



**Creative Workshops**  
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 storyteller speaker facilitator writing mentor poet

  
**Creative Workshops** **May 2011**  
**Writing Newsletter**  
**Re-story and re-imagine your Life and Work**

*Memory is a complicated thing, a relative to truth, but not its twin. (Barbara Kingsolver)*

Dear writers, story-tellers readers

I lived in Windhoek for twenty years. During a recent visit to this island in the sea of desert/ semi desert, two friends enthralled me with their diverging accounts of a wedding on a boat. One spoke of the wind rocking the craft while the other asserted there was no wind. Both agreed that as the vessel swayed in the sea swell, the groom struggled to read his home-written vows. I too had been present at that wedding on that boat. I was the groom.

In preparing to facilitate a memoir course which begins in May, I have been thinking of memory as a trickster figure. In experiencing the moment, we live in the moment and in retelling it, we recreate a new moment. This is a distant cousin with faint traces of family features. Memory is a new creation with the distinct inheritance of imagined genes. Whether the memory is of ecstasy or grief, we are born again in the retelling as we privilege fiction, tricking ourselves that it is truth. It is T S Eliot's "mixing memory and desire, stirring dull roots with spring rain."

In *My Reminiscences*, Rabindranath Tagore writes:

I know not who paints the pictures on memory's canvas; but... he is not there with his brush simply to make a faithful copy.... He takes in and leaves out according to his taste. He makes many a big thing small and small thing big. He has no compunction in putting into the background that which was to the fore, or bringing to the front that which was behind. In short he is painting pictures, and not writing history. ... Life's memories are not Life's history, but the original work of an unseen Artist. The variegated colours scattered about are not reflections of outside lights, but belong to the painter himself, and come passion-tinged from his heart.

I love that last sentence. In writing about our lives and their variegated colours, we recreate them as art. There is joy in such a liberation even if the tale is sorrowful. We can celebrate ,

in one telling, touches of the actual tinged with imagination in the desire to tell what we hoped might happen. Memoir writing involves a celebration where we learn to connect and cherish the self that is and the self that was. We join old Blue Eyes, Frank Sinatra, and sing along:

Love is lovelier  
The second time around  
Just as wonderful  
With both feet on the ground

And we enter the realm that Yeats writes of :

When you are old and gray and full of sleep,  
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,  
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look  
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep.

And there is such richness in this double-layered telling..

## **Write your Memoirs.... the Story Apprentice Series... we start in May**

*We are all apprentices in a craft where no one ever becomes a master (Ernest Hemingway)*

In the spirit of the apprenticeship tradition, **16** folk so far have subscribed to the **Once Upon a Journey** memoir writing course. Last call for any others who want to join this cruise. **Four** more berths available. This course involve face-to-face wordshop tuition with email/phone follow up support. This in turn leads to a shared publication featuring the writing of all participants. The course culminates in a celebratory launch. Courses come with **8 copies** of a book featuring your writing (+8 pages per writer)The course runs in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town.

For detailed flyers about **SAS1 - Once Upon a Journey: Writing your Life Story/Memoir** (May - Oct) please contact me.

## **launch launch launch - the Cake the Buddha Ate - more Quiet Food**

You are invited to the launch of the Buddhist Retreat Centre's new recipe book, mouth-watering recipes created by Daniel Jardim, an unusually talented cook... great photographs of the BRC... anecdotes, stories, poems and haikus

Cape Town: 5 May Exclusives Cavendish 17.30 for 18.00

Durban: 11 May : Market Mariott Road at 17. 30 for 18.00

Johannesburg: 24 June Rosebank Book Club. 17. 30 for 18.00

RSVP please lungilekhumalo@jacana .co.za 011 628 3200

for catering purposes: wine and snacks will be served

## **Dorian's May Storyshops/ Writeshops/Conversations**

If you want any of these workshops in your area speak speak.

### **KZN**

#### **1. Durban. Dragons, Fears and Treasure: A Storyshop for Coaches, Counsellors, Teachers, Healers**

Thurs 6 May 2011 09.00 - 13.00 R460

*Our deepest fears are like dragons guarding our deepest treasure ( Rilke)*

What does mythologist, Joseph Campbell, mean when he says. "the ultimate dragon is within you?" Why does Tolkien in *The Hobbit* remind us, " It never does to leave a live Dragon out of the equation?"

In this storyshop we consider some of the myths around dragons and treasure that inform our lives. We ask what is it that stands between us and our wholeness? What is the fiery blast we fear? We work symbolically with these images as we look at how myths and stories guide us. For example, In China, 'chi' the life-giving energy, flows through channels called 'dragon-lines', which follow underground water and underground magnetic fields. In following this path, we explore the nature of the dragon, our fiery fears and the hidden treasure that awaits us.

Bring writing materials, old magazines, scissors, a glue stick. I'll provide tea and coffee.

Venue: 16 Melisina Rd Glenmore Durban pse contact me for full flyer

#### **2. Durban**

##### **Creative Writing: Westville Boys' High**

Fri 6 or Tues 10 May

#### **3. Ashburton**

##### **Memoir Course for KZN participants**

Sat 7 - Sun 8 May (creating)

#### **4. Fourth Chapter Conversations: Creating/ Writing your Story for the Last Quarter of Life (Postponed)**

*Grow old with me, the best is yet to be (Robert Browning)*

This storyshop is for those who are in the late summer/autumn of their lives, the fourth stage. New opportunities open for us. New possibilities, fresh songs. How do we source and sing them? What were the first three chapters about? We seek to understand their patterns and choices so we can glean the best from them while discarding any beliefs, attitudes and habits that no longer serve us and keep us stuck.

