



WRITERSTALK

Volume 24
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April 2016

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club™

APRIL SPEAKER: KEVIN FISHER-PAULSON

RECAP: MARCH, KILLIAN MCRAE

Memoir: Honoring Your Story with Kevin Fisher-Paulson

by Jenni Everidge

Growing up, I never really read biographies. I figured the best stories were the ones that people made up, not the ones about the people who had lived. I had enough of that in my history book, so the only biographies I ever read were about Presidents and the major thinkers of the 19th century.

One day, I was in a bookstore and saw a biography about a singer I knew. I read it in one sitting on a bean bag chair in the children's section. I picked up another about a talk show host; yet another about a famous Irish author and teacher, Frank McCourt: *Angela's Ashes*. Soon enough, I was reading books about the wife of a soldier, and about a homeless woman who became a lawyer.

I was reading the life stories of regular people. I realized that biographies were about more than just people who had lived: they were about people who were still living. They could be about anyone, and the way to get me into their lives wasn't to recognize them from TV, but to care about the life they were living.

If you are writing a memoir, you should tune in. How has your life impacted the world? How did you expect it to move the mountain in your horizon, or sound in the laughter of your children? How are you making memories that others will want to read about?



Kevin Fisher-Paulson

Until five years ago, I had never even heard the word memoir. Now I can't go one day without it popping up somewhere. I'm positively saturated with it, and yet I remain intrigued. Who are the people who tell stories of their youth, or about addictions they overcame, or the special way they're acquainted with the world?

In April, join me as we meet Kevin Fisher-Paulson, who studied writing at the University of Notre Dame and wrote a touching and humorous memoir about his journey to fight for his family. He will talk to us about the importance of honoring our stories and how to make our memoirs matter.

Kevin's poems and short stories have appeared in *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Sentinel*, *Amethyst*, *RFD*, *Suburban Wilderness*, *Oberon*, and *The James White Review*. His plays and monologues have been produced in the ODC Summerfest, Theater Rhinoceros, and The National AIDS Theater Festival. His memoir, *A Song for Lost Angels*, was a finalist in the Benjamin Franklin Awards as well as the National Independent Booksellers Award. He contributes irregularly to the National Public Radio Perspective series, and his blogs can be found at GayswithKids.com as well as Twopennypress.org.

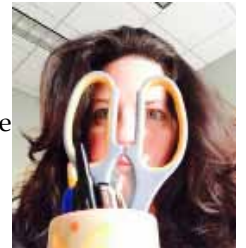
I hope to see you all at Harry's Hofbrau, 6 p.m. Monday, April 11. — WT

Producing Your Auditory Voice

by Chess Desalls

Part of the fun of publishing is having your words read by others and finding out how the manuscript translates to the voice inside a reader's head. As writers, many of us have recited our work at an Open Mic or similar venue before an audience. That, too, gives the work a voice—one more intimately connected to the author's written words.

Our March guest speaker, Killian McRae, mentioned yet another voice: the magic that happens when text is professionally recorded for sale. Audiobook production gains a new voice for the author's writing and the marketing of his work.



Killian McRae

Killian McRae is an author who transitioned from opera singing to the spoken arts. She discussed how audiobooks provide a new experience of e-book and print editions. The reader gets immersed in the story in a different way. Consequently, audiobook production embraces another medium for authors to get their books out. Some readers won't read a book unless it's in audio format. This pool of readers includes those who don't have time to sit and read a book, individuals learning English as a second language, and the visually impaired or others who require adaptations. Readers don't only follow authors; they follow their favorite narrators.

If the above reasons don't excite you

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President's Perspective

by Patrick McQueen
President, South Bay Writers

Honoring Great Writers and Great Poets



This club has introduced me to a number of amazing writers whom I deeply respect; from those who have addressed South Bay Writers during the monthly dinner meetings and workshops to those for whom I beta read and with whom I dine regularly. It has been my pleasure to experience you and your work, and I am looking forward to showcasing samples of your work in the anthology we're hoping to publish from your prompt submissions. In this space, though, I would like to tell you about authors you aren't likely to meet in our club.

In the last edition of *WritersTalk*, you read about Donnelle McGee, my creative writing instructor and author of *Ghost Man*, a novel, and *Naked*, a poetry collection. A few weeks ago, Donnelle introduced his class to another brilliant poet, Robert Ricardo Reese.

Robert came to the front of the class with a story about the racism he endured throughout his youth and ultimately finding family in gang life. For a moment, I thought people with tragic or adventurous lives make great memoirists, and I settled in my seat expecting all evening's readings to be about Robert. Instead, he surprised me with an evening describing his commitment to telling the stories of Vietnam veterans

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And now — the anthology reminder

Be sure to submit a vignette (20 to 2,000 words) from your interesting early life or from your amazing creative brain to prompts@southbaywriters.com

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South Bay Branch
www.southbaywriters.com

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SBW Mission

Educating writers of all levels of expertise in the craft of writing and in the marketing of their work.

Join Us

We have a membership category that fits you. Dues are \$45 per year plus a one-time \$20 initiation fee. Dual membership: \$25. Contact Membership Chair, Sally Milnor, or sign up online at southbaywriters.com



WritersTalk

is the monthly newsletter of the South Bay Branch of the California Writers Club.

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Submissions

Members of the South Bay Writers Club are encouraged to submit their creative works for publication in *WritersTalk*. Please prepare your work as carefully as you would for an agent. All submissions will be copyedited. The Managing Editor decides which submissions to publish.

Submission deadline is the 15th of the month.

Suggested word limits are not absolute; shorter preferred. Electronic submissions should be text or attached MS Word file sent to newsletter@southbaywriters.com. Use Times New Roman 12-font; no tabs; no colors; no page breaks.

Send graphics separately as jpg files.

Anything Goes—Almost (300 words)

News Items (400 words)

Letters to the Editor (300 words)

Creative Works

Short Fiction (1200 words)
Memoir (1200 words)
Poetry (300 words)
Essay (900 words)

Member Achievement and News:

newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Announcements and Advertisements

newsletter@southbaywriters.com

An announcement is information of interest and value to writers that does not provide direct economic benefit to its originator and is published free of charge.

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Our Mission

Encouraging writers at all levels of expertise to hone their skills in the craft of writing

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Words from the Editor

by Marjorie Bicknell Johnson
Managing Editor



Haiku: Find the Essence

Writers need to find the essence of their books.

What do you tell someone who asks what your book is about? If you tell him the whole story, not only will he fall asleep but also he will have no reason to read your book. You need an answer that engages your listener. Your answer is so important that entire writers' workshops have focused on how to catch the ear of an agent with an "elevator pitch," a one-minute description of your book. Your answer must distill your book's essence.

Poets know how to find the essence. Writing poetry forces you to find the essence, and short poetry, especially haiku, forces you to find the perfect words. The most common haiku has seventeen syllables: five syllables in the first line, seven in the next, and five in the last, with no specific rhyme or meter.

I reasoned that elevator pitch is to novel as haiku is to epic poem. I would try to distill a novel into seventeen syllables.

Forgive me for using my own novels as examples. *Bird Watcher* is about a pilot's struggle to find the thief who stole his Cessna from Palo Alto Airport. As haiku,

Cessna stolen, why
chase Palo Alto airplane
catch terrorist thief

In *Jaguar Princess*, Chanla Pesh is a descendant of a Mayan king. She learns to read what the ancients have written on the stones in the ruin where she lives. She curses a knife-wielding looter to death by crocodile, recovers the stolen artifacts, and wins a college scholarship to study archaeology. More succinctly,

Princess Chanla Pesh
reads Mayan stones, stops looters,
wins college and fame

In *Lost Jade of the Maya*, Chanla Pesh travels to Guatemala to search for the source of ancient Mayan jade. Greedy crime lords want that jade; her life, and that of her seven-year-old daughter, is in peril. In seventeen syllables,

Where is Mayan jade
greedy crime lords want to know
Chanla Pesh finds it

Granted, these are not great haiku. While they follow the seventeen-syllable format, they lack the perfect word choice that captures a feeling or image, and a classical haiku doesn't tell a story. However, the exercise of writing "haiku" will force you to answer, what is this book really about?

Writing these "haiku" forced me to consider how to write a poem. A poem must paint a picture, or play a melody, or evoke emotion. One needs to learn to analyze the colors of thought. My hat is off to our poets.

