



MARCH 2023

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Southern California Writer's Association

March 2023

- **President Larry Porricelli's Message**
- **March Featured Event: Antoine Wilson: March 18, 10 a.m. at the Regency San Juan Capistrano Theatre**
- **Hump Day: Every Wednesday 10 a.m. on SCWA's Facebook Group page**
- **Debby's Room: Continuing in March on Wednesdays 10:20 a.m. on the SCWA Facebook Group page, on the Rooms tab**



Have you subscribed?

Check out our fancy new URL for the YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/SCWAWritersOnline>

President's Message for March 2023 from Larry Porricelli



THE MAGNIFICENCE OF KEEPING A READER READING!

Greetings SCWA Members, Newsletter Readers, and any of my Longtime Reprobate Writer Friends Just Hanging Out,

The SCWA'S January Meeting featured author Chris Hauty, who regaled the crowd with his thoughts on so many different ways to take on a story. Chris is a well-known screenwriter and *New York Times* bestselling writer of action thriller novels.

We filmed Chris Hauty and will have his presentation edited and up on our SCWA YouTube Channel soon. Please enjoy it; he speaks so well on keeping the pace moving to create the “thriller” in our work. Every writer's work is a dedicated mission, and we offer our work to hoped for readers.

Hauty's words mirrored SCWA's mission: every writer is important. We are all resistance writers, engaging in pursuit of a story where every line is a magnetic pull to the next line in our stories. Somehow, our themes can open minds to expand our humanity.

There are many thoughts on the subject of creating a driving force that attracts and keeps a reader's eyeballs glued to our work. One of SCWA's founders, writer Darlene Quinn of the noted bestselling *Webs* series, wrote short chapters. Darlene offered that many readers are in bed or comfortable chairs and a short chapter keeps them hooked. Of course, Charles Dickens felt the opposite and wanted as much entanglement in a chapter as could be created.

Please take a look in our SCWA YouTube page. We have a visual catalog produced by Diana Pardee of many writers from our monthly meetings to the weekly Hump Day interviews that Maddie Margarita does with authors to seminars we have offered.

Every member is important, and every writer in SCWA has something to offer each of us.

If you have an idea, or an event you think we should produce, please let us know, you may email us any time. We would like to hear from you, our members, as to what you desire to see and hear. We are all one.

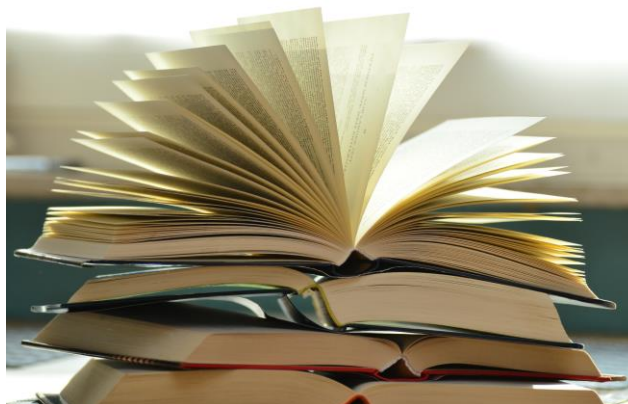
Perhaps you write in YA or in nonfiction or mystery or romance, science fiction, fantasy, and have a vision for what you hope to accomplish. Let us know so we can offer it to you. And we would be most delighted if any have projects you would like to produce, just let us know and we will support it!

Remember, the third Saturday of every month, we offer a live meeting, a modern-day Writers Round Table with food and libations. Do partake; it is well worth your time!

Thank you.
Lorenzo Porricelli
SCWA President

Welcome New Members to SCWA!

Mark Biagini
Barbara DeLong
Mary Castillo
Susan Leonard



Have you explored the SCWA website lately?

