
EDUCATION

- 2019** **Master's of Fine Arts in English – Fiction**
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville – Distinguished MFA Fellow
- 2015** **Bachelor's of Fine Arts in Creative Writing, Minor in Psychology, Certificate in Publishing**
University of North Carolina, Wilmington

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2025 – Present** **Podcaster – *Let's Have a Renaissance: The DateKeepers Podcast***
Co-producing and co-hosting *Let's Have a Renaissance: The DateKeepers Podcast*. Conducting research and outreach, interviewing guests, editing audio, and promoting content on social media. Listen on [YouTube](#) or [Spotify](#).
- 2022 – Present** **Co-Founder & Content Editor – The DateKeepers**
Offering manuscript analysis and comprehensive editorial services to novelists, memoirists, students, and scholars as they refine their manuscripts, research and apply for opportunities and funding, generate book proposals, and develop industry-critical skills.
- 2015 – Present** **Author – Self-Employed**
Writing short-form and book-length literary fiction and creative nonfiction, solo and in partnership with my wife, Itto Outini.
- 2015 – 2022** **Freelance Editor – Self-Employed**
Offered comprehensive editorial services to novelists, memoirists, journalists, students, and scholars.
- 2021 – 2022** **Writer & Copyeditor – *ABILITY Magazine***
Interviewed subjects, copyedited content, drafted profiles, and managed communications.
- 2016 – 2021** **Special Programs Staffer – Spring International Language Center**
Served as a cultural ambassador and chaperone for students and scholars with diverse degrees of English proficiency from over forty countries.
- 2018 – 2019** **Instructor – Osher Lifelong Learning Institute**

Developed two stand-alone lectures on the *Ramayana* and the *Thousand and One Nights*, respectively, and delivered these to small groups of senior citizens.

- 2015 – 2019** **Graduate Student Instructor – University of Arkansas, Fayetteville Department of English**
Taught fifteen undergraduate sections across four years as the instructor of record. Created original reading lists, lectures, exercises, and activities; conferenced with and mentored students; graded all assignments and papers.
- 2017 – 2018** **Research Instructor's Assistant – Mullin's Library, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville**
Assisted the research librarian for the English and Communications Departments with special projects, data collection, analysis of library holdings, and development of supplemental instruction materials.
- 2015 – 2017** **Writing Tutor – CLASS+ Writing Support, University of Arkansas**
Helped students brainstorm, outline, draft, revise, and proofread a variety of documents, face-to-face and online. Gained experience supporting clients using English as a foreign language.
- 2013 – 2015** **Writing Tutor – University Writing Center, UNC Wilmington**
Helped students brainstorm, outline, draft, revise, and proofread academic papers, face-to-face and online. Mentored new tutors and offered pedagogical feedback.
- 2013 – 2015** **Poetry Editor – *Atlantis Magazine*, UNCW Student Media Center**
Reviewed all poetry submissions, selected poems for publication, solicited revisions, and offered feedback to poets. Organized events and fundraisers. Trained a replacement poetry editor before departure.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- 2019** **Creative Nonfiction Essay Writing (1 Section) – University of Arkansas, Fayetteville Department of English**
Introduction to writing creative nonfiction: students read contemporary essays and analyzed them from a craft perspective, completed regular journaling assignments and writing exercises, and learned the workshop format for exchanging feedback. Major writing assignments: memoir, braided essay, collage/hermit crab essay, new journalism.
- 2018** **World Literature II: 1650 – Present (2 Sections) – University of Arkansas, Fayetteville Department of English**

Students read selected poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and drama with an emphasis on the literary legacies of racial ideology, European imperialism, and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Lectures synthesized historical, cultural, and literary perspectives. Students led discussions, maintained reading journals, and performed role-playing exercises to deepen their understanding of the texts. Major writing assignments: translation comparison/adaptation comparison, research paper/closing arguments.

2017 – 2018

World Literature I: Antiquity – 1650 (3 Sections) – University of Arkansas, Fayetteville Department of English

Students read selected poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and drama with an emphasis on literary articulations of sex, gender, and heroic archetypes in long-form narratives. Original lectures introduced dominant and marginal perspectives to enrich student-led discussions. Students engaged with texts through a variety of interactive exercises. Major writing assignments: translation comparison/adaptation comparison, research paper/closing arguments.

