

Bard & Broadside Festival & Poetry Workshop

Sunday, April 13 / 1:00p - 3:00p

Free Community Poetry +
Creative Writing Workshop

Sunday, April 13, 2025

Workshop facilitated by special guest poet Lola Haskins

DOWNTOWN LIBRARY—401 E University Ave.

Alachua County Library District's Headquarters
401 E University Ave, Gainesville, FL

On Sunday, April 13, 2025, WAG members
and guests are invited to the Bard & Broadside

Poetry Festival and Workshop at the Alachua County Library Headquarters. **There will be no April WAG program at the Millhopper Library.**

The Bard and Broadside Poetry Festival and Workshop will feature Guest Poet Lola Haskins. Haskins has published fifteen books of poetry and three of prose. The most recent books of poems are *Like Zeros*, *Like Pearls*, (Charlotte Lit 2025), *Homelight* (Charlotte Lit 2023)—named Poetry Book of the Year by Southern Literary Review, and *Asylum* (University of Pittsburgh, 2019)—featured in the *NYT Magazine*. Past honors include the Iowa Poetry Prize, two Florida Book Awards, narrative poetry prizes from *Southern Poetry Review* and *New England Poetry Review*, a Florida's Eden prize for environmental writing, and the Emily Dickinson prize from Poetry Society of America. She has served as Honorary Chancellor for the Florida State Poets Association since 2016. Additionally, enjoy a poetry reading at 4:00 p.m.. A book signing will follow.

The Bard & Broadside North Central Poetry Festival will be from April 5 to April 13. For more information about the many events during the week of the Bard & Broadside Poetry Festival, please check out this Website: <https://www.artspeaksgnv.org/north-central-florida-poetry-festival>

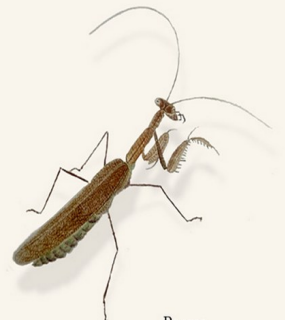
We're excited to announce that Lola Haskins will also be having a book launch this Sunday, March 30, at 2 pm at the Gainesville Library, Tower Road Branch, **3020 SW 75th St., Gainesville, FL 32608.**

Like Zeros, Like Pearls — Lola Haskins

If you can't make it to the book launch, you can pre-order a copy at this website:

<https://charlottelit.configio.com/pd/579/like-zeros-like-pearls-lola-haskins#&gid=1&pid=1>

Like Zeros,
Like Pearls



Poems
Lola Haskins

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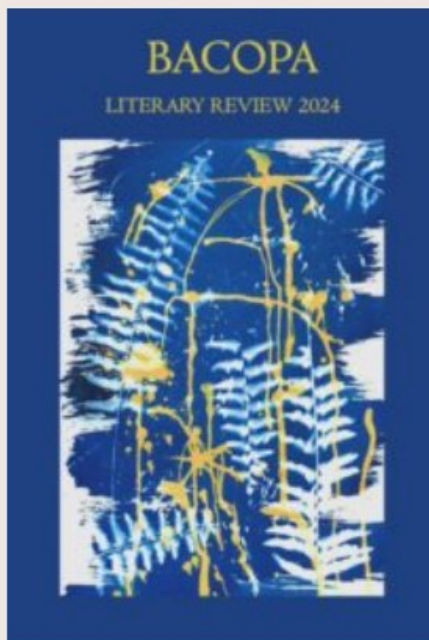
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Bacopa Literary Review



SUBMISSIONS ARE OPEN FOR THE BACOPA LITERARY REVIEW

Your chance to be published—Please send:

Fiction (up to 2,500 words)

Creative Nonfiction (up to 2,500 words)

Formal Poetry (1-3 poems)

Free Verse Poetry (1-2 poems)

Visual Poetry (1 poem)

WAG Member Submissions: 1 piece in any of the above categories, submitted via the fee-free 2025 WAG Member Submissions [portal](https://writersallianceofgainesville.submittable.com/submit/e07573a9-adcc-42aa-b6c5-36ca85ae1994/2025-wag-member-submissions) :

(<https://writersallianceofgainesville.submittable.com/submit/e07573a9-adcc-42aa-b6c5-36ca85ae1994/2025-wag-member-submissions>)

Members, please be sure to note which of our five genre categories your submission fits in your cover letter.

