



Dana Middleton,  
Lockie Hunter &  
Robert Reid Drake

## Juniper Bends Reading Series' Next Event is May 9

STORY & PHOTO BY LEAH SHAPIRO

On Friday, May 9, Juniper Bends Reading Series will host their next event. Reading at 7 P.M. that evening will be four local poets (Holly Iglesias, Vievee Francis, Lily Latini, and Trevor Clark) at Downtown Books & News, 67 N. Lexington Avenue in downtown Asheville.

Free and open to the public, this quarterly series features established and emerging writers who read original pieces for 10–15 minutes. In the past, genres have included poetry, novel excerpts, short stories, and creative nonfiction essays.

"We love to discover and nurture emerging writers, and for many of them, this is their first public reading," says Lockie Hunter, a poet, prose writer, and essayist who currently cohosts the series with poets Dana Middleton and Robert Reid Drake. "The established writers are usually writers who are beloved in our community and having them read alongside emerging writers is a magical combination."

Juniper Bends was founded in 2009 by Mesha Maren and Matt Owens. Jesse Rice-Evans became the next host in 2012. When Jesse moved to Seattle at the end of 2013, she passed the metaphorical baton to Lockie, Reid, and Dana. Previous featured readers have included Katherine Min, Katherine Soniat, Blake Butler, Rick Chess, Holly Iglesias, Charles Dodd White, David Hopes, and *The Laurel's* community editor Leah Shapiro.

"Downtown Books & News is an excellent community partner for the series," says Lockie. "Independent bookstores are a vital part of any writing and reading community. I've performed at various venues, but count the Juniper Bends series as my favorite place to read, as performing there, among the stacks, feels like an organic extension of my words."

Take a seat by the books, and start your weekend with a glass of wine (available by donation) and an engaging performance by a local writer.

For more, follow Juniper Bends on Twitter ([JuniperBendsAVL](#)), Facebook, or e-mail [juniperbendsavl@gmail.com](mailto:juniperbendsavl@gmail.com).

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*Laurel of Asheville Puzzlers are by Brian Astle ([archauss@gmail.com](mailto:archauss@gmail.com)).*

