



Spring Writer's Conference

Saturday, April 6th, 2019

9:30 AM – 3:30 PM

featuring

Paul Lisicky

and writing workshops in

* Poetry * Fiction * Creative Nonfiction * Script Writing *
* Publishing * Memoir *

To register, go directly to

<https://springwritersconference2019.eventbrite.com>

or for more information visit

www.wpunj.edu/writing

REGISTRATION INCLUDES

Light Breakfast, 9:30am -10:00 am

Plenary Reading with Paul Lisicky, 10:00 am -11:15 am

One Morning Workshop, 11:30 am -12:45 pm

Full Buffet Lunch, 1:00 pm -2:00 pm

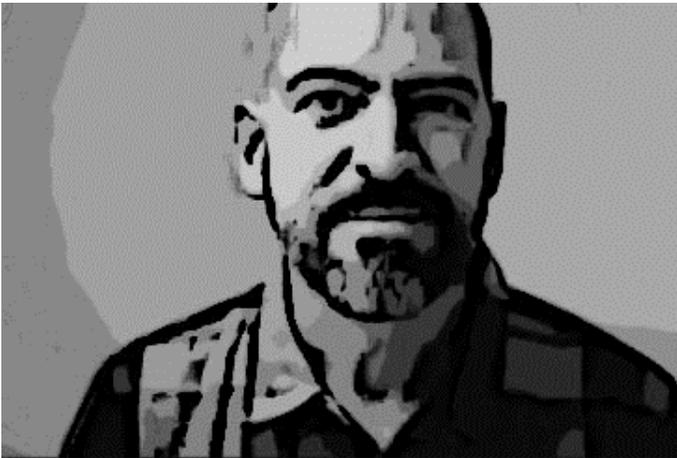
and One Afternoon Workshop, 2:15 pm -3:30 pm

Tickets: Regular \$66. WPU Alumni \$55. WPU Graduate Students \$44. WPU Undergraduate Students \$33.

Late registration (after March 31st) is \$77, so please register early.

The Department of English at the William Paterson University of New Jersey is proud to continue its annual Spring Writer's Conference, which in the past has hosted such luminaries as Paul Muldoon, Francine Prose, David Means, Terese Svoboda, Russell Banks, Alison Lurie, Judith Ortiz Cofer, Yusef Komunyakaa, Chang-Rae Lee, Kimiko Hahn, Sindiwe Magona, Anthony Swofford, Porochista Khakpour, and Luc Sante. Join us for a day of workshops and readings in fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, script writing, editing, and publishing. We welcome participation from scholars in all disciplines, creative writers of all stripes, professional editors, secondary-, middle-, and elementary-level educators, graduate and undergraduate students, and the general public—in short, anyone interested in reading, writing and literary pursuits. We offer Professional Development Hours to New Jersey Educators.

Keynote Speaker: Paul Lisicky



on *Burning House*: “An extraordinary fiction in that it sustains a believable poetic voice throughout. . . Lisicky's longer prose piece . . . often feels like a long, beautiful narrative poem about what it is to be flawed and human in a world that often seems, at best, indifferent.”

—*The Boston Globe*

on *Lawnboy*: “Lisicky's prose shines, at times hilarious, at others entrenched in sorrow and longing, but always gorgeous to read. . . The reconciliations between the characters are moving and earned, graced with compassion and vitality.”

—**Bret Anthony Johnston, *Book***

Paul Lisicky is the author of the 2016 memoir *The Narrow Door* (New York Times Editors' Choice) about two long term relationships back-dropped by environmental disaster, a 2012 collection of short prose *Unbuilt Projects*, dealing with the intersection of God, sex, family, childhood, and adulthood, the 2011 novel *The Burning House*, the 2002 memoir *Famous Builder*, and his first novel, published in 1996, *Lawnboy*. His work has appeared in *The Atlantic*, *BuzzFeed*, *Conjunctions*, *Fence*, *The New York Times*, *Ploughshares*, *Tin House*, and in many other magazines and anthologies. A 2016 Guggenheim Fellow, he has received awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, the James Michener/Copernicus Society, and the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, where he has served on the Writing Committee since 2000. He has taught in the creative writing programs at Cornell University, New York University, Sarah Lawrence College, The University of Texas at Austin and elsewhere. He is currently an Associate Professor in the MFA Program at Rutgers University-Camden and lives in Brooklyn, New York. His sixth book, *Later*, is forthcoming from Graywolf Press in 2020.

on *The Narrow Door*: “Relentlessly self-revealing, achingly tender in the way he holds his loved ones in the world, Paul Lisicky has written a memoir as raw as Jeff Tweedy fresh from rehab, and just like a Wilco album, packed with tracks so elegant in their bewilderment and sorrow, you'll want to revisit them again and again. This book charmed me, moved me, upended me, indicted me, compelled me, wrecked me, made me want to say the big YES, made me want to be better than I am.”

