

Your Faculty

2020 Southwest Florida Writers Conference

New York Professionals

Sheree Bykofsky



Sheree Bykofsky founded Sheree Bykofsky Associates, Inc. in 1991. A long standing member of the AAR, and the first agent to have a web page, Sheree has represented over a thousand authors in all areas of adult non-fiction as well as literary and commercial fiction. Her non-fiction specialties include popular reference, business, health, psychology, poker, spirituality, self-help, humor, cookbooks, pop culture, biography, women's issues, decorating; crafts, music, and much more. Sheree is an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Publishing at New York University and an Adjunct Professor at Rosemont College, and she teaches at conferences around the country.

Rita Rosenkranz



A well-established agent, who began her career as an editor at major publishing houses, Rita Rosenkranz represents almost exclusively adult non-fiction titles. Her wide-ranging list includes health, history, parenting, music, how-to, popular science, business, biography, sports, popular reference, cooking, writing, humor, spirituality, illustrated books and general interest titles. She represents first-time as well as seasoned authors, and looks for projects that present familiar subjects freshly or lesser-known subjects presented commercially. Rita works with major publishing houses, as well as regional publishers that handle niche markets. She is a member of the Association of Authors' Representatives (AAR), The Authors Guild, and Women's Media Group.

Emily Keyes



Emily S. Keyes joined Fuse Literary in 2013. Previously she worked at the L. Perkins Agency as a contracts manager and associate agent. Before entering the world of agenting, she worked in the contracts department of Simon & Schuster, Inc where she handled copyright, reversion of rights and assisted with author contracts. In 2008, she graduated from New York University's Center for Publishing. She uses her knowledge of contracts, copyright and the publishing business to benefit her clients and the Fuse team. She is passionate about children's books, SFF and fiction. She would love to help authors develop a successful pitch for those type of books.

Beena Kamlani

Penguin Random House



A long-time editor at Viking Penguin, now part of Penguin Random House, Beena Kamlani has edited a wide range of authors—among them Blanche Wiesen Cook, Terry McMillan, Diane Middlebrook, Sir Peter Medawar, Simone Beck, David Leavitt, Jiang Rong, Paul Beatty, Robert Kanigel, Reinaldo Arenas, Bob Shacochis, Alex Gilvarry, Kristopher Jansma—and was Saul Bellow’s editor for nearly two decades until his death in 2005. She also worked with Robert Fagles for over twenty years on his translations of Homer’s *Odyssey* and *Iliad*, and Virgil’s *Aeneid*. She taught book editing at New York University for eighteen years, and was presented the university’s award for teaching excellence in 2002. She now teaches a course on self-editing for writers at various locations in New York, and gives talks on editing here in the States and also at writers’ conferences in Europe.

Katharine Sands

Sarah Jane Freymann agency



Katharine Sands Literary Agent is a book agent with the Sarah Jane Freymann Literary Agency. Katharine has worked with a varied list of fiction and non-fiction authors who publish a diverse array of books.

She is the agent provocateur of *Making the Perfect Pitch: How to Catch a Literary Agent’s Eye*, a collection of pitching wisdom from leading literary agents. Actively building her client list, she likes books that have a clear benefit for readers’ lives in categories of food, travel, lifestyle, home arts, beauty, wisdom, relationships, parenting, and fresh looks, which might be at issues, life challenges or popular culture. When reading fiction she wants to be compelled and propelled by urgent storytelling, and hooked by characters. For memoir, she likes to be transported to a world rarely or newly observed.

Paula Munier

Talcot Notch Agency



Paula Munier, Senior Literary Agent and Content Strategist at Talcott Notch Literary Services, boasts broad experience creating and marketing exceptional content in all formats across all markets for WGBH, Disney, Fidelity, Gannett, Greenspun Media Group, F&W Media, and Quayside, among others. She began her career as a journalist, and along the way added editor, acquisitions specialist, digital content manager, and publishing executive to her repertoire. Her specialties include crime fiction, women’s fiction, upmarket fiction, MG and cross-over YA, high-concept SFF, and nonfiction.

