

## **Event Title: Patchwork Identities: Hybrid Memoirs by Writers of Color**

### **Event Description:**

Most memoirs take readers on a journey through a steady, singular voice. But writers with complicated life stories and layered identities (BIPOC, mixed race, marginalized) aren't always served by conventional story structure. Much like the hit film *Everything, Everywhere, All at Once*, hybrid memoirs stitch together multiple realities, voices and aesthetic approaches, stretching the boundaries of autobiographical storytelling to convey the polyphonic brilliance of their experiences.

Writing from a BIPOC, mixed race, disabled, or otherwise marginalized identity is hybrid by necessity. Living in diaspora as children of immigrants means we have to work harder to uplift our stories and fill the gaps in our collective history and memory. We believe embracing hybridity in art and life is an act of resistance against the dominant culture/canon perpetuated by colonization and white supremacy. It also opens the door to writing that is experimental, speculative, and “genre-queer.”

**Event Category:** Nonfiction Craft and Criticism

**Event Organizer and Moderator:** Grace Loh Prasad

### **Event Participants and Short Biographies:**

#### **Moderator:**

**Grace Loh Prasad** received her MFA in Creative Writing from Mills College and is an alumna of Tin House and VONA. Her essays have appeared in *The New York Times*, *Longreads*, *Artsy*, *Hyperallergic*, *Catapult*, *Jellyfish Review*, *KHÔRA*, and elsewhere. Her memoir *The Translator's Daughter* is forthcoming in 2024. Follow her on Twitter @GraceLP.

- Email: [graceprasad@gmail.com](mailto:graceprasad@gmail.com)
- Website: [www.translatorsdaughter.com](http://www.translatorsdaughter.com)

- Twitter: @GraceLP
- Mastodon: @GraceLP@mas.to
- Instagram: @graceprasad
- Substack: <https://syllables.substack.com>
- Grace's reading is an excerpt of "[Letter to My Imaginary Daughter](#)" (*KHÔRA*, 2020)

**Ella deCastro Baron**, a Filipina American storyteller, holds an MFA in Creative Writing from San Diego State University. She is a VONA alum, teaches writing for colleges and Corporeal Writing, and is published in *The Rumpus*, *ANMLY*, *(Her)oics: Women's Lived Experiences During the Coronavirus Pandemic*, and more. Her first book, *Itchy Brown Girl Seeks Employment* (City Works Press, 2009) is a hybrid memoir shaped as an ironic curriculum vitae about inherited dis-ease, faith, and a hyphenated American life. Ella's next book, *Subos and Baon: a memoir in bites*, is forthcoming in 2023. Check out more of Ella's story-making at [www.elladecastrobaron.com](http://www.elladecastrobaron.com).

- Email: [ella.storyteller@gmail.com](mailto:ella.storyteller@gmail.com)
- Website: [www.elladecastrobaron.com](http://www.elladecastrobaron.com)
- Instagram: @elladbaron
- Facebook: Ella deCastro Baron, Writer
- Ella's reading is an excerpt from "[A Checklist for Dark S\(kin\) Care](#)" (forthcoming in *ANMLY* 2023). Past work in [ANMLY #31](#)

The daughter of Chinese immigrants, **Jen Soong** grew up in New Jersey and now lives in Northern California. An alum of Tin House and VONA, her writing has appeared in *The Washington Post*, *The Audacity*, *Jellyfish Review*, *Cosmonauts Avenue* and *Waxwing*. She received her MFA in creative writing from UC Davis. Her memoir-in-progress is a reckoning of myths and migration. Find her work at [jensoong.com](http://jensoong.com).

- Email: [jen@jensoong.com](mailto:jen@jensoong.com)
- Website: [www.jensoong.com](http://www.jensoong.com)
- Twitter: @jenmuze
- Newsletter: <http://tinyletter.com/jenerallyspeaking>

- Jen’s reading is an excerpt of “[Confessions to My Ancestors](#)” (*The Seventh Wave*, 2022)

**Jackson Bliss** is the winner of the 2020 Noemi Book Award in Prose and the mixed-race/hapa author of [Counterfactual Love Stories & Other Experiments](#) (Noemi Press, 2021), the backwards novel, [Amnesia of June Bugs](#) (7.13 Books, 2022), the experimental choose-your-own-adventure memoir [Dream Pop Origami](#) (Unsolicited Press, 2022), and the digital novella, [Dukkha, My Love](#) (2017). His writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Tin House*, *Ploughshares*, *Guernica*, *Antioch Review*, *TriQuarterly*, *ZYZZYVA*, *Columbia Journal*, *Kenyon Review*, *The Offing*, *Quarterly West*, *Fiction*, *Santa Monica Review*, and *Longreads*, among others. He lives in LA with his wife and their fashionably dressed dog.

- Email: [jacksonbliss@gmail.com](mailto:jacksonbliss@gmail.com)
- Website: <http://www.jacksonbliss.com/bio>
- Twitter: [@jacksonbliss](https://twitter.com/jacksonbliss)
- Insta: [@jacksonbliss](https://www.instagram.com/jacksonbliss)
- Substack: <https://jacksonbliss.substack.com/>
- Jackson’s reading is an excerpt from: “[Songs Without Lyrics](#)” (*Hyphen*, 2022)

### **Event Structure:**

The moderator will begin by welcoming attendees and describing how the panel came together (3 minutes). The moderator will then briefly introduce each of the panelists one by one and invite them to read a very short excerpt of their work (12-17 minutes). Then the panelists will take turns responding to prepared questions (40-45 minutes). The panel will end with a 15-minute audience Q&A.

Questions we will address:

- What constitutes a hybrid memoir, to you?
- What are some of your favorite examples of hybrid memoirs, either books or individual pieces?
- Describe your own writing and what makes it “hybrid”
- Let’s talk about hybridity as a strategy. When is it just a gimmick, and when is it an integral part of the work and the message?

- We're all writers of color. How does that inform the use of hybridity in our writing? Does it have a different significance for us?
- Do you write to a specific audience?
- How do you navigate the literary world - agents, editors, publicists - who tend to prefer neat categories? How do you break through that resistance to make room for hybrid work?
- What presses and lit mags are open to/reliably publishing interesting hybrid work?