



# where Words & Imagination come to life

University of Arizona Campus | March 15-16, 2025 | [tucsonfestivalofbooks.org](http://tucsonfestivalofbooks.org)

## Bios of Children's and Adolescent Authors Available for School Visits

### Grades K-5

#### [Tom Angleberger](#)

Tom Angleberger is the New York Times bestselling author of the Origami Yoda series and the Flytrap Files series, as well as many other books for kids. He lives with his family in Virginia. His new book is a graphic novel combining poetry and dinosaurs, *Dino Poet*.

#### [Nick Bruel](#)

Nick Bruel is the creator of the New York Times bestselling Bad Kitty series. He lives with his family in Pleasantville, New York along with their sometimes-good-sometimes-bad cats Rose and Noodles. His new graphic novels are *Bad Kitty: Party Animal* and *Bad Kitty Makes a Movie*.

#### [J.C. Cervantes](#)

J.C. is a New York Times best-selling author. Her books for children and young adults have been published in more than twelve countries and appeared on national lists. She has earned multiple awards and recognitions. Her Rick Riordan Presents Storm Runner fantasy series is set in New Mexico and features Maya mythology. Her new middle grade fantasy is *The Daggers of Ire*.

#### [Angela Dominguez](#)

Angela Dominguez is an author/illustrator of books including the beloved Stella Díaz series. She is a New York Times Bestseller, Sid Fleischman winner, and a two-time Pura Belpré Illustration Honoree. Her upcoming books include a Lolo & Birdie book, *I Want More! ¡Quiero más!*, and *Gabby Torres Gets a Billion Followers*. Gabby is Angela's debut into the comics and mischief.

#### [Guojing](#)

Guojing is an author/illustrator of picturebooks and graphic novels. She is renowned for her award-winning wordless picture book, *The Only Child*, which received international awards and was included on best book lists. She has published other books, such as *Stormy* and *The Flamingo*. Her new graphic novel is *Oasis*.

#### [Ryan Higgins](#)

Ryan T. Higgins is the author/illustrator of the #1 New York Times best-selling *Mother Bruce*. In addition to the Mother Bruce and Penelope Rex series, Ryan is also the author and illustrator of *Norman Didn't Do It!*, *We Don't Eat Our Classmates*, and *What About Worms!*. His new picturebook is *Bruce Saves the Planet*. He lives in Maine with his three children, three dogs, three cats, one gecko, one tortoise, and one wife.

#### [Eliza Kinkz](#)

Eliza Kinkz is a Tejana illustrator/author who views the world through the bright colors of her crayon box. She illustrated the award-winning *Papá's Magical Water Jug Clock*. Her new book is *Mamá's Magnificent Dancing Plantitas/Las magnificas plantitas ailabdororas de Mamá*. Eliza lives with her wonderful family, and her breakfast tacos in Austin, TX.

### **Tom Lichtenheld and Beth Ferry**

Tom Lichtenheld makes books for children and people who used to be children. His New York Times bestsellers include *I Wish You More* and *Duck! Rabbit!*, created with Amy Krouse Rosenthal; *Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site*, created with Sherri Duskey Rinker; and *Stick and Stone*, created with Beth Ferry. His newest book with Beth Ferry is *A Moving Story*.

Beth Ferry is the New York Times bestselling author of numerous picture books, including *Stick and Stone*, *The Scarecrow*, and *The Nice Dream Truck*. Her new book is *A Moving Story*. She lives with her family by the beach in New Jersey, where she finds inspiration in the salty air.

### **Eric Lide**

Eric Lide is an African American cartoonist who created the ongoing webcomics *Station Square* (2009) and *Ozzie the Vampire* (2013). His work has also been featured in multiple comics anthologies, he is a cover artist for IDW's *Sonic the Hedgehog* series, and contributes comics to *The New Yorker's* "Daily Shouts" column. Eric graduated from the School of Visual Arts. His first middle grade fantasy graphic novel is *Dragonforged: Sword of the Champion*.

### **Loren Long**

Loren Long is the author and illustrator of the New York Times bestselling Otis picture book series, now an animated television series on Apple+. He's also the illustrator of the #1 New York Times bestsellers *Of Thee I Sing* by Barack Obama, *Love* by Matt de la Peña, and *Change Sings* by Amanda Gorman. His new picturebook is *The Yellow Bus*. He lives near Cincinnati, Ohio, with his wife and rescue dog, Charlie.

### **Kyle Lukoff**

Kyle Lukoff writes books for kids and other people. Before becoming a full-time writer, Kyle worked at five bookstores, in four libraries, for three schools, as two genders, through one intersection: people, and books. His picturebook, *When Aidan Became a Brother*, won many awards. His newest middle grade novel is *A World Worth Saving*.

### **Zachariah O'Hora**

Zachariah O'Hora is the illustrator of the New York Times best selling book *Wolfie the Bunny*. He is the author and illustrator of a number of award-winning books including the parent trap for cats epic *Niblet & Ralph* featured on *The Today Show*. His newest book, *Whalesong*, is the true story of a musician who talked to whales.

