

# IDAHO WRITERS GUILD 2022 CONFERENCE

## PRESENTERS BIOGRAPHIES

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### Kate Baray

Kate Baray writes urban fantasy and, under the pen name Cate Lawley, cozy mysteries. She also writes steamy paranormal romance under a secret pen. All combined, she has more than twelve series written over eight years...and a few thoughts as to what does and doesn't work for series.



### Sherry Briscoe

Sherry Briscoe is an award-winning author of mystery, suspense, and supernatural thrillers. Her childhood heroes were Alfred Hitchcock and Edgar Allan Poe, and she insists that episodes of *The Twilight Zone* and *Night Gallery* made perfectly fine bedtime stories. A native Idahoan with Cherokee heritage, she holds degrees in Journalism, Photography, and Adult Education. She is a world traveler, US Army Veteran, founder of the Idaho Screenwriters



Association, President of the Idaho Writers Guild, member of Romance Writers of America, Women’s Fiction Writers Association and is a professional speaker and workshop facilitator. Find out more about sherry, and sign up for her newsletter at [sherrybriscoe.com](http://sherrybriscoe.com).

## Michaelbrent Collings

One of the most versatile and successful indie genre writers working today, Michaelbrent Collings is an international bestseller in a dozen genres, a Bram Stoker Award and Dragon Award finalist (multiple times), a RONE Award finalist, produced screenwriter and member of the WGA, and a TEDx speaker. Named one of the Top 100 Greatest All-Time Horror Writers in a Ranker.com poll of over 15,000 readers, he and/or his work been raved about, reviewed on, and featured by everything from Publishers Weekly to the San Francisco Book Review to The Big Thrill and more.



## Jennifer Dornbush

Jennifer is a screenwriter, author, international speaker, and forensic specialist. Raised as the daughter of a medical examiner whose office was in their home, forensics is infused into her DNA. As a screenwriter she wrote the theatrically released film and novel, *God Bless the Broken Road* (2018), and has worked in TV developing, and writing both original and adapted work. As an author, Jennifer penned the crime writer’s guide *Forensic Speak*; suspense thriller, *Hole in the Woods*; and mystery series *The Coroner’s Daughter*, optioned by Lifetime TV. She is also penning the scripts. Jennifer contributed to the upcoming *Murder, Music & Mystery* anthology (Blackstone, 2022). She is a sought out teacher, speaker, and mentor. Sign up for her newsletter at: [www.jenniferdornbush.com](http://www.jenniferdornbush.com) Connect with Jennifer on IG @JGDornbush. [www.jenniferdornbush.com](http://www.jenniferdornbush.com).



## Cristen Iris

Cristen Iris is a results-oriented developmental editor, ghostwriter/book collaborator, and book proposal consultant. In addition to having successful self-publishing clients, her clients are represented by literary agents and have contracts with HarperCollins, Oxford University Press, TarcherPerigee, Prometheus Books, Santa Monica Press, She Writes Press, and other high-quality independent publishers.



Her clients have earned more than 55 book and writing awards; bestseller rankings, including *New York Times*, *Publishers Weekly*, and Amazon Charts; and nationally recognized media placements. Nonfiction books she ghostwrote or collaborated on have won a NYC Big Book Award, been recognized as a 2020 Shelf Unbound Top Notable Indie, and listed by *Parade Magazine* as one of the “24 Best Memoirs to Read in 2020.”

Her interests are broad, but she specializes in working on high-impact nonfiction with academics, medical professionals and researchers, human and animal rights advocates, athletes, and entertainers.

## Troy Lambert

Troy Lambert is a freelance writer, author, and occasional editor who is also the Education Lead for Plottr, a visual outlining and planning software for authors. He's written and published over two dozen novels, both through small presses and self-published. He lives, works, and plays in Boise, Idaho, with two dogs and his amazing wife. When not in front of a screen, he can be found in the foothills or exploring the shelves of his local liquor store for rare Scotch and bourbon.



## Patricia Marcantonio

Patricia Marcantonio is the author of the Victorian Felicity Carrol mystery series (Crooked Lane Books); *Verdict in the Desert* published by Arte Público Press, the largest US publisher of contemporary literature by US Hispanic authors; and *Red Ridin' in the Hood and Other Cuentos* (Farrar Straus & Giroux), named an Americas Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature Commended Title. Her screenplays won the Willamette Writers Kay Snow Screenplay competition and hit the top percentage in several others. She earned an Alexa Rose Foundation grant to direct her original play *Tears for Llorona* and has won awards for her journalism. Her horror mystery book will be published this summer by AM Ink Publishing.



