



WRITERS TALK

September
2024

Monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Writers Club

September Speaker: Robin Sloan

Robin Sloan: His Bestselling Writing Process

Shari Clare

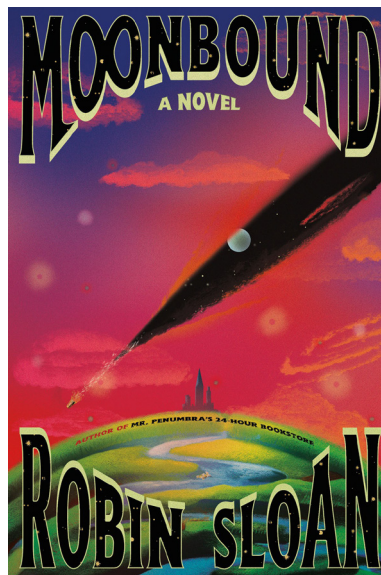


The idea for a bestselling novel can come from the most unexpected sources.

For Robin Sloan, it started when he read a tweet from a friend back in 2008: “just misread ‘24hr bookdrop’ as ‘24hr bookshop,’ the disappointment is beyond words.” The idea of a 24 hour bookstore percolated in his head, evolving into the beloved novel *Mr. Penumbra’s 24 Hour Bookstore*. His next novel, *Sourdough*, explored the use of technology for making delicious food, throwing in an unexpected sci-fi twist.

He is recently back from the book tour of his third novel, *Moonbound*, a rollicking adventure in the tradition of C. S. Lewis and Ursula K. Le Guin. Per the editors at MCDxFSG, Sloan’s publisher, “It is a deeply satisfying epic of ancient scale, blasted through the imaginative prism of one of our most forward-thinking writers.”

Robin’s love affair with words began when he was a kid who enjoyed hanging out at libraries. A few years later, while majoring in economics at Michigan State, he co-founded a literary magazine. He also co-founded the blogging site *Snarkmarket*, worked at *Current TV* (with Al Gore), and worked at *Twitter* (before it was X), always exploring the intersection of media and technology. His website includes not only information about his writing, but hints at some of his other work, which includes being a member of *The Cotton Modules* band and co-producing a movie. He solidified his connection with the South Bay in 2020 by publishing a serialized detective story in the *San Jose Mercury News*. Now, he splits his time between the San Francisco Bay Area and the San Joaquin Valley. It is a true privilege to welcome him as the guest speaker at our September meeting.



- **What: Robin Sloan - His Bestselling Writing Process**
- **When: Saturday, September 14, at 10:30AM**
- **Where: Maker Nexus, 1330 Orleans Drive, Sunnyvale**
- **Admission: \$10 for members, \$15 for nonmembers**

Map and directions to Maker Nexus on back cover

August Recap: Edie Matthews

Comedy Writing

Bill Baldwin

Due to the unfortunate illness of our planned speaker, we heard a different voice at our August meeting, a voice by no means unknown: Edie Matthews, our own until-recently branch president (photos on pages 6-7).

She spoke about comedy writing – something Edie knows a good deal about, as a writer and comedian who’s been featured on *Evening Magazine*, *Nightlife in the Bay Area*, *KCBS-News LA*, *LA Times*, and in Herb Caen’s column in the *Mercury News*, etc. She’s opened for Dana Covey, Grace Slick, Lacy J. Dalton, and the Coasters. She created comedy show, *Mothers & Other Goddesses*, and toured the US and Canada. She holds a BA in Radio-TV Journalism and an MFA in Creative Writing. She worked for KNTV News, CNN, KBAY, KXRX and hosted a local cable talk show *Edie & Company*. She taught English, Literature, and Creative Writing at De Anza College.

Edie began with a presentation of the “graveyard scene” from *Hamlet*: the prince and his friend chat with two gravediggers hard at work: light pleasantries with lots of wordplay. “This can’t be your grave; you’re still alive.” “But I’m digging it; it’s my work.” “But you’re not lying in it; therefore you’re lying!”

Edie proceeded with basic info about the structure of jokes: setup, punchline, toppers; techniques such as double-entendres; the main point being to catch people off-guard, to throw something at them that they’re not expecting.

She provided further examples from TV and film: the famous scene from *The Court Jester* where Danny Kaye is trying to remember the mnemonic for where

(Continued on page 4)

Notes From the Road

Una Daly

President, South Bay Writers

I am enjoying reading the responses to our 2024 Annual Members' Survey while on my roadtrip across Oregon, Idaho, Wyoming, and beyond. Nearly 30% of our members have taken the time to share ideas and their willingness to step up and organize activities to benefit our South Bay Writers' community. Fully 40% of respondents are members of four years or less, indicating a strong bench of branch leadership. The survey remains open and available (see the end of my message), but in the meanwhile, based on the responses I've received, several trends have emerged:

- The most popular branch activity is our monthly meetings with speakers. WritersTalk, our monthly newsletter, and writing workshops tie for second place. Social events are also appreciated followed by the website, open mic, and book festivals.
- The most requested monthly meeting topics are publishing followed closely by book sales and promotion. Cultural fiction, finding an agent, and memoir have strong support as monthly meeting topics with significant interest in other genres as well.
- Interest in critique groups and writing workshop/retreat organization is expressed along with a member anthology and writing contests.



Shari Clare, incoming vice-president of programs, has to step down from membership chair with her new responsibilities. This is a key branch position in which you can make a huge impact: The membership chair collects new applications, sends welcome documents, maintains online membership records, attends board meetings, and coordinates with the treasurer on money collected. For more details contact Shari at membership@southbaywriters.com.

We are grateful to all of you who responded to our 2024 Annual Members' Survey and it's not too late to submit. Please use this link bit.ly/sbw2425, or use the QR code below to share your ideas on how we can continue to build and expand South Bay Writers' together!!! – WT



Critique Groups - Share Your News!

