Event Title: BIPOC Women/Nonbinary Writers Cultivating Community and Safe Writing Spaces (F185)

Date: Friday, March 10, 2023 Time: 1:45-3:00 pm Place: SCC, Room 327, Level 3

Agenda Overview:

Moderator: Sakae Manning (they/them)

Panelists: Xochitl-Julisa Bermejo (she/her), Janaka Bowman Lewis, PhD (she/her), LaCoya Katoe Gessesse (she/her), Mahtem Shiferraw (she/her)

Event Description: Panelists share modes and methods towards creating safe space through considering intention as liberatory groundwork for BIPOC women and nonbinary writers, creating intersectional spaces beyond physical boundaries, identifying and becoming part of a writing community, and understanding how intergenerational racial and gender-based trauma impacts amplifying our own work. Join Janaka Bowman-Lewis, PhD, LaCoya Katoe Gessesse, and Mahtem Shiferraw, as we navigate writing and sustaining writing communities.

Event Agenda: Moderator begins discussion by introducing panelists and reading their short biographies. Each panelist gives a brief introduction of their work and how they have incorporated panel’s themes through organizations they’ve founded (Anaphora Arts and Women Who Submit), as well as through work they do in classrooms and in community for five to seven minutes each. Moderator to open up discussion with panel-developed questions for participants to draw from, discuss, and pose additional deep dive questions. Panelists will be available afterwards to greet participants and answer further questions.

Biographies and Contact Info:

Xochitl-Julisa Bermejo (Panelist) (she/her) is the author of Posada: Offerings of Witness and Refuge (Sundress Publications) and is a former Steinbeck Fellow and Poets & Writers California Writers Exchange winner. She is the creator of the quarterly reading series Hitched and a co-founder of Women Who Submit. Look for INCANTATION: Love Poems for Battle Sites, Bermejo’s forthcoming book, scheduled for release in fall, 2023. Email: womensubmit@gmail.com Follow: IG/Twitter/fb/Youtube @womenwhosubmitlit website: www.womenwhosubmitlit.org

Janaka Bowman Lewis, PhD. (Panelist/event co-creator) (she/her) is Associate Professor of English and Director of the Center for the Study of the New South at The University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She is the author of Freedom Narratives of African American Women (McFarland 2017) and three children’s books (Brown All Over, Bold Nia Marie Passes the Test, and co-author of Dr. King is Tired, Too!). She is founder of the Vanilla Bowman Foundation for Educational Impact based in Georgia and the Carolinas, serves on the boards of Freedom School Partners and Rise 2 Thrive Family Resource Center (Charlotte and Cabarrus County, NC) and was recognized in 2020 as one of Charlotte Business Journal’s 40 Under 40. Pre-order Dr. Bowman Lewis’ newest book, Light and Legacies: Stories of Black Girlhood and Stories of Liberation (U of South Carolina Press), releasing April 2023. Email: J.Lewis@uncc.edu

LaCoya Katoe Gessesse (Panelist) (she/her) is a writer, college English instructor, tutor and teaching artist. She facilitates literature, poetry and writing workshops for teens in underserved communities, holds an MFA from Antioch University LA and is a VONA fellow. Email: lkatoegessesse@antioch.edu

Sakae Manning (Moderator/event co-creator) (they/them) is on the leadership team for Women Who Submit, a nonprofit dedicated to increasing women and nonbinary writers’ submission rates, and is a memoir reader for Split Lip Magazine. They produce programs and platforms amplifying BIPOC and underrepresented writers’ work. A hybrid writer, Manning has published words in Blood Orange Review, The Tahoma Literary Review, Carve, Dryland, and was the 2017 Annenberg Community Beach House Writer in Residence where they produced salons and programs centering BIPOC women writers. Email: sakaemanning@gmail.com

Mahtem Shiferraw (Panelist) (she/her) is a poet & visual artist from Ethiopia and Eritrea. She is the author of three poetry collections, and winner of the Sillerman First Book Prize for African Poets. She serves as the executive director of Anaphora Arts, a nonprofit organization that advocates for writers of color. Email: info@anaphoraarts.com Follow on IG/Twitter/fb @anaphoralitarts Follow Mahtem on IG: @mahtem_shiferrraw Twitter: website: www.anaphoraarts.com