I'm even less qualified to write about writing poetry. However, this is our April poetry edition, so I found something especially for our poets, "Polish Your Poetry," which appears on page 13. — WT

April is National Poetry Month

View from the Board

by Sheena Arora



Sheena Arora
Contributing Editor

On Tuesday, March 8, nine South Bay Writers board members met in San Jose: President Patrick McQueen, Vice-President Jenni Everidge, Secretary Sherrie Johnson, Treasurer Bill Baldwin, Member-at-Large Sheena Arora, Hospitality Chair Carole Taub, Publicity Chair Linda Myro Judd, Newsletter Editor Marjorie Johnson, and Membership Chair Sally Milnor. Kymberlie Ingalls, Carolyn Donnell, Alfred Jan, and Valerie Lee also participated.

- Amanda McTigue's writing workshop "The IT Factor: Amplifying Your Voice As A Writer," is around the corner – April 16. The SBW workshop includes breakfast and lunch! Register soon to reserve your spot.
- Gear-up for the second round of deadlines for the SBW club anthology. Remember to submit your Vignette before April 30. Check the SBW website www.southbaywriters.com for details.
- Contact us if you are interested in the Web-editor's position at SBW. You will act as a conduit between the SBW club and the webmaster. Email Patrick McQueen at pres@southbaywriters.com
- Join us in saving our planet. Sign up to receive your *WritersTalk* via email. Contact Linda Judd in person or email at sbw.publicity@gmail.com.
- Meeting programs: May 9, Bob Balmanno: Set up a Meet and Greet; June 13, LeeAnne Krusemark: Manuscript Formatting and Submission.
- The SBW board is planning our yearly summer picnic on July 10. Save the date and your appetite!

The next SBW board meeting will be at 7 pm on Tuesday, April 5, at Lyon's Restaurant, 4233 Moorpark Avenue, San Jose. Our board meetings are open to all SBW club members.

We're on a roll! Lyon Restaurant's comfort accommodated three visitors, and one new face. Kymberlie, Carolyn, Alfred, and Valerie – thank you for joining us. You brightened a rainy evening! We want to hear your comments and concerns. Find us at Harry's or email us at pres@southbaywriters.com – WT

Italian Women's Memoirs

by Pam Oliver-Lyons, polpap@prodigy.net

Teachers needed! This note gives a tentative outline of the Women Only: Italian American Memoir. Please pass my name and this information to those you think might be good teachers.

The first event, Saturday, May 21, is under the umbrella of an ongoing series, "The Italian Family in Conversation." May 21, 1 – 3:30 pm, marks the kickoff of the offshoot of this series, the Women Only: Italian American Memoir (IAM) Program.

The purpose of the IAM program is to motivate women to write their memoirs and to know the value of their own stories, told in their voices; more specifically, giving public value to the culture, her-story, and language of their experiences. The event on May 21st will be in a speakers' panel to discuss the historical importance of women's memoirs, including language (Italian and dialects) as well as cultural aspects.

The overall intention is for each participant to write one short memoir and to gain writing skills to help them to put together an anthology and to read their stories at the Italian American Family Festa 2016, to be held August 27 – 28 in the History Park, Kelly Park, San Jose.

The first panel presentation using the Italian American Family in Conversation will be voluntary; all later workshops will have stipends. This program is now in the planning stages, so please give comments and make suggestions.

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New Members

by Sally A. Milnor



Sally Milnor

I am happy to introduce our five newest members.

Suman Ganapathy joined us online.

She's writes poetry, short stories, novels and nonfiction. She says, "I love everything connected with the human condition. I love art, literature, dance, music, science and history – anything connected with people and the world. I also love to volunteer. I volunteered extensively for the PTA and the schools in Cupertino." Suman was a volunteer writing tutor for four years. Her email: sumanmitraganapathy@gmail.com.

Daniel Lee Jarvis writes poetry. He says, "To me, poetry is more than art, but it's an art I want to master. It's a part of my journey towards self-knowledge and spiritual maturity. Poetry is my vehicle for expressing the mundane and transcendent as I experience it." In addition to his writing, Daniel is a Luddite and a bibliophile who enjoys computers, hiking, history, yoga, the esoteric and the wild.

Pat Murphy writes science fiction romance. Pat does iPhone programming, is proficient at iBookAuthor, which he is willing to demonstrate to others who are interested. Pat spent three years writing *Prophecy*, available on iBooks and Kindle. His email is pmurphyjam@gmail.com.

Ram Muthiah writes novels. He says, "I work as a technical manager in a start-up. I am passionate about technology and writing. I spend my time in learning new courses and martial arts. Recently I signed up for a class to learn acting from Kevin Spacey. My debut novel, *Tell My Dad*, will be released on June 17 – right on time for Father's Day. I have written this story based on true events that happened in Southern California; the story is set in the Bay Area."

Karen Thomas is interested in writing fiction, and she heard about our Club through Meetup. Karen does websites and graphic design professionally. Her website is www.clickactivate.com; email address, karen@clickactivate.com.

To our new members: We hope your membership brings you inspiration and enjoyment. – WT

Book Announcements

Living with Twelve Men ... a mother in training

by Betty Auchard

A day after their wedding in 1949, Denny Auchard whisks his new bride Betty to the boys' dorm on a college campus in Nebraska, where they are to serve as houseparents and role models. The strict church-based campus prompts the young wife to act smarter than she thinks she is and holier than she knows she is. Coming from a down-to-earth family that indulged in much of what is forbidden by the Christian college (including drinking, smoking, cussing, and dancing) requires that she smooth out a lot of rough edges. In the process, Betty learns lessons as a surrogate mother to eleven high-spirited young men that will prepare her for the real thing. —WT



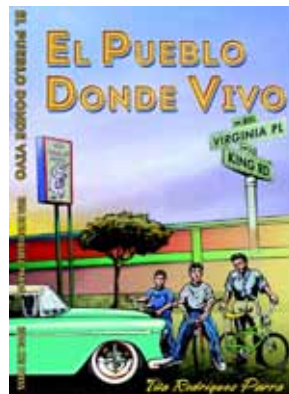
The Town I Live In

by Tita Rodriquez Parra (Mildred Parra)

Tita was born and raised in San Jose, California. Her book is named after a popular song from the '60s by McKinley Mitchell, her favorite song because the words are exactly what she felt in her teens. The song says, "The town I live in is lonely, it's so lonely till I have to cry, and I'm not ashamed to tell you that I cry."

But it wasn't the town that was so lonely—it was the way Tita always felt in her teenage years, the '60s and '70s. Her stories are about her parents divorcing; spending a night in jail; dealing with drugs and peer pressure; living with her father's drunkenness; having a step-father who picked on her; getting into a serious car accident—going over a cliff at Mt. Hamilton. The main story is about being kidnapped at the age of fifteen. She tells other childhood stories and shares happy memories, too.

Tita believes that many teens share many of the experiences she writes about. Her stories are meant to help youth get through these troubled times. The book will soon be translated into Spanish. —WT



Blog Posts: SBW Authors and Books

by Linda Judd

Author: C. S. Donnell

Book: *Blood Will Tell*

Website: <https://carolyndonnell.wordpress.com/>

Excerpt from interview, February, 24, 2016:

Q: How did you happen to come up with this story?

A: I went looking for my birth mother, found her, and then searched for my birth father. I discovered that I was a war baby. I became interested in DNA and did a couple of DNA studies, leading to my questions about how people are connected and how you can know who is really connected to whom and what those relationships are.

Blog Post: Poem on Helen

by Leslie Hoffman

My submission, "A Girl & Her Horse," to the April *WritersTalk* was published March 4 by a Las Vegas literary magazine: *Friday Night Special* on Helen: A Literary Magazine's blog.

You might enjoy viewing the video Helen created to accompany my poem: <http://www.helenpresents.com/fns-girl-horse-leslie-hoffman/>

I didn't know about the video, so it was a wonderful surprise when I opened the March 4 blog post.

Ed: With SBW's current interest in social media and blogs, this shows another possibility: put a video on your blog. —WT

A Girl & Her Horse

I watched from a distance
girl mount bareback
a horse called Moon.

Spine straight, blonde hair flowing
black mane billowing
platinum and ebony
resolute, vigilant
nostrils flared.

If I were a horse
I'd be you, Moon,
her words rode on the wind.
Moon whinnied
her fluid gait uninterrupted.

