

# Winter Wheat 2017 Sessions Schedule

## FRIDAY 3:00-4:15 PM, SESSION A

### **A1. Caution! Bringing Crime and Creative Writing Together** with Annie Cigic

This workshop is for those who enjoy writing fiction and narratives in the form of a ballad. It brings imagination, crime, and creative writing in unison. There will be hardcopy examples of well-known murder ballads to help spark inspiration. We will also explore some of the most famous, unanswered crimes and write our murder ballads based on them.

### **A2. Beginnings. Where and How Does Your Story Start?** with Brad Felver

This session will aim to differentiate between strong story openings and weak ones. What makes one compelling and the other forgettable? How can you catch the eye of readers (and editors!) without relying on gimmicks? How much pressure is fair to place upon a story's beginning? We will look at famous beginnings, as well as some lesser-known ones, as we discuss how exactly they are juggling all the various demands. Finally, we will spend some time writing some new beginnings of our own.

### **A3. When the Character Isn't Comic: Creating Complicated Heroes** with Kiera Gaswint and Theodora Hannan

Heroes are not always happy-go-lucky or completely pure examples of virtue. Creating dimension, flaws, and expanding beyond tropes is vital to writing good characters. We will explore how to accomplish this in craft through the examples of Major in *Ghost in the Shell* and Tony Stark in *Iron Man*. Major, while presented sexually, does not engage in many traditional "gender qualities," and her robotic nature problematizes her gender and moral roles as a female hero. Conversely, Tony Stark is a masculinized figure primarily through his robotics; however, even those qualities are overshadowed by the mental illnesses he grapples with over time. We hope these two examples will provide a varied backdrop for a fruitful conversation about creating strong characters with foibles.

### **A4. So Speak the Elders: Historical Roots of Poetry in Northwest Ohio in the 1970s and 1980s: A Poetic Inquiry** with Jane Piirto, Howard McCord, and Joel Lipman

Howard McCord was the first director of the MFA Program in Creative Writing at Bowling Green State University. He has lived in Bowling Green since 1970. Joel Lipman was a co-founder of the Toledo Poets Center and is a past poet laureate [2008-14] of Lucas County. The primary poet at the University of Toledo for many years, he still lives in Toledo and is active in the poetic scene. Jane Piirto had a small poetry press in Bowling Green in the 1970s and early 1980s when she lived in Bowling Green while getting her Ph.D. Piirto will interview McCord and Lipman about these days in this region. All three will read poems written at this time and share documents published then, for example, the anthology of regional poets edited by Lipman, *Glass Will and Testament* (1986). The historical take of these poet-elders on the Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam Anti-war Movement, the Sexual Revolution, and the Women's Liberation Movement, will be among the topics.



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## **A5. Up the Hill: The Absurd and the Day to Day** with Nicholas Rys

These days, we are bludgeoned with news headlines that read more like absurdist farce than the daily news. However, in spite of all this, we wash dishes, go to work, and continue on with our daily rituals because what other choice do we have? In a world full of caricature world leaders, melting ice caps, and almost continual upheaval, our daily tasks take on a level of insignificance. And yet we continue to push our rock up the hill. This presentation will explore the collision of the mundane and the absurd, and allow space to produce work exploring these two (seemingly) opposing notions.

## **A6. Can-Do Tips for Writing a Play** with Kelly Boyer Sagert

In *15 Can-Do Tips for Writing a Play*, Kelly Boyer Sagert will share a practical way to write a script. Attendees will have the opportunity to create a time and place for their plays, identify a burning question, brainstorm the main character, and begin to sketch out a plot. This method balances research and structure with opening yourself up to creativity and intuition, and works well even if you've never written a play before.

## **A7. Speaking of Death: Dialogue & Funerals in Fiction** with Dr. Kasie Whitener

Funerals are cliché and all editors will tell writers to avoid them. However, what if we just did a better job with them? This workshop provides samples of good and bad funeral conversations in fiction. Dr. Whitener will provide a checklist for evaluating effective funeral dialogue and some “shan’ts” and “musts” for novice and emerging writers. Learners will then practice their own. Seasoned and journeymen writers will enjoy this chance to break through clichéd treatments of death in fiction.

