, state, and region. Dr. Robinson-Morris is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and is a native of Galveston, Texas.

Clint Smith is a staff writer at The Atlantic and the author of the poetry collection Counting Descent. The book won the 2017 Literary Award for Best Poetry Book from the Black Caucus of the American Library Association and was a finalist for an NAACP Image Award. His latest work of nonfiction, How the Word Is Passed, was published in 2021 and became a New York Times bestseller. He has received fellowships from New America, the Emerson Collective, the Art For Justice Fund, Cave Canem, and the National Science Foundation. His writing has been published in The New Yorker, The New York Times Magazine, Poetry Magazine, The Paris Review, and elsewhere. Born and raised in New Orleans, he received his B.A. in English from Davidson College and his Ph.D in Education from Harvard University.
Thursday, November 18

8:15pm
Launch Party: Peauxdunque Review, Issues 5 & 6

Ruby Hansen Murray
Christie Lauder
Adam Karlin

David Meischen
Nikki Ummel
Willie James

Janine DeBaise
Tad Bartlett - Emcee
Johnnie Bernhard

Les Cenelles is an ensemble exploring the Creole diaspora through all findable forms of melody and memory to honor our cultural ancestors and preserve the plurality of their experiences through a prismatic and contemporary lens.

Johnnie Bernhard
Friday, November 19

**Jack B. Bedell** is Professor of English and Coordinator of Creative Writing at Southeastern Louisiana University where he also edits Louisiana Literature and directs the Louisiana Literature Press. His latest collections are *Color All Maps New* (Mercer University Press, 2021), *Rock Garden* (Daily Drunk Press, 2021), and *No Brother, This Storm* (Mercer University Press, 2018). His work has appeared in the *Southern Review, Radar Poetry, The Fourth River, Terrain.org, Construction, Grist, Sugar House, Shenandoah, Pidgeonholes, Cotton Xenomorph* and other journals. Bedell is the recipient of the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities Individual Achievement in the Humanities Award and the Governor’s Award for Artistic Achievement. He served as Louisiana Poet Laureate, 2017-2019.

**Chioma Urama** Chioma Urama is a storyteller and visual artist of Igbo and African American heritage living in the Global South. She is the author of *A Body of Water*, and a recipient of the Georgia Poetry Prize. Her written work is a deeply meditative process, connecting people, patterns, and ideas in efforts to heal herself and the collective. Her writing has been described as intuitive, intentional, and heart connected. Her written work has been published in *Southern Humanities Review, Paper Darts, Blackbird, The Normal School,* and *Prairie Schooner*. Urama is a Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship alumna and a graduate of the University of Miami MFA program, where she was a Michener Fellow. She has taught Creative Writing and Composition at the University of Miami and the University of New Orleans.

**Sean F. Munro** is an Associate Professor of English at Delgado Community College in New Orleans. He has recent poems in *Indiana Review, Split Lip Magazine, & Under a Warm Green Linden*. He hosts a weekly poetry radio show, Lunch Poems, helps organize the New Orleans Poetry Festival, and co-curates a few reading series.
Friday, November 19

1:00pm
Art, Verses, Artifacts

Supported in part by Poets & Writers

**Gina Ferrara** lives and writes in New Orleans. She has four poetry collections: *Ethereal Avalanche* (Trembling Pillow Press, 2009), *Amber Porch Light* (Word Tech Communications, 2013), *Fitting the Sixth Finger* (Kelsay Books, 2017) and *Weight of the Ripened* (Dos Madres Press, 2020). Her work has appeared in numerous journals including *Callaloo*, *The Poetry Ireland Review* and *Tar River Poetry*. Most recently, her poetry was selected for publication in the Sixty-Four Best Poets of 2019 by Black Mountain Press. Since 2007, she has curated The Poetry Buffet, a monthly reading series in New Orleans. She is an Assistant Professor of English and writing at Delgado Community College.

**Joshua Nguyen** is a queer Vietnamese-American writer, a collegiate national poetry slam champion (CUPSI), and a native Houstonian. He is the author of the chapbook, “American Lục Bát for My Mother” (Bull City Press, 2021) and has received fellowships from Kundiman, Tin House, Sundress Academy For The Arts, and the Vermont Studio Center. He has been published in *The Offing*, *Wildness*, *American Poetry Review*, *The Texas Review*, *Auburn Avenue*, *Crab Orchard Review*, and *Gulf Coast Mag*. He has also been featured on both the “VS” podcast and Tracy K. Smith’s, “The Slowdown”. He is a bubble tea connoisseur and works in a kitchen. His debut poetry collection, “Come Clean” (Oct 5th 2021, University of Wisconsin Press), was the winner of the 2021 Felix Pollak Prize in Poetry. He is a Ph.D student at The University of Mississippi, where he also received his MFA.