Rider and mount challenged to trust
each other, inner-selves
their collective power.

—Leslie E. Hoffman

Q: Who is your favorite author? Favorite book?

A: Agatha Christie is my favorite author and her book, *Sleeping Murder*. For *Deeper Colors*, Nora Roberts' *Born in Fire* influenced me.

Q: What is your favorite part of writing?

A: Researching. For *Deeper Colors*, I found an artist on Facebook who painted just like my character—I found Genevieve's *doppelganger*. On that same search, I found the story's cathedral—in Perigueux, France.

With regards to *Blood Will Tell*, I discovered that Basque DNA has whole cults built around the bloodline.

Q: Do you have any quirky writing habits?

A: Quirky? Well, I eat nachos when I write.

Read more at

WritersJacket: <https://lindyjudd.wordpress.com> —WT

Volunteering is Value-added to Your Life, Business, and Health

by ArLyne Diamond, Ph.D.

In this busy and stressful era, it is all too easy to hunker down and pay attention to nothing but our daily tasks. It is a choice many of us make all too often. We work and work and work without a change of pace. We need activities that make us feel good, that allow us to meet other people and if we are employers or managers, to give our employees a sense of pride in us, our company and themselves.

We join associations, some of which have paid professional staff, and so we participate as audiences to the speakers. Unfortunately, too many of us treat our smaller non-profits in the same manner. BUT, these organizations run on volunteer work exclusively and really need us to step forward and serve.

In the past Americans had been noted for their volunteerism. Now, we expect the government or some magical “them” — “the other” — to do the work necessary for us to enjoy the benefits of the associations to which we belong.

I’m reminded of a quote I used in my *Board of Director’s Training Book*, which bears repeating today:

These Americans are the most peculiar people in the world. You’ll not believe it when I tell you how they behave. In a local community in their country a citizen may conceive of some need, which is not being met. What does he do? He goes across the street and discusses it with his neighbor. Then what happens? A committee comes into being and then the committee begins to function on behalf of the need. You won’t believe this, but it’s true, all of this is done without reference to any bureaucrat. All of this is done by private citizens on their own initiative!

Americans of all ages, conditions, and all dispositions consistently form associations to give entertainment, to found seminaries, to build inns, to construct churches, to diffuse books, to send out missionaries.

The health of a democratic society may be measured by the quality of function performed by private citizens.

— Alex deTocqueville.

It is sad that in recent years we volunteer less and expect the paid professionals (or government employees) to do it all for us. This change has caused a loss of community involvement, a reduced sense of belonging and inhibited social contact.

Volunteering adds value to your life. Not only do you add value to your community, your nation, your pet causes, your industry and yourself — you enhance your professional reputation, your networks, your skills and in the business world, what employees think of you and the company in which you work.

What is value-added? Clearly, it is getting more than you bargained for; more than the basics of the product and service; more than just waking up in the morning, going to work, coming home and watching TV. In life, and in professional development, giving additional value is the significant difference between those who find happiness and succeed and those who don’t.

One of the most valuable lessons you can learn is to build in time to volunteer your services to organizations important to

you. By volunteering, you afford yourself the ability to tackle new problems, meet new people, test your new skills, and network with others who get to see you in action. It is a growth experience, a networking opportunity, and, of course, a way to feel good about yourself.

It is also one of the most important vehicles by which America continues to be a free nation. When we voluntarily take care of our communities and those in need, the government doesn’t need to step in and intervene.

When you voluntarily help educate our children through after school activities, you provide them with an opportunity to expand their horizons. When we voluntarily support our religious institutions, no one group can dictate which religion is the “proper” one for our country. When we volunteer our services to the political party of our choice, we help to strengthen its ability to represent our beliefs in government.

When we volunteer our services to our professional organizations, we help them flourish, we help in the growth of our profession, and we help support the continued growth of those in our chosen field. If we don’t volunteer in organizations that rely on volunteerism, we run the risk of having that organization fold. They need us as we need them.

Volunteering in our professional organizations is one of the most important ways we have to guarantee our career enhancement as well as the overall enhancement of the excellence of our profession.

And, if you want to view it from a totally self-centered point of view — what better way do you know to make yourself visible to your peers than by volunteering in your professional organization?

By volunteering you get known for the quality of your talents. By volunteering you get to be seen in a way that is richer than thousands of dollars of advertising. By volunteering you rub elbows with people you’d never get to meet otherwise, including people who might become very valuable to you professionally.

For all these reasons, giving yourself in a value-added manner to your community, your pet causes and your professional associations gives back to you a hundred fold, as well as it helps to strengthen the organizations to which you belong and preserve the freedom of this country.

(Portions of this article appeared in the Silicon Valley Engineering Council newsletter, January 1997.) — WT

Nominations Open: SBW Board

by ArLyne Diamond, Chairman, Nominating Committee

South Bay Writers holds its elections in June. All current board positions will be available for the candidates you suggest. You may nominate yourself. Please provide the following information about your nominees:

Name and Position for which person is being nominated; that person’s **Phone number** and **e-mail address**. Why you are nominating that person; skills/experience that nominee has relevant to the position being sought; any other information that might be useful to the nominating committee.

Please e-mail your nominations and supporting information to ArLyne Diamond, ArLyne@DiamondAssociates.net — WT

South Bay Writers Present...

A WRITERS WORKSHOP

The IT Factor

Amplifying Your Voice As A Writer

With Amanda McTigue

SATURDAY, APRIL 16

9:00 AM – Noon

Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Ave., San Jose
with Light Continental Breakfast and Lunch



Amanda McTigue

"We hear it everywhere these days, certainly from agents, editors and publishers: what matters most in writing is voice. Voice trumps all other forms of artistry. Indeed, for many readers, it's the why of reading.

But what the heck is it? And how the heck do we create it?

This hands-on workshop explores techniques for finding your writer's voice. We'll consider the "what" and experiment with the "how." Through conversation and short writing exercises, we'll investigate ways in which focus begets voice, playing with prompts designed to help you open and amplify that sensibility through which your writing is most powerfully expressed."

Amanda McTigue's debut novel *Going to Solace* was named a Best Read of 2012 by public radio KRCB's literary program "Word by Word." Her short story "I Won't Tell" was anthologized by *The Writing Disorder*. Last year, the journal *Literally Stories* cited a new short story "You Don't Say No to Ituango" as an Editor's Pick. Amanda's works for the stage have been produced in Carnegie Hall, the Minnesota Opera and Sonoma County's Green Music Center. Amanda did her undergraduate work at Yale in the 70s as a member of a small-but-mighty minority, the fourth class of Yalies who also happened to be women. More recently, she's an alum of both the Squaw Valley and Napa Valley writers' conferences. Amanda just returned from the remote Sierra Maestra mountains of Cuba where she was researching her next novel, tentatively titled *Monkey Bottom*. This fall she will return to Sonoma State University to stage Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute*.

WORKSHOP AGENDA

Saturday, April 16th, 2016
9am - 12pm

Doors Open - 8:00 am

Registration - 8:30 am
with Light Continental
Breakfast

WORKSHOP - 9:00 am

Break - 10:15-10:30 am

Q&A - 11:30 am

Conclusion - 12:00 Noon
with Lunch

REGULAR PRICING

\$30 members / \$40 nonmembers

March 1st through April 16th
\$45 members / \$55 nonmembers

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www.southbaywriters.com
or

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Note: On your check, include your name, address, phone, and email

Recap: Auditory Voice

Continued from Page 1

about audiobook production, consider this: there's more growth in this market than for e-books, providing authors with exposure to a new or expanded audience. "By entering this market, you'll be competing with fewer people," McRae said. "It builds another layer onto your marketing platform—to reach and entice people." The profit margins are also much higher.

McRae explained the process of creating an audiobook, including tips for self-production and matters to consider when choosing a professional narrator. Quality recording is key. Authors can make audiobooks themselves; this method is cheaper but intimidating for the tech-shy, and the process is time and labor intensive. Authors must also obtain the appropriate equipment and editing software, as well as storage with the capacity for large files.

Hiring out the work gains professional results with less effort on the author's part—for a higher price. McRae suggested ACX, an Amazon owned company, as the best method of production. ACX distributes to Audible, Amazon, and iTunes. The benefit is a professionally-produced audiobook. But authors should know that they'll be locked into a seven-year contract with no price control.

