

College of Staten Island English Department
SCHWERNER WRITER'S SERIES

Presents

**Mariahadessa Ekere Tallie, Rich Villar,
Roger Bonair Agard, Laura Swearingen Steadwell**

Thursday, April 24

4:30 pm - Center for the Arts Lecture Hall



Mariahadessa Ekere Tallie is a writer, educator, and performer. She is the Poetry Editor of the literary magazine *African Voices*. Her work confronts silence, sexism and racism and has been published in *Crab Orchard Review*, *BOMB*, *Paris/Atlantic*, *Go, Tell Michelle (SUNY)*, *Listen Up!* (One World Ballantine) and *Revenge and Forgiveness (Henry Holt)*. Flipped Eye Publishing released her first collection of poetry, *Karma's Footsteps*, in September of 2011. She is the recipient of a 2010 Queens Council on the Arts grant for her research on herbalists of the African Diaspora.



Poet and spoken-word artist **Roger Bonair-Agard** was born in Trinidad and Tobago. His collections of poetry include *Tarnish and Masquerade* (2006); *Gully* (2010); and *Bury My Clothes* (2013), which was a long-list finalist for a National Book Award. He contributed to the collection *Burning Down the House* (2000), a selection of poems from the Nuyorican Poets Cafe. He is a two-time National Poetry Slam champion and has appeared on programs such as HBO's *Def Poetry Jam* and the PBS *NewsHour*, among others.



Rich Villar directs *Acentos*, an organization fostering audiences and community around Latino/a literature. Both *The New York Times* and *The Daily News* have quoted him on Latino literature and culture, and his poetry and essays have appeared or are forthcoming in *Black Renaissance Noire*, *Hanging Loose*, *Beltway Poetry Quarterly*, and *Sou'wester*. His first book of poetry, *Comprehending Forever*, won the 2013 Willow Books Editor's Choice Literature Award.



Laura Swearingen-Steadwell has competed in slams nationwide, notably as a finalist in 2010's Women of the World Poetry Slam. She tours and leads workshops as part of the queer female duo Shadowboxers Anonymous. Laura's first book, *How to Seduce a White Boy in Ten Easy Steps*, was nominated for a National Book Award. She is currently an MFA candidate at Warren Wilson College.