



NEWS RELEASE

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RopeWalk Writers Retreat slated June 11 – 17 in Historic New Harmony

The 12th annual RopeWalk Writers Retreat is scheduled for Sunday, June 11, to Saturday, June 17. It will be held in New Harmony, Indiana, site of two 19th century utopian experiments. It provide an ideal setting for this event with its retreat-like atmosphere and its history of creative and intellectual achievement.

"RopeWalk participants are encouraged to write, not simply listen to others talk about writing during the week," said Thomas Wilhelmus, one of the founders of the retreat. In addition, several writers will give lectures, open to all participants, on aspects of the writing craft. RopeWalk Writers Retreat is a program of University of Southern Indiana.

Faculty for the 2000 RopeWalk Writers Retreat are Heather McHugh and Robert Wrigley in poetry; Stephen Dobyns and Victoria Redel in fiction; and Kim Barnes in creative nonfiction. Special guest reader is fiction writer Jared Carter; scholar and writer Nikolai Popov will be a guest lecturer.

Barnes' memoir, *In the Wilderness: Coming of Age in Unknown Country* was published in 1996. It won awards from PEN, the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association, and was nominated for the 1997 Pulitzer Prize in Biography/Autobiography. A second memoir, *Hungry for the World*, will be published by Villard/Random House in 2000. Her work has appeared in anthologies including *The Georgia Review* and *Shenandoah*. Barnes was also co-editor, with Mary Clearman Blew, of *Circle of Women*, an anthology of contemporary women writers. This is her first visit to RopeWalk.

Dobyns is the author of ten books of poems, twenty novels, and a book of essays on poetry: *Best Words, Best Order*. His latest book of poetry is *Pallbearers Envyng the One Who Rides*, published in 1999; his most recent novel is *Boy in the Water*, also published in 1999. His 1997 novel, *The Church of Dead Girls*, was a *New York Times* bestseller. Two of his novels have been made into feature films. Dobyns is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and three National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships. He is a guest writer for the San Diego Weekly Reader and has taught at the University of New Hampshire, the University of Iowa, Boston University, and Brandeis. He returns to RopeWalk for his fifth visit

McHugh is a core faculty member of the M.F.A. program at for writers at Warren Wilson College. She has been Milliman Distinguished Writer-in-Residence at the University of Washington in Seattle two thirds of every year since 1984. Between visits to RopeWalk--this is her sixth--McHugh writes books of poetry including *Shades, Dangers*, and *Hinge and Sign: Poems 1968-1993* and essays, most recently *Broken English: Poetry and Partiality*. Her poetry has also been featured on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*. McHugh's work can be sampled on the Academy of American Poets website www.poets.org/lit/poet/hmchufst.htm.

Redel received a B.A. from Dartmouth College and an M.F.A. from Columbia University. Her first collection of poetry *Already the World* received the Tom and Stan Wick award. Redel's second publication was a collection of short stories titled *Where the Road Bottoms Out*. She teaches creative writing at Sarah Lawrence College and Vermont College. This, Redel's first visit to RopeWalk, follows a very successful

appearance in the RopeWalk Reading Series on the USI campus. She will work with both shorter and book-length fiction at RopeWalk.

Wrigley has published five books of poetry: *The Sinking of Clay City*; *Moon in a Mason Jar*; *What My Father Believed*; *In the Bank of Beautiful Sins*; and, most recently, *Reign of Snakes*. He is the recipient of two National Endowment of the Arts Fellowships, the J. Howard and Barbara M. J. Wood Prize, the Frederick Bock Prize, the Wagner Award from the Poetry Society of America, and two Pushcart Prizes. Wrigley is the 1997 recipient of the Theodore Roethke Award from *Poetry Northwest* and received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1996. He is a professor of English at the University of Idaho where he teaches in the creative writing program. This is Wrigley's first visit to RopeWalk.

Carter's first collection of poems, *Work, for the Night is Coming*, won the Walt Whitman Award for 1980. His second, *After the Rain*, received the Poets' Prize for 1995. His most recent book, *Les Barricades Mysterieuses*, a sequence of villanelles, was published in 1999 by the Cleveland State University Poetry Center. In addition Carter has published seven chapbooks of poems, including *Pincushion's Strawberry* and *Situation Normal*. His work has appeared in such magazines as *Poetry*, *The New Yorker*, *The Nation*, *TriQuarterly*, and *The Iowa Review*. Carter was a recipient of the Indiana Governor's Arts Award in 1985 and has twice served as writer-in-residence at Purdue University. His fellowships include grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. He is particularly grateful to two Evansville-based literary magazines for publishing a number of his poems--*The Reaper*, during the 1980s, and *The Formalist*, during the 1990s. Carter's appearance at RopeWalk marks the beginning of a planned series of appearances by Hoosier artists.

Popov is a Joyce scholar who teaches Comparative Literature and English at the University of Washington in Seattle. Popov has translated many of the modern Anglo-Irish and European classics and is currently finishing a translation of Paul Celan's poetry for publication by Wesleyan Press. He will present a craft lecture during RopeWalk.

RopeWalk has been assisted over the past 12 years by grants from Mrs. Ruth Lilly, Susan R. Enlow, the Indiana Arts Commission, the Blaffer Trust, the Witter-Bynner Foundation, the USI Society for Arts and Humanities, and the support and assistance of Historic New Harmony, an outreach program of USI.

Workshops and lectures are held at various facilities, including the Golden Raintree Bookstore, New Harmony Inn, and the Wheatcroft Guest House, which also serves as conference headquarters. Participants may stay at New Harmony Inn and Conference Center, the Barn Abbey, Harmonie State Park, New Harmony Bed & Breakfast, or nearby motels. Reservations at the inn should be made by May 12 by calling 800/782-8605 or 812/682-4491. To reserve accommodations at the Barn Abbey, call USI Extended Services at 812/464-1989 or 800/467-8600.

Tuition for RopeWalk Writers Retreat is \$435, including workshops, individual conference, readings, receptions, and several meals. There is a 10 percent discount for Indiana residents. Those who wish to enroll in a second workshop may do so for an additional \$200 (no Indiana discount). **A nonrefundable registration fee of \$100 is due by May 3.**

A limited number of full and partial scholarships are available based on merit. **The scholarship application deadline is April 15; winners will be notified May 5.** To apply, send a letter of application with relevant biographical information and a writing sample--maximum of three poems or 20 pages of fiction or creative nonfiction--to RopeWalk Scholarship, University of Southern Indiana, 8600 University Boulevard, Evansville, IN 47712.