

# CONTRIBUTORS

**Suleiman Adan** is a writer, educator, and grassroots organizer in the Twin Cities. He works as a program manager with Reading and Math Inc. and is also a Quran/Arabic and Islamic studies teacher at the Northwest Islamic Community Center in Plymouth, Minnesota. He is a project manager and board chair for the Global Alliance of Muslims for Equality, an international NGO.

**Pamela R. Fletcher Bush** works as a writer, an editor, and the CEO and publisher of Arcata Press | Saint Paul Almanac. She is professor emerita of English at St. Catherine University in St. Paul, Minnesota, and coeditor of *Blues Vision: African American Writing from Minnesota*; *As We See It: A Fresh Look at Vision Loss*; and *Transforming a Rape Culture*.

**Mary Moore Easter** received an Artist Initiative Grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board and is the author of four poetry books: *Free Papers: Inspired by the Testimony of Eliza Winston, a Mississippi Slave Escaped to Freedom in Minnesota in 1860*; *The Body of the World*, finalist for the Minnesota Book Award in Poetry; *Walking from Origins*; and *From the Flutes of Our Bones*. She is founder and director of the dance program at Carleton College and has a long career in Minnesota as an independent dancer and choreographer. Her poems have been published in *Poetry*, *Water~Stone*, and *Prairie Schooner*. She is a Cave Canem alumni fellow.

**Louise Erdrich** is the author of seventeen novels as well as volumes of poetry, children's books, short stories, and a memoir of early motherhood. Her novel *The Night Watchman* won the 2021 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. Her novel *The Round House* won the National Book Award for Fiction; *The Plague of Doves* received the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize; and her debut novel, *Love Medicine*, was the winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award. She has received the Library of Congress Prize in American Fiction, the PEN/Saul Bellow Award for Achievement in American Fiction, and the Dayton Literary Peace Prize. She lives in Minnesota with her daughters and is the owner of Birchbark Books, a small independent bookstore in Minneapolis.

**Anika Fajardo** was born in Colombia and raised in Minnesota. She is the author of *Magical Realism for Non-Believers: A Memoir of Finding Family* (Minnesota, 2019) and the middle-grade novels *What If a Fish* and *Meet Me Halfway*. She lives in Minneapolis with her family.

**Safy-Hallan Farah** is a culture writer from Minneapolis.

**Sherrie Fernandez-Williams** earned an MFA from Hamline University. She is the author of *Soft: A Memoir*. She has received a Minnesota State Arts Board Artist Initiative Grant, a Beyond the Pure Fellowship, a SASE/Jerome Grant, and is a 2021 Jerome Hill Artist Fellow. She was a Loft Mentor Series winner in Creative Nonfiction and a Jones' Playwright Commission Award Winner, and she was selected for the Givens Black Writers Collaborative. Her poems and essays have been published in literary journals, including *New Limestone Review*, *Aquifer: The Florida Review*, and *the minnesota review*.

**Shannon Gibney** is a writer, educator, activist, and author of *See No Color* and *Dream Country*, young adult novels that won Minnesota Book Awards. She is on the faculty in English at Minneapolis College, where she teaches writing. She is a Bush Artist and McKnight Writing Fellow. She coedited, with Kao Kalia Yang, *What God Is*

*Honored Here? Writings on Miscarriage and Infant Loss by and for Native Women and Women of Color* (Minnesota, 2019), and her latest novel, *Botched*, explores themes of transracial adoption through speculative memoir.

**Kathryn Haddad** is a writer, teacher, speaker, and community organizer who explores contemporary Arab American experiences and reflects on the political reality of life for Arab and Muslim Americans. She received a Bush Fellowship for her work with the Arab American community; the 2018 Kay Sexton Award from the Minnesota Book Awards; and was a 2019–20 Jerome Fellow in Playwriting. Her plays and creative nonfiction have been published and performed throughout the United States. She cofounded Mizna, one of the few Arab American arts and literary organizations in the United States, and served as its artistic and executive director for twelve years. She is now artistic and executive director of New Arab American Theater Works and teaches high school in Bloomington, Minnesota.

**Carolyn Holbrook** is founder and director of More Than a Single Story, as well as the founder of SASE: The Write Place. She is a writer, educator, and an advocate for the healing power of the arts. Her essay collection *Tell Me Your Names and I Will Testify* (Minnesota, 2020) received a Minnesota Book Award for Memoir and Creative Nonfiction. She is coauthor of Dr. Josie Johnson's memoir *Hope in the Struggle* (Minnesota, 2019), and her essays have been published widely, in *A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota* and *Blues Vision: African American Writing from Minnesota*, as well as many other publications. She was the first person of color to win the Kay Sexton Award from the Minnesota Book Awards and the Friends of the St. Paul Public Libraries for contributions to Minnesota literature.

**Tish Jones** is a poet, educator, cultural strategist, and cultural producer. She is founder and executive director of TruArt Speaks, an arts and culture nonprofit in St. Paul, Minnesota. She has performed poetry throughout the United States, and her work can be found

in *A Moment of Silence* (Tru Ruts and the Playwrights' Center) and the Minnesota Humanities Center's anthology *Blues Vision: African American Writing from Minnesota*.