- **Sample the books written and published by SCWA members in the SCWA website bookstore:**
[www.https://www.southerncalwriters.org/member-bookstore/](https://www.southerncalwriters.org/member-bookstore/)
- **Get to know our members: explore member profiles**
- **Dig into our newsletter archive for highlights of our monthly speakers and events**

Have you explored the SCWA YouTube videos?

- **We love sharing our content!**
- **SCWA Writers Online is FREE to all with over 100 Hump Day interviews with bestselling authors led by Maddie Margarita**
- **See SCWA's workshops and videos of our featured speakers from our monthly meetings**

<https://www.youtube.com/SCWAWritersOnline>

SCWA Events This Month: March 2023

- SCWA's Featured Speaker for March will be ANTOINE WILSON. Saturday, March 18. Regency Theatre, San Juan Capistrano
- SCWA VIRTUAL HAPPY HOUR: Every Friday at 4:30 p.m. PT. Join us with your funny stories and libations for good news and good cheer. New members showing up weekly.
<https://www.southernwriters.org/>
- SCWA HUMP DAY BOOK TOUR: Join us every Wednesday on SCWA's Facebook page. And check out the ones you have missed on SCWA's YouTube channel:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/southernwriters>
- Debby's Room: Continuing through March. Every Wednesday at 10:20 a.m. PT. Join Debby Putman and Dot Caffrey for casual conversation about the writing craft and anything that you wish to bring for discussion. Click on the Rooms tab for Debby's Room on the SCWA Facebook page.

Have you missed an SCWA event? We will upload replays as they are edited and ready on SCWA's YouTube channel at:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/SCWAWritersOnline>

For information about SCWA membership and these events please go to <https://www.southernwriters.org/>

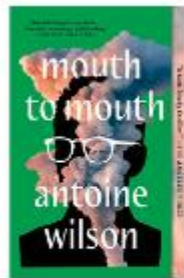
Featured March Speaker: Antoine Wilson

**Come for the program.
Stay for the surprises!**

Antoine Wilson is the author of the novels *Mouth to Mouth* (2022), *Panorama City* (2012), and *The Interloper* (2007). Antoine's *Mouth to Mouth* was featured on President Obama's Reading List. His other work has appeared in *The Paris Review*, *StoryQuarterly*, and *The Best New American Voices*, among other publications. He is a contributing editor of *A Public Space*.



A graduate of the Iowa Writer's Workshop and recipient of a Carol Houck Smith Fiction Fellowship from the University of Wisconsin, he lives in Los Angeles.



Mouth to Mouth: A
Novel



Panorama City: A
Novel



The Interloper: A
Novel

When: Saturday, March 18, 2023

Time: 10 am PDT

Where: Regency Theatre (adjacent to the San Juan Capistrano Train Station), 26762 Verdugo Street, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675

Admission: Members \$25.00

Nonmembers \$35.00

Enjoy a Continental Breakfast 9:30 am; SCWA Meeting 10:00; Speaker 10:15 am; Lunch 11:00 am

Your safety and health are important to us. *We welcome vaccinated members and guests.*

You must register by Friday, March 17, 2023, at 12:00 pm.



The graphic consists of a blue circle on the left containing the text "Hump Day Book Tour" and "LIVESTREAMED Every Wednesday 10:00 a.m.". To the right of the circle is the text "Join us every Wednesday at 10 a.m.". Below this text is a photograph of a camel in a desert landscape. The camel has the text "SCWA Hump Day Book Tour" written on its side. A speech bubble next to the camel contains the text "Wednesdays at 10 a.m. PT in the SCWA Facebook Room".

Hump Day episodes stream on SCWA's Facebook page.

Look for our SCWA group on Facebook. Scroll through the posts for the most recent guests. When we are LIVE, click on the Events tab to join us!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/southerncafwriters/events>

Debby's Room follows Hump Day at 10:20 for casual conversation about books, writing, and life as an author. Find it on the SCWA Facebook page.



LIT UP!

