

2024 WORKSHOP & EVENT DESCRIPTIONS

Authors taking part in - Blue Pencil



Café Lit



Panel Discussion



Presentations/Workshops by presenter

ANGIE ABDOU



Saturday, Seymour, 10:00 - 11:15

Breaking Up with Writer's Block

Perfection is the enemy of good. Too often what gets in between you and that first draft is clinging to the perfect idea that exists only in your head. Getting an idea from your imagination to the paper is messy. This workshop will explore writing techniques that will get and keep you writing. Participants will work through a series of exercises that will result in an early draft of a short story (fiction or nonfiction).

Saturday, Balmoral, 3:45 - 5:00

How to Hook and Hold Your Reader

This workshop will ask the hard questions: Why should anyone care about your story? What makes your writing worthy of a reader's valuable time? With the always-increasing demands on everyone's time, energy, and attention, writers must remember readers do not owe you anything. How can you shape and craft your fiction or nonfiction to ensure that it hooks readers and holds them fast until the last word?

KAREN BARNSTABLE



Saturday, Seymour, 3:45 - 5:00

Sunday, Okanagan College - Room 134, 10:45 - 12:00

Writing Memoir: A Spa for Your Soul

This workshop will focus on the therapeutic benefits of writing about your life and lead you to discover five key elements of your memoir. Each of the five sections includes an activity that will engage you in mini-writing activities, help you make decisions about your memoir, and jumpstart your memoir writing process.

Topics:

1. Choose the Ambience - The 'Why' of your memoir
2. Choose the Aroma - Theme or message
3. Choose the Focus Areas - Where to begin, where to end
4. Choose the Pressure Points - What to Include, what to leave out
5. Choose the Impact - The potential of your memoir and Target Audience

If time allows, there will also be a Q and A at the end of this session, so come prepared to ask about any aspect of memoir writing.

CHRIS BRAUER

Saturday, Hudson, 10:00 - 11:15

Sunday, Okanagan College - Room 141, 12:30 - 1:45

The Winding Path of Self-Publishing: From Idea to Book in Hand

Do you have a great story or memoir knocking about your melon, or sketched out in a battered leather journal? Wondering how to best turn these ramblings into a physical book? This workshop will offer dozens of tips and tricks from brainstorming to goal-setting to formatting to marketing and everything in between. For the true beginner to those needing gentle prodding on their path, participants can expect to be inspired, challenged, and encouraged.

DAVID BROWN



Saturday, Seymour, 11:30 - 12:45

Like Me, Love Me - Social Media Engagement for Authors

Marketing yourself as an author on social media is a lot like characterization. In this collaborative workshop, we will pick apart some winning strategies for self-promotion and explore how to authentically engage your audience while maintaining your unique voice. As Bill Gates wrote back in 1996, "Content is king." Coming up with a content strategy that suits your personality AND appeals to your audience is the first step toward organic book sales.

Saturday, Hudson, 3:45 - 5:00

ChatGPT: Cheat-mode or Collaborative Tool?

Amazon KDP recently capped the number of publications per account per day to three—that's how many books people have been churning out with the help of generative AI. One of my clients recently sent me a manuscript that clearly had been written with the chatbot's help. There's a lot of doom and gloom about the impact AI is going to have on artists, and yet it's here to stay. In other words, get on board or get left behind. But how can we leverage this tool in a way that doesn't compromise artistic integrity? In this workshop, we will look at the collaborative potential of generative AI (think assistant, not ghost writer), the new art of prompt engineering, and we'll also discuss implications for the future of our industry.

CORINNA CHONG



Saturday, Monashee, 10:00 - 11:15

Sunday, Okanagan College - Room 141, 10:45-12:00

Narrative Structure: The Bones of a Great Story

"Act I, get your guy up a tree. Act II, throw rocks at him. Act III, get your guy outta the tree."

—Julius Epstein

Anyone can tell a story, but telling a great story is no easy feat. While having a strong premise and compelling characters are important, structure—how the various parts of the story are sequenced and arranged in relation to one another—plays an integral role in building a great story. In this workshop, we will examine structural models that can be applied to narratives of all forms (including short stories, novels, and films), as well as tap into the key structural approaches that can help writers create and maintain momentum, push past the dreaded middle slump, and build towards a cohesive manuscript.

