

The Greater Manchester Arts Council  
Presents  
**The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual**  
**Manchester and the Mountains**  
**Poets & Writers Weekend**  
*Between the Lines: Text in Motion, Image, Story and*  
*Song*  
**April 23-25, 2010**  
**Manchester Center, Vermont**

**WELCOME BACK!**

We are pleased to welcome you to the Third Annual Manchester and the Mountains Poets and Writers Weekend, *Between the Lines: Text in Motion, Image, Story and Song*. As you can see by our 2010 theme and offerings, we are exploring the written word in many ways this season, both on and off the page. From the basics of forming a writer's group, to songwriting, spoken word/dance collaboration, memoir, poetry, fiction, cross-genre writing, illustration and back again, we look forward to having you travel with us on another extraordinary weekend journey.

We've moved to a beautiful new campus at The Inn at Willow Pond, one mile north of Manchester Center on Historic Route 7A. We've added a number of new faculty, presenters and events to this year's program. New this year is our first Poets and Writers Book Fair featuring small house publishers, art books, self published works and the like. In addition to our Free and Open to the Public events, we know you'll be enticed by the classes and workshops being offered.

**Early Bird sign-up assures you of a seat—in addition, we sweeten the deal with a 10% discount for sign-ups received by March 21. Registrations received after April 12 are assigned a 10% late fee.**

As you'll note, some faculty offer the possibility of submitting work beforehand; be sure to look over the submission guidelines enclosed in your packet. **We are also seeking entries of original works to be considered for publication in a commemorative edition by The Shires Press, and made available for purchase by Weekend participants. Entry guidelines for the book are also in your packet, where you can find other important information, such as where to go for meals and lodging.**

For information on renting a Bookseller's Booth, contact Beth Meachem at 802-867-0272. Vendor fee for the weekend is \$25.00; Vendors are responsible for staffing their own booth.

Thank you for your enthusiasm, input and participation.

## **Friday April 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**WHO SAYS REGISTRATION HAS TO BE BORING?**

**6:00-9:00 PM**

**The Inn at Manchester**

**Enjoy an evening with emerging and published writers. Cozy up to the bar, enjoy local Vermont Cheeses or have a cup of coffee or tea in the historic setting of one of Manchester's finest lodgings. Join in conversation, share ideas, be inspired-readings by Tarpaulin Press and Harbor Mountain Press.**

**6:00-7:30** Registration and Informal Get Together

**7:30-9:00** Readings by Tarpaulin Press and Harbor Mountain Press

**Enjoy Local Vermont Cheeses**

**Cash Bar**

**Suggested Donation: \$10.00**

## **Saturday April 24<sup>th</sup>**

**SESSION I:**

**9:00 – 10:30AM**

**The Inn at Willow Pond**

**CRAZY BEAUTY**

**Abigail Thomas**

*Memoir/ Personal Essay*

**Razor-sharp pieces of radiant truth... stained-glass windows put together from scenes garnered from the day to day... the crazy beauty of life....This workshop offers ideas for straight and not-so-straightforward personal narrative stimulated by questions you may not have considered and a few offbeat assignments. What to put in, what to leave out (and why), how to find the part of you (otherwise known as the voice) that best tells the story you choose to tell. There's no trick to writing; only finding the jumping off place. What are ten things you forget? Ten you remember?**

**Fee: \$35.00**

**Location: The Inn at Willow Pond**

**EDITING YOUR NONFICTION WORK**

**Tom Slayton**

*Nonfiction/Journalism*

Vermont Life Editor Emeritus and VPR commentator Tom Slayton will discuss the principles and pitfalls of editing, then will work with participants to edit their own nonfiction articles and essays. Participants in this workshop are asked to bring 6 copies of a non-fiction work-in-progress of reasonable length to edit with Mr. Slayton and the class.

**Fee: \$35.00**

**Location: The Inn at Willow Pond**

## **WRITING THROUGH SELF-INQUIRY and ITS RELATIONSHIP to the BODY**

**Erika and Gary Schmidt**

*Cross Genre/Hybrid Text*

Honesty, authenticity, real life, truth...the seeds for creative expression.

