Conference Registration Information

We offer two different registration plans. A nonrefundable deposit of $150 is due at the time of registration. Complete registration and pricing information, including a downloadable registration form, is available from our website. Please fill out both pages of the registration form and mail them (or fax them if credit card payment) with your deposit or full payment to the address on the form. If not paid in full, the conference balance is due by May 18. Before May 18, the conference fee minus the $150 deposit is 50% refundable. If you have questions, please email us at *bearriver@umich.edu* or call (734) 764-4139.

Plan A: Includes tuition, lodging and all meals. Lodging options for Plan A are listed below.

Cost for Plan A:

Private rooms have queen size beds. Bunks are singles.

Private room and private bath: $775 per person ($750 if paid in full by April 1)
Private rooms/private bath are limited so apply early.

Private room and shared bath: $750 per person ($725 if paid in full by April 1)

Bunk room: (Single bunk bed in a 4-bunk bedroom shared with 1-3 others/shared bath with 1-3 others: $675 per person ($650 if paid in full by April 1)

Plan B: Includes tuition and all meals, but not lodging for those who live in the Petoskey area. In addition, there are many hotels and motels available within twenty minutes of the conference for those who prefer greater privacy.

Cost for Plan B: $575 ($550 if paid in full by April 1)

Register early to secure your workshop choice: Workshops will be assigned on a first come first serve basis. In the unlikely event of a workshop cancellation, your entire payment will be refunded upon request if you do not wish to enroll in an alternate workshop.

For more information or to download a registration form, please visit our website.

www.lsa.umich.edu/bearriver

Find Your Natural Inspiration

The Bear River Writers' Conference

May 31 - June 4, 2007

MARIE HOWE is the author of two volumes of poetry, *The Good Thief* (1988), and *What the Living Do* (1997), and the co-editor of a book of essays, *In the Company of My Solitude: American Writing from the AIDS Pandemic* (1994). Stanley Kunitz selected Howe for a Lavan Younger Poets Prize from the American Academy of Poets. She has, in addition, been a fellow at the Bunting Institute at Radcliffe College and a recipient of NEA and Guggenheim fellowships. Her poems have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, *Poetry*, *Agni*, *Ploughshares*, *Harvard Review*, and *The Partisan Review*, among others. Howe teaches creative writing at Sarah Lawrence College, Columbia, and New York University. During Winter Term '07, Howe is in residence as the Zell Distinguished Visiting Professor for the University of Michigan MFA Program in Creative Writing.

Photo: Cyan James

Special Guest
MARIE HOWE

A space for you . . .

Early morning at Camp Michigania and the sun is skimming the chill off the surface of Walloon Lake. The Bear River Writers' Conference begins its day. Participants leave their cozy lodges and wander along the paths to the dining hall to chat and fill themselves with a good breakfast. The hall is loud with conversation as attendees and faculty renew acquaintances and find new friendships. Outside the windows, the landscape brightens to full day and writers pause in their discussions to consider the spectacular views that surround them.

This is the singular experience of Bear River — the fabric of the conference woven from twin loves, for the worlds of words and nature. Bear River is a place of diverse community that welcomes all of the individual voices of its many participants.

. . . outside . . .

Workshop slips into motion around 9am, the breakfast crowd dispersed into small groups of twelve. With their coffee cups and notebooks, writers gather around tables and in front of fireplaces and begin the work of the day. Conversation quickly condenses into an intense discussion of writing, process and products. Poets squint at their journals, deciphering lines from the previous night's inspiration. Fiction writers contemplate their newly minted pages and invite suggestions from the group. The atmosphere is alternately relaxed and avid, laughter a familiar punctuation to these hours.

After an intense morning of creative dialogue, participants shuffle back to the dining halls for lunch, and more conversation about the morning's achievements and their various passions for writing. The conference is deeply embedded in the natural world and the striking landscape of northern Michigan is not simply backdrop for the session, but inspiration for the creative work of participants and faculty.

Afternoon arrives and the rhythm of the conference changes. The options for recreation multiply as, each day, faculty and special guests offer readings and craft talks in the camp's education center. Participants have the opportunity to engage in active interchange with published authors, to find answers to the questions inspired by these writers' works. Those seeking a brief break from the demands of their pens may decide to use this time to wander the nature trails of the camp, go flyfishing or take a canoe and explore the calm of Walloon Lake.

