

# Writing Beyond the Workshop

*the virtual literary world during the pandemic*



# The Literary Virtual World

Since the pandemic started, most artists and arts organizations across disciplines have struggled to stay afloat.

In sharp contrast, the literary community lit up, and there has been an outburst of virtual literary readings, conferences, and open mics.

We're here today to talk about strategies to encourage students to connect with local, national, and global literary communities, and to brainstorm ways to share their own works in public spaces.

# Create a graded assignment!

This is a graded discussion: 10 points possible

due Oct 19

## Weeks 1-3 Attend a virtual reading and share about the event

Sep 28 at 9:48pm

1 3

At this time in history, I'm sure you're hearing the word *unprecedented* all the time. In some ways, the use of the word to the time in which we are living is true: Over the last year, I've attended literary readings around the globe and have witnessed live readings and panel discussions that I never thought I would. Some of the writers that I've seen include: Arundhati Roy, Ibrahim Kendi, Joy Harjo, Cornell West and many more.

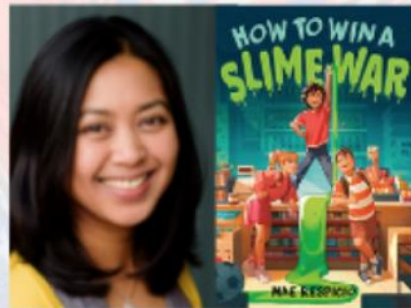
This quarter, I'm offering a space for you to share links to readings that you plan to attend - and a spot where you can exchange about the readings with each other.

You get credit for attending and posting events. All you have to do over the next three weeks is *attend and report on one reading (150 words)*. I'll move the module each week, and close the module at the end of Week 3. Please free to report about events that I don't list and to add in links that you feel might interest others.

I'm starting the discussion by posting a few links:

### Free upcoming events

- Oct 6, 6:30 pm PT: Brandy Colbert discusses *Black Birds in the Sky: The Story and Legacy of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre*, hosted by Skylight Books; [register here](#) ↗
- Oct 11, 6 pm PT: Myriam J. A. Chancy, in conversation with Zinzi Clemmons, discusses *What Storm, What Thunder*, hosted by Vroman's Bookstore; [register here](#) ↗
- Oct 12, 7 pm ET: Book launch with investigative journalist Albert Samaha, *Concepcion: An Immigrant Family's Fortune*; [watch live-stream here](#) ↗
- Oct 12, 7 pm ET: Poetry reading hosted by Lannan Center featuring Jericho Brownby; [register here](#) ↗



# Share visuals

**VIRTUAL EVENT**

**BRANDY COLBERT**  
IN CONVERSATION WITH  
**CAROLE BOSTON WEATHERFORD**

**SKYLIGHT BOOKS**  
LOS ANGELES  
www.skylightbooks.com

**WEDNESDAY**  
**10/6/21**  
**6:30 PM PST**



For my weekly welcomes and announcements, I share upcoming readings with links, dates & visuals.

30 October | 5:45 pm - 6:55 pm WAT

Virtual Event

FREE

**HOST**

**Abdulrazak Gurnah**

**Maaza Mengiste**



**VROMAN'S** *Live!*  
**BOOKSTORE**  
PRESENTS

**MYRIAM J.A. CHANCY**

IN CONVERSATION WITH ZINZI CLEMMONS

**MONDAY**  
**October 11th**  
**6:00PM PT**





# Student testimonials

In a time where we are confined to our homes, uneasy about the potentially treacherous path ahead while getting only the arcane messages from those in power, it is more important than ever that people have the opportunity and easy access to attend live readings and events.

I am a huge proponent of listening to writers read their work aloud and of having the accountability of sharing what I've written in my own literal voice and in real time, so I think attending readings is beneficial to a student like me during the pandemic.

*I will admit that I went into the event I chose thinking that I wouldn't enjoy it. It was after a long day of Zoom calls, and I felt that I wouldn't enjoy yet another onscreen obligation. Mercifully and gratefully, I was wrong.*



TUESDAY, JULY 13  
7 PM ET | ONLINE

**GHOST  
FOREST**

PIK-SHUEN FUNG  
K-MING CHANG

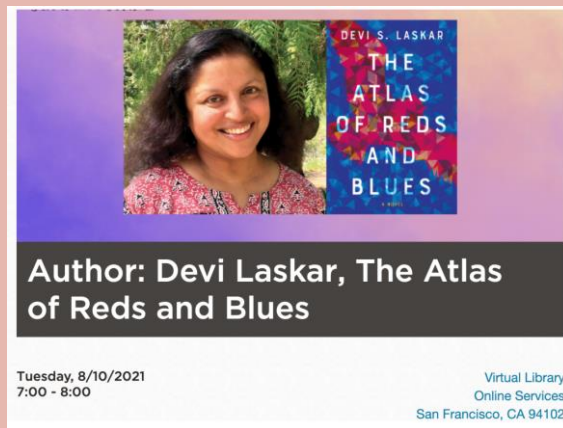
**AAWW**

The poster features two black and white portrait photographs of the featured writers, Piik-Shuen Fung and K-Ming Chang, positioned on the right side. The background is a solid red color.

# Student testimonials

*It's important to engage in something, even just by listening and thinking, that tickles the right side of our brain (creative, artistic) vs. the left (analytical, methodical).*

Virtual readings are a beautiful, powerful way to stay engaged in the world during a time where it's so easy to feel unmoored, disconnected, and alone in our emotions. As an audience member, I feel like I still experience many of the same benefits as I might at a live reading: the opportunity to see tone and expression come to life as the written word becomes the spoken, performed word.



# Discussion

- Will the demand and need for virtual readings fade as in-person events increase?
- Are there ways in which the Writers' Program community (instructors and students) could collaborate to create a virtual literary community together?
- What else?