

# POETRY & SPOKEN WORD



24TH ANNUAL

# UTAH HUMANITIES BOOK FESTIVAL

[WWW.UTAHHUMANITIES.ORG](http://WWW.UTAHHUMANITIES.ORG)

Artist: Pedro Rico is a nonbinary Xicano a community organizer and creator. Follow them at @xicanx\_creative on Instagram.



## SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER STATEWIDE VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON EVENTS

The 2021 festival will offer both virtual and in-person events, and feature scores of authors, events, and virtual conversations. This year's festival will feature excellent authors such as Terry Tempest Williams, Tara Westover, Safia Elhillo, Darren Parry, Ross Gay, Joshua Jennifer Espinoza, Oriel Maria Su, April Jones Prince, Kate Moore...so stay tuned!



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TO OUR SPONSORS**





# POETRY & SPOKEN WORD

**Orem Reads Kickoff: Storyteller Donald Davis**  
**Ashton Auditorium, Library Hall**  
**Orem Public Library**  
**September 7 at 7 PM**  
**[Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar](#)**

Join us for a delightful evening of Appalachian folktales, tall tales, and family stories with storyteller Donald Davis, a Timpanogos Storytelling Festival favorite who hails from North Carolina.

**Susan Nguyen, Sara Sams, and Bo Schwabacher**  
**[Weller Book Works YouTube Channel](#)**  
**September 10 at 6 PM**  
**[Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar](#)**

Through a collage of lyric, documentary, and epistolary poems, we follow Suzi Nguyen as she untangles intergenerational grief and her father's disappearance while climbing trees to stare at the color green and wishing that she wore Lucy Liu's freckles. Bo Schwabacher's *Omma, Sea Of Joy And Other Astrological Signs* is a book of equal parts defiance and grief. The Korean adoptee narrator speaks from a place often heavy with silence. In Sara Sams's brilliant debut collection, she proves herself to be a poet of immense personal and historical depth as she investigates complicity in one of history's most frightening discoveries: the atomic bomb.

**Wallace with Jenifer Nii**  
**[Zoom Link](#)**  
**The Mayor's Office for New Americans**  
**September 10 at 7 PM**  
**[Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar](#)**

Utah was the birthplace of Wallace Thurman, a gay Black man who became a prominent figure in the Harlem Renaissance. Join us for a live reading of *Fire!* by Jenifer Nii, which premiered as the Wallace Thurman half of Plan-B Theatre's WALLACE in 2010. Read by Carleton Bluford. Directed by Jerry Rapier.

**Orem Reads: Your Music is Killing Me!**  
**Sorenson Legacy room, Library Hall**  
**Orem Public Library**  
**September 13 at 6 PM**  
**[Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar](#)**

Much of the folk music of Appalachia hails from Scotland and Ireland and includes songs known as murder ballads for their focus on war and violence. These murder ballads include songs like "Knoxville Girl," "Pretty Polly," "Tom Dooley," and—for a more modern example—"The Hanging Tree" from *The Hunger Games*. Learn more with Orem Library Media librarian and Tennessee native James Scarborough as he provides an introduction to the murder ballads and all things bluegrass.



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**Twice Alive with Forrest Gander  
Zoom**

**Weber State University  
September 14 at TBA**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Join Weber State University for an evening with Pulitzer Prize winner Forrest Gander. In the searing poems of his new collection, *Twice Alive*, the Pulitzer Prize-winner Forrest Gander addresses the exigencies of our historical moment and the intimacies, personal and environmental, that bind us to others and to the world.

**Sunni Wilkinson, Nan Seymour, and Ben  
Gunsberg**

**Lavender House**

**September 17 at 7 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Wilkinson is a professor at Weber State University and author of *The Ache and The Wing*. Seymour is the author of *Prayers Not Meant for Heaven* and teacher and organizer at the River Writing Project.

**Book Club Discussion about Book of Delights  
Reading Garden**

**Park City Library**

**September 18 at 10 AM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Discuss *Book of Delights* by Ross Gay together before the author event in October. *The Book of Delights* is about our shared bonds, and the rewards that come from a life closely observed. These remarkable pieces serve as a powerful and necessary reminder that we can, and should, stake out a space in our lives for delight.

**Home is Not a Country with Safia Elhillo**

**Zoom Link**

**Emerald Project**

**September 18 at 6 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Emerald Project is excited to host Safia Elhillo, acclaimed poet and author of *Home Is Not A Country*, a novel-in-verse for teens. Nima wishes she were someone else. She doesn't feel understood by her mother, who grew up in a different land. She doesn't feel accepted in her suburban town; yet somehow, she isn't different enough to belong elsewhere. Her best friend, Haitham, is the only person with whom she can truly be herself. Until she can't, and suddenly her only refuge is gone.