Check out the specific requirements at this link: <https://writersallianceofgainesville.submittable.com/submit>

[Check out this great opportunity for WAG Members coming from the Bacopa Editors:](#)

Dear WAG member,

In an effort to highlight and celebrate work by Writers Alliance of Gainesville members, this year's *Bacopa Literary Review* writing contest will include a "Best of WAG" award in each of our five submissions categories.

Winning pieces will be noted in the journal's table of contents, as well as in the body of the journal. These pieces will be featured on our Editors Blog and social media, and the authors will also be invited to read their work at our annual journal debut event. While there are no separate cash prizes for these awards, winners will still be considered for the cash prizes in their genre of the overall contest.

Submissions are currently open and will close on Monday, May 5th. We invite all WAG members to submit to the category of your choice. Please send us your work via the new fee-free, WAG members-only submissions portal on our Submittable page: <https://writersallianceofgainesville.submittable.com/submit>.

Please be sure to note which one of our categories you are submitting to (Fiction, Creative Nonfiction, Free Verse Poetry, Formal Poetry, or Visual Poetry) in your cover letter. Please also note that we read submissions "blind," i.e. anonymously, so please be sure that the only place your name appears in your submission is in your cover letter.

We look forward to reading your work,
--The editors of *Bacopa Literary Review*



The Other Book Event (Black History in Alachua County) continues in April:

Civil Rights Era to the Present

April 12, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

The fourth program in The Other Book series, **Civil Rights Era to the Present**, will be held on April 12, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Each program in this series has been held at a different location, and this one will be at The Cotton Club, 837 SE 7th Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32601.

Sponsored by the Alachua County Community Remembrance Project (ACCRP), the series was developed to help fill some of the gap left in Florida's public education. This educational opportunity is especially valuable for those writing about history, inequity, and/or cross-cultural relationships within our country.

TOPIC: Civil Rights to the Present, with Dr. Rik Stevenson and local elected officials from the County Commission, City Commission and School Board

“The Other Book: Black History in Alachua County” is co-sponsored by the Alachua County Community Remembrance Project, Alachua NAACP, and the Racial Justice Committee of United Church of Gainesville and funded by a generous grant from the Community Foundation of North Central Florida.

Registering for the April program is suggested but is not required. All are invited to attend. The courses are offered free, but donations are appreciated. You can register here: <https://truth.alachuacounty.us/calendar>



The Cotton Club Museum and Cultural Center, Inc. (CCMCC) is a 501(c)(3) not for profit corporation, located at 837 SE 7th Avenue in Gainesville, FL, that was established to preserve the historic Cotton Club building, and other buildings on the site, and develop a museum and cultural center.

Beta Readers and Authors Connect Through WAG!

Do you love to read? The Writers Alliance of Gainesville (WAG) has writers who seek beta readers. If interested, contact the Beta Reader Coordinator, [Leo Hines](#). WAG members who need beta readers should also contact him.

What is a Beta Reader? A Beta Reader reads an entire book and gives feedback in specific areas such as: general flow, characters, and whether the story holds the interest of the reader. What makes the difference between a “page turner” and a book that is boring? You can make a difference!

If you enjoy reading new books, and helping authors hatch them, become a Beta Reader today. You do not need to be a member of a WAG critique pod to be a Beta Reader. You don’t even need to be a member of WAG!

The Beta Reader looks for these traits:

- Does the book hold my interest?
- Are the characters well-defined and consistent throughout the book?
- Are there any issues with time sequences?
- Is the book too wordy – too much detail?
- Not enough detail?
- Are any parts confusing?
- Are there technical terms or other information that the reader may not understand?
- Does the book adhere to general guidelines for its specific genre? A mystery or a romance, for example, has specifics that should happen to make the book fit within that genre.
- What type of audience would enjoy reading the book?

A Beta Reader is not an editor and is **not** expected to edit specifically for grammar, sentence structure, or writing style. In fact, no editing expertise is needed, though any feedback in this area can be helpful to the author.

Both the Beta Reader and the author will agree on a time of completion, and the reader will adhere to guidelines provided by the author.

If you are interested in serving as a Beta Reader for WAG authors, or you are a WAG member who needs a Beta Reader, email the Beta Reader Coordinator, and please type “WAG Beta Reader” in your subject line.