**Friday, November 19**

**Karisma Price** is the author of the forthcoming poetry collection *I'm Always so Serious* (Sarabande Books, 2023). Her work has appeared in *Poetry, Four Way Review, Wildness, The Adroit Journal*, and elsewhere. She has received fellowships from Cave Canem and New York University, was a finalist for the 2019 Manchester Poetry Prize, and awarded The 2020 J. Howard and Barbara M.J. Wood Prize from The Poetry Foundation. She’s from New Orleans, and holds an MFA in poetry from New York University. She is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor of Poetry at Tulane University.

**Stacey Balkun - Moderator** is the author of SWEETBITTER (Sundress 2021) and co-editor of Fiolet & Wing: An Anthology of Domestic Fabulist Poetry. Winner of the 2019 New South Writing Contest as well as Terrain.org's 10th Annual Contest, her work has appeared in Best New Poets 2018 as well as other anthologies & journals. Stacey holds an MFA from Fresno State and teaches creative writing online at The Poetry Barn & The Loft. Visit her online at: www.staceybalkun.com.
Friday, November 19

2:30pm
Words & Music Writing Competition Reading

**Ella Latham** is a writer and poet from South Carolina. She spent her twenties wandering around the Midwest and New York, both geographically and spiritually. A former labor organizer, paralegal, grad school dropout, literary agency assistant, and bartender, she recently quit her latest day job in construction to return to the South as part of her commitment to doing the work where her roots are and to writing. “Chronicle of My Blood-Summer” will be her first published work. She currently lives in Western North Carolina.

A native of Mississippi, **Benjamin Morris** is a writer, researcher, and the author of one book of nonfiction and two books of poetry, most recently *Ecotone* (Antenna/Press Street Press, 2017). His work has appeared in such places as *The Oxford American* and *The Southern Review*, and received fellowships from the Mississippi Arts Commission, Tulane University, and A Studio in the Woods. He lives in New Orleans, where he serves as one of the coordinators for the New Orleans Poetry Festival. To learn more visit: benjaminalanmorris.com.

**Maria Carrera** was born in Washington, D.C. and kept a diary at age six. Pursuing English Literature, she earned a B.A. at E&H College in Virginia and an M.A. at CU-Boulder, then went into theatre. She lives in San Diego, where she stage managed at the Old Globe, taught Alexander Technique to actors training at USD and UCSD, and retired.
Friday, November 19

**C.A. Munn** is a current M.F.A. playwright in the University of New Orleans’ Creative Writing Workshop. Their plays have been produced and received staged readings at the Mid-America Theatre Conference and the UNO School of the Arts. For their poetry, they were a finalist for the International Literary Awards’ Rita Dove Prize in 2019, and for their fiction they were a semi-finalist for the American Short Fiction Halifax Ranch Prize in 2020. Their work as an interviewer has been published on the *Ploughshares Blog* and their flash fiction is forthcoming at *Screen Door Review*.

**D.P. Jannerson** is the author of *The Women of Dauphine*, which was a finalist in the Fiction: LGBTQ category of the 2019 Best Book Awards, and two books of poetry. Jannerson’s short pieces have gone viral with Bitch Media, received honors from publications like *The Writer* and *So to Speak*, and been nominated for a Pushcart Prize by *The Flexible Persona*. A trans, queer, and disabled writer, he lives in New Orleans with his wife and is currently shopping around a YA novel about the characters in “Charity.”

Friday, November 19

Jessica Wang is a seventeen-year-old from Long Island, New York. Her work has been nationally recognized by Scholastic Art and Writing, NCTE, Mission InspirEd, and Susquehanna University. She has forthcoming writing in Blue Marble Review and her work can be found in The Apprentice Writer. She is the founder of the youth literary magazine Ice Lolly Review which accepts poetry, prose, and artwork from creators ages 12-26. In her free time she enjoys listening to Japanese Indie Rock and rewatching Studio Ghibli films.