2016 – 2017

Composition II (3 Sections) – University of Arkansas, Fayetteville Department of English

Introduction to meta-writing and ethnographic research: students read peer-reviewed articles, learned about rhetorical theory and procedures for ethnographic research, analyzed popular and academic texts, conducted interviews and field research, and presented their findings in oral and written formats. Major writing assignments: literacy critique, literacy study, rhetorical analysis, and analysis of a discourse community.

2015

Composition I (1 Section) – University of Arkansas, Fayetteville Department of English

Introduction to academic writing, research, and critical thinking: students read articles from newspapers, magazines, and blogs, analyzed them rhetorically, and presented their findings in oral and written formats. Exercises familiarized them with MLA guidelines and basic grammatical principles as well as stylistic, organizational, and persuasive strategies. Major writing assignments: summary, synthesis, rhetorical analysis, and argumentative synthesis.

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

May 2014	CRLA (College Reading & Learning Association) Master Tutor Certification
December 2013	CRLA (College Reading & Learning Association) Tutor Certification

PUBLICATIONS

Fiction

Forthcoming	“The Sightless Seduction of Mademoiselle.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>The Bookends Review</i> .
Forthcoming	“Roland Cornered, Roland Squared.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>The Kansas City Review</i> .
Forthcoming	“The Infidel’s Eid.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>Grand Literary Magazine</i> .
Forthcoming	“The Vine That’s Watered Grows.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>table//FEAST Literary Magazine</i> . Winner of the 2026 Blossom Contest.
Forthcoming	“House Divided.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>Jersey Devil Press</i> .
Forthcoming	“The Grapes of Vindication.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>Jagged Edge</i> .
September 2026	“The Comma Chameleons.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>Modern Literature</i> . https://modernliterature.org/the-comma-chameleons-itto-mekiya-outini/
June 2026	“A Woman Alone at Night Is Always Beautiful.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>Efiko Magazine</i> . https://efikomag.com/a-woman-alone-at-night-is-beautiful/
May 2026	“The Reanimation of Hippocrates.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>The Lincoln Review</i> . Iss 7. Pp 69 – 73. https://www.lincolnreview.org/issue7
May 2026	“Slingin’ Pearl.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>Your Impossible Voice</i> . 34. https://yourimpossiblevoice.com/slingin-pearl/
May 2026	“The Beast.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>Grub Street</i> . https://wp.towson.edu/grubstreetlitmag/2026/05/14/online-fiction-exclusive-the-beast-by-itto-and-mekiya-outini/
May 2026	“Irreverence.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>The New English Review</i> . https://www.newenglishreview.org/articles/irreverence/

- April 2026 “Among Wolves.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *The Bombay Literary Review*. Issue 63. <https://bombaylitmag.com/contribution/issue63-itto-mekiya-outini/>
- March 2026 “I Am Godfather.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *The Hidden Peak Review*. <https://hiddenpeakpress.com/2026/03/23/i-am-godfather-itto-mekiya-outini-short-story/>
- March 2026 “From the Rat’s Throat.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *The Argyle*. <https://www.theargylelitmag.com/fiction-7/from-the-rats-throat>
- March 2026 “Richard and Richard.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *Across the Margin*. <https://acrossthemargin.com/richard-and-richard/>
- March 2026 “All This for an Innocent Man.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *The Helix*. <https://helixmagazine.org/2026/03/03/all-this-for-an-innocent-man/>
- January 2026 “One Dollar and Other Considerations.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *The Seattle Star*. <https://www.seattlestar.net/2026/01/one-dollar-and-other-considerations/>
- January 2026 “My Brother’s Sister.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *Modern Literature*. <https://modernliterature.org/my-brothers-sister-itto-mekiya-outini/>
- December 2025 “The Chinese Virginity.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *Libretto Magazine*. <https://librettong.com/the-chinese-virginity-itto-and-mekiya-outini/>
- December 2025 “Green Means Go.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *Fiction on the Web*. <https://www.fictionontheweb.co.uk/2025/12/green-means-go-by-itto-and-mekiya-outini.html>
- December 2025 “The Mission.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *CommuterLit*. <https://commuterlit.com/2025/12/thursday-the-mission/>
- December 2025 “Another Night, Another Dog.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *Freedom Fiction Journal*. <https://www.freedomfiction.com/2025/12/another-night-another-dog-by-itto-and-mekiya-outini/>
- November 2025 “The Bghlt el-Kaboor.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *Afritondo*. <https://www.afritondo.com/afritondo/the-bghlt-el-kaboor>