- Are you soliciting more members for your group?
- Are you planning to form a new group?
- Are you looking for a group?
- Want to announce an online group?

Let us help facilitate your group. Send any announcements by the 15th of each month to newsletter@southbaywriters.com, and they'll be published in our pages.

California Writers Club

South Bay Branch

www.southbaywriters.com

Executive Committee

President—Una Daly
pres@southbaywriters.com

Vice President—Shari Clare
vp@southbaywriters.com

Secretary—Chris Weilert
secretary@southbaywriters.com

Treasurer—Alice Wu
treasurer@southbaywriters.com

Members-at-Large—
(1st Member at Large—VACANT)
2nd Member at Large—Alfred Jan,
member-at-large2@southbaywriters.com

Central Board Rep—Bill Baldwin
WABaldwin@aol.com

NorCal Rep—Bill Baldwin
WABaldwin@aol.com

SBW Committee Chairs

Programs—Shari Clare
vp@southbaywriters.com

Publicity and Public Relations—Edie Matthews
pr@southbaywriters.com

Facebook Admin—Carolyn Donnell
facebook@southbaywriters.com

Hospitality—Edie Matthews

Membership—VACANT

MRMS Admin (Member Roster)—Marjorie Johnson
mrms@southbaywriters.com

Member News—Marjorie Johnson
membernews@southbaywriters.com

Newsletter Editor—Tina Glasner
newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Open Mic—Bill Baldwin
WABaldwin@aol.com

Web Editor & Web Master—Joe-Ming Cheng
webeditor@southbaywriters.com

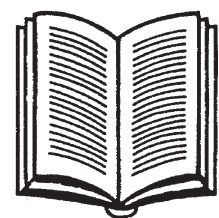
SBW Mission

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. Note: California Writers Club uses a fiscal year that runs from July 1 through June 30 each year. Dual membership: \$25. Contact Membership Chair, Inga Silva, or sign up online at southbaywriters.com

Or, send a check to CWC-South Bay Writers, P O Box 3254, Santa Clara, CA 95055



WritersTalk

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

Managing Editor—Tina Glasner

Copy Editors

Bill Baldwin
Carolyn Donnell
Marjorie Johnson
Tonya McQuade
Marty Sorensen

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. The Managing Editor decides which submissions to publish, and submissions may be copyedited for clarity or brevity.

Short Fiction (1000 words)
Memoir (1000 words)
Poetry (300 words)
Essay (1000 words)

Electronic submissions should be MS Word files. Use a plain font, no tabs, no extra spaces or returns, no page breaks. Send graphics separately as jpg files, with placement notes as desired.

Authors retain all rights to their work. WritersTalk gratefully acknowledges the authors' permission to publish their submissions here. For any reprint, contact individual authors for permission.

Submission deadline is the 20th of the month. Submit to: newsletter@southbaywriters.com

Member Achievement and News

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. Advertising of workshops, conferences, and events is accepted from other Branches of California Writers Club. Because California Writers Club is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation, WritersTalk does not accept advertising of events or services that benefit an individual. Also, we cannot accept political advertising of any kind.

Submit to: membernews@southbaywriters.com

Change of Address: Send changes of address to membership@southbaywriters.com, or you can edit your own entry in the member's roster (MRMS).

Trademarks and Copyright

The California Writers Club logo is a registered trademark® of the California Writers Club. All other trademarks, logos, and brand names appearing in this newsletter are the property of their respective owners. Some images are courtesy of IMSI's MasterClips/MasterPhotos Collection.

Copyright © 2024 California Writers Club South Bay Branch (South Bay Writers).

Words from the Editor

Tina Glasner
Managing Editor

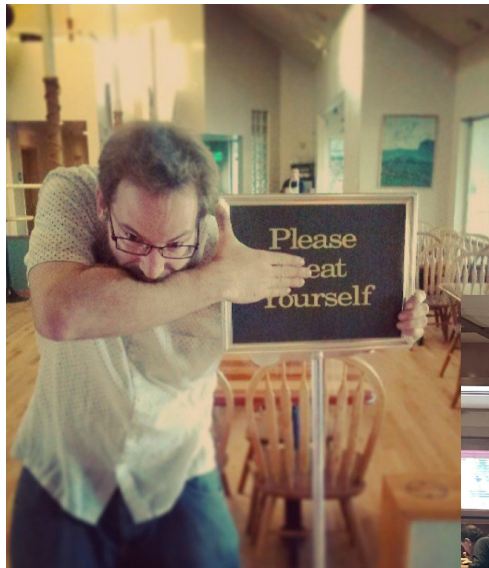
Have You Heard the One About...

It's said that laughter is "a gift" and the "best medicine," too. So thank you, Edie Matthews, for medicating our funny bones last month. I had never expected to put on my thinking cap and analyze what categories jokes fall into.

Isn't it great when you're reading a book and you actually laugh out loud? As a child, Mark Twain was one of my favorite authors, he did that for me.

ease. Next time we're side by side, I might turn to you and say, "Have you heard the one about...?"

My son Lyle also inspires me. I know I am biased, but I think he's extremely clever. That's him posing with a common restaurant signboard. That was July, 2013. Last month in Sizzler restaurant, Santa Clara, I saw the same sign. In tribute, I tried a similar pose. What do you think, is Lyle's joke a "double entendre/definition"? Let me know. —WT



And sometimes I get so jolly that I can hardly catch my breath. I like to think that if I snort, or wheeze, or get watery eyes, any embarrassment is worth the release.

