

Event Title: Who Are Adoptees and Who Has the Right to Write about Them?

Event Description: Books featuring adoption have garnered attention in recent years, and yet, many portrayals of adoptees in literature continue to be one-dimensional. This panel will take a critical look at adoptee representations in several examples of contemporary literature in order to interrogate the ways in which adoptee narratives reflect broader understandings of adoptee identity. We will also examine the consequences these problematic depictions can have on US international relations and policy-making.

Statement of Merit: From Superman to “Operation Babylift” to family separation at the US/Mexico border, adoption has a complicated global history. This panel will consider how adoption is often portrayed in literature, reinforcing stereotypical tropes such as the grateful adoptee, white savior, and reunification. Panelists will discuss how writers might incorporate a complex, intersectional lens when writing adoptee characters engaging with citizenship, colonization, alienation, and heritage.

Event Category: Panel Discussion: Multiple Literary Genres Craft & Criticism

Moderator: Marci Calabretta Cancio-Bello is the author of *Hour of the Ox*, winner of the Donald Hall Poetry Prize and a Florida Book Award Bronze Medal. She has received fellowships from Kundiman and the American Literary Translators Association, and serves as a program coordinator for Miami Book Fair.

Participants:

Ansley Moon is the author of the poetry collection *How to Bury the Dead*. She has received awards and fellowships from Kundiman and Barbara Deming Memorial Fund among others. She was a finalist for the Jake Adam York Poetry Prize, the Emerging Poets Prize from the Great Indian Poetry Collective, and the Pleiades Editors Prize.

Tiana Nobile is a Pushcart Prize nominee, a Kundiman fellow, and a recipient of a Rona Jaffe Foundation Writer's Award. A finalist of the National Poetry Series and Kundiman Poetry Prize, she is the author of the chapbook, *The Spirit of the Staircase*. She lives in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Leah Silvius is a Kundiman fellow and Books Editor at *Hyphen* magazine. She is also the author of three poetry collections: *Anemochory*, *Season of Dares*, and *Arabilis*. She is also the co-editor, with Lee Herrick, of the anthology, *The World I Leave You: Asian American Poets on Faith and Spirit*.

Introduction & Bios (10min)

Adoptee Book Club Origin Story (5min)

Discussion (20min)

- What have we noticed about adoptees representation in literature?
- Common & Problematic Tropes
- How do these representations reflect wider understanding of transracial adoptees as people?
- How do these representations affect policy?
- Writers who do it well
- Poetry vs. Prose (Fiction/Nonfiction)

Reading (15min)

Q & A (10min)