This workshop offers an opportunity to explore the relationship of writing as artistic expression to other forms of art media, either as a tool for inspiration or as an alternative means to presenting your writing. How does memory, awareness of the present moment, physical experience of the body inform writing? In what ways can we tap into the mind-body connection as information or inspiration for writing? We will pursue the path to creativity with writing exercises and guided vocal and movement meditations. Bring a short selection from your written work to be read aloud. (Erika and Gary will be performing Saturday evening)

**Fee: \$35.00**

**Location: The Inn at Willow Pond**

## **SESSION II:**

**11:00 AM-12:30 PM**

## **VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS OF THE SELF**

**Gordon Massman**

*Poetry/Prose*

Through the forests of experience, from within the thickets of our unique unduplicable individual lives peers a wild character with a pure clean voice. That character is you. That voice belongs to nobody but you. This workshop provides enticements to lure out this voice which is understandably wary of exposure to civilization. It craves liberation--is horribly lonely-- but fears the hammering judgments awaiting its trial. So it suffers a smeared and naked wilderness imprisonment until we--you--have the courage to release it. In this brief encounter this will be our project--to begin or to continue your voice's emergence into light.

**Fee: \$35.00**

## **TALES TOLD BY AN IDIOT**

**Robin Yuran**

### ***Poetry/Prose***

Looking at the history of riddles throughout the ages as ways of telling stories, passing codes and just sheer entertainment, we often uncover hidden truths in ourselves and others; a wonderful way to draw a character or unveil a plot, or simply have a good time. Various forms and styles will be presented, with a focus on the Anglo-Saxon. Exercises and experiments abound in this class as students are given a chance to write and share their own riddles.

**Fee: \$25.00**

**Location: The Inn at Willow Pond**

### **THE WRITING GYM**

**Elena Georgiou**

#### ***Poetry***

The Writing Gym with Elena Georgiou returns! In this workshop you will be led through a series of exercises that will alternate between generating new drafts and expanding and developing what you have just created; all with the ultimate goal of leaving the workshop with new work to further develop once you return home.

**Fee: \$35.00**

**Location: The Inn at Willow Pond**

### **LUNCH BREAK**

**On the Grounds**

**The Inn at Willow Pond**

**12:30-1 PM**

***Don't leave, there's more to come...***

Take a break for lunch on the grounds, and then on to the next round. Find a table outside if weather permits, or relax indoors. You can Brown-Bag it from home, or order ahead for a yummy Box Lunch from Al Ducci's Italian Pantry for just \$12.50, delivered right to you (See Registration Form for selections)

### **SESSION III:**

**The Inn at Willow Pond**

**1:00-2:30 PM**

### **THE BEAT GOES ON: FORM AND (/ IN) FLUX**

**Peter Money**

#### ***Poetry/Prose***

Drum beats, smoke signals, what wakes in consciousness is driven by us as much as by what our teachers held to be true: "No ideas but in things," "Make it new." Motivation meets content and content meets form--but it's all in flux (shouldn't it be?). Using several methods

and exercises, this workshop attempts a whole MFA into ninety minutes' time (give or take).

**Fee: \$35.00**

### **LIFT THAT BOOMBOX**

**Tyler Gibbons and Robin MacArthur (Red Heart the Ticker)**

#### ***Songwriting***

What is the difference between song lyrics and poetry? How do we fit words to music, and what role do these lyrics play in our songs? We'll spend time in workshop looking at lyrical examples from great songs to answer these questions and more. Bring an instrument if you have one. Time allowing, we could also workshop a few songs; if interested come prepared to sing an original song that you would like feedback on.

**Fee: \$25.00**

**Location: The Inn at Willow Pond**

### **INTRODUCTION TO CROSS-GENRE/HYBRID WRITING**

**Christian Peet**

#### ***Cross-Genre***

What is a hybrid or cross-genre text, and what necessitates such “between space forms”? In this workshop we will engage with texts that do not neatly fit into distinct categories of genre. We will consider the relationship between form and content, explore our syntax for clues about the larger shape of our work, and experiment with strategies to generate the narratives we are compelled to articulate.