I've also not been brave enough to try a standup routine. Maybe by the time I'm 90! For the past 10 years or so I've enjoyed collecting and memorizing jokes. Part of the challenge is in the timing. I've worked on my delivery to make them sound natural and to rattle them off with



IN THIS ISSUE

Member News: M. Johnson	4	Modern Michelangelo: M. Sorenson	9
Board Report: C. Weilert	5	Off the Shelf Cartoon: E. Matthews	9
Photos Aug 10: E Matthews	6-7	Double Space Cartoon: T. Glasner	9
Ghostbusters: A Jan	8	Markets & Conference Ads	10
Les Prose Cartoon: K. Roberge	8	Calendar & Save the Date	11

(August Recap, continued from page 1)

poison (versus a harmless drink) is hidden; then a parody of the TV show *Dragnet* that appeared on *Johnny Carson*. Both examples involved tongue-twisters longer and trickier than anything an audience would expect. That's the trick: keep 'em surprised and off-balance!

Ah, the fond memories Edie's talk brought back! I grew up in the 1960's (showing my age now), listening to Shelly Berman. ("Hello, Nickel's Department Store? I work in the building across the way. There's a woman hanging outside the window ledge of your business, it looks to be on your floor, and I think someone should pull her in. Hello, Complaint Department! You don't know me. Sir, there is a woman hanging out of a window! I don't know how she got out there! Maybe she tried something on and snapped out!")

Member News

Marjorie Johnson

News from **Bill Baldwin**: Bill Baldwin's new novel, *The Path Between*, is now available from Amazon.

A quote: "Many years ago, on a chilly November evening, my life changed completely because of a few things I'd done the year before, culminating in the call I made that frosty night from a phone booth in Sageville, Virginia: the last time I spoke with my fiancé."

Benjamin Blount was looking for love – they offered something else. He is about to have it all: career, wife, family – And then he isn't. Partly his own fault. Because Benjamin's love is not like other people's. He doesn't understand this yet, but he will. To move beyond the wreckage of his life, Benjamin must attempt the treacherous passage between the demands of society and the demands of his own soul. Benjamin must navigate the Path Between, and come to terms with who he is. Can Benjamin succeed? Paradise awaits.

Tonya McQuade will be traveling to Missouri and Kansas in early October to promote her book, *A State Divided: The Civil War Letters of James Calaway Hale & Benjamin Petree of Andrew County Missouri*. Tonya will be giving talks in several cities that played key roles in the war and in her book, including St. Joseph, Savannah, and Centralia, Missouri; and Lawrence, Kansas.

On Oct. 3, she will be speaking at the St. Joseph Museum at 10:30 a.m., then later that afternoon at the Andrew County Historical Society in Savannah (time TBD). In her talks, she will explain why many people believe the Civil War actually started in Missouri, read from some of the 50 Civil War letters included in her book, and share relevant photos, maps,

Later I encountered the likes of PDQ Bach, and Homer and Jethro: ("When we listen to Pal-yat-chee, we get itchy and scratchy.")

We've all had our favorite comedians – haven't we? – down through the years. Mel Brooks: ("My name is Frankenstein!! Um...class dismissed!").

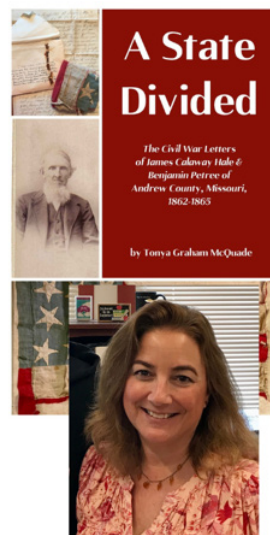
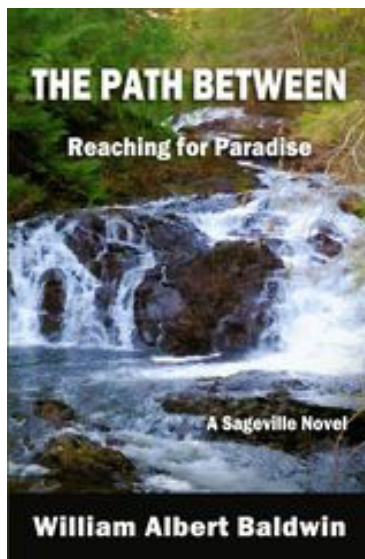
Edie gave us some great insights on appreciating comedy – and writing it! Thank you, Edie!!! Ain't Comedy fun?!

Now sit down and write! – WT

and family trees. In St. Joseph, Savannah, and Lawrence, she will also discuss key events in the "Bleeding Kansas" border wars and "Bloody Andrew" events that played out in these areas.

On Oct. 4, she will be speaking at the Book and Bean Bookstore in Centralia at 5 p.m., then the following day, at the Centralia Public Library (time TBD). In those talks, she will include a discussion of the Centralia Massacre and the Battle of Centralia, which will both be marking their 160th anniversary at the end of September. Tonya discovered she had family connections to Centralia on both the Union and Confederate sides and wrote about these connections in posts for the Emerging Civil War website.

Finally, she will (hopefully) be speaking in Lawrence, Kansas, on Oct. 7 (time and location TBD), with a focus on the 1863 attack on Lawrence led by Quantrill's Raiders, a Confederate group of guerrillas led by William Quantrill, and how this attack comes up in her book. *A State Divided* is available on *Amazon.com*, and you can learn more about Tonya on her website at tonyagrahammcquade.com.



Gaining Insights into
Missouri's Important Role
in the Civil War
Presentation by Author Tonya
Graham McQuade

Thursday, October 3

10:30 am

@

3406 Frederick
Avenue



If you would like to share your writing news, send an email to membernews@southbaywriters.com – WT

View from the Board - Chris Weilert

The South Bay Writers Board met offsite in person on August 4 to discuss the upcoming year. SBW Board members are listed on page 2 of WritersTalk.

