

Event Title: How Writers of Color Use Humor To Tell Their Stories

Event Category: Live panel

Location/date/time:

Terrace Suite I, Summit Building, Seattle Convention Center, Level 4

Friday, March 10, 2023

1:45 pm to 3:00 pm

Event Description: Sometimes the truth is funny, even when it hurts. There is a long tradition of Black, Indigenous, and other writers of color combining humor and wit to wrestle with heavy themes to make their audiences laugh and reflect on the page. In this panel, five creators in various prose genres discuss carrying on this lineage through the art of comedic storytelling. This craft discussion will delve into set-up to delivery, considering one's audience, gaze, and being vulnerable but always honest.

Event Organizer: **Mark Galarrita** is the son of a post office worker from Mindanao and a finance clerk from Manila who immigrated to New Jersey.

Prose writing: McSweeney's, Electric Literature, Split Lip, and elsewhere.

Playwriting: MANNY PACQUIAO PUNCHES THE WORLD BUT THE EARTH DOESN'T EVEN FLINCH (Arts in The Armed Forces 2020 Contest, judge: David Henry Hwang). Untitled High School Play (Westtown Schools, 2023)

MFA: University of Alabama (Short Story Prize winner: 2018, 2020, 2021)

Event Panelists:

**Kendra Allen** is the author of essay collection *When You Learn the Alphabet* and winner of the 2018 Iowa Prize for Literary Nonfiction. Her poetry collection is *The Collection Plate* (Ecco). She was born and raised in Dallas, Texas.

**Maurice Carlos Ruffin** is the author of *The Ones Who Don't Say They Love You: Stories*, a New York Times Editor's Choice, and *We Cast a Shadow: A Novel*, which was a finalist for the PEN/Faulkner Award, the Dayton Literary Peace Prize, and the PEN America Open Book Prize.

**Edgar Gomez** is a Florida-born writer with roots in Nicaragua and Puerto Rico. He has written for POPSUGAR, Narratively, Longreads, Catapult, Ploughshares, The Rumpus, and elsewhere

online and in print. He is also the author of the recent memoir *High-Risk Homosexual*. For more, visit [EdgarGomez.net](http://EdgarGomez.net).

**Gene Kwak** has published in The Los Angeles Review of Books, The Rumpus, Lit Hub, Wigleaf, and Electric Literature. *Go Home, Ricky!* is his debut novel. He teaches at the University of Nebraska Omaha.

Event Agenda: The event will take the form of a roundtable craft discussion with emphasis on approaches and examples on humor writing. Panelists will first read a small section of their work and then we'll open up discussion with a question about comedy's storytelling effectiveness to tell uncomfortable truths such as in satire or absurdism. A 10-15 minute Q&A will conclude the session.

Questions:

TBD