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“CAMP WITS: WRITERS IN THE SUMMER” RETURNS FOR A SECOND YEAR OF INSPIRATION AND FUN

Registration is now open and early-bird pricing is available until February 20

Seattle, WA— February 15, 2017: Camp WITS, a program of Seattle Arts & Lectures (SAL), returns for a second year of creative writing summer camps for young people in grades 4 through 12. Camps run from 9:00 – 3:30 for two weeks: July 24-28 & July 31-August 4 at The Center School in Seattle Center.

An offshoot of SAL’s successful, 22-year-old school-year program, Writers in the Schools (WITS), Camp WITS brings accomplished Seattle writers, poets, and comic artists together with students for two one-week sessions of writing workshops at The Center School in the Armory at Seattle Center. Each day will include on-site guided writing time and field trips to the many art, park, and urban offerings surrounding Seattle Center. Taught by accomplished WITS Writers-in-Residence, youth will learn new ways to express their authentic voices while finding fun and joy in the writing process. Campers will make new friends and become part of a community of young writers from across the city. Camp concludes with celebratory readings open to family and friends.

One parent wrote after last year’s camp, “My children are motivated to keep writing,” and described Camp WITS as “the best ever.” Alicia Craven, WITS Program Director describes the Camp as “an incredible opportunity for kids and writers to have no limits on their creativity. At Camp WITS, we have seen campers really get to know one another as friends and fellow artists, to get to try out new and different kinds of modes of self-expression and have lots of fun in the process!”

Registration is \$475; early-bird registration is \$450 and will be available until February 20, 2017. Scholarships are available.

To register, go to <http://www.lectures.org/wits>. For questions, call (206) 621-2230 x20 or email wits@lectures.org. Camp WITS is open to all experience levels and abilities, from new to seasoned writers. Sessions are limited to 20 students each.

Descriptions of Camp Offerings:

WEEK 1: Mon.-Fri. July 24-July 28

Mixed Metaphor (Grades 4-5)
9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Students will combine poetry, fiction, and comics to tell epic stories about themselves and their world.

Meet the Teachers

Samar Abulhassan is a teaching artist and poet living in Seattle. She has worked for Seattle Arts & Lectures' Writers in the Schools Program since 2008. She earned an MFA in Creative Writing from Colorado State University, where she studied fiction. She is a Hedgebrook alum, has published five chapbooks (including *Farah* and *Nocturnal Temple*), and loves working between poetry and prose.

Jeanine Walker is a poet who holds a Ph.D. in Creative Writing and Literature from the University of Houston. Her poems and reviews have appeared in *Cimarron Review*, *Cream City Review*, *Gulf Coast*, *Narrative*, *PageBoy*, and *Web Conjunctions*. She has performed at many venues around town and is the co-producer and host of the variety show 'Mixed Bag.'

Comics & Zines! (Grades 6-8)

9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Students will tell a story through drawing. Students new to comics-making encouraged!

Meet the Teachers

David Lasky is the co-author of the Eisner-Award-winning graphic novel, *Carter Family: Don't Forget This Song*. But he is better known to children as the guy who colored Cece Bell's awesome graphic novel, *El Deafo*, a Newbery Honor Book. He teaches comics at numerous venues in the Seattle area, including Hugo House and Coyote Central.

Kelly Froh has self-published many mini-comics and zines including the all-comics magazine *The Weeknight Casserole Collection* and her newest, *Senior Time*. Her comics and stories have appeared in *The Seattle Weekly*, *Poetry Northwest*, *Moss*, and *The Women's Review of Books*. Kelly has performed at the Hugo House's acclaimed Literary Series, Lit Crawl, Pecha Kucha, Spark Central, and at Bumbershoot. Kelly is also the co-founder and Executive Director of Short Run Comix & Arts Festival.

Poetry Out Loud (Grades 6-8)

9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Students will create original poems and develop their voice for the page and the stage.

