

*New Letters* Writing Conference  
Presenter Bios. 2018

**Trish Reeves'** latest book of poems, *God, Maybe* (2018) was selected to be the inaugural book of Scattering Skies Press. Her other collections are *In the Knees of the Gods* (BkMk Press), and *Returning the Question*, which won the Cleveland State University Poetry Center Prize. She has received fellowships from Yaddo, the Kansas Arts Commission, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Reeves won multiple awards for writing instruction at Haskell Indian Nations University, where she taught for 21 years.

**Catherine Browder's** latest story collection is *Now We Can All Go Home*, a homage to Chekhov (BkMk P, 2014). Her novella *Café Deux Mondes* is part of the *Ploughshares* Solo series, available on Kindle. She recent won the Mighty River Fiction Award (Big Muddy) and has won National Endowment for the Arts and Missouri Arts Council fellowships. Her story "Departures" appears in the anthology *New Stories from the Midwest* 2016. She serves as an advisory editor for *New Letters* magazine.

**Frank Higgins'** play *Black Pearl Sings!* has been one of the most produced plays in the country. Among his other plays are *The Sweet By 'n' By*, which starred Tony-winner Blythe Danner and future Oscar winner Gwyneth Paltrow. His new play, *Any Questions?*, will appear at the Kansas City Fringe Festival in 2018. He is a member of both the Dramatists Guild, and the Haiku Society of America.

**Lisa D. Stewart** has published more than 100 essays and articles in art, industry, and consumer magazines. Her treatise *Saddling for the 21st Century* is rated by the international Long Riders' Guild as the definitive text in the world for fitting saddles properly to protect the health of horses. Her nonfiction book *Bolt: Rural America at 4.5 Miles an Hour* is due out in 2019. She is conference manager.

**Diane Glancy** is author of more than 30 books; she has a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers. 2017 books are *QWERTYUIOPASDFGHJKLZXCVBNM (The Keyboard Letters)* (poetry), *Mary Queen of Bees*, a novella about Mary Wesley, sister of John Wesley, and *The Servitude of Love* (stories). In 2016, she published *The Collector of Bodies, Concern for Syria and the Middle East* (poetry); in 2015, *Report to the Department of the Interior* (poetry). She is professor emerita at Macalester College and now teaches in the M.F.A. low-residency program at Carlow University, Pittsburgh, Pa.

**Kent Rader**, known as the "World's Cleanest Comedian and Speaker," helps people and associations learn and experience how laughter matters in reducing stress

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(Kent Rader, cont.) and building quality organizations. He graduated from William Jewell College with a B.S. in accounting and survived 17 years in accounting before becoming a professional speaker in 1997. He has authored the stress-reduction book *Let It Go, Just Let It Go* and co-stars in *The Baby-Boomer Comedy Show*, *Clean Comedy for People Born Before Seat Belts, Safety Helmets, and Facebook*.

**Loring Leifer** became a writer because she likes to find things, whether the latest information on technology or someone's lost contact lens. She has followed caddies at Winged Foot Country Club, investigated art forgers, hung out with the founder of TED Talks, and consorted with nuns to reveal their stories in articles and books. A former design editor of *Interiors* magazine, her books include *Angels with Angles; Information Anxiety*; and *Younger Voices, Better Choices*.

**Stanley E. Banks** won a Langston Hughes Poetry Prize and a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship. His five books include *Rhythm And Guts* (Georgia A.B. P, 1992), *Blue Beat Syncopation* (BkMk P, 2003) and *Blue Issues* (2013). He is an assistant professor and artist-in-residence at Avila University, and has edited two books of poetry and an annual anthology.

**Ben Furnish** is managing editor for BkMk Press at UMKC; he teaches editing, philosophy, the history of publishing for the Kansas City Art Institute; he is the author of *Nostalgia in Jewish-American Theatre and Film, 1979-2004* and has contributed published writing in *Studies in Jewish Civilization, Holocaust Literature, Yiddish Poets and the Soviet Union, Jews & Sex*, and *Dictionary of Literary Biography*. He has presented conference papers for the Literature & Film Association, and at international symposia sponsored by Oxford, Heidelberg, and Harvard universities.

**Robert Stewart** is editor of *New Letters* magazine, executive editor of BkMk Press, and of *New Letters on the Air*. His latest books include *Working Class* (poems, 2018), *Plumbers* (poems, revised 2017), *The Narrow Gate: Writing, Art, & Values* (essays, 2014), and *Chickenhood* (poem chapbook, 2017). His book *Outside Language* was a PEN Center USA Award finalist: essay category. Stewart has won a National Magazine Award for editorial achievement in the essay category and teaches in the creative writing program at UMKC. He is conference director.