

A day of writing, learning about writing, and meeting other writers

Writer's Conference
Friday, Nov. 20



ANNE-MARIE OOMEN ★ ELIZABETH BUZZELLI

fiction • screenwriting • poetry • journalism


Northwestern
Michigan
College

in partnership with *Michigan Writers*

www.nmc.edu/ees

LESLEY TYE ★ ANNE STANTON ★ ROBERT DOWNES

BEN PERCY ★ AARON STANDER ★ FLEDA BROWN

Featured Writer: **Benjamin Percy**

Workshop leaders: **Fleda Brown, Elizabeth Buzzelli, Robert Downes, Anne Stanton, Lesley Tye**

Other presenters: **Anne-Marie Oomen, Aaron Stander**

Friday, Nov. 20, 2009 • 9 a.m.-5 p.m. • NMC Oleson Center, Traverse City, Michigan
Cost: \$95, includes luncheon

(see **Day at a Glance** on page 2, registration form page 3)

Courting the Muse: A Writer's Conference

Day at a Glance

Opening Session — The Single-Minded Writer

Meet **Benjamin Percy**, creative writing instructor in the MFA program at Iowa State University and writer of fiction and nonfiction. He explores lessons learned from a writer who knows that success in writing is the result of equal parts talent and doggedness.

Morning Concurrent Sessions

a) Meaningful Repetition: Tropes in Fiction

Consider the orange. In *The Godfather*, every time one appears, bad things happen. A character gets beat up or shot or suffers from a heart attack. An innocent fruit somehow becomes, over the course of the story, a harbinger of evil. This is a trope, a recurring element that swells in power and meaning every time it passes through the juggler's hands. Tropes, not plot, are the building blocks of character and thematic development in short fiction. Discuss their use and explore their potential. **Benjamin Percy**

b) The Writer as Investigative Reporter

Take a winding walk through the investigative reporting process, from getting the initial tip to writing a compelling story. Discover the investigative reporter's toolbox—computer assisted reporting, the Freedom of Information Act, public documents, and reliable inside sources. Come prepared to talk about a story idea that you'd like to pursue and possible ideas on how to research it. **Anne Stanton**

c) The Screenplay: Not Just a Blueprint

How do screenwriters use language to communicate a story intended for a visually-driven medium? Many screenwriting books and classes focus solely on story structure and content, ignoring any examination of the stylistic elements of film. This workshop will focus on the ways you as a writer can use aspects of film style to effectively tell your story and create a compelling screenplay. **Lesley Tye**

Writer's Round-table Lunch

Afternoon Concurrent Sessions

d) Shapely Fiction: Molding an Idea into Story

Ideas abound. Taking a single, deep germ of an idea and shaping it into a story—whether short or long—takes skill and dedication. Explore your ideas; then push them into a fictive form. **Elizabeth Buzzelli**

e) How to Write a Poem about Something Words Can't Touch

"I just can't describe how it was!" We'll figure out how—in a poem. We'll approach difficult or inexpressible experiences by a backdoor route, trying simile and metaphor in a group exercise that should result in a good start on a poem. We'll look at some models before we begin, and work together and individually during the workshop. For beginners and experienced writers. **Fleda Brown**

f) On the Road: Travel and Adventure Writing

You don't have to be an Indiana Jones to write about travel and adventure, but you do need to know the territory. Discover every writer's dream job as you look at breaking in with travel magazines and travel pages, writing for travel websites and blogs, turning a blog into a book, coping with the realities of the newspaper and magazine market, plus funny tales and photos from around the world. **Robert Downes**

General Session — Courting the Muse; Courting Publication - 3 Stories

Writing is only part of the process of getting your book to a reader. Gain insights into the "rest of the story" with three mystery writers and three different roads to publication. Each will detail how they brought their successful mysteries into print—with a few glitches along the way. **Elizabeth Buzzelli, Anne-Marie Oomen, Aaron Stander**

Closing Session — Luminescent Complements

Fleda Brown and **Anne-Marie Oomen** explore sense of place with readings and reflections that resonate with the Michigan landscape. Drawing from their new books, they bring an inspiring close to a day rich with fresh ideas, crafted words, and memorable people.

Presenter Biographies

Fleda Brown, Ph.D. is Professor Emerita, Dept. of English, at the University of Delaware. Her books, essays, and individual poems have won numerous awards including her 6th collection of poems, *Reunion* (2007), winner of the Felix Pollak Prize. Her collection of memoir-essays, *Driving with Divorak*, will be out in 2010 from the University of Nebraska Press. She served as poet laureate of Delaware from 2001-2007.

