



August 12, 2019
Contact: Katie Prince
Marketing Director
katie@hugohouse.org

Hugo House announces 2019–2020 Hugo Literary Series Lineup

SEATTLE, WA—Hugo House announces the writers appearing for the 2019–2020 season of Hugo Literary Series, which will feature new work from **Jayne Anne Phillips, Juan Felipe Herrera, Anthony Swofford, Karen Russell, Mira Jacob, Kiese Laymon**, and others.

The Hugo Literary Series presents new work on a theme, commissioned by Hugo House, from established and emerging writers and a local musician or band. Though most writers are initially hesitant by the perceived constraint of a prompt, they are encouraged to work without a sense of obligation, censorship, or stylistic frame.

Free from the usual channels of an editor, publisher, or reviewer affirming the work before it's presented, the writers and musicians take risks, resulting in dynamic, one-time-only performances.

The series kicks off on September 27, 2019, with “**The Great Divide**,” featuring bestselling novelist and short story writer **Jayne Anne Phillips**; Indian-American graphic memoirist **Mira Jacob**, author of *The Sleepwalker's Guide to Dancing*; and local writer **Ruth Joffe**, author of the short story collection *Night Beast*, with new disco dreamcore songs from eclectic musician **Sarah Paul Ocampo**.

“**Taking Liberties**” follows on November 22, 2019, featuring former US Poet Laureate **Juan Felipe Herrera**, author of more than a dozen collections of poetry; bestselling novelist of *The Good Thief*, **Hannah Tinti**; and Seattle fiction writer **Richard Chiem**, author of *King of Joy*; with new music from blues-based singer-songwriter and former Hugo House writer-in-residence **Amber Flame**.

On February 28, 2020, the Literary Series continues with “**Behind Closed Doors**,” featuring former Marine and *Jarhead* author **Anthony Swofford**; **Mitchell S. Jackson**, author of *The Residue Years* and *Survival Math: Notes on an All-American Family*; and acclaimed fiction writer and essayist **Charles D'Ambrosio**, with new music from R&B soul singer **JusMoni**.

The Series closes on May 29, 2020, with “**Strange Appetites**,” featuring Pulitzer Prize finalist **Karen Russell**, author of *Swamplandia!* and *Orange World*; black Southern writer **Kiese Laymon**, who wrote the award-winning memoir *Heavy*; and bestselling local novelist **Tara Conklin**, with new music from singer-songwriter performance duo **Little Spirits**.

Meet & Greet Receptions with the authors before each event will be open to [season pass holders](#) and those who purchase VIP tickets. Season passes are [on sale now](#); tickets for the

two fall events will go on sale **Monday, August 19**. Visiting writers for the series also teach one- or two-day writing classes at Hugo House on a topic of their choice.

All events start at 7:30 p.m., and drinks and books will be available for purchase. More information on events and classes can be found at hugohouse.org.

About the Writers

Richard Chiem is the author of *You Private Person* (Sorry House Classics, 2012) and the novel *King of Joy* (Soft Skull Press, 2019). His work has appeared in *City Arts*, *NY Tyrant*, and *Gramma Poetry*, among other places. *You Private Person* was named one of Publisher Weekly's 10 Essential Books of the American West. He lives in Seattle.

Tara Conklin is a writer and former lawyer whose first novel, *The House Girl*, (William Morrow) was a *New York Times* bestseller, #1 IndieNext pick, Target book club pick and has been translated into 8 languages. Her second novel, *The Last Romantics* (William Morrow) was published in February 2019 to wide acclaim. An instant *New York Times* bestseller, *The Last Romantics* was a Barnes & Noble Book Club Pick, IndieNext Pick, and was selected by Jenna Bush Hager as the inaugural read for The Today Show Book Club.

Charles D'Ambrosio is the author of two books of fiction, *The Point and Other Stories* and *The Dead Fish Museum*, and two collections of essays, *Orphans*, and *Loitering: New & Collected Essays*. His first book was a finalist for the PEN/Hemingway Award, and his most recent collection, *The Dead Fish Museum*, was a finalist for the PEN/Faulkner Award. He has been the recipient of a Lannan Literary Fellowship, a Whiting Writer's Award, and an Academy Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He teaches at the Iowa Writers' Workshop.

Juan Felipe Herrera is the 21st Poet Laureate of the United States. Herrera's many collections of poetry include *Notes on the Assemblage*; *Senegal Taxi*; *Half of the World in Light: New and Selected Poems*, a recipient of the PEN/Beyond Margins Award and the National Book Critics Circle Award; and *187 Reasons Mexicanos Can't Cross The Border: Undocuments 1971-2007*. He is also the author of *Crashboomlove: A Novel in Verse*, which received the Americas Award. His book *Jabberwalking*, a children's book focused on turning your wonder at the world around you into weird, wild, incandescent poetry, is forthcoming in 2018.