# POETRY & SPOKEN WORD

**Intercambios: Lesbian Poetics across Fronteras**

**[Zoom Link](#)**

**Artes de Mexico en Utah**

**September 20 at 7 PM**

**[Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar](#)**

Join Artes de Mexico en Utah for an enchanting reading and conversation with three of Latin America's sharpest lesbian poets. Ely Rosa Zamora left her native Venezuela after graduating from the National School for the Performing Arts in Caracas. Joshua Jennifer Espinoza is a trans woman poet and author of two poetry collections: *I'm Alive / It Hurts / I Love It* (Big Lucks 2019), and *There Should be Flowers* (Civil Coping Mechanisms 2016). Marielos Olivo is a lesbian feminist, psychologist and poet, currently working on her MFA in Creative Writing at la Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

**Kat Smith and Rob Carney**

**[Zoom Link](#)**

**Weber Book Links**

**September 20th at 7 PM**

**[Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar](#)**

Kathryn Smith is a poet and mixed media artist based in Spokane, WA. She is the author of *Self-Portrait with Cephalopod*, winner of the 2019 Jake Adam York Prize. Rob Carney is the author of seven books of poems, including *Call and Response* (Black Lawrence Press, 2021), *Facts and Figures* (Hoot n Waddle 2020), *The Last Tiger Is Somewhere* (Unsolicited Press 2020), co-authored with Scott Poole, and *The Book of Sharks* (Black Lawrence Press 2018), which won the 15 Bytes Utah Book Award for Poetry.

**Shane McCrae and Sadie Hoagland**

**Westminster College**

**September 20 at 7 PM**

**[Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar](#)**

Shane McCrae is the author of seven books of poetry, including *Sometimes I Never Suffered* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020), and *In the Language of My Captor* (Wesleyan University Press, 2017), which was a finalist for the National Book Award and the Los Angeles Times Book Prize. Sadie Hoagland is a fiction writer based in Louisiana. She has a PhD in fiction from the University of Utah and is the author of the books *American Grief in Four Stages* and *Strange Children*.





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**The Human Experience Open Mic  
The King's English  
September 25 at 5 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Join the King's English for its inaugural The Human Experience Open Mic. Music, Creative writing is welcome!

**Utah Poetry Slam ft. Abi Goddey  
The Box  
The Gateway  
September 27 at 7 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

The Utah Poetry Slam is excited to feature Abi Goddey, author and organizer of 365 Poetry, a long-running open mic series catering to Utah's refugee and immigrant communities. Rules: 3 minutes, no props, no nudity.

**Humanities in the Wild: Native Rock Imagery  
Zoom Link  
Museum of Moab  
September 28 at 6:30 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Join the Museum of Moab for an in-depth dive of Native Rock Imagery in Moab with Don Montoya and Bertram Tsavadawa. Before attending this online event, we recommend you: 1) Check out this cool trailer for the hikes:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Tz1diSBcSQ>

2) Visit one of these sites in Moab: Moonflower Canyon, Birthing Rock, or Poison Spider Mesa.

Mr. Bertram Tsavadawa is a guide of the Ancient Pathways Tours. He belongs to the corn clan from the village of Old Oraibi, 3rd Mesa. Don Montoya is an archeologist for the Bureau of Land Management. He conducts consultation with Native American tribes who have ancestral claim to the use of resources in the region.

**Blossom as a Cliffrose  
Stokes Nature Center  
September 30 at 7 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

The Stokes Nature Center is excited to host Karin Anderson and Danielle Dubrasky, editors of *Blossom as a Cliffrose*; *Mormon Legacies* and *The Beckonsing of the Wild*, which features original poems and prose by talented writers who are faithful, non-faithful, believers, heretics, converts and de-converts, dragged in or forced out of the Mormon faith. This dynamic collection demonstrates the breadth, complexity, and diversity of a Latter-day Saint legacy of commitment to natural place and challenges us to examine the myriad ways our own deeply rooted heritage shapes our personal relationship with landscape.