Meet the Teachers

Imani Sims spun her first performance poem at the age of fourteen. She has gone on to teach performance poetry to youth and adults, publish her third collection of poetry entitled, *(A)liveHeart* on Sibling Rivalry Press, and focuses on creating interdisciplinary arts experiences for the QPOC community.

Emily Sugiyam earned her Masters in Teaching at Western Washington University and is entering her fifth year of teaching at Broadview Thomson in Greenwood. She teaches 7th and 8th Grade Language Arts and her favorite unit this past year was Speech

Writing. She loves reading Young Adult books so she can keep up with her students, and she is always planning her next road trip.

WEEK 2: Mon.-Fri., July 31-Aug. 4

What's Your Story? (Grades 4-5)

9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Students will use poetry, fiction, and comics to tell the stories that matter to them.

Meet the Teachers

Jane Wong holds an M.F.A. in Poetry from the Iowa Writers' Workshop and a Ph.D. in English from the University of Washington. She is a former U.S. Fulbright Fellow and Kundiman Fellow and the recipient of The American Poetry Review's 2016 Stanley Kunitz Memorial Prize. She is the author of *Overpour* (Action Books). She is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor at Pacific Lutheran University and teaches Creative Writing and Asian American Studies.

Rachel Kessler is co-author of books *Who Are We?* (including a 7" record) and *TYPO*, made as co-founder of poetry performance collaborations Vis-a-Vis Society and Typing Explosion, respectively. Her work has appeared in *The Stranger*, *USA Today*, *Tin House*, *Poetry Northwest*, *Narrative* and elsewhere. Inspired by everyday occurrences, she has performed poetry in parks, on buses, disguised as a tree, aboard water taxis, in phone booths, hair salons and public restrooms.

Unexpected Connections (Grades 6-8)

9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Students will explore the intersection of poetry and comics using poem-hybrids, maps, short fiction, and visual poetry.

Meet the Teachers

Emily Bedard writes poetry, fiction, and collaborative screenplays with her sister. She has an M.F.A. from the University of Montana and has taught students from preschool to college age. Her freelance work is in print and online, and her poems have appeared in *Indiana Review*, *Swivel*, and elsewhere.

Greg Stump has been a regular contributor to *The Stranger* for more than a decade. He is the co-creator of the comic book series *Urban Hipster*, a former writer and editor for *The Comics Journal*, and the creator of the weekly alternative-newspaper comic *Dwarf Attack*. He teaches comics through a variety of schools and organizations in the Seattle area and recently completed his first graphic novel, *Disillusioned Illusions*.

Summer Writers' Society (Grades 9-12)

9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Students will interact with writing of all lengths—from poetry to flash-fiction to short stories.

Meet the Teachers

Daemond Arrindell is a poet, performer, and teaching artist. He is currently a faculty member of Freehold Theatre and is co-facilitating a poetry and theater residency at Monroe Correctional Complex for men. In 2012, he taught Seattle University's first course in Slam Poetry. He has performed in venues across the country and has been repeatedly commissioned by both Seattle and Bellevue Arts Museums.

Michael Overa was born and raised in the Pacific Northwest and holds an MFA from Hollins University. A steadfast believer that clear communication opens doors, Michael has taught writing in a variety of venues, including Cornish College of the Arts and the Tinker Mountain Online Writers' Workshop. His work has appeared in the *Portland Review*, *Prime Number Magazine*, *Fiction Daily* and the *Denver Syntax*, among others.

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About Seattle Arts & Lectures: Founded in 1987, Seattle Arts & Lectures champions the literary arts by engaging and inspiring readers and writers of all generations in the Puget Sound region. SAL's programs include the Literary Arts Series, Women You Need to Know Series, Poetry Series, Hinge, Sherman Alexie Loves, SAL Presents, and Writers in the Schools. WITS is an award-winning reading and writing program that places professional writers in public elementary, middle, and high schools and hospitals to work with K-12 youth; WITS also offers summer camps and runs the Seattle Youth Poet Laureate program. For more information about SAL, visit lectures.org.

Photos available upon request.

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