



LIT FEST  
2025

# Agent and Editor Meetings

Anyone who's submitted their work to the publishing world knows about the lag times, the polite declines, and the form rejections. Here's your chance to sit down and chat with a literary agent or editor to find out what they thought when reading your manuscript.

For writers interested in taking their work to market one day, Lit Fest offers an opportunity to educate yourself about and connect with publishing professionals. Given the busy schedules of agents and editors, it's a rare chance to receive their direct feedback and advice.

To request a meeting with an agent, you must purchase an Advanced Workshop Plus Agent Meeting or a Gold, Weekend Gold, Silver, Bronze, or Full-Access Business Pass (click each icon to learn more/purchase).



## BEFORE MEETING WITH AN AGENT OR EDITOR

Make sure you're ready for this. Writing is a competitive business, and agents are direct about their reactions to your work. Have you had a professional read the work you're submitting? Is it reasonably edited? If not, we'd recommend attending Lit Fest's business panels first and then reaching out to agents and editors at a later date (perhaps at next year's Lit Fest!). We also recommend that poets, short-story writers, and essayists without complete manuscripts meet with an editor to discuss how their work fits into the current marketplace.

For those who opt to take a meeting, submit your top three agent/editor preferences via the [Agent/Editor Preferences Form](#) by **May 1**. Within the following few days, writers will be scheduled with agents/editors, and by **May 6**, we'll reach back out and let you know who you'll be meeting with. You can then submit your meeting documents in one file via the [Agent/Editor Meeting Submission Form](#). We'll then confirm your meeting time and let you know if additional meetings are available for purchase.



## **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES—AGENTS/EDITORS**

In your submission, please include a one-page query letter and the first 15 pages of your manuscript in a single document in .pdf or .doc/docx format. Please use a 12-point, legible font, double-spaced, and 1-inch margins.

## **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES—LITERARY MAGAZINE EDITORS**

Four of our visiting editors represent the literary magazine community and can provide feedback on your submission, where your work may or may not fit in the literary world, and suggestions for publication: Wendy Chen of Tupelo Quarterly, Paul M. French of Denverse, Alexander Lumans of American Short Fiction, and Lena Valencia of One Story.

**For submissions to these four editors, please follow the below guidelines:**

Poetry: Please submit up to five poems formatted in a single file (.pdf or .doc/docx).

Prose: Submit up to 5,000 words of fiction, nonfiction, critique, or translation. Please use a standard (e.g., Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri) 12-point font with double spacing, page numbers, and 1-inch margins.

### **IMPORTANT DATES**

**May 1 (midnight MDT): Submit your top three agent or editor choices via [this form](#).**

**May 6: We'll confirm your meeting time and open up additional meetings if space allows.**

**May 8 (midnight MDT): Deadline to submit your meeting submission document via [this form](#).**

**May 12: You'll receive final confirmation of your meeting schedule.**

## **HOW MATCHES ARE MADE BETWEEN AGENTS AND PASS HOLDERS**

When selecting your top agent choices, be sure to align your picks based on the professional interests of each agent. Ideally, they'll be actively seeking the type of work you write so they can give you direct feedback on how your work presents in the marketplace. We'll do our best to align with your top agent picks, and once we've made your match, we'll reach back out to confirm the date and time of your meeting. Due to limited space and high demand, we can't guarantee that you will meet with your first choice, which is why it's crucial you select agents all interested in your genre.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT**

Important: While several writers have secured agents and even book deals at Lit Fest, we encourage you to think of this more as an opportunity to educate yourself. The publishing landscape is vast, and we rarely get a chance to hear a professional reaction to our work. It's best, then, to think of this meeting as more like an informational interview than a job interview.

## **HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR 20 MINUTES**

Familiarize yourself with the agent or editor whom you are meeting with and have questions prepared to ask them about your submission and the publishing world in general. Some agents/editors will have specific feedback about your submission, and some agents/editors' feedback may be more general; having questions prepared can better ensure you leave the meeting with useful information. Be prepared to verbally pitch your work.

## **ADDITIONAL MEETINGS**

By May 7, we'll open up additional meetings for Lit Fest pass holders for \$110 members/\$130 non-members each. We'll let you know if this option is available.



