

## **Bennington Writing Seminars Hosts Acclaimed Authors and Faculty in Summer 2019 Writers Reading Series**

**Bennington, VT:** From June 13 - 21, critically acclaimed, award-winning authors and faculty of the [Bennington Writing Seminars](#) will host [Writers Reading](#), an evening reading series during the MFA program's summer residency.

All readings are free, open to the public, and will take place in Deane Carriage Barn on the College's [campus](#).

On [Thurs. June 13 at 7:00 PM](#), Writers Reading welcomes [Manuel Gonzales](#) and [Dorothea Lasky](#). Gonzales is the author of *The Miniature Wife and Other Stories*, which won the Sue Kaufman Prize for First Fiction and the John Gardner Prize for Fiction, and the novel, *The Regional Office is Under Attack!* Lasky is the author of six full-length collections of poetry and prose, most recently *Animal*, coming out this fall from Wave Books, as well as *Milk*, *Thunderbird*, *Black Life*, *AWE*, and *Rome*.

On [Fri. June 14 at 7:00 PM](#), Writers Reading welcomes [April Bernard](#) and [Peter Trachtenberg](#). Bernard is a poet, novelist, and essayist. *Brawl & Jag*, her fifth collection of poems, was recently published by W.W. Norton. Trachtenberg is the author of *7 Tattoos*, *The Book of Calamities*, and *Another Insane Devotion*, a 2012 *New York Times* Editors' Choice.

On [Sat. June 15 at 7:00 PM](#), Writers Reading welcomes [Lisa Brennan-Jobs](#) MFA '09 and [Jamie Quatro](#) MFA '09. Brennan-Jobs's first book, a memoir called *Small Fry*, was a *New York Times* and National Bestseller and was selected as a Top Ten Book of 2018 by *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *People*, and *The San Francisco Chronicle*. Quatro published her debut novel, *Fire Sermon*, in 2018, and it was named an Indie Next pick, a Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers pick, a *New York Times* Editors' Choice, and was named one of the Top Seven Novels of 2018 in *The Economist*.

On [Sun. June 16 at 7:00 PM](#), Writers Reading welcomes [Jennifer Chang](#) and [Susan Cheever](#). Chang is the author of *The History of Anonymity* and *Some Say the Lark*, which received the 2018 William Carlos Williams Award. Cheever's most recent book is *Drinking in America*, a look at American History through the lens of alcoholism. She has published seven other nonfiction books, five novels, been nominated for a National Book Circle Award, and won the Boston Globe Winship medal and a Guggenheim Fellowship.

On [Mon. June 17 at 7:00 PM](#), Writers Reading welcomes alumni fellows [Keith Lesmeister](#) MFA '14, [Cassie Pruyn](#) MFA '14, and [Walter M. Robinson](#) MFA '14. Lesmeister is the author of the story collection *We Could've Been Happy Here*. Pruyn is the author of *Bayou St. John: A Brief History* and the poetry collection *Lena*, winner of the Walt McDonald First-Book Prize in Poetry. Robinson is a writer and physician in Massachusetts who recently completed a book-length manuscript of essays entitled *What Cannot Be Undone*.

On [Wed. June 19 at 7:00 PM](#), Writers Reading welcomes [Dinah Lenney](#) and **Stuart Nadler**. Lenney is the author of *The Object Parade* and *Bigger Than Life: A Murder, a Memoir* and co-editor of *Brief Encounters: A Collection of Contemporary Nonfiction*. She's currently working on a book about coffee for Bloomsbury's *Object Lessons* series. Nadler is the author of two novels, *The Inseparables* and *Wise Men*, and a short story collection, *The Book of Life*.

On [Thurs. June 20 at 7:30 PM](#) (note: later time), Writers Reading welcomes [Chelsea Hodson](#) MFA '17 and [Claire Vaye Watkins](#). Hodson is the author of the book of essays *Tonight I'm Someone Else* and has been awarded fellowships from MacDowell Colony and PEN Center USA Emerging Voices. Vaye Watkins is the author of the novel *Gold Fame Citrus* and the short story collection *Battleborn*, which won the Story Prize, the Dylan Thomas Prize, and New York Public Library's Young Lions Fiction Award, among others.

On [Fri. June 21 at 7:00 PM](#), Writers Reading welcomes [Sarai Walker](#) MFA '03 and [Phillip B. Williams](#). Walker is the author of the novel *Dietland*, one of Entertainment Weekly's Top Ten Books of the Year in 2015. *Dietland* was adapted for television in 2018 by AMC and is now on Hulu in the United States and on Amazon Prime globally. Williams is the author of *Thief in the Interior*, winner of the 2017 Kate Tufts Discovery Award and a 2017 Lambda Literary award.