Dede Cummings
Green Writers Press



In her role as publisher of Green Writers Press, she is looking for environmentally-themed fiction, poetry and nonfiction (children's-adult). In addition to her work as a literary agent, she also has a new publishing imprint to work one-on-one with authors at DC Design Books. where she acquires books that tell literary and compelling stories with a focus on writing about place.

Doug Grad
Doug Grad Agency



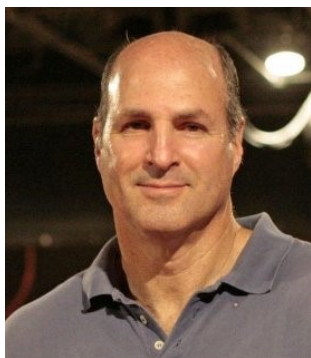
The agency opened for business in 2008, after Doug had spent the previous twenty-two years as a senior editor at four major New York publishing houses. Throughout his editorial career, Doug was always an author's advocate--the kind of editor authors wanted to work with because of his keen eye, integrity, and talent for developing projects. He was also a skillful negotiator, sometimes to the chagrin of literary agents. Now he brings those experiences to the other side of the table in offering publishers the kind of high-quality commercial fiction and nonfiction that he himself was proud to publish.

Nicole Resciniti
Seymour Agency



The Seymour Agency strives to offer aspiring and established authors the representation they need to thrive in the publishing world. From foreign rights to film rights and everything in between, we provide emotional, professional, promotional, and editorial counsel to each of our authors. HEA's are a must for romance. Mainstream suspense, thrillers, mysteries, YA and inspirational novels are welcome. A consummate science geek and card-carrying Mensa member, Nicole would love to find the next great science fiction/fantasy novel or action/adventure masterpiece.

"Nicole is a member of AAR, ACFW, RWA, and Mensa. She holds degrees in biology, psychology, and behavioral neuroscience."



David L. Robbins is the bestselling author of fifteen novels including *War of the Rats*, *Last Citadel*, and *The End of War*. He is the founder of three non-profits for writers, including the Mighty Pen Project for veterans. David currently teaches advanced creative writing at VCU. He was named by the Virginia Commission for the Arts one of the two Most Inspiring Writers in Virginia for the last 50 years. He will be speaking on the Mechanics of Writing and meeting with attendees.

Southwest Florida Writers Conference Master Classes



Sheree Bykofsky

Master Class Workshop—Pitching to agents.

Learn the best way to captivate agents and be a successful author. Bonus: Hear Sheree's famous Moose and the Wheel of Fortune stories. A special two and a half hour workshop starting at 9 am in the Shakespeare Room. Seating will be limited



DL Havlin

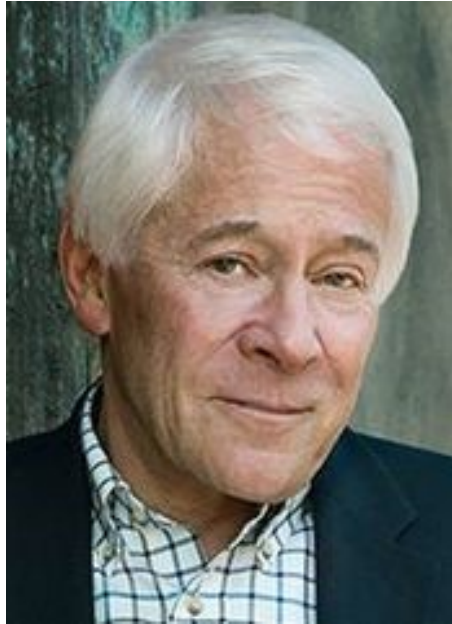
Master Class Workshop—Crafting Characters to fit your story.

Supporting main characters of well-crafted plots with vibrant, properly constructed, supporting characters, often changes fiction from interesting to riveting...from enjoyable to award winning. This session provides tools to its participants that allow them to create characters that do this ... using proven scientific facts about human behavior and our perception of these traits. Gaining knowledge of important human relationship skills is part of the course

Key Note Speaker

Author and Musician

Don Bruns



USA Today bestselling author Don Bruns is the author of three mystery series. His first novel, *Jamaica Blue* was championed by author Sue Grafton and became the cornerstone for his Caribbean series. His second series, the *Stuff* series, involves two twenty-four year old private detectives in Miami. The books have been praised for their humor, their compelling story lines and the characters. A starred review in *Booklist* compares the novels to Mark Twain's *Huck Finn*.