## Agents, Editors, and Schedule

Send us your top three agent or editor choices by **May 1**, and we'll confirm your meeting before you submit your final query letter and writing sample on **May 8**. Agents are available to take meetings virtually. Wendy Chen, Jennifer Lyons, Jennifer Chen Tran, and Lena Valencia, are available for virtual meetings only.

### **Haley Casey – June 7, 8:**

Haley Casey graduated from The University of Kansas in 2015 with a BA in creative writing, and that fall, she attended the Denver Publishing Institute for a deep dive into the industry. She began her full-time career at Ogden Publications, where she was an editor for four years. There she worked with a variety of authors across multiple magazines, wrote over a dozen articles, edited audio for podcasts, and even styled cover photos—anything to add some creativity to her days. In 2020, she interned at Metamorphosis Literary Agency and Creative Media Agency, Inc. before stepping into her role as an associate agent at CMA.

For as long as she can remember, Haley has defined herself by her love of reading. She's actively building her list, is ready to bring new stories into the world, and is looking forward to helping her authors achieve their publishing goals. Haley is looking for big emotions, multi-level plots, female friendships, sweeping urban fantasy, clever fairytale retellings, reimagined classics, unique story structures, locked-room YA thrillers, MG with magical creatures, heists and spies and assassins, rivals to lovers, and diverse voices.

### **Jenny Chen – June 9, 10**

Jenny Chen (she/her) is an executive editor at the Ballantine Books Group acquiring mysteries, thrillers, suspense, crime fiction. She joined Ballantine in 2020 and has since published various New York Times bestsellers, book club picks, award-winning mysteries, and critically acclaimed works. Previously she was at Crooked Lane Books.

Jenny is looking for mystery, suspense, thriller, or crime novels that put fresh spins on tried and true tropes, high-concept twists, with big heart or emotion at the core, and a magnetic voice. She is especially interested in protagonists who are liars, have shifty agendas, and/or are misguided by good intentions.

### **Wendy Chen (Editor) – June 13, Virtual Only**

Wendy Chen is the author of the novel *Their Divine Fires* (Algonquin) and the poetry collection *Unearthings* (Tavern Books). Her poetry translations of Song-dynasty woman writer Li Qingzhao are published in *The Magpie at Night* from Farrar, Straus & Giroux. She is the editor of *Witness*, associate editor-in-chief of *Tupelo Quarterly*, and prose editor of *Tupelo Press*. She earned her MFA in poetry from Syracuse University and her PhD in English from the University of Denver. She is an assistant professor of creative writing at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Wendy is looking for writing that stands in witness to the world we live in and all its pressing realities. The writing they publish has a distinct perspective and voice that grips readers from the very first line.



**Elizabeth Copps – June 6, 7**

Elizabeth Copps is a literary agent and founder of Copps Literary Services based in Denver, Colorado. With 15 years of industry experience, Elizabeth began her publishing career in 2010 when she moved from Florida to New York City and discovered her passion through an agency internship. Her business philosophy centers on building equitable, transparent, and long-lasting relationships throughout the publishing industry.

Elizabeth is seeking thought-provoking commercial fiction across adult, YA, and middle grade categories, particularly: Horror and speculative fiction that push boundaries and explore big questions, genre-blending narratives with lush prose and complex characters, dark mythology and folklore retellings (adult/YA), spooky middle grade with light magical elements, family dramas and female friendship stories, works exploring technology's impact on identity, historical and contemporary fiction addressing social justice/mental health, and unconventional romances.

**Brenna English-Loeb – June 6, 7**

Brenna English-Loeb works with authors of adult genre fiction and adult nonfiction, with select YA and crossover clients. She joined the Transatlantic in 2019 after working for several years at Janklow & Nesbit Associates and Writers House, where I had the pleasure of working with New York Times bestselling and award-winning authors across multiple genres. Brenna grew up in beautiful Upstate New York and studied English and Theatre at Bucknell University. Brenna is also the owner of BEL Tower Editorial, where she works with authors as a developmental editor on such big-picture issues as world-building, plot and character development, pacing and theme, among other areas of concern, such as query and synopsis critiques.

