

**NATIONAL LEAGUE OF AMERICAN PEN WOMEN
HONOLULU BRANCH**
www.nlapwhonolulu.org

April 2010 Newsletter

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A. MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Writers' Conference, 2010

Friday, 6:30 pm. People file into Punahou's Wo Center. Lisa Yee is wearing sneakers! Ilima Loomis starts us with a chant. Victoria introduces the readers. Wendy Miyake: "Maybe this is why my marriage failed; I have no gut feeling whatever." Joe Tsujimoto: ". . . My testicles chafing like brussels sprouts." Frank South: "It's the cookies. Should I get some? Maybe the cookies aren't the whole problem. I don't need these cookies to be happy; yes, I do. I wonder if I've been talking out loud; that would not be a good sign."

Susan announces Lorin Tarr Gill contest winners. Non-fiction second place winner: Sabra for "Exterminating Angel". "She promised not to cry," Susan tells us. Poetry second place winner: Tamara Moan for "October Thirty-One." Winners will be published on our web site.

A break. Shan reads from "Gaff." "When his voice sounds like that, I don't ask questions. I know something's wrong." A pig among the chickens! Lisa Yee, our keynote speaker. She has 900,000 books in print. Lisa reads from Absolutely Maybe. "He's all over me. I'm fighting, but he's winning. . . For once, I'm glad to see my mother. . . 'You're nothing but trouble—I wish I never had you!' Lisa acknowledges the darkness of the scene, turns to something lighter. "Oh, he's so dreamy!" "Looks like a nightmare to me." John Wythe White: "Not strapped down on a surfboard rack like little Nell tied on the railroad tracks. Oakley was an A student; he had earned the right to surf."

Saturday: Nancy Mower introduces Lisa in rhyme. After admitting to an obsession with Colin Firth as Mr. Darcy, Lisa tells us, "Even a menu is a story: beginning, middle, and end. Do any kind of writing!" She wishes she had started going to writers' conferences earlier. "I found my tribe," she says; validated, we nod. "All readers are looking for a good story," she tells us. "Don't just write what you know; write what you want to know about", and—"When you write, you're alone."

People eat tasty bentos on benches, chat, look happy. People buy books; authors sign them. We clean up. That's it. We're all tired. "Do we have to wait two years for another conference?" a woman asks me. I stare at her, mumble something polite.

It was a good one. Aloha, Nancy

B. DELECTABLE DETOURS

None scheduled.

C. PEN WOMEN IN THE NEWS

Kaethe Kauffman had her art work published in a new book, *Digital Art Revolution* by Scott Ligon. Three color reproductions of her range of motion muscle studies were included: "White Back," "Knee Script," and "Palm, Black" in Chapter One, "Understanding the Visual Language."

Here is a blog from Peachtree Publishers' BlogSpot that might interest our artists and writers. It shows how a book cover develops and changes until the final cover is chosen. The example used is **Shan Correa's** new middle-grade novel, *Gaff*, and here is the link to the site:

<http://peachtreepub.blogspot.com/2010/03/judging-book-by-its-cover.html>

Rosanna Hsi's article, "Recipe for Happiness," was published in the spring issue of the *Buddhist Tzu Chi Journal*.

Susie Anderson was awarded First Place at the Association of Hawaii Artists 41st Annual Aloha Show with her painting "Brass and Blossoms." Juried by Snowden Hodges, the show is currently on display at Honolulu Hale until April 26. You are cordially invited to a reception for all the artists on Thursday, April 15 from 5 to 7 pm at Honolulu Hale. (You may also view the painting on the Home page of Susie's website: <http://www.susieanderson.com>)

An article about Susie's adventures painting en plein air at the 2009 Makawao plein air invitational competition is now on-line at the *Art and Culture on Maui* magazine website. The poet that Susie refers to in the article is none other than our own Shan Correa! Read all about it here: <http://artandcultureonmaui.com> - Pages 26-28.

Rike Weiss received a Cornerstone Award for exemplary service to Hawaii Public Radio at the station's annual HPR Volunteer Appreciation Party. Rike also helped organize a group of Pen Women to help out on HPR's fund drive on April 22. The group includes **Lavonne Leong, Carol Egan, Victoria Gail-White, Tracey Bennett and Sabra Feldstein.**

Elisabeth Knoke-Dieckvoss' exhibit of paintings, "Pasione: Two to Tango," opened with a reception on April 7. It can be seen at the Sapori restaurant gallery.

D. ANNOUNCEMENTS

PLEASE NOTE: If you haven't paid your dues yet, please do so ASAP. If not, you will be dropped from the roster.

E. APRIL MINUTES

PEN Women Luncheon, April 7, 2010 Alan Wong's Pineapple Room

This meeting merited a PEN Women record with 74 people in attendance, including 15 first-time visitors.

