

PRESS RELEASE

Celebrating OwnVoice, Unity, and Determination; Rainbow Space Magic Conference 2021

SAN JOSE, Ca. – February 11, 2021 – Join authors across the spectrum as they celebrate OwnVoice, unity, and determination on March 12-14, 2021. Rainbow Space Magic (RSM) is a celebration of the LGBTQ+ science fiction and fantasy community, a place where everyone can gather, discuss, promote and create queer speculative fiction in a safe and supportive place that is accessible to our diverse community.

This is RSM's second international conference. Last year they had twenty-five writing professionals spread over ten panels for the two day event. Attendees were able to join panels ranging from Building Queer Character Arcs: Fashioning Authentic LGBTQ+ Protagonists, Antagonists and Storylines to Jumping Into the Mainstream: How Queer Authors Are Breaking Into "Mainstream" Spec Fic. This year RSM will be hosting a three day event with writing workshops on Friday March 12, 2021 and panels and readings on Saturday and Sunday.

To welcome attendees RSM has invited Jewelle Gomez – author of *The Gilda Stories* and *Bones and Ash*, as their Keynote Speaker and special guest throughout the conference. The theme of Jewelle's keynote will be "Beyond the Edge of Our Existence": what in our writing and in our lives as humans makes us valuable to the world?

When asked why this event is important, Olivia Helling one of the organizers of the event said, "Diversity and OwnVoice are so important, especially now, we live in a world where more and more people need to have their voices heard. And this conference, Rainbow Space Magic, hopes to provide a welcoming place for all voices to be heard and to share ideas. So we can all learn and grow."

This year RSM has expanded its event to include a day of writing workshops (Friday March 12) covering topics such as: Combat Writing, Book Justice, The Writer's Guide to Plants and Herbs, and Branding Sci-Fi. Expanding on their ten panels last year, this year over both Saturday and Sunday they will offer two more panels going from ten to twelve. Including four panels presented by Ownvoice speakers.

"We didn't randomly select topics for the conference," said Angel Martinez co-organizer of RSM. "We surveyed, not only our authors, but attendees from last year and asked what they wanted to see in this year's event. We didn't stop there either, we also reached out to the greater writing community to see what their needs were as well. I'm proud of the selection of panels and workshops we have on offer this year and I hope our attendees will be too."

As with last year's event that supported The Trevor Project, this year RSM's planning group decided they would encourage attendees to donate money to Lambda Literary, Glad Day Lit, Trans Media Watch, Shade Literary Group, and BLF Press. This suggested donation will serve as the fee for the conference. However, the event will remain free so anyone who wants to attend can.

"Keeping the conference as a free event was virtual this year, especially given the hardships that everyone has faced with the pandemic. Still, we hope people will be generous and support these worthy organizations." Valerie Mikles said, another of the planning groups eight members said.

The RSM international virtual conference is open to anyone and will be held the weekend of March 12-14, 2021 you can learn more about Rainbow Space Magic, the panels and workshops, and Jewelle Gomez on their website at: <https://www.rainbowspacemagic.org/>

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