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**Self-Publishing Panel**  
**Weber County Library, Main Branch**  
**September 30 at 7 PM**  
**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Five local authors and publishers will discuss their work and the available alternatives for self-publishing: Felice Austin, author of *Awake as In Ancient Days: The Christ-Centered Kundalini Yoga Experience*; Ben Behunin, author of *Authentically Ruby*, a novel; Vince Font, founder of Glass Spider Publishing; Kaylee Nipko, author of *Growing the Alphabet*, a children's book; and Margaret Pettis, author of *In the Temple of the Stars*, a poetry collection.

**Cliff Notes Writing Conference**  
**Boulder Community Center**  
**September 30 to October 2**  
**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

[Register here](#) for the annual Cliff Notes Writing Conference featuring former poet laureate David Lee, Nancy Takacs, and Mike Branch. The Conference will feature readings, workshops, and other opportunities to build your literary community.

**The Allegory of Perfection with David Lee**  
**Boulder Community Center**  
**September 30 at 7 PM**  
**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Boulder Cliff Notes is excited to feature former Utah poet laureate David Lee. Born in west Texas, Lee is the author of numerous poetry collections. Lee has been a boxer, pig farmer, seminary student, cotton mill worker, and the only white baseball player for a Negro League team. He received a PhD in literature, with a concentration in the poetry of John Milton, from the University of Utah. The first poet laureate of Utah, Lee received the Utah Governor's Award for lifetime achievement in the arts.

**The Worrier with Nancy Takacs**  
**Boulder Community Center**  
**October 1 at 7 PM**  
**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

The Boulder Cliff Notes Writing Conference is excited to host Nancy Takacs. She attended the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop, earning an MFA in Poetry. Author of several books of poems, Nancy is an emerita professor at USU Eastern/CEU. *The Worrier* poems received the 2016 Juniper Prize for Poetry, the 2018 15 Bytes Book Award for Poetry, and was a finalist for the National Poetry Series.



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**First Friday Art Stroll with Paisley Rekdal  
The Monarch  
October 1 at 7 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Find Weber Book Links at First Fridays Art Stroll in the Monarch to hear Utah Poet Laureate Paisley Rekdal.

**Survivors: What It Means to Teens with Heart,  
Liver, or Kidney Transplants  
[Zoom Link](#)**

**National Kidney Foundation for Utah and Idaho  
October 2 at 11 AM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Popular media often focuses on the drama of organ transplants—waiting on transplant lists or enduring long surgeries—not the unpredictability of post-transplant life. *In Voices of Teenage Transplant Survivors: Miracle-Like*, Susan J. Sample shares stories from poetry workshops held for 12 years at the National Kidney Foundation of Utah and Idaho's Youth Transplant Kamp where adolescents explored the physical, emotional, and existential challenges of being survivors. Along with Sample, many of the young authors will read their poetry and discuss how they continue to live with hope and gratitude.

**Michael Branch  
Boulder Community Center  
October 2 at 7 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

The Boulder Cliff Notes Writing Conference is excited to feature Pulitzer Prize-nominated author, Mike Branch, a writer, humorist, environmentalist, father, and desert rat who lives with his wife and two young daughters in the western Great Basin Desert.

**Prayers Not Meant For Heaven Launch Party  
Laziz Kitchen  
October 3 at 7 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Over the last five years, Seymour facilitated writing and storytelling workshops for hundreds of people, including cancer survivors, high school students, unsheltered writers and survivors of domestic violence. Nan offers an ongoing schedule of writing practices at her River Writing studio in Salt Lake City. *Prayers Not Meant for Heaven* is her debut collection of poetry.



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**Land of Cranes with Aida Salazar**  
**Glendale Branch, Salt Lake City Public Library**  
**October 5 at 4 PM**  
**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Nine-year-old Betita knows she is a crane. Papi has told her the story, even before her family fled to Los Angeles to seek refuge from cartel violence in Mexico. He says that Betita and her family are cranes that have returned to their promised land, Aztlán, land of the cranes. But one day, Papi is arrested by Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) and deported to Mexico. Betita and her pregnant mother are left behind on their own, but soon they too are detained and must learn to survive in a family detention camp. Even in cruel and inhumane conditions, Betita finds heart in her own poetry and in the community she and her mother find in the camp. Their voices fly above the hatred keeping them caged, but each day threatens to tear them down lower than they ever thought they could be. Will Betita and her family ever be whole again?

**Speed Date with a Book**  
**Brigham City Library**  
**October 5 at 7 PM**  
**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Looking for a new book to curl up to at night? Join Brigham City Library for Speed date with a book. You'll get the chance to meet local authors and hear about their latest work.