Whether an author chooses to give his work an auditory voice to make money or to build an audio platform, McRae provided tips for getting started. If you have more detailed questions, get in touch with her via her website at killianmcrac.com. —WT

Honoring Great Writers and Great Poets

Continued from Page 2

whose lives were destroyed or never the same again because of the war. He used a quote I will not easily forget:

"A poet's job is to remember; to remember for those forgotten, or for those soon to be forgotten."

Robert is a man who has every reason to talk about himself, to tell his story, to wallow in it, to marinate in it, to draw other people into it. I was excited to find out he wants to write about others instead. He sounded obsessed in his studies to learn about other people. He was committed to using his words—his energy—to tell their story. He adds value to the lives of those without voice by giving them voice. He adds value to his listener's lives by being the voices we never would have heard without him.

The awesome thing about the South Bay Writers Club and Donnelle's class is meeting people I want to write about. I have been, as many of us can be, a self-centered sloth in my own writing. Since getting involved in this club and attending this class, though, I have met several authors like you—and Robert Ricardo Reese—for whom I am honored to step out of the spotlight with arms outstretched toward you, introducing others to you, that they might join me in giving you the attention you deserve.

Please join me in appreciating the value great poets like Donnelle McGee and Robert Ricardo Reese bring to their subjects and audiences, just as they join me in honoring you for doing the same. —WT



Marjorie Johnson, Karen Franzenburg, and Patrick McQueen

Poetry Awards from *WritersTalk*

Three poets from South Bay Writers whose work appeared in *WritersTalk*, Fall 2015, were honored with the Critics Choice Award. They each received a certificate and a gift card for Barnes & Noble.

This award was given in lieu of the fall *WritersTalk* Challenge award for poetry. Writers whose work appeared in *WritersTalk* in 2015 were strongly encouraged to submit to the Literary Division, San Mateo County Fair. Contest, deadline April 1. Details appeared in March *WritersTalk*. The San Mateo County Fair Literary Stage runs June 11 – 18, with events for authors all week.

On March 14, 2016, the *WritersTalk* Critic's Choice Poetry Award was given to:

- Carolyn Donnell for her poem, "Tango," *WritersTalk*, August 2015;
- Karen Franzenburg for her poem, "Ode to Cecil," *WritersTalk*, October 2015;
- Karen Hartley for her poem, "There's Something About a Train," *WritersTalk*, August 2015.

Karen Hartley was unable to attend on March 14. —WT



Marjorie Johnson, Carolyn Donnell, and Patrick McQueen

Photos by Kymberlie Ingalls

Audio Books



Page created by Sheena Arora

Picture Gallery March 14, 2016

Photos by Carolyn Donnell

On One Origin of Poetic Art

by Stephen C. Wetlesen

Elegant rhythmic language itself is a form of visual art.

On a deep and subtle level, I am not a poet.

I am a frustrated visual painter who renders what I see on a canvas only with great difficulty in such venues as life model drawing sessions at art galleries. Therefore, I have developed poetic art as an alternative means and vehicle to express my visual aesthetic.

I strive to transform what my eyes see or sights my inner mind imagines, into elegant rhythmic language set forth in lines, pauses, and cadences.

It sounds childishly simple, but in fact it takes many years to master. In all humility, I do not feel I have mastered poetic art yet, though I invented it. There is always much more to learn, study, and do.

One of my several inspirations was an article I casually read in the *San Francisco Chronicle* decades ago; I foolishly failed to save it and have been unable to locate it since. Readers will simply have to take my word for its authenticity.

It seems researchers at San Francisco State University wanted to learn the difference between the minds of visual artists as opposed to minds of non-artists. One factor that struck them was the difference in language used by artists versus others.

Therefore, they organized two groups of several people: a large group of visual artists and a control group of non-artists. Both groups were transported several miles south of San Francisco to the rocky beaches that dot the San Mateo County coast. They took both groups to a gigantic granite boulder outcropping, as such are common in that region. Each group's members were asked to describe what they observed.

The non-artist control group used prosaic expressions such as "a big rock." The artists, on the other hand, used detailed language such as "flecks, specks, indentations, striations, mounds, lines, veins, projections and protrusions, here and there" as though to map the structure inch by inch. Also, there were discussions of variations of color, shade, shape, and texture. It was concluded that visual artists speak a different language.

Intrigued by this research, I strove hard over the years to develop and organize a painterly language to use in poetic cadences. A friend of mine called my finished product "haikuish." Indeed Japanese haiku do fascinate me, so I named my language "Haikuish" in his honor.

Haikuish — visual or painterly artistic language — is the basis of much of what I do. Like haiku, the rudiments of Haikuish can be taught to children in an hour or less. It's simple to learn the basics, but in practice this language takes many years to learn. Though I gave Haikuish birth, I still am not fluent.

In fact, the "use vocabulary" of most people is shockingly low. At best, most of us use only 20,000 words commonly in writing or speech, while hundreds of thousands of words exist in the *Oxford Dictionary*. It is said that Shakespeare had a "use vocabulary" of 50,000 words and coined new words as well. However, I'm no Shakespeare.

Off the Shelf

— Edie Matthews



John believes in "show, don't tell."

In any event, poetic art functions not as literature but as a form of painting that uses visual language, "Haikuish," as its brushstroke.

Yosa Buson (1700s), one of Japan's Three Great Haiku Masters along with Basho and Issa, was also a painter. His haiku certainly reflect his fascination with the tiny details of the visual, especially vivid color. Buson might be called the first poetic artist.

I will close with a beginner's list of Haikuish language terms of visual poetic art. The aspiring poetic artist should master these terms and insert them into rhythmic language to paint word pictures. This 100-word list is meant to be a nucleus and kernel of what beginners need to "see" to get started. For beginners, the permutations are in the thousands, and I have not even mastered it myself!

Beginner's Nuggets of Visual Art Language:

Artistic, atypical, awkward, balletic, bridge (verb), carnival, celestial, cerebral, chromatic, classical, close-up, colorful, contrast, cosmic, crooked, curiosity, dancelike, deep, delight, dervish, disparity, doodle, dreamlike, eccentric, effortless, elongate, ethereal, fanciful, fantasia, figures, focus, fusion, glide, graceful, happenings, imagine, incongruous, inconstant, indistinct, intense, interlude, interplay, interval, join, jottings, junction, juxtapose, kaleidoscope, keen, lanterns, lightshow, link, marine, match, merge, mirth, misfit, moon viewing, murky, neon, nexus, nightscape, nocturne, oceanic, oddball, offbeat, otherworldly, painterly, patterns, pictures, portraits, prelude, prismatic, quirky, screwball, shapes, sights, silly, sketch, snapshots, space, stretch, string, swirl, symphonic, tableau, tantalize, tidbits, tranquil, twisted, unearthly, ungainly, vibrant, vignettes, vivid, wacky, whimsical, windstorm, and zany.

The Final Seven Creative Fantasia Words: We can revolutionize our society and culture just by common use of the following short list of seven words: Artistic, Balletic, Dancelike, Deep, Graceful, Painterly, and Quirky. — WT

Six Words Plus:

A Town Like Alice, by Nevil Shute (1950)

by *Meredy Amyx*

Six-Word Review

Resourceful young woman meets challenges boldly.

Expanded Review

Can a story be warm without being sentimental? Can it be sweet without being saccharine or cloying?

Nevil Shute's 1950 novel *A Town Like Alice* answers those questions with a resounding yes.

Can it also be rugged without being harsh, emotional without being manipulative, unhurried without being boring?

Yes, yes, yes.

How about succeeding as a novel without having a villain—obstacles, but no villain? Being driven by challenges but not conflict? Using a first-person narrator who has little involvement in the action and does a fair amount of telling rather than showing?

Absolutely yes.

I don't know what the prevailing wisdom of writing workshops and critique groups was in the 1940s, or even if there was such a thing then; but I take considerable pleasure in seeing this wonderful, stirring, memorable novel work on every level without adhering to the formulas and conventions that are being drilled into hopeful would-be authors today by instructors who are often only repeating what they were told in their turn. Speakers who stand up and pontificate before a group of amateur writers hungry for publication success, when all they themselves have to their credit is a single self-published novel that on inspection desperately needed a rafter-rattling edit, recite received doctrine as if they were priests delivering the teachings of a long-departed master to a congregation of acolytes.

