

Selected Recent Scholarship and News about CAALS/MAAAC Authors

This bibliography covers post-1918 scholarship and news about the authors who since 1989 have visited the Marygrove campus as part of the *Contemporary American Authors Lecture Series (CAALS)*. It includes material about our 2026 guest, Marlon James. We hope this list serves as a resource for students, teachers, and scholars interested in the work of these authors. However, a bibliography is not only a resource; it also makes an argument, in this case about the significance of these writers—and consequently that of the series that has brought them to Detroit. Thus, we present it as a single, comprehensive list, a collection of names and titles that illustrate the depth and scope of this body of literature. (Of course, you can search this document to generate your own list of sources about an individual author or topic.)

Many of the articles and books listed here examine not just one CAALS author, but two, three, or more—usually, but not always, in the same genre—suggesting that these writers, taken together, participate in the sweeping movement of Black artistic expression in the post-civil rights era. Even when one writer is the nominal subject, as in Henry Louis Gates’s provocative essay on Jamaica Kincaid in the August 21, 2025 *New York Review of Books*, the insights and references contextualize her work so that other CAALS guests—in this case, Mary Helen Washington, Charles Johnson, and Colson Whitehead—are linked to Kincaid, along with Ralph Ellison, Richard Wright, James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, and other major African American writers. (Gates’s essay also addresses the mystification that the April 28, 1995 Marygrove audience experienced when Kincaid read not from her familiar fiction involving colonialism, race, and gender but from a newer essay about gardens and gardening. How was this connected? Reading Gates offers a solution to this three-decades-old mystery.) Another happy addition to the bibliography joins the second and third CAALS guests: Mary Helen Washington’s much-awaited book on Paule Marshall will be released on February 10, 2026. In addition, you’ll find links to news items about the writers, such as the Ernest J. Gaines postage stamp and Cornelius Eady’s reading at Zohran Mamdani’s mayoral inauguration.

Probably no one “reads” a bibliography from start to finish, but dipping into it for a few minutes at a time can generate new ideas and associations, suggestions of new work to read and study, or incentives to re-read a familiar novel or poem. Even titles of literary criticism can inspire new thoughts about familiar works. Moreover, this bibliography offers one advantage over those of the past since many of its listings include links to complete articles or abstracts—and thus immediate gratification for the curious reader. (If a link or “doi” listing appears to be inactive, try pasting it into your browser.)

Like the CAALS website and the *Marygrove African American Authors Collection (MAAAC)*, this bibliography seeks to fulfill the goals of the professors and administrators who introduced CAALS in 1989 and those who continue it today: to highlight the importance of contemporary African American writers and writing for audiences in Detroit and, via this website, around the world.

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