



CalArts Writers Showcase

Talks

May 11

3 PM

CaLARTS

REDCAT

**ROY AND EDNA DISNEY
CALARTS THEATER**

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Creative Writing MFA of the California Institute of the Arts and REDCAT are proud to present this year's MFA Creative Writing Showcase. The wild range of experiment, genre and content you will experience this afternoon embodies the spirit of CalArts and our Creative Writing MFA. Moreover, this work gives us hope and inspiration in these challenging times. Join us after the reading for a reception to celebrate the MFA class of 2026 and the release of their anthology, *Satellite Dreams*, copies of which will be available for purchase.

ABOUT THE WRITERS (in order of appearance)

Susie (9) Zhu, 9, 煦, or Susie Zhu is a practitioner of fragility and an interdisciplinary multimedia artist-poet who writes with language, sound, rematerialized technology, obscurity, and ephemeral matters. Her “poems” often manifest as time-based interactive works, including but not limited to artist’s book, performance, installation, vulnerable interface, public and private ritual. She received her dual Bachelor degrees at Brown University (Literary Arts) and RISD (Printmaking) and dual MFA degrees in Creative Writing and Art+Technology (with Integrated Media Concentration) at CalArts as a Truman Capote Literary Fellow. She will begin her doctoral studies at the University of Denver in fall. She runs butter*rabbit *press and is the author of 9 poetry/artist’s books.

Katie Clemmer is a cross-genre writer and researcher working with historical archives, a plethora of theories, and global mythologies. With a dual Bachelor's in Literature/Writing & Japanese Studies, much of her work is influenced by the transglobal sublime, gothic, and monstrous (think Frankenstein, 幽霊/妖怪, etc.). Her current project, *Concerning Parts*, is a hybrid, braided essay exploring themes of dis/appearance, abjection, and resistance. She is currently the Editor-in-Chief for *Strip Mall Magazine*.

Natanjah Driscoll Harvey is a BIPOC, Bipolar, Bicoastal artist and poet, performance artist, and teacher who aims to elevate narratives of outsider artists, rebels, non conformers, freedom fighters, and arbiters of truth, in this time of global strife and critical political unrest. They are based in Philadelphia, PA, are non binary, and write in hybrid, non fiction, and autotelic forms. They are slated to graduate with an M.F.A. in Critical Studies/Creative Writing from CalArts Institute this May 2026.

Sophia Comfort Dueñas is a multidisciplinary writer, artist, and musician. Born and raised in Los Angeles, California, Sophia enjoys spending her free time swimming in the ocean looking for new sea creatures to kiss, as well as taking long naps with her pug, Bijou Peanut Butter Marie.

James Gingold is a writer and experiential designer completing his MFA at CalArts, where he is a dual major in Creative Writing and Experiential Design & Production. His thesis project, *Edda*, is an interactive narrative RPG set in a post-apocalyptic high fantasy world, exploring memory,

media literacy, and the ethics of truth-telling through the mechanics of journalism. Before graduate school, James spent over a decade in television as a lead creative producer, primarily in documentary and travel programming. He is currently developing an immersive events company and pursuing the intersection of storytelling, interactive design, and live experience. He lives in Los Angeles.

Andrea Granera is a surrealist poet and filmmaker whose work traverses the darkest depths of girlhood and excavated questions around international feminisms. She grew up in northern California with the redwood trees.

n.k. iriel is a writer exploring the possibilities and limitations of mysticism, and how the chiasmus of narrative and belief invoke confused sacrilegious senses of personhood and placeness.

Grace “West” Lyde is a writer convinced that the world is made of magic. From immersive/interactive theatre to short stories and everything in between, their work is concerned with the divinity and monstrosity of love, the mechanics of joy in a world that eats it, and the survival of anyone who ever considered the alternative. Their work can be found in *Strip Mall Magazine*, *Writer’s Hour Magazine*, and several *WriteGirl* anthologies. They got their BFA at Scripps College and an MFA in Creative Writing at CalArts. When they’re not hiding under a desk scribbling in a notebook—she’s on stage, voice acting, or finding another way to play make believe.

