

# THES Young Writers' Workshop 2018

**SAVE THE DATE! Thursday, February 22!**

**Teachers:** Please share information about the workshop presenters and give students time to fill in their choice sheets. **Then please return the folders of choice sheets to the office by FEB. 8. Thank you!**

## FICTION, MUSIC, & POETRY

**R. A. KWAMENA ALHEEM** has loved to both write and tell fictional stories since he was in elementary school. He recalls being one his family's storytellers when spending summer nights around the fire, as a child, on family vacations. Today, he is a performing artist, using his talents as singer and emcee to spread positive energy all over Austin. He is also an author and lecturer, who has penned three mythological stories, "The Bumbler Vs. The Chess Master," "Cheikh Kubwa," and forthcoming "Spirit Bond." He has also written a nonfiction book, *The Family Tree Grows Up*, about families building communities. **Workshop:** *Creating Mythology. The key to creating great mythology is presenting a concept or "moral of the story" in a fun way. Mr. Alheem will share some of his creative secrets—how he comes up with his characters (including how he chooses their names), the setting, and the moral of the story—while helping students realize their creative potential to do the same. Students will work in groups to create these elements of their own mythological stories.*

**CAROLYN COHAGAN** began her writing career on the stage. She has performed stand-up comedy and one-woman shows at festivals around the world from Adelaide to Edinburgh. Her first novel, *The Lost Children*, is part of the Scholastic Book Club and was nominated for a Massachusetts Children's Book Award. Her new dystopian YA book, *Time Zero*, was named a Summer Reading Pick by *Seventeen* magazine. **Workshop:** *The basis for most stories is a character with a problem. We will discuss your favorite heroes and their obstacles, and then you will come up with your own original characters and suspenseful dilemmas. \*Twist alert. Prompt may not be what you expect.*

**LAURIE FILIPPELLI** is a poet, writer, and educator who has taught high school English and trained writers to teach in public schools. She is the author of a collection of poems, *Elseplace* (Brooklyn Arts Press, 2013), and her essays and poetry have appeared in various literary journals. She's most proud of her very first publication — a poem stapled in large letters to her school's bulletin board when she was in second grade. **Workshop:** *We'll explore connections between images, sounds and words as we look at an illustrated poem by Sandra Cisneros or Maya Angelou. Then we'll create pictures and poems of our own.*

**ERICA FLORES** is program director of Girls Rock Austin and has been involved with Girls Rock Camp since 2010, where she helped form the Los Angeles chapter. Ms. Flores is serving her second term as co-chair of Marketing and Fundraising on the board of the international Girls Rock Camp Alliance. She holds an MA in Communications from USC. **Workshop:** *We'll learn why we'd want to write a song, what tools we need to write a song, and what parts make up a song. Today, we'll write a song as a group. At the end of the workshop, everyone will leave with the skills to write songs on their own or with friends!*

**JENA KIRKPATRICK** is editor of the poetry anthology Writing for Positive Change and poetry workshop instructor for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Texas. Jena tours nationally as a member of the Trio of Poets. As a Poet for Hire, she writes poems for clients worldwide and on her antique typewriters at events. **Workshop:** *Becoming Something Other Than Yourself. Using Jack Prelutsky's "Ballad of a Boneless Chicken" we will practice personification, rhyming and using sensory detail while writing hilarious poems. Get ready to become something you've always wanted to be, whether it be a chicken or a tennis shoe. These poems will surely entertain you!*

**MAUREEN LOMO** aka 'M.L. Wonder' is a former diplomat turned novelist who left federal service to pursue a career of creative service, writing entertaining and engaging stories with impact. Maureen has written a short story, "The Ticket," and her first novel, *Tenth Year in the Sun*, debuts in June. **Workshop:** *Maureen will teach the students useful skills in the art of story crafting. She will first briefly explain why stories are important and discuss the most popular form of storytelling, the hero's journey. She will also discuss an important technique, "Show Don't Tell," and have students work in pairs for this lesson. The class will also divide them two teams and see which team can get the most creative with words.*

**SUSAN MORRISON**, mother of two Travis Heights graduates, is Professor of medieval literature at Texas State University in San Marcos and has written many books, including one on excrement (that's poop!) in the late Middle Ages. She has edited her mother's diaries written during World War II. This book, *Home Front Girl: A Diary of Love, Literature, and Growing Up in Wartime America*, was named by the Children's Book Committee of the Bank Street College of Education to the Best Children's Book of the Year 2013 list (Memoir: Ages 14 & up). Her most recent novel, *Grendel's Mother: The Saga of the Wyrd-Wife*, a feminist retelling of the Old English epic *Beowulf*, won the Words on Wings Book Award for young adult fiction, a Literary Classics Top Honors Award 2016. **Workshop:** *Take a step back in time. But beware! Ogres, dragons, and evil knights await! . . . Did you know Albus Dumbledore in the Harry Potter series is based on the magician Merlin from the tales of King Arthur and Queen Guinevere? Some of the greatest literature ever written takes place in the distant past. Participants in the workshop will write their own stories festooned with castle, armor, swords, towers, dragons, and magic. Make the Middle Ages come alive!*