Writers Reading is a hallmark series of the Bennington Writing Seminars, a two-year low-residency Master of Fine Arts in Writing program with ten-day residencies in January and June. During the Seminars, students work closely with distinguished and actively publishing faculty, their path determined by the reading discipline as well as the production of original work. The mission of the Seminars is to connect the emerging writer with much of the best that has been done and to cultivate the critical skills that serve the writing as much as the reading.

### **About the Authors**

[April Bernard](#) is a poet, novelist, and essayist. *Brawl & Jag*, her fifth collection of poems, was

recently published by W.W. Norton; previous books of poems are *Romanticism*, *Swan Electric*, *Psalms*, and *Blackbird Bye Bye*, which won the Walt Whitman Award from the Academy of American Poets. Her most recent novel is *Miss Fuller*, shortlisted for the International Dublin Literary Prize. Bernard is a regular contributor to *The New York Review of Books* and other journals. She has received a Guggenheim and a Whitney Humanities Center fellowship. Educated at Harvard University, she worked in book and magazine publishing in New York City and has taught widely. She is a professor of English and the director of creative writing at Skidmore College, as well as a faculty member of the Bennington MFA Writing Seminars.

The first book by [Lisa Brennan-Jobs](#) MFA '09, a memoir called *Small Fry*, was a *New York Times* and National Bestseller and was selected as a Top Ten Book of 2018 by *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *People*, and *The San Francisco Chronicle*. It was also named a Best Book of the Year by the *Los Angeles Times*, *NPR*, *The Week*, *GQ*, *Publishers Weekly*, and *British Vogue*. Her articles and essays have appeared in *Vogue*, *O Magazine*, *The Southwest Review*, *The Massachusetts Review*, *The Harvard Advocate*, and *The Los Angeles Times*. She lives in Brooklyn with her family.

[Jennifer Chang](#) is the author of *The History of Anonymity* and *Some Say the Lark*, which received the 2018 William Carlos Williams Award. Her poems have appeared in *American Poetry Review*, *The Nation*, *The New Republic*, *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, and *A Public Space*, and her essays have appeared in *The Believer*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *New England Review*, *New Literary History*, and *The Volta*. She is an associate professor of English at George Washington University and co-chairs the advisory board of Kundiman. This spring, she was the Visiting Poet at the University of Houston's Creative Writing Program.

[Susan Cheever](#)'s most recent book *Drinking in America*, a look at American History through the lens of alcoholism, was published in October 2016. Her most recent biography, *E.E. Cummings: A Poet's Life*, was published in February 2014. *Louisa May Alcott: A Personal Biography*, was published in the fall of 2010 and a previous book on the American transcendentalists, *American Bloomsbury: Louisa May Alcott, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Henry David Thoreau: Their Lives, Their Loves, Their Work* was published in 2006. She has published seven other books of nonfiction and five novels. Her short work has appeared in dozens of publications and anthologies including *The New Yorker* and *The New York Times*, and as a weekly column in *Newsday* where she contributed to coverage that won the Pulitzer Prize in 1997 after the crash of TWA Flight 800. She has been nominated for a National Book Circle Award and won the Boston Globe Winship medal and a Guggenheim Fellowship. She is a member of the Authors Guild Council and the board of the Yaddo Corporation. Cheever took a

BA from Brown and has taught at Yale, Brown University, The New School, and elsewhere. She lives in New York City.

**Manuel Gonzales** is the author of *The Miniature Wife and Other Stories*, which won the Sue Kaufman Prize for First Fiction and the John Gardner Prize for Fiction, and the novel, *The Regional Office is Under Attack!* A graduate of the Columbia University Creative Writing Program, he teaches writing and literature at Bennington College and the Queens University Latin American Low-Residency MFA program. He is also a core faculty member of the Bennington Writing Seminars. He has published fiction and nonfiction in *Buzzfeed Reader*, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *Oxford American*, *Esquire*, *McSweeney's Quarterly Concern*, and *The Believer*. Gonzales lives in Massachusetts with his wife and two children.

**Chelsea Hodson MFA '17** is the author of the book of essays *Tonight I'm Someone Else*. She has been awarded fellowships from MacDowell Colony and PEN Center USA Emerging Voices. Her writing has appeared in *The New York Times Magazine*, *Frieze Magazine*, *Black Warrior Review*, and elsewhere. She co-founded the Mors Tua Vita Mea workshop in Sezze Romano, Italy, and she lives in Brooklyn, New York.