**Fee: \$35.00**

**Location: The Inn at Willow Pond**

### **THEATRE OF LIFE: THE WRITING OF CEREMONY AND RITUAL**

**Claire North**

#### ***Text for Spoken Word***

Our weddings, funerals, baby blessings/christenings, healings, and coming-of-age rituals tell our stories. They have beginnings, middles, denouements, and endings; they contain our past, present, and future visions. Rituals and ceremonies are the most dynamic and empowering when we use our own words and actions. The workshop will clarify the structure and intention of ceremonial writing, and we will design our own ceremony/ritual and perform it.

**Fee: \$25.00**

**Location: The Inn at Willow Pond, Outdoors Weather Permitting**

### **SESSION IV:**

**The Northshire Bookstore 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**

**3-5:30 PM**

**FACULTY and GUEST READINGS**

3-4 PM

***Short Readings by Faculty and Distinguished Guests***

If you've yet to attend a MMPW Saturday afternoon reading, grab a latte and hold onto your hat. If you've been here before, you know why you won't miss this. Bring a friend!

**Free**

**PUBLISHING PANEL**

**4-5:30 PM**

***Presenting Publishers and Guests***

The Publishing Panel is a mainstay of the Poets and Writers weekend. Publishers, Agents, Editors—we get them all—and get them all talking to you about the ins and outs of getting your work into print.

**Free**

## **Pub Night**

**6:00PM 'til ?**

### **The Inn at Willow Pond**

About now, you'll be ready for food and fun. Fill your belly with locally grown garden greens and homemade pizza. Local Vermont Art Raffle and Cash Bar, not to mention a line up of award winning entertainment, featuring Storytelling, Musicians and Performances with Red Heart the Ticker, Erika and Gary Schmidt, Jeannine Laverty and guests. A percentage of the proceeds from this event will go to support the United Way of Bennington County.

**Donation \$25.00 includes dinner**

**Location: Inn at Willow Pond**

## **Sunday April 25<sup>th</sup>**

### **SESSION I: 9-10:30 AM**

#### **The Inn at Willow Pond**

#### **FACULTY and GUEST READINGS**

***More Short Readings by Faculty and Distinguished Guests***

Join us for a final session of extraordinary readings by extraordinary poets and writers. Our Sunday morning readings are always a hit—a great way to enter the homestretch.

### **SESSION II: 10:30-NOON**

#### **TELLER OF NATIVE AMERICAN TALES**

**Keith Lawrence**

***Storytelling***

Keith uses artifact reproductions and tradition to help bring life to the stories and culture of Northeast Native Peoples, including 18th century Mohawk dress, authentically crafted

from the tips of his moccasins to the top of his Gustowe headdress. Join Keith in an exploration of oral tradition and scripted performance rendered from fact and legend.

**Fee: \$25.00**

**Location: The Inn at Willow Pond**

**Enjoy an evening with emerging and published writers. Cozy up to the bar or indulge in a cup of coffee/tea in the historic setting of one of Manchester's finest lodgings. Join in conversation, share ideas, be inspired- readings by Tarpaulin Press and Harbor Mountain Press.**

## **THROUGH THE EYES OF THE WRITER**

**Tony Eprile**

***Fiction***

This writing workshop explores the relationship between writing fiction and how we see the world. Through a series of exercises, we use our own 'eyes' to develop understanding of other people's perceptions. Students should read Samuel Scudder's essay on Louis Agassiz (The Student, the Professor, and the Fish) available widely on the internet including at

<http://www.bethel.edu/~dhoward/resources/Agassizfish/Agassizfish.htm>

Students who would like to do so should bring in approx. 15 copies of a short piece (page or so) of observational writing (fiction, nonfiction, or poem) and can submit this beforehand for possible workshop critique. (See Weekend Guidelines under Submission Guidelines.

**Fee: \$35.00**

**Location: The Inn at Willow Pond**

## **PUBLISHING ON DEMAND with the Northshire Bookstore**

**Debbi Wraga**

***Self Publishing***

Once the realm of quirky text and Grange-Hall cookbooks, self-publishing has been reborn and is rapidly claiming a niche in the commercial publishing world. Our local treasure, The Northshire Bookstore, led the nation a few years back when they purchased the Espresso Self-Publishing Book Machine, one of only a handful in the world. Debbi Wraga will share what writers need to know to publish their works. Hear from some authors who have chosen to take this route in publishing.