In nonfiction, Brenna is looking for serious, groundbreaking sociological work that holds our culture up to a magnifying glass, propulsive narrative nonfiction, and accounts of historical events and people that deserve to be better known. In fiction, Brenna is looking for adult fantasy, science fiction, and mystery queries. In every genre, she prioritizes beautiful writing, exciting characters, and thought-provoking world-building. She gravitates towards relationship-driven plots with personal stakes, and she loves stories with a sense of fun and adventure, even if they're tackling serious subjects. She is specifically looking for upmarket commercial works in the following subgenres: contemporary fantasy, secondary world fantasy, gothic fantasy, high-concept space opera, horror, and modern-day classic mystery. And in all categories, she is always looking for works by authors from underrepresented groups and identities.

**Paul M. French (Editor) – June 13**

Paul M. French is the editor and founder of Denverse Magazine, a local print and online quarterly dedicated to showcasing Mile High arts and culture. He is the former executive editor of Innovation & Tech Today, and his work has been featured in Wired and the Denver Quarterly, among other publications.

Denverse is looking for raw, authentic, long-form essays and investigative journalism related to the larger Denver area. Denverse also publishes poetry, short stories, and music reporting from local writers.



**Paloma Hernando – June 9, 10, 11, 12, 13:**

Paloma Hernando got her start at Einstein Literary Management in 2020, where she built a list focusing on graphic novels and illustrated books, and joined APL in the fall of 2024. Coming from a background of independent comics and the DIY scene, Paloma has always been attracted to well-told stories with a passionate drive behind them. Paloma is also accepting prose works and is seeking any book that tells genre stories in new ways. The only thing she likes more than trope-y fun is the chance to break it down into something new. Paloma also represents illustrators for literary projects and is always on the lookout for strong visual styles. As a daughter of Argentinian immigrants, Paloma views publishing globally and would love to work with any bilingual or international projects. Currently located in Brooklyn, Paloma can usually be found at a drag show or in the karaoke room, and would love to recommend the next movie you should watch.

**Alexander Lumans (Editor) – June 12**

Alexander Lumans was awarded a 2018 NEA Creative Writing Grant in Fiction. He received fellowships in 2015 and 2024 for expeditions with The Arctic Circle Residency and he was the Spring 2014 Philip Roth Resident at Bucknell University. His fiction and nonfiction have appeared in *The Paris Review*, *Electric Literature*, *Guernica*, *Gulf Coast*, *Off Assignment*, *American Short Fiction*, among other publications. He's received support from MacDowell, Yaddo, the Helene Wurlitzer Foundation, Arteles Creative Center in Finland, Sewanee, Bread Loaf, and others. He lives in Berlin.

Alexander looks for stories that take purposeful, surprising risks in character, language, and form. He wants stories that stick with him and changes him.

**Jennifer Lyons – June 10, Virtual Only**

Jennifer Lyons was a senior agent for sixteen years before she decided to open up her own literary agency. She represents numerous award-winning authors. The awards her clients have received include the Nobel Prize, The Pulitzer for both Fiction and Nonfiction, the National Book Award for both Fiction and Nonfiction, PEN Literary Awards, the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award, the Coretta Scott King Book Award, the National Jewish Book Award, The Koret Award, The Lambda, and many others. Jennifer has attended the Frankfurt Book Fair sixteen times and has also visited the Jerusalem and London Book Fairs. Jennifer is on the advisory committee of World Poetry Books, and she is a contributing editor to the literary journal *Fiction* and the author of *The Business of Writing* (Allworth Press, 2012). She regularly teaches the business of writing based on her own book.



**Clare Mao – June 11, 12**

Clare was born and raised in Queens, NY, went to college in Iowa, and now lives in Brooklyn. Prior to joining Greenburger in 2023, she worked at Europa Content and Janklow & Nesbit.

Clare represents adult fiction and nonfiction writers and creators who are poets, musicians, journalists, illustrators, bar owners, artists, and more. Across genres, she is drawn to writers who are curious, thoughtful, and critical, who have expansive interests and concerns including and outside of writing, and who have a knack for blending genres and forms. Most importantly, she wants to represent writers who are having fun.

