

LAF LITERARY ARTS FEST

30th Anniversary

For more info, visit our official website at grossmont.edu/laf.



APRIL 27 THRU 30

MON APRIL 27

POET AND ESSAYIST

JASON SCHNEIDERMAN

11AM-12:20PM, GRIFFIN GATE

hosted by Nadra Farina-Hess and the "Americans and the Holocaust" traveling exhibit

reading and book signing by the author of *Self Portrait of Icarus as a Country on Fire*, Finalist for the National Jewish Book Award

STUDENT READING

NEW VOICES

6-7:20 PM, PVAC

student writing talent curated from this semester's Creative Writing Program courses

TUES. APRIL 28

STUDENT PANEL

WHY LIT MATTERS

12:30-1:50 PM, PVAC

students and faculty share personal stories literature's role in their lives

FICTION WRITER / NOVELIST

IVY POCHODA

2-3:20 PM, GRIFFIN GATE

reading and book signing by the author of *Ecstasy*, and *Sing Her Down*, winner of the LA Times Book Prize

WED. APRIL 29

POET

PHILLIP B. WILLIAMS

9:30-10:50 AM, GRIFFIN GATE

reading and book signing by the author of *Mutiny*, and *Thief in the Interior*, winner of the Kate Tufts Discovery Award and a Lambda Literary Award

FICTION / NONFICTION WRITER

AARON BURCH

2-3:20 PM, GRIFFIN GATE

reading and book signing by the author of *A Kind of In-Between*, and *Year of the Buffalo*

THURS. APRIL 30

AUTHOR, POET, PLAYWRIGHT

DEBORAH TAFFA

2-3:20 PM, ROOM 26-220

author of the memoir, *Whiskey Tender*, 2024 National Book Award Finalist, and 2025 winner of Carnegie Medal for Excellence in a Nonfiction longlisted title

LAF 2026 is free of charge and open to the public. All events held in person on the Grossmont College campus.

POET AND ESSAYIST JASON SCHNEIDERMAN

Mon., April 27, 11AM-12:20PM, GRIFFIN GATE

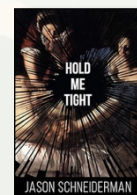
This event is a collaboration with NADRA FARINA-HESS and the "AMERICANS AND THE HOLOCAUST" traveling exhibit, sponsored by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the American Library Association. The exhibit runs **April 14 through May 21 at the Grossmont College Library.**

JASON SCHNEIDERMAN is the author of five books of poetry, including *Self Portrait of Icarus as a Country on Fire*, a 2024 Finalist for the National Jewish Book Award; and *Striking Surface*, winner of the Richard Snyder Prize and finalist for the Eric Hoffer Prize.

He is also editor of the anthology *Queer: A Reader for Writers*. His poetry and essays have appeared in numerous journals and anthologies, including *American Poetry Review*, *The Best*

American Poetry, *Poetry London*, and *The Penguin Book of the Sonnet*.

Schneiderman has received fellowships and awards from Yaddo, The Fine Arts Work Center, The Hermitage, The Fulbright Foundation, and the Poetry Society of America. An editor at *Painted Bride Quarterly*, and former Poetry Editor of *Bellevue Literary Review*, Schneiderman is Professor of English at the CUNY's BMCC and teaches in the MFA Program for Writers at Warren Wilson College. He has been a guest host for *The Slowdown* and is co-host of the podcast, *Painted Bride Quarterly Slush Pile*.



STUDENT READING NEW VOICES

Mon., April 27, 6-7:20 PM, PVAC

This popular showcase of writing talent is curated from the current semester's Creative Writing Program workshops and classes. Students are selected by their writing instructors to perform original works of poetry, fiction, non-fiction, drama, and hybrid forms.

STUDENT PANEL **WHY LITERATURE MATTERS**

TUES., APRIL 28, 12:30-1:50 PM, PVAC

HOSTED BY JULIE CARDENAS AND SARAH STELIGA

This annual, student-favorite event features a panel of Grossmont College students and faculty sharing moving and powerful personal accounts of the role literature has played in their journeys, advocating the relevance of literature and its potential to inspire change, cultivate humanity, and serve us in, both, personal and global ways.

