

The Plot Thins

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San Diego

July 2015 • mystgalaxy.com

Events

Clarion Instructor Saladin Ahmed

Discusses the Writing Process

Wednesday, July 1, 7:30 PM

Established in 1968, the Clarion Writers' Workshop is the oldest workshop of its kind and is widely recognized as a premier proving and training ground for aspiring writers of fantasy and science fiction. As we do each summer, we will be hosting many of the visiting instructors at our store. Instructor Saladin Ahmed was raised in a working-class, Arab American enclave in Michigan. His first novel, *Throne of the Crescent Moon*, was a finalist for the Hugo, Nebula, Crawford, Gemmell, and British Fantasy Awards, won the Locus Award for Best First Novel, and received starred reviews from *Publishers Weekly*, *Kirkus*, and *Library Journal*.

Brian S. Leon

Launch Party for *Havoc Rising*

Friday, July 3, 7:30 PM

San Diego author Brian S. Leon's writing incorporates a variety of his skills and interests, which include mythology and fishing, in pursuit of which he has explored jungles and museums, oceans and seas all over the world. His reading pantheon ranges from Homer and Jules Verne to more modern writers like J.R.R. Tolkien, David Morrell and Jim Butcher. The seeds of his immortal warrior, Diomedes, can be found in the Iliad. Diomedes' eternal life, spent in eternal battle, is documented in *Havoc Rising*, the first in the Guardian Chronicles, Brian's debut novel.

Clarion Instructor James Patrick Kelly

Discusses the Writing Process

Tuesday, July 7, 7:30 PM

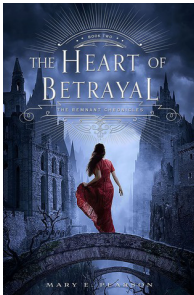
Established in 1968, the Clarion Writers' Workshop is the oldest workshop of its kind and is widely recognized as a premier proving and training ground for aspiring writers of fantasy and science fiction. As we do each summer, we will be hosting many of the visiting instructors at our store. James Patrick Kelly's Twitter bio proclaims him to be "The most famous science fiction writer you've never heard of." The award-winning author will discuss his decades in speculative fiction publishing, podcasting, and magazines.

Mary Pearson

Launch Party for *Heart of Betrayal*

Friday, July 10, 7:30 PM

Join us for the launch party of Mary Pearson latest novel! *Heart of Betrayal* is the latest installment in her Remnant Chronicles. *Kiss of Deception* left Lia and Rafe as captives in the barbarian kingdom of Venda. With little chance of escaping or of ever seeing each other again, they desperately plan an escape. But wrestling with her upbringing, her gift, and her very sense of self, Lia will have to make powerful choices that affect her country, her people, and her own destiny.



Summer Reading Story Time

Saturday, July 11, 2:00 PM

Summer is a time for stories! Join us for three terrific children's writers and their exciting tales of ninjas, kid scientists, and extra groovy animals. In Jennifer Gray Olson's *Ninja Bunny*, a little bunny must master all the skills and abilities of an expert ninja — but first must learn that even ninjas need help from their friends sometimes. In illustrator Rodolfo Montalvo's *Amazing Wilmer Dooley*, Wilmer and his friends are back with another hilarious mystery to solve. In this zany, action-packed middle-grade novel, Wilmer discovers a diabolical scheme is afoot at the 45th Annual State Science Fair and Consortium. It's even more terrible than he had imagined — and Wilmer has to save the school before it's too late. In *The Really Groovy Story of the Tortoise and the Hare* the classic tale is retold in Christina Forshay's fresh hip-hop style. Celebrate reading with Mysterious Galaxy at this fun-filled story time!

Wesley Chu, Carrie Patel, and Scott Sigler

Sign *Time Salvager*, *Cities & Towns*, and *Alive*

Sunday, July 12, 2:00 PM

Join us in celebrating the release of three new science-fiction novels by some of our favorite writers! Award-winning author of *The Lives of Tao*, Wesley Chu is back with *Time Salvager*, a fast-paced time travel adventure where Earth is a toxic, abandoned world and humans have fled into the outer solar

system to survive. As a chronman, James Griffin-Mars undertakes missions into Earth's past to recover resources and treasure without altering the timeline. But James is no one's hero. When he breaks the law and saves Elise Kim — a woman who is fated to die — the two become fugitives in the wild and poisonous wastes of Earth.