A Conversation with Orange County Readers and Writers; a monthly salon with authors reading and discussing their book hosted by Maddie Tighe Margarita

New authors—new works—new worlds. Find your next favorite author or become a new fan. LIT UP Orange County is currently accepting submissions from authors interested in sharing their work with Orange County readers and writers. Submissions should be fiction or memoir, 6-8 double-spaced pages, and engage our audience. Interested writers please contact @MadelineTigheMargarita for more details!



Maddie's most recent LitUp OC opened 2023 at Muzeo Museum and Cultural Center's Open Book series for a perfect Sunday afternoon with **Jonathan Brown, Leonard Syzmczak, and Carol Latham.**

Catch up with Maddie's entertaining interview. Find the replay on Facebook on Madeline Tighe Margarita's page.

HIGHLIGHTS February Speaker: Jonathan J. Brown

Learning How to Keep Writing

February's SCWA meeting began with intense musical magic on a drum and a big smile on the drummer's face, that of Jonathan Brown, who has published many novels and stories of crime fiction and noir. After a few moments of drumming and pacing before our enchanted audience, Brown announced, "I thought you should be entertained—and I have a policy of saying 'Yes.'" Program Chair Maddie Margarita had directed him to "Just come down and be inspirational."

At ten years old, Brown began playing drums when rap music was just starting. At a writers' conference, one of the other writers he met was a former outstanding basketball player and drummer who told him, "Yes, my discipline comes from drumming." And Brown himself has consciously developed disciplined routines for writing and publishing.

In 2013, Brown published his first book, *Crescendo*, a mystery involving music. His editor, Elaine Ash, had advised making this mystery into two books. At this initial book signing alongside Michael Connelly, a bestselling author of thirty-seven novels, Brown got a kick out of Connelly's signing his book. Brown's third book was *The Big Crescendo*. Its protagonist, Lou Crasher, has a strong sense of right and wrong and is "loosely based on me," he says. Brown creates a situation where "something small and innocent occurs in the music world—and gets big." (It doesn't hurt that Brown has a background in martial arts, Korean Karate, and being a bouncer.)

Brown then discovered he enjoys writing more than drumming, a change of preference he *never* thought he'd have. He became "a schedule and a list" guy. If any holes come up in his schedule, he writes—anytime. "It holds yourself accountable."

Because Brown dislikes the waiting period a writer has after submitting a book, he writes two books at a time. Audiences ask how he keeps from getting mixed up. He always keeps folders on his ideas and even with working titles. When he gets to 50,000 words in a manuscript, Brown starts the second book. He was/is always ready “to hit the ground running and writing.” However, the planned schedules of his career became compromised by trouble and pain in his eyes, sinuses, and headaches.

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) indicated a problem, like bone marrow cancer. A doctor told Brown that “any cancer can jump from the body to the head.” Yes, “they found a mass in my head.” Not only was he on chemo for four and one-half months, but he also had a transplant of some nature. He wanted to use a video to show his followers that was happening. “People liked my positive attitude.” Since his body had “a battle on every level,” his fans asked, “How do you stay so positive?”

Luckily, Brown didn't have nausea, but “I was excited that I woke up every morning and writing was still a passion.” However, because some medicines provoke insomnia, Brown would lay out some scenes ahead—and then “with insomnia I'd write them out.”

When Brown was writing *Chloe* and also *Drums, Guns 'N' Money* (out in March 2023), he had this argument with his wife Sonia, who was present at SCWA.

Jonathan: “Cancer or not I need to keep my books coming out. A sport—me against cancer. This too shall pass.”

Sonia: “Why you?”

Jonathan: “Why not me? It's this thing called *Life*.”

Our speaker then leveled with the audience: “All along, I kept thinking, ‘When I get through this’” (Thus, we learned that he never lost hope.)

Near the end of the presentation, Maddie Margarita, Program Chair, stepped up for a dialogue and asked Brown, “All your stuff is output. How do you refill your tank?” He responded that with no children, he and his wife take walks and also try new things, like audio books. He wound up hiring a reader for his own audio book for kids five to nine years old, *Kanu, A Boy's Journey*. Its setting is ancient Africa. In addition, Brown used a writing coach for a few sessions. “It made my writing better.”

Since that coaching, Brown reads everything out loud. Normally, he would read aloud only his third drafts. But now he wants his writing to flow and have a rhythm. “I also switch the [sentence] structure around.” Maddie confirmed his style: “It has a lyricism in its flow.” Brown responded, “Yes because I listen to music while writing. The lyrics don't get in my way.”

In addition, Brown said, “I read three to four books a month. Two at a time.” Maddie then asked, “Since you sit a lot, how do you stay loose?” Brown says to think about your posture and tight hip flexors. He also does yoga, maintenance, and Tai Chi. [Those martial arts and karate help.] “Get up every hour and stretch. We are built to move.”

“How do you stay positive,” Maddie asked, “if not to meet your goals?” Brown replied, “A goal is often a prediction. But if you keep moving your goal post, well.....” He paused. “But, yes, I have started some work and chucked it.”

Near the end, Brown quoted from *On Writing* by Stephen King: “Just because a story is difficult doesn't mean it's not going to be good.” When Brown was writing *Chloe*, a novel with his first female protagonist and of mixed race, he shows her fighting back when she gets “unwanted male attention.” Personally, Brown hates the “damsel in distress” line. Because the character in charge of Chloe is a male, “she develops a penchant for knives.”

The key to an excellent book, Brown believes, is not exactly about the plot. The characters need to be consistent yet make mistakes since stories are “ALL ABOUT THE CHARACTERS.”

Amazon refers to Brown as “the Canadian born rock drummer turned author.” Here are some of his other novels: *Don't Shoot the Drummer*, *Drumroll Please*, both Lou Crasher books, *Character Is What Counts*, a novel based on the life of Vince Lombardi, famous football coach, and *A Boxing Trainer's Journey*, a novel based on the life of Angelo Dundee.

Glenda B. Rynn, Reporter

grynn@cox.net

RESOURCES FOR WRITERS



One of the best resources and newsletters we've found is **Publishing ... and Other Forms of Insanity**. Lists include agents looking for genre submissions, publishers open to unagented submissions, information on conferences, contests, and all things publishing.

Erica Verrillo has written seven books and published five. She learned all about self-publishing: marketing, literary agents, book promotion, editing, pitching the book, getting reviews, and everything you need to do to get it right.

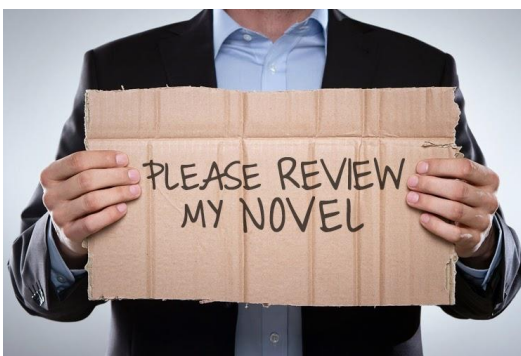
Here are two lists from her latest newsletter:

6 AGENTS SEEKING WOMEN'S FICTION Women's fiction—often coupled with the word "upmarket"—is any fiction centered on the experience of women. While in the past, this often meant a focus on romance, some of the more down-to-earth aspects of women's lives are now being considered.

6 HORROR PUBLISHERS ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS DIRECTLY FROM WRITERS—NO AGENT REQUIRED Here are six publishers looking for dark, gritty fiction that will scare your pants off or maybe just your socks. All are traditional publishers, and none require an agent.



About *Foreword Magazine*: Since 1998, *Foreword Reviews* has provided trade book reviews of the best titles from independent presses. In print, and online, its FOLIO award-winning design and editorial content makes the magazine a favorite among librarians, booksellers, and readers—an excellent resource when it comes to purchasing books. Foreword INDIES and the fee-for-review Clarion service complement its online content and print magazine, helping to showcase independent presses and their authors.



FOREWORD ANNOUNCES FINALISTS FOR 2022 INDIES BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARDS

March 9, 2023—

As part of *Foreword Review's* mission to discover, review, and share the best books from university and independent publishers, *Foreword Reviews* is pleased to announce the [Finalists for the 2022 INDIES Book of the Year Awards](#).

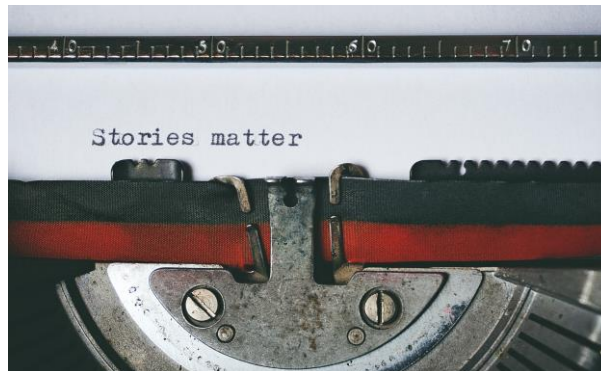


Continued:

More than 2,500 entries spread across 55 genres were submitted for consideration. The Finalists were determined by Foreword's editorial team. Winners are now being decided by teams of librarian and bookseller judges from across the country.

The complete list of Finalists can be found at:

<https://www.forewordreviews.com/awards/finalists/2022/>



Make a Writer Very Happy!

How to Leave a Review for Your Friends' Books

- Log in to your Amazon account
- Go to the products page, then select the book
- Scroll down to the Customer Reviews section and click on "Write a Customer Review"
- Rate the book
- Write your review and "submit"

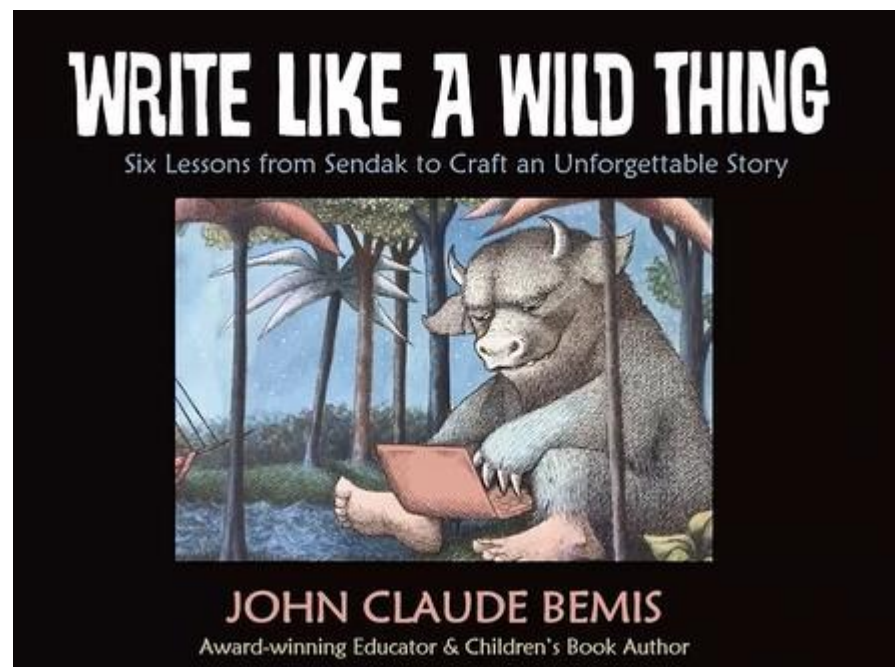
You'll see: "Thanks for your review"

Authors Publish

Authorspublish.com will keep you up-to-date on opportunities to submit your work to a wide array of publishers. These articles always contribute to the conversations about writing that we enjoy:

<https://authorspublish.com/why-writers-need-to-read-to-be-readers/>

<https://authorspublish.com/free-lecture-write-like-a-wild-thing-6-lessons-on-crafting-an-unforgettable-story/>



How do you find your way through the ocean of resources available online for writers like us? Check out this sampling of what we have found to be of interest. Links are included so you will be able to investigate further.

