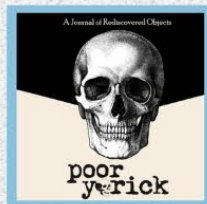




WCSU MFA 2024 Winter Residency

January 2 - 7, 2024

WCSU Westside Campus
43 Lake Ave Ext, Danbury, CT 06811



WCSU MFA in Creative and Professional Writing

2024 Winter Residency
January 2, 2024 – January 7, 2024
WCSU's [Westside Campus](#)
43 Lake Avenue Ext.
Danbury, CT 06811

*A continental breakfast is included and will be served on Wednesday the 3rd – Sunday the 7th from 8:00 – 9:00 am in the Westside Campus Ballroom.

*Lunch is included and will be served Wednesday the 3rd – Sunday the 7th from 12:00 – 1:00 pm in the Westside Campus Ballroom.

*Coffee/Tea is included and available all day.

*Dinner is not included, but there are plenty of great restaurants near campus. Feel free to ask for suggestions!

*Books by faculty and visiting writers are available for purchase through Byrd's Books:
<https://www.byrdsbooks.com/wcsu-2024-residency>

***Current MFA students: In order to receive credit for attending residency, you must attend all events, including the opening reception, evening readings, and residency wrap-up session.**

Tuesday, January 2

ARRIVAL

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM – New Student Orientation / Tour of Westside Campus Westside Campus Ballroom

We will meet in the Westside Campus Ballroom at 1:00 PM. Students starting in the spring semester are required to attend this orientation session. Current students and MFA mentors are also welcome to join us on a tour of the Westside Campus.

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM – Online Multi-Genre (OMG) Workshop Meetings CC212

Students enrolled in OMG in the spring will meet with their instructor and classmates to review course expectations and guidelines, including Blackboard, workshop etiquette, and how best to prepare and receive workshop feedback.

5:00 PM – 7:30 PM – Dinner

Residency students, faculty, and guests break separately for dinner.

7:30 PM – 9:00 PM – Reception & Faculty Flash Reading [Hotel Zero Degrees](#)

MFA Coordinator Anthony D'Aries will welcome everyone to our winter residency! MFA mentors will read short excerpts (7-10 minutes) from their works-in-progress.

Wednesday, January 3

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM – Breakfast Westside Campus Ballroom

Breakfast is served each morning from 8:00 AM – 9:00 AM in the Westside Campus Ballroom.

9:00 AM – 11:30 AM – Starting Something

Karen Romano Young

CC212

Got some half-baked plans? Looking back at some fully-formed successes? Karen Romano Young invites you to share your process in beginnings – book, project, day, life change – as you discover the story you want to tell. She'll share her own journey with a book, a comic, and a multimedia project, spanning topics from a difficult dog to climate change to diversity.

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM – Lunch

Westside Campus Ballroom

Lunch is served each day from 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM in the Westside Campus Ballroom. An info session on the MFA's literary magazine, **Poor Yorick**, will be held during lunch on Wednesday.

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM – Leaps and Tangents: How to Get from Here to There in a Poem

Kateri Kosek

CC212

Perhaps more important than any single piece of “content” in a poem, is the way that it resonates with other content. If a poem doesn't “move,” it falls flat. But what does movement in a poem look like? How does a poet get from point A to point B and beyond in a way that is graceful and coherent? Leaps, tangents, and juxtaposition are tools that all poets employ to some degree, but these distinctive kinds of connective tissue can produce dramatically different effects in terms of how the reader experiences the poem. When do tangents serve the poem, and when do they become a distraction? Is there a limit to the leaps a poem can make? Knowing how to make your poetry nimble will not only infuse it with energy, but aid in tackling complex and opposite impulses, in navigating and capturing a world that often seems ever more challenging to navigate. We'll do some writing exercises, and look at some contemporary poets such as Ada Limon, Charles Rafferty, and Natalie Diaz to explore different styles of movement. Feel free to bring a draft of a poem or other excerpt, too. Many of these concepts will also be applicable to prose.

