

COMMUNITY
OF WRITERS



Squaw Valley, CA

OMNIUM GATHERUM
& NEWSLETTER

2009-2010

ISSUE 14

COMMUNITY OF WRITERS AT SQUAW VALLEY
OMNIUM GATHERUM & NEWSLETTER
2009-2010, Issue 14

Community of Writers at Squaw Valley

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Maxima Kahn
with support and advice from
Brett Hall Jones

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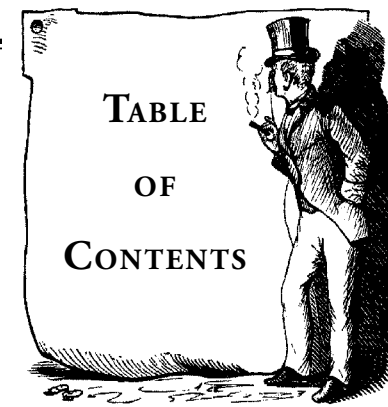
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PLEASE NOTE: *We are not able to fact-check
the submitted news. We apologize if any
incorrect information is published.*



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A Note from the Editor

Welcome to the Omnium Gatherum & Newsletter!

It is heartening in these times to see so many worthy books still making their way into print, to welcome so many new voices, and to feel our Community of Writers still typing away, wrestling with words, doing what we do. I hope you will be inspired to read some of the books you discover here and help keep the dialogue going.

In this issue you will find wonderful advice from writers Ron Carlson and Sandra Scofield alongside profiles of five of our past participants, all of whom are up to interesting things. We are pleased to offer this compendium of the successes of our staff and participants and this forum for news among our Community of Writers. However, the costs of printing and mailing the *Omnium* are substantial. If you would like to help us continue to publish, please consider making a contribution to the Community of Writers or advertise with us. All of the advertising dollars go towards the costs of producing this forum that helps keep our community members in touch with one another.

We hope you enjoy this issue. Let us know!

—Maxima Kahn
maxima@squawvalleywriters.org

Send Us Your News!



PAST PARTICIPANT OR STAFF?

Do you have news you would like us to include in the newsletter? We print publishing credits, awards and similar new writing-related achievements, and also include births. **News should be from the past year only.** Please compose it *in third person*, using complete sentences. Include titles, periodicals, publisher, and publication dates, as needed. **It helps us if your news is sent in the correct format.** See examples in this issue. **Deadline: September 1, 2010 for next issue.**

We dedicate this issue of the Omnium Gatherum & Newsletter to the memory of long-time staff member and friend James D. Houston.



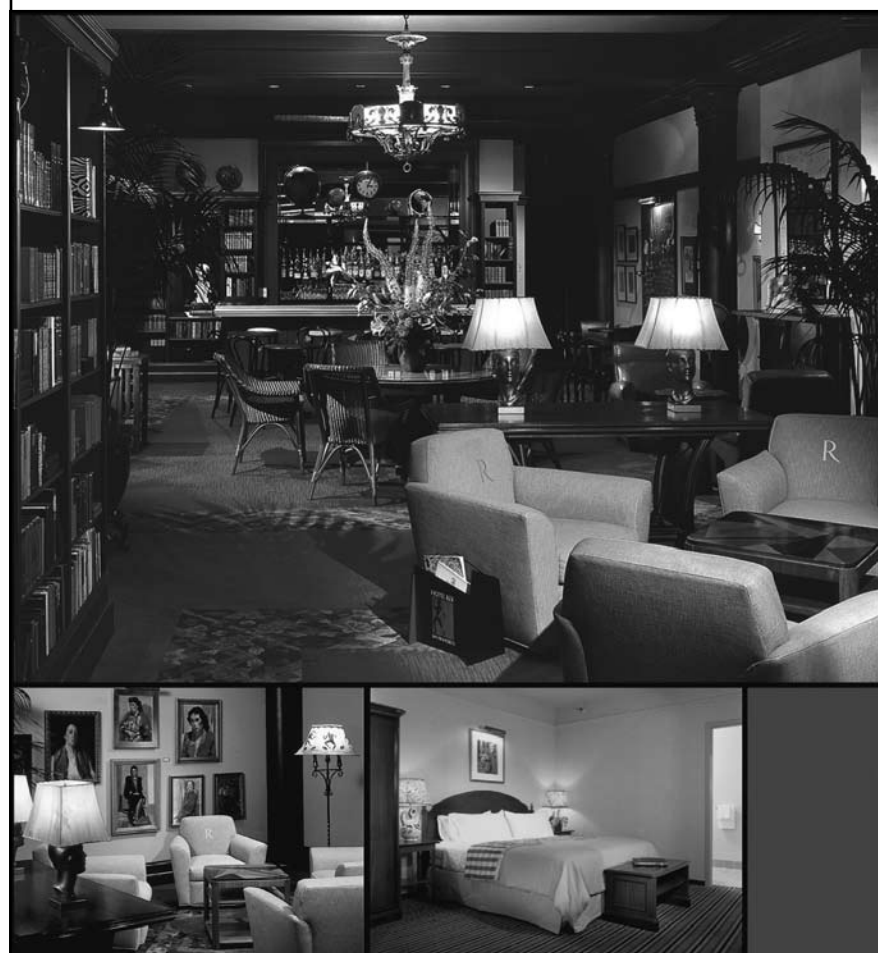
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May 10 Writers Workshop

May 1 for Screenwriting

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2010

POETRY WORKSHOPS: July 17 - 24

Kazim Ali • Forrest Gander • Brenda Hillman

Evie Shockley • Dean Young

& Special Guest Lucille Clifton

WRITERS WORKSHOPS: August 7 - 14

Max Byrd • Michael Carlisle • Mark Childress

John Daniel • Gill Dennis • Cai Emmons

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Kazim Ali: Two new books have been published this past year—*Bright Felon*, a mixed genre memoir (Wesleyan University Press), and a novel, *The Disappearance of Seth* (Etruscan Press). Forthcoming in 2010 from University of Michigan Press Poets on Poetry Series is a book of essays, *Orange Alert: On Poetry, Art and the Architecture of Silence*. www.kazimali.com

Jimmy Santiago Baca: In October, Grove Press published his novel, *A Glass of Water*, which was selected as a Recommended Read by Barnes & Noble. Also in October, New Directions published a his *Selected Poems* in a bilingual Spanish and English edition. www.jimmysantiagobaca.com

Lucille Clifton: In January 2010, the Poetry Society of America granted her its highest honor, the Frost Medal, which honors "distinguished lifetime service to American poetry."

Cornelius Eady: The poem about Emmett Till that he wrote for his Friday poem this past summer at Squaw was accepted for publication in the *New Yorker*.

Robert Hass: *The Apple Trees at Olema: New and Selected Poems*, is forthcoming from Ecco in 2010.

Brenda Hillman: Her eighth book of poems, *Practical Water*, was published by Wesleyan University Press.

Yusef Komunyakaa: Farrar, Straus and Giroux released the paperback of his *Warhorses: Poems* in October. A paperback of his earlier work, *Gilgamesh: A Verse Play*, with co-author Chad Gracia, was published by Wesleyan University Press in 2009.

Li-Young Lee: W.W. Norton published the paperback of his collection of poems *Behind My Eyes* in July.

David Lukas: His newest book, *A Year of Watching Wildlife*, was published by Lonely Planet in July.

Harryette Mullen: She was awarded one of the Academy of American Poets' top honors: the Academy Fellowship.

C.D. Wright: Her latest collection of poems, *Rising, Falling, Hovering* (Copper Canyon Press), was the international winner of the 2009 Griffin Poetry Prize. www.griffinpoetryprize.com

Dean Young: *The Art of Recklessness: Poetry as Assertive Force and Contradiction* is scheduled for release by Graywolf in July. *The Foggist* was published by Hollyridge Press as part of their chapbook series in November. He was included in the creative experiment and resulting anthology *Seven Poets, Four Days, One Book*, which was published by Trinity University Press in April. ■

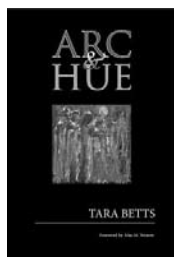


Participant Profile: Tara Betts



Tara Betts attended the Poetry Workshops in 2009. She received her MFA in 2007 from New England College. Her first collection, *Arc and Hue*, was published by the Willow Books imprint of Aquarius Press in September.

Of this collection she wrote in her blog: "There were many days when I thought the first book might not ever happen. Now, that it's here, I find myself wanting to write the next one, but better, stronger, with less apprehension. I'm just realizing that the people that I held back for are no longer alive. I never wanted to hurt their feelings, embarrass them, or air family secrets. I've kept the door closed on so many things that kept me angry, embarrassed, and even depressed. Now, I'm feeling that I might be a little bit free...to unpack the ugly I'm unwilling to carry, the kinds that many of us try to tamp down into our bones and pretend they don't happen. There is a time to bear witness and put burdens down."



Tara began writing poetry shortly after reading *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. Now, she says, "I find myself truly in awe of writers like Kwame Dawes, Joyce Carol Oates, bell hooks and Marilyn Nelson. All of them are writers who are stretching beyond poetry and creating a body of much-needed literature. I'd like to aspire toward that."

Tara is a lecturer in creative writing at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ and a Cave Canem fellow. She co-founded GirlSpeak, a weekly writing/leadership workshop for young women. She has also conducted workshops in schools, community centers, Ms. Foundation, City Girls (a substance abuse rehabilitation center for teen girls), Cook County Jail, Cooper Union, Dodge Foundation's Poets-In-The-Schools program and elsewhere.

She writes: "In 1999, I proposed and co-taught the first performance poetry classes at Gallery 37. I also spent many Saturdays at Young Chicago Authors where we started the day writing, and it was the most exhilarating part of my day."

Tara's work has appeared in *Essence*, the Steppenwolf Theater production *Words on Fire*, *Obsidian III*, *Callaloo*, *PMS*, *Meridians*, *WSQ*, *Columbia Poetry Review*, *Ninth Letter*, *Hanging Loose*, *Drunken Boat* and many other journals. Her work has been featured in twelve anthologies, including *Gathering Ground*, *Bum Rush the Page*, *Power Lines*, *Black Writing from Chicago*, *These Hands I Know*, *Home Girls Make Some Noise: Hip Hop Feminism* and *Letters to the World*. Tara has also been a freelance writer for publications such as *XXL*, *The Source*, *BIBR*, *Mosaic Magazine* and *Black Radio Exclusive*.

She has appeared on HBO's "Def Poetry Jam" and was one of the writers/performers in girlstory, an intergenerational, multicultural women's performance collective. After winning Guild Complex's Gwendolyn Brooks Open Mic Award, she represented Chicago twice at the National Poetry Slam. She has performed her work in Cuba, London, New York, the West Coast and throughout the Midwest from the Studio Museum of Harlem to the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, and from Harvard University to Ladyfest Midwest. www.tarabetts.net



POETWATCH POETRY PARTICIPANTS

Kazim Ali (98,97): See Poetry Staff News

Kevin Arnold (09,99,96,95; WW 07,93): His short story "The Troubled House" won a First Place prize at the San Francisco Book Festival in spring 2009.

Bob Austin (83,80,79): His play *The Liberty Room* will be performed by the Community Theater Group in Quincy, Illinois, site of the historic event featured in the play.

Tara Betts (09): See her Participant Profile on page 8.

Beverly Bie Brahic (08): Her translation of Francis Ponge's *Unfinished Ode to Mud* (London, CBeditions) and Hélène Cixous's *Hyperdream*, were published in 2008. *Unfinished Ode to Mud* was shortlisted for the 2009 Popescu Prize for European Poetry in Translation. Her translation of Julia Kristeva's *This Incredible Need to Believe* will be out soon. Her poems are forthcoming in *The Southern Review*, *Notre Dame Review* and *Oxford Poetry*. She was awarded a residency at Yaddo this summer.

Tara Bray (97): Her first collection of poems, *Mistaken For Song*, was published by Persea Books in 2009 and won the 2008 Lexi Rudnitsky Prize.

Jill Breckenridge (01): Nodin Press published her book of poems, *The Gravity of Flesh*, in May.

Andrea Carter Brown (92,91,89): Four poems from her new poetry manuscript, *September 12*, are featured in the current issue of *Beltway Poetry Quarterly* (washingtonart.com). Other work from this collection recently appeared in *Mississippi Review*. Her interview of Sharon Olds will appear in the Fall 2010 issue of *Five Points*.

Melisa "Misha" Cahnmann-Taylor (03,00): Her book, *Teachers Act Up!*, will be published by Teachers College Press in the spring. Her poetry appeared in *Women's Review of Books*, *Literary Mama*, *Cream City Review*, *Kritya*, *American Book Review*, and *Anthropology & Humanism*. Her second baby, a girl named Liya Paulette Cahnmann Taylor, was born in August.