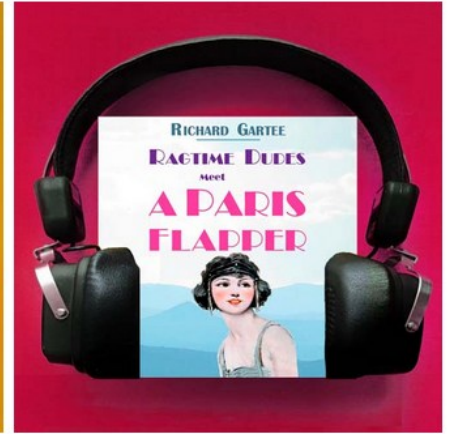
Contact the Beta Reader
Coordinator at:

Betareader
[@writersalliance.org](mailto:Betareader@writersalliance.org)



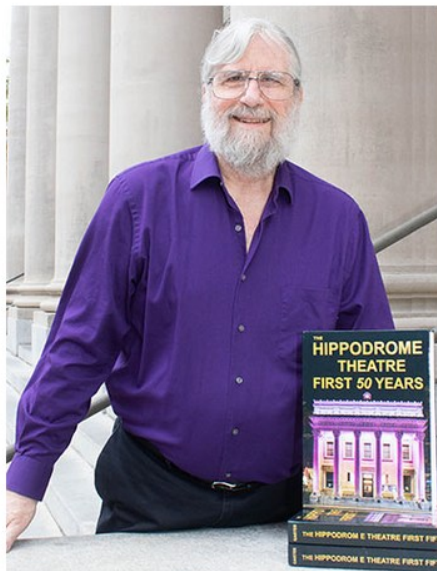
WAG BRAGS

Ragtime Dudes Series now in audio books



Literary Award
Winner

Congratulations to Richard Garte who has just had his books made available as audiobooks:



Richard Garte announces that his publisher has just released audio book editions of his humorous, award-winning Ragtime Dudes Series. The audio books are now available from the Google Play Store, with other platforms to follow. The titles are: *Ragtime Dudes at the World's Fair*, *Ragtime Dudes in a Thin Place*, and *Ragtime Dudes Meet a Paris Flapper*.

These are the first of Garte's eight novels to be produced as audio books. Links to the books can be found on his website, www.garte.com or searched for on Google Play.



THE INVADING SEA

FLORIDA AND THE CLIMATE CRISIS

WAG BRAGS

Congratulations to WAG Member Mallory Connor for the publication of two excellent environmental articles in the journal, *The Invading Sea*. The Feb. 6

article discusses the topics local authors covered at the recent Writers Alliance Sunshine State Book Festival, “Can stories change the world? Florida authors share their perspectives on climate fiction.”

(The article is available here: <https://www.theinvadingsea.com/2025/02/06/climate-fiction-cli-fi-sunshine-state-book-festival-gainesville-author-mallory-m-oconnor/>)

Mallory’s article “Fiction connects readers with reality of climate change,” was published in Nov. 2024.

The article explores the use of ecology and climate change in fiction as authors take on the changes in climate science. Though much of the cli-fi fiction is speculative, it is often based on actual research and current systems. As Mallory explained in the article, “The genre, as a whole, focuses on the potential consequences of climate change and how the characters cope (or fail to cope) with the outcomes. Psychologists assert that cli-fi stories help build “emotional resilience” and help individuals ‘connect emotionally’ with the climate crisis.”

(The full article is available here: <https://www.theinvadingsea.com/2024/11/12/climate-change-science-fiction-cli-fi-dan-bloom-literature-overstory-activism-young-readers/>)



Mallory O'Connor

The Invading Sea is a nonpartisan source for news, commentary and educational content about climate change and other environmental issues affecting Florida. The site is managed by Florida Atlantic University’s Center for Environmental Studies in the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. Nathan Crabbe, formerly the Opinion and Engagement Editor for the Gainesville Sun, is the newsletter editor.

If you’d like to submit to *The Invading Sea*, check out their editorial guidelines or sign up for the newsletter here: <https://www.theinvadingsea.com/about-us/>

FAU
CENTER FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES
Charles E. Schmidt College of Science
Florida Atlantic University

WAG BRAGS

Congratulations to WAG Member Tamm Waters on publication of her short story in the Flash Fiction Magazine—



Tamm Walters

2h · 🌐



For the past few months I've enjoyed getting a flash fiction story emailed to me each day from both 101 Words and [Flash Fiction Magazine](#). I decided to submit to 101 Words (the stories have to be exactly 101 words!), and they accepted it, and here it is as today's story (24 Feb). Hope everyone has a great week!