**Best Books for Book Clubs**  
**Weber County Library, Main Branch**  
**October 5 at 7 PM**  
**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Learn how to choose thought provoking titles for your book club on topics sure to spark lively debate. Catch up on the best books published this year and become versed on great discussion guide resources. Find out what the Weber County Library and the Utah State Library have to offer for your book club.

**Steamboat Mountain Reading Series presents**  
**Star Coulbrooke and Shanán Ballam**  
**K-2 Gallery, Helper**  
**October 8 at 7 PM**  
**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Star Coulbrooke is the inaugural poet laureate of Logan City, Utah. She was born in Preston, Idaho on February 22, 1951, to a farm family with acreage along the Bear River. Shanán Ballam is the Poet Laureate for the city of Logan, Utah. Her new poetry collection *Inside the Animal: The Collected Red Riding Hood Poems*, a semi-finalist for the 2017 Trio House Press Louise Bogan Award and a finalist for the 2017 Hillary Gravendyk Prize Poetry Book Competition from Inlandia Press.





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**Writing Workshop with Lance Larsen**  
**Sears Gallery, Eccles Fine Arts Building**  
**Dixie State University**  
**October 9 at 3 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Born in Idaho, Lance Larsen was educated at Brigham Young University, where he earned both his BA and MA, and at the University of Houston, where he earned a PhD in literature and creative writing. His poems touch on Mormon heritage while examining everyday encounters. Larsen has received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, and in 2012, the governor of Utah appointed him the state poet laureate. He is a professor of English at Brigham Young University.

**National Coming Out Day Mic Ft Nan Seymour, Lin Flores, and More Under the Umbrella**  
**October 11 at 7 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

The Utah Humanities Book Festival is coming out again as an LGBTQ+ Loving Festival. To celebrate, we're inviting some of our favorite locals to share their work at the National Coming Out Day Open Mic. Seymour is author of *Prayers Not Meant for Heaven*. Flores is author of *Reflections While Living in Utah*.

**Weber State University Alumni Reading**  
**Weber State University**  
**October 12 at 7 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Hop into the Zoom room and see what's happened to some of Weber State University's most talented alumni.

**Represent Us! A Conversation with Daniel Cureton**  
**Park City Library**  
**October 14 at 6 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Like fighting a dragon with a tooth pick, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder takes many forms and has many techniques to torture and abuse its victims. It feeds on fear, dread, and suffering. To relieve the pain, sufferers develop habits, called compulsions, deflecting OCD's obsessive gaze for a while, before it breaks through and returns with a vengeance. You will find 50 original poems and writings dealing with OCD, its affects, and rediscovering that there is life after diagnosis.



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**Slam the Islamophobia with Antonio López**  
**Zoom Link TBA**

**October 15 at 7 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

The Emerald Project is excited to host Slam the Islamophobia with special guest Antonio López. Antonio López is a Councilman of the City of East Palo Alto, a Chicano poet, and author of *Gentefication*.

**Rebeldita, the Fearless with Dr. Oriel Maria Su**  
**Zoom Link**

**Treehouse Museum**

**October 19 at 7 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Rebeldita is a child born out of long-enduring Indigenous and Black resistances in the Americas. She knows her history and uses it to change her present in OGRELAND, where Ogres steal children's parents away at night, put them in cages and send them far, far away. Through joy, intelligence, and love for her community, however, being the empowered, justice-seeker, border-smasher girl that she is, Rebeldita fights back.

**The Ache and The Wing with Sunni Wilkinson**  
**Artisan's Gallery, Cedar City**

**October 22 at 7 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

In this sublime collection, award-winning poet Sunni Brown Wilkinson shapes guilt and grief into a narrative of love, loss, and possibility. *The Ache and the Wing* explores the flickering, flighty nature of life by allowing a glimpse into the speaker's world after the death of a newborn son. Bodies become houses, three-and-a-half-inch gaps appear in an old Irishman's brain, and birdsong reverberates throughout these healing poems. Wilkinson gives life to last words. Her honest, yet delicate poems combine grief with possibility in the hope of rebuilding one's life in the wake of absence.

**Utah Poetry Slam featuring Nan Seymour**  
**The Box**

**October 25th at 7 PM**

**Event on Utah Humanities Book Festival Calendar**

Over the last five years, Seymour facilitated writing and storytelling workshops for hundreds of people, including cancer survivors, high school students, unsheltered writers and survivors of domestic violence. Nan offers an ongoing schedule of writing practices at her River Writing studio in Salt Lake City. Sign up link to compete will be provided soon. Hosted by: TBA. Rules: 3 minutes, no props, no nudity.