



The 25th Anniversary Literary Arts Fest is presented by the Grossmont College English Dept. and Creative Writing Program. Most of this year's events are made possible by the amazing generosity of **WACC, THE WORLD ARTS & CULTURES COMMITTEE OF GROSSMONT COLLEGE.**



APRIL 26 THROUGH 29

LAF 2021 literary arts festival

M

APRIL 26

2 PM • POETRY SLAM
hosted by **GILL SOTU**
playwright, musician, poet,
and SLAM champion

7 PM • JIM RULAND
novelist, rock biographer, and
host of the Vermin on the
Mount reading series

TU

APRIL 27

11 AM • MATT THOMPSON
playwright, actor, director, founder
Hillcrest's Compass Theatre

2 PM • LILY HOANG
poet, essayist, fairytale writer

7 PM • NEW VOICES
student reading

W

APRIL 28

2 PM • WHY LIT MATTERS
student panel

**7 PM • MARCELO
HERNANDEZ CASTILLO**
poet and author
plus
LAF CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST
winners

TH

APRIL 29

**12:30 PM • JULIA DIXON
EVANS** novelist and fiction
writer

7 PM • CARL PHILLIPS
internationally celebrated poet
luminary and former Academy
of American Poets Chancellor

MONDAY • APRIL 26 2 - 3:15 PM **GILL SOTU** hosts **POETRY SLAM**



The 25th Anniversary LAF kicks off with the 6th Annual Student SLAM competition. Open to all Grossmont College students, poets battle for the bragging rights of being crowned the Grand SLAM champion of Grossmont College. Limited to 12 participants, the top six are selected to advance to Round Two, from which a champion is named.



GILL SOTU wears the hats of teacher, social advocate, recording artist, slam poet, and playwright. Twice Grand Slam Poetry Champion, currently Sotu serves as teaching artist for the Old Globe Theatre, Program director for Intrepid theatre, and Creative Director for Tedx San Diego. He has also been named 2020 Artist in Residence for the Gainesville Creative Forces Art Summit.

Sotu has featured on NBC 7's *Art Pulse TV*, written and performed poetic segments for Melissa Adao's dance theatre showcase, *Hip-Hop CabHooray!* (awarded Outstanding Production at the 2015 Fringe Fest), performed with the San Diego Symphony, and hosted *TEDx San Diego* in 2017. His spoken word opera, *Ordinary Magic*, was produced at the Joan Kroc Theatre in 2016.

His publications include *How to Love God and Acrobats*, *Neo Nostalgia*, *Flawed American Male*, and others. **INFO: gillsotu.com**

7 - 8:15 PM novelist, rock biographer **JIM RULAND**

Novelist, rock memoirist, punk rock blogger, and host of the Vermin on the Mount reading series, JIM RULAND returns to the LAF to read from his newly released work, *Do What You Want* (Hachette Books 2020), the first official autobiography of the ground-breaking L.A. punk group, Bad Religion, which Ruland composed in a hybrid oral history/narrative using the voices of the band members. The book also includes rare, never-before-seen archival materials.

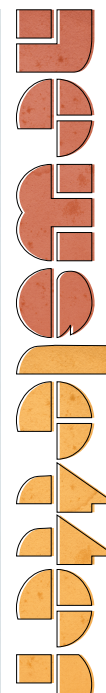


Ruland's other books include his short story collection, *Big Lonesome* (Gorsky Press 2017), and his debut novel, *Forest of Fortune* (Gallery Books 2014), a noir-ish ironic comedy set in the world of tribal gaming and named by *Los Angeles Magazine* as one of its "Six Must-Read Books to Finish Out the Summer."

Ruland regularly blogs about punk rock and is a book reviewer for *San Diego CityBeat*, *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Los Angeles Review of Books*. His memoir and fiction have appeared in *Esquire*, *Granta*, *Hobart*, and others. Ruland is also a NEA award recipient, and member of Barrio Logan's Golondrina arts collective.



INFO: jimruland.net



FLEX CREDIT:

The LAF offers FLEX credit for extracurricular attendance. Complete a Project Proposal for one or more events and submit it with your Professional Development contract.

FESTIVAL AND PROGRAM CO-COORDINATORS:

Adam Deutsch, Karl Sherlock, and Daniela Sow. Info about our Creative Writing Program's workshops and degree certificate are on our English Department website: grossmont.edu/cwp

GROSSMONT-CUYAMACA COLLEGE DISTRICT:

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GOVERNING BOARD: Elena Adams, Linda Cartwright, Bill Garrett, Debbie Justeson, Brad Monroe • **Student Members:** Benjamin Blevins, Robert McClain • **CHANCELLOR:** Lynn Neault, Ph.D., • **GROSSMONT COLLEGE INTERIM PRESIDENT:** Dr. Marsha V. Gable



ALL EVENTS, VIRTUAL, AND FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. Registration links, author bios, resources, and more, coming soon on the official LAF 25 website: grossmont.edu/laf