Sharon Charde (07,03,01,00): She was published in *Common Ground Review*, *The Paterson Literary Review* and *Chickenpinata*. She won third prize in the 2009 Al Savard Contest sponsored by the Connecticut Poetry Society and second prize in the 2009 Connecticut Poetry Society Contest, as well as Special Merit in the 2009 *Comstock Review* contest.

Ching-In Chen (07): Her poems and other writing have appeared in *make/shift*, *Chroma*, *BorderSenses*, *Sous Rature*, *San Antonio Express-News*, *Rio Grande Review*, *Verdad*, *Fifth Wednesday Journal*,



Future Earth, *Boxcar Poetry Review*, *Cha*, *Sunday Salon*, *Galatea Resurrects* and *From East To West*. She also recently co-edited *Here Is a Pen: an Anthology of West Coast Kundiman Writers* published by Achiot Press.

Amanda Chiado (07): Her poem "Openings" was chosen by Kim Addonizio for *The Best New Poets 2009*. She was also published in *Fence*, *The Dirty Napkin* and *Line 4*.

Catharine Clark-Sayles (09; Writing the Medical Experience 03): Her second book of poetry, *Lifeboat*, will be published by Tebot Bach Press in spring or summer. Tebot Bach published her first book, *One Breath*, in 2008. www.clarksayles.com

Claudette Cohen (00): Her story "An Involuntary Intimate" took first prize in the *Encore Magazine* fiction writing contest (www.encorepub.com). The prize includes being paid to write a fiction piece every other week over the next year. The stories appear under her pen name, Claude Limoges. Four poems have been published in *ditch* (www.ditchpoetry.com). claudelimogeswhat.blogspot.com

Kevin Conder (05): He had poems published in *Word Riot*, *Tonopah Review* and *2River*. His screenplay *Front Man* won the Platinum Prize in the 2008

FilmMakers.com International Screenwriting Awards. Kevin reviews films at www.onbrokenground.com/blog.

Russell Dillon (05): *Secret Damage*, a collection of his poems, was published by Forklift Ink.

Kasia Drake (04): She married Jason Hames in October.

Suzanne Edison (08): She had poems published in *Ars Medica*, *Blood and Thunder: Musings on the Art of Medicine*, *Pearl*, *Crab Creek Review Fall 2008-09*, and *Drash: Northwest Mosaic Vol. III*. Her chapbook, *Stunned With Flowers*, was a finalist in the Midnight Sun Chapbook Contest.

Selden Edwards (Poetry 07; WW 72,71,70): May 26 is the launch day for the paperback of his novel, *The Little Book*, by Dutton. www.seldenedwards.com

Maureen Eppstein (Art of the Wild 92): A new poetry collection, *Rogue Wave at Glass Beach*, was published in July 2009 by March Street Press.

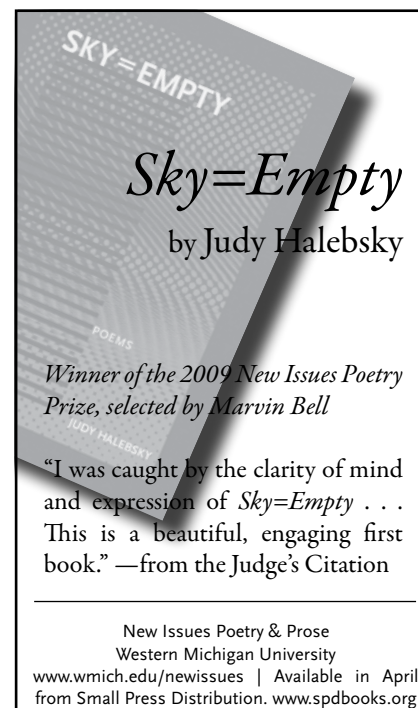
Ann Fisher-Wirth (09,00,92): Her third book of poems, *Carta Marina*, was published by Wings Press in April. Her chapbook, *Slide Shows*, placed second in the 2008 Finishing Line Chapbook Contest and was published by Finishing Line Press in December 2009. She joined the Core Faculty of the Low Residency MFA Program at Chatham University. Her poems appeared in *PersimmonTree*, *Oranges & Sardines*, *Poetry International*, *The Valparaiso Review*, *Sentence*, *The Mississippi Review*, *Fairy Tale Review* and *Rampike*, as well as several anthologies. Her work was featured in *Skylines: An Ecopoetics Exhibition* at the Center for

Contemporary Art and the Natural World in Exeter, UK. She is coediting (with Laura Gray Street) an anthology of contemporary American ecopoetry that will be published by Trinity University Press in 2012.

Molly Fisk (04,99,95,92): Hip Pocket Press is publishing her collection, *The More Difficult Beauty*. www.mollyfisk.com

CB ('Lyn) Follett (04,00,95): She was one of ten shortlisted poets for the Strokestown Poetry Festival International Prize, which included travel to the Festival in Ireland.


Serena J Fox (99,96,94,93,92): Her first book of poems, *Night Shift*, was published by Turning Point (WordTech, Inc). Many of the poems were started at the Squaw Valley Poetry Workshop. www.turningpointbooks.com




Abby Gambrel (07): She was hired for a tenure-track position at Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee.

Lara Gualarte (WW06,03; Poetry05): Her poetry has appeared, or is forthcoming this year in *Bitter Oleander*, *The Evansville Review*, *Hiram Poetry Review*, *The Sandhill Review*, *Water-Stone Review*, and *Windfall*. She was the Surprise Valley Poetry Prize winner for May 2009. In July of 2008 she was a resident poet at the Footpaths to Creativity Writer's Residency and Retreat on Flores Island in the Azores.


Audrey Taylor Gonzalez (08,06): Two books of poetry: a collection of poems in English—some written at Squaw Valley—called *Waiting for Rain*, and a collection of poems written in Spanish, *Hurgadores de La Vida*, were presented at the Biblioteca Nacional de Uruguay in December.


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—Naomi Shihab Nye

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Judy Halebsky (06,03): She won a first book contest for *Sky=Empty*. New Issues Poetry and Prose will publish the book of poems in April 2010.

Joseph Hall (03): His first book of poetry, *Pigafetta Is My Wife*, is forthcoming from Black Ocean Press this spring. In 2008 he launched the DC area event series Cheryl's Gone, which has featured a PEN/Faulkner finalist, an avant drummer, burlesque, and many poets.

Donna Henderson (05,93,92,90,89): Her new book of poems, *The Eddy Fence*, was published by Airlie Press (www.airliepress.org) in April.

Alice Jones (89,91): She won the First Annual *Narrative Magazine* Poetry Award for a poem from her manuscript *Vault*. Other poems from the manuscript have

appeared in *Boston Review*, *Colorado Review*, *Volt*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Verse*, *New American Writing* and *Parthenon West*.

Maxima Kahn (07, WW 06): She had poems published in the *Sacramento News & Review* and *Spillway*.

Hari Bhajan Khalsa (06,03): "I Would Tell You" was selected for publication in *Best of the Web 2009*. A first chapbook, *Life in Two Parts*, was a finalist in the Main Street Rag Annual Poetry Chapbook Contest and will be published in 2010.

Jessica Lamb (91): *Last Apples of Late Empires* is being published by Airlie Press.

Margaret Mackinnon (09): She has new poems in *Southern Humanities Review* and forthcoming in *Poet Lore*, and was awarded a residency at the Vermont Studio Center for July 2010.

Beverly Matherne (WW 00; Poetry 94): See Writers Workshop Participant News.

Karyna McGlynn (06): *I Have to Go Back to 1994 and Kill a Girl*, a collection of poems, was published in November by Sarabande Books. The book was the winner of the 2008 Kathryn A. Morton Prize in Poetry, selected by Lynn Emanuel.

Dawn McGuire (07,04,01,99,97,95): Her translation of Wang Wei's *Replying to SubPrefect Zhang* will be published in an illustrated, letter-pressed broadside by Broadside in July.

Norman Minnick (06): He is the editor of *Between Water and Song: New Poets for the Twenty First Century*, forthcoming from White Pine Press in March 2010.

Berwyn Moore (92,90): She has been named the first-ever Poet Laureate of Erie County, Pennsylvania. Her poem "Pins and Needles" won Second Place in *The Pinch* 2009 Literary Awards in poetry, and her poem "MS" was posted on The Best American Poetry web site on July 10. Her collection of poems, *O Body Swayed*, was published in December by Cherry Grove Collections.

Collier Nogues (06): She was awarded a residency at Yaddo Foundation, and is the 2010 Fishtrap Writer-in-Residence in Wallowa County, Oregon. Her first book will be published in spring 2011 by Four Way Books.

William Notter (95): His poetry collection *Holding Everything Down* (Southern Illinois University Press) was published in 2009. Ricardo Pau-Llosa chose the collection for the 2008 Crab Orchard Series in Poetry First Book Award. Notter also received an NEA fellowship for 2009. His poems have recently appeared in *High Desert Journal* and on *Verse Daily*.

Sharon Olson (97): She recently moved from the Bay Area to Guilford, Connecticut and has had poems published in *U.S. 1 Worksheets*, *Caduceus*, *Caesura*, *Delaware Valley Poets Anthology*, *Sand Hill Review* and *Arroyo Literary Review*. She has become an active member of the Guilford Poets Guild, setting up a blog for them (guilfordpoetsguild.wordpress.com) and doing much of the editorial work for their upcoming *Guilford Poets Guild Tenth Anniversary Anthology*.

Melinda Palacio (09): She won the Sense of Place contest by Kalupi Press. She'll receive \$1000 and publication of her first chapbook, *Folsom Lockdown*, (February 2010). She also has two poems appearing in *Palabra: A Magazine of Chicano/Latino Literary Art* and three poems in *O & S: Poets and Artists Magazine*. Two of the poems from *O & S*, "Boyhood Bop: B Train" and "Water Mark," were written at Squaw Valley last Summer. melindapalacio.com

Maya Pindyck (09): Her book of poems, *Friend Among Stones*, has been published by New Rivers Press.

Claudia M. Reder (08): A poem she wrote at Squaw last summer won *Lilith* magazine's Charlotte Newberger Poetry Contest. The judge was Alicia Ostriker. The poem will appear in the July issue.

Elizabeth Rosner (Poetry 99; WW 87,83,82): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

Larry Ruth (08,06,04,02,00): His poems were published in *The Berkeley Poetry Review*, #40; and were selected for *The Guardian's* 'Poster Poems Anthology' (working title).

Marjorie Saiser (00): She was named the Distinguished Artist for Poetry by

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"Fisk's poems twinkle with the dark, nuanced subtlety of painted miniatures; they speak from the heart and gut. Devils and angels dwell in her details." – Al Young

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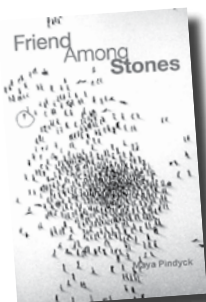
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exactly the right slant, the right channel, the right wire, the right hypodermic—straight to the reader's heart!" —THOMAS LUX,

AUTHOR OF *THE CRADLE PLACE*

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the Nebraska Arts Council in June 2009. Her book *Rooms* will be published by Backwaters Press in the fall of 2010.

Sky Sanchez (05): She has promised to wed Mathew Fischer. Their nuptials are set for late spring of 2010.

Dave Seter (03): His poetry chapbook *Night Duty* was published by Main Street Rag. A number of the poems appearing in *Night Duty* were started at Squaw Valley. www.daveseter.com.

Elaine Sexton (98): Her second poetry collection, *Causeway* (New Issues Press), was a finalist for the 2009 Publishing Triangle's Audre Lorde Award. Her poem, "Heaven," published in *O! The Oprah Magazine* in 2008, was selected for an annual collection of most notable contributors for that year.

Scot Siegel (07): His poem "Autumn Turns Through Stratified Wars" is a Pushcart nominee (*New Verse News*). He also has new poems in *Front Porch*, *The Centrifugal Eye*, *The Smoking Poet*, and *Right Hand Pointing*. *Aesthetica Magazine* (London), through its annual Creative Works Contest, gave Honorable Mention to his poem "Cruel Gifts."

Maryhelen "Mel" Snyder (05,03): An essay she wrote on Emily Dickinson ("Guarding Master's Head; Reflections on My Emily Dickinson") will be published in the Fall 2010 issue of *Poet Lore*.

Minton Sparks (06): Her third book, *Entrepreneur's Daughter*, was published in 2009.

Susan Terris (04): *Double-Edged* was published by Finishing Line Press in the fall.

Renata Treitel (91): Her collection *After the Aftermath* was published by Out On A Limb Publishing in December.

Sally Van Doren (06,03,01): She has had poems recently in *Barrow Street*, *Diode*, *5AM*, *Margie*, *The New Republic* and *Valpariso Poetry Review*. Her poem "Preposition" is featured as an animated film in the Poetry Everywhere program of The Poetry Foundation.

David Watts (04,02,99,97,93,92,91,90): The University of Iowa Press published his non-fiction book about the moral dilemmas and personal rewards of being a doctor, *The Orange Wire Problem*, in April.