Bruns's newest series, the *Quentin Archer* mysteries, involves a New Orleans homicide detective and a voodoo practitioner who team up to solve crime in the Big Easy.

Traveling the country as a guitar playing comic, Bruns worked the *Playboy Circuit*, Las Vegas, and a number of night clubs across the country. As a writer, he has traveled the country for book signings, signing twice at the *Playboy Mansion*.

Bruns is a musician, song writer, advertising guru, painter, cook, stand-up comic and novelist who has no idea what he wants to be when he grows up.

Your Local Faculty

Tim Jacobs



T.M. Jacobs, a native to the shoreline area of Connecticut. He has published nine books, over 400 articles published in various newspapers and magazines, teaches classes on writing and publishing, and currently is the owner of Jacobs Writing Consultants. His book, *The 1864 Diary of Civil War Union Soldier Sergeant Samuel E. Grosvenor: A first-hand account of the horrors at Andersonville Prison* is a biography of Grosvenor who kept a small diary while in the Andersonville Prison. This title was featured on C-SPAN2 TV. He current travels and works with his fiancé out of their RV.

Melody Dimick



Melody Dean Dimick taught at Northern Adirondack Central School, DeLand High School, and at the State University of New York at Plattsburgh. She draws from experiences teaching to write Young Adult fiction and poetry. Her latest books, *Blame* and *Backpack Blues: Inspire the Fire Within*, were published by Taylor and Seale Publishing. Prior to publication, *Backpack Blues* won a First-Place Royal Palm Literary Award (Unpublished General). Her short works appear in six Florida Writers Association (FWA) collections.

In addition to leading the FWA Villa Writers Group, Melody offers workshops, has served as an RPLA judge, and is the current president of the Florida Writers Foundation. She has an ability to provide critical advice to the novice writer.

Angelina Assanti



Angelina is a Massachusetts native. She moved to Florida to go to college and never went back. She won a President's Award in Humor for "Mark Taylor's Checkered Past" in 2015. In 2016, she won two President's Awards; one in Humor, and one in Health for "Thank God I Got Cancer...I'm Not a Hypochondriac Anymore!" This book was also a finalist in the international Readers' Favorite book competition and went on to be a #1 bestseller. She is a member of the Gulf Coast Writers Association, Mystery Writers of America and she is a past President of the Florida Authors and Publishers Association.

Joanne Tailele



Joanne Simon Tailele wrote her first short story at the age of ten. For fifty years, writing was her private release for her soul. Ms. Tailele originally has published three Women's Fiction, two biographies and a children's book. She is the current president of Marco Island Writers Inc. and owner of Simon Publishing. Originally a mid-west girl from Ohio, she lives on Marco Island, FL with her husband. You can find her books on her website at www.JoanneTailele.com

Rod Martinez



Rod was born and raised in Tampa, Florida and was attracted to words at an early age. His first book "The Boy Who Liked To Read" was created in grade school, his teacher used it to encourage creativity in her students. Eventually he discovered comic books, but his High School English teacher told him to try short story writing. Rod, the recipient of the 2017 Jerry Spinelli Scholarship from the High-

Anne Dalton, Esquire
Literary Attorney



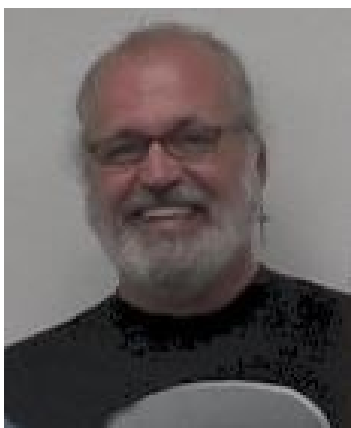
Fellow, American College of Civil Trial Mediators
Diplomate, National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals
Florida Bar Ethics Committee Member (Presidential Appointment)
Certified Circuit Civil, Appellate and Family Mediator

Ronnie Miller Book midwife



Ronni Miller, Book Midwife/Developmental Editor is the founder and Director of Write It Out® a motivational and expressive writing program since 1992. She facilitates Write It Out workshops in the US, Bermuda and Italy. She is an award winning author and has published seven books of fiction and nonfiction for adults and children. Graduate of Boston University with a BA in English and Master's credits from Bread Loaf School of English, Middlebury College, she has studied fiction with Arturo Vivante, winner of the Katherine Anne Porter prize for literature.