**Ezekiel Joubert III** is an educator, scholar, and creative writer. He is assistant professor of Educational Foundations in the Division of Advanced and Applied Studies at California State University–Los Angeles. His research and writing focus on the intersections of racial capitalism and Black education, the political economy of student mobility, the history of educational inequality in Black rural communities near Metro Detroit and in the Midwest, and Black organic educational intellectual thought and activism.

**Douglas Kearney** has published seven collections, including *Sho* and *Buck Studies*, winner of the Theodore Roethke Memorial Poetry Award and the Firecracker Award for Poetry from the Community of Literary Magazines and Presses, and a California Book Award silver medalist in poetry. He has written a collection of libretti, *Someone Took They Tongues*, and his *Mess and Mess and* was a Small Press Distribution Handpicked Selection. His newest collection is *Sho*. His operas include *Sucktion*, *Mordake*, *Crescent City*, *Sweet Land*, and *Comet / Poppea*, commissioned by the American Modern Opera Company. He received a Whiting Writer's Award, a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Cy Twombly Award for Poetry, and residencies and fellowships from Cave Canem and the Rauschenberg Foundation. He teaches creative writing at the University of Minnesota–Twin Cities and lives in St. Paul with his family.

**Ed Bok Lee** attended kindergarten in Seoul, South Korea, and grew up in North Dakota and Minnesota. He was later educated in South Korea, Kazakhstan, and on the west and east coasts of the United States. He has written three books of poetry: *Real Karaoke People*, *Whorled*, and *Mitochondrial Night*. Honors for his books include an American Book Award from the Before Columbus Foundation, a PEN Open Book Award, a Minnesota Book Award, and an Asian

American Literary Award (Members' Choice). He teaches fine arts at Metropolitan State University and lives in South Minneapolis.

**Ricardo Levins Morales** is a Puerto Rican artist and trickster organizer based in Minneapolis. His organizing life began in the Chicago Black Panther Defense Committee and has included the Alliance for Cultural Democracy, the Northland Poster Collective, Labor Notes, the Great Lakes Commons, and most recently MPD150. He supports activists and organizers in the work of healing and liberation.

**Arlita Little** is a writer and culture worker living and practicing in the Twin Cities. As former director of the Givens Foundation for African American Literature, she studied with Amiri Baraka, Sonia Sanchez, Ishmael Reed, Patricia Smith, Alexs Pate, J. Otis Powell, and other definitive writers. Her poetry has been published in *Blues Vision: African American Writing from Minnesota* and in *Konch* magazine. She coauthored *Hope in the Struggle* with civil rights activist and educator Josie Johnson and writer Carolyn Holbrook. She is arts program officer and director of artist fellowships at the McKnight Foundation in Minneapolis.

**Resmaa Menakem** is a healer, coach, and organizational strategist; founder of the Cultural Somatics Institute (<https://culturalsomatics.university.thinkific.com/>); and author of *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*. Resmaa's work focuses on the healing of trauma; on coaching leaders through civil unrest, organizational change, and community building; and on Somatic Abolitionism (the title of his blog at *Psychology Today*, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/somatic-abolitionism>). To learn more about Resmaa, visit <https://www.resmaa.com/>.

**Tess Montgomery**, a North Minneapolis native, is digital marketing specialist at Twin Cities PBS-TPT and marketing coordinator for More Than a Single Story. She has been a Fellow with the Josie R.

Johnson Leadership Academy, a Fellow with New Sector Academy, and a digital production intern with Krista Tippett's *On Being*. She is passionate about the power of grassroots, community-led organizing and believes in the principles of Ubuntu (I am because you are) and Ujima (collective work and responsibility) to build and maintain a strong community. She holds a degree in journalism and mass communications from Drake University.

**Ahmad Qais Munhazim** is assistant professor of global studies at the Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia. As an interdisciplinary scholar and decolonial writer, their work troubles borders of academia, activism, and art while focusing on everyday experiences of migration and war in the lives of queer and trans individuals. Born and raised in Afghanistan and exiled currently in Philadelphia, Munhazim identifies as genderqueer, Muslim, and displaced. They hold a PhD in political science from the University of Minnesota and co-founded Minnesota Caravan of Love, a queer and trans Muslim-led community organizing group in the Twin Cities.

**David Mura** has written ten books, including the memoirs *Turning Japanese*, a *New York Times* Notable Book; *Where the Body Meets Memory*; and four poetry collections, *After We Lost Our Way*, a National Poetry Contest winner; *The Colors of Desire*, which received the Carl Sandburg Award; *Angels for the Burning*; *The Last Incantations*; and *A Stranger's Journey: Race, Identity, and Narrative Craft in Writing*. He teaches at VONA, a writers' conference for writers of color, and has worked with Alexs Pate's Innocent Classroom, a program designed to improve relationships between teachers and students of color.