Charles Webb (91): *Shadow Ball: New & Selected Poems* was published in 2009 by the University of Pittsburgh Press.

Ian Wilson (Poetry 08,93; WW 04): *The Wilson Poems* appeared in the chapbook series from Hollyridge Press in April, and his novella, *Great Things Are Coming*, was published by Hollyridge in February.

Gary Young (75,74): He was awarded the 2009 Shelley Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America. The prestigious

national award is given annually to "a living American poet selected with reference to genius and need." His *New and Selected Poems* is forthcoming from White Pine Press. ■

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Summer 2009 Special Thanks and Photo Gallery



First of all, we thank our magnificent staff that makes the conference what it is, and our many donors who make it possible. Many thanks to **Lisa**

Alvarez, Diana Fuller, Andrew Tonkovich and **Louis B. Jones**, who despite their roles as directors and/or teaching staff are to be seen in the days before the conference moving tables and chairs; to **Kaitlin Klaussen**, who coordinated housing for us with Audrey Rose trailing after; to **Stacey Knapp** for running the bookshop with warmth and style. We'd also like to thank **Debbie Lane of The Bookshelf** who helped us tremendously with the bookstore. Thanks



Sands Hall and Mark Childress

also to **Tracy Hall** and **Sara Swinerton** for coordinating our snack bar. Thanks also to **David Womack** for bartending, driving, and helping with manuscripts at registration. And to **Jennifer Dietz** and **Joan Klaussen** for filling in the gaps wherever needed.

Many thanks to members of the Board and Squaw Valley locals who have been tremendously generous with their time over the years: **Eddy & Osvaldo Ancinas, Amy Tan & Lou Demattei; Joan & Peter Klaussen; Barbara Hall; Mimi & Burnett Miller; Geri**



Danette Rivera and Lisa Alvarez

Our work waiver crews make each conference run smoothly. For their labor during poetry we thank **Christina Marie Darling, Nicholas Gulig, Melissa Mack, Ingrid Moody, Maya Pindyk** and **William Stobb** and for their work during the writers workshops, our gratitude goes to **Sara Flood, Christine Granados, Susan Henderson, Jeff Percifield, Patricia Schaefer, and Danette Rivera** who stepped in to help with the staff picnic.



Eddy Ancinas, Mimi Miller, Gerald Haslam, Janice Haslam and Burnett Miller

Thanks also to our friends **Adam Haight, Tad Hall, Hunter**

Jones, Charlotte Cadieux, Margot Miller, Tom

Taylor and especially

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David Womack

We send our great appreciation to **Justin Casey** and **Tom O'Neill** of the **Olympic Plaza Food and Beverage** for their lovely venues; and **Ena Arbueza** for her remarkable dinners. We will miss you!

The Board and Staff of the Community of Writers would especially like to thank **Nancy Cushing, President of the Squaw Valley Ski Corp.** who has continued to create an environment where a conference such as ours is possible; and to their wonderful staff: **Ernst Hager, Tom Kelly, Christine Horvath, Cynthia Braga, Linda Law** and the **Security Team** (who are superb ambassadors).

And of course we couldn't do it without our donors. As we are a fully independent organization, your support makes it happen.

—Brett Hall Jones, Executive Director



2009 Past Participant Readers



Galway Kinnell and Brett Hall-Jones



Barbara Hall and Lou DeMattei



The Sounds of Summer 2009

Music Heard in the Office



—Lisa Alvarez



Steve Earle: Townes

Earle's tribute to his friend, the late great singer-songwriter Townes van Zandt. Lots of heart, lots of blues and some fine storytelling.

The Man of Somebody's Dreams: A Tribute to Chris Gaffney

Dave Alvin produced this impressive collection of So Cal's rootsy accordion player extraordinaire, Chris Gaffney. The contributors tell you what kind of guy Gaffney was: Los Lobos, Joe Ely, Freddy Fender, James McMurtry, Boz Skaggs, John Doe and many others. Dave Alvin does a turn on "Artesia," a suburban hymn to a long gone time.

Dave Alvin and the Guilty Women

The all-female band allows Alvin to create a more elegiac mood without losing any of his bluesy edge. Check out his unlikely but beautifully haunting ballad about his fellow Downey resident, Karen Carpenter.

Jackson Browne: Time the Conqueror

New tunes from one of the SVCW office's favorites. It's what we come to expect and love from Browne: a mix of personal and political.



Charlie Haden: Family and Friends: Rambling Boy

Jazz bassist Charlie Haden gathers his family and friends together to revisit his roots in Americana music. Guest artists, his daughters (The Haden Triplets), son-in-law Jack Black, Roseanne Cash, Elvis Costello, Vince Gill, Bruce Hornsby, Ricky Skaggs, take on classic tunes by the Carter family, Hank Williams and others.

Joan Baez: Day After Tomorrow

Steve Earle produced this latest album by Baez and the result is gorgeous. Songs include those by Earle, Eliza Gilkyson, Elvis Costello and Tom Waits.

Barbara Dane and the Chambers Brothers

This rare Folkways album was recorded in 1966. Lots of rousing so-called movement music plus a haunting version of Richard and Mimi Farina's ballad "Pack up Your Sorrows."



SCREENWRITING STAFF NEWS



Eugene Corr: He is currently producing a documentary in Havana, *From Ghost Town to Havana*, with Roberto Chile as cinematographer and co-producer. The final shoot is scheduled to take place around four baseball games between Cuban and Richmond youngsters in April.

Pamela Gray: Her original screenplay *Betty Anne Waters*, starring Hilary Swank, was produced this past spring and will be released in 2010. She is completing the screenplay for *Dewey: The Small-Town Library Cat*; Meryl Streep is still attached to star. She has sold a one-hour drama series idea to CBS and is currently writing the pilot script. She has contributed to the upcoming book *Now Write* to be published by Tarcher/Penguin in 2010.

Toney Merritt: He has optioned a short story entitled "A Dreadful Day" by New York writer Dan Warthman. He plans to adapt and produce the story soon.

Judith Rascoe: She was the story consultant for the *Bang Bang Club*, a feature about young conflict photographers in South Africa, scheduled for release in 2010.

Tom Rickman: He will write the Miles Davis story for producer Rudy Langrich (*Hotel Rwanda*).

Lisa Rosenberg: Her adapted screenplay, *Crawl Space*, is under consideration in Los Angeles and New York. She is currently writing a romantic comedy and a thriller, as well as a bi-monthly column on storytelling on film for sf360.org. She teaches for the San Francisco Film Society.

Thomas Schlesinger: He co-wrote the HBO documentary, *Prom Night in Mississippi*, which follows Morgan Freeman's efforts to sponsor an integrated prom in his small town. He co-created *The Stranger*, a 32-episode action series for Moroccan television and co-wrote *Mestiza* to be shot in New Mexico in the spring.

Camille Thomasson: She is completing *The Stacey Bess Story*, based on the autobiography *Nobody Don't Love Nobody*, for Hallmark Hall of Fame. *The Lois Wilson Story*, based on the book by the same name, will be screened by CBS in April. She is also collaborating with Michael Urban on a comedy feature, *Outlaw Inlaw*.

Christopher Upham: His autobiographical documentary, *Return to Dakto*, is in final cut stage and has been successfully test screened. He is a story consultant for arms trafficking expert Kathi Austin's African memoir for Paramount/Broadway Books. He is also teaching screenwriting at San Francisco State and San Francisco Film Society.

Michael Urban: He is currently working on *The Other Guy*, which will star David Duchovny (produced by And Then Productions and Bold Pictures). He is currently in preproduction for his directorial debut, *Longing Lasts Longer*, and is collaborating with Camille Thomasson on a comedy feature, *Outlaw Inlaw*.

Jason Wolos: His feature *Trattoria* is set for production at the end of 2010. ■



Participant Profile: Kimberly Reed

Kimberly Reed attended the Screenwriting workshop in 2006. Her documentary feature, *Prodigal Sons*, was an acclaimed hit at festivals this past year, screening at the Telluride Film Festival, AFI-FEST, Viennale, Melbourne, True/False, Denver, Boulder International, and many others, and winning the FIPRESCI International Critics Award at the the 11th Thessaloniki Documentary Festival, and a Best of Fest top-ten audience award at the Palm Springs International Film Fest. The film has received rave reviews and won numerous other awards and recognition, including Special Jury Prize at the Nashville Film Fest and Florida Film Fest, and being selected as one of the "Top 25 Documentaries of the Decade" from Lists2day, among many others.

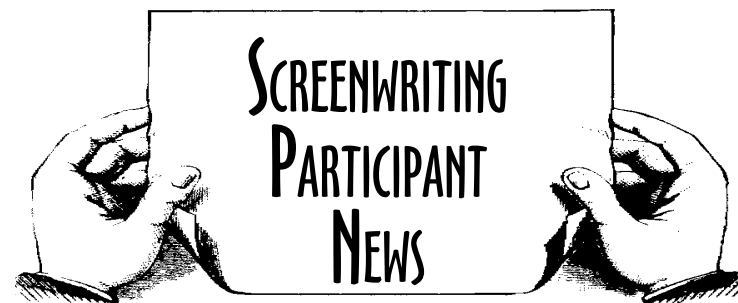
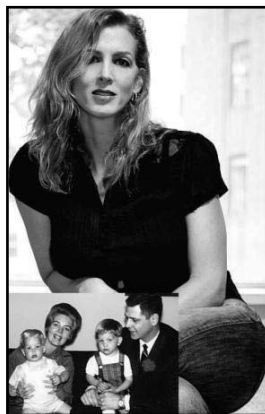
Prodigal Sons tells the remarkable story of Reed's own family and her reconciliation with her estranged brother Marc. Reed was born a boy, the middle of three brothers, became a star quarterback for the high school football team and was class valedictorian. After moving away, Reed made the decision to become a woman. She also became a filmmaker. Her older brother Marc, adopted into the family, suffered a severe injury, but it is his rivalry with Kimberly, his former brother, that perhaps most affects his life. The film explores issues of identity, trauma, family history and love, and travels from Montana to Croatia, from high school reunion to jail cell, and from deaths and births.

Kim writes, "I started out believing this film was about Marc's quest for identity, but it was about my own. I thought my transition was complete, but instead Marc taught me I was only

halfway, and that I had to somehow resurrect the first half of my life I had buried alive. This freed me to return home and reclaim my past."

After studying cinema at UC Berkeley (B.A.) and San Francisco State University (M.A.), Kimberly Reed was looking forward to a career as a filmmaker. She was a young, award-winning filmmaker (*Views of My Father Weeping*), had worked as a commercial editor, had traveled the world directing and producing travel documentaries, and had become an early expert in the nascent field of digital filmmaking and postproduction. But then she transitioned genders and disappeared. Sequestering herself in the world of publishing, she applied her filmmaking knowledge to her position as editor-in-chief of *DV* magazine, and established her reputation as a frequent speaker and digital filmmaking expert in publications like the *New York Times* and *USA Today*.

Prodigal Sons is her first feature-length documentary film. She was named one of *Filmmaker Magazine's* 25 New Faces of Independent Film. *Prodigal Sons* will be released nationwide by First Run Features, starting in late February in New York City. The film will be broadcast on the Sundance Channel on June 20. The DVD release is expected in the summer. www.prodigalsonsfilm.com. For her next project, Reed is developing her narrative feature, *Please Check One*. ■



Jill Ackles (09): She was nominated for a daytime Emmy for her directing work on *All My Children*, and won First Place for her screenplay *Playing God* in the *Fade-In Magazine* screenwriting competition, attracting interest from producers.

Marie Amsler (07): Her script *Esperanza* is scheduled to start production in 2010 in Hamburg and the Pyrenees with Sebastian Kutzli as director.

Eva Benedikt (09): She is co-producing/directing her original script *Illegal* with Demetrio Loricchio (Rome). The project is in the financing/marketing stage. Principal photography in Calabria is set for June.

Matt Boatright-Simon (08): He has been writing/directing/producing all of the commercials, documentaries, and narrative projects for Christian Audigier Fashion Designer in Los Angeles. Preproduction on his script *October* is scheduled for February 2010.

Jeffrey Brown (08): He hopes to shoot *Run The Tide*, written by fellow Squaw participant Rajiv Shah, as his first feature in 2010. His film adaptation of *Sold* has two potential producers in India where the film will be shot. To date the script is with Danny Boyle and his co-director of *Slum Dog Millionaire*, Loveleen Tanden.

Fay Darmawi (08): *Turtle Beach* made it to the quarterfinals at the Blue Cat Screenwriting Competition and *Fade-In* Awards. Currently she is concentrating on writing her first thriller, *Age of Consent*.