#### **5. Diakonia Council of Churches**

Wed 11 May

life story wordshop for stress and trauma counsellors

## Western Cape

### 6. Cape, Somerset West/Winery Road

#### **Memoir Course for Cape participants**

Sat 14 and Sun 15 May (creating)

Sat 20 -Sun 21 May (crafting)

## Gauteng

### 7. Johannesburg. Houghton

#### **Memoir Course for Gauteng participants**

Sat 21-Sun 22 May (creating)

### 8. The Poet's Craft: A Wordshop Day

Mon 23 May 09.30 – 16.00 R580 (payment secures place)

*I believe that poetry is a primal impulse within us all. I believe we are all capable of it and ...  
that a small, often ignored corner of us yearns to try it (Stephen Fry)*

*This life so short the craft so long to learn (Chaucer)*

Billy Collins, American poet Laureate, begins a poem with these simple words:

I wonder how you are going to feel  
When you find out  
That I wrote this instead of you.  
  
That it was I who go up early  
To sit in the kitchen  
And mention with a pen  
The rain soaked windows.

This day is about recovering this simplicity and opening ourselves to the joy poetry offers us. We pay attention and listen to how established poets observe the world through image, symbol and ambiguity. With Wordsworth, 'we see into the life of things.' Then as poetry opens us to our creativity and imagination, we share and craft our poems in process.

Venue: 210 Killarney Park 5<sup>th</sup> Street (close to Killarney Mall)

## Ongoing activities (repeat info here)

### **Mentoring – one-on-one**

"You make me sound like myself" (various clients) Walk with me in words. You put on one shoe, I wear the other. Memoirs, mindful adventures, work in the word... genres tumbling out of folk on the one-on-one path. Such a richness of story here.

### **Email Courses: Writer's/ Poet's Voice Course – one-on-one tuition**

Some folks respond to structure, assignments... if so, ask and it shall be negotiated. Here is one possibility: Do you love reading and writing? This one-on-one apprenticeship aims to take you further up the writing mountain and offer you a deeper engagement with your craft. This course is structured in the nature of an ongoing conversation with a few chosen

writers or poets, (ancestral or alive) with me and with yourself. I encourage you to keep a journal to record your observations and reflections.

## **Speaking Engagements**

*Be still when you have nothing to say but when genuine passion moves you, say what you've got to say, and say it hot. ( D. H. Lawrence)* Last August I created and presented a myth of the Berg at the Drakensberg Sun for Southern Sun executives. What are your needs?

## **Development Work**

During 2011 I will be working for Diakonia facilitating life story workshops for stress and trauma debriefing counsellors.

## **Bosman and Nasrudin under starlight**

This season I will be a story-ing ...a winter evening, wine, cheese, breads and fire tales for the telling. This kind of evening is a bit like the old days - singing around the piano at home. - Except I use stories and creative activities to get folk interacting and to prompt conversations. Themes... Chinese, South African, Mediterranean, Arabian nights. Spending quality time. Any rhyme or reason – birthdays, TV fatigue, the art of conversation.

## **Corporate Work**

***The Halo and the Noose, the Power of story-telling and story listening in Business Life* R195**

Want to source a 100 plus stories? co-written with Graham Williams (Graysonian Press). We run corporate story workshops based on our book. *Roma Howard*, a training practitioner in leadership and team effectiveness, writes:

*I was utterly captivated by The Halo and the Noose, and now regularly recommend it when I am facilitating my Train the Trainer & Presentation Skills courses. )*

For orders: from the authors or Graysonian Press Inspirational books that change the world [www.graysonian.com](http://www.graysonian.com) 0836101113

We've established a website in order to offer *The Halo and the Noose* as an eBook, and to create a Member's facility for those who are serious about their story-telling and listening prowess in business. Members can access various resources, audio streams, article archives, their own newsletter, questionnaires, communicate with the authors and will get ongoing offers. The site is <http://www.haloandnoose.co.za>

In response to a growing demand we offer an eWorkbook, discounted to members (*Story Matters @ Work*) that contains many new stories and exercises covering elevator, personal, business issue, corporate, crucial conversation and other stories.

## **Friends at Work and Play**

### **Elma Pollard: Write for Earth email based writing course**

Learn the art of eco-journalism with energy and passion. Offer your voice to help craft a better future. More information at this link <http://thegreentimes.co.za/index.php?id=63>

### **Aneta Shaw: Creative relaxation in a small group context**

Enhance personal growth and honour your soul through creative techniques. Aneta is a clinical psychologist and hypnotherapist, has integrated years of experience and life in other countries with ancient ways of being in this world.

Aneta 082 686 8118 or 021 8555415 [aneta.shaw@vodamail.co.za](mailto:aneta.shaw@vodamail.co.za)

### **Hugh Hodge: As-you-write-it**

Hugh, the Off-the-Wall Poetry MC and New Contrast Ed, runs a Saturday morning - 0930-1230 - class in creative writing from his home and the homes of participants, The course, As-you-write-it, is themed on the seven ages of (wo)man; over seven Saturdays. Cost R250 per Saturday or R1000 for all seven if paid up-front. Booking essential to Hugh ([hahodge@gmail.com](mailto:hahodge@gmail.com)) - quorum 3, full house 8.

### **Juliette Gyure : Coaching**

*Far Sight Change and Transition Coaching cc* provides a framework, creative processes and support mechanisms for people negotiating significant changes and transitions. I have a passion for co-creating innovative pathways to change, transition and transformation with my clients. For a free consultation contact me, Juliette Gyure, on 0726353818. (I am based in Durban)

*" If nothing ever changed, there would be no butterflies"*

### **Anne Haarhoff OWL (Order, Words, Language)**

Need a top class sharp eyed editor and proof reader? Oh so most highly recommended  
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So let remake those memories

Dorian

