

September 2011 Newsletter

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A. MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT: How Does The Story End?

A group of women - some of them Pen Women - and I have been reading a book this year called *Life Is A Verb* by Patti Digh. We meet monthly and use the chapters as a point of departure and inspiration for exercises and discussion. As the pages turn, Digh spins endless ideas and juicy metaphors, offering fresh ways to unlock the rigid programs that short circuit time and attention, sucking the air from our creative selves. Patti Digh lets her *wild mind* run free.

One such exercise in freeness suggests writing your own obituary. Although I'd heard the idea before, I'd never actually written one. Initially, it began as a nice little exercise in ego -- what accomplishments will I be remembered for...what can I put on *the list* -- important and wonderful, yes, but soon enough the journey evolved into a distillation of truth. The existential *who am I* question to the max? What are my real gifts, whether noticed or not? Traits that make a difference? Uncultivated talents? Flaws? Challenges? How refreshing to own all of that with as little judgment as possible (or maybe not). After all, we're spinning on the great ferris wheel, starting over again and again when we screw up, hoping for the ride of our lives. We're all in this one together.

Trying to write your own obit is a lot like shooting a self portrait... preparing the space, relaxing to the now, then exhaling into the lens of the camera, simply being who you are in the moment and allowing yourself to really be seen. It's a very intimate experience.

So, how will a best friend remember you? What thoughtful words will s/he use? What will your colleagues say about you? Soak up the good stuff. Imagine the honest criticism too, and take that to heart. Write it and own it. It won't matter. You'll be dead anyway. And do let the brag monster out. You can be sure s/he's tiring of that cage. Stop taking yourself for granted. Now... how does your story end?

Live is a verb, not a noun. Charlotte Perkins Gilman

-- Susan Killeen

B. SEPTEMBER DELECTABLE DETOUR

WHAT: READERS' THEATRE: "The Maestro's Woman"

By Jan Shiarella McGrath, directed by Victoria Gail White

WHEN: Saturday, September 24th at 7:30pm

WHERE: TAG - The Actors' Group

Iwilei Road, Suite 101, Honolulu, HI 96817

TICKETS: Admission by donation (\$10 suggested donation)

(808) 722-6941, <http://www.taghawaii.net/OrderTickets.html>

Please purchase your ticket and meet us at the theatre, seating is open.

A drama of love and music: the passionate life of Elvira Puccini—tender, fiery, vindictive— with composer Giacomo Puccini.

Featuring Jim Aina, Laura Buzzell, Jo Pruden and Sara Langham (with Peter Clark, Stacy Groves, Susan Killeen, Gary Culver, John Wythe White et al.)

Jan Shiarella McGrath began scriptwriting after lifelong acting, directing, poetry writing, and editing works including “The Inferno” and “Paradise Lost” for stage presentation. This script and her biographic play, “By Any Other Name,” about Marlowe and Shakespeare, were presented as staged readings at HPU Theatre. She has recently completed a contemporary screenplay, “Home Free.” Jan is elated that Victoria, her stage daughter and “Belle of Amherst” director, is interpreting “The Maestro’s Woman.”

There will also be a performance Friday, September 23rd, 7:30 p.m.

OCTOBER DELECTABLE DETOUR

WHAT: BAMBOO PRESS PRESENTS WINE & WORDS: AN INTIMATE EVENING WITH LEE CATALUNA

WHEN: Wednesday, October 05, 2011 7:30 PM

7:30 Wine and Pupu’s

8:00 Reading

WHERE; Kumu Kahua Theatre, 46 Merchant Street

Parking in the Harbor Court building (enter the garage from Bethel Street)

TICKETS: \$30.00 donation in advance; \$40.00 at the door

Call 626.1481 or email brinfo@bambooridge.com

Seating will be limited, reservations highly recommended.

Please plan on joining the fun of a private preview of “Three Years on Doreen's Sofa” and up-close talk story with award-winning author Lee Cataluna.

C. PEN WOMEN IN THE NEWS

Susie Anderson will have a show of her newest works on view October 1-27. Entitled “Fresh!” the show will be at The Gallery at Ward Center (across from Mocha Java). An opening reception takes place Oct. 1 from 3-5.