You can read Tamm's story here:

<https://101words.org/in-which-an-atheist-recalls-a-pivotal-moment-from-age-7-1973>

Want to sign up to get free stories? You can sign up here: <https://101words.org/flash-fiction->

FLASH FICTION MAGAZINE



WAG BRAGS



Reminder—the Writers Alliance and the Gainesville Fine Arts Association have collaborated again to produce both visual and literary art. This year, selected GFAA artists will create a work of art and a WAG member will write a piece inspired by the artist's work. The theme will be "[Hidden Histories](#)." Both pieces will be

featured together in an exhibition at the GFAA gallery from April 23 through May 24, 2025.

A reception for artists, authors, and the public is scheduled for Friday, April 25 during [Artwalk](#), 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.

Here's the current schedule, so mark your calendar!

April 7: Writing due to WAG representative

April 16: Writing due to GFAA

April 22: Installation of works at GFAA gallery

April 23: Exhibition opens

April 25: Reception for artists, authors, and the public during Artwalk, 7-10 p.m.

May 24: Last day of exhibit

WAG members received an invitation to participate, and 30 signed up. They will follow these parameters in submitting their written work:

Microsoft Word file

500 words or less, prose or poetry

Give the piece a title, and add author name

Arial font, single-spaced or 1.15 spaced, with 1-inch margins

No more than 2 pages

File name: # of the artwork, author's last name, and title of written piece

Submit to webmaster@writersalliance.org by April 7

No Twists for Twists' Sake: Earn Your Ending

March 20, 2025 by [Kathleen Barber](#)

Imagine you've just picked up the latest buzzy thriller, the one that has everyone on social media raving about the "shocking twist." You start reading, and you're really into it. It's a murder mystery with no shortage of suspects—the victim Jane's cheating husband Hugo, her jealous best friend, her unstable coworker, an obsessive delivery person—and you're having fun guessing which one is the culprit. You turn to the final page, full of anticipation ... only to discover the murderer was the victim's long-lost twin sister, a character who was never once mentioned in the preceding 300+ pages. *What?*

Is that a twist? Technically. But it's also an unearned ending. The author didn't take the time to lay the groundwork for that conclusion, and the reader is left feeling unsatisfied, even cheated.

Let's discuss some techniques and craft elements that will help you craft an ending that feels both surprising *and* satisfying. Note that while I focus on thrillers in this article, earning your ending is important across all genres. No matter whether you're writing a thriller or a romance or upmarket fiction or something else, you want your reader to feel fulfilled by the ending.

1. Sprinkle the clues

The most straightforward technique is sprinkling clues throughout the novel—while withholding the one element that ties them all together. As an example, in the imaginary thriller I described above, we might see clues throughout the novel that Hugo is the murderer—a single piece of jewelry left behind by his lover, a receipt proving that he wasn't where he said he was, an unexplained scratch on his face—but it isn't until a final clue slots into place that we reach the inescapable conclusion that Hugo is guilty.

2. Layer the clues with red herrings

To throw your reader off track, consider layering your legitimate clues with misdirection and red herrings. In our example, this would mean each time the author hinted at Hugo's guilt, they would also plant a false clue pointing toward someone else. In the same chapter we learned about Hugo's gambling problem, we might also find evidence that the obsessed delivery driver had been peering through the windows at night or following Jane around town.

CONT. Next Page

No Twists for Twists' Sake: Earn Your Ending—cont.

3. So many suspects

You can also throw so many suspects at the reader that you completely muddy the waters. Creating an ensemble cast can be one way of doing this, as can systematically introducing and dismissing additional suspects as you move through the book. The way this would work in our example would be to first throw suspicion on the delivery driver, only to reveal in the next chapter he had an airtight alibi. Suspicion might then move to her coworker, and the coworker would then be excluded. And so on, until the field narrows around your ultimate culprit. The trick is to present many options and make them all seem equally likely.