## Kevin Mullani

Kevin Mullani is a publisher, ghostwriter, nonfiction book-coach, and closet digital marketer who is bridging the gap between online sales experts and the publishing industry.

Shortly after getting out of the Air Force, the unexpected passing of Kevin's youngest son, Ethan Tru, prompted him to start a publishing company as a way to help others pass on their wisdom through books. Growing his company from scratch, his service has always been based in integrity and centered around producing the highest quality books for his clients. Since founding Tru Publishing in 2012, he has helped countless authors to write and publish books, leaving legacies of their own.



Recently, Kevin has created digital training programs based on the time-tested processes he has found to be most successful in his own business. His introductory program, *Blue Ocean Positioning*, is focused on teaching authors the most important elements they need to know before writing a book. *Expert Book Formula* is his flagship program designed to help authors properly structure and write a life-changing nonfiction book.

Innovator Press is Kevin’s latest venture—a new publishing company that focuses solely on solution-based, nonfiction books. He is a member of the Independent Book Publishers Association and the Nonfiction Authors Association, and currently lives in Boise, Idaho with his wife and two children.

## Amanda Orozco

Before joining Transatlantic, Amanda Orozco gained a breadth of experience in academic publishing, publicity, subsidiary rights, and agenting. She graduated from UCLA with a BS in Physiological Science and minored in English and worked as a fine art instructor and freelance editor for several years before moving to New York to complete the NYU Masters of Science in Publishing: Digital and Print Media. While at NYU, she worked at the National Book Foundation, Shreve Williams Public Relations, and The Gernert Company; she was also selected to attend the Frankfurt Book Fair and the Beijing International Book Fair. Upon graduating from NYU in 2019, she worked in Subsidiary Rights at Little, Brown, where she helped sell rights for authors such as Michael Connelly, Elin Hilderbrand, and Sarah Knight, until discovering agenting was her true calling. She worked at Park & Fine Literary and Media before moving back to Los Angeles, where she is building her list at Transatlantic and working with authors such as Vanessa Angélica Villarreal, Vickie Vertiz, Anthony Christian Ocampo, Nick Medina, and Vanessa Friedman.



Amanda has been a member of PoCinPub since 2018 and currently volunteers with Dryland, the literary journal born in South Central, where she aims to amplify marginalized voices from the literary underground.

## Tiffany Rosenhan

Tiffany Rosenhan is the debut Author of young adult spy thriller, *Girl From Nowhere*. Her spy skill is being two places at once (quite easy when you have an identical twin!) She is the mother of four young daughters, has a degree in political science from the University of Utah, and loves to travel with her children and husband, a critical care physician and stroke survivor. She lives in Millcreek, Utah.



## Katharine Sands

A literary agent with the Sarah Jane Freymann Literary Agency, Katharine Sands has worked with a varied list of authors who publish a diverse array of books. Highlights include *Spiritual Pregnancy: Nine Months that Change Your Life Before You Give Birth* by Dr. Shawn Tassone and Dr. Kathryn Landherr; *Loglines* by Lane Shefter Bishop; *Talk to Strangers: How Everyday Random Encounters Can Expand Your Business, Career, Income and Life* by David Topus; *The New Rules of Attraction: How to Get Him, Keep Him and Make Him Beg for More* by Arden Leigh; *Stand Up for Yourself: Resolve Workplace Crises Before You Quit, Get Axed or Sue the Bastards* by Donna Ballman; *Health and Beauty Bullet Points* with Dr. Oz guest, Dr. Pina Loguidice; *Dating the Devil* (producer: Vast Entertainment) by Lia Romeo; *XTC: SongStories*; *Chasing Zebras: THE Unofficial Guide to House, MD* by Barbara Barnett of Let's Talk TV; *CityTripping: a Guide for Foodies, Fashionistas and the Generally Style-Obsessed*; *Writers on Directors*; Ford model Helen Lee's *The Tao of Beauty*; *Elvis and You: Your Guide to the Pleasures of Being an Elvis Fan*; *New York: Songs of the City*; *Taxperts: Dirty Little Secrets the IRS Doesn't Want You to Know*; *The SAT Word Slam*, *Divorce After 50*; *Trust Your Gut*; *Make Up, Don't Break Up* with Oprah guest Dr. Bonnie Eaker Weil to name a few.