Some participants elect to spend the afternoon reading or writing. Others investigate the nearby attractions in Petoskey, Boyne City, Harbor Springs, Bay Harbor and East Jordan. As the sun edges down toward the horizon, participants return again to the comfortable space of the dining hall to relax with one another over a satisfying meal and relive the day's highlights.

. . . of the everyday

Evening at Bear River and participants once again disperse, to read, to write, to listen to the creative work of their teachers. Faculty readings carry the conference to twilight. Later, some participants bring stories and instruments and gather around the campfire get burning down along the lakeside. Some, under the thrall of the day's creative energy, find a quiet spot in front of one of the camp's many fireplaces and work filling the blank pages of their notebooks. On Saturday, many participants venture away from the campgrounds to enjoy an evening of words and music at Crooked Tree Arts Center. The conference's creative endeavors culminate on the final night in a special reading that showcases the work of participants, with some students performing their work to music, often for the first time.

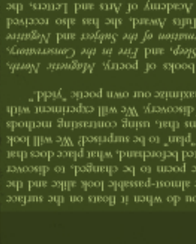
The Bear River Writers' Conference, which runs from dinner on Thursday through breakfast on Monday, is defined by its own particular geography, situated as it is at the intersection of the natural and creative worlds. Populated by an eclectic collection of writers of all levels of experience, it offers community members a hiatus from daily routine and the chance to find a space for themselves and their words.

Find your place at Bear River

Photo: Cyan James

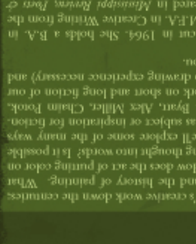
Poetry

Linda Gregerson is the author of four books of poetry, *Magnum Verbi*, *Waterborne*, *The Woman Who Lived in Her Sleep*, and *Fire in the Conservatory*, as well as two books of criticism, *The Reformation of the Subject* and *Negative Capability*. Winner of the 2003 Kingsley Tufts Award, she has also received awards and fellowships from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Poetry Society of America, *Poetry* magazine, the Ingram Merrill Foundation, the National Humanities Center, the Institute for Advanced Study, the Guggenheim Foundation, and the NEA twice. She is on the MFA faculty at the University of Michigan.



Fiction

Elizabeth Kostova was born in Connecticut in 1964. She holds a B.A. in British Studies from Yale University and an M.F.A. in Creative Writing from the University of Michigan. Her work has appeared in *Mississippi Review*, *Ploughshares*, *Western Humanities Review*, and *The Best American Poetry*. Her first novel, *The Historian*, (Little, Brown, June 2005) was a #1 New York Times Bestseller and is being translated into 37 languages. She is also co-author of a travel book entitled *1927: The Good-Natured Chronicle of a Journey*.

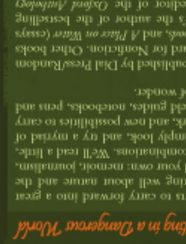


Fiction and Painting (s)

Writers and painters have fed of one another's creative work down the centuries: numerous contemporary novels revolve around the history of painting. What can the visual art offer as fiction writers? How does the act of painting color the canvas resemble or differ from the act of putting thought into words? Is it possible to describe a painting? In this workshop, we'll explore some of the many ways in which painting and writers can function as subject or inspiration for fiction. In the process, we'll look at works by A. S. Byatt, Alex Miller, Claire Hoole, and Oscar Wilde, among others, we will not short and long fiction of our own. Bring along a sketchpad (absolutely no drawing experience necessary) and a reproduction of a painting that fascinates you.

Glen and Chris: The Art of Nature Writing in a Dangerous World

In this intensive workshop, we'll make new starts to carry forward into a great creative summer. The emphasis will be on writing well about nature and the environment in whatever genre or genres you call your own: memoir, journalism, essay, fiction, poetry, drama, screenplay, and all combinations. We'll read a little, experiment a great deal, get outside a little to simply look, and try a myriad of exercises designed to generate new ideas, work and new possibilities to carry forward into a great summer of writing. Bring field guides, notebooks, pens and pencils—and don't forget your childhood sense of wonder.



Performance

We will explore the many meanings of the term "poetry in performance." from on-stage performances to the idea that poetry is itself a language performance. We will consider poetry "Internal action," how lyric poetry in particular spins out of itself, finds its direction through the momentum generated by the life flow of words. Poetry's rhythm or music is an essential performance component. We will discuss the history of poetry's oral and aural roots. We will also listen to recordings of poets renowned for their success in performing poetry with and without musical accompaniment.

