

Center for the Study of Southern Culture



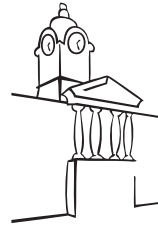
THE THIRTIETH  
**Oxford Conference for the Book**

The University of Mississippi • Oxford, Mississippi

April 3–5, 2024

[www.oxfordconferenceforthebook.com](http://www.oxfordconferenceforthebook.com)

# OXFORD CONFERENCE



## for the Book

### TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2024

#### 6:00 p.m. Prologue

Sheila Sundar, with *Habitations*, in conversation with  
Melissa Ginsburg  
Off Square Books, 129 Courthouse Square

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2024

#### 1:00 p.m. UM Campus Slavery Research Tour

Tour led by Don Guillory  
Meets on the steps of the Lyceum facing the Circle  
Free and open to the public

#### 6:00 p.m. Oxford Conference for the Book Authors' Party

Hosted by the Friends of the Library, the Willie  
Morris Awards for Southern Writing, and the  
Oxford Conference for the Book  
Music by Ole Miss Jazz Quintet  
Memory House/John Faulkner's House  
University of Mississippi Campus, 406 University Ave.  
(Advance Ticket Required)

### THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 2024

Free parking available for attendees at Overby Center

#### 9:30 a.m. "Following the Footprints of Slavery"

Welcome by Kathryn McKee  
Joseph McGill Jr. and Herb Frazier, *Sleeping with  
the Ancestors*  
Jodi Skipper, moderator  
Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics  
University of Mississippi Campus

#### 11:00 a.m. Welcome Lunch

Hosted by the Friends of the Library  
Archives and Special Collections  
J. D. Williams Library  
University of Mississippi Campus  
(Lunch is free, but registration appreciated)

#### 11:30 a.m. "National Book Awards Presents: Myth Making and Breaking"

Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah, *Chain-Gang All-Stars*  
José Olivarez, *Promises of Gold (Promesas de Oro)*  
Melissa Ginsburg, moderator  
Archives and Special Collections  
J. D. Williams Library  
University of Mississippi Campus

#### 1:00 p.m. "Notes on the State of America"

Heather Cox Richardson, *Democracy Awakening*  
Kathryn McKee, moderator  
Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics  
University of Mississippi Campus

#### 2:30 p.m. "The Poetry of Place"

January O'Neil, *Glitter Road*  
A. H. Jerriod Avant, *Muscadine*  
Saddiq Dzukogi, moderator  
Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics  
University of Mississippi Campus

#### 4:30 p.m. Square Books Presents: "Téa Obreht and *The Morningside*"

Téa Obreht, *The Morningside*  
Introduction and Q&A with Snowden Wright  
Off Square Books, 129 Courthouse Square  
Oxford Square

#### 6:00 p.m. Thacker Mountain Radio and Book Signing

Reading by Kaveh Akbar, *Martyr!*  
Music by Creekbed Carter Hogan, and Hope  
Clayburn and Soul Scrimmage  
The Powerhouse, 413 South 14th St.  
(Authors from Thursday's sessions will sign books at  
*Thacker Mountain Radio*)

#### 7:30 p.m. "Open Mic Night" with Derrick Harriell and the Southern Literary Festival

Oxford University Depot, 101 Depot St.

**FRIDAY, APRIL 5, 2024**

*Free parking available at Women's Terrace by the Student Union*

**10:00 a.m. "Southern Transplants: Diverse Connections with the South"**

Jen Fawkes, *Tales the Devil Told Me*  
Jennifer Maritza McCauley, *When Trying to Return Home*  
Gabriel Bump, *The New Naturals*  
Michael X. Wang, moderator  
Student Union Ballroom  
University of Mississippi Campus

**11:30 a.m. Lunch on Your Own**

**1:30 p.m. "Looking Backward to Move Forward"**

Eddie Glaude, *We Are the Leaders We Have Been Looking For*  
W. Ralph Eubanks, moderator  
Student Union Ballroom  
University of Mississippi Campus

**3:00 p.m. Oxford Conference for the Book and Southern Literary Festival Keynote**

Andre Dubus III, *Such Kindness and Ghost Dogs*  
Student Union Ballroom  
University of Mississippi Campus

**4:30 p.m. Winners of the Willie Morris Awards for Southern Writing**

Welcome by David Crews  
Lauren Crawford, "Galveston" (Poetry Winner)  
Cassandra Jackson, *The Wreck: A Daughter's Story of Becoming a Mother* (Nonfiction Winner)  
David Joy, *Those We Thought We Knew* (Fiction Winner)  
Amber Nichols-Buckley, moderator  
Off Square Books, 129 Courthouse Square

**5:30 p.m. A Willie Morris Awards and Oxford Conference for the Book Celebration**

Closing Reception and Book Signing  
Hosted by the Willie Morris Awards for Southern Writing  
Music by Ricky Burkhead, Greg Johnson, and Paul Tate  
Off Square Books, 129 Courthouse Square  
(Authors from Friday's sessions will be available to sign books)

**9:00 p.m. Postscript: "Noir at the Bar: A Gathering of Crime Writers and Musicians"**

Ace Atkins, William Boyle, Colin Brightwell, Tom Franklin, Derrick Harriell, Max Hipp, Lisa Howorth, David Joy, Tyler Keith, Clair Lamb, Tobi Ogundiran, Bea Setton, and Michael Farris Smith  
Music by Kell Kellum and Bark  
Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square

# Special Events

Register for events online at  
[www.oxfordconferenceforthebook.com/schedule](http://www.oxfordconferenceforthebook.com/schedule).