- November 2025 “Matchmaker, Martyr, Murderer, Mine.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *A Thin Slice of Anxiety*. <http://www.athinsliceofanxiety.com/2025/11/fiction-matchmaker-martyr-murderer-mine.html>
- November 2025 “The Indisputable Master of Her Craft.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *Open: Journal of Arts and Letters*. <https://ojalart.com/americanaprose-discourse-fictionshort-story-to-10000-wordsitto-and-mekiya-outini-the-indisputable-master-of-her-craft/>
- November 2025 “The Rain Is Falling on Tangier.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *Aura Literary Arts Review*. Vol 52. Pp 13 – 15. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/12ux5XHmnmlyUEPCWOkfa0KP96YWaX3Sm/view>
- October 2025 “Field Notes.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *Boudin*. <https://www.mcneese.edu/thereview/field-notes/>. Winner of the Skinner Prize.
- October 2025 “The Cheeseman Cometh.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *The Spontlong Review*. <https://www.thespotlongreview.org/issue-xii-fiction-outini>
- October 2025 “Why I Don’t Deserve to Be in Jail This Halloween.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *Midwest Weird*. <https://www.midwestweird.com/post/why-i-don-t-deserve-to-be-in-jail-this-halloween-by-itto-and-mekiya-outini>
- October 2025 “Night of Transformations.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *The Other Side of Hope*. Vol 5. <https://othersideofhope.com/volume-5.html>
- October 2025 “Righteous Hombres.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *Expat Press*. <https://expatpress.com/righteous-hombres-itto-mekiya-outini/>
- October 2025 “A Scientific Mind.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *Darkwinter*. <https://www.darkwinterlit.com/post/a-scientific-mind-by-itto-and-mekiya-outini>
- October 2025 “The First Day of My Life.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *New Contrast Magazine*. <https://www.newcontrast.net/product/new-contrast-issue-209-digital/>
- October 2025 “Three Paths.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. *The Eunoia Review*. <https://eunoiareview.wordpress.com/2025/10/05/three-paths/>

September 2025	“Metamorphosis.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>Litbreak</i> . https://litbreak.com/metamorphosis/
September 2025	“The Cost of a Cake.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>The Thieving Magpie</i> . https://thievingmagpie.org/itto-mekiya-outini-fiction/
September 2025	“Death of an Icon.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>The t&emz/ Review</i> . 32. https://www.thetemzreview.com/outini.html
September 2025	“The Angel of Forgetting.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>The New English Review</i> . https://www.newenglishreview.org/articles/the-angel-of-forgetting/
September 2025	“Leila Enabled.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>Harpy Hybrid Review</i> . 12. http://www.harpyhybridreview.org/hybrid_works/leila-enabled/
August 2025	“Johnny, From Another World.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>Literally Stories</i> . https://literallystories2014.com/2025/08/06/johnny-from-another-world-by-itto-and-mekiya-outini/
August 2025	“There Is No Home, but You Can’t Stay Here.” Short Fiction. Co-Authored with Itto Outini. <i>Modern Literature</i> . https://modernliterature.org/there-is-no-home-but-you-cant-stay-here-by-itto-mekiya-outini/
July 2025	“The Virginity Consultant.” Short fiction. Co-authored with Itto Outini. <i>Mount Hope</i> . https://www.mounthopemagazine.com/the-virginity-consultant
July 2025	“The New Sufyan.” Short fiction. Co-authored with Itto Outini. <i>Gargoyle Magazine Online</i> . 11. https://gargoylemagazine.com/itto-mekiya-outini/
July 2025	“The Full Package.” Short fiction. Co-authored with Itto Outini. <i>Hidden Peak Review</i> . https://hiddenpeakpress.com/2025/07/07/itto-mekiya-outini-the-full-package-short-story/
July 2025	“The Long Now.” Short fiction. Co-authored with Itto Outini. <i>Stickman Review</i> . 24.1. http://stickmanreview.com/V24N1/outini.html
June 2025	“Old Meats and No Service.” Short fiction. Co-authored with Itto Outini. <i>Stonecoast Review Literary Journal</i> . https://www.thestonecoastreview.org/issue-23/old-meats-and-no-service