Thomas Moore is an allegedly funny author and screenwriter hailing from the Bay Area. His work combines grizzly imagery and ideas with a lighthearted sensibility and razor sharp wit...according to his mother. He earned a Bachelor's degree from the University of British Columbia and a Master in Creative Writing from CalArts. He is currently looking to finish his debut novel, *Victor is Dead*, and looking to move into Los Angeles proper.

Jay Oandasan is a biracial nonbinary writer & artist. They received their Associate Degrees from Norco College, and their Bachelor's in Creative Writing from the University of California, Riverside. They work in visual art, comics, poetry, fiction, hybrid, etc. Their interests revel in exploring the hardships and hopes of trauma and identity. They currently serve as the Head Editor of Poetry and Fiction for *Strip Mall Magazine*.

Agnes Ong writes and makes stuff from an immigration-worldliness of autistic-artistic becoming. She loves humans. She has pursued undergraduate and graduate degrees across various fields, spanning the spectrum from political science and media to gender studies and poetry, including more recently, two MFAs from the Herb Alpert School of Music and the School of Critical Studies at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts!!!) also known as *****HEAVEN*****!!!!!! H-E-A-V-E-N, indeed!!!!!! Her work has appeared in those things called literary journals. She has been named finalist in a clusterf*ck of literary contests, but almost never the winner. She performs sh*t sometimes. She has taught nonfiction, music, and poetry in universities.

n. roybal is a brown, queer, faggy-loca hustler in these fascist-biting, inflation streets. they are a trans irreverent artist and puta feminista poet. n.'s debut poetry collection, *exhumare maricon, america brown-poesia*, is forthcoming. let trans people live!

AJ Strout is an artist, educator, feminist, and entangled machine body from Los Angeles, California. His practice includes Transrealist writing, performance art, and immersive set design. He received his BA in Film and Gender from Pitzer College and attended CalArts where he earned two MFAs in Creative Writing + Arts Education and Art and Technology. He produces live events for the Ex Corpse Art Collective and Queer X Events in Hollywood, CA.

Caroline Vasquez is a writer and big sports guy from California's Antelope Valley. Vasquez holds a BA from Rutgers University and an MFA in Creative Writing from CalArts, where she served as Head Nonfiction and Visual Arts Editor for *Strip Mall Magazine*. She is working on *Apex Prey*, an essay collection about motorsport, fandom, and fear written by a racing fan and flag marshal who is scared of driving. Find them trackside at circuits around the world and at apexprey.dreamwidth.org.

Kiko Gio is a Sichuanese queer feminist artist and poet working at the intersection of sculpture, video, performance, and beyond. Gio earned a dual bachelors degree in Psychology and Fine Arts from Vanderbilt University in 2024, where it received its Hamblet Merit Award. Its work continues to evolve at California Institute of the Arts where it is currently a dual MFA candidate in Fine arts and Creative Writing (class of 2026).

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Arianne Ayu Alizio is a poet, filmmaker, and capricorn many times over. They write and direct expansive love stories for those who exist between worlds—ghost stories invested in intimacy, belonging, and transformation. Arianne received The Poetry Project’s 2022 Brannan Prize and was a top 10 finalist for Palette Poetry’s 2023 Rising Poets Prize. Their film *La Mirage* debuted at the 2013 Brooklyn Film Festival and was recently acquired by Empowerhouse. Arianne’s short *Jalan Jalan* was a finalist for Jane Schoenbrun’s 2018 Eyeslicer Grant. They’ve screened and performed at St. Mark’s Church-in-the-Bowery, IAIA, BLUM, Philosophical Research Society, Garel Fine Art Gallery, and The Broad. Their latest short film *Fiancé Forever* is currently in post production. Arianne is also the founder of Film Spells, a community for cinépsychics offering workshops, rituals, and screenings. ★

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Audio Assistant/QLab: Ed Carlo Arafiles

Live Stream Operator: Matt Kamimura

Lighting Operator: Jennifer Gonzalez

Deck: Ladini Wallace

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