



Be a Better Writer

Conversations on Writing and Publishing at The Bay Area Book Festival

**Cornelia Funke, Amy Tintera, Dani Shapiro, Hannah Tinti, Traci Chee, Erik Axl Sund,
and more**

June 3-4, 2017

How do you write a bestselling novel? How do you take the mystery out of what makes a good mystery? Or write about something you've never experienced, as sci-fi and fantasy authors often do? Are you publishing a book for the first time and want to know how it's done? Or a short story? Or are you a journalist trying to speak your mind in our post-truth era?

Learn from the pros in these sessions that span all genres—from YA to thrillers to memoir—tailored to give you the insights and skills you need to survive and thrive as a writer and publisher at this year's [Bay Area Book Festival](#).

Highlights of this year's conversations on **writing & publishing**, which will all take place in venues in downtown Berkeley, include:

My Literary Friend: Dani Shapiro and Hannah Tinti Talk

As much as we think of the act of writing as solitary, art never occurs in a vacuum. Author and editor Hannah Tinti talks with bestselling author Dani Shapiro about the necessity of mentorship, literary friendships, and the surprising joys and hard truths of living the writer's life. *(Saturday, June 3, 10am at the David Brower Center - Goldman Theater. Sponsored by One Story.)*

Publishing's Roles and Responsibilities in a Post-Truth Era

With Naheed Hasnat Senzai, Marissa Moss, Jessica Powers, Rachael Small and Lise Quintana, moderated by Brooke Warner

In a publishing climate rife with fake news, and following the aftermath of the public fallout of Simon & Schuster's acquisition of Milo Yiannopoulos's 'Dangerous,' questions arise about free speech, our cultural response to truth, and gatekeepers. This panel will be a spirited conversation about the state of the industry and the roles and responsibilities of all the players—from publishers and the media, to authors and readers. *(Saturday, June 3, 11:45am at the Hotel Shattuck Plaza - Crystal Ballroom. Sponsored by Zoetic Press.)*

Worlds We Create: Young Adult Fantasy Writers on Creating Alternate Realities and Memorable Characters

Traci Chee, Lisa Maxwell, Shannon Messenger, and Amy Tintera; moderated by Alex Green
Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither were the fictional universes of Harry Potter, LOST, or Game of Thrones. Learn the secrets behind creating worlds in the most popular story form there is—fantasy—from four smart, innovative writers in the genre. Here, you'll absorb what keeps them, and their readers, hooked, and master the tools you need to develop and immerse readers in a world of your creation. *(Saturday, June 3, 3:15pm at the Hotel Shattuck Plaza - Boiler Room.)*

The Art of Investigation: Journalists Meet Crime Writers

Erik Axl Sund (Jerker Eriksson and Håkan Axlander Sundquist), in discussion with Michael Montgomery

There is a curious connection between crime novels and investigative reporting. Both are called “stories” by their practitioners. Both present victims and an evildoer, whether that be a person or a system, and both work with suspicion, suspense, and a constant assessment of the reliability of sources of information. Michael Montgomery is a journalist who has reported on some of the most heinous real-life mysteries around the world. Erik Axl Sund is the pseudonym of two Swedish writers whose blockbuster “The Crow Girl” is “a jolting examination of a cycle of abuse and revenge” that “builds a powerful indictment of society’s willingness to turn a blind eye toward powerful, privileged abusers preying on the weak” (Booklist, starred review). *(Sunday, June 4, 1:15pm at the BAMPFA - Barbro Osher Theater. Sponsored by the Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation, the Center for Investigative Reporting, and Margaret and Will Hearst)*

Plus, **Cornelia Funke**, the “J.K. Rowling of Germany,” will talk about how she created, Breathing Books, her multidimensional production and publishing company; four African writers discuss what it means to tell their own stories, in their own words and languages, and the journey their work takes to arrive in print, at home and abroad; the masterminds behind the popular short story magazine, **One Story**, will explore the power and timelessness of the American short story; **Wendy Hornsby, Ellen Kirschman, Vidar Sundstol**, and **Steve Hockensmith** will clue people in on what makes a good “whodunit”; a new generation of Irish authors will illuminate on how their small, rocky island has had such outsized influence on world literature; and four bestselling thriller authors will reveal the trade secrets of the craft, including **Keith Raffel**, a mystery and thriller writer who formerly served as counsel to the Senate Intelligence Committee overseeing the CIA and NSA!

For other book festival sessions, [see the full schedule](#).

Festival speakers are available for interviews by credentialed members of the press via email or Skype in advance of the festival, or in person over the weekend event. Outlet must be identified and assignment secured before the interview.

The festival logo and other images are [available here](#), and author photos are available by request. Please contact Anna Pulley, anna@bayboofest.org.