- June 2025 “Blue Mucus.” Short story. Co-authored with Itto Outini. *Lotus-Eater*. Issue 21. Pp. 21 – 28. https://lotus-eatermagazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/lotus_eater_issue_21-definitivo-2.pdf
- June 2025 “To the Island and Halfway Back.” Short story. Co-authored with Itto Outini. *Sortes*. Issue 22: ain’t that high brow stuff archy. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bHhmqU19_ArJ_ZjXrSS2iUY5XRTw8kY3/view
- June 2025 “How to Make Your Man Smile.” Short fiction. Co-authored with Itto Outini. *DarkWinter*. <https://www.darkwinterlit.com/post/how-to-make-your-man-smile-by-itto-and-mekiya-outini>
- May 2025 “For the Sake of Truth and Beauty.” Short fiction. Co-authored with Itto Outini. *Rundelania*. Issue 17. <https://rundelania.com/for-the-sake-of-truth-and-beauty/>
- April 2025 “Ten Years.” Short story. Co-authored with Itto Outini. *Modern Literature*. <https://modernliterature.org/ten-years-by-itto-mekiya-outini/>
- April 2025 “The Breadwinner.” Short story. Co-authored with Itto Outini. *Fine Lines*. 34.1. <https://www.amazon.com/Fine-Lines-Spring-2025-Issue/dp/B0F4KQLKR3>
- July 2023 “Baptism by Earth.” Short story. *New Millennium Writings*. First place winner of the 55th *New Millennium Writings* Award in Fiction. <https://tinyurl.com/4thwu2tk>
- June 2023 “Still Life with Stalk Eyes.” Short story. *The Coachella Review*. Summer 2023 Issue. <http://thecoachellareview.com/2023/06/02/still-life-with-stalk-eyes-by-mekiya-outini/>
- November 2022 “The Red Herring.” Short story. *The Madison Review Extended Cut*. 18.
- September 2022 Chapters I & II of *Ashes, Ashes: A Novel*. *West Trade Review*. 13 (Fall Edition). <https://westtradereview.com/onlineexclusivef22walters.html>
- June 2021 “Lorelei’s Worm.” Short story. *Chautauqua Literary Journal*. Water Issue (18). <https://chqdaily.com/2021/08/2021-edition-of-literary-journal-features-water-as-unifying-theme/>
- July 2020 “Shibboleth.” Short story. *The Write Launch*. Short Story. 39.
- June 2020 “The Man Who Misspelled God.” Short story. *Sunspot Literary Magazine*. 2:1.

Creative Nonfiction

- Forthcoming “Bad Nombres.” Essay. *Glint Journal*.
- April 2026 “Even the Imaginary Friends.” Essay. *Hindsight Journal*. Vol. VI.
https://www.hindsightjournal.org/_files/ugd/2e2d6c_6289456c9073423db49d73c93aa89130.pdf
- December 2025 “Driven.” Essay. *Adelaide Magazine*. 84.
<https://adelaidemagazine.org/driven>
- September 2025 “Young and Hungry at the Bacchanal.” Essay. *Litbreak*.
<https://litbreak.com/young-and-hungry-at-the-bacchanal/>
- August 2025 “Autofiction.” Essay. *The Brussels Review*.
<https://thebrusselsreview.com/mekiya-outini/autofiction/>
- June 2025 “Highly Reactive Materials.” Essay. *Men Matters Online Journal*. Issue 10.
<https://menmattersonlinejournal.com/issue-10-mekiya-outini/>
- May 2025 “In Sickness and in Health.” Essay. *A-Minor Magazine*.
<https://aminormagazine.com/2025/05/27/in-sickness-and-in-health/>
- April 2025 “Incomplete Nurture.” Essay. *Fourth Genre*. 27.1.
<https://scholarlypublishingcollective.org/msup/fg/article-abstract/27/1/91/399394/Incomplete-Nurture?redirectedFrom=PDF>
- February 2025 “Chapter 9: English.” Memoir excerpt. Co-authored with Itto Outini. *The North American Review*. 310.1.
<https://northamericanreview.org/node/18248>
- July 2022 “The Title Is Your Name.” Essay. *The Michigan Quarterly Review*.

