



MINNESOTA STATE
Write Like Us



Presents a reading by **Kiese Laymon**



*Kiese Laymon is a Black southern writer from Jackson, Mississippi. He is the author of the award-winning memoir **Heavy**, the groundbreaking essay collection **How to Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America**, and the genre-defying novel **Long Division**. His bestselling memoir **Heavy: An American Memoir** won the Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Nonfiction and the Christopher Isherwood Prize for Autobiographical Prose, and the audiobook, read by the author, was named the Audible Audiobook of the Year. **Heavy** was named a best book of 2018 by The New York Times, Publishers Weekly, NPR, The Washington Post, Entertainment Weekly, among other publications and one of the 50 Best Memoirs of the Past 50 Years by The New York Times. **Long Division** was honored with the William Saroyan International Prize for Writing in 2014, and was shortlisted for a number of other awards, including The Believer Book Award, the Morning News Tournament of Books, and the Ernest J. Gaines Fiction Award. A contributing editor for Vanity Fair, his work has also appeared in The New York Times, Esquire, ESPN The Magazine, NPR, Colorlines, The Los Angeles Times, The Guardian, Ebony, Guernica, The Oxford American, Lit Hub, and many others in addition to Gawker. He is a graduate of Oberlin College and holds an MFA in creative writing from Indiana University.*

And in conversation with

Michael Kleber-Diggs



*Michael Kleber-Diggs (KLEE-burr digs) is a poet, essayist, and literary critic. His debut poetry collection, **Worldly Things**, won the Max Ritvo Poetry Prize. His essay, "On the Complex Flavors of Black Joy," is included in the anthology **There's a Revolution Outside, My Love: Letters from a Crisis**, edited by Tracy K. Smith and John Freeman. Among other places, Michael's*

*writing has appeared or is forthcoming in **Great River Review**, **Water-Stone Review**, **Poem-a-Day**, **Poetry Daily**, **Poetry Northwest**, **Potomac Review**, **Hunger Mountain**, **Memorious**, and a few anthologies. Michael is a past Fellow with the Givens Foundation for African American Literature, a past-winner of the Loft Mentor Series in Poetry, and the former Poet Laureate of Anoka County libraries. Since 2016, Michael has been an instructor with the Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop. He also teaches Creative Writing in Augsburg University's low-res MFA program and at Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists. His work has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net and has been supported by the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Jerome Foundation, and the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council. Michael is married to Karen Kleber-Diggs, a tropical horticulturist and orchid specialist. Karen and Michael have a daughter who is pursuing a BFA in Dance Performance at SUNY Purchase.*

Thursday, April 28 • 6 p.m.
North Hennepin Comm. College
Main Theater, Fine Arts Center

Open to the public • Free • Reservations required for in-person limited COVID-protocol seating at wlu-KieseLaymon.eventbrite.com • Reservations required for live-streaming at tinyurl.com/KieseLaymonWebinar • In person event will be ASL interpreted • For further accommodations and questions contact WriteLikeUs@MinnState.edu