## **FRIDAY 4:30-5:45 PM, SESSION B**

### **B1. From Start to Finish: Publishing a New Literary Journal** with Jenna Bush and Ashley Meihls

What is it that gives a literary magazine the edge it needs to succeed? The panelists will be discussing this question while exploring their experience as editors with *Asterism*. In a workshop portion of the panel, we will discuss some of the criteria that was considered when looking at submissions and give attendees an opportunity to workshop some of their pieces.

### **B2. The Art of Poetry Translation** with Erin Carlyle

This workshop explores the art of poetry translation. As writers, we will discuss how a work changes when it is translated into another language. The translator brings their own interpretation of a work, which becomes a collaboration with the original poem. We will be reading and discussing theories of translation, and reading several different translations. Time will be allotted to practice translation. Participants are encouraged to bring a laptop and/or a language dictionary of your choice.



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## **B3. Mind Cartography: Exploring Your Brain with Poetry** with Dan Gualtieri

Using poetry to write about how our minds work is difficult; numerous mental barriers and distractions make it difficult for us to write honestly about our own mental processes. In this writing-intensive workshop, you will be introduced to an exercise that can begin to get around those barriers. We will use free association to create a dense visual landscape of words that represent your brain, which we will then begin to explore by writing poetry.

## **B4. ISO: A Complex Portrayal of Mental Illness in Fiction** with Kari Hanlin

The goal of this workshop is to focus on creating authentic portrayals of mentally ill characters in fiction; not mere caricatures. We will look at examples of accurate depictions in literature, discuss the archetypes of mentally ill characters, and build complex, nuanced characters that are more than an illness. We will examine the techniques authors use to create mentally ill characters in literature, including Holden Caulfield, Esther Greenwood, and Charlie from *Perks.* This session will include time to write, share, and ask questions of each other's characters.

## **B5. Dialogue like White Elephants** with Nick Heeb

Whether you're an aspiring short story writer, novelist, screenwriter, or poet, you'll receive excellent practice honing the very difficult art of writing dialogue. This workshop will challenge you to improve the dialogue of your characters by having their voices tell a story, not the narrator. By exploring excerpts from great stories and novels which use dialogue almost exclusively, we will discover ways to make the dialogue of your characters pop. So, bring your favorite characters, and see where their own words take the story you've been dying to tell!

## **B6. Smashing Writer's Block and Deepening the Drama: A Guide to using Improvisation Techniques from Music and Theatre** by Dr. Conor Nelson and Dorothy Ellen Palmer

Improvisation, using both music and words, offers writers a relaxed, interdisciplinary approach to combat the dreaded blank page of writer's block, to build voice and character by deepening the drama. This is a fully-interactive, audience-participation workshop where writing is improvised on the spot and writers come away with practical techniques to use at home. It's suitable for every genre; no musical or theatrical background is required.

## **B7. Characters in Culture** with Hadeel Salameh

We want our characters to be as three-dimensional as we are, but how do we do this in a way that fairly represents our characters' complex lives? Considering our characters' ideals, demographic backgrounds, and cultural origins is key to fitting in their shoes to share their story. In this workshop, we will zoom in on a specific culture of origin and open our minds to writing in perspectives seen from that culture. We will discuss how to be open to all cultures in our writing and practice shaping out unique characters.



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**SATURDAY, 9:00-4:00**

## **Bookfair**

Visit regional presses and programs.

## **Quiet/Sensory Room**

Experience inspiration of individual senses, or quiet time to write.

