

PoetryWest

The Muse News

May 2011

Meeting

Poetry West meets from 10:00 a.m. to noon the first Saturday of every month. Our next meeting & workshop is May 7, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., at the Worner Center **WES Room at Colorado College**, NW Corner of Cascade and Cache le Poudre.

Workshop Description

A Two-part Workshop with Janice Gould

Part 1: Critical Reading/Analysis of Native American Poetry

We'll do some critical readings of noted Native American authors, looking at themes, preoccupations, and philosophical outlook of poems by Joy Harjo, Linda Hogan, Luci Tapahonso, Sherman Alexie, and others. What variations in tone, outlook, and world view do these authors convey in their poetry?

Part 2: Modeling Burroway: "Character as Desire"

We'll address voice and persona. Using wood, stone, rock, and other materials. The objects will serve as a catalyst for creating voice. Using wood, stone, rock, and other material objects (and our imaginations), we'll work on "listening" to the natural world. A second exercise will create character, either for a persona poem, a dramatic monologue for a character in a play, or for text within an epic poem.

Janice Gould (Concow Maidu) is an Assistant Professor in Women's and Ethnic Studies at UCCS. She earned her B.A. in Linguistics at the University of California, Berkeley, as well as a Master's degree in English at the same institution. Her Ph.D. in English was earned at the University of New Mexico. Janice more recently earned, in 2008, a Master's degree in Library Science from the University of Arizona, where she was a Knowledge River Scholar and a Fellow in the Association of Research Libraries. She also completed an internship at the National Museum of the American Indian and earned a certification in museum studies, also from UA. She is the recipient of grants for her poetry from the National Endowment for the Arts and from the Astraea Fund for Lesbian Writers. She was recently awarded the Native Writer-in-Residence Fellowship from the School for Advanced Research in Santa Fe, which will begin in 2012, and she was also given the first literary prize for poetry from the online journal, *Native Literature: Generations*. Her books of poetry include *Beneath My Heart* (Firebrand Press), an artbook/chapbook, *Alphabet* (May Day Press), and *Earthquake Weather* (University of Arizona Press). *Doubters and Dreamers* (University of Arizona

Press) is her newest publication. The University of Arizona Press also published Janice's scholarly work, *Speak to Me Words: Essays on Contemporary American Indian Poetry*, which she co-edited with poet, Dean Rader. Janice's poetry has seen print in over 50 books and journals, including *Pilgrimage Magazine*, edited by Maria Melendez. Janice has taught a variety of courses in literature and creative writing, and she was the Hallie Ford Chair in Creative Writing at Willamette University from 2002-2005.

Upcoming Workshops

PW seeks a volunteer member workshop-facilitator for June.. If you have a topic not recently addressed and might be interested, please contact Julianza at julianza@comcast.net with ideas and questions.

Teaser: **Mr. Aaron Abeyta** has answered in the affirmative as PW facilitator for Fall. Please visit this award-winning poet's site on Colorado Poets Center.

Musings

Website: Member Profiles

If you would like your writing profile to appear on the Poetry West website, please submit the following to julianza@comcast.net: your name/contact information, a 75-word bio/bibliography, sample poetry not to exceed 40 lines (this can include short poems or, say, two long ones), and statements as to whether you mentor poetry and/or give readings/workshops.

PW Email Address

Poetry West now has an email address for anyone needing further information about PW or any of its events: contactpoetrywest@gmail.com.

Haiku Society

Are you interested in writing, reading, and appreciating haiku and other Asian forms of poetry? If so, please plan to join us on Sunday 15 May at 2 o'clock in the afternoon at the Mediterranean Cafe, 118 E. Kiowa Street, downtown Colorado Springs. FREE.

A new local chapter of the Haiku Society of America (HSA) is forming again after a long hiatus in our town. We will be reading, writing, discussing, and learning about haiku and more. As a member of the national HSA, you will receive a subscription to the literary journal 'Frog Pond,' regular national newsletters with notices about haiku events around the country, book reviews, calls for submissions to contests and a variety of publications, as well as many informative articles, essays, and more.

We will continue to get together on the third Sunday of each month.

All Best, Patricia Nolan, Pat Kennelly, Autumn Hall

Member News

Congratulations to PW member Ron Brasch who recently won the Arts Business Education Consortium 2011 Award for Community Support for Arts Education. Ron was honored at the Thirty-Second Annual Arts Awards Luncheon held on April 13th for his “expertise, his time and his financial support to arts organizations” in the Pikes Peak Region.

Calls for Submissions

Check out new listings on *Poets & Writers* Small Press Database:

http://www.pw.org/small_presses

Messages From the Hidden Lake, the anthology published by Friends of the Alamosa Library, is accepting submissions of writing and artwork, with a deadline of May 1st. They are also seeking judges for both prose and poetry. If interested, please contact librarian@alamosalibrary.org or go to <http://www.alamosalibrary.org/index.html>.

Open Mics

NPM Closing Night

April 30 is “Bad Poetry Night” at Black Cat Books, 720 Manitou Blvd., Manitou Springs. Bring your best worst verse and share a stress-busting evening. Also, bring a little snack towards a potluck; spirits sold in-house.

Literary Open Mic with Abby takes place next on the first and third Mondays of each month. pm, at Black Cat books (now merged with safron) in Manitou, 720 Manitou Blvd. This is open to those who write poetry or prose, and is part of the Colorado Springs Writers Reading Series. Further information: abby.murray@ppcc.edu or cswritersreading@gmail.com

Poor Richard's Readings

We have been approached by Marie, of Poor Richard's Bookstore, about PW members' giving a monthly reading. Please consider whether you'd like to participate in this wonderful opportunity. She will be sending me dates from which to choose, and hopefully this event will start up in May.

