



Tri-Valley Writers 2021 Writers Conference

Saturday, October 16, 2021

Session Synopsis and Schedule

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast

9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. Welcome

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. CRAFT: “How to Write with Page Turning Tension” presented by **Jordan Rosenfeld**

Tension in novels, stories, and even memoirs is like the connective tissue that allows muscles to attach to bones and thus flex their might. It’s the heart of conflict, the backbone of uncertainty, the hallmark of danger. It keeps readers guessing and characters on their toes. This presentation will help writers master the art of tension on every page and within every element of the tale to crafting a story your readers can’t put down!

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. SELF-PUBLISHING: “Future of Publishing” presented by **Laurie McLean**

Whether you were super productive with your writing during 2020 and early 2021 or couldn’t eke out a word because of the pandemic and its aftereffects, we’re beginning to emerge from those dark days now. So what’s next? Laurie will share with us what exactly the “new normal” in publishing will become. Is nonfiction still going to be popular with readers and if so which areas? Where will fiction take off once again? And what are some of the new areas of growth? Find out about innovations and old standbys as publishing reopens for business.

10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. CRAFT: “Memoir Craft 101” presented by **Brooke Warner**

In this overview of the craft behind memoir writing, Brooke Warner, Publisher of She Writes Press and author of three books on memoir, will guide you through the fundamentals of what you need to know to get started on or deepen your memoir. This session will cover scene; character development and characterization; flashback and memory; dialogue and character tagging; and reflection. You’ll

leave with specific concepts to improve your own writing, and you'll get a renewed appreciation for how valuable storytelling is in writing your memoir.

10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. **MARKETING: “Creating Best Selling Websites”** presented by **Linda Lee**

Sharp copy, user friendly design and reader functionality are key. Your readers come to your site with certain goals in mind. Your job is to help them achieve these goals as quickly as possible, ensuring that they have a positive user-experience. In this session we will focus on basic components every website should have. Some of the subjects we will be covering include:

- How important is the color and the design?
 - What is the most effective use of social media?
 - What can you do that will bring readers back to your site?
 - How can you get readers to sign up for your email list?
 - What about a blog? Do you need one?
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Noon – 1:00 p.m. Lunch

1:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. **KEYNOTE SPEAKER—Rhys Bowen**

Rhys Bowen is the *New York Times* bestselling author of two historical mystery series as well as the #1 Kindle bestseller *In Farleigh Field* and the international bestsellers *Above the Bay of Angel* and *The Tuscan Child*.

In Farleigh Field was nominated for the Edgar Award, and won the Agatha Award for best historical mystery as well as the Macavity and Bruce Alexander Memorial Awards. *The Tuscan Child* has sold over half a million copies.

Rhys was born in Bath, England, and educated at London University, but now divides her time between California and Arizona. Her books have been nominated for every major mystery award and she has won twenty of them to date. They have been translated into twenty-two languages, including Chinese and Arabic.

She currently writes two historical mystery series, each very different in tone. The Molly Murphy mysteries feature an Irish immigrant woman in turn-of-the-century New York City. These books are multi-layered, complex stories with a strong sense of time and place and have won many awards including Agatha and Anthony. There are 17 books so far in this series, plus three Kindle stories, *The Amersham Rubies*, *Through the Window* and *The Face in the Mirror*—a great way to introduce new

readers to Molly's spunky personality.

Then there is Lady Georgie, Rhys's latest, and very popular, heroine. She's 35th in line to the throne of England, but she's flat broke and struggling to survive in the Great Depression. These books are lighter and funnier than Molly's adventures. They poke gentle fun at the British class system—about which Rhys knows a lot, having married into an upper-class family rather like Georgie's, with cousins with silly nicknames, family ghosts and stately homes. The fourteenth book in the series, *The Last Mrs. Summers*, was published August 2020. Two books in the series have won the Agatha Award for best historical mystery. The series received the Readers' Choice Award for favorite mystery series and Rhys was nominated for career achievement. It was also voted one of Goodreads' top-10 cozy mysteries.

Her most recent achievement has been the big historical stand-alone novels, *Above the Bay of Angel In Farleigh Field*, *The Victory Garden*, and *The Tuscan Child*. They have enjoyed impressive sales world-wide and brought Rhys many new readers. Her latest stand-alone, *The Venice Sketchbook*, was published in April 2021.