**Dorothea Lasky** is the author of six full-length collections of poetry and prose, most recently *Animal*, coming out this fall from Wave Books, as well as *Milk*, *Thunderbird*, *Black Life*, and *AWE*, all also out from Wave Books, and *Rome* (Liveright/W.W. Norton). She is also the author of numerous chapbooks, including *Snakes* (Tungsten Press) and *Poetry is Not a Project* (Ugly Duckling Presse). She is the co-editor of *Open the Door: How to Excite Young People About Poetry* (McSweeney's) and was a 2013 Bagley Wright Lecturer on Poetry. Along with the poet Alex Dimitrov, she is the co-creator of [@poetastrologers](#), a popular astrological Twitter account, and for which she co-writes two monthly astrological columns for *W Magazine* and a 21st-century astrology primer is due out from Flatiron Books in the fall of 2019. She holds a doctorate in creativity and education from the University of Pennsylvania, is a graduate of the MFA program for Poets and Writers at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, the Arts in Education program at Harvard University, and did her undergraduate studies at Washington University. She has taught poetry at New York University, Wesleyan University, and Bennington College. Currently, she is an Associate Professor of Poetry at Columbia University's School of the Arts, where she directs the Undergraduate Creative Writing Program and organizes the summer writing classes, as well as serves as co-Faculty Advisor for Columbia Artist/Teachers.

**Dinah Lenney MFA '03** is the author of a memoir-in-essays, *The Object Parade* (Counterpoint Press), and of *Bigger Than Life: A Murder, a Memoir*, selected for the American Lives series by

the University of Nebraska Press. She co-edited *Brief Encounters: A Collection of Contemporary Nonfiction*, with the late Judith Kitchen (W.W. Norton, 2015), and she's currently working on a book about coffee for Bloomsbury's *Object Lessons* series. Other work has appear in a variety of publications including *The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *AGNI*, *Creative Nonfiction*, the *Harvard Review*, the *Paris Review Daily*, and the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, where she serves as an editor-at-large. Dinah has taught at UCLA, the University of Southern California, Pacific Lutheran University, and elsewhere. She recently judged the PEN USA award for creative nonfiction, and, for two consecutive years, chaired the panel for the Christopher Isherwood Award for the Los Angeles Times Book Prizes.

[Keith Lesmeister](#) MFA '14 is the author of the story collection *We Could've Been Happy Here* (MG Press, 2017). His fiction has appeared in *American Short Fiction*, *Gettysburg Review*, *New Stories from the Midwest*, *North American Review*, *Redivider*, *Slice Magazine*, and many others. His nonfiction has appeared in *The Good Men Project*, *River Teeth*, *Sycamore Review*, *Tin House Online*, and elsewhere. He teaches at Northeast Iowa Community College.

[Stuart Nadler](#) is the author of two novels and a short story collection. His first novel, *Wise Men* (Little, Brown), was named a Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers selection, a Best Book of the Year by Amazon, and has been translated across Europe. His story collection, *The Book of Life* (Little, Brown), was a finalist for the Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature, and long-listed for the Frank O'Connor International Story Prize. His most recent novel, *The Inseparables* (Little, Brown), was published in July 2016, and was named a Best Book of the Year by Kirkus, and a finalist for a Mark Twain Prize for the American Voice. In 2012, he was a recipient of the 5 Under 35 Award from the National Book Foundation. He has taught at the University of Iowa, the University of Wisconsin, Connecticut College, and Boston College. Beginning in the fall 2019, he will a visiting literature faculty member at Bennington College.

[Jamie Quatro](#) MFA '09 published her debut novel, *Fire Sermon*, in 2018 with Grove Press. The novel is an Indie Next pick, a Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers pick, a *New York Times* Editors' Choice, and was recently named one of the Top Seven Novels of 2018 in *The Economist*. Quatro's debut collection, *I Want To Show You More*, was a *New York Times* Notable Book, an *NPR* Best Book of 2013, and was chosen as a favorite book of 2013 by James Wood in *The New Yorker*. A contributing editor at the *Oxford American*, Quatro's work has appeared in *Tin House*, *Ploughshares*, *VQR*, *Kenyon Review*, *McSweeney's*, and elsewhere. She is a Visiting Professor in the Sewanee MFA program and lives in Chattanooga, TN.

[Cassie Pruyn](#) MFA '14 is the author of *Bayou St. John: A Brief History* (The History Press, 2017) and the poetry collection *Lena* (Texas Tech University Press, 2017), winner of the Walt McDonald First-Book Prize in Poetry and finalist for the Audre Lorde Award. Her poems, essays, and reviews have appeared in *Blackbird*, *AGNI Online*, *The Los Angeles Review*, *The Common*, *Poet Lore*, and many others. She has lived and taught in New Orleans for the past nine years and will be moving back to her hometown of Portland, ME, in August 2019.