Academic Papers

- May 2016 “The Masala Complex: Rape-Revenge Cinema, Grassroots Feminism, and the Collision of Gazes in *Mardaani*.” *Film Matters*. 7:1.
- April 2014 “Revising Revisionist Herstory: Reconstructing Gender Narratives Before, During, and After the Partition of India.” *Palaver Interdisciplinary Journal*.

PRIZES & AWARDS

October 2025	Winner of the <i>Boudin</i> Skinner Award (“Field Notes,” co-authored with Itto Outini)
August 2024	Finalist for the 2024 <i>Fourth Genre</i> Steinberg Memorial Essay Prize (“Incomplete Nurture”)
June 2024	Finalist for the 2024 <i>Arts & Letters</i> Prize in Creative Nonfiction (“0 1”)
March 2024	Finalist for the 2024 Disquiet Prize & Denis Johnson “Stagaya” Memorial Fellowship (“0 1”)
April 2023	First place winner of the 55 th <i>New Millennium Writings</i> Award in Fiction. (“Baptism by Earth.”) https://tinyurl.com/4thwu2tk .
April 2023	Finalist for the <i>North Carolina Literary Review</i> ’s 2023 Alex Albright Creative Nonfiction Prize
December 2020	Winner of <i>Sunspot Literary Magazine</i> ’s 2020 Editor’s Prize (“The Man Who Misspelled God”)
March 2020	Finalist for the <i>Texas Review</i> ’s 2020 George Garret Fiction Prize

GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, & RESIDENCIES

Oct 2025	Edward F. Albee Foundation Fellowship My work with Itto Outini on a novel about sex work and AIDS in Morocco received support from the Edward F. Albee Foundation.
Mar – Apr 2024	MacDowell Fellowship (Spring/Summer Residency) While in residence at MacDowell, I completed a memoir in essays.
2023 – 2024	Steinbeck Fellows Program My work with Itto Outini on her memoir received support from the Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies at San José University.

SCHOLARSHIPS

2015 – 2019	Distinguished MFA Fellowship – University of Arkansas Merit-based award of additional funding for promising MFA candidates
2015 – 2019	Graduate Fellowship – University of Arkansas Stipend for graduate assistant instructors in good academic standing
2018	Study Abroad Grant – African American Studies Department Award to participate in a three-week educational trip to Ghana

2013 **Stella Doran International Student Travel Award – UNCW**
Award to study for one semester at the University of Hyderabad,
India

PUBLIC SPEAKING

August 2022 **Jenderal Soedirman University – Faculty of Humanities**
Delivered the Keynote Speech in the General Lecture for Freshmen,
Faculty of Humanities, Jenderal Soedirman University. Indonesia.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

March 2015 “Revising Revisionist Herstory: Reconstructing Gender Narratives Before,
During, and After the Partition of India.” The Southeast Women’s Studies
Association (SEWSA). Annual Conference: The Ebb and Flow of
Feminism. University of North Carolina, Wilmington.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

2017 – Present	Golden Key Society
2013 – Present	Phi Eta Sigma
2012 – Present	Honors Society
2011 – Present	Phi Beta Kappa

VOLUNTEER

2024 – 2025 **Reader – *The Harvard Review***
Read fiction and nonfiction submissions to *The Harvard Review*,
contributed comments, voted to accept or reject submissions.

2022 – 2023 **Communications Specialist – Fulbrighters with Disabilities**
Wrote and copyedited blogs, newsletters, web content, and promotional
materials and made recommendations for the chapter’s digital content
strategy.

2020 **Grocery Delivery Driver – Canopy Northwest Arkansas**
Delivered fresh produce from the local farmer’s market to refugee
households.

2018 – 2020 **Area Representative – Youth for Understanding**

Interviewed American families interested in hosting exchange students and students interested in going abroad. Monitored participating households, mediated conflicts, and assessed scholarship applications.

2018

Conversation Group Leader – University of Arkansas, Fayetteville’s International Students Office

Led discussions with international students practicing their English speaking and listening skills.

2017

Ambassador – Afghan Fulbright Conference on Social Movements at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

Welcomed Afghan students to Fayetteville, shuttled them to and from the airport, engaged in discussions regarding cultural exchange, American-Afghan relations, and graduate student life with participants.

2016 – 2018

Conversation Partner – Spring International Language Center

Met weekly with international students practicing their English speaking and listening skills.