

Geneva Writers Conference

9th conference
31 JANUARY-2 FEBRUARY 2014

The 9th Geneva Writers' Conference welcomes writers from around the world to a weekend of workshops and panels led by well-known authors, agents, editors and publishers from Italy, Switzerland, the UK and the US.

The goal is to bring together English-language writers for high-level instruction, support and feedback through workshops, discussions, and readings. Conference instructors are experienced in teaching creative writing and committed to sharing their knowledge, skills, and perspectives on writing as an art and as a profession.

The program offers a choice of writing workshops in fiction, young-adult, nonfiction, and poetry, and panels in publishing and social media. There are also question and answer periods with instructors and panelists, and two evenings of readings. The bookshop is open all weekend.

The Conference takes place at Webster University in Bellevue, ten minutes from the center of Geneva. Information about Geneva hotels and transportation options will be sent after registration is completed.

Early check-in starts at 17:30 on Friday evening. The opening cocktail buffet for participants and staff will include readings by participants (numbers limited and advanced sign-up required).

The Conference fee is CHF 200 (CHF 180 seniors, CHF 160 students). The fee includes:

- Writing workshops in fiction, young-adult, nonfiction, and poetry (classes limited to 20 writers)
- Panels in traditional publishing, alternative and self publishing, and social media
- Question & Answer periods with instructors and panelists
- Readings by participants and instructors
- Closing reception, Sunday afternoon

The Meal Reservation Form is attached to the registration form. Bookstore consignment forms will be sent by email in early January. Complimentary tea and coffee will be available throughout the weekend.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Jenny Bew Or
Amanda Callendrier
Seetha Chinnappa
Tasja Dorkofkis
Alan Harmer
Katie Hayoz
Folake Idowu
Catherine Nelson-Pollard
Daniela Norris
Mary Pecaut
Bob Piller
Pierre-Yves Tiberghien
Susan Tiberghien
Rick Vincent
For further information visit
www.genevawritersgroup.org
or send an email to
conference@genevawritersgroup.org
Designed by Sue Niewiarowski
www.n-design.com
The Geneva Writers' Conference is wholly
non-profit, made possible by registration fees
and the generous support of the following
individuals and organizations:
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Hello Switzerland
Genève Tourisme
International PEN, Centre Suisse Romand
International Women's Writing Guild (New York)
Paris Writers News
Payot Librairie-Chantepoulet, English Books
Stauffacher English Bookshop (Bern)
Swiss News
WICE, Paris Writers Workshop
www.LivingInNyon.com
World Radio Switzerland

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PROGRAM

Friday / 31 January

17:30 Early Check-in
19:00 Opening Cocktail Buffet
Participant Readings

Saturday / 1 February

9:00 Check-in
10:00 Welcome
10:30 Session I
12:30 Lunch
14:00 Q&A
15:00 Session II
17:00 Break
17:15 Q&A
18:15 Dinner, Instructor Readings

Sunday / 2 February

9:30 Welcome
9:45 Session III
11:45 Break
12:00 Q&A
12:45 Lunch
14:00 Session IV
16:15 Closing Reception

REGISTRATION

Please send the Registration Form by email or post, clearly indicating the payment.

By email

conference@genevawritersgroup.org

By postal mail

Geneva Writers' Conference
24 chemin des Mollies
CH-1293 Bellevue
Switzerland

The deadline is Friday, 24 January 2014. Your registration will be confirmed by e-mail when payment is received. Cancellations received before 24 January will be refundable less a CHF 20 handling charge. No refunds can be made after this date.

On the Registration Form please indicate four workshop or panel choices from the twelve that are listed, and two alternatives in order of preference. Workshops are limited to twenty participants, and all places will be allotted on a first come, first served basis.

Please also indicate your meal choices and include their payment with the conference fee, clearly indicating each item.

WORKSHOPS AND PANELS

FICTION

1. Narrative Distance / Christopher Castellani

This workshop explores narrative distance and how understanding its relationship to point of view can help turn your good story, scene or chapter into a great one. We will look at examples, discuss the role of diction, tone and detail, and apply our discussion to our own work.

2. Finding the Heartbeat: Unforgettable Characters / Tanarive Due

Characterization is the heart and soul of fiction. Through examples, discussion and exercises, we will unlock the secrets of creating unforgettable characters, how characters can amplify theme and plot, and of using characters to make your readers cling to every word of your story.