Tad Bartlett is the managing editor of Peauxdunque Review, and he is a founding member of the Peauxdunque Writers Alliance. He has had fiction and non-fiction published by The Massachusetts Review, The Baltimore Review, The Bitter Southerner, the online Oxford American, The Chautauqua Literary Journal, The Stockholm Review of Literature, and many others. His work was designated as a “notable” essay in the 2017 Best American Essays, and his fiction and non-fiction have been Pushcart-nominated four times. He earned his MFA in fiction from the Creative Writing Workshop at the University of New Orleans.
Friday, November 19

4:30pm
Telling History through Graphic Novels

Sponsored by the Historic New Orleans Collection

Brian K. Mitchell is a native of New Orleans and a resident of North Little Rock, Arkansas. Mitchell identifies himself as a “Transplanted New Orleanian” who is forever thankful to the State of Arkansas for welcoming him during the chaotic aftermath of the hurricane. Mitchell is currently an Associate Professor of History at the University of Arkansas Little Rock and an Associate Faculty Member at the Anderson Institute on Race and Ethnicity. A graduate of the University of New Orleans, Mitchell is the winner of the 2021 Phyllis Wheatley Award for Monumental: Oscar Dunn and his Radical Fight in Reconstruction Louisiana and was Louisiana’s selection for the Library of Congress’ “Great Reads from Great Places.” He is the author of numerous papers, book chapters, and books, and is nationally recognized for his public history and digital humanities projects which often explore difficult and forgotten histories. His research has been covered by CNN, Atlas Obscura, The New York Post, The Guardian, National Public Radio, The New York Times, and the Associated Press.

Josh Neufeld is a cartoonist known for his nonfiction narratives of political and social upheaval, told through the voices of witnesses. He is the writer/artist of the nonfiction graphic novels A.D.: New Orleans After the Deluge and A Few Perfect Hours. His other works include The Influencing Machine, The Vagabonds, Keyhole, and numerous nonfiction comics for various news outlets. Neufeld has been a Knight-Wallace Fellow in journalism, an Atlantic Center for the Arts Master Artist, and a Xeric Award winner. He lives in Brooklyn, New York, where he makes — and teaches — comics, including at the School of Visual Arts.
**Friday, November 19**

**Hugo Martinez** is a freelance illustrator and comic book artist living in New Orleans. Graduated from Watkins College of Art and Design with a BFA in graphic design. As a first generation U.S. citizen, his work revolves around issues of race, justice, identity, and community.

**Nick Weldon** is editor at The Historic New Orleans Collection, where he edited Monumental: *Oscar Dunn and His Radical Fight in Reconstruction Louisiana* (2021), *Enigmatic Stream: Industrial Landscapes of the Lower Mississippi River* by Richard Sexton (2019), and content for several major exhibitions. He was previously senior editor at *Runner’s World*, and has written about a wide range of topics for other outlets.
Friday, November 19

6:00pm
Lessons for Louisiana: Incarceration and Public History

Stephanie Gaskill--Moderator received her Ph.D in Religious Studies from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill in 2017. The centerpiece of her dissertation was The Life of Jesus Christplay, performed in 2012 and 2013 by incarcerated men and women from Angola Prison and the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women (LCIW), respectively. She has received numerous grants for her research, including an in-residence dissertation completion fellowship at the John C. Danforth Center for Religion and Politics at Washington University in St. Louis and, most recently, a project grant for researchers from the Louisville Institute. In addition to her academic work, Dr. Gaskill taught HiSET (GED) classes for women incarcerated at Orleans Parish Prison from 2017 to 2020.

Elizabeth Nelson is an Assistant Professor in the Medical Humanities and Health Studies program at IUPUI. A medical historian, her research focuses on modern institutions of confinement, such as mental hospitals and prisons. An examination of structural racism, sexism, ableism and the production of poor health, disability, and premature death is a necessary part of this work. However, Dr. Nelson is especially interested in creativity, knowledge production, community building, and activism in these institutional spaces--human striving within and against oppressive and inhospitable environments. Central to her work are questions of rehabilitation, care, structural violence, haunting/trauma, reform, abolition, and theories of time and history. Currently, Dr. Nelson is co-editing a book (with Michelle Daniel) by members of the Indiana Women’s Prison History Project on the history of women’s incarceration in Indiana, and she is co-authoring a book (with Modupe Labode and Emily Beckman) that examines the expansion of rights for people with intellectual disabilities within a doomed institution, Indiana's “Central State” psychiatric hospital on the eve of its closure in 1994.
Andy Eisen is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the History Department and the Assistant Director of the Honors Program at Stetson University. He is the co-founder and co-director of the Community Education Project, Stetson University’s higher education in prison program.