Sherie Davenport (07): Her screenplay *Easy on the Eyes* was a semi-finalist in the Landlocked Festival, and was optioned to Empire Entertainment. *Lucky Christmas* was optioned to Smash Media and pitched successfully to Hallmark. *Kiss Me Lucky* took first place in the June ScriptSavvy screenwriting contest and second in the comedy category at Filmmakers International Screenwriting Awards. It was optioned in June by Empire Productions.

Syda Patel Day (06): Her novel, *A Waterless River*, was sold to Persea/Norton and will be published in September 2010. She was awarded the Steinbeck Fellowship and a Djerassi Residency.

William Farley (05): He was honored with a Spring 2009 retrospective at the Ventura Film Festival, and his work has also appeared in the following festivals: Mendocino, Mill Valley, Cinema by the Bay (SFFS) and Santa Fe.

Christina Ferguson (08): She teamed up with Linda Kelly, (*Deadheads: Stories from Fellow Artists, Friends, and Followers of*

the Grateful Dead), on an original script, *Box of Rain*, with Gordy Hoffman. It was a Sundance finalist and is now out with potential producers.

Daniel Golding (05): His documentary, *WALLA! Making The People Happy*, was nominated as Best Documentary Short at the American Indian Film Festival. It was previously shown on PBS.

Marjory Kaptanoglu (08): She was a finalist for the San Francisco Film Society's 2009 Hearst Screenwriting award for her original script *Direct Descent*.

James Kohlberg (Screen 04, WW 03): He currently has three scripts in development: *Outlander*, *This Book Will Save Your Life* and *Bronwyn and Clyde*. With partner Neil Kaplan, he launched Essential Entertainment, an international film sales and finance company providing a one-stop shop for investors and producers. Recently they added a sister company, Essential Pictures, with a 7-picture deal and all overseas rights handled by Jene Hausfater.

Tiffany Laufer (06): She has finished production and released the DVD of her short *The Acorn Penny*. Her previous short, *Women's Work*, was screened at the AFI Festival in October 2008; Chad Benton



directed. She has also published the second in the Bellaboo series of children's books, *The Porch Dream*.

Felicia Lowe (09): She has resumed post-production and fundraising for her documentary *Chinese Couplet*. She has launched a new project, *Barefoot Historian*, a documentary about Him Mark Lai, "dean of Chinese American History," and the role of community-based historians. She has also accepted a commission from the San Francisco Girl's Chorus to design and create the multi-media portion of a new work inspired by the poetry discovered at Angel Island. The work will be performed at the San Francisco Performing Arts Theatre in June 2010.

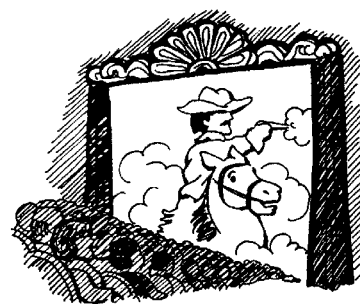
Carmen Madden (07): She wrote, directed and produced *Everyday Black Man*, which won Best Feature at the Peachtree Village Film Festival in Atlanta. Her second feature, *Shadow Fight*, is slated for production in 2010.

Amanda Micheli (09): She received the Kenneth Rainin Foundation Award from the San Francisco Film Society for her first narrative feature film, *Tomboy*.

Aparna Malladi (06): She wrote and directed her first feature film, *Mitsein*, starring Smriti Mishra, Amit Garg, Namrae Gujral and Rupinder Nagra, edited by Mark Scovil and distributed by James Duval, Co-Founder of Continuum Pictures. It was screened at the Zero Film Festival in December in Los Angeles.

Miguel Marqueda (09): He is working on his third feature, *Chopper City*.

Kari Nevil (09): She is casting *Chick With The Band* and working with award-winning producer Keith Olsen on sound track and rock star cameos. She is also finishing two



documentaries: *Infidelity* and *Sex Talk with Teens*, a video for Vodafone Americas Foundation for Global Philanthropy Forum. She also produced, directed and wrote a documentaty on Silicon Valley's first woman entrepreneur, Heidi Roizen.

Holly Payne (07): See Participant Profile on page 24.

Cynthia Phillips (09): Her first projects as a producer include films by Squaw Valley alumnae: Tamuira Reid's *Luna Gone Mad* and Lise Swenson's *An Unexamined Life*.

Kimberly Reed (06): See Participant Profile on page 20.

Tamuiira Reid (09): Her script *Luna Gone Mad* is being produced by Cynthia Phillips.

Stephanie Storey (09): She directed and executive produced a new medical comedy web series entitled *Don't Make Me Sick*, starring a cast from shows like *Gilmore Girls*, *the Office* and *The Daily Show* (www.DontMakeMeSick.net). The series successfully premiered in the fall. She produced a pilot for the Sundance Channel, which is planned for production in early 2010. With her writing partner, she recently optioned a feature script called *I Want My Baby Back* to Arnold Leibovit Entertainment.

Lisa Swenson (Screen 09,05; WW 04): She received a Film House Residency from the San Francisco Film Society to complete preproduction on her film *Saltwater*, and is simultaneously developing a documentary, *An Unexamined Life*, about the principal character in the film. Squaw participant Cynthia Philips has joined the production team.

Cliff Traiman (09): He has completed a narrative short, *She Who Laughs Last*, which screened in January in San Francisco.

Mabel Valdiviezo (05): Her award-winning script *Soledad* (Best Feature Screenplay at the Florida Media Market; Sundance Screenwriting Lab finalist), has been pitched to indie producers in the U.S. and Chile and is looking for final funding. Her autobiographical documentary, *Prodigal Daughter*, on the the price of immigration for her family in Peru, was a finalist for the ITVS Diversity Development Fund. Mabel was a runner-up for the San Francisco Film Society's 2009 Kenneth Rainin Award.

Annika Wood (09): She received a scholarship from CCSF to a Filmmaker Education Class at SFFS, making her their inaugural recipient. She is working on her fifth script, a sci-fi action piece.

Derek Zavela (07): He has completed the final draft of his screenplay *The Long Walk Home*, which has attracted the attention of premiere Native American Casting Director Rene Haynes, who is helping him package and cast the project. ■

San Francisco Film Society has a great new program funding development and production of social/human rights/justice narrative scripts from Bay Area writers.

Participant Profile: Holly Payne



Holly Payne attended the Screenwriting Workshops in 2007. No stranger to writing for screen or otherwise, she has spent seven years teaching screenwriting and story development at the Academy of Art University and five years with the faculty of the MFA Writing Program at California College of the Arts in San Francisco.

She is the author of *Kingdom of Simplicity*, *The Sound of Blue*, and *The Virgin's Knot*. Published in nine countries, *The Virgin's Knot* received critical acclaim as a *Contra Costa Times* Book Club Pick, a Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers Selection 2002, a Border's Original Voices Book 2002 and was nominated for The First Novelist Award by the Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing at Virginia Commonwealth University. Payne's second novel, *The Sound of Blue*, is set during the Balkan conflict and is based on a true story of a Serbian refugee whom she befriended while teaching English in Hungary.

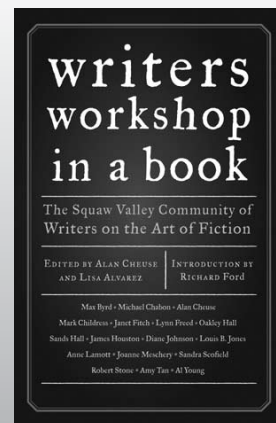
After being struck by a drunk driver in 1994 and left unable to walk for nearly a year, Holly Payne received a letter from the driver asking for forgiveness. Instead of a letter, she wrote a novel, *Kingdom of Simplicity*. *Kingdom of Simplicity* is set in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, where Holly grew up close to the Amish community. The book, which won a Marin Arts Council Grant for Fiction, centers around an Amish youth, Eli, who is unable to forgive the person who killed his family. The Amish have a strong tradition and practice of forgiveness, so Eli's inability to forgive makes him an outsider. While Holly was writing the novel, the brutal shooting death of five Amish girls shocked the

community and the world. "Two years prior, I had written a scene in which five Amish sisters are killed in a hit-and-run buggy accident, which is the crux of the whole story. The reaction that I imagined the Amish community to take was now playing out in real-time in 2006. The Amish immediately forgave the shooter, reached out to his family, and attended his funeral the next Friday while they were burying their own daughters."

The real event was a challenge for Holly: "At first, I thought I should stop writing the book because no one would want to read a 'fictional' account of something that had just happened. For at least a month, I sat at my desk and cried for those girls and their families and all the first-response people involved in the aftermath. It took a full hour each day to face the pages and continue to the end. But through the writing, I completed something in my own life and was able to see how much I needed to reach out to the drunk driver who hit me and hope that he knew I had forgiven him and would find a way to forgive himself."

Holly received a BA in journalism from the University of Richmond and a MFA from the Master of Professional Writing Program at USC where she produced her first film. She has lived and worked in London, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Hungary, Turkey, Croatia and continues to travel in search of stories that illuminate the endangered people and places of the world. She is currently at work on a new novel of historical fiction set in Bulgaria. In 2009, the University of Richmond honored her with a Distinguished Alumni Award.

www.kingdomofsimplicity.com ■



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The Focal Point: A place where a scene converges and turns

Sandra Scofield

Adapted from *The Scene Book: A Primer for the Fiction Writer* by Sandra Scofield (Penguin)

You decide what to call it. Nugget. Moment. Apex. Focal point. Hot spot. If you don't have one, the scene is boring. Think about where the scene's essence lies: the point at which everything changes. There is "Before X" and "After X." X is the focal point.

Sometimes it comes early, because you don't always spend time on the beginning of the scene; you just launch it. Sometimes it comes late, because there's a long buildup to the event. But you'll sense that there's momentum before and after X. There's movement *away from something* or *toward something*. Because you wrote the moment of X, you can't go backward. You can't have it the way it was. Maybe it's the climax, if you think like that, or maybe it's not. Maybe it's the thing that pushes to the climax. You might think of a caught moment, a still photograph that has a before and after, then release it into the scene again.

When you attend to this point in your scenes, you stop writing in circles. Things happen, scenes matter, events and emotions escalate.

Start (as always) by attending to this factor in stories you read. Choose a scene and identify that special point.

What came before?

What happens after?

What does this beat of action do to the scene?

What is its effect on the protagonist? On the situation?

How does it make the scene livelier or more menacing or funnier or more tender or brisker or sadder?

Why is it memorable?

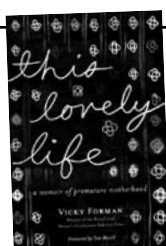
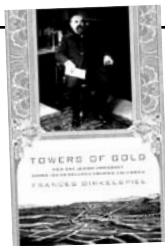
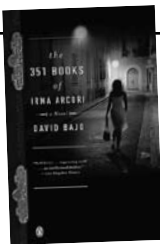
Look for focal points in your own work—or find the places where they can be developed. Think about them in your life. Your child is telling you all the reasons why she needs to do something all the other kids are doing, and suddenly you realize: she's already done it. What was the giveaway? The moment the kid said too much? Or triggered a connection to something that makes sense now? That synapse is your focal point. What you do next is the rest of the scene.

Remember that a focal point isn't an epiphany; it isn't just lights going off and a character watching the rain slide down the window. Focal points are workhorses, not stopping points, after which characters *do things*.

Pam Houston's stories are full of these moments. In *Cowboys Are My Weakness*, women either do things because they think they have to in order to win the big guys' hearts, or they finally get that it's not worth it—and do something else. Read Lorrie Moore, where you may not catch the focal point as it goes by, but you can go back and find it later. You work to read her stories, though it doesn't feel like it.

Some scenes seem to occur in the focal point. Everything else is the nest for it. In other scenes the focal moment is like a window opening. Or there's something the protagonist was holding onto so tightly that when we finally get to see it, we understand what's going on at last. And then the scene picks up motion.

See if it helps you to look for that instant, that image, that thought, that break, that turn, in your scenes. Pin it down, to be sure your scene has a point. An X. ■



Published Alumni Reading Series

Often referred to as the “this could be you” reading, the Community of Writers has welcomed some remarkable writers back to Squaw Valley for the Published Alumni Reading Series to read from their books and talk about their journey from unpublished writers to published authors.