3. Plot, the Engine of a Novel / Henry Sutton

While a plot makes a novel, a story doesn't. The simple equation: Story + Conflict = Plot, lies at the core of all great fiction. With examples and exercises we will be getting to grips with the very engine of a novel—how you devise such a plot, how you create energy, and all important, desire.

4. YA & Children's: Where in the World / Mimi Thebo

In young adult and children's fiction, place is as important as character. In this workshop, we read and write about setting, and we 'ground' our fiction. Whether you know the area well, or you've imagined a castle in the sky, a deep understanding of place will inform and enrich your fictional world.

NONFICTION

5. Moments of Being / Sven Birkerts

Extrapolating from Woolf's book, we will look at how the memoirist/personal essayist penetrates the "cotton wool" of ordinary experience to recover and narratively frame the

significant materials of memory. How do we narrate the "shocks" of consciousness, and build compelling structures from past experience?

6. Zen and Writing: Clear Seeing, Clear Writing / Susan Tiberghien

We will look at Zen as a way to unclutter the well of creativity within us. After a brief introduction to Zen, we will read excerpts from Zen masters and contemporary writers (Annie Dillard, Eduardo Galeano). With guided writing exercises leading to a short fragment of clear writing.

7. Personal Essay / Marion Winik

The heart of creative non-fiction is the personal essay—a short form featuring a strong voice, and combining elements of storytelling, fact, and commentary. We will read and write on provocative themes of heart and mind, drawing on events in our lives and in the world.

POETRY

8. Poems that Come Alive / Wallis Wilde Menozzi

Using readings and exercises, participants will try to discover what volatility, what living spirit they can release into work so that a balance is found between reality and imagination. We will discover how a sense of life wakes up a poem and brings a voice into it.

9. Naming the Nameless / Brenda Shaughnessy

Most of life's experiences transcend or defy explanation. Audrey Lorde wrote, "Poetry exists to give name to the nameless." We will discuss how to utilize memory, personal history, grief, celebration, desire, trauma, and sensory description as tools to powerfully render unwieldy human experience in language.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

(scheduled parallel to workshop sessions)

10. Traditional Publishing

Sarah Levitt, Sophie Lambert (agents)

Tasja Dorkofikis, Ladette Randolph (editors)

What are the roles of agents and editors in today's publishing world? What do they look for in a writer and in a manuscript? What happens then? How does the book get promoted? What is expected of the author?

11. Alternative and Self Publishing

Melissa Rosati (consultant)

John Hunt (publisher)

Nancy Freund, Katie Hayoz (authors)

What are the alternatives to traditional publishing? What are their pros and cons? What is the attraction of e-books? What are the steps to self-publishing? How is distribution and promotion handled?

12. Social Media

Melissa Rosati, Tasja Dorkofikis, Ladette Randolph, Sarah Levitt, Sophie Lambert

What social network tools should writers use to publicize their work and develop an on-line voice? There will be time to ask questions.

Question & Answer Periods

These sessions are open and it is not necessary to register. They will allow for discussion and contact with the instructors and panelists.

INSTRUCTORS AND PANELISTS

FICTION

Christopher Castellani is the author of three novels—*All This Talk of Love*, *The Saint of Lost Things*, and *A Kiss from Maddalena*—and the forthcoming *The Art of Perspective*. Artistic director of Grub Street, a leading creative writing center in the US, he also teaches in the Warren Wilson MFA program. www.christophercastellani.com

Tanarive Due, the Cosby Chair in the Humanities at Spelman College, she also teaches fiction in the MFA program at Antioch University. She won an American Book Award, an NAACP Image Award and recently co-wrote and co-produced a short film, *Danger Word*, based on her novel *Devil's Wake*. www.tanarivedue.com

Henry Sutton, is the author of eight novels, *My Criminal World*, 2013, and a collection of short stories. He is Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of East Anglia, and director of the MA in Prose Fiction. He's been Literary Editor of *Esquire*, Books Editor of *The Daily Mirror*, and judged numerous awards. <http://henrysutton.co.uk>

