

A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

As of 2023, 8 authors have been published through the STEP contest, with 2 authors' books forthcoming in 2024

Winning books have been featured in *Parade*, *Newsweek*, and *Travel + Leisure*, won multiple awards, and more

Winners join an active community of 1,000+ authors

www.shewritespress.com/equality-in-publishing



SHEWRITESPRESS.COM/EQUALITY-IN-PUBLISHING



ABOUT THE STEP CONTEST

Since 2018, we've been proud to play a role in the much-needed elevation of writers of color.

Every year for five years running, we've offered two authors of color publishing packages (plus a 500-book print run) as part of our **She Writes Press and SparkPress Toward Equality in Publishing (STEP)** contest. The purpose of this contest is to support inclusivity across our lists, and to fortify our own mission to give voice to women writers.

Both packages include the full services of the She Writes Press and SparkPress Publishing Package (each valued at \$9500):

- Custom interior design for up to 100,000 words
- Custom cover design
- E-book file conversion/upload to 130+ distribution partners
- Traditional distribution to the trade via Publishers Group West
- Proofreading of your final manuscript
- Copyright filing/obtaining Library of Congress control number
- Warehousing of short-run printed books
- Preordering and fulfillment of all orders
- Support of your book through production/post-publication

*In addition, and not included in the Publishing Package, the Equality Toward Publishing program includes a first print run of 500 copies.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS

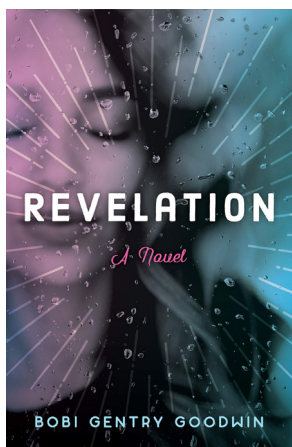
STEP recipients are selected on the basis of the merit of their entry, which consists of a query letter, full chapter summaries, and the first 50 pages of the work. Authors can also submit a full-length nonfiction book proposal. There is no fee to enter.

WHO CAN ENTER:

- Anyone over the age of eighteen, in all countries/regions
- Women only (Any writer identifying as female/woman, trans, non-binary, or genderqueer.)
- Women of color (by which we mean people whose heritage is African, Indigenous to the Americas, Latinx, Asian/Pacific Islander, Arab, or people of mixed racial heritage with one or two parents who fit into the above groups).
- Agented or unagented work qualifies

MEET SOME OF OUR STEP WINNERS BELOW

SHE WRITES PRESS



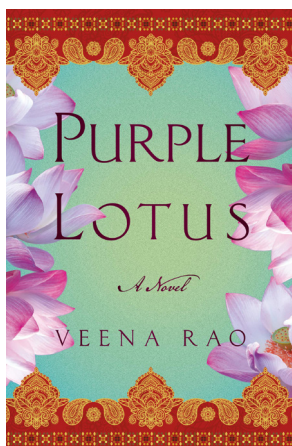
REVELATION BY BOBI GENTRY GOODWIN

"A tumultuous family drama in which characters contend with the legacies of the past, troubles of the present, and uncertainties of the future."

—**Kirkus Reviews**

"Wonderfully realistic dialogue and relatably fallible characters mark Goodwin's debut for readers who appreciate Vanessa Davis Griggs and Kimberla Lawson Roby."

—**Booklist**



PURPLE LOTUS BY VEENA RAO

2021 American Fiction Award: Winner

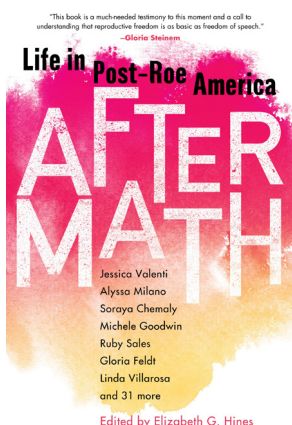
2021 Georgia Author of the Year Award Finalist

2021 International Book Awards, Finalist: Women's Fiction

2021 International Book Awards, Finalist: Multicultural Fiction

"Rao's resonant novel is an ode to the value of personal dignity and the importance of being true to oneself that carries on long after the final chapter."