This absorbing novel brings us Jean Paget, a capable and deeply likeable young woman who would be unjustly served by the condescending clichés that spring inevitably to mind: spunky, plucky, indomitable, and the like. What we need for Jean is not adjectives but verbs. Attempts. Persists. Overcomes. Accomplishes.

As a member of a group of English women and children taken prisoner by Japanese forces in Malaya during World War II, Jean confronts devastating ordeals and learns to survive. Back in England, she receives an unexpected legacy from a distant relative and decides to return to Malaya. Her further journey takes her far into the desolate outback of Australia, where she begins a new life. The narrator's evident affection for her and concern for her well-being shape her account of her experiences into a warm and moving story about people you'd like to know.

This is not a perfect novel nor a literary masterpiece. For me, it doesn't have to be in order to rate five stars. But it does have to merit a sincere "well done" by as objective a measure as I can apply, and it also must be entirely satisfying. It is.

In addition to the character of Jean, both admirable and believable, I found the depiction of life in the incomprehensibly im-

mense spaces of wild Australia fascinating. Shute emigrated with his family from England to Australia in 1950 and spent the last ten years of his life there. His descriptions of the country and the people sound compellingly authentic.

The one difficulty I had with the novel is a product of its place, time, and culture: racism is taken for granted and not questioned. Terms now considered racially offensive are used casually, and the low regard for nonwhite races among the white populations is represented without apology. I don't blame Shute for reflecting what he knew as he knew it, but I still find those elements hard to read.

Rating: 5 stars out of 5.

[This review originally appeared on LibraryThing.com on July 5, 2015.] — WT

How to Write a Book Review

by *WT Staff*

So you have published your book. Now it needs reviews, and so do the books of other writers. Your opinion is important—don't be afraid to voice it in a book review: a critical analysis of a published work that assesses its strengths and weaknesses.

A book review is *not a book report*. Resist the temptation to summarize the character, plot, theme, and setting. Instead, give the genre and intended audience and tell your readers whether the book is interesting, thorough, original, and worth reading.

Before writing a book review, you must, of course, read the book in its entirety. Make quick notes as you read.

If the book is nonfiction, ask yourself, "Is it original, well researched and well written?"

For a work of fiction, ask yourself, "Are the characters well rounded and believable? Does the plot twist, turn, and thicken, or does it plod along? Does the book address universal themes?"

Make notes about the author's writing style: Is it irreverent or dry? Fast paced or excruciatingly detailed? Potential readers will want to know. As a reviewer, you must tell them.

Get to the point. When you begin writing, make your thesis known in the first few lines of your review. Will your review be favorable, or do you plan to advise your readers to spend their money elsewhere?

Be sure to give the book's complete title and its publisher. Include brief biographical information about the author at the beginning of your review. Is this his first book? How has his background qualified him to write about this particular subject? If you know the author, do not mention that fact; your review must give an impartial picture of the book's merit.

Be succinct. A book review usually has fewer than 1,000 words. Use a natural, informal tone to communicate your impressions and opinions of the author's work. Always edit and proofread your review multiple times.

NOTE: If you review a book for Amazon, don't publish the review unless you can honestly give it at least four stars. If you find a book of particular merit, please share your review with us at *WritersTalk*. — WT

The Odd-Ball Dancer

For forty years he dances, dances,
Sweeps round the hall to irregular rhythms
Of Balkan music, leading or following
The line of dancers
On Friday nights or off on trips
To dance workshops.
Five-four, seven-eight, nine-eight,
Even, at times, twenty-five-sixteen,
Convincing his relatives the record is skipping,
Puzzling them with leaps and squats and slaps.
They wonder why he doesn't dance the polka.

– William Albert Baldwin

Heidi

When I look into your soul
Is it surprising that I want you,
Want you with all my being,
Want you with all my heart;
Because your goodness is so evident,
Because your power is so clear.

– William Albert Baldwin



View from Klamath Falls A Chain of Haiku

High semi desert.
Ethereal brown features.
Distant white Shasta.

Volcanic plateau.
Far south, pure white cone beckons.
Contrast with scrub lands.

Glass water marshes.
Aquatic reed heron flocks.
Dry range paradox.

Mount Shasta ice cones.
Does some lost kingdom live there?
Local myths and dreams.

– Stephen C. Wetlesen

Distance

The distance between here, then and now
soon becomes a moment passed
the present form
of thought acted upon –
I blink and it's gone,
slipped like silk through the
membranes of my mind.

~ j mutz



This I Wish

Not this pain
I wish
For you
Not this
But bliss
I wish
For you
Not pain
that tears
that sears
Not pain
that burns
that yearns
Not pain
that hurts
and hurts again
Not loss
Not tears
Not fears
Not this
I wish
For you
But peace
Surcease
of sorrow

This I wish.

– Penelope Anne Cole

Family

When I speak of ties
that bind us together
I do not solely mean that
which flows in our veins,
but of those strings that
tie us to the heart of the matter.
Strung on the tiny web
of truth and affection
we are a tapestry,
tightly woven together
within Love's knotty embrace.

~ j mutz

Combat Boots

I hear the crack of the gun,
the shot fired
the race started
the gauntlet thrown
and I race to pull on my combat boots.

I wish for a musket and fantasize a crossbow
retrace my training to SING into an attacker
rewatch the film that taught me
pull out my wide vocabulary
and press it onto the table
where you sit across from me
silent.

– Jenni Everidge

Out-of-Office Reply

There's no food in the fridge
The bathroom's a mess
I must get a flu shot
And take the cat to the vet
I've been working from home
I've been working from work
I need a comp day
Before I go berserk
I won't be in Monday
I won't check email
The I.M. will be off
I'm ignoring voicemail
If it is critical
You can call my cell
It better be urgent or
I'll be madder than _ _ _ _

– Luanne Oleas

Zombie Love

He whispered in my ear
"I want to be so near
The very heart of you,
The very heart of you."

I turned my hand so quick
Past flaking skin and ick.
I pulled the heart of him,
The very heart of him.

He looked at me so dear,
He held me close to him.
he nibbled on my ear
And then I couldn't hear.

He spun me half around
And whispered in my ear,
"You have the heart of me,
The very heart of me."

– Linda M. Judd

Polish Your Poetry

by WT Staff

Crafting even the shortest publishable poem takes sustained effort. After all that work, how can you keep your submission out of the editorial slush pile?

In *Writer's Digest*, March/April 2016, Lauren Camp gives tips on how to polish and self-edit your poetry in "9 Ways to Polish Your Poetry for Publication." She discusses the content of your poem, tells how to submit it for publication, and gives writing tips, summarized here.

- **Think hard about the word *the*.** *The* means "the one and only." Look at every single appearance of *the* in your poem. Did you mean *the* (one and only) park bench, or a park bench, or maybe the poem reads as well without using *the*.
- **Stop going and doing.** An easy fix is to shorten and tighten verbs. Why are you *going* when you could just *go*? Or fly or trudge or march?
- **How many times do you say "I"?** Try eliminating the references to you.
- **Don't try to say too much.** Read aloud to find anything confusing or too abstract.
- **Be specific.** Give details without drowning your readers in adjectives.
- **Change the pacing.** Do you want readers to move more slowly and revel in your images? Or, if you are writing about something urgent or disturbing, do you want your readers to keep moving through the poem?

