

## **AWP PANEL OUTLINE**

**EVENT TITLE:** Working with Literary Agents: Insider Advice for Small Press Publishers, Sponsored by CLMP

**Event Description:** Hear from leading literary agents about what makes a small press publisher attractive to an agent, how they cultivate working relationships with editors, and what a small press publisher can expect from working with an agent.

**EVENT CATEGORY:** Publishing, Editing, and Technology

### **Event Organizer & Moderator:**

**Jisu Kim:** Jisu Kim is the senior marketing and sales manager at the Feminist Press. She has also edited several agented titles during her tenure at FP.

### **Event Participants:**

**Michelle Brower:** Michelle Brower is an agent with Aevitas Creative Management, where she specializes in literary fiction, book club fiction, and narrative non-fiction. Her authors include Clare Beams, Sarah Domet, Jason Mott, Tara Conklin, Viet Dinh and many others.

**Sonali Chanchani:** Sonali Chanchani is an assistant and rising literary agent at Folio Literary Management, where she specializes in upmarket fiction and narrative nonfiction.

**Erin Harris:** A VP at Folio, Erin represents literary/upmarket fiction and narrative nonfiction. Her clients include: Pulitzer Prize & National Book Award finalist Carla Power; Indie Next Pick author Erica Ferencik; Iowa Short Fiction Award winner Allegra Hyde; and National Jewish Book Award finalist Adam Wilson.

### **Opening remarks and housekeeping announcements.**

Good morning/afternoon/evening, and welcome to Working with Literary Agents: Insider Advice for Small Press Publishers, Sponsored by CLMP.

A few reminders before we begin:

- For those needing or wishing to follow along to a written text, please let the moderator of the panel (identify moderator) know and a printed copy of the presentation will be delivered to you.
- Please make sure that spaces marked for wheelchairs remain clear of chairs or other barriers.
- Treat service animals as working animals and do not attempt to distract or pet them.
- Be aware of those with chemical sensitivities and refrain from wearing perfume.
- Please be aware that your fellow attendees may have invisible disabilities. Do not question anyone's use of an accommodation while at the conference, including for chairs reserved for those with disabilities.
- We realize the lines for the bathrooms may be long, but please refrain from using an accessible stall unless you require such accommodation. Please also be aware family restrooms located on level 2 are reserved for those with disabilities or those wishing to use a single-stall restroom.
- If you have any questions or concerns regarding conference accessibility, please call or text the **Accessibility Hotline (503) 455-4127** or email **events@awpwriter.org**.

Thank you all for being here. We know there are a lot of panel and book fair options, and many of you have busy schedules, and we really appreciate you being here. I hope you are as excited as I am to gain some insight into the relationship between literary agents and small presses, such as the Feminist Press.

At Feminist Press, we work with both agented and unagented submissions. We have quite a unique editorial process—for the majority of our acquisitions, editors present potential titles to the entire staff, including our interns. The team has the chance to review proposals and manuscripts beforehand, and our editorial meetings are an open forum where people can raise concerns, share their excitement, and so on. We want to embody democracy in our acquisitions process because of how closed off the gate-kept world of publishing can be. Also, as a small press, it's vital that the entire team is on board for a manuscript—if we all believe in its potential, the entire publishing process from design to production to publicity runs better.

For FP, it's really important to work with agents that truly "get" our list. We publish a wide variety of formats, but we do have a particular niche and aesthetic. So face-to-face meetings and thorough conversations are an essential first step in those partnerships.

Well, enough about me. I would love to introduce the panelists here today:

**Michelle Brower:** Michelle Brower is an agent with Aevitas Creative Management, where she specializes in literary fiction, book club fiction, and narrative non-fiction. Her authors include Clare Beams, Sarah Domet, Jason Mott, Tara Conklin, Viet Dinh and many others.

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I would be curious to hear about your past experiences working with indie presses and how that process might be different, or the same, in comparison to working with a corporate publisher.

**Participant opening remarks, in response to the question:** What's your past experience working with indie presses and how is that process the different or the same, when working with indies vs. a corporate publisher?

**Moderator questions:**

1. When you're shopping around a manuscript, how does a small press fit into your selling strategy? What do you look for in indie presses?
2. For indie presses that don't work with agents yet but want to, how might they attract your attention?
3. As an agent, what do you offer an indie press?
4. What are some success stories, where working with an indie editor resulted in gains for all? What do you think was key to making that happen? (If time permits)

**Responses of each participant to moderator questions**

## Audience Q&A Session