Are you afraid of scams and rip-offs when you consider publishing your book? Writers need never go it alone with a watchdog like Writer Beware to have your back.

Writer Beware's mission is to track, expose, and raise awareness of scams and other questionable activities in and around the publishing industry.



After many years on the Blogger platform, we have finally transitioned to WordPress, which offers much greater flexibility in terms of design, control, and ease of use.

We also have a new, easy to remember web address: www.writerbeware.blog.



LitNuts was created to share the “Best of the Indies” with booklovers.

- Subscribers get a free newsletter featuring only indie books.
- Authors and publishers get an affordable way to share their work with engaged readers.

<https://litnuts.com/> LitNuts promotes *only* books from independent presses and authors. Details on its website:

<https://litnuts.com/pages/authors-and-publishers>

**"Irony is just honesty with the
volume cranked up."**

-George Saunders

Benefits of SCWA Membership

WELCOME, WELCOME, WELCOME!

- ❖ **Active members receive up to 60% off admission to SCWA meetings.**
- ❖ **Members are eligible for a free 30-minute consultation from book shepherd Sharon Goldinger on any publishing contract.**
- ❖ **Discounts are available for active SCWA members for registration for the La Jolla Writer's Conference and for early registration for the Southern California Writers' Conference.**
- ❖ **Access to professional network of publishing, business consultants and editors.**
- ❖ **Participation in SCWA marketing platforms on southernalwriters.org and SCWA social media platforms.**
- ❖ **Opportunities to showcase your book on the SCWA website in our bookshop, Members showcase, and on your profile.**
- ❖ **SCWA Member's Only group on Facebook where we rewind and replay recent featured guests and their presentations.**

SCWA Board of Directors

- President Larry Porricelli
- Vice President..... Steve Jackson
- Vice President of Finances Don Westenhaver
- Vice President of ProgrammingMadeline Margarita
- Vice President - Social Media & Production Diana Pardee
- Newsletter Editor.....Pam Sheppard
- Scribe and Speaker Reporter.....Glenda Rynn
- At-Large..... Sharon Goldinger

Mailing Address for inquiries by mail: PO Box 47, Huntington Beach, CA 92648
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TERMS OF USE AND CONTENT INFORMATION DISCLAIMER

The SCWA encourages open, respectful communication between individuals interested in the craft of writing through a variety of social and traditional media, such as Facebook, SCWA website and emails. Any individual using inappropriate language, discussing inappropriate topics, or commenting in a disrespectful way will be removed from access to any future SCWA communication methods.

The SCWA communication sites should only be used for dialogues related to the craft of writing. Non-writing related topics should be done via other forms of personal communication. Please review the content disclaimer located in the newsletter via the SCWA website www.southernwriters.org or on the About page of the SCWA Facebook page. The SCWA does not endorse individual opinions placed of any of its sites.

The SCWA receives information on various services, writing contests, and events. As a courtesy, we will forward the information to our members. Unless otherwise indicated, the SCWA does not discourage, encourage, or recommend any of the services, contests, or events. Many of these services, contests and events cost money; therefore, we recommend that you evaluate the opportunities based on your individual situation and interest. Because of our membership email protection policy, please do not forward information to the general membership directly. **We request that all members forward any information to the SCWA President for approval and forwarding to the membership.**

SCWA members wishing to share appropriate writing-related information and resources are welcome to do so via the SCWA Facebook page. The SCWA Board members and Newsletter Editor will determine the information to be contained in the SCWA on-line newsletter, which is primarily used for official SCWA information.