Performance/Poetry

Barry Wallenstein is the author of five collection of poetry, the most recent being *A Museum of Comfort* (Ridgeway Press, 1999). His poetry has appeared in over 100 journals in the U.S. and abroad, the last of which appear in *Pennsylvania Review*, the *Nassau Community Review*, and *American Poetry Review*. His 1971 book *Visions of Kerouac, the Poet Passing* (T.C. Crowell) was reissued in a new and expanded edition by Bookline Press (2002). A special interest is his performance of poetry with jazz collaboration. He has made live recordings of his poetry with jazz, the most recent being *Bandoneon* (Cadence Jazz Records CJR 1194) November, 2005. He is a Professor of literature and creative writing at the City University of New York and is an editor of the journal, *American Book Review*.

Director's Statement

James McCullough and Richard Tillinghast first planned the Bear River Writers' Conference as a place where writers from outside northern Michigan could enjoy the beauties of this place and where they could meet the writers who live here. They hoped to bring people with general literary interests together with those who were interested in writing about place and the natural environment. They hoped the mix would create new ideas that would send all the writers home with good work to continue… And they thought the shores of Walloon Lake—which had already inspired one American classic—would be a good place to help accomplish their idea. I'm pleased to report that so far it seems to be working!

Poetry in Performance

We will explore the many meanings of the term "poetry in performance." from on-stage performances to the idea that poetry is itself a language performance. We will consider poetry "Internal action," how lyric poetry in particular spins out of itself, finds its direction through the momentum generated by the life flow of words. Poetry's rhythm or music is an essential performance component. We will discuss the history of poetry's oral and aural roots. We will also listen to recordings of poets renowned for their success in performing poetry with and without musical accompaniment.

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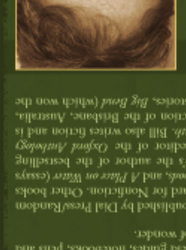
Fiction

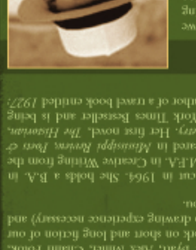
Bill Roorbach recent book is *Temple Stream*, published by Dial Press/Random House, which won the 2006 Maine Literary Award for Nonfiction. Other books of nature writing are *Summer with Juliet*, *Big Woods*, and *A Place on the Earth* (essays with Robert Kinerk and Wesley McNair). He's the author of the bestselling book of instruction, *Writing Life Stories*, and editor of the *Oxford Anthology Contemporary Creative Nonfiction: The Art of Truth*. Bill also writes fiction and is the author of a novel, *The Smallest Cabin* (a section of the Bahamas, Australia literary festival, 2004), and a collection of short stories, *Big Band* (which won the Flannery O'Connor Award in 2001).

Finding a New Way

Extraordinary writing often springs from ordinary events. In this workshop we will turn ordinary details into spectacular stories & poems, tapping into the deepest psychic levels of fairy tale, myth, symbol and archetype where the real poems and stories live. We will find new ways of shining the light of imagination onto our daily lives and into what lies beneath the surface. There is room in this workshop for both beginners and experienced workshopers. Expect to come away from the workshop more in touch with your own instincts and imagination, having written something that will surprise you.



Richard Tillinghast lives on a mountainside in Ireland. Before leaving the U.S. he was an adjunct at the University of Michigan. In 2001 Richard co-founded Bear River and was director through 2005. An itinerant traveler, he was formerly Editor-in-Chief of *Lit: On the Finest Guide to Europe*. In addition, he has also worked for many years as a book reviewer and essayist, publishing in *The New Republic*, the *Atlantic*, the *New York Times*, the *Irish Times*, *The Nation*, the *Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal* and elsewhere. He is the author of seven books of poetry and two books of essays, most recently *Poetry and What Is Real*, University of Michigan Press, 2004. His next book of poetry, *The New Life*, is scheduled from Copper Beech Press for later this year.