4. Set it up

You can also provide the answer at the outset of the book. I know that sounds counterintuitive: who wants to read a book when you already know what happens? It's actually a neat trick to keep the reader off-balance. In our example, we would strongly suspect Hugo at the beginning. But, as the novel progressed, that suspicion would be clouded by things like giving him an alibi, destroying his motive, and of course throwing suspicion on other characters. Later, when the author circled back to definitively show it was Hugo all along, the reader would be satisfied they called the ending—and more important, satisfied by the ride that took them there.

6. Interstitial elements

Incorporating interstitial elements like news articles, social media posts, and journal entries can provide clarity to the reader while leaving the narrator and other characters in the dark. In our fake example, useful interstitial elements could be Jane's journal entries revealing a darker side of Hugo or emails between Hugo and his lover.

7. Flash forwards

Starting the novel with a flash forward allows you to present a clue to reader right from the start. This is most effective when the clue is out of context and the reader can't make sense of it until much later. In our example, the book might open showing us the murderer leaving the scene of the crime, and the reader is given a small clue to his identity—such as a hidden tattoo—that doesn't come back to the story until much later.

No Twists for Twists' Sake: Earn Your Ending—cont.

8. Flashbacks

Flashbacks can help earn your ending because they give the reader a glimpse into a character's past or illustrate how things are set up. In our example, a useful flashback might reveal a dark secret from Jane and Hugo's past.

9. Dual timelines

Dual timelines are challenging but amazing when done well. In essence, you're telling two stories: the present-day story and a parallel story in the past. It's effective because you can gradually reveal the truth in one timeline while keeping the characters in the other timeline in the dark. In our example, the investigation into Jane's murder could play out in the present-day timeline while the past timeline reveals a surprising motive for Hugo—and it isn't until the storylines come together that the reader understands the full picture.

10. Unreliable narrator

Finally, there's everyone's favorite: the unreliable narrator. With an unreliable narrator, you can include direct—even obvious—clues that still throw the reader off because they're reluctant to accept anything the narrator says at face value. In our example, let's pretend the narrator is Jane's sister, who has a known substance abuse problem. She sees clues pointing to Hugo's guilt, but because she's under the influence at the time, no one believes her, not even the reader.

No matter which of these techniques and craft elements you incorporate into your novel, the important thing to keep in mind is that you want to leave your reader satisfied. Readers want to both be surprised by the ending *and* to feel as though they should have seen it coming, and so it's important to take the time to set things up and to earn your ending.



Kathleen Barber is an author and certified book coach. Her debut novel, *Truth Be Told*, was adapted by Reese Witherspoon's media company into a series that ran for three seasons on AppleTV+. Her third novel, *Both Things Are True*, is forthcoming in September 2025.

Visit her online at kathleenbarber.com.

Classes and Conferences



INTERVIEW: How to Pitch Your Book w/ Jane Friedman

APR

15

Tuesday, April 15

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM EDT



Zoom

Standard - USD

\$18.00

****This is a LIVE interview with author Jane Friedman about the craft of writing and reality of building a writing career. Attendees will be sent a recording after the interview. **** For more information, or to get tickets, sign up here: <https://lu.ma/cp0i0g2v>

Classes and Conferences



Rekindle your Creative Spark through
Meaningful Action, Writing, and Community

Begins May 1, 2025

Struggling to see how one voice matters? Looking for help with focus, inspiration, and accountability? If you're doubting your capacity to create or your ability to encourage positive change, then join the WRITEABILITY nonprofit's Sustaining Circle! Participate via Zoom with award-winning author Katey Schultz, who will offer free-writes, calls to action, and craft resources within a supportive community. Members will have the opportunity to meet authors, publicists, and publishers in bonus Q&A events. Program runs Thursdays from noon to 1:15 pm ET, May 1 through April 30, 2026, with a monthly cost of \$67. Register here: www.writeability.org/jointhecircle.

W*R*I*T*E

SLEUTHFEST

MAY 14-18, 2025

Hilton Bayfront

St. Petersburg, Florida

SleuthFest provides writers at any point in their publishing journey with techniques to improve their craft, information on publishing, marketing, and the business of writing, along with insight from best-selling authors, industry professionals, and forensics experts.

We also give authors networking opportunities that are an invaluable component of any writer's toolkit.

SleuthFest helps attendees achieve their publishing goals.

Register here: <https://sleuthfest.com/register/>

CONTESTS

Perkoff Prize Deadline Extended!