Una Daly, President: The annual brunch planning meeting included Joe-Ming Cheng, our new webmaster. In addition to getting to know each other better, the board discussed board member job descriptions and potential modifications. New ideas included: purchasing new A/V equipment to facilitate our monthly meetings; sharing our newsletter to promote our branch to new writers and other branches and clubs; exploring new meeting formats including speaker panels, team writing activities, and special topics; and collaborating with other CWC branches on events and other activities. Regarding the member survey that she put together with board input, Una is looking forward to using the responses to guide new directions.

Alice Wu, Treasurer: Alice reported that there was a 1.5% increase in funds to our treasury account in July.

Bill Baldwin, Open Mics, Central Board & NorCal Rep: The Open Mics will continue on the first and third Fridays, as Zoom meetings. Recent Open Mic stats: June 7 - 6 readers, 6 readings, June 21 - 4 readers, 4 readings, July 5 - 4 readers, 4 readings, July 19 - 4 readers, 5 readings, August 2 - 7 readers, 7 readings. Bill is still exploring possible locations for live readings. NorCal has had no meeting since May. CWC Central Board discussed the disappointing response to this year's Literary Review. It can be downloaded via the email that announced it. Not many people have replied, however. Our ekphrastic book (*Vision and Verse*) is now available from Amazon. The next Jack London Awards will be presented in October 2025. A committee is working on the successor to MRMS. We are discussing changes to our membership structure and fees. A slate of officers was elected for 2024-5: Roger Lubeck, President; Jordan Bernal, Vice President; William Baldwin, Treasurer; and Crissi Langwell, Secretary. The next Central Board meeting will be in October.

Carolyn Donnell, Contests & Facebook Admin: Carolyn was unable to attend the offsite. We continue to wish her a speedy recovery. She was certainly missed at our brunch.

Shari Clare Vice President/Membership: As VP, Shari reported that for the August meeting, our previously scheduled presenter, Heather Haven, became ill and asked to reschedule. Shari has given her the next available slot, on November 9. Shari gave thanks to Edie Matthews for filling in with less than a week's notice. And Edie's presentation on humorous writing kept us laughing! Shari is very excited to soon hear our September speaker, award winning author, Robin Sloan, author of *Mr. Penumbra's 24 Hour Bookstore*. For the October meeting, author Jill Hedgecock will be presenting "Chapter Endings." For the November meeting, Heather Haven will be presenting "Getting Published." For 2025, Shari is planning to reach out to potential speakers sometime in September. These inquiries will be guided by the results of the survey

Una put together. As Membership Chair, Shari reported that we have 113 active members, including 2 lifetime members, 4 dual members, and 3 student members. As of August 13, 6 new members have joined for 2024/25 and 60 have renewed, which combined with our 2 lifetime members brings the total to 68 memberships valid for 2024/25. This leaves 45 people who were 2023/24 members who have not yet renewed. Shari is in the process of sending individual reminders to them, stating that September 1 is the deadline.



Marjorie Johnson, Member News, MRMS

Admin: Marjorie was unable to attend the offsite, due to her move. She was also missed at our brunch. On a side note, Marge is giving up running the raffles for our meetings, which have been a fun feature for us. Thank you so much, Marge. Member Amanda Senior has agreed to take

over this function.

Tina Glasner, WritersTalk Editor: Tina reported on upcoming changes to WT: Update masthead, give "WritersTalk" a more modern font, drop volume and issue numbers, just list Month and Year; Promote critique groups; strive to get WT out digitally 5 days before month-end if at all possible; begin emailing courtesy copies of WT to the other branch newsletter editors; relax the never-reprint rule for WT content if it's been 8 years or so since it was run before. But still favor new content. Changes still under discussion include: discontinue cumulative index and current labeling of type of content, because it's not a true tagging system and we are not sure how many members use this feature, also searches can be done on PDF files instead; see if new MRMS allows printing snail mail for those members who want paper WT; take over snail mail list maintenance from Marge if she wants to offload this duty.

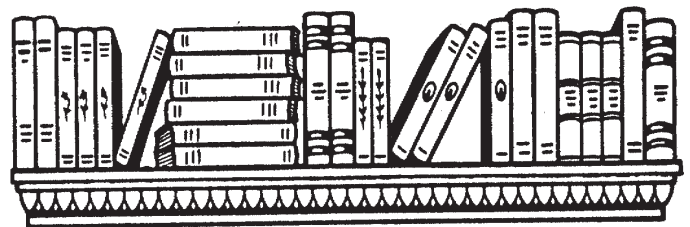
Joe Ming, Web Editor: We are happy that Joe is our new web editor, taking over from Una.

Edie Matthews/Public Relations: Edie is now running public relations for the club.

Alfred Jan, Member At Large: Alfred is serving another term as Member at Large.

Open Discussion: Looking for ways to promote more submissions, additional copy-editors, and new board members.

Una will email the schedule for upcoming Board meetings (Zoom). SBW members are always welcome to attend. To attend a board meeting, send an email to Una at pres@southbaywriters.com. - WT



SBW August 10: Edie Matthews - Comedy Writing

Photos by Joe-Ming Cheng, Carolyn Donnell



CURRENT EVENTS

Since the days of renaissance, court jesters used current events and public figures as a source of mirth. Will Rogers was the first American comic to carry on and perfect this technique. The following excerpt from his autobiography tells how it happened.

My act at that time consisted generally of the same jokes each night all pertaining to the place or to the other acts in the (*Zigfield Follies*) show. Then Mr. Ford started his memorable peace trip. Well, I doped out a lot of gags on it, and the first one I used turned out to be about the best one I ever had.