Al Musitano



Al Musitano has used his experience as a photographer and videographer to design book cover art and create video book trailers, helping other authors along the way.

He honed his skills as a columnist for the Bradenton Herald with his weekly column, "Dad of Manatee." He studied book marketing and advertising to increase his audience reach and still found time to co-author *Published! The Complete Guide to Non-Traditional Publishing*. He earned his BA in Engineering and has incorporated aspects of it in his writing.

Besides writing several novels, including the popular GothMare young adult series, he is working on a few other projects, written, musical, and artistic. For more info go to www.GothMares.com or e-mail him at eye2eye@inbox.com



Dona Lee, CEO of PLOTTING SUCCESS, an author's services company helping authors write, edit, publish, and market their work. In 2005 she joined the Sarasota Fiction Writers. Her experience with SFW led her to establish a new group in Manatee County associated with the Florida Writers Association. Her mentoring/tutoring skills grew and she and her partner (now husband) wrote a book, *Published! The Complete Guide to Non-Traditional Publishing* now in its second edition. It has been used in countless workshops, seminars, and classes. Dona has an AS Degree in Business Management with a minor in Journalism and was editor of her college newspaper. Dona's won multiple short-story contests, written *Published! The Complete Guide to Non-traditional Publishing* and recently released her debut novel, *Chimera*. www.plottingsuccess.com



ABC Books 4 Children & Adults Faculty

Brenda M. Spalding



Award-winning author Brenda M. Spalding is a prolific writer with several children's books and adult novels to her credit. She settled in Bradenton Florida with her husband, after his retirement from the military.

She has won awards from the Florida Authors and Publishers Association and the National League of American Pen Women. She is a past president of the National League of American Pen Women- Sarasota branch, a member of the Sarasota Authors Connection, Sisters in Crime and a founding member and current president of ABC Books 4 Children & Adults. She enjoys helping new authors in choosing their publishing path and how to navigate all the pit falls.

Clarissa Thomasson



Clarissa has written five children's books, four novels set in Southwest Florida, a World War II novel, a compilation of local Venice heroes, a poetry book and two full-length stage plays. Thomasson is also a freelance magazine writer—having written for *GRAND* magazine and *Yesterday in Florida* and currently writing a monthly column for *Eastside Venice Neighbors*. Thomasson won a 2005 Florida Trust for Historic Preservation award for her contribution to Florida history. In 2006, she was listed in the *North Carolina Literary Review* for her contributions to North Carolina literature. In 2014, Thomasson won first place in the Clarence "Bud" Jones Playwriting Competition at the Firehouse Theatre in LaBelle, Florida, for her play, *Over the Bridge*. Thomasson's newest play, *Florida Shadows*, also won first place for 2015 in the Clarence "Bud" Jones Competition.

Lucy Tobias



Lucy Tobias is a three-time winner of the coveted New York Times Chairman's Award for outstanding newspaper writing. She worked for 26 years as a reporter and photographer for the New York Times Regional Group. The New York Times syndicate carried her columns, travel and environmental stories.

Lucy served as Authentic Florida Expert for Visit Florida providing videos, blogs and podcasts. She currently lives in Sarasota, Florida, writes books that are family and travel friendly plus free lance stories to newspapers and magazines. Her Website is: www.LucyTobias.com

Joe Eckstein



Joe Eckstein is a professional book designer and the illustrator of over fifteen published books for children, including *Herby Gets a Life*, which he also authored. He has several more books in the works. Drawing and writing stories since he can remember, he grew up in central Ohio, holds a Bachelor's degree in Fine Art from Bowling Green State University, and worked as a staff illustrator for leading children's educational publisher Carson-Dellosa. He now calls Florida home, where, in addition to writing and illustrating children's books, he teaches art and theatre to school children.