In 2009 we featured these Published Alumni:



DAVID BAJO (88,87) has worked as a journalist and translator and has published stories in *The Cimarron Review*, *Zyzzva*, *Five Chapters*, and *The Sun*. Viking published his first novel, *The 351 Books of Irma Arcuri*, in 2008. Foreign rights have been sold to nine countries. www.davidbajo.com



FRANCES DINKELSPIEL (04,03) is the author of *Towers of Gold: How One Jewish Immigrant Named Isaias Hellman Created California* (St. Martin's Press, November 2008), which was a winner of a Northern California Independent Booksellers Association 2009 Book of the Year award. A former reporter for the *San Jose Mercury News*, her freelance work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *People* magazine. www.francesdinkelspiel.com



JAMIE FORD (06) is the author of *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*, which was published by Ballantine in January 2009. The novel has been a *New York Times* bestseller and was chosen by the American Booksellers Association, IndieBound, Costco and Target for selected reading lists. www.jamieford.com



VICKI FORMAN (94) is the author of *This Lovely Life: A Memoir of Premature Motherhood* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), winner of the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference Bakeless Nonfiction Prize and on the *San Francisco Chronicle's* Best 100 Fiction/Nonfiction list for 2009. Her work has appeared in the *Seneca Review*, *Santa Monica Review*, and in the anthologies *Love You to Pieces*, *This Day*, and *Literary Mama*. www.vickiforman.com



TANYA EGAN GIBSON (04,02,01,00) is the author of the novel *How To Buy a Love of Reading*, published in May 2009 by Dutton. She has written articles for *The Writer Magazine*. www.tanyaegangibson.com

Participant Profile: Nami Mun



Nami Mun attended the Community of Writers in 2002. Her debut novel, *Miles from Nowhere* (Riverhead January 2009), tells the story of a teenage runaway, a Korean immigrant, on the streets of New York. Joon's adolescent years take her from a homeless shelter to an escort club, through struggles with addiction, to jobs selling cosmetics door-to-door, committing petty crimes, and finally toward some hope. *Miles from Nowhere* started out as several short stories about Joon's struggles to earn a living. Nami Mun was attracted to the voice of the young narrator, at once naïve and street-wise, and began to sense the possibility of a larger narrative. The book took eight years to complete, as Mun went through numerous rounds of revisions “even doing thirty rounds of revisions on certain chapters or scrapping pages and pages of prose to salvage a few sentences.” She says the hardest part was “to loosen my grip and hand over the manuscript.”

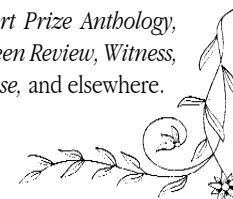
But all that hard work paid off. *Miles from Nowhere* has been receiving rave reviews and has garnered her a Whiting Award as well as being shortlisted for the Orange Award for New Writers and the 2010 Tournament of Books, and being selected as one of Booklist's Top 10 First Novels. Nami Mun was named “Best New Novelist” by *Chicago Magazine*.

While she credits “everything” in her life for helping her finish the book, she says, “I met two very important people at Squaw: Jim Houston and Janet Fitch. These two were kind enough to read the first story-chapter I wrote

for *Miles from Nowhere*, and they were the ones who gave me my first boost of confidence about my writing. Jim and I stayed in touch, and he mentored me for years to come. I'm very sad that he's no longer with us, that we can't hear his ukulele, but I'm grateful for having known him. And I'm grateful that Squaw gave me a scholarship so that I could be exposed to fellow writers and wonderful teachers, like Jim.”

When asked if the success of the book has made it harder or easier to keep writing, she responds, “It's always difficult to write. Whether you have nothing to worry about or everything to worry about, writing takes its toll.” But she continues, having just completed a short story, which is forthcoming in *Granta*, and she is currently working on a novel about crime and family.

Mun teaches creative writing at Columbia College Chicago, but she adds, “I moonlight as a fiction writer on nights and weekends. During summers, I become a full-time writer and a part-time smoker.” She was born in Seoul, South Korea, and grew up there and in Bronx, New York. She has worked as an Avon Lady, a street vendor, a photojournalist, a waitress, an activities coordinator for a nursing home, and a criminal defense investigator. After earning a GED, she went on to get a BA in English from UC Berkeley, and an MFA from University of Michigan, where she received the first place Hopwood Award for short fiction. Her stories have been published in the *Pushcart Prize Anthology*, *The Iowa Review*, *Evergreen Review*, *Witness*, *Bat City Review*, *Tin House*, and elsewhere. www.namimun.com ■



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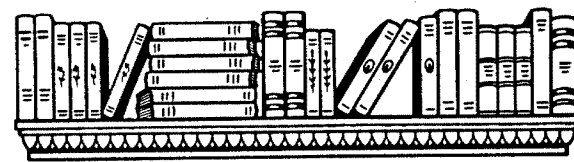
—*Philadelphia Inquirer*

LUIS ALBERTO URREA

Author of *INTO THE BEAUTIFUL NORTH*,
coming in trade paperback June 2010

"Magical." —*Vanity Fair*

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WRITERS WORKSHOP STAFF NEWS

Lisa Alvarez: She has stories forthcoming in the anthology *Sudden Fiction Latino* (Norton) and in *Green Mountains Review*.

Bill Barich: *A Pint of Plain: Tradition, Change, and the Fate of the Irish Pub* was published by Walker and Co. in February.

Elise Blackwell: Her novel *An Unfinished Score* is forthcoming from Unbridled Books in the spring. www.eliseblackwell.com

Don Bredes: *The Errand Boy*, the third novel in the Hector Bellevance Series of literary suspense novels, was released from Three Rivers Press in September 2009. www.donbredes.com

James Brown: His memoir *The Los Angeles Diaries* will be reissued in trade paperback, and his new memoir, *This River*, will be published by Phoenix Books in August 2010. Both memoirs will also appear as audio books. Brown's essays have been anthologized in *Best American Sports Writing* (Houghton Mifflin), *Fathers & Sons & Sports: Great American Sports Writing* (ESPN Books), and *Oral Interpretation* (Pearson Books). He is currently director of the new M.F.A. Program in Creative Writing at California State University, San Bernardino.

Max Byrd: His most recent talk at Squaw, "This Is Not a Map," was published by the *Wilson Quarterly* in the summer of 2009.

Ron Carlson: His most recent novel, *The Signal*, was published by Viking in May and was selected as one of the *Los Angeles*

Times' Favorite Fiction of 2009.

Alan Cheuse: A new novella, *When the Stars Threw Down Their Spears and Watered Heaven with Their Tears*, will appear in the 2010 issue of *The Idaho Review*. www.alancheuse.com

Mark Childress: His new novel, *Georgia Bottoms*, is forthcoming from Little, Brown in February 2011. He just joined the Board of Directors of the Community of Writers. www.markchildress.com

John Daniel: His second collection of essays, *The Far Corner*, was published by Counterpoint in April 2009. www.johndaniel-author.net

Leslie Daniels: Her first novel, *Cleaning Nabokov's House*, sold at auction. It will be published by Simon & Schuster, Touchstone Fireside in the spring of 2011.

Lynn Freed: Her novel *The Servants' Quarters* was published by Houghton Mifflin in April 2009. Her story, "Sunshine", which she read at Squaw Valley in August, will be published in the Spring issue of *Narrative Magazine* (www.narrativemagazine.com) and then appear in the anthology *The Dark End of the Street* (Bloomsbury) in May 2010. Her essay, "The Romance of Elsewhere and the Bonds of Home" will also be published by *Narrative Magazine*. www.lynnfreed.com

Molly Giles: Her essay, "Odds on Ends" originally presented as a talk at Squaw in 2008, is forthcoming in *The Writer's*

Chronicle. She has new stories in *Epoch* and *The Southern Indiana Review*.

Glen David Gold: His new novel, *Sunnyside*, was published in May by Random House. www.glendavidgold.com

Gerald Haslam: His *Coming of Age in California* was reprinted by Devil Mountain Books. He has finished work on his first biography, *S.I. Hayakawa—American Samurai*, to be published next fall.

Mary-Rose Hayes: In August Chronicle Books published her novel *Blind Trust*, her second collaboration with co-author senator Barbara Boxer. www.maryrosehayes.com

Michael Jaime-Becerra: He will be part of the visiting delegation at the Guadalajara International Book Fair, which has designated Los Angeles as its 2009 Guest of Honor. Jaime-Becerra's novel, *This Time Tomorrow*, is forthcoming from St. Martin's in winter 2010.

Diane Johnson: The paperback of her novel *Lulu in Marrakech* was released by Plume.

Louis B. Jones: Stories of his were published in *The Sun*, *Open City* and *The Santa Monica Review*. He appeared in San Francisco's Litquake Festival in support of *The Threepenny Review*. He will be writing a regular diary, under the banner "Notes from Nevada City," in *Open City*. www.louisbjones.com

Adair Lara: Her guide for writers, *Naked, Drunk and Writing*, which she self-published in 2009 was sold to Random House (Ten Speed imprint) and will be released by them in the Fall of 2010.

Maile Meloy: Her collection of stories, *Both Ways Is the Only Way I Want It*, was published by Riverhead in July. It was selected as one of *The New York Times*

Book Review's 10 Best Books of 2009, one of the *Los Angeles Times's* Best Books of 2009, and one of Amazon.com's Best Books of 2009. www.mailemeloy.com

Varley O'Connor: She has been awarded a Kent State creative activity grant toward the completion of her fourth novel, *Tanny*. Varley's personal essay, "Blue Station Wagon, circa 1961," will be published by *The MacGuffin* in their Spring/Summer 2010 issue. www.varleyoconnor.com

Frederick Reiken: His new novel, *Day For Night*, is forthcoming in spring 2010 with Reagan Arthur Books, an imprint of Little, Brown. His short story "Shadow" appeared in the Winter 2009 issue of *Glimmer Train*, and his short story "The Naked Hours" was in the Summer 2009 issue of the *Gulf Coast Journal of Literature and Fine Arts*. www.frederickreiken.com

Jason Roberts: Norton will publish his next book, *Every Living Thing*, in 2010. jasonroberts.net

Elizabeth Rosner: Her second novel, *Blue Nude*, is scheduled for a paperback release in September 2010 (Gallery Books of Simon & Schuster). www.elizabethrosner.com.

Martin J. Smith: His short story, "Dark Matter," will appear in the *O.C. Noir* anthology (Akashic Books, spring 2010). He continues as editor-in-chief of the award-winning *Orange Coast Magazine* in Orange County, California, and his pop culture history books *Poplorica* (HarperResource) and *Oops* (Collins) are now available in trade paperback.

Rob Spillman: *Gods and Soldiers: The Penguin Anthology of Contemporary African Writing*, which he edited, came out in April.

Andrew Tonkovich: See Profile page 35.

Susan Trott: She completed her *Holy Man Trilogy* with the September publication of *The Holy Woman* (Outskirts Press).

Jane Vandenburgh: Counterpoint Press will publish the paperback of her memoir, *A Pocket History of Sex in the 20th Century*, in March. Her book on the structure of the longer narrative, *Architecture of the Novel: A Writer's Handbook—Plot, Story & the Mechanics of Narrative Time* will be released by Counterpoint in June as a paperback original. janevandenburgh.com

Rick Wartzman: His latest book, *Obscene in the Extreme: The Burning and Banning of John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath*, was released in paperback by PublicAffairs in September.

Al Young: *Jazz Idiom: Blueprints, Stills and Frames (The Jazz Photography of Charles L. Robinson)* received the PEN-Oakland Award in December. alyoung.org

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In Memoriam: James D. Houston

Last April long-time beloved staff member James D. Houston died. He joined the Community of Writers staff in 1983 and had returned almost every year since. At the time of his death, Brett wrote: "We will all miss his warmth, wisdom, and generosity. We'll miss his ukelele and guitar and upright bass in the Follies, his renditions with Al Young of 'Hey Good Lookin' and 'Don't Get Around Much Anymore.' His is a profound loss to the writing community and this extended family we all share."

Jim Houston was the celebrated author of eight novels and more than a dozen works of non-fiction, including most recently *Snow Mountain Passage*, *Bird of Another Heaven* and *Where Light Takes Its Color From the Sea*. *Snow Mountain Passage* was cited by *The Washington Post*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, and *The Los Angeles Times* as one of the Year's Best Books. With his wife of nearly 60 years, Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, he co-wrote the classic *Farewell to Manzanar*, which chronicled Jeanne's childhood experiences in a Japanese-American internment camp during World War II. Nearly forty years later, the book is in its 63rd printing. Houston also edited several anthologies. Recognition for his work includes two American Book Awards, a Joseph Henry Jackson Award for Fiction and the Humanitas Prize, among others.

Born in San Francisco in 1933, he met Jeanne Wakatsuki at San Jose State. After serving in the U.S. Air Force in England, he received an M.A. in American literature at Stanford University and later returned as a Wallace Stegner Writing Fellow. For several years he made his living as a musician, teaching guitar, and playing acoustic bass in a piano bar and in a bluegrass band.

Houston taught creative writing at Stanford for a year and then for twenty years at UC Santa Cruz and was a guest professor at several other universities. In 2006, he was named the Lurie Distinguished Chair in Creative Writing at San Jose State University.

His stories and essays have appeared in such publications as *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *Rolling Stone*, *GQ*, *Ploughshares*, *The Utne Reader*, *The Los Angeles Times Sunday Magazine*, *Honolulu*, *Manoa: A Pacific Journal of International Writing*, and *Zyzyva*.