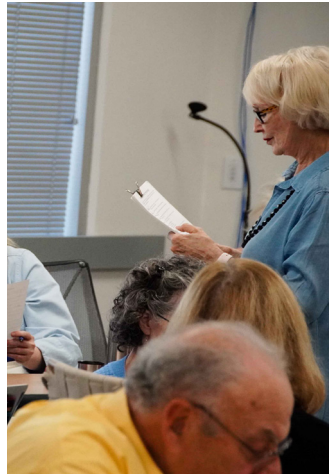
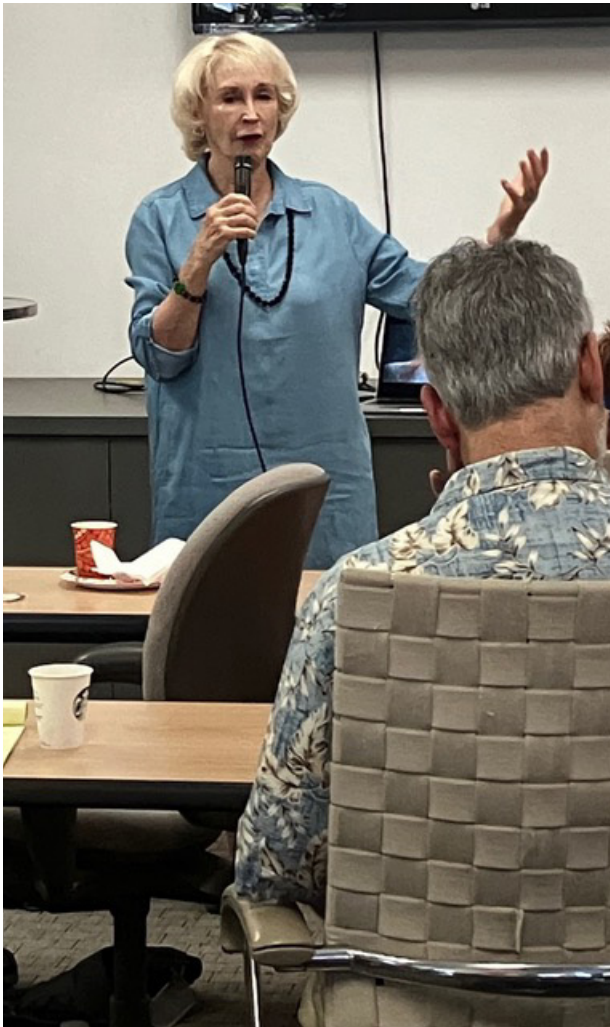
“If Mr. Ford had taken this bunch of girls in this show, and let’ em wear the same costumes they wear here, and marched them down between the trenches, believe me, the boys would have been out before Christmas!”

After that line of stuff died out, I wished somebody else would start something, but I thought at the time there would never be anything as funny as that. One day my wife said:

“Why don’t you talk about what you read? Goodness knows, you’re always reading the papers!”

So I started to reading about Congress; and, believe me, I found they are funnier three hundred and sixty-five days a year than anything I ever heard of.





Examples: “The good news is China is coming to the Olympics. The bad news is they need a billion rooms.”—*Johnny Carson*

“Reverend Moon was arrested for income tax evasion. Now when the Moonies pray they have to kneel and face Chino State Prison.”—*Johnny Carson*

“The Navy spent \$600 on an ashtray and \$800 on a toilet seat. They place a lot of importance on where you place your butt.”—*Johnny Carson*

“I used to think it was a big deal the way the pope would get off the plane and kiss the ground, but now it’s being done all the time by passengers on the Concorde.”

—*Edie Matthews*

“Commissioner of football Pete Rozelle retired after 30 years with a totally clean record—no drug bust, sex scandals. I guess he had to retire, he just couldn’t keep up with the times.”—*Jay Leno*

“Suppose you were an idiot... And suppose you were a member of Congress... But I repeat myself.”—*Mark Twain*

“Looks like we’re headed for another water shortage. I ate at an expensive restaurant. They gave me a pitcher of water with a brick in it.”—*Jay Leno*



Ghostbusters and Gelett Burgess: Coincidence or Rip Off?

Alfred Jan

With the release of a third Ghostbusters movie in July 2016 with an all woman team, the franchise, originally released on June 8, 1984, kept rolling on. (Editor's update. As of 2024 there are now 5 in the Ghostbusters franchise.) But where did the concept originate? Two antecedents include *Spook Busters* (1946), a Bowery Boys slapstick comedy, and *Lonesome Ghosts* (1937), a Disney short.

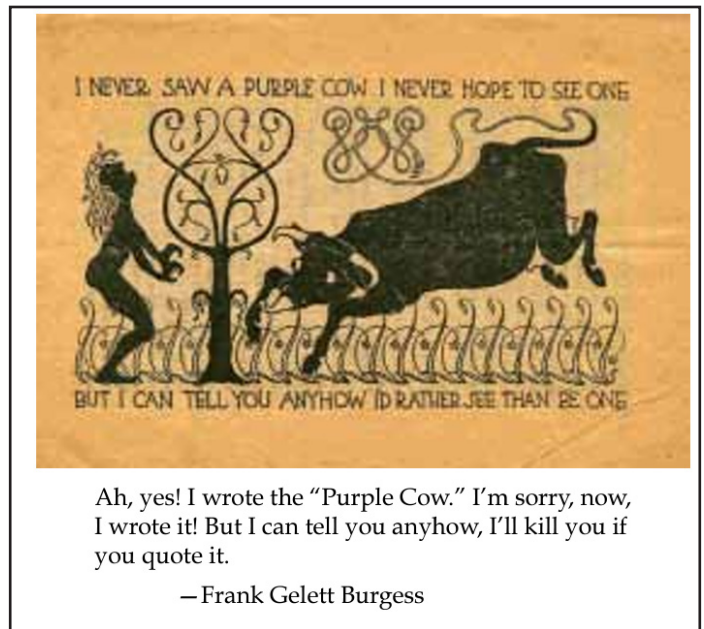
Nobody, including David Wallace in his book, *Ghostbusters: The Ultimate Visual History*, mentions "The Ghost Extinguisher" by Gelett Burgess, a short story published in *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, April 1905. Unlike today's *Cosmopolitan*, that version was a general interest literary periodical.