S.M. FREEDMAN



Saturday, Hudson, 11:30 - 12:45

Make your Story a Page Turner: Add Tension to your Writing by Tapping into Fear.

No matter what genre you're writing, tapping into fear will take your story to the next level. Join Shoshona (S.M.) Freedman, a Globe and Mail Top 100 Best Books of 2022 award-winning author of mysteries and thrillers, for a workshop on how to make your story a page turner.

Sunday, Okanagan College - Room 136, 10:45 - 12:00

Finding An Agent: Guidance From an Author Who's Survived the Query Trenches – Twice!

The search for an agent can be overwhelming, confusing, and frustrating. In this workshop, Shoshona (S.M.) Freedman will walk you through a step-by-step guide on what to do (and what not to do) when searching for an agent. Learn from her successes *and* her mistakes! Topics we'll cover include: Do I need an agent? What does an agent do (and not do) for an author? How do I choose which agents I should query? How should I query? What strategies can I employ to increase my chances of success? What should I do when an agent offers me representation? I've accepted an offer of representation, now what happens?

CONOR KERR



Saturday, Monashee, 11:30 - 12:45

Sunday, Okanagan College - Room 136, 12:30 - 1:45

Holding Voice Through Poetry

This discussion will talk about family memory within landscapes and the natural environments that we move within. Participants can expect a discussion around what it means to create poetry and write voice that echoes both a modern and historical perspective and how those interweave to craft narrative poetry that moves mountains.

LORNA SCHULTZ NICHOLSON



Saturday, Seymour, 2:30 - 3:45

Creating voice!

How do you create a strong voice, a unique voice, a realistic voice in your writing? Editors are always looking for the voice that speaks to them when they acquire a project. Every character in a story, including minor characters, should have distinct voices so the reader can interpret the personality of the character. Join Lorna Schultz Nicholson as she gives writing tips and techniques to create the voice that speaks!

Sunday, Okanagan College - Room 134, 12:30 - 1:45

Kids and teens love to read!

Do you have a fiction or non-fiction idea that you think would be great for kids or teens? Have you written a book for young readers but don't know how to get it published? What about that picture book scurrying around your brain? Join children's author Lorna Schultz Nicholson to learn the ins and outs of

how to get a book from idea to publication. This session will include advice ranging from picture books to young adult novels, and everything in between.

ROBERT J. SAWYER



Official Opening

Keynote Saturday: Why Everyone Should Read Science Fiction

Ballroom, 9:30 – 9:45

Science fiction is not what you think. Since the dawn of the genre, SF has been at the forefront of social-justice debates. If you suppose you know what science fiction is all about because you've seen *Star Wars*, join Robert J. Sawyer— “the dean of Canadian science fiction” according to the *Ottawa Citizen*— who will show that *Star Wars* isn't science fiction, and introduce you to *real* SF, a profound mode of storytelling . . . invented over 200 years ago by a woman.

Saturday, Hudson, 2:30 - 3:45

The Intimately Human and the Grandly Cosmic

Making your science fiction appeal not just to the mind but to the heart as well. The number-one reason mainstream readers don't even try science fiction is they think it has nothing to offer them emotionally: they wrongly believe that it's either too dry and intellectual or that any character development is sketchy, and any character drama is simplistic and juvenile. But the best science fiction is as emotionally complex, as heart-wrenching, as moving, and as uplifting as the best mainstream fiction. Learn how to balance both halves of the term “science fiction” without giving short-shrift to either.

Sunday, Okanagan College - Room 130, 12:30 - 1:45

Sunday Morning Conversation with Robert J. Sawyer: The Writing Life: Past, Present, and Future

Robert J. Sawyer has been a full-time fiction writer for over 30 years. He sold his first short story in 1980 and his first novel in 1990. Join him as he looks back at the hard lessons learned from decades in publishing. An acclaimed futurist, he'll also peer ahead to see how writers might continue to make livings in the decades to come while considering the impact artificial intelligence will have on the very idea of being an author.

