Meet This Year's Participants

**JADA ALLEN**

Jada Renée Allen is a Black trans writer, educator, & conjurewoman living & working on U.S.-occupied O’odham Jewed, Akimel O’Odham, & Hohokam lands. A 2022 92Y Discovery Poetry Contest winner, Jada is the recipient of fellowships, scholarships, & support from Tin House, Kenyon Review Writers Workshop, Community of Writers, & VONA/Voices, among others. Her work appears in Gulf Coast; Hayden’s Ferry Review; Paris Review Daily; Virginia Quarterly Review; & elsewhere. She is from Chicago, IL.

**FULLAMUSU BANGURA**

Fullamusu Bangura is a queer writer + visual artist originally from Washington, D.C. and currently residing in Chicago, Illinois. They are the author of the essay-book “...Considers Lil’ Kim’s Hard Core.” Their poetry has been published in New Delta Review, Apogee Journal, and Southeast Review. In 2020, they were selected as a 2020 Best of the Net Poetry finalist. They are a zinemaker and collagist, using humor and astrology to make sense of a chaotic world.

**JARI BRADLEY**

Jari Bradley (they/them) is a San Francisco native. They are the recipient of an Inprint C. Glenn Cambor Fellowship and a Cave Canem fellow. Their poems have been published in Callaloo, Virginia Quarterly Review, Academy of American of Poets (Poem-A Day), and elsewhere. They are currently a PhD candidate in Creative Writing and Literature at the University of Houston and poetry editor for Gulf Coast Journal.

Website: [jaribradley.com](jaribradley.com)

**ZAKIA CARPENTER-HALL**

Zakia Carpenter-Hall is an American writer, tutor and critic living in the UK. Her reviews and poems have been published in Poetry Wales, The Poetry Review, Wild Court, Magma and elsewhere. Human Ecologies (2021) is her ecopoetry film commissioned by The Scottish Poetry Library in partnership with Africa in Motion Film Festival and Obsidian Foundation. She was editorial intern for Magma 82 Obsidian, a Poetry London mentee, Jerwood Bursary Recipient and London Library Emerging writer. Into the Same Sound Twice (Seren, 2023) is her debut poetry pamphlet.
CHING-IN CHEN
Descended from ocean dwellers, Ching-In Chen is a genderqueer Chinese American writer, community organizer and teacher. They are author of The Heart's Traffic: a novel in poems and recombinant (2018 Lambda Literary Award for Transgender Poetry winner) as well as chapbooks to make black paper sing and Kundiman for Kin :: Information Retrieval for Monsters (Leslie Scalapino Finalist). Chen is co-editor of The Revolution Starts at Home: Confronting Intimate Violence Within Activist Communities. Website: www.chinginchen.com

ZAKIYA COWAN
Zakiya Cowan is a Chicagoan with a bachelor's degree in English from Lewis University. Her work has appeared in Split Lip Magazine, Green Mountains Review, Spoon River Poetry Review, the Chicago Reader, and Hobart. She is the former Managing Editor for Jet Fuel Review and Interviews Editor at Honey Literary. Cowan is a 2023 Tin House Winter Workshop participant, a 2020 Brooklyn Poets Fellowship recipient, a Best of the Net nominee, and a Best Small Fictions nominee.

ESSAH COZETT DÍAZ
Essah Cozett Díaz is a Liberian-American poet, podcaster, and PhD candidate at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras. Díaz is currently a senior research fellow of the Diaspora Solidarities Lab. In 2016, she founded Hermanas del Agua to create a safe space for femme identifying people to practice strategic self-care. Díaz is also an alumna of Obsidian Foundation and the Young Scholars of Liberia. Her writing has appeared in several international print and online publications. Website: www.essahcozett.com

MATT FORD
Matt Ford is a writer, artist, and educator from Detroit. They earned their MFA at UC San Diego and are the founder of 5D Publishing, LLC. Currently writing their debut novel, Rapture In Blue, their work has been published in Wall Street Journal, HuffPost, The Creative Independent, Art Journal, Chicago Reader, and elsewhere. They have received fellowships from SAIC, Martha's Vineyard, and the Mellon Foundation, among others. Donate to Matt’s Lambda Literary Retreat fund: bit.ly/matt-lambda
**Kelly Fordon**

Kelly Fordon’s latest short story collection *I Have the Answer* (WSUPress, 2020) was chosen as a Midwest Book Award Finalist and an Eric Hoffer Finalist. Her 2016 Michigan Notable Book, *Garden for the Blind*, (WSUP), was an INDIEFAB Finalist, a Midwest Book Award Finalist, Eric Hoffer Finalist, and an IPPY Awards Bronze Medalist. She is the author of three poetry chapbooks and one full-length collection, *Goodbye Toothless House*, (Kattywompus Press, 2019) an Eyelands International Prize Finalist and an Eric Hoffer Finalist.