In Burgess' yarn, the "scientist and speculative philosopher" narrator learns how to capture ghosts from a Japanese Buddhist. This religion claims the soul has seven layers, each of which is shed after death, and a ghost is one of those layers remaining on earth, retaining bodily shape. This form can then be precipitated out or made physically manifest by exposure to a burning powder, suctioned by bellows, and placed in a container. After witnessing this process, our hero analyzes the powder and refines the apparatus "which enabled me to inhale an entire ghost at a single stroke. With this powerful instrument, I was able to compress even an adult life-sized ghost into a two-quart bottle in the neck of which a sensitive valve (patented) prevented the specter from emerging during process. The whole apparatus being strapped upon my back, I was enabled to direct a stream of powerful precipitating gas in any desired direction."

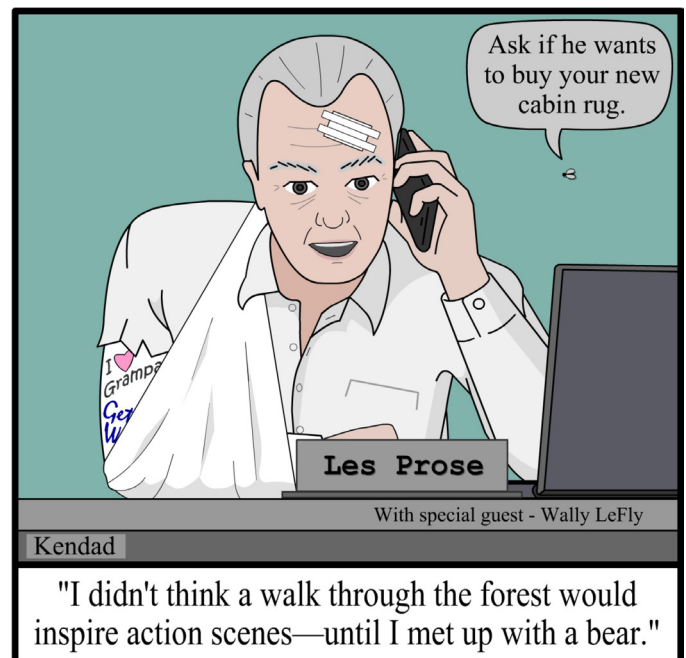
While this worked for newer ghosts, he needed further improvements to capture older, less "materializable" examples. "The ordinary fire extinguisher of commerce gave me the hint as to how the problem could be solved." The narrator then develops a ghost-extinguisher and goes into business removing ghosts, including from a sanatorium for "nervous invalids," previously a hotel which burned to the ground, killing many guests and leaving many ghosts. The story ends when the ghost warehouse explodes, freeing all captives, who torment our hero forever after.

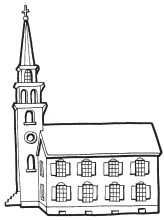
Burgess' plot differs from that of *Ghostbusters*, which throws in demonic possession, absurd monsters (a giant Stay Puft Marshmallow Man), and cataclysmic conflict over New York City. Nowhere do the writers Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis credit Burgess. Whether they read his story or not I do not know, but many details seem too similar to be purely accidental.

In *Ghostbusters*, the movie team employs proton pack energy streams fired from nozzles with supply packs mounted on their backs. Ghosts are deposited in containment units in a firehouse basement. New York City is attacked by a ghost army after the EPA orders their storage banks deactivated, resulting in an explosion. This time the ghosts are defeated, but coincidence or rip off? I let you, the reader, decide.



Note: Best known for nonsense poetry such as "The Purple Cow," Gelett Burgess (1866 - 1951) was a multi-talented Renaissance man and a California Writers Club member. See my book, *A Gelett Burgess Sampler: Ethics and Aesthetics*, Surinam Turtle Press, 2012 for further reading. — WT





Fiction

A Modern Michelangelo

Marty Sorensen

Luigi tiptoed into the church of Santa Catarina in Palermo, a short warm walk from the port. Today was not a holy day so the church was empty except for one little old lady with smooth skin for her age, dressed in black but with a white lace scarf, on her knees in the last pew, praying the rosary.

He looked up to admire the renaissance ceiling paintings, every bit as good as anything in the Vatican. Of course, he couldn't see much. Most of the ceiling was covered by scaffolding and wooden planks. Well, he thought, if it worked for Michelangelo, it's good enough for me. For a moment he wondered how long it would take to fall from the planks down to the hard marble floor below.

As he surveyed the church, he looked around for the way to climb up the scaffold. Staring straight up he noted between the wooden planks the ultramarine blue from lapis lazuli mixed with lead white used to create Mary's flowing robes. His eye followed the line of the scaffolding and the beige Per lato Sicilia marble walls of the church until he saw the ornate carved confessional directly below. If you're going to confess your sins, do it with class.

Luigi looked once at the old lady, who was looking back at him. He wondered if she noticed the tall unused artist brushes sticking up out of his canvas bag. As he climbed up the scaffold he kept pushing his bag out of the way. Once at the top he surveyed the planks before him and crawled along until he was just under the blue robe of the Virgin Mary. He stretched himself out on his back, then turned on his side, pushed a plank away, and looked straight down at the dark wood confessional below him. With his left hand he searched behind him and found the canvas bag. Without looking, he took out the artist brushes and laid them out on the plank.

Then he reached inside the bag and found his Beretta 92FS service pistol. Turning on his stomach, he inched over until his left arm was free to shoot between the planks. And he waited.