In Carrie Patel's *Cities and Towns* the dark, forbidden knowledge of how Recoletta — the fantastical, gaslit underground city — came to be founded has been released into the world for all to read, and now someone must pay. Inspector Liesl Malone is on her toes, trying to keep the peace, and Arnault's spy ring is more active than ever. Has the city's increased access to knowledge put the citizens in even more danger? Allegiances change, long-held beliefs are adjusted, and things are about to get messy.

In the anticipated new novel *Alive*, Scott Sigler delivers an exciting new story that Pierce Brown calls "A ripping, claustrophobic thunderbolt of a novel." When a teenage girl awakens to find herself trapped in a coffin, she has no idea who she is, where she is, or how she got there. Fighting her way free brings little relief — she discovers only a room lined with caskets and a handful of equally mystified survivors. Beyond their room lies a corridor filled with bones and dust, but no people and no answers. Whatever the truth is, she is determined to find it. Join us for this fantastic and action-packed event!

Michael B. Koep

Signs *Leaves of Fire*

Tuesday, July 14, 7:30 PM

"Renaissance Man" Michael B. Koep is an avid world traveler, educator, accomplished visual artist, award-winning poet, swordsman and a touring rock musician. Michael's spirit is imbued in the arts. *The Invasion of Heaven* investigates the age-old questions: why are we here, where are we from and where are we going? Amid swordfights, shootouts, betrayal, just-discovered family members, secret guardians prone to poetic monologues and murders — in a milieu of fine art, fine food, secret lovers, myth, mafia, ancient languages and the loud music of classic vinyl LPs. In *The Newirth Mythology*, *Leaves of Fire*, Koep explores myth, memory, revenge and the hope of forgiveness.

Clarion Instructor Karen Joy Fowler

Discusses the Writing Process

Wednesday, July 15, 7:30 PM

Established in 1968, the Clarion Writers' Workshop is the oldest workshop of its kind and is widely recognized as a premier proving and training ground for aspiring writers of fantasy and science fiction. As we do each summer, we will be hosting many of the visiting instructors at our store. Best-selling author Karen Joy Fowler is the co-founder of the James Tiptree, Jr. Award and the current president of the Clarion Foundation (AKA Clarion San Diego). Her six novels and three short story collections include *The Jane Austen Book Club* and *We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves*, winner of the 2014 California Book Award for Fiction.

Robert Brockway

Signs *The Unnoticables*

Thursday, July 16, 7:30 PM

Here's how *The Unnoticables* by Robert Brockway begins:

Unknown. Unnamed. I met my guardian angel today. She shot me in the face. I'm not much for metaphor. So when I say "guardian angel," I don't mean some girl with big eyes and swiveling hips who I put on a ridiculous pedestal. I mean that she was an otherworldly being assigned by some higher power to watch over me. And when I say "shot me in the face," I don't mean she "blew me away" or "took me by surprise." I mean she manifested a hand of pure, brilliant white energy, pulled out an old weather-beaten Colt Navy revolver, and put a bullet through my left eyeball. I am not dead. I am something far, far worse than dead. Or at least I'm turning into it.

You don't want to miss the rest of the story ...

Gretchen McNeil, Robin Benway, Jessi Kirby, and Tamara Ireland Stone

Sign *Get Dirty*, *Emmy & Oliver*, *Things We Know by Heart*, and *Every Last Word*

Friday, July 17, 7:30 PM

Join us in welcoming these fabulous four YA authors Gretchen McNeil (*Get Dirty*), Robin Benway (*Emmy & Oliver*), Jessi Kirby (*Things We Know by Heart*), and Tamara Ireland Stone (*Every Last Word*). Gretchen will sign and discuss the second in her Don't Get Mad series which can be thought of as *The Breakfast Club* meets *Pretty Little Liars*. The four girls aren't

just mad anymore — they're afraid as they try to discover a killer's identity while their personal lives fall apart. In Robin's latest book, *Emmy & Oliver*, Emmy thought she and Oliver were to be best friends forever until he disappeared only to return years later. Jessi will discuss her latest, *Things We Know by Heart*, featuring Quinn Sullivan who seeks out the recipients of her boyfriend's donated organs. Tamara's *Every Last Word* tackles OCD and the struggles of high school junior, Samantha, as she constantly battles personal demons and dark thoughts.

