

AWP 2022: Event Outline

Event Title: Outside of Class: Tentative Outlines and Turning Paths

Scheduled Day: Saturday, March 26, 2022

Scheduled Time: 1:45 p.m.–3:00 p.m. ET

Scheduled Room: 120C, Pennsylvania Convention Center, 100 Level

Panelists:

- Chad Abushanab,
- Anna Caritj,
- Charles Kell (Moderator),
- Natalie Homer, and
- Michael X. Wang.

Official Description:

A thesis often represents a student's cumulative work in a creative writing program. But what happens next? Panelists who have recently published their first books, will discuss their creative processes, what changes they made from thesis to book publication, how publication affected them, and the challenges they faced, such as revision, submitting to journals and prizes, seeking an agent, and applying to residencies. These authors will offer practical advice to attendees and hold a brief Q&A.

1:45 p.m.-2:00 p.m.: Housekeeping and Introductions (Charles Kell)

- Offer context of panel:
 - Demystifying some aspects of publishing one's first book.
 - Each panelist will share the story of how their book took shape and was published. Each panelist will offer practical advice and experiences with editing, finding a publisher, editing again, and then speak to how and if that experience has changed their approach to writing.
- Read bios of panelists in order at which they will speak (alphabetically).

Chad Abushnab:

Chad Abushanab is the author of *The Last Visit*, winner of the Donald Justice Poetry Prize. His poems appear in *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Believer*, *Best New Poets*, *Southern Poetry Review*, *Ecotone*, and others. He holds a PhD in English and Creative Writing from Texas Tech University.

Anna Caritj:

Anna Caritj holds a BA from the University of Virginia and an MFA in creative writing from Hollins University. She received the Wagenheim Fiction Prize in 2012 and was a winner of AWP's 2016 Into Journals Project. Her first novel, *Leda and the Swan*, came out in May 2021 with Riverhead Books.

Natalie Homer:

Natalie Homer is the author of the poetry collection *Under the Broom Tree*. She has an MFA from West Virginia University, and lives in Waynesburg, Pennsylvania.

Charles Kell:

Charles Kell is the author of *Cage of Lit Glass*, chosen by Kimiko Hahn for the 2018 Autumn House Press Poetry Prize. He is assistant professor of English at the Community College of Rhode Island and editor of the *Ocean State Review*.

Michael X. Wang:

Born in China's mountainous interior, Michael X. Wang immigrated to the United States when he was six. He is the author of the story collection *Further News of Defeat*, which won the PEN/Bingham Prize. His stories can be found in *The New England Review*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, and many other journals.

All panelists are encouraged to read brief one-to-two-minute-excerpts of their books, either in context of revision, or by way of introducing to the book/ manuscript project to attendees, and to tell the story of how the manuscript grew, took shape, and the process of editing (before and after acceptance if applicable), and how publishing their first book has (or hasn't) affected them as a writer.

2:00 p.m.-2:10 p.m. – Chad Abushanab (poetry) to discuss *The Last Visit*.

Topics might include:

- Submitting to Donald Justice Prize,
- How the manuscript changed between graduate school, PhD, and acceptance,
- With greatest amount of time between publication and now, offer reflections
- How publishing *The Last Visit* has affected (or not) practice as a writer since.
- Turn the mic to Anna.

2:10 p.m.-2:20 p.m. – Anna Caritj (novelist) to discuss *Leda and the Swan*.

Topics might include:

- Process of moving the novel from drafts before and after graduate school,
- Working with an agent and placing *Leda* with Riverhead
- Working with a larger publisher,
- How *Leda* has or has not affected practice as a writer since then.
- Turn the mic to Natalie.

2:20 p.m.-2:30 p.m. – Natalie Homer (poetry) to discuss the recent publication of *Under the Broom Tree*.

Topics might include:

- How *Under the Broom Tree* developed since time at MFA,
- Process of submitting to an Open Call vs. a contest,
- Releasing a book during pandemic,
- As most recently published books, any thoughts and reflections over last few months, and
- Ongoing work writing since publication.
- Turn the mic back to Charles.

2:30 p.m.-2:40 p.m. – Charles Kell (poetry) to discuss *Cage of Lit Glass*.

Topics might include:

- Any insights or key moments during development of manuscript.
- Submitting to a book prize without any restrictions,
- Effect of releasing a book just before a pandemic, and
- How experience with *Cage of Lit Glass* influenced forthcoming work, *Ishmael Mask*.
- Turn the mic to Michael.

2:40 p.m.-2:50 p.m. – Michael X. Wang (short stories) to discuss *Further News of Defeat* and how the collection took shape over time.

Topics might include:

- Sending to an open fiction contest for short stories while working on novel
- Releasing a book during pandemic
- Winning Pen / America / GLCA Award
- How publication and post-publication accolades has affected ongoing practice as a writer

2:50 p.m.-3:00 p.m. – Charles Kell will turn to audience Q and A and offer any prepared questions to the panel.