She is the agent provocateur of *Making the Perfect Pitch: How to Catch a Literary Agent's Eye*, a collection of pitching wisdom from leading literary agents. Actively building her client list, she likes books that have a clear benefit for readers' lives in categories of food, travel, lifestyle, home arts, beauty, wisdom, relationships, parenting, and fresh looks which might be at issues, life challenges or popular culture. For compelling reads in faction, memoir and femoir, she like to be transported to a world rarely or newly observed; for fiction, she wants to be compelled and propelled.

## Stacey Smekofske

Stacey Smekofske is an energetic, versatile, and responsive editor that works with award-winning authors to craft compelling stories and build their influence. Stacey coaches independent authors through the entire editing and publishing process and helps them achieve their individual goals. She graduated magna cum laude with a degree in communications and English and has been an educator and editor for over 18 years. She is a member of the Idaho Writers Guild, the Idaho Writers and Editors Association, the Northwest Editors Guild, the Editors Freelance Association, and the American Copy Editors Society (ACES). She has a certificate in copy editing with Poynter University and ACES. Stacey has a myriad of life experiences and knowledge that allows her to edit many novel genres including fantasy, thriller, historical, horror, children's literature, memoir, business, and self-help. With fortitude and compassion, Stacey labors with zealous writers to produce passionate and inspiring writing.



## Carrie Stuart-Parks

Fourth generation Idaho native Carrie Stuart Parks is an award-winning, internationally known forensic artist. She travels across the US and Canada teaching courses in forensic art to law enforcement professionals including the FBI, Secret Service, and RCMP, and is the largest instructor of forensic art in the world. Her best-selling novels in the mystery/suspense/thriller genre have garnered numerous awards including several Carols, Christys, Inspys, Golden Scrolls, Kudos, Maxwell, and Wright. Her books have finaled in the Daphne du Maurier, Silver Falchion, Selah, and Cascade competitions.



Carrie is a popular speaker and presenter and has been the Special Guest at the Writer's Police Academy, Early Bird Special Presenter along with Frank Peretti at the American Christian Fiction Writers, Keynote at the Oregon Christian Writer's Conference, as well as presented at ThrillerFest, Daphne Du Maurier's Kiss of Death, BlueRidge Mountain Christian Writer's Conference, and numerous other conferences. As a professional fine artist, she has her paintings hanging in a number of corporate and private collections and has written and illustrated best-selling art books for North Light Publishers.

## Lance Thompson

Lance Thompson has written for television (Mr. Belvedere), motion pictures (The Two Jakes, The Honeymooners), and as a motion picture advertising consultant on over 500 campaigns, has earned two Key Art Awards and an International Broadcasters Award. His writing and photography have appeared in magazines, (Air & Space Smithsonian, Cowboys & Indians, Hemispheres, Delta Sky), books (X-Plane Crashes) and newspapers (Los Angeles Times, Dallas Morning News). He is co-writer of the book Shatter the Sky, the memoirs of U-2 pilot Merryl Tengesdal, released in October 2021, and on War From the Right Seat, a World War II aviation memoir scheduled for release in 2022.



## Amanda Turner

Amanda Turner is the New York Times bestselling author of *How to Be Awkward*, *This Little Piggy Went to the Liquor Store*, and *Vagabonding with Kids*, among others. Her works have received a starred review from *Publishers Weekly*, IPPY Awards in Humor and Travel, Foreword Indies Awards, Independent Press Awards, and inclusion in BookLife's Top 5 Indie Books of 2014. She lives in Idaho with her husband and two daughters, but travels frequently as a part-time digital nomad.



## Johnny Worthen

Johnny Worthen is an award-winning, multi-genre, hybrid, tie-dye-wearing author, voyager, and damn fine human being! Trained in literary criticism and cultural studies he earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the University of Utah. Beyond English on a good day, he speaks Danish and reads Latin. He is a Utah Writer of the Year.

An avowed Deconstructionist, Johnny writes up-market stories from the inside out, beginning with theme and pursuing an idea through whatever genre will best serve it. So far, he has published fiction novels as mystery, young adult, comedy, urban fantasy, horror and science fiction, both traditionally and independently.

A frequent presenter and panelist at writing conferences and fan conventions, he is active in local communities of artists and writers. A long-time volunteer for the League of Utah Writers, the state's oldest and largest writing organization, he has served several high positions of leadership there, including President from 2018-2020.

When not writing his own stuff, Johnny edits professionally for a small dark fiction press in Los Angeles and teaches Creative Writing at the University of Utah as an Associate Instructor. He lives in Sandy, Utah with his wife, sons and cats. There's also a lawn.

