



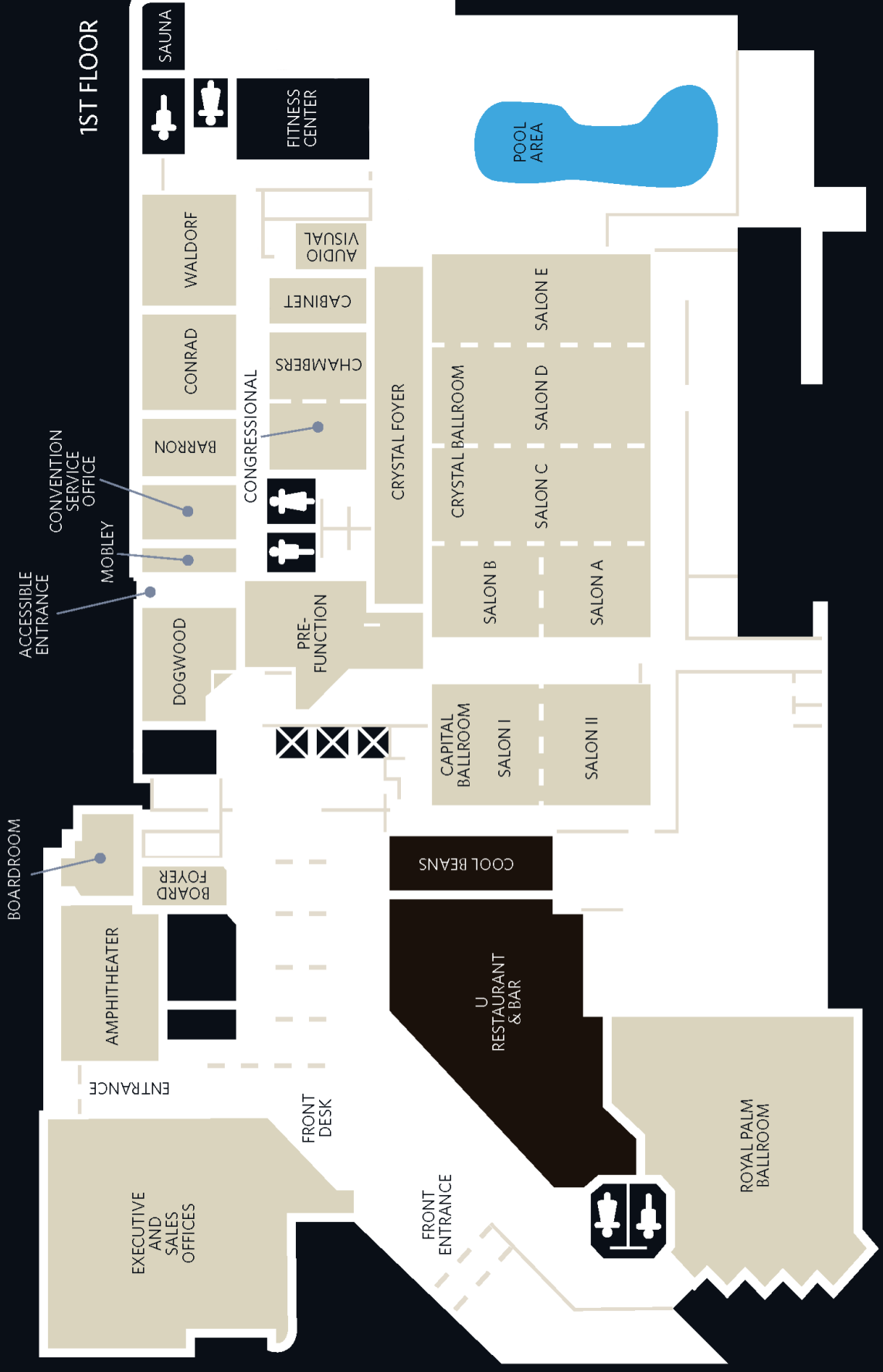
Florida WritersCon 2024

CRAFT.
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FWA | FLORIDA
WRITERS
ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 18-20, 2024
Hilton Orlando/Altamonte Springs

1ST FLOOR



Welcome to Florida WritersCon 2024



Dear Members,

I am so very happy and proud to welcome you to Florida WritersCon 2024, a precious opportunity to immerse yourself in the world of writing and publishing. We've crafted a program filled with chances to learn and grow.