Michelle Daniel Jones is a fourth-year doctoral student in the American Studies program at New York University. She is interested in excavating the collateral consequences of criminal convictions for people and families directly impacted by mass incarceration. Michelle’s advocacy extends beyond the classroom through collaborations and opportunities to speak truth to power. While incarcerated, she presented legislative testimony on a reentry alternative she created that was approved by the Indiana State Interim Committee on the Criminal Code. As a subject matter expert, she serves in the development and operation of taskforces, think tanks and initiatives to reduce harm and end mass incarceration and has joined Second Chance Educational Alliance as a Senior Research Consultant, the boards of Worth Rises and Correctional Association of New York and advisory boards of the Jamii Sisterhood, The Education Trust, A Touch of Light, Urban Institute and ITHAKA’s Higher Ed in Prison Project.
Monica Deck holds a Bachelor of Science in Medical Humanities and Health Studies and is a certified recovery specialist and community health worker. In addition to her work with Mental Health America of Indiana, she worked as a research coordinator and project manager for the Indiana Women’s Prison History Project, supporting currently and formerly incarcerated scholars as they pursued original historical research on the origins of the women’s carceral system in Indiana. Monica considers herself to be in long-term recovery from severe mental illness, and that lived experience motivates her passion for mental health education, patient empowerment, and self-advocacy. She regularly speaks publicly regarding her clinical and personal experiences to student groups and clinicians in training. Her research interests include health outcomes for formerly incarcerated women, the intersection of narrative identity and illness, and the long-term psychological impact of chronic disease.

Ana Schmid is an artist, poet, activist, and Ph.D student in Ethnic Studies at University of California-Riverside. She blends her knowledge and artistic expressions in her work and contributes her time and talents to numerous charitable, activist, and outreach causes. She is a founding member of the Indiana Women’s Prison History Project, a research team engaged in re-writing the history of women’s prisons and institutions. Her area of emphasis is nineteenth century gender and sexuality: the history of gynecology/obstetrics, medicalization of women’s bodies, sex work, epistemic injustice/ violence, and trauma. She is co-author of the play The Duchess of Stringtown. She also works in collaboration with Abolition Journal Collective, IDOC Watch anarchist collective, the Lumina Foundation, National Council of Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls, Constructing Our Future, Focus Re-Entry Initiative, Silent Cry, Inc., Underground Scholars, and Memento Mori Paranormal History Hunters.
Saturday, November 20

9:00am
Eye-Opener: Café Brûlot with Sue Strachan and Liz Williams

Sue Strachan is a veteran journalist who has written about New Orleans culture, history, food, cocktails and current events for the New Orleans Times-Picayune, New Orleans Advocate, New Orleans Magazine and other local and national publications.

Liz Williams grew up eating in two great food traditions – those of New Orleans and Sicily. She is Founder of National Food & Beverage Foundation. She coauthored The Encyclopedia of Law and Food. New Orleans: A Food Biography was selected as the 2018 One Book, One New Orleans book. Lift Your Spirits, was published in 2016. Her book about Creole Italians is soon to be published by LSU Press. Listen to her podcast, “Tip of the Tongue,” wherever you listen to podcasts. A graduate of Louisiana State University Law Center (JD) she served as a U.S. Army Judge Advocate General. She practiced law in Washington, DC and Louisiana. She has served as judge in many cooking competitions and consulted internationally on the food of New Orleans. Travel is an excuse to eat in new places.
Saturday, November 20

10:30am
Workshop: Navigating the Personal Essay with Athena Dixon

Athena Dixon is a poet and essayist born and raised in NE Ohio. She is the author of the chapbook No God in This Room (Argus House Press, 2018) and a debut collection of personal essays titled The Incredible Shrinking Woman (Split/Lip Press, 2020). Her work also appears in The Breakbeat Poets Vol. 2: Black Girl Magic (Haymarket Books, 2018) and Getting to the Truth: The Craft and Practice of Creative Non-Fiction (Hippocampus Books, 2021). Additionally, her poetry and essays have appeared in GAY Magazine, Grub Street, Narratively, Shenandoah, and So to Speak Journal among others. She is a recipient of a fellowship from the Martha’s Vineyard Institute of Creative Writing and a 2nd Book residency from Tin House. She resides in Philadelphia.

