



# The Seventh Week

clarion west writers workshop • fall 2018

origami birds courtesy Siphon Mabona

## A MANUAL FOR READING BOOKS

ANDREA CHAPELA CW '17

The other day, before I went to bed, I was clicking away on the internet when I found the hundred books that every person should read before they die. I didn't know most of them, and I started to wonder what exactly I had been reading in the last twenty years—so I looked through my bookshelf and discovered it stuffed with textbooks: more math than words. I went looking online for more lists, but with every tab I opened, I found more novels and short stories and poems that I had never heard of. I wrote down every book in every language, and still the list kept growing. I decided to go to the library first thing in

the morning. I imagined it like this: Once I get the books, I'll stash them in every pocket, and when I run out of space in my clothes, I'll put them in bags and boxes and suitcases, as many as will fit in my car. Back at home, I'll take every book out and start piling them in my bedroom until I start building towers, taller and taller, until I need to build bridges to connect them, and I create such an infrastructure that it swallows all the furniture and only the bed remains. By then it'll be dark outside, but before I go to bed I make sure to open the window so that the air doesn't grow stale with the smell of so much paper. I don't foresee that the warmth of summer comes into the room, softening the covers, reminding every book that they used to be trees, and the books start sprouting roots, and the roots grow and coil on the carpet, making intimate connections with other books: the roots of Salinger mingling with Borges', that twist of Tolstoy, that loop around Woolf, and Dante and Cervantes, and the books with more pages

sprout more roots, until all the books are connected, forming a web, inciting so much verbal arousal that the books start breathing together in unison, and some even open up and bloom to let go of syllabic spores charged with such narrative strength that they float through the room like fireflies, spinning around, landing on other books, reacting with each other until the crosspollination is unbearable and the books start sprouting trunks, branches, leaves, and in a couple of hours my room is a forest, and I, still fast asleep, don't even notice when the roots tangle around me and word flowers grow between my toes and the spores stick to the curve of each finger, encompassing me in a foliage cocoon, and there, finally, something really extraordinary takes place: I start absorbing every word I haven't read, that I would never have had the time to read, and by dawn my head is filled with stories and I'm awakened by the song of the first pair of origami larks that chirp from a nest near the window.

## UN MANUAL PARA LEER

El otro día, justo antes de acostarme descubrí en internet una lista con los cien libros que hay que leer antes de morir. Como no conocía la mayoría, me pregunté qué había leído en los últimos veinte años y como no estuve segura, fui a ver mi estantería y la descubrí llena de manuales y libros de texto: más fórmulas que palabras. Por eso regresé a la computadora, tomé nota y busqué más listas; pero en cada ventana descubría más novelas y cuentos y poemas que no conocía. Copié títulos de libros en todos los idiomas, pero la lista crecía y crecía, así que decidí ir a la biblioteca a la mañana siguiente. Sacaría todos y cada uno de los libros hasta llenarme los bolsillos y, cuando ya no tuviera espacio en mi ropa, seguiría empacándolos en bolsas y cajas y maletas, tantas como cupieran en mi

auto. Ya en casa, llevaría todos los libros al dormitorio y los apilaría uno a uno para erigir torres conectadas por puentes que formarían una infraestructura aglutinante, que engulliría todos los muebles excepto la cama. Para entonces sería tan tarde que me entraría sueño y me echaría a dormir arrullada por todas las historias. Pero antes, para evitar que se enmoheciera el aire con tanto olor a libro, dejaría la ventana abierta para que pudiéramos respirar, olvidaría que el calor húmedo del verano entraría y se posaría sobre los libros, ablandaría sus cubiertas, recordándole a cada uno que alguna vez fueron árboles y entonces no podrían evitar soltar raíces y las raíces crecerían y se enrollarían en la alfombra a medio cubrir y por primera vez libros que eran desconocidos entre sí se conectarían íntimamente: las raíces de Salinger se enredarían en Borges que se enredaría en Tolstói, que se enredaría en Woolf y en Dante y en Cervantes, porque los libros con más páginas echarían más raíces, y entonces cada libro formaría

parte de la red y entonces de pura excitación verbal, comenzarían a respirar al unísono, algunos se abrirían como flores y soltarían esporas silábicas, cargadas de fuerza narrativa, que se alzarían por el cuarto como luciérnagas, darían vueltas, se posarían en otros libros, se fusionarían entre sí y, con tanta polinización, a los libros les saldrían retoños y ramas y hojas y troncos y en un par de horas formarían un bosque a mi alrededor, pero dormida no me enteraría de nada aunque las raíces me pasaran por encima y las flores me crecieran entre los pies y las esporas se me pegaran a la piel, al cabello, a la curvatura de cada dedo y ya cubierta de todo ese follaje sucedería algo de verdad extraordinario: comenzaría a absorber todo lo que no he tenido tiempo, ni tendré tiempo de leer y gracias a ese proceso de osmosis, al amanecer, con la cabeza llena de libros, abriría los ojos cuando me despertara el canto de las dos primeras alondras de origami desde su nido cerca de la ventana. ▶

