

CONFERENCE SCENE

Events to advance your craft, connections and career.

BY DON VAUGHAN

1 San Miguel Writers' Conference and Literary Festival

Skip out on the winter chill while honing your craft at this sun-drenched international soirée.

WHEN: February 14–18, 2018.

WHERE: Hotel Real de Minas, San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. **PRICE:** \$575–\$795, depending on package. The “Whole Enchilada” option includes two three-hour intensives with the faculty member of your choice. Single-event tickets also available. Agent pitches and individual consultations are an additional fee. See website for details. **WHAT MAKES THE CONFERENCE UNIQUE:** “SMWC is the largest co-cultural, bilingual gathering in the Americas [that attracts] writers, teachers and other professionals from Mexico, the United States and Canada,” Conference Co-Director Maia Williams says. It’s also among the few literary conferences held at a UNESCO World Heritage site, a designation San Miguel de Allende received in 2008. **WHO IT’S PERFECT FOR:** Writers eager for an immersive experience combined with top-caliber instruction from well-published professionals. **HOW MANY ATTEND:** 750. “The core conference is limited to 300 attendees for the tracks taught in English,” Williams says. **FACULTY:** Novelists Wally Lamb



(*The Hour I First Believed*), Jorge Volpi (*In Search of Klingsor*), Joseph Boyden (*The Orenda*) and Emma Donoghue (*Room*); poet Rita Dove (“Collected Poems 1974–2004”); nonfiction writer John Vaillant (*The Golden Spruce*); writing coach Jane Friedman; and more. **HIGHLIGHTS:** With seven keynote presentations and more than 75 workshops and panels over the course of the weekend, attendees have plenty to keep themselves busy day and night. Lighter fare includes *Live On Stage: Tall Tales and Short Plays*, a Mexican fiesta, curated readings by conference faculty, and daily open-mic sessions. **IF YOU GO:** Explore beautiful San Miguel and beyond via one of the many available excursion opportunities, such as the Haiku Walk through El Charco Del Ingenio botanical garden.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
sanmiguelwritersconference.org.

2 Winter Writers' Weekend

Go from procrastinator to published writer at this boutique affair in the city where Saul Bellow and Joyce Carol Oates crafted classic works.

WHEN: March 2–4, 2018. **WHERE:** Nassau Inn, Princeton, N.J.

PRICE: \$200. **WHAT MAKES THE CONFERENCE UNIQUE:** The Winter Writers' Weekend is a fun, friendly gathering that promotes long-term connections. “Many of our participants stay in touch throughout the year,” Conference Director Karen Hodges Miller says. **WHO IT’S PERFECT FOR:** Authors seeking professional development, from publishing to platform. “Winter Writers’

Weekend is for authors who want to go further, reach more people, and sell more books," Miller says.

HOW MANY ATTEND: 60. **FACULTY:** Novelists Melissa Macfie (*The Celtic Prophecy* series) and Nora Phoenix (*No Filter*); marketing expert Noelle Stary; graphic artist Eric Labacz; website designer Lisa B. Snyder.

HIGHLIGHTS: Sessions address such timely topics as authentic marketing, making book reviews work for you and building a website to boost your platform. For those who have difficulty following through with their projects, Miller will present a session titled *Finish Your Book: What's Stopping You?* "Bring your laptop, because this is an interactive conference," she advises. **IF YOU GO:** The Cloak & Dagger on Nassau Street is a must-visit for anyone who loves a good *whodunit*. The indie bookstore is located in an 100-year-old colonial home renovated to reflect an English-style library—the kind one might find in an Agatha Christie mystery. **FOR MORE INFORMATION:** winterwritersweekend.com.

3 The Write Stuff Writers Conference

Improve your fiction while making lifelong connections at this long-running event in the heart of America's steel country.

WHEN: March 22–24, 2018. **WHERE:** Best Western Lehigh Valley Hotel Conference Center, Bethlehem, Pa. **PRICE:** \$289 for members/\$329 for nonmembers through Feb. 12; \$319/\$359 through March 4; \$339/\$379 after. Daily rates also available; see website for details. Fee includes daily lunch. **WHAT MAKES THE CONFERENCE UNIQUE:** An intimate atmosphere makes it easy for

attendees and faculty to meet and mingle. "Our conference is designed to be inclusive by encouraging participants to share ideas, pose questions and make connections with others who share the passion [for] writing," Conference Director Dawn Sooy says. "The included lunches enhance the ready exchange of ideas and thoughts between attendees, presenters and agents, and the Friday reception is a great place to relax and network."

WHO IT'S PERFECT FOR: Writers of every stage hungry for the most up-to-date info and insight on penning and publishing fiction. **HOW MANY ATTEND:** 150. **FACULTY:** Novelists Bob Mayer (*Area 51* series), Jane Cleland (*Josie Prescott* mysteries), Ben Sobieck (*Black Eye*), Matt Betts (*Indelible Ink*), Richard White (*For A Few Gold Pieces More*), Tabitha Lord (*Infinity*) and Suzanne Mattaboni (*Excuse Me, Waitress, Is That New Jersey?*). **HIGHLIGHTS:** Seminars address a variety of relevant topics and include: Mastering Suspense, Structure and Plot; Using Metaphors to Add Richness and Texture to Your Work; and A Marathon, Not a Sprint: Long-Term Marketing Strategies for Indies. Attendees can receive immediate feedback on a sample of their work at the Friday evening Page Cuts Critique Sessions. (Critique sessions are free but require advance registration; see website for details.) **IF YOU GO:** A visit to Bethlehem wouldn't be complete without a stop at the Moravian Book Shop on Main Street. Established in 1745, it's the oldest book purveyor in the U.S. **FOR MORE INFORMATION:** glvwg.org. **WD**

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15TH SAN FRANCISCO WRITERS CONFERENCE

Celebration of Craft, Commerce & Community

Join us and 100+ presenters—authors, editors, publishers & literary agents from New York, L.A. & S.F. Bay Area!

Keynoters will include: Dana Gioia, California Poet Laureate/former NEA Chairman; the author of *Lucky Boy*, Shanthi Sekaran; and thriller novelist Robert Dugoni.

Free 'Open to the Public' YA Session with Mitali Perkins

February 15-18, 2018

Pre/Post Master Classes on Feb. 15 & 19

all at the InterContinental Mark Hopkins Hotel

\$229 SFWC Attendee room rate...until sold out!

SFWC-MIL Writing Classes year-round at Mechanics' Institute Library

To get event updates and class details, subscribe to the SFWC Newsletter at:

www.SFWriters.org



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Our editors are available to speak at your conference or workshop. We're happy to talk about technique, business or inspirational topics. We also help evaluate query letters or book proposals. We won't break your budget, and we're fun people!

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