Jodi Belknap, editor, art director, and publisher of Calabash Books, together with author/playwright Tammy Montgomery, has teamed up with Honolulu Theatre for Youth for a holiday season play adapted from *Tasi's Gift, A Tale of Samoa*, the newest children's book in CB's Pacific Rim series inspired by the cultures and endangered animals and plants of our neighboring island nations. *Tasi's Gift*, the book, will

be launched at Native Books, Ward Center on Saturday, November 12, with plenty of activity and maybe even a bit of mock kava to sip! Opening night for the play adapted for the stage by talented playwrights Jamie and Aito Simpson Steele is Friday, Nov. 25, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. at Tenney Theatre.

Author Tamara Montgomery and illustrator Joe Dodd will be on hand to autograph books at both events. A portion of book sale will be donated to HTY for use in its programs benefiting Hawaii's keiki. **Connie DeDona** was asked to return to Habilitat on August 27, to speak about and share some of her Slam Poetry. *Habilitat presents: Cornelia DeDona*, also aired on Olelo, Jan, 11-14 2011. The residents joined her by sharing some of their slam poems as well.

Carol Egan has recently written articles on dance and theatre for publication in the Halekulani Living magazine and Malamalama, the UH alumni magazine.

Victoria Gail-White participated in a textile show at the Craft Museum, a small museum around the corner from the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. The show is up until Nov. 4th. She directed a reading of Nancy Moss' play, "Anna: Love in the Cold War," for the September luncheon and is currently directing a Readers' Theatre production of Jan McGrath's play at TAG. She was also honored with an Ensemble Po'okela for her work in "Duets" at TAG. It marks her second Ensemble Award for a TAG production, the other being Edward Albee's play, "The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?" for which she also was awarded a Po'okela for Leading Actress.

Kaethe Kauffman has a one-person exhibition at Art Quest Art Center in Pennsylvania.

Susan Killeen joins the cast for a reading of **Jan McGrath's** new play, "The Maestro's Woman," at TAG (The Actors' Group) on September 23 and 24.

Mara Miller gave a PowerPoint talk on the universality of fairy tales at Mission Houses Museum on September 6.

Leialoha Apo Perkins (along with Karen Watson-Gegeo) recently published "Love Letters," available from Kamalu Uluolele Publishers and Audioemissaries, Aug. 2011.

Leialoha was also invited to join the Academy of American Poets, 2011.

Liz Train has several works on view at the current show that runs until September 30 at the Academy Art Center Gallery. "Thirst" is a group show featuring thirteen artists working in a variety of media. The show was originally titled "Water" and most of her work is about water...snorkeling in the turquoise ocean, seeing beautiful waterfalls and rain forest pools.

D. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Habilitat presents: Cornelia DeDona airs on Olelo, Jan, 11-14 2011.

<http://www.vimeo.com/16954977>

To see the residents of Habilitat joining Connie go to

<http://www.viddler.com/explore/habilitat/videos/43/> or click on **Connie D. How to perform Slam Poetry at Habilitat Hawaii** <<http://www.viddler.com/explore/habilitat/videos/43/>>

E. SEPTEMBER MINUTES

The September meeting of the National League of American Pen Women, Honolulu Branch took place at Alan Wong's Pineapple Room, September 7, 2011. Attendees included 27 members, 13 friends, 12 guests, and 3 visitors for a total of 55.

President **Susan Killeen** opened the meeting at noon. She welcomed everyone back after the summer vacation and read an excerpt from F. Scott Fitzgerald, then she asked first time visitors to introduce themselves.

On the table were three items: 1.) an announcement about Tag Readers' Theatre presentation of "The Maestro's Woman," by Friend **Jan Shiarella McGrath**, directed by Vice President **Victoria Gail-White**, to be performed September 23 & 24, 2.) an announcement of TAG's presentation of "Harvey," by Mary Chase, and 3.) an announcement of Cinema Italiano in Hawaii's 8th Annual Film Festival.

Susan gave an introduction to who the Pen Women are.