Hope Schenk-de Michele and Paul Marquez

Sign *Daughter of Darkness*

Saturday, July 18, 2:00 PM

Hope Schenk-de Michele and Paul Marquez have been best friends for more than four decades. They both grew up in Los Angeles, California and share a passion for mystery and science fiction. This passion led them to create the forever young and beautiful daughter of darkness, Lucinda. To assist in bringing Lucinda's story into the literary world, Hope and Paul enlisted the help of New York Times best-selling author of science fiction, fantasy and alternate history, Maya Kaathryn Bohnhoff as a collaborator. *Kirkus Reviews* dubbed *Daughter of Darkness* "A Worthwhile Jaunt For Readers Interested In A Mix Of Magic, Mankind, And The Sinister Ploys Of The Devil."

John Edward Mullen

Launch Party for *Digital Dick: A Murder Mystery*

Saturday, July 18, 4:00 PM

Local author Matt Coyle's blurb on John Edward Mullen's debut: "In *Digital Dick*, John Mullen has created one of the most unique sleuths in the mystery world. Suspenseful, funny, and heartwarming, *Digital Dick* is a winner! Read it and your Satisfaction Index will rise at least 100 points!" Fellow local author Terry Ambrose notes, "*Digital Dick* is a terrifically funny take on how a computer might view our world. With precise analysis and observation, the ability to compute probabilities and scenarios in nanoseconds, and a Satisfaction Index that gets knocked around faster than a ping pong ball, *Dick* solves crimes with blazing speed—but also learns that even a computer can have a heart."

Phoef Sutton

Signs *Crush*

Sunday, July 19, 2:00 PM

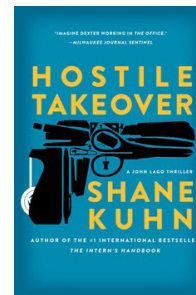
Phoef Sutton will be on hand to entertain us with his latest crime fiction action thriller, *Crush*. *Publishers Weekly* notes that *Crush* is "tailor made for the big screen" which should come as no surprise since Sutton is also an Emmy Award-winning television writer, producer, and feature film writer. Caleb Rush, nicknamed "Crush," is a Hollywood bouncer who agrees to be a bodyguard for spoiled wild child, Amelia Trask, the daughter of an arrogant billionaire. His martial arts skills, wit, and brawn are put to the test as he soon realizes that protecting Amelia invariably puts him in the crosshairs of the Russian Mafia.

Shane Kuhn

Signs *Hostile Takeover*

Monday, July 20, 2015, 7:30 PM

Hostile Takeover, the sequel to Shane Kuhn's darkly comic debut, *The Intern's Handbook*, is finally here and we couldn't be more excited (see Linda's glowing review). Deadly assassin John Lago is back and this time, he faces his most fearful enemy yet—his wife and former nemesis, Alice! Conflicting management styles creates a rift at their company, HR, Inc., and at home for this husband and wife assassin team. When Alice takes on a new HR target, John is forced to fight alongside her to save their company as well as their marriage. This twisted witty thriller will surely not disappoint fans of the series that *Kirkus Reviews* calls "Tarantino funny."



Julia Dahl

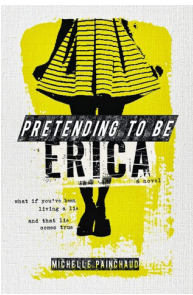
Signs *Run You Down*

Tuesday, July 21, 2015, 7:30 PM

Julia Dahl's debut mystery novel, *Invisible City*, featuring NYC reporter Rebekah Roberts, was nominated for an Edgar and an Anthony Award for Best First Novel last year. It was one of *Boston Globe*'s Best Books of 2014. Now the determined tabloid reporter returns in this thrilling sequel, *Run You Down*, where Rebekah is once again lured into her estranged mother's ultra-Orthodox world as she investigates the mysterious death of a young Hasidic woman. Rebekah soon learns there are others who, like her mother, have left the tight-lipped community, taking their dark secrets with them. Julia is a crime journalist who lives in Brooklyn and writes for CBSNews.com.

Michelle Painchaud
Launch Party for *Pretending to be Erica*
Friday, July 24, 7:30 PM

Help MG welcome debut local YA author Michelle Painchaud to the Galaxy! Michelle’s website bio reads in part: “I like anime, tea, and I graduated from the school of JRPGs. *Pretending to be Erica*, my first book, is about a congirl raised by a conman, who tries to pull off the ultimate heist by pretending to be a dead girl. My books have lots of blood and swearing - some of them have magic and some of them don’t!” *Pretending to be Erica* was included in PopCrush’s “15 Most Anticipated Young Adult Books of 2015.”