Extended Deadline: April 15, 2025

The deadline for the *Missouri Review's* Perkoff Prize has been extended to April 15, midnight PST. The Perkoff awards \$1000 and publication to writers of the best story, set of poems, or essay that engages in evocative ways with health, wellness, and medicine as judged by the editors. Fee: \$15. All entrants receive a free 1-year digital subscription, and all entries are considered for publication.

Full Guidelines here: <https://missourireview.com/contests/perkoff-prize/>

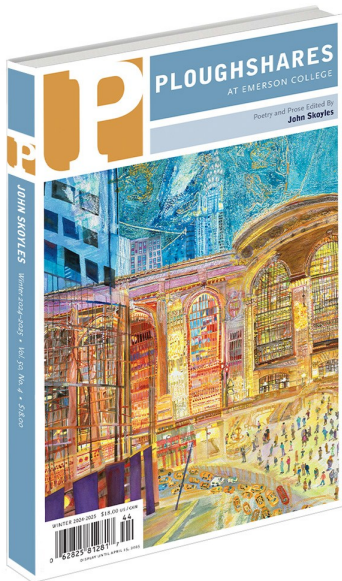


*W*R*I*T*E*

Submit to Ploughshares' Emerging Writer's Contest!

Deadline: May 15, 2025 at 12pm EST

The Emerging Writer's Contest is now open! Awarded in fiction, nonfiction, and poetry categories each year, *Ploughshares'* Emerging Writer's Contest recognizes works by writers who have yet to publish a book. Winners in each genre receive \$2,000, a conversation with Aevitas Creative Management, and publication in *Ploughshares*. Submit your writing by May 15th at 12pm EST for the chance to be discovered! pshr.us/ewc2025



Contests

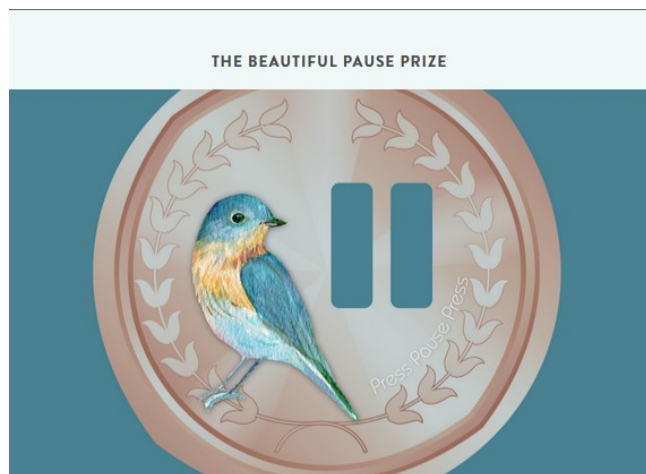
Bellevue Literary Review Prizes are Open for Submission through July 1

Deadline: July 1, 2025



Bellevue Literary Review's annual prizes recognize exceptional writing about health, healing, illness, the body, and the mind. For each genre, first prize is \$1,000 and honorable mention is \$300. Winners will be published in the Spring 2026 issue of BLR. The Goldenberg Prize for Fiction will be judged by Joan Silber. The Felice Buckvar Prize for Nonfiction will be judged by Nicole Chung. The John & Eileen Allman Prize for Poetry will be judged by Patricia Spears Jones. Deadline: July 1, 2025. Entry fee: \$20. blreview.org/blr-prizes

*W*R*I*T*E*



The 2025 Beautiful Pause Prize Open for Poetry Collections

Deadline: May 1, 2025

The Beautiful Pause Prize is a yearly prize of \$1,000 and the print publication of a full-length manuscript awarded to a writer of exceptional talent and heart. One runner-up will receive \$500 and publi-

cation of a series of poems in one of our print volumes. Submit your poetry manuscripts through May 1, 2025. We are looking for original, honest, beautiful poems from humans. We have no gates to keep. Haunt us from every corner of every place. Send us collections that make us pause, slow down, think, laugh, cry, and feel more connected to our fellow humans. As we always say: Send us whatever is in your hearts. [Read the guidelines here:](https://www.presspausepress.org/the-beautiful-pause-prize) <https://www.presspausepress.org/the-beautiful-pause-prize>

SUBMISSIONS



Palooka Seeks Chapbooks, Prose, Poetry, Artwork, Photography

Deadline: Year-round

Palooka is an international literary magazine. For over a decade we've featured new, up-and-coming, and established writers, artists, and photographers from around the world. We're open to diverse forms and styles and are always seeking unique chapbooks, fiction, poetry, nonfiction, artwork, photography, and graphic narratives. Submissions open year-round. palookamag.com

W*R*I*T*E

Kerouac Project Writers Residency

Open for Submissions

Deadline: April 14, 2025

The Kerouac Project of Orlando is looking for six writers to each spend two months living and working in the same house where Beat writer Jack Kerouac lived in 1957–58 when he wrote *The Dharma Bums*. The Project is accepting applications for its residency program between February 7 and April 14, 2025.