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM – Enrichment Projects

CC212

Enrichment Projects are designed to give MFA students an opportunity to explore an avenue of learning outside of their coursework. A student might, for example, choose to learn a foreign language, start a new online publication, volunteer for a nonprofit organization, or try another appropriately challenging activity. The Enrichment Project is not a writing assignment, but a project that will influence the student as a professional writer.

Come hear students share their Enrichment Project experiences and maybe get some inspiration for your own!

5:00 PM – 7:30 PM – Dinner

Residency students, faculty, and guests break separately for dinner.

7:30 PM – 9:00 PM – Faculty/Visiting Writer Readings

Jill McDonough

WS218

Our 2023 Housatonic Book Award winner in poetry, Jill McDonough, will read her work, followed by a Q&A section.

Thursday, January 4

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM – Breakfast

Westside Campus Ballroom

Breakfast is served each morning from 8:00 AM – 9:00 AM in the Westside Campus Ballroom.

9:00 AM – 11:30 AM - Writing in Meter is Just Listening to Yourself

Jill McDonough (HBA Winner, Poetry)

CC212

People are terrified of writing in meter because their English teachers didn't really get it. They freaked out that sometimes a line of Shakespeare has more than ten syllables and gave up. We're not going to give up; we are going to learn that *FUCK YOU* is a spondee, and *fuck THAT; fuck YOU* is two iambs. We are going to learn meter by thinking about how we say our own names, and how we talk. We are going to listen to each other and ourselves, and learn iambs, trochees, spondees, anapests, and dactyls, then put them together to make iambic pentameter, blank verse, heroic couplets, and sonnets. And we will have a great time. You'll leave class able to scan poems and Netflix and NPR and Ariana Grande. And Ariana Grande says to come.

(*AR i/AN a/GRAN de*: three trochees. and *AR/i AN/a GRAN/de SAYS/to COME*: five iambs. A perfect line of iambic pentameter. You're welcome. First one's free. [*you're WEL/come. FIRST/one's FREE*: three iambs.])

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM – Lunch

Westside Campus Ballroom

Lunch is served each day from 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM in the Westside Campus Ballroom.

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM – YA Voice in Fiction

Patricia Park

CC212

What is YA literature and how is the voice different from an adult novel? In this session, we will discuss how to craft voice in YA fiction. We will discuss characterization, POV, language, and other craft considerations in constructing the voice of the YA novel. We'll talk about pitfalls to avoid. We will also address how a YA audience is different from adult fiction and other genres, looking at sample texts.

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM – Banter Games: Writing Swoonworthy Dialogue for YA

E.A. Neeves

CC212

Many young adult novels, even if they are primarily a fantasy, a mystery, or some other genre, include a romantic plotline. Worrying about whether that hottie really likes you while you're fighting evil sorcerers or solving a murder mystery increases the story's stakes, after all. In this workshop, we'll look specifically at romantic banter: how to craft it, how to weave your action around it, and how to make sure it drives the main plot forward (beyond making your characters swoon). Selected readings from recent YA novels will be provided. Please come prepared to discuss. We'll also be engaging in some writing exercises. While it will be useful if you already have characters to use in these exercises, this is not necessary. Prompts will be provided to help you begin to form characters on the spot.

5:00 PM – 7:30 PM – Dinner

Residency students, faculty, and guests break separately for dinner.

7:30 PM – 9:00 PM – Faculty/Visiting Writer Readings

Patricia Park & E.A. Neeves

WS218

Visiting writers Patricia Park and E.A. Neeves will read their work, followed by a Q&A session.

Friday, January 5

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM – Breakfast

Westside Campus Ballroom

Breakfast is served each morning from 8:00 AM – 9:00 AM in the Westside Campus Ballroom.