11:30am
Midday Music: Johnny Vidacovich

Johnny Vidacovich is the quintessential New Orleans jazz drummer, with all the exuberance and skill befitting one who grew up in the birthplace of jazz. Since starting to play the drums at the age of ten, performing has been his passion. From French Quarter clubs to the big stages, he has shared his talents with greats like New Orleans’ “Tan Canary” Johnny Adams, Professor Longhair, and Mose Allison, and as a member of Astral Project. The seminal New Orleans contemporary jazz group, Astral Project has been taking its audiences to higher planes of reality for several decades. Vidacovich has been recognized by everything from the Big Easy Entertainment Awards to accolades in Offbeat and Downbeat and the New York Times. He is also a highly regarded teacher and educator whose past students include Stanton Moore and Brian Blade.
Saturday, November 20

1:00pm
Crossroads: Intersections of History and Creative Writing

Eric Nguyen earned an MFA in Creative Writing from McNeese State University in Louisiana. He has been awarded fellowships from Lambda Literary, Voices of Our Nation Arts (VONA), and the Tin House Workshop. He is the editor in chief of diaCRITICS.org. He lives in Washington, DC. Things We Lost to the Water is his first novel.

Elizabeth Miki Brina is the author of Speak, Okinawa. Her work has appeared in The Sun, River Teeth, Lit Hub, and Gulf Coast Magazine, among others. She is the recipient of a Rona Jaffe Bread Loaf Scholarship and a New York State Summer Writers Institute Scholarship. She currently lives and teaches in New Orleans.
Christopher Louis Romaguera—Moderator is a Cuban-American writer who lives in New Orleans. He was born in Hialeah, Florida and graduated from Florida International University in Miami. He has an MFA in Creative Writing (Fiction) at the University of New Orleans. Romaguera has been published in New Orleans Review, PANK Magazine, Louisiana Literature, Santa Fe Writers Project, Catapult, Massachusetts Review and other publications. He is a monthly columnist at The Ploughshares Blog and is the Poetry Editor at Peauxdunque Review. Romaguera was an Editorial Intern at Electric Literature. He is a VONA alum.

Brenda Marie Osbey even books include All Souls: Essential Poems (LSU Press, 2015), History and Other Poems (Time Being, 2013), and the limited edition chapbook 1967 (William & Mary 2018). She is the author also of a Kongo-New Orleans opera triptych, including Sultane au Grand Marais (Rites & Reason Theatre, 2011).

Critical studies of her work include Summoning Our Saints: the Poetry and Prose of Brenda Marie Osbey by John Wharton Lowe (Rowman and Littlefield, 2019). The recipient of numerous writing and research fellowships and awards, she is currently the 2021–22 Hodson Trust–John Carter Brown Library Fellow.
Saturday, November 20

2:30pm
“I Ain’t Much on Casanova”

Kelly Harris-DeBerry’s recent article, “Oh, Casanova: How a Cleveland R&B Song became a New Orleans brass band staple” for 64 Parishes Magazine traces the popular song’s roots to New Orleans. Kelly is a poet and the author of Freedom Knows My Name. She was recently awarded a Vindie awarded from the Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance for the Vindie Award for “We are the Holy Ones” in conjunction with the The Historic New Orleans Collection.

DJ Soul Sister--Moderator Hailing from New Orleans, Melissa A. Weber is a Black music scholar who teaches History of Urban Music at Loyola University New Orleans’ College of Music & Media. For the past two decades and in her spare time, under the moniker of DJ Soul Sister, she has hosted her Soul Power show on WWOZ FM in New Orleans, was the first DJ to win a Big Easy Entertainment Award, and has performed with artists ranging from Questlove to George Clinton & Parliament-Funkadelic. Her extensive collection of over 10,000 records earned her a spot in the book Dust & Grooves: Adventures in Record Collecting. Weber has also written for the Journal of Popular Music Studies, Red Bull Music Academy, Wax Poetics, and liner notes projects for labels such as Vinyl Me, Please. She has presented papers at the Pop Conference and annual meetings for the International Association for the Study of Popular Music, the National Council for Black Studies, the Society for Ethnomusicology, Southeast and Caribbean Chapter, and the Dayton Funk Symposium at University of Dayton.
Saturday, November 20

**Michael Ferguson** is the former music director for Atlantic recording artist Gerald Levert on numerous national concert tours. He began his entertainment marketing career as a marketing representative for GMR Marketing on the Luther Vandross “Power of Love Tour” for Miller Brewing Company’s $25 million dollar music marketing campaign that also included artists ZZ Top, Rod Stewart, and Clint Black.