## UM Campus Slavery Research Tour

**Wednesday, April 3, at 1:00 p.m.**

The University of Mississippi Slavery Research Tour includes information about the development of the antebellum campus, the centrality of enslaved laborers in the construction and daily operation of the antebellum campus. Don Guillory leads the tour, which meets on the Lyceum steps facing the Circle. The tour is free and open to the public, but advance registration is appreciated.

## Oxford Conference for the Book Authors' Party

**Wednesday, April 3, at 6:00 p.m.**

Held at the historic Memory House, the onetime home of author John Faulkner, on the University of Mississippi campus (406 University Ave.), this much-loved opening reception is a lively event with wonderful food, drinks, and conversation between fellow conference attendees and conference authors. This is a ticketed event.

*Tickets are \$50 per person. Purchase tickets through the conference website. A limited number of tickets will be available at the door.*

## Welcome Lunch

**Thursday, April 4, at 11:00 a.m.**

This box lunch in the J. D. Williams Library's Archives and Special Collections is hosted by the Friends of the University of Mississippi Library. The "National Book Awards Presents" session will begin at 11:30 and will include National Book Awards finalist Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah, longlistee José Olivarez, and poet Melissa Ginsberg. The box lunch is free, but advance registration is appreciated.



## Thacker Mountain Radio

**Thursday, April 4, at 6:00 p.m.**

Thacker Mountain Radio will have a special OCB show at the Powerhouse, just off the Oxford Square (413 South 14th St.). The live show will feature readings from Kaveh Akbar followed by music from Creekbed Carter Hogan, and Hope Clayburn and Soul Scrimmage. This event is free, no registration necessary.



## "Noir at the Bar: A Gathering of Crime Writers and Musicians"

**Friday, April 5, at 9:00 p.m.**

Author William Boyle revives his Oxford tradition of gathering local crime writers and musicians at Ajax Diner (118 Courthouse Square). Hear readings from Ace Atkins, William Boyle, Colin Brightwell, Tom Franklin, Derrick Harriell, Max Hipp, Lisa Howorth, David Joy, Tyler Keith, Clair Lamb, Tobi Ogundiran, Bea Setton, and Michael Farris Smith, alongside music by Kell Kellum and Bark. This event is free, no registration necessary.

# The Participants



## Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah

### *Chain-Gang All-Stars*

Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah is a 2023 National Book Award finalist for his daring and most recent novel, *Chain-Gang All-Stars*. He is the author of the bestselling short story collection *Friday Black*, and his work has appeared in numerous publications. In the *Breakwater Review*, ZZ Packer selected Adjei-Brenyah as the winner of the 2nd Annual Breakwater Review Fiction Contest. Originally from Spring Valley, New York, he graduated from SUNY Albany and earned his MFA from Syracuse University.

**Thursday, 11:30 a.m., Archives and Special Collections, J. D. Williams Library**



BEOWULF SHEEHAN

## Kaveh Akbar

### *Martyr!*

Kaveh Akbar is the author of two poetry collections, *Pilgrim Bell* and *Calling a Wolf a Wolf*; a chapbook, *Portrait of the Alcoholic*; and the recently published novel *Martyr!*. He is also the editor of *The Penguin Book of Spiritual Verse: 100 Poets on the Divine*. The recipient of honors including multiple Pushcart Prizes, a Civitella Ranieri Foundation Fellowship, and the Levis Reading Prize, Akbar was born in Tehran, Iran, and teaches at the University of Iowa and in the low-residency MFA programs at Randolph College and Warren Wilson. In 2014, Kaveh founded *Divedapper*, a home for dialogues with the most vital voices in American poetry.

**Thursday, 6:00 p.m., The Powerhouse, 413 South 14th St.**



JOE WORTHEN

## Ace Atkins

### *Don't Let the Devil Ride*

Ace Atkins is a *New York Times*–bestselling author of more than two dozen novels. Atkins, a former SEC football player, started his career as a crime beat reporter in Florida before becoming a full-time novelist. Since then, he's written eleven books in the Quinn Colson series and several true crime novels based on infamous crooks and killers. He was also chosen by Robert B. Parker's family to continue the Spenser series in 2010, adding ten novels to that iconic franchise. He lives and works in Oxford, Mississippi.

**Friday, 9:00 p.m., Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square**



INDIE FILM LAB

## A. H. Jerriod Avant

### *Muscadine*

A. H. Jerriod Avant is a poet from Longtown, Mississippi, whose work has appeared in the *Boston Review*, *Pinwheel*, *Callaloo*, the *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *Obsidian*, the *Yale Review*, and other journals. He graduated from Jackson State University and earned MFA degrees from Spalding University and New York University. He is currently an adjunct instructor of English at the University of Mississippi. His debut collection, *Muscadine* (2023), recently won the 2024 Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters award for Poetry.

