

Wyoming Writers, Inc. 2023 Conference Schedule

Friday, June 2nd

7:00am - Registration table opens. Vendor tables open.

8:00am -- 8:45am - Coffee and networking hour.

9:00am -- 10:15am - Plenary welcome session including an address by Mayor Collins of Cheyenne.

10:30am -- Noon - Critique Tables.

Noon -- 1:15pm - Lunch (on your own, but lunching with your fellow attendees is encouraged)

1:00pm -- Bookstore opens.

1:30pm -- 3:00pm - Breakout sessions.

Writing What You Know: Using Autobiography as Fiction presented by Nina McConigley

The old adage is to write what you know. Which is great -- but as fiction writers, it's sometimes safer to fictionalize what you know. In this craft class, we'll talk about how to take real life experience and fictionalize it. Looking at published texts and with in-class writing we'll discover how to write about what you know -- and how to use the truth to go into imaginary places.

Increasing Creativity presented by Bill Downs

Writers aren't always in the mood to write, and flashes of inspiration can be few and far between, so forget the notion that writing can be done only when inspired by the Muse. This session looks at creativity and the many ways writers can be inspired to increase their creativity.

Romancing the Book presented by Bernadette Soehner

Take a deeper look into what elements and tropes are expected in a romance novel. We will discuss heat waves, closed doors, and romantic elements that will keep your readers turning pages and picking up your books.

3:15pm -- 5:15pm - Critique Tables

5:00pm - Bookstore closes

5:30pm -- 6:45pm - Dinner on your own. Food trucks and entertainment available nearby as part of Friday on the Plaza

7:00pm -- 8:30pm - Open mic

Saturday, June 3rd

8:00am - Registration table opens. Vendor tables open.

8:00am -- 8:45am - Coffee and networking hour

9:00am - Bookstore opens.

9:00am -- 10:15am - General membership meeting including board elections for the 2023-2024 year.

10:30am -- 11:45am - Breakout sessions.

Creating Character presented by Nina McConigley

At the center of any story is a character. In this workshop, you will learn how to create believable fictional characters and construct scenes with emotional depth and range. We will start from scratch in character development and create characters that our readers will want to know more about and spend time on the page with.

Genres, Tropes, and Word Counts: Knowing What You Write, Who It's For, and How to Deliver the Goods presented by Angie Hodapp

Building a career as a fiction writer is just like building a career in any other field: success comes with knowing your customers and delivering a product or experience that exceeds their expectations and keeps them coming back for more. So how do you begin? In this class, we'll define top-level fiction categories (commercial, upmarket, literary),

and then drill down to dozens of genres and subgenres. Why do these labels exist? Does your book really have to fit into a neat little box? What about cross-genre novels or those breakout genre-busters that defy all categorization? Next we'll examine tropes—familiar character types, settings, situations, and storylines—and talk about how to use them to attract readers without lapsing into cliché or derivation. Finally, we'll look at target word counts for each major genre. How long should your manuscript be, and why does word count matter so much to agents, editors, publishers, librarians, and booksellers? Whether you're seeking a traditional publishing deal or planning to publish independently, knowing how to talk about where your work sits on the vast literary landscape will not only help you find readers, it will help readers find you.

Story Arc Mapping for the Recovering Pantser presented by Bernadette Soehner

A trip is always better when you have a road map, and a story isn't much different. In this workshop we will walk through different visual methods of plotting, from brain dumps to plotting graphs that will help you plan out your next manuscript. By mapping out your story arc, you're giving yourself a map to a better story, easily dissected points to create a blurb, and a tidy list to create a synopsis—not to mention a map to make sure you stay on track while creating your masterpiece. In this workshop we will learn how to map out a story without giving up that free for all pantser attitude.

Noon -- 1:15pm - Lunch and Awards

1:30pm -- 3:00pm - Breakout sessions.

Applying Writing Techniques to Real Life presented by Bill Downs

Writers create interesting stories and happy endings, but their personal lives are sometimes messy. Some storytelling techniques can help make our lives more enjoyable, and some have the potential lead us to damage. Perhaps we write so that we can escape into the worlds of our characters, but why can't our story and character techniques be applied to our lives? In this session, we will look at the short story that is daily existence to apply some philosophical ideas from great thinkers; we can then improve personal character and the story.

What It Is and Why You Need It presented by Angie Hodapp

What is theme, why does your story need it, and how can you go about developing it? Working from a list of more than 100 thematic pairs, we'll shoot straight to the heart of your characters' core beliefs and values, and practice mapping their internal story arcs. Then we'll learn strategies for plotting, revising, and strengthening scene craft with an eye toward developing meaningful thematic takeaways.

Improve Your Metaphors and Similes presented by Matt Mason

Metaphors and Similes are among the first things we will list when we name the building blocks of a poem. Good ones give us something to visualize as well as something to feel, so they save us space on the page and make our poems more effective.

3:15pm -- 5:15pm - Breakout sessions.

How to Approach Poetry When We Teach it and Talk About it presented by Matt Mason

Poetry has suffered over the past hundred years, going from something people read and memorized for fun to some intimidating mystical thing which alienates most students. Let's talk about getting poetry back to something which can be entertaining and accessible.

Comma, Semicolon, Hyphen, Dash: One Hour to Better Mechanics presented by Angie Hodapp

Come get all your burning questions about proper punctuation answered! Appropriate for both fiction and nonfiction writers, this class will survey the differences between grammar and mechanics and cover 17 punctuation rules you can immediately put to use in your work.

Rejection to Publishing presented by Nina McConigley

This workshop will be a bare bones workshop on publishing. How to craft cover letters to magazines, and help with querying agents.

6:00pm -- 7:15pm - Banquet and Keynote Address by Matt Mason.

6:30pm - Bookstore closes.

Sunday, June 4th

8:00am -- 8:45am - Coffee and Networking hour.

8:30am - Bookstore opens.

9:00am - 10:30am - Breakout sessions.

Putting Humor in the Poem presented by Matt Mason

We often don't think of poetry as something that should make you laugh, but we should. Poetry is a form of cultural storytelling and emotional understanding, and humor can be an important part of that, even in poems about serious subject matter.

The Formula of Non-Formulaic Writing presented by Bill Downs

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Introduction to Independent Publishing presented by Bernadette Soehner

Explore the process of publishing your own books and taking control of your publishing career. This workshop will give you the basics to create the to-do list that dreams are made of. You will learn about pre-publicity, the tools you'll need, how to choose an editor, what to consider when formatting, and different publishing models. Come prepared to take in a lot of information and all of the possibilities that independently publishing offers you.

10:30am - Bookstore closes.

10:45am -- 12:30pm - Paddle Panel

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Jo Ferguson

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