Essay & Poetry

Thomas Lynch is the author of three collections of poetry. His collection of essays, *The Undertaking—Life Studies from the Dismal Trade* won The Heartland Prize for non-fiction, The American Book Award, and was a finalist for the National Book Award. It has been translated into eight languages. *Bodies in Motion and at Rest* won the Great Lakes Book Award, *Bookend Essays—We Into and Amazing*, a third collection of nonfiction, was published in 2005. His work has appeared in journals and newspapers throughout the UK, Ireland and the United States and has been broadcast on NPR and the BBC. He is an Adjunct Professor in the graduate creative writing program at University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Life Stories

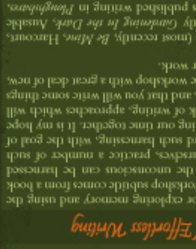
In this workshop, we'll explore the autobiographical origins of our work, whether in nonfiction or fiction, though remembering and story-telling techniques, and techniques of memoir, are ordinary, practice a number of such strategies, and bits of dialogue—that contain the stories that have been granted to us through the experience of our own lives. Come prepared to generate new work and bring along a few old photos of yourself as well as other people and places important to your life.

Memory and Imagination, Toward Effortless Writing

In this workshop we will practice methods for exploring memory and using the imagination to find material for fiction. The workshop subtitle comes from a book by Dorothea Brande which examines ways the unconscious can be harnessed in the service of writing stories. We will, ourselves, practice a number of such processes for writing, exercises directed toward such harnessing, with the goal of generating a serious amount of new work during our time together. It is my hope that you will learn new approaches to the task of writing, approaches which will make writing more "effortless" and rewarding, and that you will write some things that will surprise you, and come away from the workshop with a great deal of new, exciting material with which to continue your work.

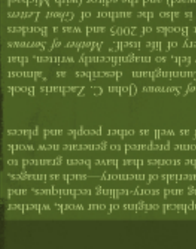
Fiction & Poetry

Laura Kasischke has published four novels (most recently, *Be Mine*, Harcourt, 2007), six collections of poetry (most recently *Gardening in the Dark*, Alaska, 2004), and a novel for young adults. She has published writing in *Ploughshares*, *Poetry*, *The American Poetry Review*, *The New England Review*, and elsewhere, and been the recipient of several Pushcart Prizes and two fellowships for the National Endowment for the Arts. Her latest novel is being made into a film starring Uma Thurman, directed by Valerie Bertinelli. She teaches at the University of Michigan.



Creative Non-Fiction/ Memoir

Richard McCann is the author of *Mother of Sorrows* (John C. Zachariis Book Award, 2005), which novelist Michael Cunningham describes as "almost unbearably beautiful. … A book so intimately felt, so magnificently written, that it can stand unembarrassed beside the mystery in the itself." *Mother of Sorrows* was chosen by Amazon as one of the 50 Best Books of 2005 and was a Borders Original Voices selection. Richard McCann is also the author of *Color Letter* (Beatrice Hawley Award, Capricorn Poetry Award) and the editor (with Michael Klein) of *Things Seen in Flight*. (Photo credit: Sigrid Estrada)



Poetry

Bob Hicks fifth book of poetry, *The Cinnamon Library*, was published in 2007 by Dim. *Animal Soul* (2001) was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. Recipient of an NEA fellowship, Hicks's poems have appeared in three volumes of *Best American Poetry* and twice received the Pushcart Prize. He was recently awarded the Jerome J. Shestack Prize by *The American Poetry Review* and the Anne Halley Prize from *Massachusetts Review*. He teaches at Virginia Tech.

Prose & Poetry/ Travel Writing

Keith Taylor published two new books in 2006. *Guilty as the Rapture*, a collection of poems and stories, was picked as a Michigan Notable Book of the Year for 2007. *Haunted Country: The Poetry and Prose of Louise Erdrich*, a book he translated with friend William Bracke, was published in England. Over the years his work has appeared in a couple of hundred places, ranging from *Story* to the *Los Angeles Times*, from *Bird Watcher's Digest* and the *Chicago Tribune* to *Michigan Quarterly Review* (two issues of which he recently guest edited), *Poetry Ireland*, and *The Southern Review*. He has won awards for his work here and in Europe. He works as the coordinator of undergraduate creative writing at the University of Michigan.

Director

The Bear River Writers

To learn more about these authors—and the many others affiliated with the Bear River Writers' Conference—please visit our website:

www.lsa.umich.edu/bearriver

SPECIAL THANKS TO MEIJER, INCORPORATED FOR ITS GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE BEAR RIVER WRITERS' CONFERENCE.