## **SATURDAY 9:30-10:45 AM, SESSION C**

### **C1. Rattle the Tracks of Your Train of Thought: On Defamiliarization** with Katy Cesarotti

*"We are creatures of habit; given a blank we can't help trying to fill it in along lines of customary seeing or saying. But the best poetic lines...rattle the tracks of your trains of thoughts."*—Heather McHugh

Clichés become mental shortcuts to generalized, vague experiences. When we write that a character sees fireworks or sees stars or sees red, the reader's mind automatically creates a generic image, disengaging from the specifics of our stories. In this workshop, we will examine how we can use the technique of defamiliarization to render ordinary objects fresh and draw readers into our fictional worlds.

### **C2. Collaborative Brainstorming** with Madeline Grigg

As part of a collaborative brainstorming exercise based on tabletop games like D&D, writers will be given tools (dice, characters, and a setting) and a dilemma that they will resolve as group. The writers must translate the results of dice rolls into narrative consequences to propel their ideas in interesting directions. If the character writers encounter a lull in plot-generation, writers can create an appropriate new dilemma or draw from a dilemma jar. Ideally, a good session will result in complex situations and surprising, creative solutions, as well as unique perspectives from each writer involved in the dilemma.

### **C3. Yoga for Poets** with Marcy Meyer

In this workshop, participants will experiment with reading poems out loud while practicing yoga postures, to integrate mind, body, and voice. By pairing a contemplative poem with a seated posture, a poem about seeking balance with the tree pose, or a poem about letting go with the corpse pose, we can experience a poem by feeling it in our bodies. By bringing our attention to the embodied experience of reading poetry while practicing yoga, we can push the boundaries of the spoken word to a new level of body, mind, and voice integration. Through yoga poetry, we can transform the primarily vocal experience of reading poetry into a eurhythmic practice of performing poetry in motion. The session will conclude with a discussion in which participants will explore the implications of yoga poetry for teaching, creative inquiry, and work-life balance.



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## **C4. Identity Collage: Places of Origin/Places of Residency** with Bonnie Nish

How does your place of origin factor into the world around you? What have you kept with you and what have you discarded? These poetry exercises will help you to delve further into yourself to find the things you might not be paying attention to that could add to your writing voice. It will help you to build a bridge between your rich inner and outer worlds, and your past and present. Let the words fall onto the page as we discover how our heritage can enrich our writing and communities to engage us in new ways.

## **C5. Crash Course on Cover Letters, Bios, and All Things Submittable** with Remi Recchia and Roseanna Boswell

The goal of this workshop is to provide Winter Wheat attendees with the fundamentals of submitting their creative work to literary journals and magazines. Following a brief presentation, there will be time for a discussion and a Q&A session. Workshop participants will then draft their own submission materials and share them with others for analysis and critique. Other facets of the submission process addressed may include organization and professionalism.

## **C6. Writing from the Deep: Deep Sea, Deep Space, and the Dark Places within the Human Imagination** with E.B. Schnepf

Writers spend the bulk of their time plunging into the depths of human consciousness and pushing the boundaries of not only what a character can take or be, but where a poem or story could take the reader. This will be multi-genre workshop looking at writing experiences within the mysterious spaces of human consciousness through writers of space such as Italo Calvino, Dana Levin, and Tracy K. Smith.

## **SATURDAY 11:00-12:15 AM, SESSION D**

### **D1. How Choice Shapes Fiction and Recognizing Opportunities in Revision** with Bridget Adams and Rebecca Orchard

What makes writing feel vivid and real? From Madame Bovary to Holden Caulfield, some characters live in our heads forever, and great writers make readers feel present on a rainy Paris street or atop a bloody rampart. How do we take our first drafts and develop our characters and deepen our worlds? How do we know what details make our writing sing? It all comes down to choices. In this workshop, we'll discuss some unforgettable writing, generate material, and speed-revise it in a supporting environment into urgent, dynamic, memorable prose.

### **D2. Self-Publishing** With Colette Arrand

Join BGSU MFA alumna Colette Arrand as she discusses merits and practices of self-publishing.