**Thursday, 2:30 p.m., Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics**



## Bark

### *Loud* (LP)

Bark is a product of the melding of two keenly honed, fiercely independent musical minds, Tim and Susan Lee. Situated somewhere between garage rock, punk rock, power pop, and the Delta blues, Bark finds a twentieth-century niche from their Mississippi homestead. Their latest LP, *Loud*, came out in 2023 on labels Dial Back Sound and Cool Dog Sound out of Water Valley, Mississippi. The album recently won the 2024 Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters award for Music Composition (Contemporary).

**Friday, 9:00 p.m., Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square**



## William Boyle

### *Shoot the Moonlight Out*

William Boyle is the author of eight works of fiction set in the southern Brooklyn neighborhood of Gravesend, where he was born and raised. His first novel, *Gravesend*, was nominated for the Grand Prix de Littérature Policière in France and shortlisted for the John Creasey (New Blood) Dagger in the UK. He is the author of numerous other books, including his most recent, *Shoot the Moonlight Out*, which was listed by CrimeReads as one of the ten best noir novels of 2021. His next book, coming in 2025, is *Saint of the Narrows Street*. He lives in Oxford, Mississippi.

**Friday, 9:00 p.m., Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square**



## Colin Brightwell

Colin Brightwell is a Kansas City, Missouri, native. His work has appeared in *Reckon Review*, *Bull*, *Flyover Country Literary Magazine*, *Guilty Crime Story Magazine*, and *past-ten*. His debut collection, *Nothing Good Ever Happens in a Flyover State*, is forthcoming from Cowboy Jamboree Press in 2025. He holds an MFA in fiction from the University of Mississippi.

**Friday, 9:00 p.m., Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square**



## Gabriel Bump

### *The New Naturals*

Gabriel Bump grew up in South Shore, Chicago. He received his MFA in fiction from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. His work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *McSweeney's*, *Guernica*, *Electric Literature*, and other publications. He is an assistant professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. *The New Naturals* is his first novel.

**Friday, 10:00 a.m., Student Union Ballroom, University of Mississippi Campus**

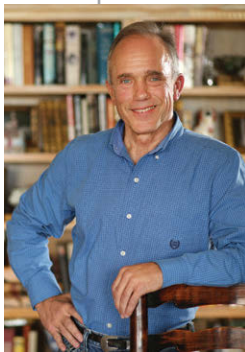


## Lauren Crawford

“Galveston”

Lauren Crawford earned her MFA in poetry from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, where she served as an associate editor for *Crab Orchard Review*. A native of Houston, Texas, she was the second-place winner of the 2020 Louisiana State Poetry Society Award from the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, and her poetry has either appeared in or is forthcoming in *Poet Lore*, *Passengers Journal*, the *Appalachian Review*, the *American Journal of Poetry*, the *Midwest Quarterly*, the *Worcester Review*, the *Spectacle*, and elsewhere. Crawford currently teaches writing at the University of New Haven and is a reader for Palette Poetry.

**Friday, 4:30 p.m., Off Square Books, 129 Courthouse Square, Oxford Square**



ADAM ROBINSON

## David Crews

David Crews is the clerk of court for the US District Court in the Northern District of Mississippi and is a former US Marshal. In 1982, David worked with Gov. William Winter to secure a pioneering piece of legislation that brought a statewide system of kindergartens and compulsory school attendance to Mississippi. He is the author of *The Mississippi Book of Quotations*, and he is a judge for the Willie Morris Awards for Southern Writing. He is married to the lovely Claire Shel mire Crews. They have two wonderful children and four ferociously lovable dogs.

**Friday, 4:30 p.m., Off Square Books, 129 Courthouse Square, Oxford Square**



## Andre Dubus III

*Such Kindness and Ghost Dogs: On Killers and Kin*

Andre Dubus III is a previous National Book Award finalist and highly acclaimed author of nine books including *House of Sand and Fog*, *The Garden of Last Days*, *Townie* and, most recently, the novel *Such Kindness* and a collection of personal essays, *Ghost Dogs: On Killers and Kin*. Among his achievements are a Guggenheim Fellowship, the National Magazine Award for Fiction, two Pushcart Prizes, and an American Academy of Arts and Letters Award in Literature. His books are published in more than twenty-five languages, and he teaches at the University of Massachusetts Lowell.

**Friday, 3:00 p.m., Student Union Ballroom, University of Mississippi Campus**



## Saddiq Dzukogi

Saddiq Dzukogi is a Nigerian poet and assistant professor of English at Mississippi State University. He is the author of *Your Crib, My Qibla*, selected by Carolyn Forché as winner of the 2021 Derek Walcott Prize for Poetry and the 2022 Julie Suk Award. He is the recipient of numerous fellowships from the Nebraska Art Council, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, PEN America, and Ebedi International Residency. His poetry is featured in various publications, including *POETRY*, *Ploughshares*, *Kenyon Review*, *Poetry London*, *Guernica*, *Georgia Review*, *Gulf Coast*, and *Prairie Schooner*. He lives and writes from Starkville, Mississippi, and is at work on his next book, an epic poem, “Bakandamiya.”

**Thursday, 2:30 p.m., Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics**



## W. Ralph Eubanks

W. Ralph Eubanks is the author of *A Place Like Mississippi*, which takes readers on a complete tour of the real and imagined landscapes that have inspired generations of authors. The book honors and explores the landscape of Mississippi and its history—and reveals the many ways this landscape has informed the work of some of America’s most treasured authors. Eubanks is the Black Power at Ole Miss Faculty Fellow at the University of Mississippi’s Center for the Study of Southern Culture.

**Friday, 1:30 p.m., Student Union Ballroom, University of Mississippi Campus**



## Jen Fawkes

*Tales the Devil Told Me*

Jen Fawkes is the author of *Mannequin and Wife*, a Shirley Jackson Award nominee and *Foreword* INDIES gold medalist; *Tales the Devil Told Me*, a World Fantasy Award finalist; and *Largehearted Boy* Favorite Story Collection of 2021. Her fiction won the 2021 Porter Fund Literary Prize and has appeared in *One Story*, *Lit Hub*, the *Iowa Review*, and others. A two-time finalist for the Calvino Prize in fabulist fiction, Fawkes lives in Little Rock, Arkansas. Her debut novel, *Daughters of Chaos*, is coming in July 2024 from Abrams.

**Friday, 10:00 a.m., Student Union Ballroom, University of Mississippi Campus**



## Tom Franklin

*Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter*

Tom Franklin is the author of five books, including *Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter*, which won the *Los Angeles Times* book prize for mystery/thriller, the Willie Morris Award for Southern Fiction, and the UK’s Golden Dagger Award. He recently received the 2024 Harper Lee Award for Alabama’s Distinguished Writer. Franklin lives in Oxford with his wife, Beth Ann Fennelly, and teaches in the University of Mississippi MFA in Creative Writing Program.

**Friday, 9:00 p.m., Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square**



## Herb Frazier

*Sleeping with the Ancestors: How I Followed the Footprints of Slavery*

Herb Frazier is a journalist and the author of the nonfiction books *Behind God’s Back: Gullah Memories*, *We Are Charleston: Tragedy and Triumph at Mother Emanuel*, and the forthcoming *Crossing the Sea on a Sacred Song*. His latest book, written with Joseph McGill Jr., is *Sleeping with the Ancestors: How I Followed the Footprints of Slavery*.

**Thursday, 9:30 a.m., Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics**

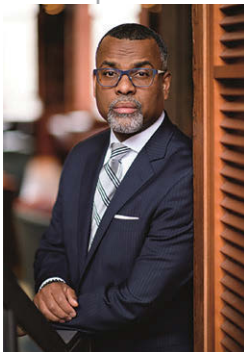


### Melissa Ginsburg

Melissa Ginsburg is the author of the poetry collections *Doll Apollo* (winner of the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Poetry Award) and *Dear Weather Ghost*, the novels *The House Uptown* and *Sunset City*, and three poetry chapbooks, *Arbor*, *Double Blind*, and *Apollo*. Originally from Houston, Texas, Ginsburg is associate professor of creative writing and literature at the University of Mississippi and serves as associate editor of *Tupelo Quarterly*. She lives in Oxford, Mississippi.

**Tuesday, 6:00 p.m., Off Square Books, 129 Courthouse Square**

**Thursday, 11:30 a.m., Archives and Special Collections, J. D. Williams Library**



SAMEER A. KHAN

### Eddie S. Glaude Jr.

*We Are the Leaders We Have Been Looking For*

Eddie S. Glaude Jr. is the author of several books, including *We Are the Leaders We Have Been Looking For*, *Democracy in Black*, and the *New York Times* bestseller *Begin Again: James Baldwin's America and Its Urgent Lessons for Our Own*, winner of the Harriet Beecher Stowe Book Prize. He frequently appears in the media as an MSNBC contributor on programs like *Morning Joe* and *Deadline: White House*. A native of Moss Point, Mississippi, Glaude is the James S. McDonnell Distinguished University Professor at Princeton University.

**Friday, 1:30 p.m., Student Union Ballroom, University of Mississippi Campus**



NADIA ALEXIS

### Derrick Harriell

*Come Kingdom*

Derrick Harriell is the director of the African American studies program at the University of Mississippi and the Otilie Schillig Associate Professor of English, African American Studies, and Creative Writing at the University of Mississippi. He holds a PhD in English from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee and an MFA in creative writing from Chicago State University. A two-time Pushcart Prize Nominee, he is the author of four collections of poetry and was the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters 2014 poetry award winner for his collection *Ropes*. His latest poetry collection, *Come Kingdom*, was published in 2022.

**Friday, 9:00 p.m., Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square**



### Max Hipp

*What Doesn't Kill You Opens Your Heart*

Max Hipp is a teacher, writer, and musician from Oxford, Mississippi. His work has appeared in *Southern Humanities Review*, *Cheap Pop*, *SmokeLong Quarterly*, and *Black Warrior Review*, among others. He teaches literature and creative writing at the University of Mississippi. *What Doesn't Kill You Opens Your Heart* is his first book.

**Friday, 9:00 p.m., Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square**





## Lisa Howorth

### *Summerlings*

Lisa Howorth was born in Washington, DC, where her family has lived for four generations. She is a former librarian and the author of the novels *Flying Shoes* and *Summerlings*. She has written on art, travel, dogs, and music for the *Oxford American* and *Garden & Gun*, among other publications. She lives in Oxford, Mississippi, where she and her husband, Richard, founded Square Books in 1979.

**Friday, 9:00 p.m., Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square**



KURT EGERING

## Cassandra Jackson

### *The Wreck: A Daughter's Memoir of Becoming a Mother*

Cassandra Jackson is a professor of English at the College of New Jersey, where she teaches classes about African American literature and visual culture. She is a coauthor of *The Toni Morrison Book Club* and has published two books on race in US literature and art. She has written about racial oppression in everyday life in *HuffPost* and the *Washington Post*, and her latest book, *The Wreck: A Daughter's Memoir of Becoming a Mother*, is the nonfiction winner of the Willie Morris Award for Southern Writing. She lives in New Jersey with her husband and two children.

**Friday, 4:30 p.m., Off Square Books, 129 Courthouse Square, Oxford Square**



ASHLEY T. EVANS

## David Joy

### *Those We Thought We Knew*

David Joy is the author of *When These Mountains Burn* (winner of the 2020 Dashiell Hammett Award), *The Line That Held Us* (winner of the 2018 Southern Book Prize), *The Weight of This World*, and *Where All Light Tends to Go* (Edgar Award finalist for Best First Novel). His stories and creative nonfiction have appeared in several publications, and he is the author of the memoir *Growing Gills: A Fly Fisherman's Journey*. His latest book, *Those We Thought We Knew*, is this year's fiction winner of the Willie Morris Award for Southern Writing. Joy lives in Tuckasegee, North Carolina.

**Friday, 4:30 p.m., Off Square Books, 129 Courthouse Square, Oxford Square**

**Friday, 9:00 p.m., Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square**



## Tyler Keith

### *The Mark of Cain* (novel), *Hell to Pay* (LP)

Tyler Keith is a musician and writer born and raised in the Florida panhandle. He moved to Mississippi where he studied writing under Barry Hannah, then spent the next twenty years writing songs and playing in the bands the Neckbones, Tyler Keith and the Preacher's Kids, Tyler Keith and the Apostles, and Teardrop City, making fourteen albums and touring in the US and Europe. He later returned to the University of Mississippi and earned a master's degree in Southern Studies and an MFA in documentary expression. He lives in Oxford, and *The Mark of Cain* is his first novel.

**Friday, 9:00 p.m., Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square**



MARIO MARTINEZ

## Kell Kellum

*See Yourself In* (LP)

Kell Kellum is most well known for his side work with Jimbo Mathus, Water Liars, Anne Freeman, Andrew Bryant, and Young Valley. On his albums, *Adding to the Ashes* and *See Yourself In*, Kellum takes center stage and unravels masterpieces of his own. “As a pedal steel player, he bends notes so hard he breaks your heart,” says Oxford novelist William Boyle. “Two beers in, and you’re crying.” Kellum is also, since 2022, the operations assistant at the Center for the Study of Southern Culture.

**Friday, 9:00 p.m., Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square**



## Clair Lamb

Willie Morris Awards for Southern Literature Juror

Clair Lamb is a writer, editor, and researcher who has served as a judge for the Willie Morris Award for Southern Fiction since 2009. Her clients include internationally bestselling novelists John Connolly, Joseph Finder, and Lisa Lutz. She was assistant editor of the Edgar, Anthony, and Agatha Awards–winning anthology *Books to Die For*. She lives in northern Virginia.

**Friday, 9:00 p.m., Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square**



JESSE BREIN

## Jennifer Maritza McCauley

*When Trying to Return Home*

Jennifer Maritza McCauley is the writer and poet behind the hybrid collection *SCAR ON/SCAR OFF* and the short story collection *When Trying to Return Home*. She has been awarded fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Kimbilio, CantoMundo, and the Sundress Academy for the Arts. She holds an MFA from Florida International University and a PhD in creative writing and literature from the University of Missouri. Based in Houston, Texas, she is the assistant professor of literature and creative writing at the University of Houston–Clear Lake.

**Friday, 10:00 a.m., Student Union Ballroom, University of Mississippi Campus**



## Joseph McGill Jr.

*Sleeping with the Ancestors: How I Followed the Footprints of Slavery*

Joseph McGill Jr. is the founder of the Slave Dwelling Project and co-author of *Sleeping with the Ancestors: How I Followed the Footprints of Slavery*. In years prior, he was a field officer for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the executive director of the African American Museum in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and the director of history and culture at Penn Center, St. Helena Island, South Carolina. He was also the park ranger at Fort Sumter who appears in the book *Confederates in the Attic* by Tony Horwitz. He holds a bachelor of arts degree in professional English from South Carolina State University.

**Thursday, 9:30 a.m., Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics**



## Kathryn McKee

Kathryn McKee is the director of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture and McMullan Professor of Southern Studies and Professor of English at the University of Mississippi. She is the author of *Reading Reconstruction: Sherwood Bonner and the Literature of the Post-Civil War South*, and her work has appeared in various journals, including *American Literature*, *Legacy*, *Southern Literary Journal*, and *Mississippi Quarterly*. She has a PhD in American Literature from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**Thursday, 1:00 p.m., Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics**



## Amber Nichols-Buckley

Amber Nichols-Buckley is a lecturer in the Department of Writing and Rhetoric at the University of Mississippi. Her background in classroom teaching inspires her work as co-chair of the Transitioning to College Writing Symposium. She also enjoys serving as a nonfiction judge for the Willie Morris Awards for Southern Writing.

**Friday, 4:30 p.m., Off Square Books, 129 Courthouse Square, Oxford Square**



ILAN HAREL

## Téa Obreht

### *The Morningside*

Téa Obreht is the internationally bestselling author of *The Tiger's Wife*, which won the 2011 Orange Prize for Fiction and was a finalist for the National Book Award. Her second novel, *Inland*, was an instant bestseller, won the Southwest Book Award, and was a finalist for the Dylan Thomas Prize. Her work has appeared in *The Best American Short Stories*, the *New Yorker*, the *Atlantic*, *Harper's*, and *Zoetrope: All-Story*. Originally from the former Yugoslavia, Obreht now resides in Wyoming. Her latest novel is *The Morningside*.

**Thursday, 4:30 p.m., Off Square Books, 129 Courthouse Square, Oxford Square**



## Tobi Ogundiran

### *Jackal, Jackal: Tales of the Dark and Fantastic*

Tobi Ogundiran is the author of the short story collection *Jackal, Jackal: Tales of the Dark and Fantastic* and the upcoming *In the Shadow of the Fall*. He has been nominated for British Science Fiction Association, Nommo, and Shirley Jackson awards. His short fiction has been featured on the podcast *LeVar Burton Reads* but also appears in journals such as *Lightspeed*, *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*, and in several year's-best anthologies. Born and raised in Nigeria, he now lives and works in Oxford.

**Friday, 9:00 p.m., Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square**



MERCEDES ZAPATA

## José Olivarez

### *Promises of Gold (Promesas de Oro)*

José Olivarez is the son of Mexican immigrants. His debut book of poems, *Citizen Illegal*, was a finalist for the PEN/Jean Stein Award and a winner of the 2018 Chicago Review of Books Poetry Prize. It was named a top book of 2018 by the *Adroit Journal*, NPR, and the New York Public Library. Along with Felicia Chavez and Willie Perdomo, he coedited the poetry anthology *The BreakBeat Poets Vol. 4: LatiNext*. He cohosts the poetry podcast *The Poetry Gods*. His most recent collection of poems, *Promises of Gold (Promesas de Oro)*, was longlisted in 2023 for a National Book Award.

**Thursday, 11:30 a.m., Archives and Special Collections, J. D. Williams Library**



JOHN ANDREWS

## January Gill O'Neil

### *Glitter Road*

January Gill O'Neil is the poet and author of *Rewilding*, *Misery Islands*, and *Underlife* whose poem “At the Rededication of the Emmett Till Memorial” was a co-winner of the 2022 Allen Ginsberg Poetry Award. Her latest collection, *Glitter Road*, reflects her time spent as the Grisham Writer in Residence in Oxford: “the Velvet Ditch: / a place you can fall into, get comfortable among confederate rebels.” She is an associate professor at Salem State University, former executive director of the Massachusetts Poetry Festival, and currently serves on the Association of Writers and Writing Programs’ board of directors.

**Thursday, 2:30 p.m., Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics**



## Heather Cox Richardson

### *Democracy Awakening*

Heather Cox Richardson is professor of history at Boston College. She has written about the Civil War, Reconstruction, the Gilded Age, and the American West in award-winning books and most recently authored the bestselling *Democracy Awakening: Notes on the State of America*. Her work has appeared in the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, and the *Guardian*, among other outlets. Her nightly newsletter, *Letters from an American*, reaches over a million readers.

**Thursday, 1:00 p.m., Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics**



BEN NASON

## Bea Setton

### *Berlin*

Bea Setton was born in France and has lived in Paris, Colombia, the US, and Berlin, the city that inspired her debut novel, *Berlin*. She studied at Cambridge for a master’s in philosophy and theology, which gave her the idea for her second book, *Plaything*, to be published this June. Setton currently lives in Oxford, where she is writing—and setting—her third novel.

**Friday, 9:00 p.m., Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square**



## Jodi Skipper

Jodi Skipper is associate professor of anthropology and Southern Studies at the University of Mississippi. She is coeditor of *Navigating Souths: Transdisciplinary Explorations of a US Region* and, most recently, author of *Behind the Big House: Reconciling Slavery, Race, and Heritage in the US South*.

**Thursday, 9:30 a.m., Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics**



PHILIPPE MATSAS

## Michael Farris Smith

### *Salvage This World*

Michael Farris Smith is an award-winning writer whose novels have appeared on Best of the Year lists with *Esquire*, NPR, *Southern Living*, *Garden & Gun*, *Book Riot*, and numerous other outlets. He has also written the feature-film adaptations of his novels *Desperation Road* and *The Fighter* (titled for the screen as *Rumble through the Dark*). His most recent book is *Salvage This World*. He lives in Oxford, Mississippi, with his wife and daughters.

**Friday, 9:00 p.m., Ajax Diner, 118 Courthouse Square**



CLAIRE BANGSER

## Sheila Sundar

### *Habitations*

Sheila Sundar is an assistant professor of English and creative writing at the University of Mississippi. Her writing has appeared in the *Virginia Quarterly Review*, the *Massachusetts Review*, the *Threepenny Review*, and elsewhere. *Habitations* is her debut novel.

**Tuesday, 6:00 p.m., Off Square Books, 129 Courthouse Square**



## Michael X. Wang

Michael X. Wang is an assistant professor in the University of Mississippi Department of English. He was born in Fenyang, a small coal-mining city in China's mountainous Shanxi Province. Wang immigrated to the United States when he was six and has lived in ten states. He holds a PhD in literature from Florida State University and an MFA in fiction from Purdue. His story collection, *Further News of Defeat*, won the 2021 PEN/Robert W. Bingham Prize and the 2022 Great Lakes Colleges Association's New Writers Award. His debut novel, *Lost in the Long March*, was published in November 2023.