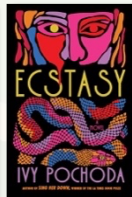
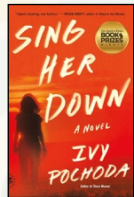
FICTION WRITER, NOVELIST **IVY POCHODA**

TUES., APRIL 28, 2-3:20 PM, GRIFFIN GATE



IVY POCHODA is the author of *Ecstasy*, and the critically acclaimed novels *Wonder Valley*, *Visitation Street*, *These Women*, and *Sing Her Down*, which won the *LA Times* Book Prize. She won the 2018 Strand Critics Award for Best Novel and the Prix Page America in France, and she has been a finalist for the Edgar Award. Pochoda now lives in

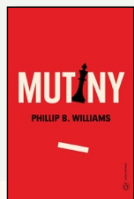
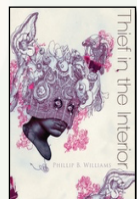
Los Angeles, where she leads a creative writing workshop in Skid Row and helped found *Skid Row Zine*. She is currently a professor of creative writing at the UC Riverside-Palm Desert low-residency MFA program.



POET AND NOVELIST **PHILLIP B. WILLIAMS**

WED., APRIL 29, 9:30-10:50 AM, GRIFFIN GATE

Chicago native **PHILLIP B. WILLIAMS** is the author of four collections of poetry, including *Thief in the Interior*, winner of the Kate Tufts Discovery Award and a Lambda Literary Award; and, *Mutiny*, a finalist for the PEN/Voelcker Award for Poetry Collection and the winner of a 2022 American Book Award. His debut novel, *Ours*, was named Book of the Year by *The New Yorker*, *Los Angeles Times*, NPR, and others. Williams is also the recipient of a Whiting Award and fellowships from the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University and the NEA. He currently teaches in the MFA in creative writing program at NYU and is founding faculty of Randolph College's Low-res MFA.



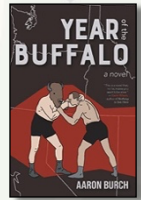
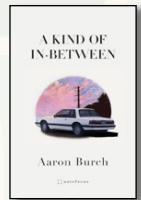
The 30th Anniversary Literary Arts Festival is presented by Grossmont College English Department's Creative Writing Program. For more info, visit grossmont.edu/laf.

FICTION AND NONFICTION WRITER **AARON BURCH**

WED., APRIL 29, 2-3:20 PM, GRIFFIN GATE



A founding editor for the popular literary journal, *Hobart*, fiction writer **AARON BURCH** has authored seven books, including the novels *Year of the Buffalo* and *A Kind of In-Between*. He is also the author of a memoir / literary analysis, *Stephen King's The Body*, and a short story collection, *Backswing*. Burch is also the editor of the craft anthology *How to Write a Novel: An Anthology of 20 Craft Essays About Writing, None of Which Ever Mention Writing*, and is currently the editor of the journals *HAD* and *Short Story, Long*. He grew up in Tacoma, Washington but now lives in Michigan, where he teaches at the University of Michigan.



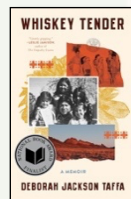
AUTHOR, POET, PLAYWRIGHT **DEBORAH TAFFA**

THURS., APRIL 30, 2-3:20 PM, ROOM 26-220

DEBORAH TAFFA's *Whiskey Tender*, a 2024 National Book Award Finalist, was also a longlisted title for a 2025 Carnegie Medal for Excellence. Named a top book of 2024 by *The Atlantic*, Audible, and *Time Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, *Elle*, *Esquire*, NPR, *The Washington Post*, *Oprah Daily*, *Publisher's Weekly*, and others, *Whiskey Tender* won a Southwest Book Prize and an International Latino Book Award, and was an Amazon Editor's Best Choice Book for the year as well.



With awards and grants from the NEA, PEN America, MacDowell, Hedgebrook, the Ellen Meloy Foundation, *Tin House*, A Public Space, the Kranzberg Arts, and the NY Summer Writers Institute, Taffa is currently working on her second story collection. Her writing can be found at *The Rumpus*, *Boston Review*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *A Public Space*, *Salon*, *Huff Post*, *Prairie Schooner*, *The Best Travel Writing*, *The Best of Brevity: Twenty Groundbreaking Years of Flash Nonfiction*, *The Best American Nonrequired Reading*, and elsewhere. Her play, "Parents Weekend," was performed at the Autry Theater's 8th Annual Short Play Festival in Los Angeles.



A citizen of the Quechan (Yuma) Nation and Laguna Pueblo, Deborah Jackson Taffa earned her MFA in Creative Writing at the University of Iowa in Iowa City. Prior to her

job at Institute of American Indian Arts, she taught Creative Nonfiction at Webster University and Washington University in Saint Louis. She also served as an Executive Board Member with the Missouri Humanities Council where she was instrumental in creating a Native American Heritage Program in the state.