### **Dawn Quigley**

Dawn Quigley, citizen of the Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwe, ND, is an assistant professor. She taught English and reading in K-12 schools and served as an Indian Education program co-director. In addition to her young adult novel, *Apple in the Middle*, she has written the early chapter book series *Jo Jo Makoons* and the middle grade novel-in-verse *Red Bird Danced*.

### **Andrea L. Rogers and Rebecca Lee Kunz**

Andrea L. Rogers is an award-winning author of historical and contemporary fiction, including essays, picture books, young adult novels, middle grade stories and a comic. Her new YA novel is a Cherokee Futurism called *The Art Thieves* and a new picturebook, *Chooch Helped*.

Rebecca Lee Kunz grew up in Oklahoma and is an artist and the owner of Tree of Life Studio in Santa Fe, NM, where lives with her husband and three daughters. A citizen of the Cherokee Nation, her work draws upon tribal iconography and is inspired by mythic and archetypal symbolism. *Chooch Helped* is her debut picturebook.

### **Bob Shea**

Bob Shea is an award-winning author and illustrator of picturebooks, including the popular Ballet Cat series, The Dinosaur VS. ... series and runaway smash hit, *Unicorn Thinks He's Pretty Great*. He wrote *Who Wet My Pants* illustrated by his friend Zach Ohora. His new picturebook is *Bearsuit Turtle Makes a Friend*.

### **Nikkolas Smith and Kwame Mbolia**

Nikkolas Smith is an Artist, picturebook author, and Hollywood film illustrator. He is the author-illustrator of *The Artist* and *My Hair Is Poofy & That's Okay*. He also illustrated *I Am Ruby Bridges*, *Wakanda Forever: The Courage to Dream, That Flag*, and *The 1619 Project: Born on the Water*. He is the illustrator of *Captain America*. Nikkolas speaks on his Artivism and leads digital painting workshops. Born in Houston, Texas, Nikkolas lives in Los Angeles.

Kwame Mbalia is a #1 *New York Times* best-selling author and the publisher of Freedom Fire, an imprint of Disney Hyperion devoted to stories about the Black diaspora by Black creators and includes his Jax Freeman series. He is the author of the award-winning Tristan Strong series and the picturebook, *Captain America: Brave New World: A Hero Looks Like You*. Kwame lives with his wife and children outside Raleigh, North Carolina, where he is working on the next Jax Freeman adventure.

### **SJ Taylor**

S. J. Taylor writes stories steeped in folklore and magic, where young protagonists tackle big adventures and bigger questions. Although she grew up in Arizona's desert, her heart yearns for the Nordic lands. When she's not writing, she can often be found knitting yet another sweater (sweater weather is the best weather). She lives in Connecticut with her family. Her new book is *Madsie the True*.

## **Grades 5-8**

### **Kim Bussing**

Kim Bussing writes fairy tales for children and adults. She has an MFA from the University of Arizona. Her new book series is Princess Swap with *Cinderella and the Beast* and *Snow White and the Dragon*. She also partners with corporations and entrepreneurs to harness the power of storytelling and leads workshops on using the tools of fiction writing in personal and professional lives. Originally from Seattle, Washington, she lives in Tucson, Arizona, and is often traveling in search of a good bookstore and gluten-free croissants.

### **Soman Chainani**

Soman Chainani's six novels in the School for Good and Evil series debuted on the *New York Times* bestseller list. The series has sold over 4.5 million copies, has been translated into 33 languages, and has been adapted into a film by Netflix. His collection of retold fairy tales, *Beasts and Beauty: Dangerous Tales*, was also an instant *New York Times* bestseller and is in development to be a television series from Sony 3000. Every year, he visits schools to share his secret with kids that reading is the path to a better life.

### **Violet Duncan**

Violet Duncan is Plains Cree and Taino from Kehewin Cree Nation. As an accomplished author, educator, dancer, and storyteller, she has toured nationally and internationally, promoting wellness and cultural education. After becoming a mother of four and seeing the need for greater Native representation in literature, Violet authored picturebooks. Her new middle school novel, *Buffalo Dreamer*, was named a 2024 National Book Award for Young People's Literature Finalist. She is also Creative Director at Young Warriors.

### **Megan E. Freeman**

Megan E. Freeman attended an elementary school where poets visited her classroom every week and has been a writer ever since. She writes middle grade and young adult fiction. An award-winning teacher, Megan taught multiple subjects across the arts and humanities. Her new middle grade novel is *Away*, a sequel to *Alone*. She lives near Boulder, Colorado.

### **Leah Johnson**

Leah Johnson is an eternal midwesterner and author of award-winning books for children and young adults. Her middle grade novel, *Ellie Engle Saves Herself*, is followed by her new book, *Bree Boyd is a Legend*. Leah edited *Black Girl Power: 15 Stories Celebrating Black Girlhood* under the Freedom Fire imprint. She owns Loudmouth Books, her Indianapolis-based bookstore that specializes in the work of marginalized authors and banned or challenged books.