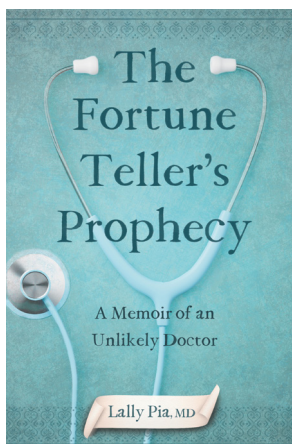
—**Newsweek**



AFTERMATH, EDITED BY ELIZABETH G. HINES

"In the aftermath of Roe, the consequence of allowing states to suppress this right will be a new American revolution. This book is a much-needed testimony to this moment and a call to understanding that reproductive freedom is as basic as freedom of speech."

—**Gloria Steinem, author and activist**



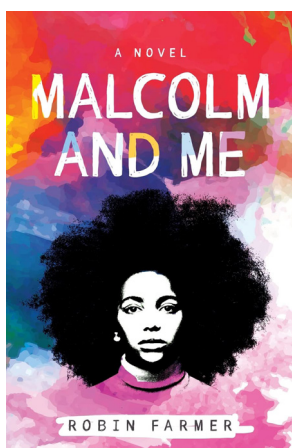
THE FORTUNE TELLER'S PROPHECY BY LALLY PIA
Coming Spring 2024

A searing examination of the immigrant experience, *The Fortune Teller's Prophecy* is Lally Pia's tale of resilience in the face of a bungled Green Card—a four-continent quest to fulfill her dream of becoming a doctor.

"Lally Pia is an extraordinary writer who has led many extraordinary lives and has written an extraordinary book about several of them. An exile, immigrant, friend to cadavers, and a doctor of doctors, this extraordinary human's story is full of light, dark, inspiration, and love. You must read it."

—David Henry Sterry, author of *Chicken*

SPARKPRESS

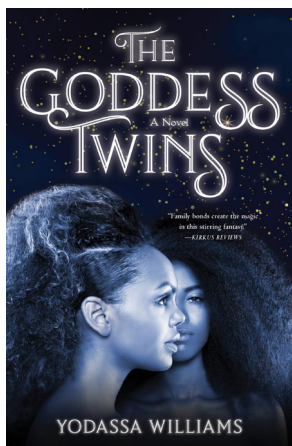


MALCOLM & ME BY ROBIN FARMER

2021 Eric Hoffer Award Grand Prize Shortlist
2021 Eric Hoffer Award Honorable Mention in Young Adult
2021 Eric Hoffer Book Award First Horizon Finalist
2021 Page Turner Award Finalist

"Farmer brings emotional fidelity to Roberta's struggles, making the girl's growth feel well earned. A celebratory coming-of-age novel with a thoughtful, resilient heroine."

—*Kirkus*



THE GODDESS TWINS BY YODASSA WILLIAMS

One of *Parade* magazine's 20 Upcoming Books of Summer

"... an impressive, commanding novel about Black girl magic... *The Goddess Twins* is an emotive and powerful feminist novel that inspires the innate goddess in every girl."

—*Foreword Reviews*



LOVE IN THE AGE OF DRAGONS BY FATIMA R. HENSON

2022 Moonbeam Children's Book Awards Gold Winner in Young Adult Fiction (Fantasy / Sci-Fi)

2022 American Fiction Awards Finalist in Multicultural Fiction and Science Fiction: Post-Apocalyptic

"The author describes an extraordinary world through a thrilling and addictive narrative. . . . The result is a fast-paced but not rushed story, perfect for dystopia/fantasy lovers."

—***Readers' Favorite, 5-star review***



THE GARDEN OF SECOND CHANCES BY MONA ALVARADO FRAZIER

" . . . persistently tense story. . . both narratively and emotionally satisfying."