Modbo

April 29th: **The Modbo does NPM!** – 8 pm: Open mic and guest poet Jermard Beasley: Arts alley south of Bijou between Tejon and Cascade. Julie Shavin will feature poetry at The Modbo gallery on Friday, May 27th, 8 pm. This is also an open mic event, so please come out to listen, and read your work. Modbo hosts an open mic the last Friday of each month, with a featured speaker. Modbo is located at 17C E. Bijou St. in the alley south of Bijou between Tejon and Cascade. Contact the modbo@gmail.com, Lauren or Brett.

Regional Happenings

Rita Dove to Read in Loveland

Rita Dove, former U. S. Poet Laureate and Pulitzer Prize winning poet, will read on Saturday, May 28, at 8 p.m. at the Rialto theater (228 E. 4th St. in downtown Loveland). She will also present a talk at 1: 30 p.m. that afternoon at the Loveland Museum and Gallery, a few blocks away. The talk is free and open to the public. Dove is the fourth former poet laureate to read in Loveland. Carrpool, anyone?

Aspen Workshop with Nikki Finney

Early announcement for planning: June 19-24 is the date for a juried poetry workshop with poet and fiction writer Nikki Finney in Aspen, CO.

Applications are now being accepted for a 5-Day Juried Poetry Workshop with Nikky Finney in connection with the 35th Aspen Summer Words Writing Retreat and Literary Festival. The workshop will run from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. from June 19-24 in Aspen, Colorado.

Finney is a professor of creative writing at the Univ. of Kentucky and the author of three collections of poetry, including *On Wings Made of Gauze*, *Rice* (winner of a PEN America Open Book Award), *The World is Round*, and a collection of stories, *Heartwood*. Her fourth collection of poetry, *Head Off & Split*, was published in the winter of 2011.

"This 5-day poetry workshop offers an intimate class setting (writing classes are limited to 12 students) designed to help you discover your voice, hone your craft, and share your work. This workshop is ideal for students seeking intensive instruction and individualized critique to polish poetry in development."

To apply please visit <http://www.aspenwriters.org>

Manuscript submission, limited to 10 pages, and \$25 reading fee are required upon registration. Tuition for the 5-day poetry workshop is \$665 (plus a \$25 reading fee). Full and partial scholarships are also available. For more information contact Lauren Lowinger | Student Liaison | lauren@aspenwriters.org | [970.925.3122](tel:970.925.3122), ext 4#.

POETRY PRISM

Brian Barker, Denver-based poet, recently gave a workshop/reading to Poetry West, and I am fortunate to own his "Animal Gospels." As mentioned in the inner jacket, this is a collection of "rigorous and powerful songs," in which Barker appropriates animals as "contemplative signposts that address the poverty and brutality" of one of our greatest national shames: racial brutality.

Consider these lines: "the night's music silenced/and sluiced through the oily gutters,/Into the yawning storm drains clotted/with trash and mud and drowned birds." The lines' sheer, if disturbing, beauty incorporate off-rhyme, alliteration (like a drumming) and assonance, evincing onomatopoeia. He

continues, “the water thighdeep and spreading like iodine (what an image!)/Scything the manicured lawns....” Although one reviewer claims an absence of irony, I do see such here, having, as a child, lived an ineffably-unsettling manicured life, one in which malnourished black women descended in droves from buses to prettify my neighborhood's mansions.

“Once, when I was sixteen and death didn't exist,” Barker jumped into “water that was no longer water but a doorway, a “weightlessness,” which I took as a time before the evolution of a social conscience, which would plague any successful adult empath.

He writes of a Mexican man “scooping....a muddy wedding dress....I can see the rowing/Back ...dripping/Like wet wings...” The tragedy of this end-annotated Texan flood is, palpable, grief's constantly reinforced in the imagery of water, stuff of tears.

“Gospel with Lion and Gazelle” begins in “the hour of sweet nothing,” ...”when dogs know no masters,” his body (following love-making) “glad to be broken,” likening the smell of his lovers' hair to the dust “that clings to the hooves of gazelles,” not a comparison one might expect – but the scent becomes an image, a motion, a notion, a freedom, mirroring the freedom of the opening lines. That is to say, so much of this lyric narrative volume is evocative. Water appears often; the writing breaks own dams.

What of “When I dare at last to imagine hunger”...? I'd say - subtle, compelling, to us, the invariably satiate, ... and onward to the muskrat, mockingbird, swine-themed works – interwoven in Barker's magical loom of fact and imagination.

“I know this of the fleeting world: the falling down/not the rising up,/the snow persisting in its silence/and my hands too human to hold it.” Barker is longing, perhaps like all of us, to find a place of grace, to hold onto “whatever good is elusive.” This is a symphony, if you will, by a man of great humility, who is wed to the power and journeyman nature of language, and, of course, to gospel, the gospel of remembrance, remonstrance, and any possibilities of redemption.

- Respectfully submitted by Julie Shavin

End rhyme

Poetry is the journal of the sea animal living on land, wanting to fly in the air. Poetry is a search for syllables to shoot at the barriers of the unknown and the unknowable. Poetry is a phantom script telling how rainbows are made and why they go away.

~Carl Sandburg, *Poetry Considered*