**Marc Gordon** is the last surviving member of the group LeVert who recorded the song Casanova. Gordon is an award winning writer/producer, & co-founding member of LeVert. His Writing and Production credits: Anita Baker, Mikki Howard, Stephanie Mills, Musiq Soulchild and more. Gordon was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio with Gerlad and Sean Levert.

**Keith Frazier** is one of the founding members of Rebirth Brass Band. In the band, Frazier plays the bass drum with a cymbal mounted on top. He plays the drum with one hand and the cymbal with the other, using a flathead screwdriver. Keith Frazier and his brother, Phillip Frazier (the group’s sousaphone/tuba player), formed Rebirth Brass Band along with other band members they met at Joseph S. Clark Sr. High School in New Orleans, including renowned trumpeter, Kermit Ruffins. In Joseph S. Clark’s marching and concert bands, Frazier played several brass instruments and was section leader of the baritones.
Saturday, November 20

4:30pm
New Orleans Writers: The Next Generation

6:00pm: An Evening with Louisiana Poet Laureate
Dr. Mona Lisa Saloy

Mona Lisa Saloy, Ph.D the new Louisiana Poet Laureate is an award-winning author & folklorist, educator, and scholar of Creole culture in articles, documentaries, and poems about Black New Orleans before and after Katrina. Currently, Conrad N. Hilton Endowed Professor and of English at Dillard University, Dr. Saloy documents Creole culture in sidewalk songs, jump-rope rhymes, and clap-hand games to discuss the importance of play. She writes on the significance of the Black Beat poets—especially Bob Kaufman, on the African American Toasting Tradition, Black talk, and on keeping Creole to today. Her first book, Red Beans & Ricely Yours, won the T.S. Eliot Prize and the PEN/Oakland Josephine Miles Award. Her collection of poems, Second Line Home, captures New Orleans speech, family dynamics, celebrates New Orleans, the unique culture the world loves. Saloy’s screenplay for the documentary Easter Rock premiered in Paris, the Ethnograph Film Festival & at the national Black museum. She’s lectured on Black Creole Culture at Poets House–NYC; the Smithsonian; Purdue University; the University of Washington; and Woodland Patterns Book Center. Her documentary, Bleu Orleans, is on Black Creole Culture. She is an editorial reviewer for Meridians: Feminism, race, transnationalism. Her recent publications of verse: “New Orleans, a Neighborhood Nation.” I am New Orleans, anthology. Kalamu ya Salaam, editor. University of New Orleans Press, 2021; and in the newest Chicago Quarterly Review, Vol. 33, Anthology of Black American Literature. Mona Lisa Saloy writes for those who don’t or can’t tell Black Creole cultural stories. more of her work can be found at: www.monalisasaloy.com Tweet to @redbeansista & @MonaLisaSaloy
Words & Music 2021 Steering Committee and Guest Curators
Tad Bartlett
Stacey Balkun
Johnnie Bernhard
Kelly Harris-DeBerry
Stephanie Gaskill
Candice Huber
Susan Kagan
Annell Lopez
Christopher Louis Romaguera
Shelby Simon

One Book One New Orleans Sustaining Members
Matthew Schwarzman
Patty Friedmann
Cheryl Landrieu
Katie Burke
Jean Holliday
Amanda McFillen
Catherine Whitney
Clint and Sheryl Smith
Therese Bennett
Susan Kagan
Benjamin Dent
Millie Ball
Jarvis DeBerry
Jermaine Smith
Ellen Morris Prewitt
David Billimgs
Lindsay Dent
Melissa Carrigee
Carol Allen
Tony Bolden
Edgar “Dook” Chase IV
Laura Dent
Andrea Recasner
Fatima Shaik Little
Becky Retz
Jessica Dorman
Larkin Page
David Brown
Alexandra Reisner
Jeanetta Bryant
A.E. Rooks
The Marino Family
Leah Nunn Engelhardt
Words & Music Special Thanks
Allie Armitage
Ann Benolken
Gianna Chachere
Kyle DeCoste
Lynette Dosty
Adrienne Ellis
Ethan Ellestad
Skye Eustis
Michael Ferguson
Gina Ferrara
Kelley Gallagher
Diana Hernandez
Joshua Nguyen
Ellen Morris Prewitt
Clint and Sheryl Smith

One Book One New Orleans Board Of Directors
Megan Holt, Ph.D.
Elizabeth Hyman, Esq.
Liz Elliott
Malik Bartholomew
Jennie Merrill
Ashton M. Jackson
John H. Norris
Jerika Marchan
Liz Granite
A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS