

For Immediate Release:

13th ANNUAL DAVID R. COLLINS WRITERS' CONFERENCE TO FEATURE DIVERSE OFFERING OF WORKSHOPS

What: The David R. Collins Writers' Conference

When: Thursday, June 28 - Saturday, June 30, 2018

Where: McCarthy Hall, St. Ambrose University (518 W. Locust St) Davenport, IA (and other locations)

The Midwest Writing Center (MWC) is thrilled to announce that the annual David R. Collins Writers' Conference returns with a diverse offering of workshops, all taught by an award-winning faculty.

Attendees will hone their craft in intensive three-day workshops, but will also have the option to participate in book pitches, 1-on-1 manuscript critiques, luncheons, a faculty reading and open mic, and a keynote address featuring a screening of MOTIONPOEMS Season 8.

This year's conference offers five workshops:

“Intimacy Issues: Writing the Not-So-Personal Personal Essay” with Lyz Lenz

In *The Godfather* (book, not movie) Mario Puzo writes, “It’s all personal, every bit of business. Every piece of shit every man has to eat every day of his life is personal. They call it business. OK. But it’s personal as hell.” Everything we write is personal, from journalism to music reviews to Facebook posts and beyond, if it isn’t personal then, why write it at all? This workshop will explore how to weave together the personal, the reported, the business, and “every piece of shit a man eats”, together into a cohesive narrative. If you write very personal essays, this class will teach you how to weave in research to broaden the scope of your writing. If you write the not-so-personal, this class will teach you how to weave in those personal stakes that make readers engaged. We will read essays from writers who expertly blend genres and discuss techniques for how to make everything personal as hell.

Offered 8:45-10:15 a.m. on June 28, 29, 30

“Revving the Machine of Desire: How to Write a Compelling Novel Opening” with Amy Hassinger

Novelist and critic Douglas Glover calls the novel a “machine of desire.” Just as we all do on every single day of our lives on earth, your protagonist must yearn for something—something concrete, specific, and difficult to attain. What is this something? Why is it so important to the overall arc of your novel? We’ll explore this subject together over the weekend, looking at successful novel openings and workshoping our own. Bring your drafts if you have them, or be prepared to write an opening over the weekend. There’s no better inspiration than starting out right.

Offered 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. on June 28, 29, 30

“Mixology: Fresh Poetry from Source Material” with Lauren Haldeman

Ask any writer: the best work often comes out of nowhere, with the feeling that you are a lightning rod for greater knowing. Source material can often provide that electricity. In this exciting course, we will actively

pursue this idea by using source materials to launch our writing into unrealized terrain. We will use found language, theme-based inquiry and even field research (field trips!) to inspire insights and creations that we could not have come up with on our own. You will leave the class with a powerful new creative writing process and a fat stack of next-level work.

Offered 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. on June 28, 29, 30

“Pop + Fizz: Digital Storytelling with Comics + Video” with Lauren Haldeman

This class will give participants a generative, hands-on experience with digital storytelling and comics. Working in groups, we will discover the pleasures and challenges of making one-shot videos. (All you need is a phone with a camera — or a friend with one.) We will also view examples of literary comics and create a short poetry comic of our own. You will leave the class with a powerful new understanding of new media and a few pieces of your own.

Offered 1:45 – 3:15 p.m. on June 28, 29, 30

“Hooking Up: Rethinking the First Few Pages of our Fiction and Nonfiction Narratives” with Keith Lesmesiter

In this weekend workshop, we will read, discuss, and write our own story openings. What works? What doesn't? How do language, details, and images inform mood and tone? What promises are made in those opening pages, and how might those promises pay off in the end? How might we, as writers, achieve opening pages—of our own—so fresh and arresting as to “hook” a reader? Over the course of our three sessions, we will take a close look at the opening pages of fiction and nonfiction narratives, and how they hook readers. We will also write or revise the opening pages of our own stories so that we might go home or back to our desks with new or revised material.

Offered 3:30 – 5 p.m. on June 28, 29, 30

The David R. Collins Writers' Conference has been noted as offering quality writing instruction at affordable prices with a dash of Midwest hospitality. Register today through PayPal at the MWC website (www.mwcqc.org), over the phone (309-732-7330), or via email (mwc@midwestwritingcenter.org).

MWC members who register before June 15th can save up to \$45; non-member early bird registrants can save up to \$30. Accommodations are available for \$42 per night in the St. Ambrose University Dormitories.

David R. Collins Writers' Conference is made possible through the generous sponsorship of Modern Woodman of America (founding sponsor), Regional Development Authority, St. Ambrose University English Department, Figge Art Museum, and the Illinois Arts Council Agency through federal funds provided by the National Endowment for the Arts.