



Mendocino Coast Writers Conference News & Updates

Connecting Writers to Community for 20 Years
February 2009

2009 CONFERENCE UPDATES

Throughout the years, the Mendocino Coast Writers Conference has experienced incredible support from our local communities. As we move toward celebrating our 20th anniversary, we feel it is important to give back. We're thrilled to announce that Friday night of the conference, July 31, 2009, poet, memoirist and writer **Luis Rodriguez** will offer a talk to our participants and our community. His title is *Hearts and Hands: Creating Community in Troubled Times*. Rodriguez's presentation is a powerful example of how writers can create positive changes in their communities and is co-sponsored by the Fort Bragg Police Department and Multi-Cultural Awareness Club of College of the Redwoods. We look forward to you joining us for this important night.

Sharman Apt Russell has sent a description of her morning workshop: *A Fearless Heart: The Terrors & Joys of Writing Creative Nonfiction*. She says: "In one of his early lyrics, rocker Steve Earle sings, 'I know I fall in love a lot. I got me a fearless heart.' That's how I think of creative nonfiction writers. We fall in love a lot (with a particular subject, with the world) and then must be brave enough to write with authority and honesty. In this workshop, we will share our work, our fears, and our strategies for being fearless."

Bonnie Hearn Hill's workshop is titled *Character-Driven Fiction*. Regardless of the genre, good fiction is driven by character. Learn how to structure your scenes and your story by driving them with well developed characters. Topics include external and internal conflict, character traits and voice, scene structure, deep point of view and focused dialogue. A character writing exercise and critique of participant manuscripts will help you get the most from this workshop.

For other conference updates and links to the presenters' websites, please check <
<http://www.mcwc.org>>.

HELP SPREAD THE WORD

We've printed up some very attractive bookmarks with information about the 2009 Mendocino Coasts Writers Conference. If you could help spread the word about our great conference by dropping a handful off at your local library and/or bookstore, or passing them out to members of your writing group, please email news@mcwc.org and tell us how many you could distribute.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jennie Orvino (2002 participant) is the producer of a two-day workshop, *Telling Difficult Stories*, March 7 and 8 at Orchard Spotlight in Santa Rosa. Facilitators are Elizabeth Ellis and Loren Niemi. For more information, email jennio@sonic.net.

MCWC COMMUNITY LITERARY NEWS

Luis Rodriguez reports that **Elizabeth Alexander**, the African American poet who read a poem at the Inauguration of President Barack Obama, is one of the best selling authors of Tia Chucha Press, which Rodriguez founded twenty years ago. Her book *Body of Life* was published by Tia Chucha Press in 1996.

Ian Schoenherr, upcoming 2009 conference presenter, received a nice review of his forthcoming book, *Read It, Don't Eat It*, in the *School Library Journal* blog <<http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/blog/1790000379/post/1850040185.html>>.

Robert D. San Souci, who presented at MCWC in 2002 and 2003, announces the publication of *As Luck Would Have It*, a children's picture book. His brother Daniel San Souci is the illustrator.

Ellen Sussman, our Soundings reading/workshop presenter last fall, has an essay in the February issue of *Good Housekeeping*.

Kat Meads, who presented at MCWC in 2002 and 2007, tells us her collection of brief fictions, *Little Pockets of Alarm*, is now available from Main Street Rag Publishing Company.

Camille Dungy, who was on our Paths to Publishing panel at last year's conference, is happy to report that she had three poems published in the January/February issue of *American Poetry Review*, and A Room of Her Own Foundation featured her book *What to Eat, What to Drink, What to Leave for Poison* in their winter book club along with one by Rita Dove. A poem she published in *Jubilat* was also picked up by *Poetry Daily* <<http://poems.com/>>. Camille comments: "That's one more example of how perseverance can pay off. I've been sending that poem out for at least a couple of years, and now it's out in the world and flourishing on its own."

MCWC Advisory Board member and presenter (2006 and 2008) **Jody Gehrman** says her second Young Adult novel, *Triple Shot Bettys in Love*, is in stores now.

John Lescroart (presenter 2001, 2004 and 2007) is featured this month in *Narrative Magazine* <<http://narrativemagazine.com/>>.

MCWC board member **Maureen Eppstein** has a poem in the current issue of *Calyx*.