David Agranoff
Signs *Amazing Punk Stories*
Saturday, July 25, 2:00 PM

The author of *Boot Boys of the Wolf Reich* and *The Vegan Revolution ... with Zombies* returns with his follow up to his first Wonderland award-nominated short story collection.

Amazing Punk Stories will feature stories set in classic pulp genres including horror, SF, epic fantasy, Westerns, spy and noir — all with a punk rock spin. Come to the party, hear a reading from the author and eat yummy vegan treats. “David Agranoff is a razor sharp writer, a storyteller with a hard rock pacing, a magician of ideas, an adventurer in subcultures, an expert in underground music scenes — all of which is apparent in *Amazing Punk Stories*. But he’s fundamentally something else. David Agranoff is an idealist in Hell.” - John Shirley from his introduction.

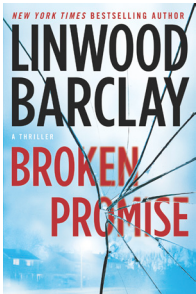
Clarion Instructors Maureen McHugh and Margo Lanagan
Discuss the Writing Process
Wednesday, July 29, 7:30 PM

Established in 1968, the Clarion Writers’ Workshop is the oldest workshop of its kind and is widely recognized as a premier proving and training ground for aspiring writers of fantasy and science fiction. Our summer visits from the instructors ends with the duo of Maureen McHugh and Margo Lanagan. Maureen won the James Tiptree Award for her first novel, *China Mountain Zhang*. She also won a Shirley Jackson Award for her collection *After the Apocalypse*, which was named one of *Publishers Weekly*’s 10

Best Books of 2011. Margo’s novel, *Tender Morsels*, unflinchingly explores the evil and sweetness in the world and the magic of learning to live with both; *Yellowcake* is her latest short story collection published in the US.

Linwood Barclay
Signs *Broken Promise*
Thursday, July 30, 2015 7:30 PM

Linwood Barclay is the #1 internationally bestselling author of thirteen thrillers, including *No Time For Goodbye* and the follow-up *No Safe House*. His books have been translated into nearly thirty languages and many have been optioned for film and television. His latest thriller, *Broken Promise*, features unemployed newspaper reporter and widower, David Harwood. When David decides to move back to his hometown of Promise Falls, NY, he stumbles upon a bizarre family secret involving his cousin and a baby she swears an angel gave to her. When the baby’s real mother is found murdered, David takes it upon himself to find out what really happened. Come find out why Stephen King calls this former *Toronto Star* columnist “a suspense master.”



Reviews

FROM OUR STAFF

Speculative Fiction
Armada by Ernest Cline



Ender’s Game, or watch *The Last Starfighter*! Obvious! How could we all have been so blind?!

“Greetings, Starfighter! You have been recruited by the Star League to defend the frontier against Xur and the Ko-Dan armada!”

It all comes to a head when Zack Lightman sees the alien scout ship from his classroom window. He thinks he’s switched his flip. But no! Seems *Armada*, the awesome video game he’s been playing so awesomely, is actually a simulator ... and he’s about to be recruited to save the Earth!

“Wanna go for a ride?”
This book was written by a die-hard science fiction fan for die-hard science fiction fans. Like *Ready Player One*, *Armada* is chock full of every reference you could shake a stick at and, more than likely, a few you’ll miss in your desire to turn the page to see what new adventure awaits you. It reads like a movie script, and what a movie it would be. *Beam me up, Scotty!* That said, *Armada* is not another *Ready Player One*, but it *is* just as much fun, written in our very science-fiction-loving DNA. Who among us hasn’t dreamt of being recruited to save a galaxy far far away? *So say we all!* And who knows, perhaps *Armada* is just another level in Earth’s invasion preparation. Time to level up and take names.
“The Force will be with you. Always.”

So run, don’t walk to Mysterious Galaxy. Be the first kid on your block to get a shiny new copy of this most awesome book of awesomeness. You’ll laugh, you’ll cry. It’ll change your life! And ...

“You’re Welcome.” – Patrick
Crown, \$26.00.

Crooked by Austin Grossman

Though he may have done a few good things with his presidency, most people remember Richard Nixon as a crook, not a hero. In *Crooked*, Grossman reimagines Nixon as an unlikeable, but ultimately compelling, antihero trying to save the U.S. (and the world) from a secret war of unknowable horrors. Though clearly researched, the novel glosses over

much of the real world Nixon’s actions, making it much more accessible to anyone interested in supernatural spy thrillers, not just Nixonian scholars. The action is sometimes slow, but the nature of the mysteries and the authentic cast will keep readers going to the end. – David
Mullholland, \$26.00.