As a child, Rhys spent time with relatives in Wales. Those childhood experiences colored her first mystery series, about Constable Evans in the mountains of Snowdonia. She wrote ten books in the series, including the Edgar nominee *Evan's Gate*.

She has lived in England, Germany, and Australia, but has called California her home for many years. She now escapes to a condo in Arizona during those cold California winters. When she's not writing, she loves to travel, sing, hike, paint, play the Celtic harp and spoil her grandchildren.

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. CRAFT: “Creating a Strong Sense of Place” presented by **Cara Black**

How do the most successful writers so effectively transport their readers to another era, to another planet, to Timbuktu, or to a dark, rainy Paris street during World War II?

Cara has written 19 books in her Private Investigator Aimée Leduc series and a historical standalone, *Three Hours in Paris*. In the process, she's thought a great deal about how a strong sense of place can immediately engage readers and how effectively location establishes a story's themes and characters, shapes its plot, and determines the narrative's possibilities.

Cara will share five things she's found essential to establish a strong sense of place, no matter the subject or location. She believes a good part of creating a vivid sense of place is linked to preparation: Each time she returns to Paris, she makes a point of entrenching herself in a different part of the city, learning

its secret history. She's posed as a journalist to sneak into closed areas, trained at a firing range with real Paris flics, gotten locked in a bathroom at the Victor Hugo Museum, and even gone down into the sewers with the rats so that her heroine, Aimée, can complete the same journey in a way that feels genuine and authentic to her readers.

The session will focus on:

- Essential strategies you can employ to make the settings in your stories come alive for your readers.
 - Ways to research a location before sitting down to write—understanding a place and the kinds of details needed to make things vivid for readers.
 - Using the five senses to bring key details to life.
 - The use of emotions and feelings to deepen, contrast, or complement the story's basic elements.
 - Cara's thoughts about what she calls "*writer's immersion*," and how this technique helps her uncover the most important, most telling details that keep her story moving forward.
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2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. **MARKETING: "Book Marketing Demystified"** presented by **Matthew Felix**

In his Book Marketing Demystified presentation, author and book-marketing strategist Matthew Felix will discuss some of the many options available to authors for developing on an online marketing strategy, including the specific components that comprise his own strategies and those he uses with clients. From key considerations to think about up front, to the importance of finding your niche and building a platform, to the pros and cons of social media, to the ins and outs of Amazon, and more, Matthew will discuss essential principals, common questions, and frequently underutilized techniques for developing a successful marketing strategy.

3:15 p.m. – 4:15 p.m. **CRAFT "Get Intimate with Your Characters"** presented by **Jordan Rosenfeld**

What makes those books you can't put down until your eyelids are sandy and your brain is buzzing, compelling? Unforgettable, unique characters who are real, flawed, complex and human. In this presentation writers will learn what it takes to build complex characters, unlock the essentials of point of view (POV), learn about key "character cues" crucial to demonstrating character, and much more.

3:15 p.m. – 4:15 p.m. **MARKETING "Queries, Synopses & Press Releases that Get Results!"**
Presented by **Joey Garcia**

The pandemic shook publishing, changing the book business forever—and it’s not going “back to normal.” The present—and future—belongs to savvy authors who know that their literary success depends on discoverability and delivering an audience. In this presentation, you will learn how to craft queries and synopses that grab the attention of agents and publishers. You’ll also learn how to use your query and synopsis to connect with the media and build an audience for your book. Whether you plan to self-publish, hybrid publish, or seek an agent, this content-rich presentation delivers the boost your book deserves. This session is designed for fiction and nonfiction authors and authors-to-be, regardless of their path to publishing (hybrid, self-publishing, or traditional publishing).

- Learn three essential secrets from authors succeeding now in self-publishing, traditional publishing and hybrid publishing.
- Discover the single reason why most queries to agents fail and the most important things you can do to ensure your success.
- Understand the secret to a synopsis that gets an agent or publisher excited about your book.
- Learn the basics of the new format for press releases and why it matters.
- Identify how to use your query to craft savvy pitches and press releases that inspire the media to interview you.
- Discover a surprising way to ensure that your media appearance sells books.

4:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. Wrap Up

4:45 p.m. – 6:00 pm. Meet and greet with no host bar and presenter’s book signing.