**SHELDON PACOTTI** is a writer of fiction, nonfiction, and video games. His writing has appeared in magazines like The Bridge, Bellowing Ark, and Salon.com. Games he has worked on include Wishbone and the Amazing Odyssey, Epic Mickey, and System Shock 3. **Workshop:** *Are you brave enough to enter the Story Maze? We will start in a dark, dangerous place, and you will have to get us out. We will split into three groups, each deciding what to do, then we will split up and choose again. In the end, we will have nine endings -- nine stories -- the pathways of... the Story Maze.*

**NEAL POLLACK** is a very famous fiction writer and journalist who also tests race cars. Last year, he published his tenth book, a crazy sci-fi novel set on Mars and in the Austin of the future, called Keep Mars Weird. He's the cohost, with his 14-year-old son Elijah, of Extra Credit, a podcast on Audible.com. **Workshop:** *"Create your own detective." Everyone loves a mystery! In this workshop, you create your own detective and give them a crime to solve.*

**RUPERT REYES** is an Austin playwright and Artistic Director of Teatro Vivo, a bilingual theater company dedicated to reaching all audiences and creating bridges between cultures. He is a graduate of the University of Texas Department of Theater and Dance. The B. Iden Payne Theater Awards committee has nominated his plays for best new scripts and he has received several acting nominations as well. He recently published, at the urging of his friends, the first of the Petra Trilogy, Petra's Pecado and Vecinos. His most recent collaboration with ZACH Theater and Glass Half Full, a children's play, *Cenicienta*, was awarded Best New Play in 2015 by the Critics Table Awards. **Workshop:** *Tutored by the Collective Creation style of one of best Chicano Theater companies in the US, students in Mr. Reyes workshop will create a scene as a group. This playwriting process uses each individual to contribute toward a finished product. Following prompts given at the start of the workshop, each student will have an opportunity to write a part to create the entire scene. Then groups of students will be given the opportunity to perform the scene for the entire class.*

## **NONFICTION**

**PATRICK ANCIPIK** and **BILL TALBOT** have worked together in marketing for over a decade at multiple companies and now both work at CA Technologies, one of the world's largest software companies. Patrick started his career as a technical writer 20 years ago and is currently co-authoring a book about Digital Transformation. Patrick has a BA in American Studies from Yale University. Bill is a VP of Solutions and Product Marketing and has over 15 years of marketing and sales experience. Bill earned a B.A. from Boston University, and an M.B.A. with a focus on high tech marketing from The University of Texas at Austin. **Workshop:** *"Thunderbirds in the Shark Tank." Patrick and Bill will demonstrate how writing—from the technical to the creative—is essential for business and especially the marketing profession. Students will use different writing techniques and styles to get their products and ideas in shape to enter the Shark Tank.*

**SIMONE MONIQUE BARNES** has been working with, for, in, and through the arts and honoring culture for more than 20 years. When she's not writing, teaching Laughter Yoga, or helping youth and adults to use the arts as a tool for social change, she's hanging out with her super cute little therapy dog, Razz. **Workshop:** *Students will become content editors and photojournalists for the day, helping Simone take and select photos of Razz, and write captions and content about his adventures at the Young Writers' Workshop for his microblog All That Razz (<https://www.facebook.com/allthattrazz/>).*

**NAIJEAN BERNARD-ONWERE**, PhD, emigrated to the United States with her family from Grenada in the mid 1970s. She grew up in a diverse, international community in the Washington DC area. For her PhD dissertation, she traveled to three Caribbean islands to investigate and compare the differences in racial identity development between college-age youth in the Caribbean and in the United States. Throughout her career as a mental health professional, Naijean has worked with children, youth and families in various capacities, from juvenile corrections, school systems, and child welfare. She is currently a Senior Foster Care Trainer for a Fortune 500 company. She enjoys presenting on the intersection of trauma, racial identity and how proper hair/skin care can help to provide cultural healing for Black children in the US foster care system. **Workshop:** *"I'm weird and it's ok!" This workshop will explore what makes us all unique and maybe even a little weird. Workshop participants will explore their own passions, stories and unique hobbies. Feel free to draw, sing and of course, write out what makes you a unique person. We will use "emojis" as an ice-breaker to get our creative tools flowing!*

**NADIA CHAUDHURY** is the editor of Eater Austin. . . . **Workshop:** *TBD*

**CEDRIC GOLDEN** has spent the last two decades covering sports events in our state of Texas and many places around the U.S. As the general sports columnist at the *Austin American-Statesman*, Cedric has covered two Super Bowls, the Final Four, the college football championship, the College World Series, and several fights in Las Vegas featuring Floyd Mayweather and Manny Pacquiao. **Workshop:** *Cedric will teach his students about the techniques of interviewing and profile writing.*

**DOYIN OYENIYI** is a writer with Texas Monthly magazine. . . . **Workshop:** *TBD.*

**NETTIE REYNOLDS** is a nationally published essayist and speaker, and storyteller. She's a humorist and has spoken at *Erma Bombeck Conference*, *Texas Governor's Conference for Women*, *BookExpoAmerica*, *Social Venture Network Conference*, the *Living Room Series*, *Frontera Fest* and others. Nettie was most recently featured as a participant in the nationally lauded *Listen To Your Mother* show. She is a laughter yoga instructor, hula hooper and ukulele player. Ms. Reynolds believes in the power of humor in stories. **Workshop:** *Nettie will help you find the funny story inside of you that you're aching to share. She'll walk you through her five minute funny exercise which you can use anytime*

*to help you find the humor in any story and write it so others laugh as well.*