She then gave the following information about Pen Women in the News:

Elsa Bohnert, who was expected at the meeting but didn't show up, was celebrating her birthday.

Jan McGrath's play, "The Maestro's Woman," directed by Victoria Gail-White would be presented by Tag Reader's Theatre, September 23 & 24.

Kathe Kauffman has a one-person exhibition at Art Quest Art Center in Pennsylvania.

Susan asked **Margo Goodwill** to stand and thanked her, Elsa and Victoria for the very successful Art Exhibit.

She asked **Glenda Hinchey** to come to the podium and thanked her for the terrific job she has done editing the Newsletter for the past seven years. Glenda is now retiring from that position.

Susan asked **Connie DeDona** to come to the podium and welcomed her as a new Letters Member who has just been approved by National. She gave Connie a lei and a certificate from the branch.

The next person Susan invited to the podium was **Dorothy Wright**. She invited Dorothy to sit in a chair and then gave a brief rundown of Dorothy's life. Dorothy has been a member of Pen Women for over 30 years, a Honolulu branch officer many times, has participated in writers' conferences from Cape Cod to Santa Barbara, and in Honolulu has served a panelist, workshop leader, and committee member. She's chaired the Lorin Tarr Gill Writing Competition many times and has sponsored and attracted many new members.

Susan went on to say that Dorothy may be the most published member of Honolulu Pen Women and listed her many writing accomplishments. She then discussed Dorothy's "non-professional" life, her marriage, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, all living on the mainland. Dorothy keeps in touch with them by phone, e-mail, and skyping. She mentioned some of Dorothy's many contributions to the Waikeola Congregational Church, and she ended with some Fun Dorothy Facts. Susan concluded by saying "Dorothy is one of the Classiest women I've ever met!" and presented her with a Lifetime Branch Membership. Dorothy was given a standing ovation.

Next Susan presented a brief bio of **Nancy Moss**. Nancy is an award-winning playwright whose plays have been performed in Honolulu at Kumu Kahua Theatre, The Actor's Group, and Mark's Garage and in New York City at the Dorothy Strelsin Theatre. Her musical, "Infinite Jest," was performed in Honolulu and showcased in New York City. She has written five plays about the Iraq War. Susan then gave personal information about Nancy including the fact that with Emma Pavich, she co-founded our successful Girl's Court Program, an important community out-reach project, now celebrating it's 5th year. She asked "the real Nancy Moss" to please stand up.

Nancy came to the podium and said there was one correction. She and Emma didn't co-found Girl's Court, but Nancy founded Pen Women's presence in this program, which has had an impact on the lives of many troubled young women, and Nancy said it has been an important out reach program for our branch. She then told us major points about her play, "Anna: Love in the Cold War," which was recently showcased at the Dorothy Strelsin Theatre in New York.

For the rest of the meeting, we were absorbed in a gripping dramatic reading of a portion of that play, with Victoria playing the title role of Anna, Jason Harter, a TAG actor and Po'okela winner, playing the role of Isaac Berlin, one of Anna's many lovers, and Brad Powell speaking the lines of Randolph Churchill, Winston Churchill's son. The beautifully written and beautifully read play received a standing ovation.

Susan adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Alpert Mower
Recording Secretary

F. NEXT MEETING

Date: October 5, 2011, 11:30-1:30pm

Place: Alan Wong's Pineapple Room, Macy's at Ala Moana

Featured Speaker: Sonja Sironen

Guest Speaker, **Sonja Sironen** was born and raised in Germany. She lived in Asia for more than ten years, where she studied *bharata natyam* with Haridevi Jayasundera in Sri Lanka and Adyar K. Lakshman in India. She has performed in Asia, Germany and the U.S. and earned an MA in Dance Ethnology at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She has taught *bharata natyam* at UH Manoa and continues to teach and perform in Hawai'i. In November 2009 she collaborated on a new choreography with the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble. It was performed on the Asia-Pacific Dance Festival which took place in August at the Kennedy Theatre.

G. CONTACT THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

If you have news to share, please email editor Carol Egan by October 13, 2011:

eganc001@hawaii.rr.com.