He watched as a door opened and a small man with black hair in a gray suit approached the confessional, stopped, looked left and right, then took out a revolver from his coat and leaned into the priest's door. Luigi pointed his Beretta between the planks, pulled the trigger twice, and the man dropped down as red pools flowed from both shoulders onto the floor.

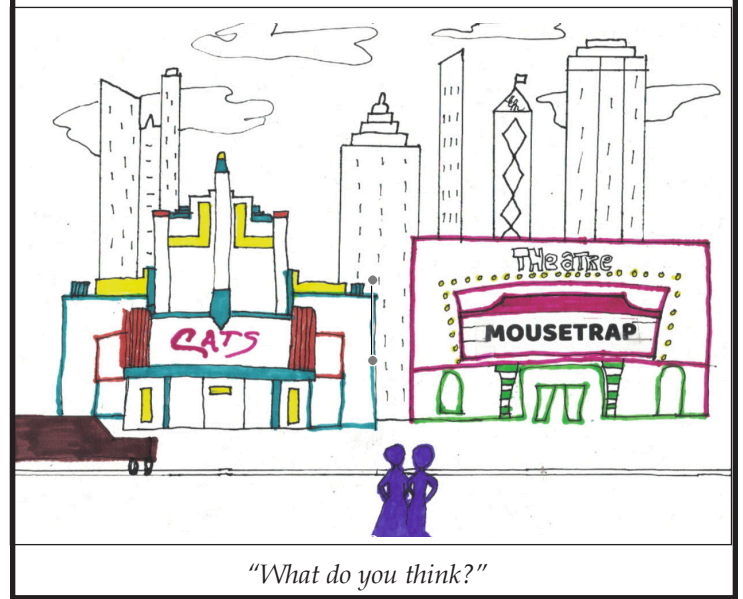
As Luigi crawled back across the planks over to the scaffolding he smiled to himself, took one of the brushes and gave Mary's robe a careful swirl of restoration. When he had climbed down to the floor, he walked over to the little old lady, who was sitting back staring in disbelief and still holding her rosary.

"Buongiorno, Signora," he said, "allow me to introduce myself. Luigi Santini, Carabinieri."

She smiled and nodded. "You're a very good shot."

He laughed. "But not a good painter." — WT

Off the Shelf — Edie Matthews

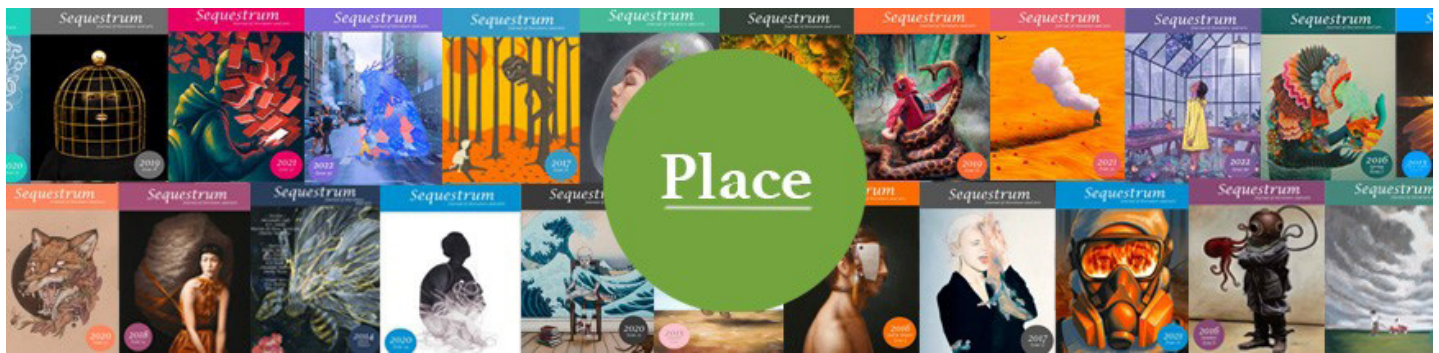


DOUBLE SPACE

• Tina Glasner •



Reprinted from WT, ~ 1998 - 1999



Sequestrum is a journal of short prose and poetry. A place can haunt us. It can inspire us. Point to your passion on a map, and we'll follow. As always, wow us. Thrill us. Never bore us. Deadline 9/15.

For more info see [Sequestrum](#). When ready to submit, please use [our online submission system](#).

Fiction: Submissions should generally not exceed twelve thousand (12,000) words.

Creative Nonfiction: Submissions should generally not exceed twelve thousand (12,000) words. All genres of nonfiction (articles, reviews, memoirs, personal essay, cross-genre, etc.) are acceptable, though we rarely publish scholarly essays or literary criticism.

Poetry: We like our poetry short. Submissions should be no more than thirty-five (35) lines. Maximum four (4) poems per submission.



Dear Writer,

Are you ready for this year's **Central Coast Writer's Conference**? Only 5 weeks to go, so if you haven't yet registered, it's time! I hope to see you on October 5, if not sooner... it'll be here before you know it!

For more info, go to [Central Coast Writers Conference](#).

Upward and Onward,
Brian Schwartz
Event Director



Catamaran accepts fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, and visual art. Themes we are especially interested in are science and nature writing, creativity and the artistic process, personal journey and travel, and innovation. Any setting is fine, but the West Coast is of particular interest.

Catamaran is now accepting submissions for its garden

issue, which will center around our connection with the natural world through gardens. Deadline 10/15.

Catamaran is distributed to bookstores and subscribers quarterly. Catamaran seeks to provide a channel for you to share your creative work with the general public. For more info, go to the [Catamaran Submission](#) page.

2024 SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 CWC Bulletin submit deadline	2	3	4	5	6 Open-Mic - 7:30p (see note*)	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 SBW Meeting 10:30a
15 SBW WritersTalk deadline; Sequestrum (see p10) deadline	16	17	18	19	20 Open-Mic - 7:30p (see note*)	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

*Open-Mic - Register in advance at southbaywritersopenmic@gmail.com by 5p the Thursday before, and you'll receive a Zoom link on Friday afternoon.