—***Kirkus Reviews***

" . . . searing . . . Candid when it comes to relationships, immigration issues, and the harms that young women endure and inflict upon others, *The Garden of Second Chances* is an affecting novel in which an at-risk youth finds the courage to move past her mistakes."

—***Foreword Reviews***

PAST JUDGES

We're always looking for passionate, qualified judges with experience in the publishing industry. Meet our past judges below:



ELIZABETH G. HINES

Elizabeth G. Hines is an author, editor, and strategic communications specialist. She was the founding education editor at AlterNet, a syndication service and online community of the alternative press featuring news stories from alternative newsweeklies, magazines, and web publications. Her work has appeared in *HuffPost*, Women's eNews, AOL's Black Voices, Black Enterprise Magazine, and Babble.com, and she is the coauthor of the best-selling biography, *Black Titan: A. G. Gaston and the Making of a Black American Millionaire*, winner of the 2004 Non-Fiction Book Honor from the American Library Association.



VEENA RAO

Veena Rao was born and raised in India but calls Atlanta home. A journalist by profession, she is the founding editor and publisher of *NRI Pulse*, a popular Indian-American newspaper. Although her day job involves news reports, interviews, and meeting press deadlines, she devotes her spare time to creative writing and long walks in the woods. *Purple Lotus*, her debut novel, is a winner of the She Writes Press and SparkPress Toward Equality in Publishing (STEP) contest.



REGINA BROOKS

Regina Brooks is the CEO of Serendipity Literary Agency the largest African American owned agency in the US, and the author of *Never Finished, Never Done*; *Writing Great Books for Young Adults 2e*; and *You Should Really Write A Book: How to Write, Sell, and Market Your Memoir*. Brooks is the agent behind many notable authors and illustrators whose awards include National Book Award, Newbery, Caldecott, Michael Printz, Pen Writers honors. Her clients have also won the NAACP Image Award, Edgar Award, Kirkus and a host of other awards. Brooks is on the faculty of the Harvard University publishing program and several low-residency MFA programs. She was a *Publishers Weekly* 2015 Starwatch Honoree, was named Woman of the Year by The National Association of Professional Women, and is a three-time winner of the Stevie™ Award for Women Entrepreneurs. *Writer's Digest* magazine named Serendipity Literary Agency as one of the top 25 literary agencies in the US.



JENNIFER CHEN TRAN

Jennifer Chen Tran is a literary agent with over a decade of experience in publishing.



ROBIN FARMER

Robin Farmer is a national award-winning journalist and transplanted Philadelphian who currently calls the Richmond, VA, area home. At eight, she told her mother she would write for a living, and she is grateful that her younger self knew what she was talking about (many young folks do). Her other interests include screenwriting, poetry, movies, and traveling. She's still hoping to write stories about young people for television and film. Robin earned her degree in journalism from Marquette University.



U-MELENI

U-Meleni Mhlaba-Adebo is a Zimbabwean American poet, author, speaker, singer, and educator who has performed internationally in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Nigeria, Portugal, and Ireland. She is fiercely passionate about using her voice for women's empowerment, wellness, diversity & inclusion, and the exploration of translation or "hyphenated identities" through her work. She was featured on "WGBH Suitcase Stories." Her poetry collection *Soul Palms* (She Writes Press) was described by David Updike as "written in a fearless female voice tempered with optimism and healing possibilities of love." In Spring 2018 she was a Keynote at the Naturalization Ceremony at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston as well as the 15th Annual Refugee Conference in Lowell, MA. During Women's History Month she performed in a staged reading at the Next Stage Arts Project in Putney, Vermont, for "*Bold Women, Brazen Acts*, an event inspired by Rivka Solomon's book *That Takes Ovaries! Bold Females and Their Brazen Acts*."

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO ENTER, WHO SHOULD ENTER, THE JUDGING PROCESS, AND MORE, VISIT: SHEWRITESPRESS.COM/EQUALITY-IN-PUBLISHING

If interested in judging, contact brooke@shewritespress.com