In fiction, she is looking for novels with a strong sense of place, insightful character work, and beautiful prose. She represents fiction across the spectrum of literary to upmarket/book club to commercial with strong writing. In nonfiction, she is seeking cultural criticism, memoir/narrative, and essay collections, and is actively looking for writing about solidarity, food, art, fashion, pop culture, new modes of creating community, and the environment. She also represents illustrated projects like cookbooks and photo books, and her list includes a Chinese mythology-inspired tarot deck, a photographic archive of emo music, and an astrology cocktail book.

She does not represent children's/YA, sci-fi/fantasy, or horror. While Clare represents poets, she is not actively seeking poetry submissions. Select clients include: Karen Cheung, Johanna Hedva, and Eric Huang.

**Nate Muscato – June 7, 8:**

Nate Muscato represents academics, journalists, artists, and polymathic thinkers and storytellers. Authors he works with have written for national and international publications, hit the New York Times bestseller list, and received awards and fellowships from the Whiting Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation, and the Ford Foundation.

Prior to joining Aevitas Creative Management, Nate worked at Farrar, Straus & Giroux and Sterling Lord Literistic in New York, taught high school students in Milan, and worked as a bookseller in New England. He graduated from Vassar College with a BA in English and Italian.

Nate primarily focuses on nonfiction, specializing in narrative journalism, cultural history and criticism, and original research. In terms of memoir, he is drawn to projects that combine artful storytelling, radical perspectives, and humor to explore broader concepts of progress and justice in society. Nate also has an interest in select genre fiction, particularly sci-fi/fantasy stories that explore new worlds while revealing truths about our own. Throughout these genres, he has a strong affinity for queer voices.



**Elizabeth Pratt – June 11, 12, 13:**

Elizabeth Pratt joined Trellis Literary Management after 1.5 years at Park & Fine Literary and Media. Prior to that, she worked at Universal McCann and The Wylie Agency. A graduate of the University of Michigan, where she studied history and English, and the Columbia Publishing Course at Oxford, Elizabeth is actively building her own client list. Originally from East Lansing, Michigan, Elizabeth now lives in New York.

Elizabeth is looking for character-driven literary fiction focused on the inner workings of complex relationships like *Conversations with Friends*; *Intermezzo*; *Detransition*, and sprawling family sagas or chronicles of a life, with a historical bent, like *The Love Songs of W.E.B. Du Boies*; *The Queen of the Night*; *Little Gods*. Elizabeth is also interested in Mythological, folklore, high fantasy, romantasy, and other genre-bending fiction that might use elements of genre, but makes a strong point about the primary narrative and themes of the book, such as, *Circe*; *A Thousand Ships*; *The Secret History*; *Bel Canto*. Finally, Elizabeth is interested in any debuts, poets-turned-novelists, and anyone who writes well!

**Samantha Shea – June 10, 11:**

After graduating from Colgate University, Samantha Shea joined Georges Borchardt, Inc. in 2010 and was made a Vice President in 2016. Her list includes literary fiction, memoir/narrative nonfiction, journalism, popular culture, essays, cultural criticism, and history. Samantha's authors are regularly named for numerous awards and honors, including the "5 Under 35" honor from the National Book Foundation, the "Best of Young American Novelists" honor from *Granta Magazine*, the Kirkus Prize, the Whiting Award, the National Book Critics Circle Awards, the PEN/ Robert W. Bingham Prize, and others. Samantha is open to queries in the following genres: upmarket fiction, journalism, history, and cultural criticism.