While the workshops are designed to inspire and elevate your knowledge and skills, the experience extends far beyond the sessions. Mixers, meals, and breaks are perfect for forging connections with fellow writers, industry professionals, and publishing experts. Take advantage of moments that allow you to share experiences, gain valuable insights, and cultivate relationships that can support you on your writing journey.

Don't miss the Friday Night Mixer—a delightful evening of networking and delicious indulgence followed by an open mic. And of course we look forward to being together to celebrate writing and writers at Saturday's Royal Palm Literary Awards Banquet.

Before you return home on Sunday, be sure to attend the panel featuring industry professionals sharing their diverse perspectives on publishing. There will be plenty of time for your questions, so come ready to engage!

I look forward to seeing you and matching so many names I know with faces. Be sure to say hello and tell me about your conference experiences. I'd love to hear what you think.

—Mary Ann de Stefano, President



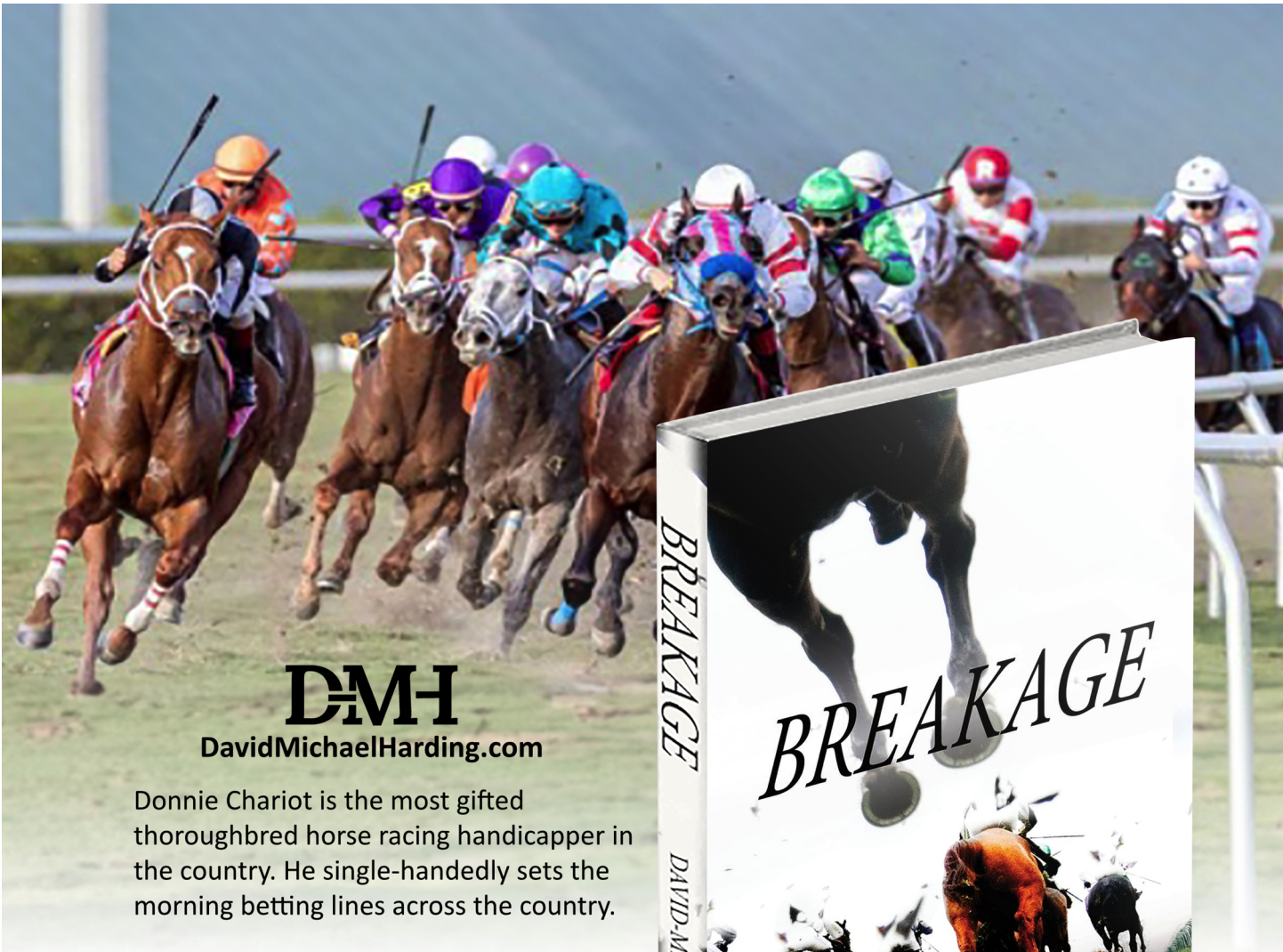
Dearest Colleagues,

In his bestselling nonfiction, *Novelist as a Vocation*, Haruki Murakami describes writers as the most welcoming group of people among all the arts. So it is in that vein that I use the salutation colleagues for this note of welcome to our membership, faculty, and volunteers. As you may have noticed from the moment you stepped up to the registration desk, our Florida WritersCon 2024 volunteers warmly greeted you whether you're a new member or a familiar face. Over the next three days, it's our sincerest hope that you not only enjoy the workshops, the mixers, and dinners, but most of all the camaraderie of an organization whose slogan is Writers Helping Writers.

The ideas for this year's conference began to take shape on the last day of WritersCon 2023, when the planning committee of Mary Ann de Stefano, Michael Farrell, Ginnye Cubel, and I met in a room filled with the detritus of a long, productive weekend. In that room we talked about what we did well in 2023 and how we could make it better in 2024. The guiding principle of our discussion was: How can we best serve our members next year? And from that, the catchphrase *Craft, Connect, Captivate* was born. This year we've added small-group Creative Catalyst workshops to allow attendees hands-on experience in everything from marketing to metaphors. The other workshops offer a balance of craft and business. In short, we hope there's something our members who have come from near and far will enjoy. Moreover, we want you to leave invigorated by the words of our keynote speaker Richard Blanco and the connections you've made with likeminded writers helping writers.

Again this year, I'm honored to have served as your Florida WritersCon chair.