**Friday, 10:00 a.m., Student Union Ballroom, University of Mississippi Campus**



T. PAUL GANDY

## Snowden Wright

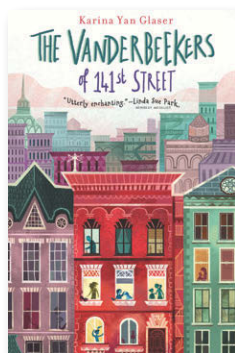
*The Queen City Detective Agency*

Snowden Wright is the author of *American Pop*, a *Wall Street Journal* WSJ+ Book of the Month and NPR Best Book of the Year. He has written for the *Atlantic*, *Salon*, *Esquire*, *The Millions*, and the *New York Daily News*, among other publications, and previously worked as a fiction reader at the *New Yorker*, *Esquire*, and the *Paris Review*. Recipient of the Marguerite and Lamar Smith Fellowship from the Carson McCullers Center, Wright lives in Yazoo County, Mississippi. His third novel, *The Queen City Detective Agency*, is forthcoming from HarperCollins in August 2024.

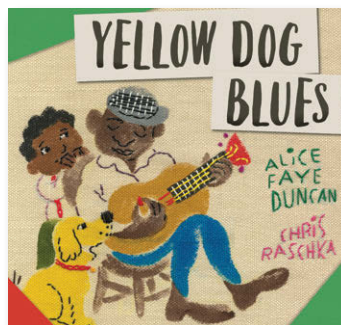
**Thursday, 4:30 p.m., Off Square Books, 129 Courthouse Square, Oxford Square**

## Children's Book Festival

The 2024 Children's Book Festival took place on Thursday, March 28, at the Ford Center for Performing Arts. The festival serves more than 1,200 first- and fifth-graders from schools in Lafayette County and Oxford. Committees made up of local school librarians, teachers, and representatives from the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, the Lafayette County Literacy Council (sponsor of the first grade), Junior Auxiliary (sponsor of the fifth grade), and Square Books, Jr. choose the books each year. The Oxford Conference for the Book then invites those authors to present programs at the Ford Center to each grade.



The first-grade author this year was Alice Faye Duncan. Duncan has written more than a dozen books for children, including *A Song for Gwendolyn Brooks* and *Martin, Memphis, and the Mountaintop*. Her most recent book is *Yellow Dog Blues*. The

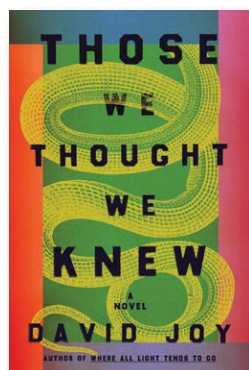


fifth-grade author was the *New York Times*–bestselling writer and illustrator Karina Glaser, with her book is *The Vanderbeekers of 141st St.*

The Children's Book Festival is underwritten by the Elaine Hoffman Scott Memorial Fund.

## The Willie Morris Awards for Southern Writing

The Willie Morris Awards for Southern Writing seeks to honor rising authors and, by extension, spread appreciation for contemporary southern literature. In the spirit of the awards' namesake, winning authors address southern themes with an air of hope. From hundreds of nominations, the Willie Morris Awards for Southern Writing are pleased to announce our 2023 winners. Hear them read at the concluding session Friday, April 5, at 4:30 at Off Square Books, with a book signing and reception to follow.



WILLIE  
MORRIS  
AWARDS

FOR SOUTHERN WRITING

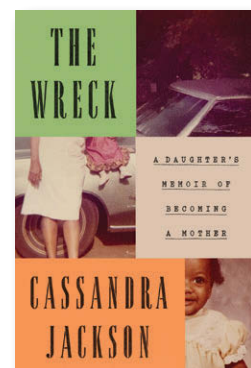
The 2023 Willie Morris Awards for Southern Writing winner for fiction is David Joy for his novel, *Those We Thought We Knew*. This year's winner for nonfiction is Cassandra Jackson for *The Wreck: A Daughter's Story of Becoming a Mother*, and the

winner for poetry is Lauren Crawford for her poem "Galveston."

Mississippi author Willie Morris served as the University of Mississippi's writer-in-residence from 1980 to 1991, where he stimulated students' creativity and passion for the written word. His own works, notably *North toward Home* and *My Dog Skip*, reflect his homeplace with both honesty and optimism.

Willie Morris Awards founders Dave Williams and Reba White Williams

sought to continue Morris's tradition, aptly suited for the Oxford Conference for the Book. Since moving to the University of Mississippi in 2019, the Willie Morris Awards have become an annual event integral to the book conference and a staple of the University of Mississippi's Department of Writing and Rhetoric.



# Center for the Study of Southern Culture



The Center for the Study of Southern Culture, founded in 1977, is an educational institute at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, Mississippi, and the first regional studies center devoted to the South. The Center's mission is to investigate, document, interpret, and teach about the American South through academic inquiry and publications, documentary studies of film, photography, and oral history, and public outreach programs. The interdisciplinary Southern Studies faculty and the undergraduate and graduate degree programs are the core of the Center's work.