**Melissa Olson** is an Indigenous person of mixed Anishinaabe and Euro-American heritage, a tribal citizen of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. For several years, Melissa has worked as a writer and producer of independent public media serving as the co-managing editor of the MinneCulture program at KFAI Fresh Air Community Radio in Minneapolis. Melissa lives in Minneapolis.

**Alexs Pate** is president and CEO of Innocent Technologies and the creator of the Innocent Classroom. He has written five novels, a children's book, and a work of nonfiction, and he has curated several literary anthologies. His latest book is *The Innocent Classroom: Dismantling Racial Bias for Children of Color*.

**Bao Phi** is a Vietnamese American Minnesotan, born in Vietnam and raised in the Phillips neighborhood of South Minneapolis. He is a spoken word artist, a poet, a children's book author, a community member, a nonprofit arts administrator, a refugee, and a father.

**Mona Susan Power** is the author of three books of fiction, *The Grass Dancer*, *Roofwalker*, and *Sacred Wilderness*. Her first novel was awarded the PEN/Hemingway Prize. Her short fiction and essays have been published in journals, magazines, and anthologies, including *The Best American Short Stories*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Paris Review*, *Granta*, *Missouri Review*, and *Ploughshares* (Solos Series). She is an enrolled member of the Standing Rock Sioux tribe and is currently settled in Minnesota.

**Marcie Rendon** is a citizen of the White Earth Nation. She received a McKnight Distinguished Artist Award and was included on *Oprah Magazine's* list of thirty-one Native American authors to read in 2020. Her novel *Girl Gone Missing* was nominated at the Edgars for the Sue Grafton Memorial Award of G. P. Putnam's Sons, and *Murder on the Red River* received the Pinckley Women's Debut Crime Novel Award and was a finalist for a Western Writers of America Spur Award.

**Samantha Sencer-Mura** is a biracial Japanese American woman living in Minneapolis on stolen Dakota land. She is the executive director at 826 MSP, a writing, tutoring, and publishing center for youth with the mission to empower the next generation of Twin Cities authors. She earned a degree in critical theory and social justice from Occidental College and a degree in school leadership from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

**Said Shaiye** is a Somali writer who calls Minneapolis home. He is working on his MFA degree at the University of Minnesota, and his debut book *Are You Borg Now?* is forthcoming.

**Erin Sharkey** is a writer, arts, and abolition organizer, cultural worker, and film producer based in Minneapolis. She has an MFA in creative writing from Hamline University and is the cofounder, with Junauda Petrus, of an experimental arts collective called Free Black Dirt. She is editing *A Darker Wilderness*, a forthcoming anthology of Black nature writing for Milkweed Editions. In 2021, she was awarded the Black Seed Fellowship from Black Visions and the Headwaters Foundation for Justice. She teaches with the Minnesota Prison Writers Workshop.

신 선 영 辛善英 **Sun Yung Shin** is a Korean American poet, editor, children's book author, and writer whose work has been published in *Poetry*, *Bomb* magazine, and the 2021 Gwangju Biennale, among other venues. Her poetry collections have won an Asian American Literary Award and a Minnesota Book Award. Her edited anthologies include *What We Hunger For: Refugee and Immigrant Writers on Food and Family*; *A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota*; and *Outsiders Within: Writing on Transracial Adoption* (Minnesota, 2021). Her fourth book of poems, *The Wet Hex*, is forthcoming. With poet Su Hwang she codirects Poetry Asylum in Minneapolis.

**Michael Torres** was born and brought up in Pomona, California. His first collection, *An Incomplete List of Names*, was a National Poetry Series selection. Visit him at [michaeltorreswriter.com](http://michaeltorreswriter.com).

**Diane Wilson** is a Dakota writer whose debut novel, *The Seed Keeper*, was recently published. Her memoir *Spirit Car: Journey to a Dakota Past* received a Minnesota Book Award and was selected for the One Minneapolis, One Read program; her nonfiction book *Beloved Child: A Dakota Way of Life* was awarded the Barbara Sudler Award from History Colorado. Her writing has been featured in many

publications, including the anthology *A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota*. She has received a Bush Foundation Fellowship as well as awards from the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Jerome Foundation. She mentors a cohort of emerging Native writers, is a descendant of the Mdewakanton Oyate, and is enrolled on the Rosebud Reservation.

**Kao Kalia Yang** is a Hmong American writer for both children and adults. Her books have been recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Dayton's Literary Peace Prize, the Chautauqua Institute, the National Book Critics Circle Award, and with four Minnesota Book Awards. She is the Edelstein-Keller Writer in Residence in the creative writing program of the University of Minnesota. Her books include *The Latehomecomer: A Hmong Family Memoir*, *The Song Poet*, *The Shared Room* (Minnesota, 2020), and *Yang Warriors* (Minnesota, 2021).

**Kevin Yang** is a multimedia storyteller born and raised in the Twin Cities who finds most of his inspiration unraveling his Hmong American experience with others. He creates in the mediums of spoken word poetry and documentary filmmaking. He represented Hamline University at the College Union Poetry Slam invitational and was a New Angle Documentary Fellow at Saint Paul Network.