The selected writers will be announced in May. Selection is based on the quality of their submitted work. Each writer stays free with their utilities covered and a \$600 food and supplies stipend to use during their residency. Visit KerouacProject.org for more information.

SUBMISSIONS



Our Doors are Open

Deadline: Year-round

The Blue Mountain Review launched from Athens, Georgia in 2015 with the mantra, “We’re all south of somewhere.” As a journal of culture, the *BMR* strives to represent all life through its stories. Stories are vital to our survival. What we sing saves the soul. Our goal is to preserve and promote lives told well through prose, poetry, music, and the visual arts. We’ve published work from and interviews with Jericho Brown, Kelli Russell Agodon, Robert Pinsky, Rising Appalachia, Turkuaz, Michel Stone, Michael Flohr, Lee Herrick, Chen Chen, Michael Cudlitz, Pat Metheny, Melissa Studdard, Lyrics Born, Terry Kay, and Christopher Moore. bluemountainreview.submittable.com/submit

*W*R*I*T*E*

Konsume Magazine’s “State of the Media 2025”

Deadline: April 30, 2025

Do you have a talent for breaking down complex media issues into viral, meme-worthy insights? Can your words challenge authority without being tedious? Do you believe journalism should be as transparent as the power it scrutinizes? If so, we want to hear from you. **What We’re Looking For:** investigative deep dives on who really shapes news narratives, data-driven stories that visualize the state of journalism, punchy op-eds that call out corporate malfeasance in social media and news media landscapes, art-meets-analysis takes on propaganda, bias, and censorship, and pieces that make readers say, “Whoa. I never thought about it like that.” www.konsume.com/call-for-submissions/

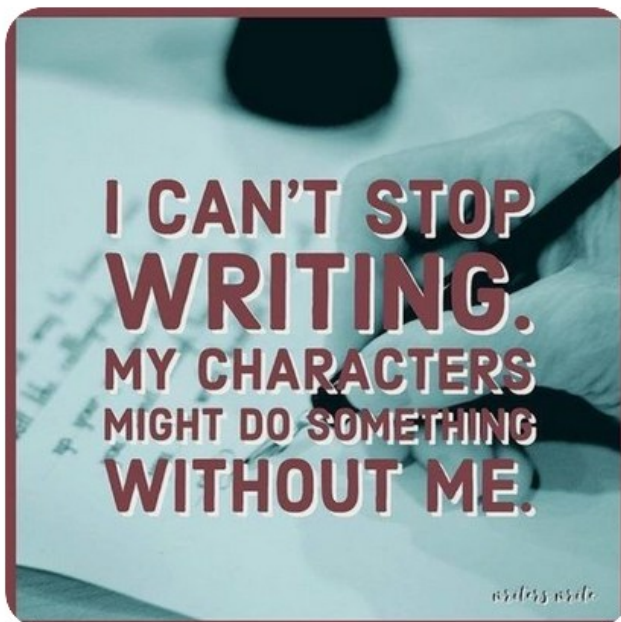


Writer's Alliance of Gainesville
A not-for-profit Florida corporation

P.O. Box 358396
Gainesville/Florida/32635-8396
352-336-8062/wagmail@cox.net

The Writers Alliance of Gainesville (WAG) promotes, encourages and supports aspiring and experienced regional writers. This goal is accomplished via WAG monthly meetings, public readings, ongoing small critique groups, a literary journal, writers' contests, and collaborations with schools and civic organizations to foster creative expression through the written word.

Writers Alliance—
www.writersalliance.org



All writing problems are psychological problems. Blocks usually stem from the fear of being judged. If you imagine the world listening, you'll never write a line. That's why privacy is so important. You should write first drafts as if they will never be shown to anyone.

- Erica Jong