Since its founding, the Center has become a focal point for innovative education and research on the American South, strengthening the University's instructional program in the humanities, promoting scholarship on many aspects of southern culture, and encouraging public understanding of the South as a diverse and complex space.

The Center will celebrate fifty years on the University of Mississippi campus in 2027. Keep an eye on the Center's website and social media for events leading up to the anniversary.

## Anne Scott Barrett Paints Vibrant Watercolor for Poster

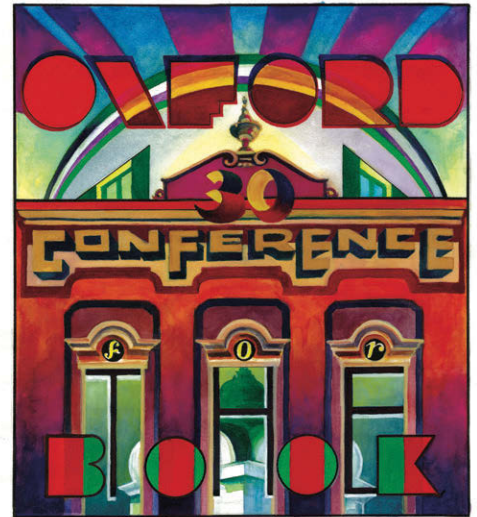
To mark the thirtieth convening of the Oxford Conference for the Book, the conference organizers worked with Oxford-based artist Anne Scott Barrett to create artwork emblematic of the rich history and promising future for the conference.

The official 2024 poster envisions the history of collaboration behind the conference in a collage of familiar forms and stunning color. Noteworthy architectural details move the eye from the university campus to the historic downtown Square, referencing the longest-standing anchors of the conference map. At the top, Barnard Observatory glows in a painted sunset. The 1859 Greek Revival building, with its unmistakable green shutters, houses the Center for the Study

of Southern Culture. Below, the windows of Square Books are recognizable to booklovers across Mississippi. Here, they reflect the Lafayette County Courthouse, where conference attendees have traditionally gathered for author panels. In geometric lettering, "Oxford Conference for the Book" settles into the cityscape behind it, in much the same way that the two have shaped one another over time.

Barrett's artwork will be included in the Oxford Conference for the Book archive where it will, no doubt, remain a highlight in the collection for years to come. A limited number of full-size prints will be available to the public on a first-come, first-served basis, as well as stickers and keepsakes marking the Thirtieth Oxford Conference for the Book.

Visit [annescottbarrett.com](http://annescottbarrett.com) or email [heyash@gmail.com](mailto:heyash@gmail.com) to reach the artist.



## UM Archives and Special Collections Exhibition Celebrates Books

During the Thirtieth Oxford Conference for the Book, Archives and Special Collections in the J. D. Williams Library will exhibit *More Than Words: The Book as Object*. This exhibition celebrates the concept of the book for itself, not necessarily for its specific content. Displays of early material range from selections of medieval fragments to the first printed description of double-entry bookkeeping in Luca Pacioli's *Summa de arithmetica* (1494) to a copy of William Shakespeare's Second Folio (1632), owned by famous nineteenth-century actor Edwin Booth.



Other displays showcase various paper marbling techniques, examine aspects of a book's publication journey, and

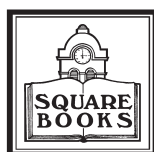
feature various points of book collecting by examining different editions, their conditions, associations, and more.

Visitors can also see selections from Faulkner's personal library on loan from Rowan Oak. In addition to rare and fascinating books like William Faulkner's handmade *Marionettes* or Mark Catesby's *Natural History*, examples of pulp fiction and other popular works are on display. From ultra-microminiature books of less than a quarter-inch tall to royal folios exceeding twenty inches, this exhibit is sure to fascinate any bibliophile.

# The Thirtieth Oxford Conference for the Book

Center for the Study of Southern Culture • Oxford, Mississippi

The Thirtieth Oxford Conference for the Book is sponsored by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, the University of Mississippi College of Liberal Arts, the Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics, the Department of Writing and Rhetoric, the Friends of the UM Library, Lafayette County Literacy Council, Junior Auxiliary of Oxford, Square Books, Ajax Diner, Southside Gallery, *Thacker Mountain Radio*, the Southern Literary Festival, the Willie Morris Awards for Southern Writing, the National Book Foundation, Hawthornden Foundation, the R&B Feder Charitable Foundation for the Beaux Arts, the Mississippi Arts Commission, and the Mississippi Humanities Council.



**OVERBY CENTER**  
FOR SOUTHERN JOURNALISM AND POLITICS  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI



**National Book Foundation**  
Presenter of the National Book Awards



**SOUTHSIDE GALLERY**



We are proud that the conference is free and open to the public. This does, however, require fundraising in support of author travel, stipends, venue rental, and the many other things necessary for planning a three-day-long event. Any amount helps in our mission to bring celebrated writers to Oxford. If you wish to support the conference, visit [oxfordconferenceforthebook.com](http://oxfordconferenceforthebook.com) for information about online giving. If you prefer to send a check, you may mail it to the following address:  
The University of Mississippi Foundation – OCB General Support, P.O. Box 249, University, MS 38677-1848.

For more information concerning the conference, contact:

## Center for the Study of Southern Culture

The University of Mississippi

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