—Paul Iasevoli, Florida WritersCon 2024 Chair



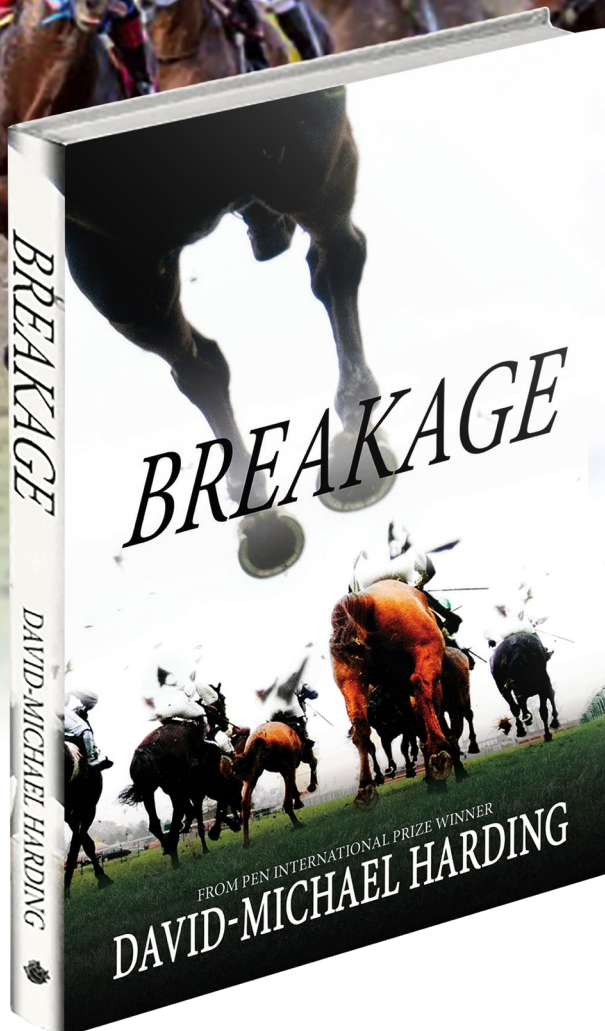
DMH

DavidMichaelHarding.com

Donnie Chariot is the most gifted thoroughbred horse racing handicapper in the country. He single-handedly sets the morning betting lines across the country.

But when early onset Alzheimer's causes his unique gift to fail him, mobsters from Manhattan to Las Vegas aren't happy. Chariot needs his estranged daughter to help him, but their rocky past keeps them apart.

When Donnie's granddaughter is kidnapped to force his daughter into the game, he controls everyone. Until he doesn't. His mind failing, his daughter getting wise, and wiseguys wiser still, it's a race to save a family before the momentum of the past destroys their future.



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Keynote Address

Richard Blanco

*National Humanities
Medal Recipient*

*President Obama's
Inaugural Poet 2013*

*Lambda Literary
Award for Memoir*



Photo credit: Matt Stagliano

We're thrilled that our keynote speaker this year is poet Richard Blanco! Richard's keynote address will touch on how he moved from working as civil engineer to becoming an award-winning and nationally recognized poet.

Selected by President Obama as the fifth Presidential Inaugural Poet in U.S. history, Richard Blanco was the youngest, the first Latinx, immigrant, and gay person to serve in that role. In 2023, Blanco was awarded the National Humanities Medal by President Biden from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Born in Madrid to Cuban exile parents and raised in Miami in a working-class family, Blanco's personal negotiation of cultural identity and the universal themes of place and belonging characterize Blanco's many collections of poetry, including his most recent, *Homeland of My Body*. He has also authored the memoirs *For All Of Us, One Today: An Inaugural Poet's Journey* and *The Prince of Los Cocuyos: A Miami Childhood*. Currently, he serves as Education Ambassador for The Academy of American Poets and is an Associate Professor at Florida International University. In April 2022, Blanco was appointed the first-ever Poet Laureate of Miami-Dade County.

You can learn more about Richard Blanco at his website: richard-blanco.com

Praise for Richard Blanco

"A masterful poet who is clear-eyed and full of heart, Blanco explores the country's haunted past while offering a bright hope for the future." —Ada Limón

"Blanco's poems are journeys to a homeland within the heart, a welcome homecoming earned from a lifetime's wise voyaging." —Sandra Cisneros

