

## AWP Event Outline

Event Title: On Errors: Reconsidering Accuracy & Authenticity in Translation, Sponsored by ALTA

Event Sponsor: American Literary Translators Association

Event Date & Time:

Scheduled Day: Thursday, March 9, 2023

Scheduled Time: 12:10-1:25 PM ET

Scheduled Location: Room 331, Summit Building,  
Seattle Convention Center, Level 3

(double check up-to-date AWP materials for any last minute changes)

Event Description: This panel focuses on errors in translation to raise urgent questions about race, class, power, and literary values. It will engage the fraught situation of heritage speakers who often feel shame when making translation mistakes. It will confront and redress dominant ideas of accuracy, authority, and authenticity. Diverse panelists will discuss navigating their own translation errors and/or their experiences teaching, editing, or mentoring emerging translators.

Event Category: Translation

Event Participants:

Organizer/Moderator: Gabrielle Civil is a black feminist poet, performance artist, and slow-moving translator. Her performance memoirs include *Swallow the Fish*, *Experiments in Joy*, *(ghost gestures)*, *the déjà vu*, and *In & Out of Place*. She has premiered over fifty performances worldwide. The aim of her work is to open up space.

Madhu H. Kaza is a writer, translator, and educator based in New York. She is the editor of *Kitchen Table Translation*, an anthology of writing by immigrant and diasporic translators. She teaches in the MFA program at Columbia University.

Sawako Nakayasu works at the intersection of writing, translation, and performance. Publications include *Pink Waves* (Omnidawn), *Some Girls Walk into the Country They Are From* (Wave Books), and *Say Translation Is Art* (Ugly Duckling). She is an assistant professor in literary arts at Brown University.

JD Pluecker is a writer, translator, artist. Their most recent translations are *Writing with Caca*, *Gore Capitalism*, and *Antígona González*, and they have published zines, chapbooks, and a book of poetry and image, *Ford Over*.

#### Event Activities:

12:10 PM Arrival

A slide show of protected “errors” plays in the room.

12:12 PM Welcome & Housekeeping

Gabrielle Civil [GC] welcomes everyone and shares accessibility guidelines. Another panelist and/or AWP volunteer will deliver Event Outlines and any other pre-prepared materials to anyone who identifies a need. Key reminders include:

- Please make sure that spaces marked for wheelchairs remain clear of chairs or other barriers.
- Treat service animals as working animals and do not attempt to distract or pet them.
- Be aware of those with chemical sensitivities and refrain from wearing scented products.
- Please be aware that your fellow attendees may have invisible

- disabilities. Do not question anyone's use of an accommodation while at the conference, including for chairs reserved for those with disabilities.

[GC] introduces the panelists—Madhu H. Kaza [MK], Sawako Nakayasu [SN] and JD Pluecker [JDP] by showing and reading aloud a panelist bio slide and then another slide that the panelist has provided with a marked-up “wrong” translation. (We will come back to those error slides during the individual panelist presentations). The order of these introductions is the presentation order. But first . . .

#### 12:15 PM Opening Exercise

GC leads an opening exercise for attendees to conjure up their associations with “errors”—first in their notebooks (1 min), then in a sound or gesture (1 min). Each panelist then shares their own “error” associations simultaneously (1 min) as word/ sound/ gesture or combination.

#### 12:20 PM Panelist Presentations

[GC], [MK], [SN] & [JDP] will present their work for up to 10 minutes each.

#### 1:00 PM Synthesis / Incorporation of Errors

Panelists including the moderator will take 5 minutes to improvise together a synthesis or incorporation of the errors mentioned in the previous presentations. This will be offered as experimental translation.

#### 1:05-1:20 Q & A/ Exchanges

Panelists and attendees dialogue in a 15-minute Question & Answer session, exploring errors (and shame) in translation (and writing). Attendees could share more responses to the starting exercise or to the synthesis that just happened. Panelists could offer more improvised text, sound, or movement.

#### 1:20-1:25 Thanks & Further Resources

[GC] thanks attendees, asks for the return of event outlines, and shows a slide with info on further resources.