—**Pam Houston, author of *Contents May Have Shifted***

on *Unbuilt Projects*: Lisicky's gently beautiful *Unbuilt Projects* is a prose collection that collects thoughts and undoes them in equal measure. It sidesteps the arc of linear narrative in favor of the reality of how we live, which is in bursts that fuse imagination and reality.

—**The Rumpus**

Please convene in the Atrium Building

Breakfast - Orientation-Registration, 9:30 AM – 10:00 AM

Paul Lisicky's Keynote Address, 10:00 AM - 11:15 AM



Morning Workshops, 11:30AM-12:45PM

❖ **Openings: A Workshop, with Paul Lisicky.** How to involve the reader from the first sentence—or at least the first few? How to imply tension and trouble without giving the whole narrative away? We'll think about those questions through the matters of craft—voice, structure, focus, sonics, description—and a worksheet of the openings from some recently published work. There will be time for an exercise. Along the way we'll work hard and make sure play and seriousness share the same space. **Preakness Hall, Room 220**

❖ **Making Flash Fiction Flash, with Nathan Alling Long.** At the start of the workshop, we will describe, read examples of, and discuss a series of techniques that are available to the flash fiction writer (strong opening line, in medias res, borrowed genre, neutral image, implication, dialogue, charged language, etc.). Using these techniques, members of the workshop will write a flash fiction piece of their own. There will be time to read a few of these and discuss how the authors used techniques, and how the techniques themselves helped propel the story. **Nathan Alling Long's** work has appeared on *National Public Radio* and in over a hundred other publications, including *Tin House*, *Glimmer Train*, *Story Quarterly* and *The Sun*. His story "Reception Theory" won the 2017 international *OWT* Story Prize and "Arctic" won the 2015 international *Open Road* fiction award. His collection of fifty flash fiction, *The Origin of Doubt*, was released in 2018 from Press 53, and his manuscript, *Everything Merges with the Night*, was a finalist for the Hudson Book Manuscript Prize and a semifinalist for the Iowa Fiction Award. He is also the recipient of a Mellon grant, a Truman Capote literary fellowship, and three Pushcart nominations. Nathan lives in Philadelphia and teaches creative writing and women gender and sexuality at Stockton University. <https://blogs.stockton.edu/longn/> **Preakness Hall, Room 221**

❖ **Poetry and Fake News, with Timothy Liu.** What makes a poem true? What if adherence to real life facts leads to boring disclosures while a commitment to fictional glosses can rope in the reader's ever-divided attentions? In this workshop, we'll look at some sample texts (Elizabeth Bishop's poem "The Fish"; an essay by Louise Gluck; and literary hoaxes surrounding such figures like Araki Yasusada and Yi-Fen Chou) to determine how we might value a work of art even when it's suffused in a cloud of disinformation and what that might mean for our own work. **Timothy Liu** is the author of ten books of poems, most recently *LUMINOUS DEBRIS: NEW & SELECTED LEGERDEMAIN* (1992-2017). His journals and papers are archived in the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library. A Professor of English at William Paterson University, Liu lives in Manhattan and Woodstock, NY. **Preakness Hall, Room 222**

❖ **Script-Writing Workshop, with Philip Cioffari.** A lecture/workshop in dramatic writing, for both stage and film. The focus will be on writing strong, compelling scenes. Students are encouraged to bring, for discussion, one or more of their original scenes for a play or movie. **Philip Cioffari's** novels include: *The Bronx Kill*; *Catholic Boys*; *Dark Road*, *Dead End*; *Jesusville*; and the story collection, *A History of Things Lost or Broken*. He wrote and directed the independent feature film, *Love in the Age of Dion*. His plays have been produced OFF and OFF-OFF Broadway. He is a playwright member of the Actors Studio. www.philipcioffari.com. **Preakness Hall, Room 229**



Buffet Lunch, 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (Atrium Lobby)