President Nancy Moss thanked the following volunteers for their service during her term: Glenda Hinchey, newsletter editor; Baerbel Miller, reservations point person; Susie Anderson, membership coordinator; Pam Sakamoto, corresponding secretary; Barbara Clemens, recording secretary; Carol Egan, treasurer; and Susan Killeen, vice president.

Nancy also presented the slate of officers for the 2010-2012 term. There were no nominations from the floor. Twenty-nine PEN Women members voted in favor for: Susan Killeen, president; Victoria Gail White, vice president; recording secretary, Nancy Mower; treasurer, Pam Sakamoto; and corresponding secretary, Shan Correa.

Nancy Moss and Susie Anderson welcomed new PEN Women member Ann Gomers (Art) and PEN Women Friends Cat Gelman, Miho Teipel, and Canelle Demange.

Nancy Mower announced that as of Tuesday, April 6th, 129 people have registered for the Writers' Conference. Victoria, absent from the meeting, was picking up keynote speaker Lisa Yee at the airport. Nancy noted that Lisa Yee was scheduled to sign books at the Kahala Barnes & Noble on Thursday from 5-7PM. Nancy encouraged anyone interested in volunteering for the Conference to speak with her. She also urged anyone not yet registered to do so immediately as some of the workshops have reached capacity. Susan Killeen presented Nancy with a lei for her tireless work heading the Writers' Conference committee.

Margo Goodwill announced that the Haleiwa Arts Festival, scheduled for July 17 and 18, welcomes volunteers.

Incoming president Susan Killeen praised Nancy Moss, saying that working with her for the past 2 years has been an "absolute delight." Susan announced that Shan Correa's latest novel GAFF, which takes place in Hawaii, has just been published. Susan urged members to notify PEN of their developments so that we can join, not only to support one another, but also to "celebrate successes."

Susan mentioned that Marsha Eaton, our new website designer, can update member bios at this time. Please send Susan any new bios – 250 words maximum with an optional 2-3 images.

Susan encouraged PEN meeting visitors to apply for membership or become a PEN Women Friend.

Susan introduced PEN's guest speaker, Kauai Hart Hemmings, the local author of the novel *DESCENDANTS*, which is being filmed in Honolulu by Alexander Payne, the director of *Sideways*, and starring George Clooney.

Kauai read us the very scene that was being filmed on April 7th. She also took an extensive Q&A about her creative process, the route to publication, and the film-making.

Kauai did not write with a film in mind, but she loves film and thinks about what "captivates visually." She had imagined George Clooney as a character. She does borrow structural devices from other genres. She does not use plotting charts but likes to know where she is headed. In each paragraph, scene, and chapter, Kauai asks herself what that portion has accomplished.

Her writing process depends on her daughter's schedule. When her daughter was 11 months old, Kauai "powered through" *DESCENDANTS* in six months during the baby's naps. No email or Facebook! She does not wait for inspiration and admits that some days, she hates the work. She finds it helpful to treat writing as work, acknowledging that there will be bad days as in any profession. Her favorite part is rewriting, which means putting something on paper first "to mold." In addition to children, Kauai credits desperation and anger as stimuli since the road to publication can be circuitous.

Kauai believes that her agent query letter worked because it was short -- 3 sentences, concluding with a request to send the agent some work. She sold *HOUSE OF THIEVES*, her story collection, but another novel accumulated numerous rejections. Kauai set it aside to write *DESCENDANTS*. She has now returned to that novel but made it completely new. It took her time to decide who the protagonist should be. Kauai asserted that "Sometimes, magic happens when you cross out and delete. It's okay to start all over."

Kauai commented that in writing fiction, one deals with the dilemma of being a good girl versus a good writer. One has to give oneself permission "to be free to benefit the story," never picking up a pen for revenge, but using what she knows, plus imagination, to drive forward the story.

One week before *DESCENDANTS* hit the stands, Alexander Payne optioned it. Kauai has had extensive input into the film, working with Alexander Payne to review the screenplay's multiple drafts. She has also been on the set a lot, even playing George Clooney's secretary and obtaining SAG status. She is pleased by how much the film-makers have involved the people of Hawaii. She is enjoying the film-making process; writing is solitary and it is warming to see others being so collaborative for the film. She also appreciates how genuinely interested the filmmakers are in Hawaii. She has loved seeing the characters come to life. George Clooney is terrific.

Susan closed the Q&A meeting to give Kauai time to autograph books and thanked her for her superb presentation. The May PEN Women meeting will feature members reading their own work.

Respectfully submitted by Pam Sakamoto on April 8, 2010.

F. NEXT MEETING

DATE: WEDNESDAY, MAY 5

TIME: 11:30 AM

PLACE: PINEAPPLE ROOM (MACY'S, ALA MOANA)

SPEAKERS: PEN WOMEN WILL READ THEIR WRITINGS.

G. CONTACT THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

If you have news to share, please email editor Glenda Hinchey:

glendahinchey@yahoo.com.