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**Whitney French**

Whitney French (she/her) is a writer, multidisciplinary artist, and publisher. She is the editor of the award-winning anthology *Black Writers Matter* (University of Regina, 2019) and *Griot: Six Writers Sojourn into the Dark* (Penguin Random House, 2022). Her work has appeared in ARC Poetry, Augur, FIYAH, WATER Magazine and elsewhere. Whitney French is a certified arts educator and the co-founder/publisher of Hush Harbour, the only Black queer feminist press in Canada. She lives in Toronto. Website: whitneyfrenchwrites.com

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**Melinda González**

Dr. Melinda González (@lapoetaguerrera), born in Newark, New Jersey with ancestral home in Moca, Puerto Rico, is an Afro-Indigenous poet, anthropologist, professor, and poetry workshop facilitator. She examines the impact of race, class, and gender on disaster distribution, using decolonial and indigenous research methods for environmental justice. She facilitates poetry workshops to help poets, writers, and academics maintain their authentic voice while addressing colonial repression.

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**Destiny Hemphill**

Destiny Hemphill (she/her) is a chronically ill ritual worker and poet, living on the unceded territory of the Eno-Occaneechi band of the Saponi Nation (Durham, NC). She is the author of the poetry collection *motherworld: a devotional for the alter-life* (Action Books, 2023). Her work has also been featured in Poetry Magazine, Southern Cultures, and the Academy of American Poets' Poem-a-Day series. Website: destinyhemphill.com
CANDICE JANSEN
Candice Jansen is a New Archival Visions Digital Curatorial Fellow at the Centre for Humanities Research at the University of the Western Cape. In 2022, she was an ACLS African Humanities Post-doctoral Fellow. Her doctoral dissertation was completed at WiSER (Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research), entitled COLOURED BLACK: The Life & Works of South African Photographers, Cedric Nunn and Ernest Cole (2019).

ROMAN JOHNSON
Roman Johnson is a scientist and writer from Memphis, TN. He won the 2021 Lucille Clifton Poetry Prize from Backbone Press, was a finalist for the 2021 Bellingham Review 49th Parallel Award for Poetry and is a past winner of the Clark Atlanta University Poetry Prize. His work concerns itself with grief, longing, masculinity, violence, and connection. His work can be found in Obsidian and African Voices Magazine.

LESLIE MCINTOSH
Leslie McIntosh (all pronouns respectfully used) is black, male presenting, an older millennial, and a writer. Leslie has received support from Breadloaf, Callaloo, Millay Arts, The Watering Hole, Zoeglossia, and more. Leslie’s work has appeared in Beloit Poetry Journal, Foglifter, Southern Humanities Review, Witness, and elsewhere. Leslie is a Chapbook Editor at Newfound and lives on the stolen land of the Munsee Lenape, currently known as Jersey City.