"Richard Blanco writes about the elusive poundingness of love." —Eileen Myles

Schedule: **Friday**

Time / Speaker	Event	Location
11:30 AM - 5:00 PM	Check-in: Pick Up Your Badge	Boardroom
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Creative Catalyst Workshops Admission to Creative Catalyst workshops require advance registration & payment an add-on fee	
Ginnye L Cubel	Marketing Strategies for Multi-Passionate Writers	Dogwood
Gail Ghai	Elevating Your Poetry with Similes and Metaphors	Mobley
Cathy Fyock	The Speaker Author: Sell More Books, Book More Speeches	Conrad
Rick Bettencourt	Microsoft Word Mastery: Transform Your Documents	Barron
Sarah Fisk	Writing a Standout Query Letter	Waldorf
Mary Flynn	Open Mic Prep Session	Capital Ballroom
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	Open Sessions - WritersCon Registrants	
Robert Herrick	Self-Publish Your Book Without Breaking the Bank	Crystal AB
Al Pessin	The Secrets of Bad Writing	Crystal C
Ken Pelham	Hooked from the Start: Crafting Dynamite Story Openings	Crystal D
Anne Dalton, Esq.	Good Publishing Contracts, Bad Publishing Contracts	Crystal E
2:30PM - 3:30 PM	Networking Break	
3:30 PM - 4:30 PM	Open Sessions - WritersCon Registrants	
Patricia Charpentier	Micro- Memoir: The Art of Writing Short	Crystal AB
Kristin Owens	Publishing Possibilities	Crystal C
Sylvia Whitman	Let the Wild Rumpus Start: Writing Picture Books	Crystal D
Carol J. Post	Pace Your Story for Maximum Reader Engagement	Crystal E
4:30 PM - 5:30 PM	Networking Break	
5:30 PM - 7:00 PM	Friday Night Mixer - WritersCon Registrants Join us at the Mixer for an evening of networking and delicious indulgence, starting with a free champagne pour. Enjoy a substantial selection of food, including mouthwatering appetizers, pasta, carving tables—and more! A cash bar will be available.	Royal Palm Ballroom
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	Open Mic, Hosted by Mary Flynn Limited to 15 performers, 5 mins each, who have registered & paid for Mary's Creative Catalyst Open Mic Prep Session	Royal Palm Ballroom

Your badge is required for admittance to meals, sessions, and the Friday Mixer & Open Mic. Schedules and room assignments are subject to change without notice. For presenter bios and session descriptions go to floridawriters.org/faculty

Schedule: Saturday Morning

Time	Event	Location
7:30 AM - 9:30 AM	Breakfast Buffet & Opening Remarks	Crystal Ballroom
7:30 AM - 11:00 AM	Check-in: Pick Up Your Badge	Boardroom
9:30 AM - 10:15 AM	Networking Break	
10:15 AM - 11:15 AM	Open Sessions - WritersCon Registrants	
Robert Herrick	No Drawing Required: Create illustrations without AI	Crystal AB
Rick Bettencourt	The Email Connection: Marketing Strategies for Authors	Crystal C
Sarah Fisk	Writing a Nonfiction Book Proposal	Crystal D
Joan Leggitt	Writing and Sending Your Query Letter	Crystal E
Ken Pelham	Right Word, Wrong Time: Avoiding the Traps of Etymology	Dogwood
11:15 AM - 11:45 AM	Networking Break	

5 Tips for Networking @ Florida WritersCon

Attend Sessions: Participate in sessions where you can meet others with similar interests. This creates a natural environment for discussion.

Maximize Opportunities: Use breaks, mealtimes, and networking events to approach people. These settings can be more relaxed and conducive to making connections.

Be Mindful of Your Surroundings: Pay attention to people standing alone or looking for someone to talk to. Approaching them can lead to a mutually beneficial connection.

Be Genuine and Authentic: Focus on building real relationships rather than just collecting contacts. Show interest in others' work and share your own experiences.

Follow Up On-the-Spot: If you meet someone interesting, suggest connecting on social right away or exchanging contact information to keep the momentum going.