9:00 AM – 11:30 AM – The Nonfiction Book: Getting Started

Scott Ellsworth (HBA Winner, Nonfiction)

CC212

The best nonfiction books are often fueled by passion. *This is a story that I have to tell*, or *People need to know about this issue*, or maybe simply *What an incredible story*. But getting started can often be incredibly challenging. For as much as the writer may care about a certain subject, the job that the writer has is to get others interested as well. How can they create the kind of book that readers will want to keep reading all the way through? Much of the answer lies in how the book is structured—in which stories the book will tell, and which ones it will leave out.

In this workshop, we'll focus on one of the biggest steps in creating a potentially successful nonfiction book, namely, how to move it from being a passion project to something resembling an actual outline. In book writing, this is where the rubber meets the road. We'll discuss what makes a good story, how to search for stories, and how to hook your readers from the first pages onward.

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM – Lunch

Westside Campus Ballroom

Lunch is served each day from 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM in the Westside Campus Ballroom.

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM - Everybody Loves a Sequel: From Theory to Action...Worldbuilding in the Real World (Or Any World That I'm Welcome To, Too)

Matthew Quinn Martin

Westside Campus Ballroom

When last we left our presenter this past summer, he'd delivered a bevy of theories about worldbuilding (described by at least one attendee as "way too much, man"), tackling questions like: *How much worldbuilding is enough? How much is too much? Are you entertaining and enlightening your audience? Or are you burdening and boring them? What role does historical research play? And where do you draw the line between real-life inspiration and cultural appropriation? How does one incorporate maps, appendices, glossaries, and other incidental material? Are they helpful, or a distraction?*

All of this will be summarized for new attendees and the previously sleep-deprived alike in the opening *PREVIOUSLY ON* segment (just like on TV). From there we will move from the realm of the hypothetical to that of the real, as we not only examine practical and actionable strategies to incorporate all these observations into your own writing but work through a series of exercises designed to make the process as organic as the world you hope to create.

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM – Mentor Meetings**Westside Campus Ballroom and CC212**

Students may use this time block to meet with their spring mentors and begin planning their syllabi.

5:00 PM – 7:30 PM – Dinner

Residency students, faculty, and guests break separately for dinner.

7:30 PM – 9:00 PM - Faculty/Visiting Writer Readings**Scott Ellsworth****WS218**

Our 2022 Housatonic Book Award winner in nonfiction, Scott Ellsworth, will read his work, followed by a Q&A section.

Saturday, January 6**8:00 AM – 9:00 AM – Breakfast****Westside Campus Ballroom**

Breakfast is served each morning from 8:00 AM – 9:00 AM in the Westside Campus Ballroom.

9:00 AM – 11:30 AM - The Art of Pitching Journalism, Essays, and Opinion Articles**Erik Ofgang****CC212**

This workshop will provide a crash course in pitching various types of pieces to magazines and newspapers. Topics covered will include pitch formatting basics, the difference between a story and an idea, what it takes to land national pitches and how to build on your existing passions – your thesis projects, your guilty binge-watching pleasures, etc. – to develop powerful and authentic pitches that only you can write. Time permitting, students will have a chance to develop pitches during the workshop.

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM – Lunch**Westside Campus Ballroom**

Lunch is served each day from 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM in the Westside Campus Ballroom. An info session for our **2024 Dublin Residency** will be held during lunch on Saturday!

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM – Choosing Your Professional Genre

Westside Campus Ballroom

Current students and alumni will share their experiences choosing and writing in their professional genre. Come learn about a wide range of genres, including grant writing, speechwriting, technical writing, and corporate communications. There will be plenty of time to ask questions.

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM - MFA Thesis Readings

WS218

Join us in celebrating our recent and soon-to-be MFA graduates as they read from their final thesis manuscripts!

5:00 PM – 7:30 PM – Dinner

Residency students, faculty, and guests break separately for dinner.

7:30 PM – 8:30 PM – Student Open Mic

Hotel Zero Degrees

Join us for a student open mic! All students are welcome to share a reading (5 minutes max.)