Sunday, Okanagan College - Room 130, 12:30 - 1:45

A Thematic Approach to Writing

Many of the biggest bestsellers—including Dan Brown, John Grisham, and the late Michael Crichton—are thematically driven. Starting by picking your theme—the topic you want to explore and what you want your message to be—provides a powerful catalyst for developing both compelling plots and unforgettable characters.

SHARI ULRICH



Saturday Night Entertainment

MASTER CLASS: The Magic of Songwriting

Part One: Saturday, Balmoral, 10:00 - 11:15

Part Two: Saturday, Balmoral, 11:30 - 12:45

Songwriting is an exciting and dynamic marriage of words and music and a creative process that I find endlessly fascinating. The atmosphere will be a very comfortable and safe space. While I invite and encourage participants who would like to bring a song or lyrics to read - to do so, anyone is welcome. Bringing your work in whatever form is a wonderful vehicle to talk about all the different principles in

songwriting – what works and doesn't work and why. (Though preferably not songs already professionally recorded.) The songs can be played in person, or if recorded onto a CD or thumb drive, can be shared that way. Please bring at least one copy of the lyrics for pieces you are sharing with you to the workshop.

SHERI-D WILSON   **Saturday Night Entertainment**

Saturday, Balmoral, 2:30 - 3:45

Writing Across Genres - Laboratory

After we discuss what crossing genres means, we'll explore the idea of mixing genres, then we'll discuss the synergy of putting them together into one piece as a way to develop your own unique voice. Please bring writing tools.

Sunday, Okanagan College, Room 130, 10:45 - 12:00

Conjuring Characters - Atelier

In this workshop, we will explore tips on how to bring your characters to life. We will include elements of poetry and dialogue. Please bring writing tools.

Special Guest

KENTHEN THOMAS, Saturday Night Entertainment

Story teller, a proud member of the Secwepemc Nation.

Saturday, Ballroom, 9:00-9:45 am

Opening Ceremony Welcome

Ballroom 6.00-10:00 pm

Saturday Night Vibe.

SPECIAL EVENTS

May 17 Friday

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm REGISTRATION Hotel lobby

7:00 pm -10:00 pm Café Lit Ballroom - doors open @ 6.45 PM. M.C. Shirley DeKolver Authors present readings/performances from their own work. Included in registration. Public Tickets available at the door \$30

May 18 Saturday

9:00 am Ballroom. Official Opening: Mayor of Salmon Arm, Kenthen Thomas: Welcome to Secwépemc Territory. Keynote: Robert J. Sawyer: Why Everyone Should Read Science Fiction

2:30 - 3:45 Monashee Panel: AI: Love it, Hate it, or Tolerate it?

Angie Abdou, David Brown, S.M. Freedman, Robert J. Sawyer, Deanna Kawatski, (Moderator)

6:00 pm Ballroom: Banquet

6:30 - 7:30 pm Ballroom: Askews' Foods Word on the Lake Writing Contest Awards Ceremony. Winners of the Fiction, Non-Fiction and Poetry categories. Prizes include cash from Askews' Foods, a free festival pass, and a copy of the 2024 Anthology. Hear the winners read from their work and comments from the judges.

7:30 - 10:00 pm Ballroom Gala Event Saturday Night Vibe!

Entertainment: Kenthen Thomas, Storyteller. Sheri-D Wilson, Spoken Word, Shari Ulrich, Musician.

May 19 Sunday Okanagan College

The Salmon Arm branch of Okanagan College has, once again, donated the use of their campus on Sunday to the festival. The Student Union has also donated the use of their cafeteria and lounge.

8:30 am Student Lounge. Coffee & Muffins.

9:30 - 10:30 am Room 130. A Conversation with Robert J. Sawyer: Why Everyone Should Read Science Fiction

1:50 -2:30 pm Room 130. Festival Closing: Draws for Books, 2025 Festival Pass. Winner of the Canmore Vacation Fund Raiser

We are privileged to hold our festival on the unceded and traditional lands of the Secwépemc people.