[Walter M. Robinson](#) MFA '14 is a writer and physician in Massachusetts. He was a 2015 PEN/New England New Discovery in Non-Fiction. His recent essays have been published in *The Sun*, *The Literary Review*, and *Harvard Review*; each essay was named a Notable Essay in *Best American Essays* (2015, 2016, 2017) He was a fellow at The MacDowell Colony and at Yaddo in 2016. He recently completed a book-length manuscript of essays entitled *What Cannot Be Undone*. His research has been supported by the National Library of Medicine, the National Institutes of Health, and the Project on Death in America. He was the executive producer for Nancy Andrews' [The Strange Eyes of Dr. Myes](#), which won the 2017 IFP/Gotham Award for Breakthrough Series. He [runs a retreat](#) for writers and visual artists in southeastern Massachusetts.

[Craig Morgan Teicher](#) is the author of three books of poetry, most recently *The Trembling Answers* (BOA Editions), which won the 2018 Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize from the Academy of American Poets. His collection of essays, *We Begin in Gladness: How Poets Progress* (Graywolf) was published in 2018. He edited *Once and For All: The Best of Delmore Schwartz* (New Directions). He also teaches at NYU and the New School and is director of special editorial projects for *Publishers Weekly*.

[Peter Trachtenberg](#) is the author of *7 Tattoos*, *The Book of Calamities*, and *Another Insane Devotion*, a 2012 *New York Times* Editors' Choice. His essays, journalism, and short fiction have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Harper's*, *A Public Space*, *Bidoun*, and *The New York Times'* travel magazine, *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, and *Story Quarterly*. His honors include the Whiting Award, the Nelson Algren Award for Short Fiction, a Guggenheim fellowship, and a residency at the Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Center. He is an associate professor in the writing program of the University of Pittsburgh. Trachtenberg is the publisher of [ScoundrelTime](#), an online literary journal of resistance.

[Sarai Walker](#) MFA '03 is the author of the novel *Dietland*, which was one of Entertainment Weekly's Top Ten Books of the Year in 2015. *Dietland* was adapted for television in 2018 by AMC and is now on Hulu in the United States and on Amazon Prime globally. Her essays and



articles have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, the *Washington Post*, and many national magazines. After receiving her MFA from the Bennington Writing Seminars in 2003, Walker earned a PhD in English from the University of London. She has taught writing and literature at several universities and lives in Los Angeles, where she is developing a new TV series, as well as writing her second novel, *The Cherry Robbers*, which will be published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt in 2021.

[Claire Vaye Watkins](#) was raised in the Mojave Desert. A graduate of the University of Nevada Reno, Claire earned her MFA from the Ohio State University, where she was a Presidential Fellow. She is the author of the novel *Gold Fame Citrus* and the short story collection *Battleborn*, which won the Story Prize, the Dylan Thomas Prize, New York Public Library's Young Lions Fiction Award, the Rosenthal Family Foundation Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and a Silver Pen Award from the Nevada Writers Hall of Fame. Her stories and essays have appeared in *Granta*, *Tin House*, *Freeman's*, *The Paris Review*, *Story Quarterly*, *New American Stories*, *Best of the West*, *The New Republic*, *The New York Times*, *Pushcart Prize XLIII*, and many others. She is a Guggenheim Fellow, a Lannan Foundation Fellow, one of the National Book Foundation's 5 Under 35, and one of *Granta's* Best Young American Novelists.

[Phillip B. Williams](#) is the author of *Thief in the Interior*, winner of the 2017 Kate Tufts Discovery Award and a 2017 Lambda Literary award. He received a 2017 Whiting Award and 2013 Ruth Lilly Fellowship. Phillip is the co-editor in chief of the online journal *Vinyl*.

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### About the Bennington Writing Seminars

Steeped in the Bennington College's literary legacy, [Bennington Writing Seminars](#) is consistently named one of the top low-residency Masters of Fine Arts in Writing programs. Founded in 1994, the Seminars was one of the first low-residency graduate writing programs in the country. During this two-year, low-residency program, students commit as much to reading as to writing and conceive reading lists that strengthen and broaden their knowledge. Students perform critical literary analysis and craft bold new works of fiction, nonfiction, or poetry inspired by their discoveries. They finish with a polished thesis and a parting lecture. All this with the expert guidance of authors who, throughout individualized instruction, become familiar with and develop a stake in students' work.

Stay in touch with the Bennington literary scene, including Bennington Writing Seminars [alumni and candidates](#), via Twitter:

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