Elizabeth Kane Buzzelli, B.A., is a novelist, short story writer, speaker, and journalist. She is a book reviewer for the *Northern Express*. Her novels: *Dead Dancing Women* and *Dead Floating Lovers* are in book stores now. Others in this Emily Kincaid mystery series from *Midnight Ink* will be out in the next two years.

Robert Downes is the editor and co-publisher of *Northern Express Weekly*. He is also a veteran traveler who has visited nearly 50 countries since hitch-hiking alone across the U.S. at the age of 17. In 2007, he traveled solo around the world, cycle-camping 700 miles across Europe and backpacking on through Egypt, India and Southeast Asia. The blog he wrote at Internet cafes became the basis for his memoir, *Planet Backpacker*, 2008. Today, he continues blogging on world travel on his website, www.planetbackpacker.net,

Anne-Marie Oomen, MFA writes with rural culture as its heart; her nonfiction books include, *Pulling Down the Barn*, a Michigan Notable Book, *House of Fields*, and *Un-coded Woman*, and two chapbooks of poetry, *Seasons of the Sleeping Bear*, and *Moniker* (with Ray Nargis). She has written and produced several plays including the award-winning *Northern Belles*, as well as *Wives of An American King*. She teaches Creative Writing at Interlochen Arts Academy and is a nonfiction instructor for the Solstice Writers Conference of Pine Manor College, MA.

Benjamin Percy, MFA, teaches creative writing in the MFA program at Iowa State University. He is the author of a novel, *The Wildling* (forthcoming, Graywolf) and two books of short stories, *Refresh, Refresh*, (Graywolf, 2007) and *the Language of Elk*, (Carnegie Mellon, 2006). His stories have appeared in *Esquire*, *Paris Review*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Best American Short Stories* and many other publications. Ben is the winner of the 2008 Whitting Award.

Aaron Stander spent most of his adult years as a college writing instructor before moving to the Traverse City area in 2000. His mystery books include *Summer People* (2004), *Color Tour* (2006), and *Deer Season*, 2009. He is also the author of numerous articles, stories, poems, and reviews. He is a past president of Michigan Writers and the host for the IPR radio program, *Michigan Writers on the Air*.

Anne Stanton, M.A., journalism, works for the *Northern Express*, digging into a wide variety of investigative stories. She has worked as a reporter at the *Sacramento Bee*, the *Traverse City Record-Eagle*, and as a grant writer for the Michigan Land Use Institute. She has won numerous state and national awards. She also assists her husband, Doug Stanton, with the research of his books.

Lesley Alicia Tye holds a BFA in Screenwriting from the University of Southern California and a MFA in Creative Writing from National University, and currently teaches screenwriting and film at the Interlochen Arts Academy. Previously she lived in Los Angeles and worked in film and television with credits ranging from Costume Designer for *Two Coyotes*, *Below-the-line Agent for Casala, Ltd*, and co-writer of the pilot *Devin's Chronicles* for Caspian Sea Entertainment.



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Registration Form - Writer's Conference - Nov. 20

Choose one morning workshop:

- a) Meaningful Repetition: Tropes in Fiction
- b) The Writer as Investigative Reporter
- c) The Screenplay: Not Just a Blueprint

Choose one afternoon workshop:

- d) Shapely Fiction: Molding an Idea into Story
- e) How to Write a Poem about Something Words Can't Touch
- f) On the Road: Travel and Adventure Writing

Participant information:

name _____ birthdate _____ M F
day/cell phone _____ email _____
mailing address _____
city _____ zip _____
county _____ home phone _____

Payment Method: conference cost - \$95

- Cash Check (Payable to NMC)

VISA, MasterCard, Discover No.: _____

CCV (last 3-digits on back of card) _____ Exp. Date _____

Cardholder's Name _____

- **Phone Registration** (credit or debit card only) to: Code: 5685
(231) 995-1700 or 800-748-0566, ext. 1700
- **Fax Registration** (credit or debit card only) to: (231) 995-1708
- **Mail Registration** to: NMC-EES, 1701 E. Front Street,
Traverse City, MI 49686-3061
- **Bring to:** Extended Education office, NMC University Center,
Cass Road, T.C. (between 14th St. and S. Airport Rd.)

Refund policy - A 100% refund will be given if request is made three business days prior to the conference.