

## **Event Title: Teaching Point of View: The Pedagogy of Perspective**

**Event Description:** Writing students contend with reverberating questions about point of view, especially around issues of representation and narrative ownership. Why use first-person versus third? Why does one work call for epic omniscience and another present tense? What happens when we give voice to those who are unlike us? This panel asks professors of creative writing how they approach the pedagogy of perspective. What practices best support our students' critical thinking and imaginative abilities?

**Event type:** Pedagogy

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

**Sarah Braunstein:** Sarah Braunstein is the author of *THE SWEET RELIEF OF MISSING CHILDREN* (W.W. Norton). Her fiction and essays have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Playboy*, *Ploughshares*, *AGNI*, *Harvard Review*, and *The Sun*. She is an Assistant Professor of English and Creative Writing at Colby College in Maine.

### **Event Participants:**

**Mark Mayer:** Mark Mayer's first book, *AERIALISTS* (Bloomsbury 2019), won the Michener-Copernicus Prize and was shortlisted for the William Saroyan International Prize for Writing. His stories have been published in *American Short Fiction*, the *Kenyon Review*, *Guernica*, the *Iowa Review*, and *Best American Mystery Stories*. He is an Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Memphis.

**Auden Patrick:** Auden Patrick (he/they) is a queer and trans creative writing MFA student at the University of Memphis. He most frequently writes about fear, love, and monsters.

**Dolen Perkins-Valdez:** Dolen Perkins-Valdez is the New York Times bestselling author of two novels: *WENCH* and *BALM*. Her forthcoming novel *TAKE MY HAND* will be published by Berkley/Penguin Random House. She is an Associate Professor in the MFA Program at American University in Washington, DC.

**Rachel Powers:** Rachel Powers is a creative writing student at Colby College. She completed an honors thesis in fiction this January and will graduate in the spring.

### **Moderator Questions:**

- Broadly speaking, how do we approach teaching “point of view” in a fiction writing classroom? Do we teach craft terms first? Do we encourage students to write from different perspectives or subject positions? What’s the starting point?
- What particular exercises or assignments have we relied on, to what effect?
- What texts do we assign— craft essays? Stories? Novels?
- What do we say to the student who says: “I only write first-person POV because it’s most natural.”
- How about the one who says, “I don’t want to get in trouble. I’ll stay in my lane.”
- What has been most helpful— or unhelpful— to our students?