

FAWCHICAGO.ORG  
March 2023 NEWSLETTER



Wednesday March 8, 2023 Program  
12:00 Noon at the Fortnightly of Chicago

**Program: Author Ling Ma**

Ling Ma, author of the FAW award-winning (2019) futuristic novel *Severance*, will be our guest speaker for the March 8 program. She has just published a very well-reviewed collection of short stories, *Bliss Montage*. Her program will begin with a reading from her new work, followed by a conversation with FAW member and science fiction writer Joan Gordon. They will discuss the creative process, writing the fantastical, using and going beyond “writing what you know,” and other topics to do with writing and finding a readership. Your questions and comments will be most welcome, as well.

Members of the Adult Literature committee still hark back to *Severance* as a wonderful example of a book that is relatable (for us, a Chicago setting and the worst kind of corporate job,) thought provoking (our society felled by a virus both terrifying with oddly ironic symptoms) and populated by characters you have to cheer on. The new book, *Bliss Montage*, features eight short stories centered on women, mostly in fabulist circumstances, attempting to control their environments. This book will be the subject of Readers and Reviewers (see announcement below), at 11:15 before the luncheon.



**Luncheon reservations and cancellations are due no later than 6:00 PM  
Thursday March 2nd.**

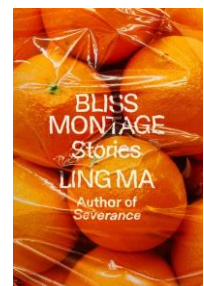
**Call: Pat Adelberg - (847) 588-0911  
or Peggy Kuzminski - (cell) (773) 710-863  
for reservations**

Make your reservation ASAP. Luncheon will be served at 12:00 noon in the main floor dining room of the Fortnightly Club of Chicago, 120 E. Bellevue Place. The Fortnightly has COVID-19 safety measures in place. The seating is tables of 6 – 8 socially distanced. Proof of vaccination is no longer required. **Please remember that vegetarian meal requests are special order, and the Fortnightly chef only prepares the number of meals that are requested. Do not ask the staff for a vegetarian meal at the luncheon if you did not pre-order one at the time of your reservation.**

- ✓ Cost is \$45.00 Pay by check(preferred) payable to FAW at the door. Cash is accepted also.
- ✓ Vegetarian meals should be requested at the time you make your reservation.
- ✓ You must call to cancel your reservation, otherwise you will still be charged.
- ✓ Group reservations - please only have one person make the group request to avoid confusion.
- ✓ You may request a permanent (standing) reservation for all the meetings. You must then call and cancel any program you can't attend—otherwise FAW is still charged for your meal and we must charge you.

**READERS AND REVIEWERS  
March 8, 11:15 before the luncheon**

Since Ling Ma, author of FAW-award-winning *Severance*, will be our luncheon speaker, we will read her new collection of short stories, *Bliss Montage*, coming out in September. These eight stories are by turn funny, sad, strange, and wise, often within one story. There are links among each of them although each story can stand alone, and they are often surreal. They are described as investigating "the ways that the outlandish and the ordinary are shockingly, deceptively, heartbreakingly alike." You will certainly be entertained, but you may also have questions, and Ling Ma will be there to answer them after her talk!





## President's Corner –Ida Hagman

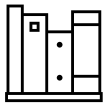
February and March are busy times behind the scenes at FAW. The Award Committees are reading and discussing which books to award. Soon you will receive a letter from me asking for donations to the Patrons Fund, which is the fund for our book awards. Planning has already begun for next year as we look at dates for our luncheons. We are also looking for some new board members. The slate will be presented to our members in April when we will have a short annual meeting at our luncheon.

As far as I know no one has submitted any more bookstore memories so let's switch to library stories. What libraries have you visited during your travels? During my first visit to California in the 1970's, I was able to visit the Huntington Library and see the Ellesmere manuscript of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. I had written my senior paper on Chaucer, and I was so happy to see this beautiful manuscript, which was on display under glass. Here's what The Huntington has to say about the manuscript, "The Ellesmere Chaucer is a beautiful and elaborately decorated manuscript of Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Created between 1400 and 1410, it contains what is believed to be a portrait of Chaucer as well as miniature paintings of twenty-two of the fictional pilgrims." Though my travelling companions had little interest in such things, even they were impressed by the beauty of the manuscript and the charm of the Huntington Library and Gardens.

Next time I see you, tell me your library stories,

~Ida

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## Children's Book Project Update

A **BIG** THANK YOU! Goes out to all the members who donated to the Children's Book Project! We raised over \$500.00!! Your generosity will help build a kindergarten classroom library at Lawndale Community Academy in Chicago. Thirty-three books requested by the teacher will ship out this week. Bold and colorful *3D Theater Oceans* and *Amazing World Sea Creatures* will sail into the arms of children, eager to learn. Hopefully, the *National Geographic Readers* featuring the razor-toothed T-Rex won't scare them too much! And no shipment would be complete without some fan-favorite books from the Young People's Literature Committee—*Thank You, Omu* and *Saturday* by Oge Mora (2019 FAW Award Winner), *Brick by Brick* by Heidi Woodward Sheffield, and *Big Papa and the Time Machine* by Daniel Bernstrom.

Thank you for being a part of this special opportunity to enrich the lives of our Chicago youth for "**One of the greatest gifts adults can give—to their offspring and to their society—is to read to children.**" —Carl Sagan

~Angela Gall