### **Rosanne Parry**

Rosanne Parry is the author of the bestselling novels *A Wolf Called Wander*, *A Whale of the Wild*, *A Horse Named Sky*, and her new book, *A Wolf Called Fire*. These “Voice of the Wilderness” stories center the voices of wild animals and their struggle to survive in a dangerous and changing world. Based on rigorous research and inspired by animals of the western United States, Rosanne’s books are adored by animal-loving readers of all ages. The author lives with her family in Portland, Oregon, and writes in a treehouse in her backyard.

### **Jose Pimienta**

Jose Pimienta was raised in Mexicali, Baja California and now resides in Los Angeles, working on comics and storyboards for animation and film. Their middle grade graphic novel, *Twin Cities*, received starred reviews and several awards. Jose’s new graphic novel is *Halfway to Somewhere*. Jose has been a guest author at schools across the U.S. Jose focuses on the importance of Latinx culture and the experience of growing up on the border.

### **Kim Tomsic**

Kim Tomsic was a classroom conversationalist and got in trouble (a lot!) with teachers for talking. The trouble spanned from the East Coast to the West Coast, because she was a military brat and the new girl at eight different schools. In between friendships, she discovered that a good book can be a welcomed companion. Kim lives in Arizona with her family and dog. Her new book is *The Truth about 5th Grade*.

### **Jasmine Warga**

Jasmine Warga is the New York Times bestselling author of *Other Words for Home*, a Newbery Honor Book and a Walter Honor Book for Younger Readers; *The Shape of Thunder* and *A Rover’s Story*. She has two YA novels, *Here We Are Now* and *My Heart and Other Black Holes*. Her new middle grade novel is *A Strange Thing Happened at Cherry Hill*. She lives in the Chicago area with her family in a house filled with books.

## **Grades 8-12**

### **Victoria Aveyard**

Victoria Aveyard is from East Longmeadow, Massachusetts, a small town known only for the worst traffic rotary in the U.S. She moved to Los Angeles to earn a BFA in screenwriting at USC. She currently splits her time between the East and West coasts. As an author and screenwriter, she uses her career as an excuse to read too many books and watch too many movies. She is the author of the New York Times bestselling Red Queen series and the new Realm Breaker series.

### **Kendare Blake**

Kendare Blake is the #1 New York Times bestselling author of the Three Dark Crowns series and the new Heromaker Duology. She is also the author of *Anna Dressed in Blood*, a Cybils Awards finalist; *Girl of Nightmares*, *Antigoddess*; *Mortal Gods*; and *Ungodly*. Her books have been translated into over twenty languages, been featured on multiple best-of-year lists, and received many regional and librarian awards. Kendare lives and writes in Gig Harbor, Washington.

### **Soman Chainani**

Soman Chainani's six novels in the School for Good and Evil series debuted on the New York Times bestseller list. The series has sold over 4.5 million copies, has been translated into 33 languages, and has been adapted into a film by Netflix. His collection of retold fairy tales, *Beasts and Beauty: Dangerous Tales*, was also an instant New York Times bestseller and is in development to be a television series from Sony 3000. Every year, he visits schools around the world to speak to kids and share his secret: that reading is the path to a better life.

### **Alexa Donne**

Alexa Donne is the Edgar Award–nominated author of *Pretty Dead Queens*, *The Ivies*, and *The Bitter End*. By day she lives in Los Angeles and works in television marketing. The rest of the time she contemplates creative motives for murder and takes too many pictures of her cats.

### **Gayle Forman**

Award-winning author and journalist Gayle Forman has written bestselling novels for children and adults, including *Not Nothing*, the Just One series, and the New York Times bestseller *If I Stay*, translated into more than forty languages and adapted into a major motion picture. She lives in Brooklyn, New York, with her family. Her new book is *After Life*.

### **Josh Galarza**

Josh Galarza, a longtime Montessori educator, writes fiction and creative nonfiction, and is a visual artist specializing in printmaking and book arts. His work explores male gender performance, queer issues, body liberation, and Chicano studies. His debut novel, *The Great Cool Ranch Dorito in the Sky*, is a finalist for the 2024 National Book Award for Young People's Literature. He currently lives in Richmond, VA.

### **Scott Reintgen**

Scott Reintgen is the New York Times bestselling author of *A Door in the Dark*, the Nyxia trilogy, the Dragonships series, and the Celia Cleary series. His new YA novel is *A Burning in the Bones* and his new middle grade novel is *The Last Dragon on Mars*. Scott is a former public school teacher from North Carolina. When he's not writing, he uses his imagination to entertain his wife, Katie, and their three children.

**Andrea L. Rogers** – see her bio on page 2

### **Nic Stone**

Nic Stone is the author of many novels, including the #1 New York Times bestsellers *Dear Martin* and *Dear Justyce*. Her new YA novel is the sequel, *Dear Manny*. She also penned the YA titles *Odd One Out* and *Chaos Theory* and middle-grade novels, *Clean Getaway* and *Fast Pitch*. Nic lives in Atlanta and will continue to write books that ruffle feathers.