Geoffrey Dunn, in an obituary on the MetroActive website for the San Jose area, wrote, "Houston was a mentor and cultural signpost for two generations of regional writers, a quiet, dignified presence, always with a helping hand for young authors clenched in struggle with the muse." ■



Jim and Jeanne Houston with Oakley and Barbara Hall

Profile: Andrew Tonkovich



Sometimes life goes in a circle. Andrew Tonkovich attended the Writers Workshop in 1993 and 1995 and the Screenwriting Workshop in 1996, while a student in the MFA program at the University of California, Irvine. In his individual conference, he met with the editor of a prestigious journal who encouraged his writing. Andrew says of this meeting, "I understood this to mean that I should read his magazine, of course, but also got a sense that I was at least in the ballpark, if perhaps not quite shortstop material." Now he teaches at UC Irvine, is the editor of the *Santa Monica Review* and, since 1998 has been a regular staff member of the Writers Workshops, where he meets with participants in individual conferences and moderates panels. About the Community of Writers he says, "I like that we are all there together, cooperating, and that a success for one is in some ways a success for all, to bowdlerize the old Wobbly slogan."

Andrew got started writing by following the example of his wife, Lisa Alvarez—now co-director of the Writers Workshops—who was writing short stories and sharing great books with him. He joined Jim Krusoe's writing workshop at Santa Monica College. After many years in the workshop, Krusoe unexpectedly handed over the editorship of the *Santa Monica Review* one day. Years later Andrew says he is still wading through the big box of manuscripts Krusoe handed him. His favorite part of being editor is the thrill of discovering a great new story or essay that is perfect for the magazine. He says, "I swear the physical manuscript glows. I holler to my wife, even if she's not home, like some mad angler, that I got one."

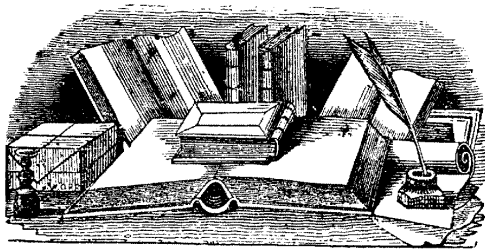
Andrew teaches composition at UC Irvine, which he sees as a way of teaching civic engagement, literacy and intellectual curiosity. He is a union organizer at UC Irvine as President of the University Council-American Federation of Teachers (UC-AFT). He also hosts a weekly radio show, *Bibliocracy*, on KPFK-FM (kpfk.org or bibliocracyradio.blogspot.com). Every Wednesday at 2:30 pm (and streaming live on the web), Andrew interviews prominent writers and invites them to read from their work. "I am surprised, pleased, gratified that writers want to be on the radio, that old-fashioned medium of creativity



and wonder. I enjoy being part of the community-sponsored, non-commercial, anti-corporate Pacifica Radio Network. Personally, the totally self-indulgent experience of being read to by writers is why I do the show." *Bibliocracy* first aired in January 2008 with California Poet Laureate Al Young on the show. Two years later, Andrew has featured such notables as Judith Freeman, Paul Auster, Michelle Latiolais, Greil Marcus, James D. Houston and many more, along with new authors.

Recently Andrew has completed a novella, is working on a novel about a blind giant and his talking guide dog, and he continues to write short stories. His short stories, essays and commentaries have appeared in *The Ear*, *Kinesis*, *Faultline*, *Radical Teacher*, *OC Weekly*, *Los Angeles Times* and the anthology *Geography of Fear*. An excerpt of his novel *Being Mr. Right* appeared in the *Green Mountains Review*. Tonkovich has also taught at Santa Monica College, Irvine Valley College and University of Redlands, where he advises the student literary magazine. ■





WRITERS WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT NEWS

Jenn Alandy (08): The twenty-five word story she submitted to Robert Swartwood will be included in a forthcoming anthology of "hint fiction" to be published by W.W. Norton in the fall of 2010.

Ronald Alexander (02): His *Romance/Romanze: Two Novellas* was published by Hollyridge Press.

Fred Andresen (03,02,01,00): Recently his book, *Walking on Ice, An American Businessman in Russia*, was chosen as a text-book for the newly formed joint MBA program of Colorado State University and the university in The Russian Republic of Tatarstan. www.fandresen.com

Kevin Arnold (09,99,96,95; WW 07,93): See PoetWatch.

Colette LaBouff Atkinson (96): Her collection of poems, *Mean*, was published by the University of Chicago Press in 2008.

Drew Banks (07): He published his new novel, *Ere I Saw Elba*, through BookLocker.com. www.drewbanks.com

Elaine Beale (02): Her novel, *Another Life Altogether*, an excerpt of which was workshopped at Squaw Valley in 2002, will be published by Spiegel & Grau (Random House) in spring 2010.

Krista Benjamin (03): She married Scott A. Lukas in February 2009. She received a Jackpot Grant from the Nevada Arts Council to support the preparation of her poetry book manuscript for publication. Poems are forthcoming in *Margie*, *Ouroburos Review*, *Redivider* and the anthology *Poets of the American West*.

Elise Blackwell (90,88): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

Belle Boggs (03): She won the 2009 Katharine Bakeless Nason Literary Prize in fiction for her collection of stories, *Mattaponi Queen*. It will be published by Graywolf Press.

Don Bredes (74): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

James Brown (94): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

Mary F. Burns (04): Her debut fiction book, *J—The Woman Who Wrote the Bible*, is forthcoming from O-Books in summer 2010. www.maryfburns.com.

Colleen Morton Busch (04): Penguin Press will publish *Fire Monks*, a book about a group of Zen monks who saved Tassajara during the 2008 summer of lightning-ignited fires.

Jamie Cat Callan (90): *French Women Don't Sleep Alone: Pleasurable Secrets to Finding Love* (Kensington 2009) garnered her a Virginia Center for the Creative Arts Fellowship at VCCA's International residency in Auvillar, France. Both *French Women Don't Sleep Alone* and her writers box of games, *The Writers Toolbox* (Chronicle) have gone into second printings. Jamie was also appointed as a visiting faculty member in popular fiction at the University of Southern Maine at Stonecoast. www.jamiecatcallan.com

Aneesha Capur (05): Her first novel, *Stealing Karma*, will be published by HarperCollins this year in India. She will also be graduating from the MFA Program at Warren Wilson College in January 2010.

Meg Waite Clayton (00): *The Wednesday Sisters* has been selected as the Target Bookmarked Club Pick for the summer. The novel is also a Borders Book Club Selection. www.megwaiteclayton.com

Mark Coggins (Screen 01; WW 96): His fourth novel, *Runoff* (Bleak House Books), won the Next Generation Indie Book Award in the Mystery/Suspense category. His fifth, *The Big Wake-Up*, was published in November. www.markcoggins.com

David T. Corbett (WW 99,91,89,88; Screen 2001): His fourth novel, *Do They Know I'm Running?* (Random House/Mortalis), will appear in March 2010. His short story "Pretty Little Parasite" was selected for inclusion in *Best American Mystery Stories 2009* (Houghton-Mifflin). His story "Dead by Christmas" appears in *Phoenix Noir* (October 2009) and a story he co-wrote with Luis Alberto Urrea titled "Who Stole My Monkey?" will appear in 2010's *Lone Star Noir* (both from Akashic Press). www.davidcorbett.com

Eileen Cronin (09,06,05): She has an excerpt from her memoir-in-progress forthcoming in the Spring 2010 issue of *Third Coast*. Another excerpt appeared last year in the *Bellevue Literary Review* and was nominated for a Pushcart Prize.

Tracy DeBrincat (96): Her short story collection *Moon Is Cotton & She Laugh All Night* was published in December by Subito Press. The first chapter of her novel, *Buckaroo Proper*, was awarded First Prize for Fiction in the Santa Barbara Writers Conference National Writing Contest, and an excerpt will be published in *95Notes Literary Magazine*. Her short story "Call It A Hat" will be published in the *Art from Art* anthology from Modernist Press. Another short story, "Gardenland," appears in *Another Chicago Magazine* #49.

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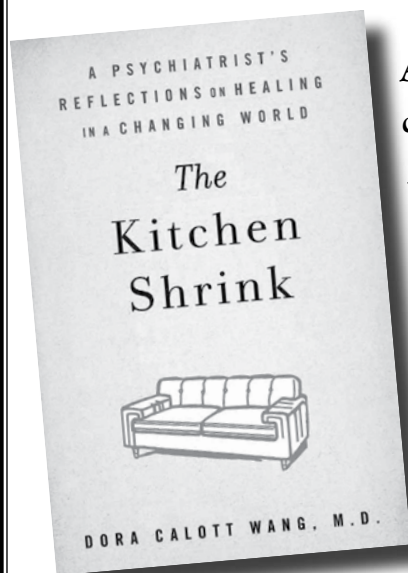
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"As the nation works on a plan to provide better medical care, it is vitally important to read *The Kitchen Shrink*. This book reminds us of the noble goal to provide healing medicine to the benefit of all." —Maxine Hong Kingston

Dora Calott Wang, M.D., is a Yale-educated psychiatrist and the recipient of a prestigious Lannan Foundation writer's residency. *The Kitchen Shrink* was developed and workshopped at the Squaw Valley Community of Writers.



Terry DeHart (96): He has a two-book deal with Orbit Books. His first novel, *The Unit*, is a post-apocalyptic thriller scheduled to be published in July 2010.

Colin Dickey (06): His nonfiction book, *Cranioklepty: Grave Robbing and the Search for Genius*, on the thefts of several famous skulls in the nineteenth century, was published in September by Unbridled Books.

Selden Edwards (Poetry 07; WW 72,71,70): See PoetWatch.

Maria Espinosa (93): *Dying Unfinished*, which "exists in a terrain between fiction and memoir," was published in March by Wings Press. www.mariaespinosa.com

Marie Estorge (01): Written under the pen name Marie Etienne, *Confessions of a Bi-Polar Mardi Gras Queen* (Alluvium Books) received the 2009 Independent Publisher Awards Gold Medal for Best Regional Non-Fiction. Marie's memoir was also voted one of the "10 Top Reads for Summer" by the *Contra Costa Times*.

Joshua Ferris (03): His second novel, *The Unnamed*, was released in January 2010 from Reagan Arthur Books. The rights have been sold for a film. www.joshuaferris.com

Vicki Forman (94): *This Lovely Life: A Memoir of Premature Motherhood* won the 2008 Katharine Bakeless Nason Literary Prize in non-fiction from the Breadloaf Writers' Conference. It was released in July 2009 from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. www.vickiforman.com

Ben George (01,99): He is the editor of *Ecotone* (www.ecotonejournal.com), published by the MFA program at UNC

Wilmington. He edited an anthology of original essays on fatherhood called *The Book of Dads: Essays on the Joys, Perils, and Humiliations of Fatherhood*, which was released in May by Ecco/HarperCollins. Contributors include Charles Baxter, Anthony Doerr, Rick Bass, Richard Bausch, Nick Flynn, and many more.

Sandra Giedeman (95,93): She was a finalist in the Mississippi Valley Poetry Competition. Her poems, "East St. Louis" and "Desert Angel," were published in an anthology of Mississippi Valley writing, *Off-Channel*. Poems also appeared in *The Connecticut River Review* and *Shaking Like a Mountain*.

Glen David Gold (97,96): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

Christine Granados (09): An excerpt from her novel *Sandblown, Fight Like a Man*, which was workshopped at Squaw Valley, was published in the October 2009 issue of *Evergreen Review* (www.evergreenreview.com). www.christinegranados.com.

Melody Chan Graves (06): Her short story "The Final Bow" won the *Southern California Review* Annual Prize in Fiction and appears in the Spring 2009 issue.

Lev Grossman (95): His novel *The Magicians* was published in August by Viking. It debuted at #9 on the *New York Times* bestseller list. levgrossman.com

Lara Gulate (WW 06,03; Poetry 05): See PoetWatch.

Lise Haines (99): Her third novel, *Girl in the Arena*, was published by Bloomsbury in October. www.lisehaines.com

Daniel Hallford (05): His collection of short stories, *Tattooed Love Dogs*, was

published by the Strategic Book Group of New York in November.

Jane Hammons (08): Recent publications include short stories: "The Devil's Inkwell," in the premiere issue of *The Gander Press Review*, "Mary Jesus" in *Able Muse*, and "Party Line" in *Everyday Genius*, as well as several essays: "The Berkeley Line-Up" in *The East Bay Monthly*, "Politics With Drawl" in *Columbia Journalism Review*, "The Boy in the Window" in *San Francisco Chronicle Magazine*, "Mothering in Real-Time," originally published in *The Mothers Movement Online*, was anthologized in *The Maternal is Political* (Seal Press). Her short story "The Land With No Air" is forthcoming in an anthology of 'Hint Fiction' edited by Robert Swartwood (fall 2010, W. W. Norton).

Sara J. Henry (07,06): Her first novel, *Learning to Swim*, will be published in January 2011 by Shaye Areheart Books (Random House); a sequel will follow in October 2011. For both of these manuscripts, the opening chapters were workshopped at Squaw Valley. www.sarahhenry.com

Sheila Himmel (08): *Hungry: A Mother and Daughter Fight Anorexia* was published by Berkley in August.