**Julie Stevenson – June 9, 10:**

Julie Stevenson is a literary agent with *Massie McQuilkin & Altman* in New York. She represents literary and upmarket fiction, suspense, memoir, graphic novels, narrative nonfiction, young adult fiction. She is drawn to storytelling with unforgettable characters, an authorial command of voice, and a strong sense of narrative tension. She looks for work that both entertains and explores the depths of human experience. She's agented #1 *New York Times* bestsellers and books that have won the Pulitzer Prize, the MWA Edgar Award, the Center for Fiction First Novel Prize, the Carnegie Medal for Excellence, the National Book Critics Circle Award, the Dayton Literary Peace Prize, and the Caldecott Honor. Before she became an agent, Julie worked in the editorial departments of *Tin House* and *Publishers Weekly*. Julie grew up in Missoula, Montana and received her bachelor's degree in English Literature from Washington University in St. Louis and an M.F.A in Creative Writing from Sarah Lawrence College in New York. Some of the most notable books Julie has agented include *The Sympathizer* by Viet Thanh Nguyen, *Girl In Pieces* by Kathleen Glasgow, and *The Mountains Sing* by Nguyễn Phan Quế Mai.

Julie is looking to acquire upmarket and literary fiction with spiky protagonists, propulsive storytelling, and unexpected twists, as well as original retellings and capacious family epics. For nonfiction, she gravitates toward intimately told books that interrogate contemporary issues, whether through reportage, memoir, or essays. Find her online at [www.mmqalit.com](http://www.mmqalit.com) and on Instagram @juliestevensonpfarr



**Paige Terlip – June 12:**

Paige Terlip represents all categories of children's books from picture books to young adult, as well as select adult fiction, including thrillers/psychological suspense, fantasy/sci-fi, horror, upmarket fiction, romance, and mysteries, and platform-based nonfiction. Regardless of genre, she is seeking inclusive, intersectional voices and gorgeous line-level writing with emotionally compelling narratives. Paige has worked at ABLA since 2017. She comes to agenting with a background in marketing, design, and freelance editorial. She's worked at Charlesbridge Publishing, The National Renewable Energy Laboratory, and a ranch in the Rockies. She has an MA in Children's Literature and an MFA in Writing for Children from Simmons University.

**Jennifer Chen Tran – June 10, 11 , Virtual Only**

Jennifer Chen Tran is a literary agent at Glass Literary Management. With over a dozen years of experience in the publishing industry, Jennifer is passionate about nurturing and championing the creative lives of the authors and artists she is honored to represent. She works with a wide range of award-winning talent, including entrepreneurs, journalists, physicians, thought leaders, James Beard nominated chefs, and graphic novelists, among others. Jennifer is an editorial agent who believes in the art and magic of collaboration. She works with her authors from concept to publication, helping to polish each creator's work so that it can best shine in a competitive marketplace.

Prior to joining Glass Literary Management, Jennifer was a literary agent at Folio Literary Management and Idea Architects and served as Of Counsel at The New Press. She obtained her Juris Doctor from Northeastern School of Law and a Bachelors in English Literature from Washington University in St. Louis. She is an attorney in good standing in California and New York, a member of the Authors Guild, and a member of the Association of American Literary Agents.

As a person of color and daughter of Taiwanese immigrants, Jennifer is deeply committed to amplifying voices from persons with disabilities, BIPOC, LGBTQ, underrepresented, marginalized, and neurodiverse communities. Her ultimate goal is to work in concert with authors to create books that will have a lasting positive social impact on the world—books that inform, entertain, and inspire. You can find Jennifer's [full manuscript wishlist here](#).

**Lena Valencia (Editor) – June 13 , Virtual Only:**

Lena Valencia is the author of the short story collection *Mystery Lights* (Tin House Books). Her fiction has appeared in *BOMB*, *The Baffler*, *Electric Literature*, *Ninth Letter*, *Epiphany*, the anthology *Tiny Nightmares*, and elsewhere. She is the recipient of a 2019 Elizabeth George Foundation grant and holds an MFA in fiction from The New School. She lives in Brooklyn, New York, where she is the managing editor and director of educational programming at One Story and the co-host of the reading series *Ditmas Lit*. Previously she has held positions at *BOMB* and A Public Space. Find out more at [lenavalencia.com](http://lenavalencia.com)

At One Story, we seek standalone stories that leave readers feeling satisfied. We gravitate towards character-driven narratives with emotional resonance. Because we publish each author only one time, we are constantly on the lookout for new voices, and while we do publish established authors, the majority of the work we publish comes from lesser-known writers, many of them emerging.

**QUESTIONS: Contact Torin Jensen at ([torin@lighthousewriters.org](mailto:torin@lighthousewriters.org))**