Afternoon Workshops, 2:15PM–3:30PM

❖ **Memoir, with David Borkowski** How much of fiction is from a writer's actual life? How much of autobiography or memoir is fictional? If writers of fiction use fact to make their work more believable, relatable and identifiable, how do writers of autobiography create fictional material to make their work more engaging, spirited and compelling? In this workshop we will explore such questions while drafting some creative nonfiction writing of our own. **David Borkowski** is Associate Professor of English at William Paterson University. He completed his Ph.D. at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Professor Borkowski's work has appeared in *Rhetoric Review* and *College Composition and Communication*. His first book was entitled *The Emergence of a New Rhetoric: A History of the Linguistic Reformation of American Culture*. The paperback edition of his last book, *A Shot Story: From Juvie to Ph.D.*, was recently issued in paperback by Gotham Press, an imprint of Fordham University Press. He is currently writing an historical novel, *The Dynamite Express*. It takes place in the American West in the 1890's, and deals with a labor dispute among silver miners and mine owners. Professor Borkowski teaches a range of writing and literature courses, at both the graduate and undergraduate level—The Victorian Novel, Global Literature, The Romantic Movement, Films & Literature, the Writing Capstone, Critical Writing, Biography & Autobiography, to name a few. **Preakness Hall, Room 220**

❖ **A Jump Start for Fiction Writers, with Martha Witt.** Do you have a story in progress that's begun to flag or that lies stuffed in a drawer awaiting the muses? Are you fond of a particular character, idea, or scene but have lost track of all narrative pulse? Bring a hard copy of that stalled story along with a notebook and/or laptop and a desire to experiment with a variety of editorial approaches. You should leave this workshop having constructed a useful set of cables for jumpstarting your fiction. **Martha Witt**, Associate Professor of Creative Writing at William Paterson University, is the author of the novel *Broken as Things Are* (Holt, 2004 and Picador, 2005) as well as numerous short stories and works of flash fiction. She is also a translator whose recently completed translation of the novel *Hy* by the Italian writer, Grazia Deledda, is forthcoming with *Italica Press* in February of 2019. **Preakness Hall, Room 221**

❖ **Traditional, Independent, Self-Publishing, with The Book Doctors.** It's the greatest time in history to be a writer. There are more ways now to get published now than ever before. Yes, there are so many options, but they're all so confusing. That's where The Book Doctors come in, with a prescription for fixing whatever's ailing your book. This interactive seminar will break down the process of getting published by traditional publishers like HarperCollins, Penguin, Random House, etc. You'll get the skinny on landing a book deal with a well-respected independent publisher like Gray Wolf, Tin House, or Soft Skull. And finally, you'll get the inside 411 on self-publishing. Then three writers will be chosen to pitch their books in 1 MINUTE. The Book Doctors will break down (in a kind and gentle way) the strengths and weaknesses of the pitch itself, and suggest whether the author should try Traditional, Independent, or Self-Publishing. **The Book Doctors** have helped countless writers get successfully published. Between them, **Arielle Eckstut** and **David Henry Sterry** have over 35 years' experience in the publishing business: teaching at leading colleges and universities, agenting, consulting, coaching, putting on events and writing bestsellers. They began their business teaching at Stanford University, and have since presented and taught at Smith, Reed College, San Francisco State, and Indiana University, among many others. They have done events at over 150 bookstores, and writing conferences and book festivals from coast to coast. **Preakness Hall, Room 222**

❖ **Writing Dialogue, with Yasmine Beverly Rana.** An interactive workshop in which participants will read, write, and perform their own dialogues. The workshop will begin with a reading and discussion of contemporary scenes on current topics, followed by the opportunity to create and share scenes which will culminate in a stage play. **Yasmine Beverly Rana** was one of six finalists for the 2015 Francesca Primus Prize for her play *THE WAR ZONE IS MY BED* and received a 2015 Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts for *ANOTHER SPRING*. Her plays have been developed and performed in the United States and internationally. Noteworthy plays include *THE WAR ZONE IS MY BED*, *THE FALLEN*, *BLOOD SKY*, *RETURNING*, and *PARADISE*, among others. Her plays and monologues have been published in *The Alabama Literary Review*, *The Best Contemporary Monologues of 2014* (Applause Theatre and Cinema Books), *The Best Men's and Women's Monologues of 2013* (Smith and Kraus Publishers), *Blackbird*, *The Kenyon Review*, *TDR: The Drama Review*, and *The Contemporary European Idea*. Translations include the Romanian-language anthology, *Cinci Piese de Teatru*. The University of Chicago Press and Seagull Books "In Performance Series" published *The War Zone is My Bed and Other Plays*, an anthology of four of Yasmine's plays. In addition to being a playwright, Yasmine is an educator and drama therapist. **Preakness Hall, Room 229**