TUESDAY • APRIL 27

11 AM - 12:15 PM MATT THOMPSON PLAYWRIGHT



Stage actor, director, playwright, and lecturer, MATTHEW SALAZAR-THOMPSON has authored dozens of plays during this career. His commissions include The San Diego Repertory Theatre, North Coast Repertory Theatre, Point Loma Playhouse, Coronado Playhouse, and many others. *The 146 Point Flame*, based on the historic 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, has been name-checked in *Southern Theatre Magazine* as one of the top ten plays on immigration. *Who's Afraid of Me, Myself and Edward Albee?*, was developed under the Albee's

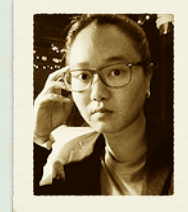
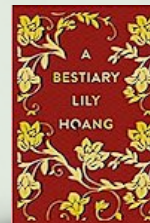
mentorship and accepted into the New York Fringe Festival. His play *Switching Tracks* placed in the top five finalists in the Detroit New Works Festival in 2017, the Garry Marshall Theatre New Works Festival 2018, and North Coast Repertory Theatre's Playwriting Showcase. A former Artistic Director of Point Loma Playhouse, Thompson lectures in the SJSU'S Theatre & Film Dept. INFO: matthewathompson.weebly.com

2 - 3:15 PM LILY HOANG POET, ESSAYIST, FAIRYTALE AUTHOR

LILY HOANG is the author of five books of prose, including *A Bestiary*, 2016 winner of the Cleveland State University Poetry Center's Non-Fiction Book Prize. 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). 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*.



Additionally she is co-editor of 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. INFO: literature.ucsd.edu/people/faculty/lhoang

7 - 8:15 PM NEW VOICES STUDENT READING

Exceptional student writers from this semester's creative writing courses perform new and original works. Raw, well crafted, authentic—this student-centered event is always a crowd favorite. A read-along program booklet is also provided, and audience members afterward get to Q&A with readers.

WEDNESDAY • APRIL 28

2 - 3:15 PM WHY LIT MATTERS STUDENT 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 Cassady Lynch and Felicia Williams.



the New York Public Library top picks of 2018, *Cenzontle* is also a finalist for the Lambda Literary Award, the California Book Award, the Publishing Triangle's Thom Gunn Award for Gay Poetry, and the Northern California Book Award. His first chapbook, *DULCE*, won the Drinking Gourd Poetry Prize published by Northwestern University press. His most recent memoir, *Children of the Land* (Harper 2020), is praised by Latinx author Sandra Cisneros as "the document of a life without documents, of belonging to two countries yet belonging to neither. Hernandez Castillo has created his own papers fashioned from memory and poetry. His motherland is *la madre tierra*, his life a history lesson for our times."

7 - 8:15 PM MARCELO HERNANDEZ CASTILLO POET, ESSAYIST, IMMIGRATION ADVOCATE, UNDOCUPOETS FOUNDER



MARCELO HERNANDEZ CASTILLO is the author of the chapbook *Dulce* (BOA editions 2018), and the collection *Cenzontle* (2018), winner of the 2017 A. Poulin Jr. prize, and winner of the Great Lakes Colleges Association New Writer Award for poetry, the 2019 Golden Poppy Award from the Northern California Independent Booksellers Association, and the Bronze in the FOREWORD INDIE best book of the year. Listed among one of NPR's and



A recipient of the Barnes and Noble "Writers for Writers" Award, Castillo holds a B.A. from Sacramento State University and was the first undocumented student to graduate from the Helen Zell Writers Program at the University of Michigan. His work has appeared or been featured in *The New York Times*, *PBS Newshour*, *People Magazine en Español*, *The Paris Review*, *Fusion TV*, *Buzzfeed*, *Gulf Coast: A Journal of Literature and Fine Arts*, *New England Review*, and *Indiana Review*, among others. He currently teaches in Ohio in the Low-Res MFA program at Ashland University. INFO: marceloherandezcastillo.com



THURSDAY • APRIL 29

2 - 3:15 PM JULIA DIXON EVANS FICTION WRITER



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. INFO: juliadixonevans.com



2020). Widely esteemed as one of the most influential lyric poets in the United States, Phillips has authored fifteen internationally acclaimed books of poetry, including *Silverchest* (2013) and *Wild Is the Wind* (2018), both winners of the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize for Poetry. His numerous accolades include the Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award, the Theodore Roethke Memorial Foundation Poetry Award, the Thom Gunn Award for Gay Male Poetry, and award in literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Library of Congress, and the Academy of American Poets. Phillips is also an important affiliate of the Dark Room Collective, an intergenerational reading series formed after the funeral of James Baldwin in 1987, to cultivate the work of black poets of various aesthetic movements.



A four-time finalist for the National Book Award, and finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award, Carl Phillips honors include the Lambda Literary Award, an Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Theodore Roethke Memorial Foundation Poetry Award, the Thom Gunn Award for Gay Male Poetry, and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Library of Congress, and the Academy of American Poets, for which he served as Chancellor from 2006-2012. He is Prof. of English and Creative Writing at Washington University in St. Louis. INFO: poetryfoundation.org/poets/carl-phillips



7 - 8:15 PM CARL PHILLIPS POET, ESSAYIST

The finale of our 25th Anniversary LAF welcomes Queer African American author, poet luminary, and former Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets, CARL PHILLIPS, with a reading of poems from his latest collection, *Pale Colors in a Tall Field* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux