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## **D3. Using Prompts to Create Scenes and Character in Fiction** with Susanne Jaffe

A prompt is a method to jumpstart your creative juices, and to get you thinking about the possibilities for a story, a character, a plot, or a scene. It is an effective tool whose primary purpose is to inspire a writer's vision, not replace it. The class will consist of a great deal of writing in response to various prompts—usually short, maybe 500 words—and then reading a few of them out loud.

## **D4. Placing our Writing in Love and Complexity** with Margaret McKeon

What does it mean for us to listen deeply to place? What are our connections and responsibilities in terms of the places that mark and are marked by our lives? For this workshop, I'll share poetry and music connected to both the joy and pain of experiencing land as provocation for a writing session where we touch and feel place knowing. After meeting in our assigned room, we will head outside to encounter the land and write at a number of stops.

## **D5. Writing the Fallout Story** with Eric Wasserman

Bitter breakups, nasty divorces, super close friendships gone bad, great workplace colleagues becoming enemies, once tight siblings no longer speaking, former chummy neighbors despising one another. Any of these sound familiar? Have you gone through the fallout of a relationship? Do you want to write fiction about it but can't get beyond your personal history? In this writing intensive workshop, we will explore specific techniques to help you create autobiographical fiction about a fallout you had in order to make the fabricated rendition similar to the real experience, but different enough to free yourself artistically so that it doesn't just read as a revenge story.

## **D6. Writing with Social Media** with Allison K. Williams

Social media--platform--building readership--too often, these feel like a distraction from our "real" work, or like we're shouting into a void. But it's possible to use social media to improve our craft and bring joy to our day and momentum to our career. We'll write sample posts that use social media purposefully and meaningfully and learn how Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram, Facebook, and blogging can be part of our literary world.

## **SATURDAY 1:30-2:45 PM, SESSION E**

## **E1. Brainstorming the Novel** with Lawrence Coates

"Brainstorming the Novel" will be a discussion/workshop on conceiving and developing your novel idea. The presentation will feature an outline of the seven basic plots, some guided exercises that can be shared, and some questions that can be used to strengthen your idea or the manuscript you're currently working on.



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## **E2. Drawing the Line Between “Real” and “Fake” in Non-Fiction Creative Writing** with Sarah Kiepper

This session invites discussion on where to draw the line between non-fiction events, and creative non-fiction portrayals of those events, considering also, date, time, place, and characters. The group will explore real events, details of the events, and what is missing, but integral to the story. Participants will have an opportunity for writing individually or as a group to create the missing information for multiple event examples. A discussion on research ideas and sources for non-fiction event pieces will also be incorporated.

## **E3. Community Comic Creation** with Anthony Lograsso

Together we will work to create a single, cohesive comic strip. The group will create a single story and then each individual or small group of individuals will make each panel before putting it all together. Such an activity is a prime example of writing in a group or community. With each individual or small group creating a panel, we should have enough time to complete a full comic strip with different drawing styles.

## **E4. The Art of Ekphrastic Poetry** with Anna Short

The Ekphrastic Poetry Workshop will explore ekphrastic poetry, poetry written with the inspiration of visual artwork that creates a narrative or expands on the imagery of the art piece. Brief discussion revolving around the ties between visual art and poetry will be held and the rest of the time will be used to create poems from the painting “Landscape with the Fall of Icarus” and then time to share and discuss how everyone went about writing this poem and the similarities and differences present in everyone’s work.

## **E5. Stigma and Social Identity** with Anne Weyer

Anne Tyler has cited Erving Goffman, the Canadian-American sociologist as being central to her character development. In this workshop, we will explore the relationship between stigma and social identity and how we can use Goffman’s work to illuminate the connection that our characters have between their self-perception and their perception of the world around them, with a focus on stigmatized individuals. Hidden motivations can be illuminated through the perceptions of various characters. How will your character behave based on their own perceived place in the world, and how does that mesh with how other characters in your world perceive them?

## **E6. Self-Edit Like a Pro** with Allison Williams

Editors and agents see common, time-consuming, but fixable issues in most manuscripts they receive. When a writer can identify these elements, their work will be cleaner, more readable, and more likely to receive an acceptance. By working technically, the ‘darlings’ aren’t so hard to kill. By being mindful of writing habits and actively choosing techniques that serve the work, you can teach yourself to write better—for free. Bring 3-5 pages of a work-in-progress on a flash drive, that same work-in-progress printed out, and your bravery. We’ll edit each other, and Allison will do a live sample-edit for some courageous volunteers.



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## **E7. Sitting with the Sestina** with Jessica Zinz-Cheresnick

In this workshop, participants will explore the traditional sestina, a spiraling and mystifying poetic form. We will sit comfortably next to traditional form, but then we will work to make it new. Participants will take on this form in a new light, but with the traditional purpose.

## **SATURDAY 3:00-4:15 PM, SESSION F**

## **F1. Spinning Gold from Dross: On The Uses of Bad Art** with Sam Adams

Enough with emulation. How should artists orient themselves toward art they find repellent, dumb, or annoying? We'll investigate parodies, pastiches, and spoofs, but we'll focus on appropriating parts of lesser works to build our own (superior) works. Come prepared to write glittering stuff sourced straight from our cultural junkyard.

## **F2. Brevity As a State, Not a Destination: an Inquiry Into Flash Fiction** with Christopher Bowen

Have you heard of the shortest novel? Hemingway is often attributed to writing it. "For sale: baby shoes, never worn." How can we, as writers, see the pitches, climaxes, and emotional arcs of our storylines more concretely? How does editing out unnecessary words change its emotional effect? Attention is worth something to a reader. It's what makes us writers of emotional and verbal storytelling. In this workshop, we'll begin by discussing the affects and intentions our writing has emotionally on the reader and, after a small session, how best to edit out what isn't needed for clarity and profundity.

## **F3. Collaborative Writing** with Sarah Kiepper

In the spirit of community and coming together, this session invites discussion on collaborative writing and explores plagiarism's relationship to team-writing. Participants will have an opportunity for writing in a joint-writing practice where the creation of a writing piece is shared. The group will then decide what is whose.

## **F4. Undergraduate Editor's Roundtable** with *Prairie Margins*

Join the staff of *Prairie Margins*, a national undergraduate journal in print for over fifty years, to talk about what it's like to be an undergraduate editor, how to develop professionally as an editor, and how to deal with some of the controversies now affecting the publishing world.

## **F5. Love and Protest: Writing Poetry in Turbulent Times** with Andrew and Donora A. Rihn

As the rhetoric of the current administration roils and as many dig in their ideological heels, what room is there for poetry? This workshop will answer that question, as writers needn't retreat from the political, but can engage it with both power and nuance. Andrew and Donora A. Rihn, recent co-authors of the poetry chapbook *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell: An Election Cycle*, will offer techniques to avoid affectively-anemic political poetry that merely rants. Participants will engage the



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political through love and protest and will each leave with a draft that surges with the muscle of the human heart.

### **F6. The Opposite of Forgetting: Poetry, Truth, and Memory** with Gisela Ruebsaat & Heather McLeod

In 1977, Amnesty invited US poet Carolyn Forché to visit El Salvador. Forché later wrote “The Colonel,” a poem about a dinner at the home of a military figure in El Salvador. The poem combines details about the mundane act of eating, with the shocking detail of a sack of human ears being emptied onto the dinner table. Forché described her time in El Salvador as a “baptism” for the poet, as her political and moral education. This workshop explores the role poetic “remembering” plays in shaping perception. Participants will craft poems based on experiences which shaped their moral/political outlook

### **F7. Immediate Response** with Dara Wier

We struggle to find urgently necessary words. We say, “It took my breath away,” “there are no words to ...,” “there’s not really anything to say about that,” “I can’t find words for,” “words cannot do justice to ...,” “I have nothing to say about that,” and as John Cage memorably said, “I have nothing to say and I’m saying it.” In this workshop, there will be 9-18 minutes of writing from 3 different angles, and with various intentions. The rest of our time will be for focused conversation.