Darien Hsu Gee (99): Writing under the pen name Mia King, her third novel, *Table Manners* (Berkley Books/Penguin USA), was released in August.

Buzzy Jackson (WW 01; Screen 94,97): *Shaking the Family Tree: Dispatches from the Frontlines of American Genealogy* is due out in July 2010 from Touchstone/Fireside.

Michael Jaime-Becerra (02,99): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

Louis B. Jones (89): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

Elizabeth Kadetsky (04,97): This past year she had short stories and personal essays appear in *Antioch Review*, *TriQuarterly* and the *New York Times*, as well as in the anthology *Going Hungry* from Anchor books. She finished a one-year appointment as visiting writer at University of Pittsburgh and is currently visiting writer for two years at Penn State University.

Maxima Kahn (Poetry 07, WW 06): See PoetWatch.

Lisa Kastner (08): She has begun the Running Wild Writers Community in the Philadelphia area. The mission is to provide venues for up and coming writers to learn and excel in the craft of writing. www.runningwildwriters.org.

James Kohlberg (Screen 04, WW 03): See Screenwriting Participant News.

Scott Lambridis (09): The story he workshopped at Squaw this past year was published in the "Musical Obsessions" issue of *Storyglossia* in October alongside an interview with him (www.storyglossia.com). Another story of his appeared in San Francisco State's *Transfer* in December.

Dylan Landis (01): Her novel-in-stories *Normal People Don't Live Like This* was published by Persea Books in September. The book opens with "Jazz," which she workshopped at Squaw, and includes "Rose," which was published in the *Santa Monica Review*. www.dylanlandis.com

Sam Leader (05): He was awarded a seven-month residency at the Provincetown Work Center in order to complete his novel.

MOON IS COTTON & SHE LAUGH ALL NIGHT

Short Fiction
by Tracy DeBrincat

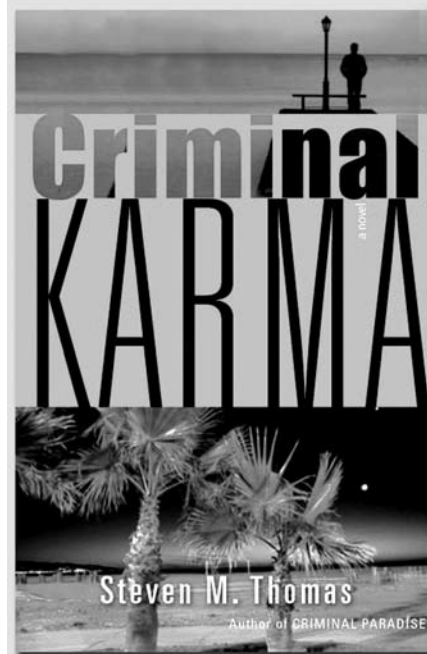


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Edan Lepucki (07): She won the 2009 James D. Phelan Award for her novel excerpt, *Days of Insignificance and Evil*, and she has a short story, "I Am the Lion Now" forthcoming from *Narrative Magazine*.

Joan Steinau Lester (03): She had a piece of narrative nonfiction, "Four Beds," in the *Alaska Quarterly Review*, Winter 2008. *Black/White/Other*, her debut YA novel, will be published by Zondervan (HarperCollins), in 2010. On Nov 1, 2008, Joan Steinau Lester wed her partner of 28 years. www.JoanLester.com

Margit Liesche (03): Her novel *Hollywood Buzz* was published by Poisoned Pen Press in April.

Aimee Liu (94): She is the 2009 recipient of the Algonquin West Hollywood Literary Award. Her essay "Becoming International" has been anthologized in the new collection, *The Face in the Mirror*, edited by Victoria Zackheim and published by Prometheus Books. www.aimeeliu.net

Paulette Livers (07): Two of her stories, "Man Walks Into a Bar" and "Unworkable," appeared in the Summer issue of the online journal *Dogzplot.com*. "Man Walks Into a Bar" also appeared in audio format in the fall at *Boundoff.com*. A short story, "The Space Around Us," was published by *The Dos Passos Review* in December. An excerpt from the novel-in-progress, *Saint Nobody*, was published in *Palimpsest*, a publication of the Department of Humanities at the University of Colorado.

Li Miao Lovett (06): Her first novel, *In the Lap of the Gods*, will be published by Leapfrog Press in September 2010. An essay of hers won first-place in the Soul Making Competition. She won second-

place for a short story in the Stanford Fiction Contest, and also was given a "Best Start" award from *Glimmer Train*. www.limiaolovett.com

Leslie Lytle (00): Her nonfiction book *Execution's Doorstep: True Stories of the Innocent and Near Damned* was released in November by the University Press of New England. www.executionsdoorstep.com

Dale Guy Madison (07): His film, *Dreamboy: My Life as a QVC Host and Other Greatest Hits*, based on his memoir of the same name, was selected for screening at the 2008 San Diego Black Film Festival.

Robin Martin (99,97,96,95): A short story "1969" will be published in the *New Orleans Review* having won the 2009 Tennessee Williams Literary Festival Contest. She co-wrote and co-produced the short film *My Happy Faces* (Argeris Productions). Her short story "Bob and Hope" was a semi-finalist in the William Faulkner Wisdom Creative Writing Competition & a finalist in the Tennessee Williams Festival. "Ms. Zuma Beach" and "On the Washing Machine" were story finalists in the Moondance Film Festival.

Marisa Matarazzo (06): Her collection of stories *Drenched, Stories of Love and Other Delirium* was published by Soft Skull Press.

Beverly Matherne (WW 00; Poetry 94): Her new book of bilingual prose poems, *Lamothe-Cadillac: Sa jeunesse en France (Lamothe-Cadillac: His Early Days in France)*, was published by Éditions Tintamarre. She has a villanelle dedicated to Dylan Thomas in *Seventh Quarry*

Magazine, published in Swansea, Wales, and a poem in free verse in *Cadence of Hooves: A Celebration of Horses*, Yarroway Mountain Press.

Maile Meloy (98): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

Mary E. Mitchell (01,00): Her second novel, *Americans in Space*, was published by Thomas Dunne Books in October. www.maryemitchell.com

Anthony J. Mohr (08): His personal essay "At Play with the Mousketeers" was published in the Spring issue of *Oracle* and, in October, in an anthology titled *This Path* (Silver Boomer Books).

David J. Morris (08): He has been awarded a residency at MacDowell and one at the newly founded Norman Mailer Writers Colony. He was also co-winner of the Staige D. Blackford Prize for Non-Fiction given by the *Virginia Quarterly Review* for his essay "Trophy Town," which appeared in the Winter 2008 issue.

Nami Mun (02): See her Participant Profile on page 29.

Varley O'Connor (89,88): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

Mike Odom (08): In January 2009, he received an honorable mention in poetry at the Writers in Paradise conference at Eckerd College. His poem was noted in Vol. 4 of *Sabal*, the conference journal. In July, he won a first place award for the *Fairhope Courier*, where he is a reporter, from the Alabama Press Association in the Freedom of Information/First Amendment category for his series on "sunshine in government."

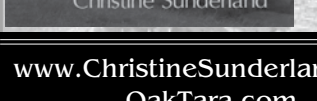
Jessica O'Dwyer (07,06): The memoir she began at Squaw will be published

OAKTARA PRESENTS

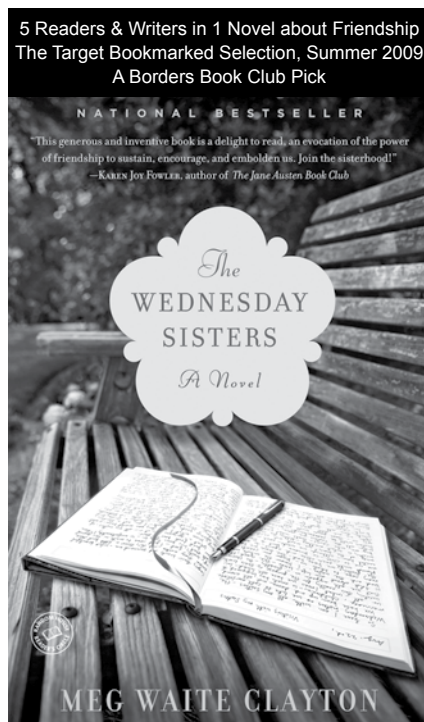
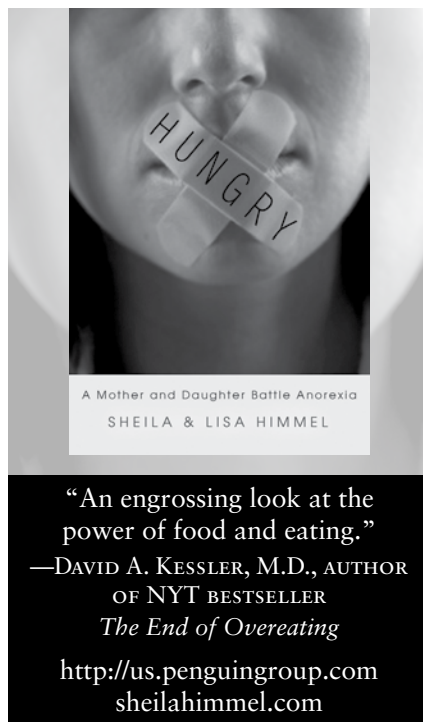
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in by Seal Press in Berkeley in the fall. Titled *Mamalita*, the book is about her experience adopting her daughter from Guatemala.

Maureen O'Leary Wanket (06): Stories of hers were published online in *Xenith* (www.xenith.net) and *Fiction at Work* (fictionatwork.com), and in print in the January 2010 print edition of *Fiction at Work* and the Fall 2009 issue of the University of Oklahoma's College of Medicine's art and literary journal *Blood and Thunder: Musings on the Art of Medicine*.

Caitlin O'Neil (08): She will have a short story published in the Winter 2010 issue of *Drunken Boat*.

Erich Origen (06): Following the success of 2008's *New York Times* bestseller *Goodnight Bush*, Erich and co-author Gan Golan are collaborating on a new book—a superhero comic parody called *The Adventures of Unemployed Man*. It will be published by Little, Brown in 2010. www.unemployedman.com

Coco Owen (05): This year she has been published in *1913: A Journal of Forms*, *Umbrella* and the Woman Made Gallery calendar, and has work forthcoming in *The Antioch Review* and *The Journal*.

David T. Page (03,02): His book *Yosemite & the Southern Sierra Nevada: A Complete Guide* (Countryman/W.W. Norton) was named Best Guidebook of 2008 by the Outdoor Writers Association of California, and received a 2009 Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism Award from the Society of American Travel Writers.

Sue Parman (98): She won first place in the 2009 Oregon Writers Colony Context

for fiction for her short story "All Hallow's Eve." Her short story "Return of the Bone Lady" was the Editors' Choice for short stories in the *Third Quarterly Review of Bewildering Stories* (an online journal).

Victoria Patterson (06): Her interlinked collection of short stories, *Drift*, was published in June with Houghton Mifflin Harcourt and is one of three finalists for the prestigious Story Prize. Her short story "Winter Formal" was published in the *Southern Review*, Winter 2009. Her short story "The First and Second Time" was published in *Freight Stories No.5*, June 2009; and her short story "Johnny Hitman" from the *Santa Monica Review*, Spring 2008 Twentieth Anniversary Issue was a notable 100 in *The Best American Short Stories 2009*.

Ismet Prcic (07): His novel *Shards* will be published by Grove, Atlantic in 2010. ismetprcic.com

Mira Ptacin (08): Since participating in the Writers Workshop in 2008, she married Andrew Jackson, graduated from Sarah Lawrence College's MFA program, (where she was editor of their literary magazine *Lumina*), started and finished her memoir (thanks to the encouragement of Squaw's Jason Roberts), and was published in *Epiphany Literary Magazine* and the *Citron Review*, an online literary journal started by one of her housemates from Squaw Valley. Mira hosts a monthly nonfiction reading series in NYC called "Freerange" and on October 7th, the series hosted Squaw Valley author Mark Childress as the featured guest.

Frederick Reiken (95): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

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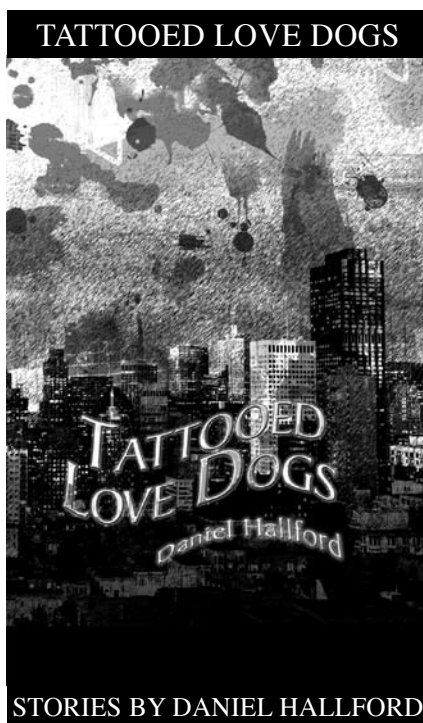


Diana E. Richmond (08): She just published her debut novel (workshopped at Squaw), *Some Other Time*, through iUniverse.