**Northshire Bookstore**

**Fee: \$10.00**

## **RISKY BUSINESS**

**Clemma Dawsen**

***Text and Image***

We hear often about "risk-taking in art" and are told time and again to "take risks" with our writing, but what does it actually mean and how does one do it? We will begin with exercises wherein we consider the relationship between the images in our heads and the words we use to form text. We will look at the actual *shape* of our writing-the combination of text and white space-as it appears on the page. We will discuss the pros

and cons of illustrating work with photographs and drawings or even sound and movement, and ask ourselves what we are-poets, writers or 'others'-while we ponder the importance of labels and challenge the notions surrounding so-called "real writing".

**Fee: \$35.00**      **Location: Inn at Willow Pond**

## **LUNCH BREAK**

### **On the Grounds**

#### **The Inn at Willow Pond**

**12:30-1 PM**

*Once again-- there's more to come...*

Take a break for lunch on the grounds, and then on to the next round. Find a table outside if weather permits, or relax indoors. You can Brown-Bag it from home, or order ahead for a yummy Box Lunch from Al Ducci's Italian Deli for just \$12.50, delivered right to you (See Registration Form for selection)

## **SESSION III:    1:00-2:30**

### **STORIES FOR THE TELLING**

**Jeannine Laverty**

#### **The Writer as Storyteller**

Before written language, stories were preserved and passed through memorization and recitation. Storytelling is the grandmother of all poetry, song and story, and the techniques of storytelling have great value to all workers in words, written, sung or spoken. Jeannine will be telling some stories, using those stories to demonstrate, along with participants, some of the paralinguistic elements of oral storytelling and the ways to structure an oral story for successful telling.

**Fee: \$25.00**

**Location: The Inn at Willow Pond**

### **THE CARE AND FEEDING OF WRITERS GROUPS**

**Clemma Dawsen**

This workshop will be driven by the needs of its participants. We may explore such questions as: How to I start a group? How do I critique the work of others? How do I recognize valuable critique of my own work? How do I deal with fellow groupies who hog the floor night after night? What's the best use of our precious time? Do we organize or free-flow? How does one lead a group? Is a leader necessary? The possible list goes on.... **Bring your questions along or see submission guidelines.**

**Fee: \$25.00**

**Location: The Inn at Willow Pond**

### **PREPARING A BOOK PROPOSAL**

**Ed Cyzewski**

*Expository Writing/Publishing*

Every book starts with a proposal, and this workshop will take a step-by-step approach to

drafting a proposal that will compel editors by addressing key issues such as a book's one- sentence summary, the reader benefits, the market comparison, and the intended audience. Attendees will leave with a clear understanding of book proposals, examples of proposals, and concrete ideas for next steps.

**Fee: \$35.00**

**Location: The Inn at Willow Pond**

## [A Few More Things...](#)

### Special Thanks

We of the Greater Manchester Arts Council and more specifically, the Manchester and the Mountains Poets and Writers Weekend, would like you to join us in thanking our advisors, author Gretel Ehrlich and Christian Peet of Tarpaulin Sky Press. Ehrlich read for our first fundraiser back in 2008, continues to offer support and advice, and much to our delight, drops in out of the blue from time to time.

Ehrlich's essays, short stories, and poems have appeared in numerous anthologies as well as in Harper's, the Atlantic, The New York Times Magazine, The Washington Post, Time Magazine, Life, National Geographic and many, many others. Her books have been translated into French, Italian, German, Japanese, Danish, and Swedish. Awards include the National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing Fellowship, a Whiting Foundation Award, A Guggenheim Fellowship, and the Harold B. Vurcell Award at the American Academy of Arts and Letters etc. Ehrlich has been awarded the 2010 Poe Thoreau Award, and has a new book forthcoming in August.

Heartfelt thanks to Tarpaulin Sky Press founder and publisher, Christian Peet, and Advisory Editor, Elena Georgiou for supporting and encouraging our efforts from the start. We hope to have them with us for a long time to come (see bios for more information on Peet and Georgiou).