Mitchell S. Jackson's debut novel *The Residue Years* received wide critical praise. Jackson is the winner of a Whiting Award; his novel won the Ernest J. Gaines Prize for Literary Excellence. Jackson's honors include fellowships from the Cullman Center of the New York Public Library, the Lannan Foundation, the Ford Foundation, PEN America, TED, New York Foundation for the Arts, and The Center for Fiction. His writing has appeared in the *New Yorker*, *Harpers*, the *Paris Review*, the *Guardian*, and elsewhere. His nonfiction book *Survival Math: Notes on an All-American Family* was recently published by Scribner.

Mira Jacob is the author and illustrator of *Good Talk: A Memoir in Conversations* (One World, 2019). Her critically acclaimed novel, *The Sleepwalker's Guide to Dancing* (Random House, 2014), was a Barnes & Noble Discover New Writers pick. She teaches at The New School.

Ruth Joffre is the author of the story collection *Night Beast* (Black Cat, 2018). Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Kenyon Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *The Masters Review*, *Lightspeed*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Mid-American Review*, *Nashville Review*, *Copper Nickel*, *PANK*, and elsewhere.

Kiese Laymon is a black southern writer, born and raised in Jackson, Mississippi. He is the author of the novel *Long Division*; a collection of essays, *How to Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America*; and *Heavy: An American Memoir*, winner of the Andrew Carnegie Medal and the LA Times Isherwood Prize for Autobiographical Prose. *Heavy* was named one of the Best Books of 2018 by the *New York Times*, *Publishers Weekly*, NPR, *Library Journal*, the *Washington Post*, *Southern Living*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, and more. Laymon is currently the Otilie Schillig Professor of English and Creative Writing at the University of Mississippi.

Jayne Anne Phillips is the award-winning author of the story collections *Black Tickets* (Delacourt Press, 1979) and *Fast Lanes* (E.P. Dutton, 1987), and the novels *Machine Dreams* (Vintage, 1999), *Lark and Termite* (Knopf, 2009), *Quiet Dell* (Scribner, 2013), and others. *Machine Dreams* was nominated for the National Book Critics Circle Award and chosen by the *New York Times Book Review* as one of the best books of the year.

Karen Russell, won the 2012 and the 2018 National Magazine Award for fiction, and her first novel, *Swamplandia!* (2011), was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize, winner of the New York Public Library Young Lions Award, and one of *The New York Times'* Ten Best Books of 2011. She has received a MacArthur Fellowship and a Guggenheim award and is a former fellow of the NYPL Cullman Center and the American Academy in Berlin. She graduated *summa cum laude* from Northwestern University and received her MFA from Columbia University's School of the Arts.

Anthony Swofford is the author of two memoirs, *Jarhead*, which was made into a movie in 2005, and *Hotels, Hospitals, and Jails*; and the novel *Exit A*. He served in a US Marine Corps Surveillance and Target Acquisition/Scout-Sniper platoon during the Gulf War. After the war, he was educated at American River College; the University of California, Davis; and the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop. He has taught at the University of Iowa and Lewis and Clark College.

Hannah Tinti is the author of the bestselling novel *The Good Thief*, which won The Center for Fiction's first novel prize, and the story collection *Animal Crackers*, a runner-up for the PEN/Hemingway Award. Her novel *The Twelve Lives of Samuel Hawley* is a national bestseller and has been optioned for television. She teaches creative writing at New York University's MFA program and co-founded the Sireland Writers Conference and *One Story* magazine.

About the Hugo Literary Series

Since 2007, Hugo House has commissioned new writing and songs from a theme and writing prompt. The nights are collages of unexpected styles and different points of view, and the writers and musicians are encouraged to work without a sense of obligation, censorship, or stylistic frame. No one sees or hears the work before it is read or performed at the events for the very first time. Past Literary Series writers have gone on to have their commissioned pieces published or anthologized in publications such as the *New Yorker*, the *Iowa Review*, and *Freeman's*. Following her performance during the 2014–2015 series, Sheila Heti called the series “real and genuinely literary” and “one of the most creatively exciting series” she’s been a part of.

About Hugo House

Hugo House opens the literary world to everyone who loves books or has a drive to write—giving people a place to read words, hear words, and make their own words better through writing classes, readings and events, and residencies.

hugohouse.org

[Facebook.com/HugoHouse](https://www.facebook.com/HugoHouse)

Twitter: [@HugoHouse](https://twitter.com/HugoHouse)

Open hours: Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and during classes and events