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Florida Writers Association Collection, Volume 16

Metamorphosis

*Our members' best creative
nonfiction, fiction, and poetry*

Creative Nonfiction

Scott Corey, Voices Along the Way
Cheryl M. Dougherty, The Brush of Your Wing
Phyllis McKinley, Bonnie, Dee-Dee, and Grace
Cathy Rebhun, Moving On
Susan Rivelli, A Picture and a Dream

Fiction

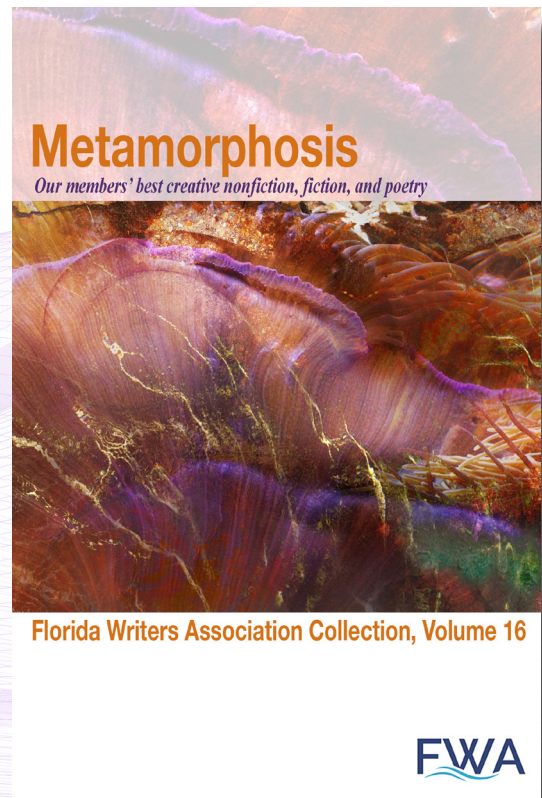
Harry T. Barnes, Coyote Woman
P.K. Brent, Bread of Poets
Barbara A. Busenbark, Marguerite's Awakening
Adeline Carson, The Gaping Yaw of Spring
Bob Ellis, A Fork in the Road
Michael Farrell, Who I Would Become
Jim R. Garrison, Becoming
Tilly Grey, I'm Different
John Hope, Dirtball
Kelly Karsner-Clarke, Freaky Thursday
Michele Verbitski Knudsen, A Change of Heart
Anthony Malone, Waterbags
Meredith Martin, Ghost Pirates
George August Meier, From Coffee Spill to Australia
Joanna Michaels, Love is Everything
Micki Berthelot Morency, Vanishing Color
Mark H. Newhouse, Metamorphosis
David M. Pearce, Rotag
William R. Platt, Something from a Small Moon
K. L. Small, Masterpiece
Minda A. Stephens, The Wave
Mike Summers, The Timekeeper's Garden
Lynn Taylor, One Small Act
Ed N. White, Be Hopeful What You Wish For

Poetry

Rose Angelina Baptista, Madeira Beach Urchin
Nancy Lee Bethea, For the Better
Deb Crutcher, Did I Know Love?
Madeline Izzo, Mammatus Theatre
Denis O. Keeran, Transmutation
Linda Kraus, Manufacturing a Persona
Donna Parrey, Metamorphosis
David Spiegel, Hummingbird
K.M. Stull, I-4 West
Sylvia Whitman, A Loss for Words
Robin Zabel, Coquina Beach

NextGen Writers

Perla Anderson, Childhood
Jace Burke, Saul to Paul
Grayson Carpel, A Frog's Journey
Ebelle-Imani Creve-coeur, Through the Seasons
Sydney Crane, Nature's Gift
Reece Hemmett, My Basketball Career
McKayla R. Lindor, The Seasonal Cycle
Hudson D. Lowe, Earth's Evolution
Madeline Pesi, An Ode to Motherhood
Zayba Zafar, A Caterpillar to a Butterfly