Tarpaulin Sky was founded in 2006 with the intent of bringing out new books by contributors to *Tarpaulin Sky Literary Journal*. Founded in 2002 as an online literary journal, *Tarpaulin Sky* took the form of 12.5 internet issues before its first paper edition in November 2007, and the magazine continues to publish new work both online and in print. Now, via open reading periods, we are also publishing books by writers who are new to us. Like the journal, the press focuses on cross-genre / trans-genre / hybrid forms as well as innovative poetry and prose.

We would also like to extend special thanks to the Inn at Willow Pond for sharing their property with the Greater Manchester Arts Council and helping us to build this weekend to new levels and the Inn at Manchester and Casablanca Motel for housing presenters and sharing their facilities to build success for our annual event.

We are pleased to be working with the United Way for us to bring greater visibility to this event. A percentage of the proceeds from the Saturday night program will go to the United Way of Bennington County to support youth programs.

Consider Bardwell Farm is one of Vermont's foremost cheesemakers located in West Pawlet, VT. Angela Miller, owner, author and publisher has joined with other local cheese producers to share the value of the local agriculture efforts in building a creative community.

### **Vendors and Booksales**

Tables are available to writers, illustrators and publishers for \$25 for the weekend for the selling and trading of BOOKS, BOOKS and more BOOKS. For more information about having a table at this event please contact Beth at [gmarts06@myfairpoint.net](mailto:gmarts06@myfairpoint.net) for more information.

### **BIOGRAPHIES: Faculty and Presenters**

**Ed Cyzewski** (M.Div. Biblical Theological Seminary) works in the nonprofit sector of southwest Vermont and as a freelance writer. He is the author of *Coffeehouse Theology: Reflecting on God in Everyday Life* <<http://inamirrordimly.com/coffeehouse-theology/>>, as well as two accompanying study guides. He contributed the short story "A Bittersweet Land" to the *Southshire Pepper-Pot* <[http://www.amazon.com/Southshire-Pepper-Pot-Literary-Culinary-Refrains/dp/0979963303/ref=pd\\_bbs\\_sr\\_1?ie=UTF8&camp=s=books&qid=1207791961&sr=8-1](http://www.amazon.com/Southshire-Pepper-Pot-Literary-Culinary-Refrains/dp/0979963303/ref=pd_bbs_sr_1?ie=UTF8&camp=s=books&qid=1207791961&sr=8-1)> and blogs on theology at [www.inamirrordimly.com](http://www.inamirrordimly.com) <<http://www.inamirrordimly.com/>> and writing at [www.edcyz.com](http://www.edcyz.com) <<http://www.edcyz.com/>>. His next book is due out in February 2010.

**Clemma Dawsen** writes, draws pictures and plays the dulcimer. She is currently at work illustrating her recent collection of poetry, song and story, *Picked Clean*. She's raised two boys and made a living as potter, sculptor, outfitter and guide, sheep herder, wrangler, ranch hand, midwife, cook and buckaroo. Currently she teaches high school English and goes home at night to electricity and running water in Sandgate, where she spends evenings alternating between watching NHL hockey on TV and teaching circus tricks to her rat terrier, Frida. Clemma did most of her studies 'in the field' (literally) but also holds a Bachelors' degree from Bennington College, and a Masters' from Goddard.

**Tony Eprile**, fiction writer, novelist; South Africa/USA, is the author of *Temporary Sojourner and Other South African Stories* (1989) and *The Persistence of Memory* (2004), both of which were New York Times Notable Books of the Year. Eprile has taught at Northwestern University, Williams College, Bennington College, Lesley University, and at the Iowa Writers' Workshop. Visit <http://iwp.uiowa.edu/periscope/003eprile.html> to see reviews.

**Elena Georgiou** is the author of *Rhapsody of the Naked Immigrants* (forthcoming, Harbor Mountain Press, 2009) and *mercy mercy me* (University of Wisconsin Press). She is also co-editor (with Michael Lassell) of the poetry anthology, *The World In Us* (St. Martin's Press). Georgiou has won an Astraea Emerging Writers Award, a New York Foundation of the Arts Fellowship, and was a fellow at the Virginia Center for the

Creative Arts. Her recent work appears in *Denver Quarterly*, *BOMB*, *MiPoesia*, *Lumina*, *Spoon River Review*, *Cream City Review*, and *Gargoyle*. She is currently an editor at Tarpaulin Sky Press and a member of the faculty in the MFA program at Goddard College, Vermont.

