

1 // SUPPLEMENTAL HANDOUT for

(More than) Crisis and Loss: Writing Female Mid-life

Illness, grief, divorce, burnout: the years between forty and fifty (and beyond) can be particularly fraught for women — but female mid-life and its attendant crises and discoveries are rarely depicted honestly or directly in popular culture. Join us for a reading by poets whose work addresses the realities of these years, which may include epiphanies and crises of love and faith, but also feature a second coming-of-age and a more confident and assured sense of self.

ORGANIZER, MODERATOR & PARTICIPANT:



Sarah Kain Gutowski (she/her/hers) is the author of *The Familiar*, a fabulist narrative-in-poems female existential crisis, and *Fabulous Beast*, winner of the 14th annual National Indies Excellence Award for Poetry. With interdisciplinary artist Meredith Starr, she is co-creator of *Every Second Feels Like Theft*, a conversation in cyanotypes and poetry, and *It's All Too Much*, a limited-edition audio project. Her poetry has appeared in various print and online journals, including *The Gettysburg Review*, *The Threepenny Review*, *Painted Bride*

Quarterly, and *The Southern Review*. A member of the National Book Critics Circle, her criticism has been published by *Colorado Review*, *Calyx: A Journal of Art and Literature by Women*, and *New York Journal of Books*.

Website: www.sarahkaingutowski.com

Social media handles:

X/Twitter: @SKGutowski

Instagram/Threads: @sarahkaingutowski

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/sarahkaingutowskiauthor/>

Email: sarah.kain.gutowski@gmail.com

2 // SUPPLEMENTAL HANDOUT for (More than) Crisis and Loss: Writing Female Mid-life

EVENT PARTICIPANTS:



Julie Brooks Barbour's most recent poetry collection is *Haunted City* (Kelsay Books). A collection of essays co-edited with Mary Biddinger, *A Mollusk Without a Shell: Essays on Self-Care for Writers*, is forthcoming from The University of Akron Press in 2024. Her work has appeared in *South Dakota Review*, *Glass: A Journal of Poetry*, *Whale Road Review*, *Escape Into Life*, *Moon City Review*, *Gone Lawn*, *Menacing Hedge*, and *Allium, A Journal of Poetry and Prose*.

Website: juliebrooksbarbour.com

Social media handles:

Instagram: @jbsundries



Mary Biddinger's most recent poetry collection is *Department of Elegy*, and her novella in flash, *The Girl with the Black Lipstick*, is forthcoming with Black Lawrence Press in 2025. She is co-editor, with Julie Brooks Barbour, of the essay collection *A Mollusk Without a Shell: Essays on Self-Care for Writers*. Biddinger teaches literature and creative writing at the University of Akron and in the NEOMFA program, and serves as poetry and poetics editor for the University of Akron Press.

Website: <https://linktr.ee/marybid>

Social media handles:

Bluesky: @marybid.bsky.social

Twitter: @marybid

Samples of recent work that may be read at this event include:

<https://www.greenlindenpress.com/issue17-mary-biddinger>

<https://www.havehashad.com/hadposts/everyone-rise-the-gavels-coming-down>

<https://theindianapolisreview.com/everyone-knows-beauty-is-its-own-blank-slate/>

http://diodepoetry.com/biddinger_mary-2/

3 // SUPPLEMENTAL HANDOUT for (More than) Crisis and Loss: Writing Female Mid-life



Cynthia Marie Hoffman is the author of the OCD memoir in prose poems *Exploding Head*, as well as three more books of poetry from Persea Books: *Call Me When You Want to Talk about the Tombstones*, *Paper Doll Fetus*, and *Sightseer*. She is the recipient of fellowships from the Wisconsin Institute for Creative Writing, Civitella Ranieri Foundation, and the Wisconsin Arts Board. Poems have appeared in *Electric Literature*, *The Los Angeles Review*, *The Believer*, and elsewhere. She lives in Madison, WI.

Website: www.cynthiamariehoffman.com

Social media handles:

Twitter: @CynthiaMHoffman

Instagram: @CynthiaMarieHoffman

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/cynthiamarie.studner>

Email: cynthia@cynthiamariehoffman.com



Michelle Whittaker is the author of the poetry collection, *Surge* (great weather for MEDIA)- a finalist for the Next Generation Indie Book Award. Her poems can be found in the *New York Times Magazine*, *New Yorker*, *Shenandoah*, *Slowdown Podcast* and other publications. She was awarded a Jody Donohue Poetry Prize, Pushcart Prize Special Mention, Cave Canem Fellowship, and a NYFA Fellow. Her next collection called *Spoke the Dark Matter*, will be coming out in the summer of 2024 with Sundress Publications.

Website: www.michellewhittakerpoet.com

Social media handles:

Instagram: @michpoto