Save The Date: Events and Contests

Name	Date	Comments
West Trade Review	multiple.....	Reading period: Aug 15 - Dec 1
California Writers Club Bulletin	Sept 1, Dec 1.....	Submit articles or announcements to the state membership
Zoetrope Short Fiction Competition	Oct 1.....	Fiction up to 5,000 words, cash prizes & talent representation
Central Coast Writers Conference (see p10).....	Oct 5.....	40th annual conference at Cuesta College, San Luis Obispo
South Bay Writers October Meeting.....	Oct 12.....	Author Jill Hedgecock, on "Chapter Endings"
Catamaran - Gardens Issue (see p10).....	Oct 15.....	Fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, art
South Bay Writers November Meeting.....	Nov 9.....	Author Heather Haven, on "Getting Published"

For excellent advice on literary scams, see the [Writer Beware](#) page of the Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers Association (SFWA). For extensive ratings of self-publishing services, see the [Ratings](#) page of the Alliance of Independent Authors.

South Bay Writers Club



Reminder: our South Bay Writers Club group on Facebook

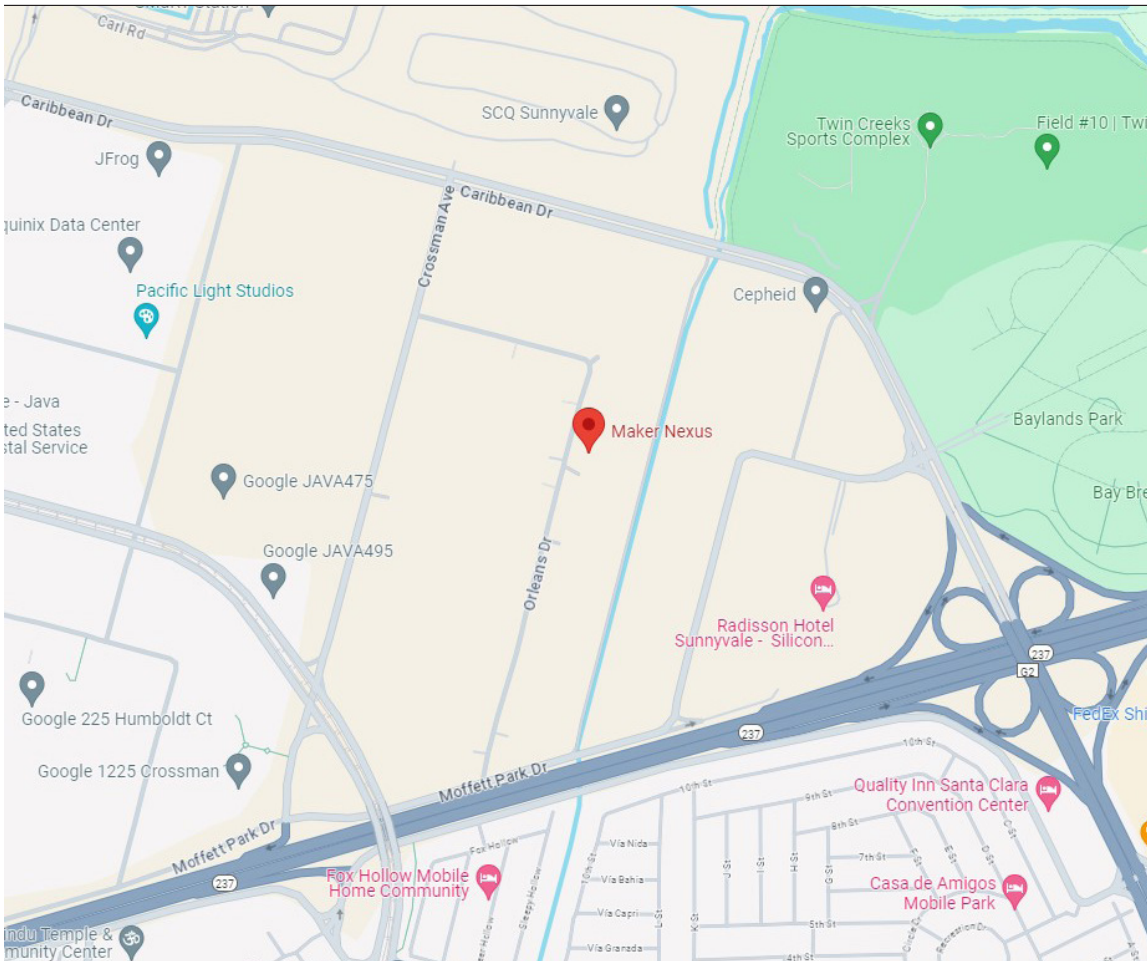
Carolyn Donnell, SBW Facebook Admin

South Bay Writers has a very active Facebook members' group, [South Bay Writers Club](#). In this group you'll find postings that can inform, engage, and inspire, as administered by our very own Carolyn Donnell. Think of Facebook as another means to enjoying your membership in SBW and the California Writers Club, as a whole.



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

Address Correction Requested



Directions:

Maker Nexus
1330 Orleans Drive
Sunnyvale

From Fair Oaks Ave, go north to Crossman Ave, turn Right. To Baltic Way, turn Right. To Orleans Drive, turn Right.

From Lawrence Expy, go north, name changes to Caribbean Dr. To Crossman Ave, turn Left. To Baltic Way, turn Left. To Orleans Drive, turn Right.

**Saturday, September 14,
10:30 at Maker Nexus**

**Come EARLY to
allow for the security
check-in and finding
a good seat**

**Robin Sloan: His Best-
selling Writing Process**