Most of all, read your poem aloud. Hear it and check its flow. Feel its rhythm. — WT

One Moment in France

Lavender and pink
Vibrations of light and life
Sunshine from within

— Carolyn Donnell

A Masterpiece, The Greatest

A creator's greatest achievement, a masterpiece
No one has done it, an achievement, a showpiece
No one has done it, an achievement, a success
A creator's greatest achievement, one gem no less

A masterpiece, it's a great job, called a treasure
A masterpiece, it's a great job, called a jeweler
A masterpiece, it's a great job, called one prize
Achievement, a masterpiece, it's no surprise

Anything done successfully is a blockbuster
Anything done excellently is known as a hitter
Anything created, its creator sees work of art
A masterpiece should not depart but set apart

A masterpiece is the greatest
A masterpiece will pass any test

— Clarence E. Hammonds

I Found My Thrill on Daffodil Hill



Daffodil Hill Photo by Karen Hartley

Daffodil Hill

It's a long ride
to Volcano in
Amador County
But when you arrive
you forget about the drive
When you see a bounty
of daffodils
dancing in the sun
Golden yellow
Pure white
A beautiful idyllic sight
Bending and nodding
to welcome you

You can't help but run to the
field and touch the petals
The dancing flowers call
you to admire them
the white ones
with yellow centers
the pure yellow ones
swaying in sunshine
Truly a feast for the eyes
And every now and then
a yellow daffodil with
a bright orange center
Who could resist the
temptation to grab one
and hold on
to that lovely, perfect
flower

Daffodil Hill
a banquet for the eyes
It's difficult to leave
knowing that luscious
view won't arise again
until next Spring
If you want to go
to Daffodil Hill
now is the time
The window is small
and will close soon
until the fields once more
stand regal in their finery

Daffodil Hill
Truly, a banquet of
lush, floral life
— Karen Hartley



—Photo by Ruth Hottel

*Daffy-down-dilly has come to town
In a yellow petticoat and a green gown*

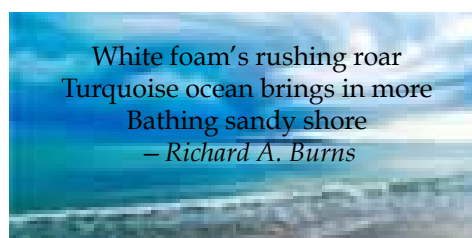
little boxes

every day i make a pilgrimage to stand before
rows upon rows upon rows of little boxes with
doors and locks.
i slide a key into the little lock opening my box.
it's mostly jammed with useless words,
words to betossed aside, unread.
a waste of trees, i think, as i sift through the
wrinkled contents,
looking for the mother lode. i find only tailings.
a call to do my civic duty, which I will ignore,
a plea to aid children with big, hungry eyes,
a good deal on tires i do not need.
i toss it all in a blue bin overflowing with
everyone else's rejects
to be shredded and used again, perhaps to be
printed with new words,
and stuffed inside my little box another day so i can
throw it away all over again.
one day i will find treasure, instead of bills and
grocery ads,
something better than recycled, throw-away words.
so i close my little door and
lock my little box once more.

more little boxes

on birthdays and important holidays i drive to the
other side of town.
i don't really want to, but i know it is the
right thing to do.
i am expected, so i go.
i pass through gates that close at sundown and
walk though clipped lawns to
pass walls of marble boxes,
boxes with names and dates.
Some have comforting words on them or pictures.
i try to avoid the ones with pictures. they make
me feel like i am being
watched by people who don't know me.
i imagine that they whisper about me
behind my back.
i hurry past the strangers and follow a path to
visit people i used to know,
people who have faded from my memory like a
favorite old t-shirt
that has been washed too many times.
one day, years from now, i will be turned into a
bag of grit and bone
and rest in a little box of my own.
perhaps someone will pass through the gates on my
birthday and important holidays.
perhaps i will whisper about visiting strangers.
perhaps i will gently fade away like
all the other people resting inside little boxes with
little doors,
doors that do not open any more.

– Kari Conley



White foam's rushing roar
Turquoise ocean brings in more
Bathing sandy shore
– Richard A. Burns

Evermore

Hand in hand
Gazing at our reflections in the quiet part of the stream
We can see our love light in the skys dancing clouds
I hear your heartbeat with the current of the waters
I feel you take a deep breath with the gentle breeze
Love kisses us amongst surrounding tall evergreens
Nature wraps us in this moment we have become one now
I hold you close
Time has no boundary
We embraced our love with every moment shared
We honored it with treasured memories in our hearts
We caressed each other in the kiss of life each day
I hold this sheltered box of love close to my heart
Time has no boundary
The quiet of the stream holds the reflection of one face now
You can sense my heartbeat in the ripples of water that pass by
I will always remember that last kiss on your sweet lips
The salty taste of tears that flow down my cheek
The taste of loss fills my heart
This is the moment I say good by my love
Your ashes are blowing in the breeze
Amongst the high evergreens and our gentle stream
I know you will be with me
Evermore
Time has no boundary
– Karen Franzenburg

Hammer

the impulsive fury of the hammer
condemns its fury to a meek demise
falling on the dispassionate deafness
of the gentle forest trees
the winter sun wept rays of humbled light
through the solstice of yesterday's sorrows and song
the melancholy drip of the rain closet holds
all my tears in the jewel case
the verdure of the loam like Thanksgiving gravy
Attracts the fly in the sill
Desperate for the light painting the inconceivable glass
I've been a prisoner since birth in the chasms of convention
I let you in through the open door
And I let you out to the universe
Crushing your exoskeleton in the vanity of time
Paper protecting my arrogant fingers
Who will perform such a generous act of mercy for me
I will make this moment mine
A single incident in the tide of time
I feel the unwinding of the passages after personality

– Jack Knutson

April Terse on Verse

by Pat Bustamante



Pat Bustamante
Contributing Editor

April Foods

Just got over Easter feasting;
Ate too much, but April teasing
Personified by my weighing scale
Cannot be accurate in the leasting--
Aw, it's kidding. I'll ignore it as I go breezing
Right to the 'fridge filled with cakes and ale.
Yum, strenuous writing needs plenty filling-up:
Oops, watch out for that spilling cup!
April, Poetry Month, sounds thrilling.
Ignore crazy rules that we should be killing.

— Pat Bustamante

There are countless books on how to write poetry, or write this and that. Sometimes they sound daunting. The best a writer can do is believe in self, in a unique life that leads to unique tales. Whatever it is you've experienced, it's *your* story.

Before you leave this life please write down your travels and adventures, your childhood and your ancestors, sorrows and joys, loves and hates—we want to hear about them.

I'm an example of how many days one can put the job off. IRS has me working on my monetary loss and gains of last year (there might be a punishment if I don't). CWS, Creative Writer Scolding: If it loomed over our heads with a big fine, some magic would happen. Ya think? — WT

Separated

Five socks and not a pair.
My mate is gone, O where?
In the washer, under the bed,
Behind the fridge, where has he fled?

What does a single sock do?
Wait for a man with only one shoe?
Do I become a cleaning tool?
Fall apart, look a fool?

My partner's gone into space.
Can't stand to be in one place.
While I and other singles wait
Worried sick about our fate.

Oh, no, no! How rotten!
Thrown away, forgotten.

— Judith Shernock

spring forward

time springs forward
an hour is lost
somewhere
in my consciousness
in sleepless wonder

~ marjorie johnson

Points

points have no joints
how can they combine
to form a line?

~marjorie johnson



Orb

You brought me
a brass orb
at the center of nine
dark rings that circle
on a burnished stand,
the axis that might
have swirled the globe
of our yesteryears,
but this solar system
newly spins
as music brings each morning
and the day

awakens
flesh

settles grief
into light

the sun turns
round the planets tight
in their magnetic orbit

as lips meet
in song and alchemy
with hydrogen and iron.

— Mary Pacifico Curtis



February Weather

Those in Iowa have the tease of snow
on the ground and weather that can't
make up its mind. We're not much
better off here in California where
the sun shines bright but with a
hard snap in the air and roses
pressing out reddish green
growth that frost will soon
turn to black. So much
for new life. Mother
Nature can sure
sure nip things
in the bud,
the bitch.

— Betty Auchard

Why in Paris?

Why must lovers always meet
in Paris on a cobbled street?
Why not Cleveland or St. Paul,
or any other place at all.
In Bakersfield their love would flower,
except there is no Eiffel Tower.
It's very nice in Kalamazoo,
and Albuquerque's lovely, too.
Phoenix is a charming spot,
although it gets a little hot.
Milwaukee can be grand, I hear,
besides it's got that famous beer.
But nowhere do I hear a voice
except that Paris is the choice.
I guess it must be really groovy
because of that old Bogart movie.

— Jack Hasling

Rebound

Salve the blisters from the torch I hold
Ease my regrets of being too bold.
Your voice must not be my balm.
I alone will bring me calm.
I scoured my heart to feel the pain
So I need not go back again.
Another love smothered, brain churned.
When will I let my own light burn?

I do not need a man to know who I am.

— Suzy Paluzzi

2016 Cyber Convention BookExpo

by Chess Desalls

The 2016 Brain to Books Cyber Convention runs online from April 8 – 10. Hundreds of authors world-wide have signed up for blog tours, interviews, readings, and other bookish activities. Readers can browse the fairgrounds to enter giveaways, meet authors, and find new books to read. I had so much fun during last year's event that I wanted to share it with you.