**Jeannine Laverty** has been telling international folk tales since 1979 when her work teaching English as a Second Language to immigrants in New York City showed her firsthand how the U.S. is made up of cultures of all the countries of the world. Her school and museum performances and workshops for children have been awarded funding from the New York State Council on the Arts, the New York Foundation for the Arts and the National Institute for the Humanities. Jeannine performs for adults and high school students as part of the storytelling ensemble, SweetLand Storytellers, known especially for its program, "Voices from the Vietnam War." She has taught weekend workshops in storytelling for adults at Sagamore and other Adirondack sites since 1980. In recognition of her long-term commitment to the art of storytelling, she was awarded the 1999 Northeast Region Award for Leadership from the National Storytelling Network.

**Keith Lawrence**—a native of Burlington, Vermont, of American and Iroquois descent, Keith developed an interest in the telling of Native American stories through his work as a Boy Scout leader in the early 90's. He has studied Native American culture extensively with a focus on the Iroquois of the New York area, having some ancestry there. Keith entertains and educates throughout the Northeast, bringing living history to Scouts, churches, elder housing and schools. He is also part of Burlington's First Night Celebration. Keith teaches at the University of Scouting, an advanced training forum for Scout leaders in the U.S. and Canada.

**Gordon Massman** is the author of *The Essential Numbers 1991 – 2008*, published in June 2009 by Tarpaulin Sky Press. *The Essential Numbers*—which most readers would recognize as a collection of poems, although Massman prefers to call them "texts"—is something of "new & selected," in that it includes texts from Massman's previous volume, *The Numbers* (Pavement Saw Press, 2000) as well as selections from the 700+ pieces Massman has written in the years since. As their titles suggest, Massman's texts since 1991 have been numbered sequentially, and at the time of this interview, are closing in on 2000. Massman teaches at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in North Adams, MA.

**Peter Money**, a former student of poet Allen Ginsberg, is a well known poet and publisher. His books include *These Are My Shoes*, *Minor Roads*, *A Big Yellow*, *Instruments*, *Between Ourselves*, *Finding It: Selected Poems*, and a collaborative with Arab Modernist poet *Saadi Youssef*, *Today—Minutes only*. His work has appeared in numerous journals and magazines, and has been read by Garrison Keillor on *The Writer's Almanac* on NPR. His latest book, *Che—A Novella In Three Parts*, has just been released. Money is Editor/Director of Harbor Mountain Press, and has studied, taught and

traveled extensively both in the U.S. and abroad. He and wife Lucinda live in Vermont and have two young children.

**Rev. Claire North**-Rev. Claire Longtin North is Minister in Residence at Sunderland Union Church, Sunderland, VT and has been a Ceremonialist in the community of Manchester and the Mountains for 13 years. She holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Goddard College and is working on her first novel, a magical realism Vermont adventure. Claire takes great joy in facilitating the creation of ceremonies and rituals with people who want to use their own words.

**Christian Peet** is the author of *Big American Trip* (Shearsman Books, 2009) and two chapbooks: *The Nines, Book 2* (Interbirth Books, 2009), and *The Nines, Book 1* (Palm Press, 2006). His work appears in the anthology, *A Best Of Fence: The First Nine Years*, and in journals such as *Action Yes*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Octopus Magazine*, *Practice: New Writing + Art*, and *SleepingFish*, among others. He lives in Vermont, where he runs Tarpaulin Sky Press ([tarpaulinsky.com](http://tarpaulinsky.com)).

**Red Heart the Ticker** is the musical collaboration of **Robin MacArthur** and **Tyler Gibbons**, a husband and wife duo from Marlboro, Vermont. Their music, often compared to Will Oldham, Gillian Welch, and Iron and Wine, is, in many ways, a reconciliation between their verging musical tastes: Robin's penchant for tradition influenced sixties folk and twangy, old-fashioned country music, (Dave Van Ronk, Loretta Lynn) and Tyler's love of jazz fusion and esoteric sixties rock (Mahavishnu Orchestra, Leonard Cohen). A couple long before they began playing music together, RHTT was born when, in 2005, they built themselves a cabin in the woods of Vermont and lived there without running water. As the long cold months of winter drew on they decided they would have to start playing music together to keep themselves from going batty with cabin fever. *Red Heart the Ticker* (red heart for warmth, ticker for rhythm,) is what was born. They are winners of numerous awards. Most recently they appeared live on *A Prairie Home Companion* where they 'took the Bronze' in The PHC National Duet Contest.