9:00 PM - ? – Bad Poetry Contest

Hotel Zero Degrees

The cringiest literary event of the year (and that's saying something)! Share the worst poem you can come up with and maybe you'll win a prize! You've worked hard all year writing good work – now's your chance to be bad. Join us for this light-hearted event and celebrate the last night of residency.

Sunday, January 7

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM – Breakfast

Westside Campus Ballroom

Breakfast is served each morning from 8:00 AM – 9:00 AM in the Westside Campus Ballroom.

9:00 AM – 11:30 AM - Hustle & Flow: How to Make a Living & Find Balance as a Creative Writer

Joan Kwon Glass

CC212

Do you wonder how some writers manage to make a living while also focusing on writing? Have you felt overwhelmed by the varying demands of your professional, creative and personal life? Joan Kwon Glass will share how she balances a full-time job and her writing life while parenting, editing a magazine, serving as a city poet laureate, conducting manuscript consultations and teaching for several writing centers. Joan will share specific strategies that have worked for her and provide examples of how authentic literary citizenship can lead to growth, fulfillment and opportunity.

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM – Lunch

Westside Campus Ballroom

Lunch is served each day from 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM in the Westside Campus Ballroom.

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM - Seeing the Big Picture: Structuring Novels and Memoirs

Ian Rogers

CC212

Wondering why readers can't follow your novel's plot? When's the best time to reveal your character backstory? In this workshop we'll learn how story threads connect novels and memoirs from beginning to end, and how a good outline can help you track what readers need to know and when. Along the way, we'll learn why Aristotle's three-act structure is so important, how to show Chekhov's gun before it goes off, and different methods for tracking information in a longer work. Whether you're knee-deep in revisions or haven't started page one, come learn how to step back and consider the bigger picture of a novel or memoir.

3:00 PM – 4:00 PM – Residency Wrap-up Discussion

CC212

All MFA students attending residency will join this wrap-up discussion to share feedback, ask questions, and provide suggestions for future residencies.

DEPARTURE

Residency Faculty

Anthony D'Aries is the author of *The Language of Men: A Memoir* (Hudson Whitman Press, 2012), which received the PEN Discovery Prize and Foreword's Memoir-of-the-Year Award. His work has appeared in *McSweeney's*, *Boston Magazine*, *Solstice*, *The Literary Review*, *Memoir Magazine*, *Sport Literate*, *Flash Fiction Magazine*, *Tupelo Quarterly*, and elsewhere. He currently directs the low-residency MFA in Creative and Professional Writing at Western Connecticut State University. www.anthonydariesauthor.com

Scott Ellsworth is the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Secret Game*, winner of the 2016 PEN/ESPN Award for Literary Sports Writing. He has written about American history for *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and the *Los Angeles Times*. Formerly a historian at the Smithsonian Institution, he is also the author of *The World Beneath Their Feet* and *Death in a Promised Land*, his groundbreaking account of the 1921 Tulsa race massacre. His most recent book, *The Ground Breaking: The Tulsa Race Massacre and an American City's Search for Justice*, won WCSU's 2022 Housatonic Book Award. Scott lives in Ann Arbor, where he teaches in the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies at the University of Michigan.

Joan Kwon Glass is the author of *Night Swim* (Diode Editions, 2022) & two chapbooks including *How to Make Pancakes for a Dead Boy* (Harbor Editions, 2022) and *If Rust Can Grow on the Moon* (Milk & Cake Press, 2022). She serves as poet laureate for Milford, CT, as Editor-in-Chief for *Harbor Review* & as a writing instructor at Brooklyn Poets, Hudson Valley Writers Center, Writing Workshops, Corporeal & elsewhere. Joan's poems have been published or featured in or are forthcoming in *The Slowdown*, *Rattle*, *Ninth Letter*, *Poetry Northwest*, *Tahoma Literary Review*, *Salamander*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Asian American Writer's Workshop*, *RHINO*, *Dialogist*, *Honey Literary*, *Hayden's Ferry Review* & elsewhere. She has been a finalist for the University of Akron Poetry Prize, the Subnivean Award, the Lumiere Review Award & the Sundress Academy Broadside Contest, and her work has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize & Best of the Net. This is her 21st year as a public-school educator and she lives in Milford, CT with her family.