Nova by Margaret Fortune
36:00:00

Sixteen-year-old Lia Johansen arrives on New Sol Space Station a refuge and war orphan, but she is not exactly what she seems. She remembers little of her past, nor if she is entirely human. All she knows is her mission. Lia Johansen is bomb, engineered to go Nova in 36 hours, and the clock is ticking. Then it is not. Malfunction. Now she needs some answers, and a reason to go on ... before she goes off. Even a dud can be dangerous if it’s rattled too much.
00:02:13

Exploring what it means to be human through the unlikely eyes of a piece of unexploded ordnance, *Nova* is the truly remarkable first volume in a series of five interconnected novels of interstellar war that will appeal to adults young and old ... a novel quite worthy of Heinlein and PKD ... and your time. Trust me, don’t miss this one. *Glorious.*
00:00:42
00:00:41

– Patrick
DAW Books, \$24.95. A June Fantastic Firsts Selection.

Mystery & Suspense
Hostile Takeover by Shane Kuhn

Hostile Takeover, the sequel to the darkly amusing *The Intern’s Handbook* might also be called *The War of the Roses*, because assassin John Lago faces his most deadly target yet-his wife Alice! Filled with murder, mayhem and more than a dash of sarcasm, *Hostile Takeover* begins with just that: their workplace, Human Resources, Inc. coming under the control of John and Alice. Husband and wife assassins working together, training new employees to infiltrate corporations under the guise of interns and kill high profile targets can put a real strain on a marriage. Can John and Alice survive (literally) the inter-office conflicts and find true love again? If they manage to avoid killing each other, can they also survive outside sources who want them dead? For fans who like their thrillers on the dark side, with a splash of twisted humor – Linda
Simon & Schuster, \$25.00.

Truffled To Death: A Chocolate Covered Mystery by Kathy Aarons

Michelle Serrano and Erica Russell, best friends, roommates, and business partners, are hosting a special exhibit of Mayan

antiquities for the town museum. Professor Addison Moody, former mentor to Erica, has requested their business, Chocolates and Chapters, host the event. In spite of a couple of incidents and Erica’s increased stress level, the evening seems to go well. Until the antiquities go missing and Erica, because of her degree and background, becomes the prime suspect in the theft. When Dr. Moody is found dead, his assistant Lavender Rawlings accuses Erica of murder. Once again the business partners and friends find themselves racing the police for a solution. With the help of Michelle’s brother, Leo, and Erica’s brother, Bean, the ladies hunt both a murderer and international art thief. Throw in kittens and match-making and readers will enjoy the company of the two best friends. – Guest Reviewer Sandra Hale
Berkley Prime Crime paperback original, \$7.99.

Young Adult
Nimona by Noelle Stevenson

This is a fun and imaginative graphic novel that explores friendship, magic, and what it really means to be a hero. Nimona is a young girl who is fiercely independent, a bit impulsive, and plenty eager to create havoc around her. When she joins forces with the notorious villain, Lord Ballister Blackheart she thinks they can finally prove that the heroes at the Institution of Law Enforcement and Heroics aren’t exactly who they say they are. But the lines between villainy and heroism aren’t so clear and Nimona and Ballister must both work through their painful pasts before they can help make the present world a better place. Full of science, magical shapeshifting, heroes, villains and plenty of laugh out loud moments, this is a graphic novel readers of all ages can enjoy. – Kelly
HarperCollins, \$12.99.

I Am Princess X by Cherie Priest

Princess X offers readers the very best kind of “purple prose,” in its tale of BFFs May and Libby, who create the title character on a playground during a quiet moment in grade school. May continues to tell tales of the sword-wielding, sneaker-wearing princess, illustrated by Libby – until Libby’s tragic accidental death. When the lonely teenaged May sees fan art and a webcomic appear with their character, she is surprised ... and as she explores the mystery behind the reemergence of her creation, she begins wondering if Libby is dead after all. The story’s prose / sequential art combination, supported by an active website for iamprincessx.com provide a fully immersive experience for true believers in female friendship. – Maryelizabeth
Arthur A. Levine, \$18.99.



BOOKS OF MARTIANS, MURDER, MAGIC, MAYHEM & MORE
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