**Erika Schmidt** is a visual and performing artist working in innovative processes of printmaking, collage and installation and in experimental dance theater as director of Vital Spark Performance Art Group. Erika began her work in printmaking at the University of South Florida, Tampa where she earned her M.F.A. in 1997. Erika works on a full size, Charles Brand intaglio press creating original hand pulled images, most often in series. Drawing from a collage sensibility, her pieces can be constructed into larger wall installations that combine printmaking media. Erika's work is included in numerous public and private collections and is widely shown in national juried and invitational exhibitions

**Gary Schmidt** has a Masters Degree from the University of Illinois Champagne/Urbana in Music Theory and Composition and a B.A. in piano performance from the University of South Florida, Tampa FL. He has been for the last 30 years a professional chef and with Erika created the Antiquarian Restaurant and Bay Street Gallery in Lakeland, FL. During his spare time Gary has composed numerous compositions for Vital Spark Performance Art Group and has recorded two of his own CDs: *Channels of Light* and *Meditation Music for the Piano*.

**Thomas K. Slayton** is editor emeritus of Vermont Life Magazine. He served as its editor-in-chief for 21 years, and is a past president of the International Regional Magazine Association. Prior to his association with Vermont Life, he was a reporter and editor for Vermont newspapers for 20 years. His book, *Searching for Thoreau: On the Trails and Shores of Wild New England*, was published in 2007 and was subsequently awarded the gold IPPY award for creative non-fiction by the Independent Publishers' Association. It also won an honorable mention by Foreword Magazine as one of their top 10 nonfiction books of the year. Slayton is the author of *Sabra Field, the Art of Place*, which was published in 1994 and republished in 2002. Other books include *The Beauty of Vermont*, published in 1998 and *Finding Vermont, An Informal Guide to Vermont's Places and People*. He recently edited and helped write the book, *A Century in the Mountains: Celebrating Vermont's Long Trail*. He is also author of various magazine and newspaper articles, and is a regular commentator for Vermont Public Radio. He has been awarded honorary doctorates of letters by the University of Vermont, Sterling College, and Southern Vermont college, and is a recipient of the Franklin Fairbanks Award, given annually to a Vermonter who contributes in a significant way to the cultural life of the state. He lives in Montpelier with his wife, Elizabeth.

**Abigail Thomas**-Abigail Thomas has written three works of fiction, *Getting Over Tom*, *Herb's Pajamas*, and *An Actual Life*. She has also written the memoirs *Safekeeping* and *A Three Dog Life*, which was chosen one of the best books of 2006 by the Los Angeles Times and the Washington Post, and has been translated into nine languages. She has taught in the MFA Program at The New School, at the Tin House Summer Workshop, The Omega Institute and the Writers at Work program in Utah. Her most recent book is *Thinking About Memoir*, a guide to writing about one's life. She has four children and twelve grandchildren. She is at work on a new non-fiction book about a lifelong friendship.

**Robin Yuran** has spent time as an artist, poet, columnist, coppersmith, jeweler, bartender, garden designer and nightclub singer. Robin began volunteering at the Norfolk Library in 1995 and worked her way up to her current position of Co-Director. She holds a B.A. in literature from Charter Oak State College where she graduated with honors for outstanding achievement. Robin did her graduate studies in library and information science at Southern Connecticut State University and has an MFA in creative writing

from Goddard College in Plainfield, Vermont. She has published her poetry in a number of newspapers and magazines including *The Shy Librarian*, *Library Journal*, *Verbatim Language Quarterly* and *Carousel Magazine*. Her research on Mark Twain in Norfolk, Connecticut was published in the Spring 2007 issue of the *Mark Twain Journal*. She has published two collections of poetry, *The Shelf Life of a Mouse and Other Tales* (December 2003) and most recently received a grant from the Artists and Writers Educational Development Foundation for the publication of *Tales Told By an Idiot* (June 2009). Robin facilitates poetry workshops for all ages in area schools and libraries.