Schedule: Saturday Afternoon & Evening

Time	Event	Location
11:45 AM - 1:30 PM	Buffet Lunch & Annual Membership Meeting	Crystal Ballroom
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM	Richard Blanco Keynote Address + Q&A Followed by Booksigning	Crystal Ballroom
2:00 PM - 6:30 PM	Check-in: Pick Up RPLA Banquet Badges	Boardroom
1:45 PM - 2:30 PM	FWA Collection, Vol. 16: Metamorphosis Book Signing	Capital Ballroom
2:30 PM - 2:45 PM	Networking Break	
2:45 PM - 3:45 PM	Open Sessions - WritersCon Registrants	
Ginnye L. Cubel	Building a Marketing Foundation Before You're Published	Crystal AB
Joan Leggitt	Writing Flawed Characters	Crystal C
Sylvia Whitman	Plotting for Pantsers	Crystal D
Anne Dalton, Esq	Exploding Those Urban Legends About Copyright	Crystal E
Gail Ghai	Moving Your Words from General to Specific to Concrete	Dogwood
3:45 PM - 4:00 PM	Networking Break	
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Open Sessions	
Kristin Owens	Seven Drafts to a Completed Novel	Crystal AB
Al Pessin	How to Get Published after Really, Really REALLY Trying	Crystal C
Cathy Fyock	Unlock the Business Potential of Your Book	Crystal D
Patricia Charpentier	Know the Rules Before You Break Them	Dogwood
Carol J. Post	Make Your Fiction Sparkle	Amphitheater
5:00 PM - 5:30 PM	Networking Break	
5:30 PM - 7:00 PM	Royal Palm Literary Awards Mixer Hors d'oeuvres & cash bar	Royal Palm Ballroom
7:00 PM - 10:00 PM	Royal Palm Literary Banquet & Awards Ceremony	Crystal Ballroom

“A writer’s community is an essential part of the creative process, where ideas can flourish and evolve.”

ISABEL ALLENDE

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Schedule: **Sunday Morning**

Time	Event	Location
7:30 AM - 9:15 AM	Breakfast Buffet	Crystal Ballroom
9:15 AM - 9:30 AM	Networking Break	
9:30 AM - 11:15 AM	Publishing Perspectives Panel A select panel of industry professionals share their knowledge about and experience with publishing from their different perspectives: agent, publisher, and author. Sarah Fisk, Robert Herrick, Joan Leggitt, Kristen Owens, Al Pessin; Rick Bettencourt, Moderator	Crystal Ballroom
11:15 AM - 11:30 AM	Closing Remarks	

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 - I read FWA eNews delivered to my email monthly.
 - I read FWA blog updates available on the FWA website or by email subscription.
- + I take advantage of opportunities to have my writing recognized or published:**
 - I contribute to the FWA blog.
 - I enter the Royal Palm Literary Award competition.
 - I submit my work to the annual Collection for consideration.
 - I submit my creative writing to *The Florida Writer* in response to the prompts.
- + I take advantage of the opportunities FWA provides to increase visibility for my books or services.**
 - I submit news of my writing-related accomplishments for publication *The Florida Writer*.
 - I joined FWA's Speaker's Bureau.
 - I advertise my books or services in *The Florida Writer*.
- + I participate in FWA learning and networking opportunities to support my writing career:**
 - I take part in a FWA writers group or critique group.
 - I attend the annual conference.
 - I follow FWA on social media and engage in discussions.
- + I use my time, knowledge, and special skills to help other writers and make great connections:**
 - I've been interviewed on FWA's podcast.
 - I volunteer for as a RPLA judge, for a committee, or as a writers group leader.

To learn more, explore floridawriters.org or write to contactus@floridawriters.org

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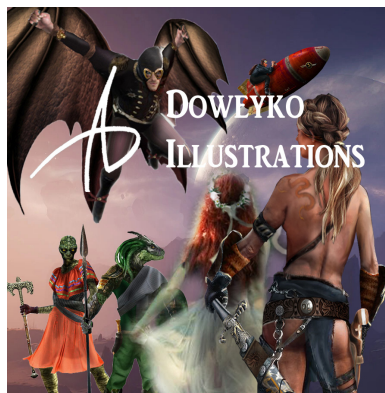
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