▶ Continued from p. 1

**Andrea Chapela** is a Mexican writer with a degree in chemistry from the UNAM (National Autonomous University of Mexico) and an MFA in Spanish Creative Writing from the University of Iowa. Andrea is an alumna of the Clarion West class of 2017, which she describes as the most intense and wonderful experience of her life. It was also the first time she wrote directly in English instead of self-translating. She was awarded the Michael & Elliot Alexander Scholarship. Andrea is currently a Madrid City Council Arts Fellow, working on an essay collection about scientific language. ♦



# What We Did Last Summer



Week 1: Instructor Daniel Abraham CW '98 reads at University Bookstore

Instructor Yoon Ha Lee interviewed by E. Lily Yu CW '13 at the Wing Luke Museum before Week 3



Instructor Karen Joy Fowler at the Seattle Public Library, Week 5

Karen Joy Fowler's audience

## 2019 Winter One-Days

### January 27: Seanan McGuire Tailored Stories for Tailored Markets

A look at tailored markets and how to write what editors are looking for, staying true to your own voice while meeting someone else's expectations.

McGuire, winner of a 2016 Nebula, has been a finalist for the highest awards in the field and writes for many tailored markets.

### February 10: Daryl Gregory Running from Bears

Practical techniques for creating compelling stories focusing on characters who want something specific and fail to get it—or find it's not what they needed after all.

Gregory is an award-winning, genre-mixing writer. His recent novel, *Spoonbenders*, is a Nebula, Locus, and World Fantasy Award finalist for 2018. [www.clarionwest.org/workshops/oneday/](http://www.clarionwest.org/workshops/oneday/) ♦



Ted Chiang, Instructor Karen Lord, and Caroline Yoachim CW '06 at the Week 4 party



Jon Lasser CW '16, Julia Sidorova CW '09, and Tegan Moore CW '15 at the Week 1 & Locus Awards party

Now that summer 2018 is beginning to recede in the rear-view mirror, we'd like to take a look back at all the fun we had this summer—when we weren't frantically writing, that is. Between June and July this year, our six wonderful Summer Workshop instructors held six inspiring readings hosted by the University Bookstore and the Seattle Public Library. Community events, parties, and the Clarion West Write-a-thon made for a summer full of learning, laughter, and cheer.

Thanks for the memories, and see you all next year! ♦

## 2019 Summer Workshop Readings



**June 25**  
Elizabeth Hand

**July 2**  
Stephen Graham Jones

**July 9**  
Amal El-Mohtar

**July 16**  
Ibi Zoboi

**July 23**  
Jack Dann and Jonathan Strahan

**July 30**  
Ann Leckie

photo credits: Stephen Graham Jones by Kevin Richard Schafer, Amal El-Mohtar by Jessica P. Wick, Jonathan Strahan by Cat Sparks

# A Farewell to the 2018 Six-Week Summer Workshop

The class of 2018 had representatives from nine countries across five continents, and their writing reflected both their diversity and their passion for speculative fiction. We send them home with a fond farewell and look eagerly forward to their upcoming careers.

"The workshop was for me a dream come true, and every waking moment in Seattle captured that old adage. It was surreal, being surrounded by like-minded people, yet ones so diverse and varied in experiences and viewpoints. Nothing in my writing career comes close to how amazing it felt to be there and take in all the advice and ideas that I found there. I once described it as 'cuddly': the workshop was so warm and inviting and nurturing. So many other words come to mind. Comfortable. Blissful. Serene. All those outshine the moments where we challenged ourselves, where we were stressed about deadlines, about word counts, about critiques, which were all



photo by Joe Steinbacher

Rachel Broderick CW '18 jousts with Instructor Karen Lord

great in the end anyway because we knew it was all ultimately worthwhile in order to better our craft or learn something we hadn't thought of before.

"I can't think of any other experience in life that would ever come closer to what

it would feel like to be in a fairy tale."