Mimi Thebo writes for adults, children, and young adults. Her work has been adapted into a Bafta-winning film, read on BBC Radio Four, translated into ten languages and signed on television for deaf children. She lives in South-west England and teaches at Bath Spa University. www.myglamorousliterarylife.wordpress.com

NONFICTION

Sven Birkerts is the author of nine books, most recently *The Other Walk: Essays*. His new book *On or About: Surveying the Digital Divide* will be published by Graywolf Press in 2015. He edits the journal *AGNI* at Boston University and Directs the Bennington Writing Seminars. www.bu.edu/agni/authors/S/Sven-Birkerts.html

Susan Tiberghien has published three memoirs and the best-selling *One Year to a Writing Life*. Her narrative essays have appeared in journals and anthologies. Susan teaches at C.G. Jung Centers and writing conferences in US and

Europe, where she directs the Geneva Writers' Group. www.susantiberghien.com

Marion Winik's most recent book is *Highs in the Low Fifties*. Her essays have appeared in *The New York Times Magazine* and on NPR's *All Things Considered*. She reviews books for *Newsday*, teaches at the University of Baltimore and was named 2013 "Best Humorist" by *Baltimore Magazine*. www.marionwinik.com.

POETRY

Brenda Shaughnessy is the author of *Our Andromeda*, *Human Dark with Sugar*, winner of the James Laughlin Award, and *Interior with Sudden Joy*. Her magazine publications include *Best American Poetry*, *The New Yorker*, and *Paris Review*. A 2013 Guggenheim Fellow, she teaches at Rutgers-Newark. www.brendashaughnessy.com

Wallis Wilde-Menozi's poetry in *Agni*, *Southwest Review*, *Mississippi Review*, *Kenyon Review* has won critical acclaim. In 2013, she published *The Other Side of the Tiber*, a book of non-fiction, with FSG, NY and *Toscanelli's Ray*, a novel with Cadmus editions, SF. She lives in Parma, Italy. www.walliswilde-menozi.com

AGENTS, EDITORS, PANELISTS

Tasja Dorkofikis, freelance editor and publicist, edits *English PEN Atlas*. She worked as Divisional Publicity Director at Random House (for Cape, Chatto & Windus, Harvill Secker and Vintage) and most recently at Portobello Books as Associate Publisher and Commissioning Editor. www.englishpen.org/pen-atlas-home/

Nancy Fraser (Nancy Freund) was VP of the publishing distribution company Midpoint Trade Books, representing 250 independent publishers to the trades. Today heads European acquisitions for Delphi Distribution and runs independent publisher Gobreaux Press, whose first title *Rapeseed*, is her own debut novel. www.nancyfreund.com

Katie Hayoz is an agent-assisted indie author. Her young adult novel, *Untethered*, took second place in the Mslexia children's novel competition. She is assistant director of the Geneva Writers' Conferences, directs the biennial Meet the Agents, and was part of the editorial committee for *Offshoots 12*. www.katiehayoz.com

John Hunt, of John Hunt Publishing, works mainly as an editor across the many different imprints that the company is building to create coherent communities of authors and readers. Check the new lists over the last dozen years at <http://www.johnhuntpublishing.com>.

Sophie Lambert began her career in publishing as a fiction buyer. After working at Janklow & Nesbit Associates in New York and as a director at Tibor Jones & Associates, she is now an agent at Conville & Walsh and represents literary and commercial fiction as well as nonfiction. www.convilleandwalsh.com

Sarah Levitt is a literary agent at The Zoë Pagnamenta Agency. She is interested in serious non-fiction (biography, cultural history, memoir, science, "ideas" books, and narrative), in addition to voice-driven, imaginative, literary fiction that demands a reaction from the reader. www.zpagency.com

Ladette Randolph is editor-in-chief of *Ploughshares* magazine and teaches at Emerson College. She is the author of four books and editor of three anthologies. Recipient of a Pushcart Prize, a Virginia Faulkner Award, and a Rona Jaffe Foundation grant, she is co-owner of manuscript consulting firm Randolph Lundine. www.ladetterandolph.com

Melissa A. Rosati, CPCC, is a speaker/panelist for creativity conferences held at Yale University, Skidmore College, Montefiore Medical Center and Sloan Kettering. Her clients are writers, artists, and nonprofit organizations in health-care. Melissa is also an adjunct professor of publishing at Pace University, NYC. www.melissascoachingstudio.com