

Genre Bending: Chapter 4: Verse—What to Make of Our Inspirations

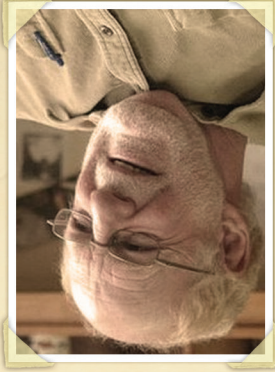
Elements of good writing – narrative and character, image and metaphor, word choice, phrase and sentence making, formal traditions and innovations – all can be applied to prose and poetry; essay and fiction, playwriting and memoir. This workshop will examine ways in which genres overlap and interplay.



Essay and Poetry

The Landscapes of Poetry

Thomas Lynch's collections of poems include *Skating with Heather Grace*, *Criminalkin & Other Poems*, and *Still Life in Milford*. A fourth collection of poems, *Walking Papers*, will be published this year. *The Undertaking*, his first book of nonfiction, won The American Book Award. The Heartland Prize and was a finalist for the National Book Award. *Bodies in Motion and at Rest* won the Great Lakes Book Award, and *Booking Passage*, was named a 2006 Notable Book by the Library of Michigan. His work has appeared in *Harper's*, *The New Yorker*, and *The Atlantic* among others, has been broadcast by NPR, the BBC and RTE in Ireland, and is the subject of PBS Frontline's "The Undertaking".



Poetry

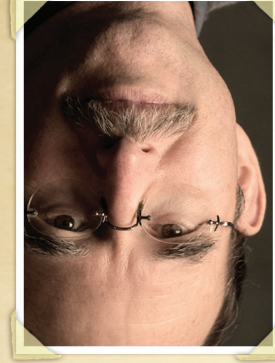
During our sessions, I'll introduce several different approaches one can take into the variety of landscapes in the world of poetry. There will be time to write using prompts or one's own impulses, time to reflect in this sanctuary of a setting, time to have conversations about one another's poems and writing concerns, time to laugh, time to suggest and a time to refrain from suggesting! One need not be familiar with any approaches to writing a poem to feel comfortable, and if one is familiar with a variety of approaches, the workshop is constructed to lead to further growth in one's own work.

Jack Ridd's latest collection, *Lost Season*, explores life during a hard winter in a small town obsessed with its high school basketball team's losing season. Ridd's previous collection, *Broken Symmetry*, was co-recipient of The Society of Midland Authors award for best book of poetry published in 2006. In 2008, he was named by the Institute for International Sport as one of the 100 most influential people in sports. Ridd was named The Carnegie Foundation's Michigan Professor of the Year in 1996.

Manuscript Consultations

Marc will offer a limited number of manuscript consultations across the various genres. Prose manuscripts may be up to 50 pages; poetry up to 30 pages. Writers should provide manuscripts in advance of the conference to facilitate the process. Please submit your work by May 1, 2010 to kcurren@umich.edu with *Manuscript Evaluation – Your Name* in the subject line. We will take the first 6 manuscripts submitted. A sign-up sheet will be made available at the conference for one hour manuscript consultations with Marc for the six writers.

NOTE: Manuscripts will be accepted only from those who have registered and paid their \$150 deposit.



Manuscript Evaluation

Marc J. Sheehan is the author of two books of poetry – *Greatest Hits* and *Vengeful Hymns*, winner of the Richard Snyder Award from Ashland Poetry Press. He has helped edit several books of poetry, fiction and creative non-fiction. He has worked with writers whose books have won publication through the National Poetry Series, Associated Writing Program Award Series, as well as through university and commercial publishers. For several years he was associate editor of the literary journal, *Fourth Genre: Explorations in Nonfiction*, published by Michigan State University Press. Currently he edits *Ferris Magazine*, a broad-interest university magazine.

Memoir



Poetry



Writing Poems with People in Them

Sue William Silverman's memoir, *Love Sick: One Woman's Journey through Sexual Addiction* (Norton), is also a Lifetime television original movie. Her first memoir, *Because I Remember Terror, Father, I Remember You*, won the Association of Writers and Writing Programs award in creative nonfiction. Sue has appeared on various television programs such as "The View," "Anderson Cooper – 360," "CNN-Headline News," as well as the Discovery Channel. She is associate editor of *Fourth Genre: Explorations in Nonfiction*. Her most recent book is *Fearless Confessions: A Writer's Guide to Memoir*. She teaches in the low-residency MFA in Writing program at Vermont College of Fine Arts.

The goal of the workshop will be to write a mini-memoir, a piece that could be a stand-alone essay, but also one that can be expanded into a full-length memoir essay—or even a book—which captures your unique experience and perspective. In order to practice crafting a memoir (either a long or a short one), we will explore the essential elements of sensory imagery, metaphorical language, distinctive voice, dramatic arc, and focused theme.

Memoir

THE BEAR RIVER WRITERS

To learn more about these authors—and the many others affiliated with the Bear River Writers' Conference—please visit our website:

www.lsa.umich.edu/bearriver

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