Where do I find the Cyber Convention?

The event is happening online, on Goodreads:

[goodreads.com/group/show/](http://goodreads.com/group/show/154267-brain-to-books-cyber-convention-2016-fairgrounds)

[154267-brain-to-books-cyber-convention-2016-fairgrounds](http://goodreads.com/group/show/154267-brain-to-books-cyber-convention-2016-fairgrounds)

Sign in with your Goodreads account and join the group to participate in the discussions and giveaways. One of the participants has put together a fair map of authors: riverfiction.com/bookfair/

What is a Cyber Convention?

The name sounds fancy – possibly even intimidating – but the concept is quite simple. Imagine a book fair or carnival where booths are set up with vendors, games, and food booths. On the day of the fair, the gates are open for fairgoers to wander the grounds and browse around through heaps of books. Authors who have set up booths for the Cyber Convention are essentially doing the same thing as the vendors – creating a display of their work and interests, and allowing readers to stop by and engage.

The difference is that, instead of having physical booths in a live fairgrounds, the authors create a virtual representation of their booth online, in the form of a discussion board where they can post text, pictures, and links. (Yes, the food booths are also virtual. But that just means the funnel cakes don't have calories.) Readers can then enter the conversation by replying to what the author has posted.

For an example of an author booth within the fairgrounds, please visit my booth at goodreads.com/topic/show/17980466-ya-time-travel-freebie-shelf-book-match-giveaway where I've set up an introduction, a shelf of free books, and a book match giveaway game.

How do I set up an author booth to highlight my books and writing?

Authors can set up their own fair booths by adding a thread to the fairgrounds discussion. First, make sure you're signed in with your Goodreads account and have joined the event linked above. Next, click on "The Fair Grounds" at: goodreads.com/topic/group_folder/298333 At the top of this page, there is a "New Topic" link where you can start your own discussion thread to post information about your books and writing.

For more information, read our wooden sign posts at goodreads.com/topic/show/17970150-wooden-sign-post, or send an email to chess@chessdesalls.com. I'll be happy to escort you backstage. – WT

Patio bordered

With sparkling side-show in bloom

Lightens every load

– Richard A. Burns

CWC Sacramento Seminar:

"Learn From Publishing Experts plus Pitch To An Agent"

Saturday, April 30, 2016, 9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Cattlemen's, 12409 Folsom Blvd., Rancho Cordova:
Hwy 50 at Hazel Ave.

Literary agents from **Fuse Literary**: Gordon Warnock,
Jennifer Chen Tran, Laura Cummings

Learn from publishing experts:

- Query Letters
- Synopsis
- Proposals
- Role of Agents
- How to Pitch to Agents
- How to Work With Agents
- Where to Find Agents Appropriate For Your Project
- How the Submissions Process to Publishers Works
- What is a "Hybrid Author"
- Publishing Contract Terms You Should Know
- Other Legal Concerns

For complete details and to register:

<http://www.cwcsacramentowriters.org/2016/learn-from-publishing-experts/> – WT



CWC Redwood Writers:

"Pen to Published" Conference

Saturday, April 23, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Flamingo Resort & Spa, 2777 Fourth Street, Santa Rosa

Keynote speakers: Award-Winning Authors

Dorothy Allison and Albert Flynn DeSilver

Pitchfest with Literary Agents looking for new talent

Craft: Joshua Mohr, Susanne Lakin, David Colin Carr,
David Corbett, Robbi Sommers Bryant

Genre: Amanda McTigue, Fran Claggett,
Albert Flynn DeSilver, Dan Coshnear

Marketing: Helen Sedwick, Sharon Hamilton,
Vicki DeArmon, Frances Caballo

Publishing: Joel Friedlander, Howard Van Es,
Laurie McLean, plus three agents for Pitchfest

More information at

redwoodwriters.org/pen-to-published-2016

Note: This will be worth your drive to Santa Rosa. WT would like to say more, but the flyer is a two-page PDF, too long to include in its entirety.

Please check their website. – WT

Contests, Markets, and Seminars

by Carolyn Donnell



Carolyn Donnell
Contributing Editor

Writers Digest 85th Annual Writing Competition.

This is the big annual contest.

Deadline May 6!

Lots of categories, six prizes in each. One Grand Prize winner will receive \$5,000 in cash; an interview in *Writer's Digest*; one-on-one attention from four editors or agents; a paid trip to the *Writer's Digest* Conference; a one-year subscription to *Writer's Digest* *Tutorials*; and a 30-minute Platform Strategy Consultation with Chuck Sambuchino.

Prizes range from \$1,000 first prize, to second, \$500; third, \$250; fourth, \$100; fifth, \$50; and sixth, \$25. All top winners will receive a one-year *Writer's Digest* VIP membership; listing in *Writer's Digest*, on WritersDigest.com, and in the *84th Annual Writer's Digest Annual Writing Competition Collection*.

Categories include: Inspirational Writing (Spiritual/Religious); Memoir/Personal Essay; Magazine Feature Article; Genre Short Story (Mystery, Romance, etc.); Mainstream/Literary Short Story; Rhyming Poetry; Non-rhyming Poetry; Stage Play; Television/Movie Script; Children's/Young Adult Fiction.

See more at writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions/annual-writing-competition

Sites that list competitions:

<https://www.poets.org/academy-american-poets/american-poets-prizes>

<http://www.pw.org/grants>

<https://winningwriters.com/>

<http://www.writermag.com/writing-resources/contests>

<http://thewritelife.com/27-free-writing-contests/>

<http://fundsforwriters.com/contests/>

<http://www.freedomwithwriting.com/freedom/uncategorized/10-free-writing-contests-fellowships-with-prizes-of-500-to-25000/>

<http://www.dystopianstories.com/writing-competitions-2016/>

Check out contests carefully.

Is the entry fee worth the price? How selective are they? Are they for real? Here are a few web sites to help you learn what to avoid.

<https://winningwriters.com/the-best-free-literary-contests/contests-to-avoid>

<http://www.sfw.org/other-resources/for-authors/writer-beware/anthologies/>

<http://www.wikihow.com/Avoid-Writing-Contest-Scams>

If you uncover an intriguing opportunity, please share with us here at *WritersTalk*. — WT

National Poetry Month Websites

National Poetry Month Sites that have activities for poets and/or poetry prompts:

Writer's Digest:

<http://www.writersdigest.com/editor-blogs/poetic-asides/poetry-challenge-2016>

NaPoWriMo 2016: 30 Days of Poetry Writing:

www.napowrimo.net/

Poetry Superhighway:

<http://poetrysuperhighway.com/psh/a-poetry-writing-prompt-a-day/>

Poets.org:

<https://www.poets.org/national-poetry-month/about-celebration>

Santa Clara County Poet Laureate blog:

<http://poetlaureateblog.org/>

Cupertino Poet Laureate:

<http://cupertinopoetlaureate.org/tag/poetry-kitchen>



Diamonds and Rust

Her gypsy eyes flash his way
knowing more than they reveal
Her audience remains rapt
the lyrics of her songs are haunting
her voice, high quavering tones piercing many hearts
With sounds from the guitar, older than the trees
rolling smoothly forth behind the folk tale
behind the practiced stories she sings
her automatic fingers find their next frets
Her chords are true while her mind flits about
desperate for hope and finding only loneliness
Now she's able to recall feelings
of a searching heart getting swept away
a couple years before by the original vagabond

Bobby is watching
but the rest of the audience doesn't know
the boy-man, already a legend
has just broken off with Joany
The song ends; the audience applauds
She sees little to clap for

Later that night he is packing to leave
off to another apartment, another stage of life
She blinks away tears
She can't believe she's this petty
She recalls him saying her poetry was lousy

He says friends will be picking up his boxes tomorrow
She says put that in one of your damn songs
When the door closes behind him
she can't see the tears welling in his blue eyes
eyes she fell hard for and seem to see so far

— Richard A. Burns

California Writers Club: CWC News

Be Seen Statewide in the CWC Bulletin

Deadline for advertising submissions for the August issue is Friday, July 29, 2016. The spring issue is in press.

All ads submitted must be self-edited, print-ready, and will be published as received. Capacity for advertising will be determined by the Editor-in-Chief. In case we receive more ads than can be accommodated, submitters will be notified of the option to reserve space in the next issue. All ads must be emailed as a jpg file to Bob Isbill at advertisingCWC@gmail.com. Details at CalWriters.org.