— Dennis Staples, CW '18

Our full 2018 Workshop Report will be part of our Annual Report, to be posted in January 2019. ♦

## Clarion West Writers Workshop

### Board of Directors

Yang-Yang Wang | *Chair*  
Rashida Scholz | *Vice Chair*  
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Miriah Hetherington | *Treasurer*  
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Nisi Shawl  
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Neile Graham | *ex officio*

### Workshop

Neile Graham | *Workshop Director*  
Joe Steinbacher | *Workshop Administrator*  
Katie Sparrow | *One-Day Workshop Administrator*  
M. Huw Evans | *Workshop Specialist*  
Tegan Moore | *Workshop Specialist*

### Database

Kate Schaefer | *Database Volunteer*  
Ryan Hurteau | *Database Volunteer*  
Suzanne Tompkins | *Finance/Database Specialist*

### Communications

Jeremy Sim | *Communications Specialist*  
Vicki Saunders | *Art Director*  
Tom Whitmore | *Copy Editor/Proofreader*  
Joe Steinbacher | *Copy Editor*  
Erik Owomoyela | *Website Manager*

## In memoriam

The Clarion West community lost several powerful influences this year, members of our community who have been students, teachers, mentors, and so much more. We mourn their loss and offer our full support as a community to their family and loved ones. Ursula K. Le Guin, Mary Rosenblum, Gardner Dozois, and K.C. Ball leave behind a body of work that will be remembered. As a tribute to their lasting contributions as writers, editors, and public figures, we'd like to recommend the works that have left an indelible mark on the Clarion West staff and board:

### K.C. Ball

*Snapshots from a Black Hole and Other Oddities* (short story collection), and *Lifting Up Veronica* (novel), recommended by Tod McCoy, board secretary.

### Gardner Dozois

"Unstoppable" (short story), published in the May 2018 issue of the Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction, and *The Year's Best Science Fiction: Thirty-Fifth Annual Collection* (short story collection, ed.), recommended by Jeremy Sim, communications specialist.

### Ursula K. Le Guin

*The Left Hand of Darkness* and *Lavinia* (novels), *Steering the Craft: A Twenty-First-Century Guide to Sailing the Sea of Story* and "Speech in Acceptance of the National Book Foundation Medal" (non-fiction), recommended by Vicki Saunders, past board chair.

### Mary Rosenblum

*Water Rites* (novel), recommended by Neile Graham, workshop director, and "My She" (short story), reprinted in *Telling Tales: The Clarion West 30th anniversary anthology*, recommended by M. Huw Evans, workshop specialist.

We are also deeply saddened by the recent loss of June Cotton, Nisi Shawl's mother, who has been an inspiration and comfort to so many. ♦

# Women in Speculative Fiction Giving Circle

MARNEE CHUA  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A few years ago, Clarion West formed the **Women in Speculative Fiction Giving Circle**, dedicated to women writers of speculative fiction, to support and inspire female writers that continue to energize and change the world.

Clarion West was founded by women. Our 1971 workshop was initiated by Vonda N. McIntyre, a Nebula and Hugo Award-winning author and a Clarion graduate herself, with the support of the original Clarion workshop's founder, Robin Scott Wilson. In 1984, J.T. Stewart, a Seattle poet, writer, playwright, editor, teacher, and performance artist, reestablished the workshop with Marilyn J. Holt, a local writer, investor, and business owner.

One of our core visions has always been to uphold the development and proliferation of female writers in speculative fiction. The **Women in Speculative Fiction Giving Circle** is intended to be a realization of that vision, by supplementing fund-

ing for scholarships and instructorships that reduce the cost for female instructors and students to attend our Six-Week and One-Day Workshops.

Anyone can honor the important contributions of women in speculative fiction by joining our giving circle today. If there's a woman who's inspired you to write or participate in speculative fiction, you can honor her publicly with a donation of \$100. Our website has the current list of these inspirational women writers, and we will be publicizing the list of newly added names in *The Seventh Week* every year.

Ways to give:

- Make a general gift to this fund (via mail or online) in recognition of all women everywhere who contribute to the field of speculative fiction.
- Donate \$100 to include a short note (maximum: 6 words) about the contributions of a selected honoree.
- You may also make your contribution an annual pledge, to assure that these women—the women who make our field as important and successful as it is—will be honored not only this year, but in years to come.

Clarion West's founders helped make this field great. You can help keep it great. Donate online at <https://www.clarionwest.org/donate/women-in-speculative-fiction/>, or mail a check to: P.O. Box 31264, Seattle, WA 98103-1264. ♦

## Giving Circle Member In Celebration of

Karen G. Anderson	Peggy Rae Sapienza (in memoriam)
Caroline Bobanick	Nisi Shawl and her novel <i>Everfair</i>
Tom Whitmore	Chelsea Quinn Yarbro—fan, writer, mentor, and friend
John and Marilyn Hedtke	Vonda McIntyre
Anonymous	Eileen Gunn: storyteller, wisdom-sharer, creation catalyst
Kathy Gill	For all the women writing in this field, but especially Octavia E. Butler and Margaret Atwood, who forever changed how I see today's world
Diane Johnson	Ursula Le Guin—her imagination and style inspire!
Anonymous	Ellen Datlow and Pat Cadigan—Speculative fiction pioneers, catalysts, and brilliant instructors.
Kristi Austin	Jane Hawkins
Anonymous	Nicola Griffith and Kelley Eskridge