DÉSHAWN MCKEEL
DéShawn McKeel is a Georgia-born, Texas-raised poet and writer. DéShawn’s interests and influences include Black Feminist Theory, (Black) Southern and Texan cultures, Black music, surveillance, absurdism, surrealism, and myth and folklore. DéShawn is currently an M.F.A. Creative Writing Candidate at Rutgers University-Newark.
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<th>Name</th>
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<td><strong>SHY-ZAHIR MOSES</strong></td>
<td>Shy-Zahir Moses (they/them) is a Queer Black poet, scholar, and lover working to make it out of Texas. They hold a B.A. in English from the University of Houston and are pursuing an M.F.A. in poetry from the University of Texas at Austin. They spend their free time getting read to by Toni Morrison on Audible, creating new poetic forms, and growing their in-home library.</td>
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<td><strong>SAMUELA MOUZAOIR</strong></td>
<td>Samuela is currently a doctoral student studying Educational Psychology. She calls many places home—including Burkina Faso, Colorado, and Michigan, where she currently lives. She enjoys thinking and writing about whimsy, love, speculative fiction, and identity. She is also interested in incorporating Afrofuturism into her scholarship and creative practices.</td>
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<td><strong>EVIE MUIR</strong></td>
<td>Evie Muir (she/they)is both a domestic abuse survivor and qualified domestic abuse specialist, writer and the founder of Peaks of Colour - a Peak District based nature-for-healing community group, by and for people of colour. As a Northern freelance writer, they are passionate about the liberating form of writing as healing and resistance. Evie’s debut book, 'Radical Rest', explores Black and Abolitionist Feminist approaches to activist burn out and will be published by Elliot &amp; Thompson in 2024. Website: <a href="http://www.eviemuir.com">www.eviemuir.com</a> Instagram/Twitter: @xeviemuir</td>
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**OLATUNDE OSINAIKE**  
Originally from the West Side of Chicago, Olatunde Osinaike is a Nigerian-American poet, essayist, and software developer. He is the author of Tender Headed (Akashic Books, 2023), selected by Camille Rankine as winner of the 2022 National Poetry Series, forthcoming in December 2023. His work has received fellowships and support from Poets & Writers, the Hurston/Wright Foundation, and Kenyon Review Writers Workshop. He lives in Atlanta.

**A. ADENIKE PHILLIPS**  
a. adenike phillips (she/her) is a Black, feminist poet, emerging visual artist, and oral history practitioner. In her work, she is committed to documenting and amplifying the stories of Black people with specific emphasis on Black women. She has received fellowships and/or mentorships from AWP, Hurston/Wright Foundation, Arts by The People and The National Public Housing Museum. Her work has appeared in The Amistad, The Black Fork Review and Gulf Stream Magazine.  
Website: www.stalkingfire.com

**THERÍ PICKENS**  

**ANA RODRIGUEZ MACHADO**  
Ana Rodriguez Machado is a Cuban diaspora writer living in Toronto. Her work has been published or is forthcoming in PRISM international, The Humber Literary Review, The Malahat Review, and elsewhere. Her poems have been finalists for the CBC Poetry Prize, the PEN Canada New Voices Award, and The Malahat Review Far Horizons Prize in Poetry. She was a poet mentor for the Koffler Arts Centre’s “in my mother tongue | poetry & portraits.” She holds an MFA from the University of Guelph.  
Website: anaro.ca
Sneha Subramanian Kanta is a writer and academic. She is the author of the chapbooks Ghost Tracks (Louisiana Literature Press, 2020), Ancestral-Wing (Porkbelly Press, forthcoming), and Every Elegy Is A Love Poem (Variant Lit, forthcoming). She is one of the founding editors of Parentheses Journal.

Website: www.snehasubramaniankanta.com

Angel Sutjipto (they/she) was born in Jakarta, Indonesia and have resided on Lenapehoking (aka NYC) for the past 20 years. Angel is a writer, an only child, and aspiring troublemaker who realized that disappointing their immigrant mom did not mean the end of the world. They are an alum of Voices of Our Nation (VONA) and Macondo Writers Workshop. Their writing has appeared in Briarpatch magazine and Somewhere We Are Human anthology.

Dorsía Smith Silva is a Pushcart Prize nominee, Best of the Net finalist, Best New Poets nominee, Obsidian Fellow, Poetry Editor of The Hopper, and Full Professor at the University of Puerto Rico. Her poetry has recently been published or is forthcoming in Poetry Northwest, the minnesota review, Shenandoah, and elsewhere. She is the editor of Latina/Chicana Mothering and the co-editor of seven books. She posts on Twitter @DSmithSilva and CavanKerry will publish her poetry book in 2024.

Rebecca Stoner is a poet and educator living in New York City. An MFA candidate at Rutgers-Newark, her poetry is forthcoming in Palindrome. Her work has been supported by the Minnesota Northwoods Writers' Conference.

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KALEY WHITE
Kaley is a poet-scholar and digital artist living in Philadelphia, PA. Her work thinks deeply about space making, community building, joy, and identity. She holds a M.S. Ed in Culture, Society, and Education from the University of Pennsylvania and an MA in Political Science. Follow her ongoing work on Twitter @kaleyy__

TEONA WILLIAMS