Checks or money orders, made payable to CWC Central Treasury for submitted ads, must be mailed to: HDCWC, The Bulletin Marketing Department, 20258 Hwy 18, STE 430, PMB 28, Apple Valley, CA 92307. —WT

Your ad will be seen by 2,000 writers.

SBW TalkBooks Talks SBW Books

SBW TalkBooks is a book club that selects books written by SBW members for its monthly group reads. TalkBooks has a presence on Goodreads where members can discuss books online. Goodreads offers networking opportunities through blogs and social media. Many authors have blogs in need of something to talk about; TalkBooks will help get that conversation going. Sharing book news leads to book buzz among readers whom an author might never reach alone. TalkBooks meets at 7:30 PM on the last Wednesday of each month at the Santa Clara Library on Homestead in Santa Clara. For info, contact Linda Judd at lindyjudd@yahoo.com.

If you are a member of South Bay Writers who has a published book, send a jpg of the cover and a descriptive paragraph to newsletter@southbaywriters.com. We will publish your book announcement. Also, be sure to join the SBW group on Goodreads and ask to be interviewed by SBW TalkBooks. It's easy: establish your Goodreads account and then join our group; the administrator lets you in. —WT

CWC Around the Bay

These are published meeting locations and times for other CWC branches in the greater San Francisco Bay Area. If you're thinking about attending one of their meetings, be sure to check the website first for details.

Berkeley: 2:00 third Sundays, Oakland Public Library Main Branch. cwc-berkeley.org

Central Coast: 5:30 third Tuesdays, Point Pinos Grill, 77 Asilomar Boulevard, Pacific Grove. centralcoastwriters.org

Fremont Area: 2:00 fourth Saturdays at DeVry University, 6600 Dumbarton Circle, Room 120, Fremont. cwc-fremontareawriters.org

Marin: 2:00 fourth Sundays, Book Passage in Corte Madera. cwcmarin.com

Mendocino Coast: 6:00 third Wednesdays, Mendocino Hotel. writersmendocinocoast.org

Mount Diablo: 11:30 second Saturdays, Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, 611 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill. cwcmtdiablowriters.wordpress.com

Napa Valley: 7:00 second Wednesdays, venue is changing. napavalleywriters.net

North State: 6:00 third Mondays, Butte County Library-Chico Branch. northstatewriters.com

Redwood: 2:30 first Sundays, Flamingo Conference Resort & Spa, 2777 Fourth Street, Santa Rosa. redwoodwriters.org

Sacramento: 11:00 third Saturdays, Cattlemen's Restaurant, 12409 Folsom Blvd., Rancho Cordova. cwcsacramentowriters.org

San Francisco/Peninsula: 10:00 third Saturdays, Belmont Congregational Church, 751 Alameda De Las Pulgas, Belmont. sfpeninsulawriters.com

Tri-Valley: 11:30 third Saturdays, Four Points by Sheraton, 5115 Hopyard, Pleasanton. trivalleywriters.org



SBW TalkBooks Spring 2016 Schedule

March 30: *Stars in the Deep: Destiny*
by David F. Snider

April 27: *Dancing in My Nightgown:
The Rhythms of Widowhood*
by Betty Auchard

May 25: *The Forgotten:*
by R.L. King

June 29: *A Gelett Burgess Sampler: Ethics
and Aesthetics*
by Alfred Jan

Italian Women's Memoirs Continued from Page 4

As the program moves forward, each training workshop will help participants to write their stories. Participants will benefit from learning basic elements of storytelling, critiquing, editing, and on-line publishing.

One consideration for participants is how to introduce Italian words or dialects into the text of a story written in English. Secondly, they need to learn how to edit and critique each other to keep word usage and writing succinct, to avoid rambling. To tell a good story is a basic goal.

Here is the tentative plan for a four-month program to be held on one Saturday afternoon per month at 1 – 3:30 pm:

- May 21: IAM: panel focused on women's unheard stories, causes, and importance.
- June 4: Memoir writing workshop. Memoir-writing book available. Class limited to 25.
- June 18: Critiquing workshop.
- July 9: Editing workshop.
- July 23: Publishing workshop.
- August 27: Festa readings

Pam Oliver-Lyons, 408-693-9250,
email: polpap@prodigy.net —WT

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April 2016					1 7:30P Open mic Barnes & Noble Almaden, San Jose	2
3 10 AM Our Voices	4 1:30PM Mystery Circle 2PM Valley Writers	5 7 PM SBW Board meeting	6	7	8	9
10	11 6:00PM Regular Dinner Meeting, Harry's 2PM Valley Writers	12 Deadline <i>WritersTalk</i>	13	14	15 7:30P Open mic Willow Glen Library, 1157 Minnesota Ave	16 Workshop with Amanda McTigue 9 AM TO NOON
17 10 AM Our Voices	18 2PM Valley Writers	19	20	21 7 PM Poetry readings	22	23
24	25 2PM Valley Writers	26 7 PM TalkShop	27 7:30 PM TalkBooks	28	29	30
Future Flashes						
May 9: SBW regular meeting	May 3: SBW Board meeting		TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN SOUTH BAY WRITERS			

Ongoing Events

Critique Groups

Our Voices: Meets at Le Boulanger in the Pruneyard in Campbell every other Sunday 10 AM. Genres: Fiction, memoir, nontechnical nonfiction. Contact: Dave LaRoche at dalaroche@comcast.net

Valley Writers: Meets at Valley Village Retirement Center, Winchester Blvd, Santa Clara, Mondays 2 PM. Marjorie Johnson, marjoriej358@comcast.net

Emperor's Mystery Circle: Meets at Emperor Norton's, 7508 Santa Teresa Blvd, San Jose, 1:30 PM, first Mondays. Mystery genre. Contact Pam Oliver-Lyons, polpap@prodigy.net

Your Critique Group: Send info to newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Open Mics

South Bay Writers Open Mic: Read from your own work, from your favorite authors, or just come to listen, first and third Friday evenings. See calendar for schedule. Contact Bill Baldwin (408) 730-9622 or email WABaldwin@aol.com

CWC SF Peninsula Speaker: April 16, 10 a.m. to Noon

Sam Kauffman:

"Creating a one-author performance that connects with your audience"

Belmont Congregational Church, 751 Alameda de las Pulgas, Belmont.

<http://www.cwc-peninsula.org/events.html>

SBW Board Meetings

Our Board meets at at Lyons Restaurant, 4233 Moorpark Avenue, San Jose 95129, at 7 PM on the Tuesday night preceding the second Monday SBW dinner meeting. Contact Patrick McQueen, pres@southbaywriters.com.

Ongoing discussion groups

TalkShop: Discuss topics of interest to writers—challenges, problems, and tips. Meets last Tuesdays, 7 pm. Contact Carole Taub at 777777ps@gmail.com

SBW TalkBooks: discussion group focusing on books written by SBW members. Meets last Wednesdays, 7:30 PM, Santa Clara Library, Homestead Road. For more information, read article on Page 14 and send email to newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Poetry Readings

Poets@Play: Meets at Markham House History Park, 1650 Senter Rd., San Jose, Second Sundays most months, 1 – 4 PM. poetrycentersanjose.org

Poetry Center San Jose: Meets at Willow Glen Library, 1157 Minnesota Ave., San Jose, Third Thursdays, 7 PM. poetrycentersanjose.org 408-808-3045

Words Drawing Music: Ongoing open mic opportunity at Works San Jose, 365 South Market Street, on second Thursdays, 7 to 9 PM. Information at workssanjose.org

SBW Recommends ...

If you know of a regularly occurring event for writers, send an email to newsletter@southbaywriters.com.



California Writers Club
South Bay Branch
P.O. Box 3254
Santa Clara, CA 95055
www.southbaywriters.com

MAIL TO

Address Correction Requested

South Bay Writers
April Regular Meeting
6 PM, Monday, April 11

Harry's Hofbrau
390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose

Memoir: Honoring Your Story

Kevin Fisher-Paulson
April Speaker

WritersTalk deadline is always
the 15th of the month.

Regular dinner meetings are
second Mondays 6 – 9 PM
except July and December.



Harry's Hofbrau

From Highway 280, take Saratoga Avenue North.
Harry's is on your right near Stevens Creek Blvd.