Andrew Roe (03,97): His fiction recently appeared in *Slice Magazine*, *Freight Stories*, and *Monkeybicycle*. His work also was selected for the New Short Fiction Reading Series in Los Angeles. He and his wife welcomed twins, Henry and Celia, last year.

Robin Romm (08): *The Mercy Papers: A Memoir of Three Weeks* was released by Scribner in January. Scribner also released the paperback of her collection of stories, *The Mother Garden* in March.

Elizabeth Rosner (Poetry 99; WW 87,83,82): See Writers Workshop Staff News.



Lucy Sanna (08): She received a fellowship to the Vermont Studio Center.

Mary Lou Schram (03,01,89): She published her newest novel, *Pursuing Happiness...one more time*, through Author House in April.

Gail Seneca (08): Her short story "Perfect Understanding" will appear in the Winter 2010 issue of *The Macguffin*; and her story "Ambassador" will appear in *Westview*.

Ariane Simard (02,01): She and her husband, Martin Simard, welcomed a son, Nico Yves Simard—nicknamed Terror-Delight—to the world on August 19, 2009.

Martin J. Smith (91): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

Christine Sunderland (05): She has had two novels published with OakTara: *Offerings* (April 2009), set in France, and *Inheritance* (September 2009), set in England, completing her Western European Trilogy. www.ChristineSunderland.com.

Ellen Sussman (96,80): She had an essay published in *Because I Love Her: 34 Writers Write about the Mother/Daughter Bond*, edited by Nicki Richesin. Oprah's Book Club chose her book *Dirty Words: A Literary Encyclopedia of Sex* as one of the top ten books about sex. Her new novel, *French Lessons*, was bought by Ballantine with a two book deal. It will appear in 2011. www.ellensussman.com

Lisa Swenson (Screen 09,05; WW 04): See Screenwriting Participant News.

Steven M. Thomas (00): *Criminal Paradise* has been selected as one of five finalists for *Best First Novel* by the prestigious International Thriller Writers. Steve will be a guest and panelist

at Thrillerfest in New York City this summer, where the winning novel will be announced. His second novel, *Criminal Karma*, was published by Ballantine in July. www.stevenmthomas.com

Renée Thompson (09,07,03): *Narrative Magazine* featured her short story "Old Will Road" as a Story of the Week in May 2009. Her first novel, *Bridge at Valentine*, is forthcoming from Tres Picos Press in summer 2010. www.reneethompson.com

Wendy Nelson Tokunaga (02,01): Her novel, *Love In Translation*, came out in November from St. Martin's Griffin. www.WendyNelsonTokunaga.com

Andrew Tonkovich (WW 95,93; Screen 96): See Profile on page 35.

Lauren Velevis (06): Two novels, *The Betrayal of Natalie Hargrove* (Penguin/Razorbill) and *Fallen* (Random House/Delacourte), were published in the fall of 2009, both under the name Lauren Kate. www.laurenkate.com

Dora Wang (05,04,03,02,01,00): Her memoir, *The Kitchen Shrink: A Psychiatrist's Reflections on Healing in a Changing World*, is being published in April 2010 by Riverhead Books.

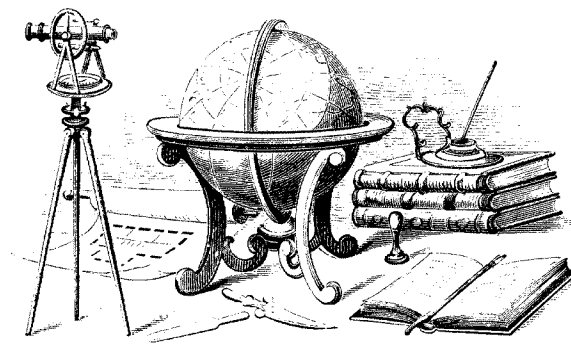
Tara Austen Weaver (05): Her first nonfiction book, *The Butcher & The Vegetarian: One Woman's Romp Through a World of Men, Meat, and Moral Crisis*, is being published by Rodale (February 2010). The story grew out of a post on her food blog: teaandcookies.blogspot.com.

Kathie Weir (01): One of her short stories, "Hamburger Gravy," was included in the May 2009 anthology, *Dots On A Map*, published by Main Street Rag.

Tim Wendel (Screen 05, WW 89-86): He received the Award for Teaching Excellence from Johns Hopkins University for 2008-2009. His latest book, *High Heat: The Secret History of the Fastball and the Improbable Search for the Fastest Pitcher of All Time*, will be published in March, 2010 by Da Capo Press. www.timwendel.com

Kirsten Whatley (06): Her first book, *Preserving Paradise: Opportunities in Volunteering for Hawaii's Environment* (www.preservehawaii.org) won a 2009 national merit award for Best Travel Guide from the North American Travel Journalists' Association (NATJA).

Ian Wilson (Poetry 08,93; WW 04): See PoetWatch.



Andrew Winer (98,97): His novel *The Marriage Artist* will be published by Henry Holt in Fall 2010. www.andrewwiner.com

Emily Wiser (04): She published "The New Year" in *The Green Hills Literary Lantern*.

Diane Wolff (WW 83; Screen 84): *Tibet Unconquered: Eight Hundred Years of History With China from the Mongol Conquests to the Present* will be published by Palgrave/MacMillan in September of 2010. Boston publisher Cheng & Tsui, will be doing a revised and expanded edition of her book on Chinese calligraphy, *Chinese Writing: An Introduction* (working title), due out in the Fall of 2010. www.dianewolff.com

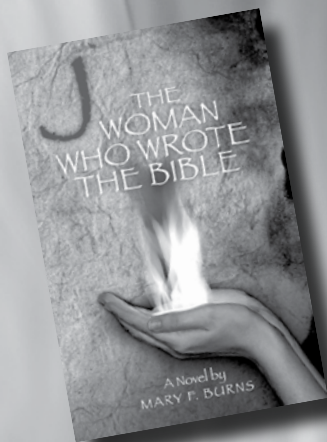
Kim Wyatt (06): She is managing editor of the literary journal *Edge* and has started a small press, Bona Fide Books (www.bonafidebooks.com).

Tiphannie Yanique (05): Her short story collection, *How to Escape from a Leper Colony*, was published in March by Graywolf Press. Stories from the collection have won a Pushcart Prize, the *Boston Review* Prize in Fiction, the Kore Press Fiction Award and have been featured in *Best African American Fiction* for 2009. www.tiphannieyanique.com

Mingmei Yip (98): Her second novel, *Petals from the Sky*, will come out in March 2010 from Kensington Books. She was also offered a contract by Tuttle Publishing to write and illustrate her second children's book. www.mingmeiyip.com

Alia Yunis: Her debut novel, *The Night Counter*, was published by Shaye Areheart Books in July. www.aliayunis.com ■

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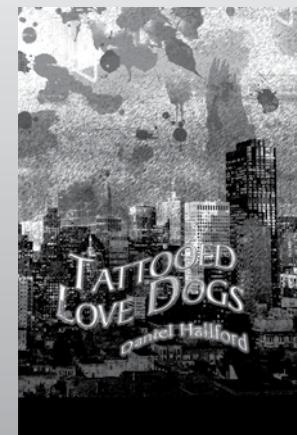
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The First Sentence

Ron Carlson

Excerpted from *Ron Carlson Writes a Story*. This is the opening of a craft discussion about writing one particular story, “The Governor’s Ball” from Ron’s book *The News of the World*.

THIS WAS THE FIRST SENTENCE:

I didn’t know until I had the ten-ton wet carpet on top of the hideous load of junk and I was soaked with the dank rust water that the Governor’s Ball was that night.

The first word of the story is I. Who’s speaking? Do I know? No. Is it me? No. Should I stop and write a character sketch for this guy, a moral code, a genealogy? No. What I have done is dive in the river. For whatever reasons, I’ve kicked myself off the edge in regard to this story and I’ve started. I felt ready. That mattress had been nibbling at me for almost a year, and I didn’t want it to get away. I want to read this story. So now the most important thing for me is to figure out ways not to stop. I’m going to get out of my own way every chance I get. If I need a family tree for this guy, I’ll pencil it up this afternoon when I’m out of gas for the day. For now, I’ve put the rope in my teeth and jumped in the river. I do not know where I will come out. As a writer you can plan, you can say, I’m going to swim across this river and come out there by that blooming jacaranda. But, you’re not. It is impossible from the bank to estimate the force and contour of the current of the water, let alone the temperature and the hidden obstacles. You strip off your clothes, set your glasses on a rock, take the pencil from behind your ear, bite hard on the rope, look once, and leap in. You can’t think your way across.

Your journey is going to require attention and effort. The first thing we should agree on is that writing is difficult. It is a strange activity done alone in a room mostly, and it is, many times, like work. Other times it’s like anything you want it to be, meeting two brothers on a train, holding tight to the tail of what seems to be a Bengal tiger, sipping Ovaltine after midnight. Other times it can be unspeakable. When you blunder onto the far shore completing the first draft, you may be far downstream, and then you can tighten the rope, walk back, place it where you want, but let’s worry about that later. Now, let’s swim, find out.

So how is the first sentence? It’s good. It’s okay for a reader, but I don’t care. I can’t even think that way here. It’s good for the writer because it creates what I’ll call inventory—there’s something in it. The writer David Boswell says it perfectly: “‘It was a dark and stormy night,’ is not a terrible sentence from a reader’s point of view, but it is a terrible sentence for the writer because there’s no help in it. ‘Lightning struck the fence post’ is much better because there’s that charred and smoking fence post which I might have to use later.” I’m constantly looking for things that are going to help me find the next sentence, survive the story. ■

Contributors This Issue

LISA ALVAREZ is co-director of the Community of Writers’ Writers Workshops and is a professor of the English department at Irvine Valley College. She has stories forthcoming in this spring’s *Sudden Fiction Latino* (Norton) and *Green Mountains Review*.

RON CARLSON’s most recent novel, *The Signal*, was published by Viking in May 2009. His novel *Five Skies* was one of the *Los Angeles Times*’ Best Books of 2007 and the One Book Choice of Rhode Island in 2009. With Michelle Latiolais, he directs the Graduate Program in Fiction at University of California, Irvine.

BRETT HALL JONES has been the Executive Director of the Community of Writers for 18 years. Before that, she was director of catalogue

photography for the San Francisco Auction House, Butterfield & Butterfield. She continues to be a photographer, focusing lately on author photos.

MAXIMA KAHN is a poet, fiction writer and essayist. She teaches workshops on writing and creativity in Nevada County, California. She attended the Writers Workshop in 2006 and the Poetry Workshop in 2007.

SANDRA SCOFIELD is the author of seven novels; a memoir, *Occasions of Sin*; and a craft book for writers, *The Scene Book* (Penguin Books, 2007). She has been a finalist for the National Book Award and won a fiction prize from the Texas Institute of Letters. She teaches in the Pine Manor College MFA program. www.sandrascofield.com

You Might Want to Consider . . .

These magazines are edited by Squaw Valley Staff or Participants and/or they expressly encourage submissions from The Community of Writers. Be sure to mention your participation at Squaw.

CANARY: Gail Entrekin, editor. www.hippocketpress.com/canary.cfm

ECOTONE: Ben George (01,99), editor. www.ecotonejournal.com

UNTITLED COUNTRY REVIEW: Scot Siegel (07) editor. untitledcountry.blogspot.com

FAULTLINE: UC Irvine’s literary journal. www.humanities.uci.edu/faultline

GREEN MOUNTAINS REVIEW: Leslie Daniels (staff), fiction editor. greenmountainsreview.jsc.vsc.edu

MANZANITA: Monika Rose, editor. www.manzanitacalifornia.org

NARRATIVE MAGAZINE, Tom Jenks, Carol Edgarian, editors (staff). <http://narrativemagazine.com>

NIGHT TRAIN, Alicia Gifford (04), fiction editor. www.nighttrainmagazine.com

ORANGE COAST REVIEW: www.orangecoastreview.com

PING PONG: an international journal of arts and letters published by the Henry Miller Library. Maria Garcia Teutsch (01), editor in chief. www.henrymiller.org/ping_pong.html

SANTA MONICA REVIEW, Andrew Tonkovich (staff), editor. www.smc.edu/sm_review

TIN HOUSE, Rob Spillman (staff), editor; Elissa Schappell (staff); editor at large, Lee Montgomery (98), executive editor. www.tinhouse.com

WATER~STONE REVIEW, Hamline University. www.waterstonereview.com

If you edit a literary journal and would like to be included in future lists, let us know!

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