Kateri Kosek, a graduate of the MFA program at WCSU, is the author of *American Eclipse*, winner of the Three Mile Harbor Press Poetry Prize, and a chapbook, *Vernal* (Split Rock Press). Her poetry and essays have appeared in such places as *Orion*, *Terrain*, *Catamaran*, *Creative Nonfiction*, *Briar Cliff Review*, and *Northern Woodlands Magazine*. She has been a resident at the Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts, and the Tallgrass Artist Residency in Kansas. Kateri lives in the Berkshires of western Massachusetts, teaches college English, and freelances for *Berkshire Magazine* and *The Berkshire Edge*. She serves on the board of the Center for Northern Woodlands Education, and is currently working on writing the text for a book of nature art.

Matthew Quinn Martin is the author of the *Nightlife* series (Pocket Star/Simon & Schuster) as well as numerous works of short fiction. He is the co-writer of the feature films *Being* and *Slingshot*. He currently lives in the woods of upstate NY.

Jill McDonough's books of poems include *Habeas Corpus* (Salt, 2008), *Where You Live* (Salt, 2012), *Reaper* (Alice James, 2017), and *Here All Night* (Alice James, 2019). The recipient of three Pushcart prizes and fellowships from the Lannan Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Fine Arts Work Center, the New York Public Library, the Library of Congress, and Stanford's Stegner program, she taught incarcerated college students through Boston University's Prison Education Program for thirteen years. Her work has appeared in *Poetry*, *Slate*, *The Nation*, *The Threepenny Review*, and *Best American Poetry*. She teaches in the MFA program at UMass-Boston and offers College Reading and Writing in Boston jails. Her sixth poetry collection, *American Treasure*, won WCSU's 2023 Housatonic Book Award.

E.A. Neeves grew up in New England, where she spent many summers lifeguarding at an idyllic lake, and occasionally catching snapping turtles. She enjoys tea, swimming, and board games that take entire evenings to play. When she's not writing, she can usually be found spending time with her family at their (probably not haunted) home in Salem, MA. *After You Vanished* is her YA debut.

Erik Ofgang is an award-winning journalist who has written for numerous publications, including *Connecticut Magazine* and *The Wall Street Journal*. He is the author of several books, including *Buzzed: Where to Enjoy the Best Craft Beverages in New England*, *Gillette Castle: A History*, and *The Good Vices: From Beer to Sex, the Surprising Truth About What's Actually Good for You*. In addition, he has written for the *Associated Press*, *Thrillist*, and *Tablet Magazine*.

Patricia Park is a tenured professor of creative writing at American University, a Fulbright Scholar in Creative Arts, an Edith Wharton Writer-in-Residence, and a Jerome Hill Artist Fellow. She is the author of the YA novel, *Imposter Syndrome and Other Confessions of Alejandra Kim*, and the adult novel, *Re Jane*, a retelling of Jane Eyre named *New York Times Book Review Editors' Choice*, winner of an American Library Association Award, an NPR Fresh Air pick, and others. She's written for the *New York Times*, *New Yorker*, *Guardian*, and others. Her new YA novel, *What's Eating Jackie Oh?* is forthcoming in April 2024.
www.patriciapark.com; Twitter/IG/Tiktok: @patriciapark718

Ian M. Rogers is the author of *MFA Thesis Novel* (Vine Leaves Press, 2022), a satirical novel of academia. He lived and taught English in Japan for a number of years, most recently at Kanagawa University in Yokohama. He holds an MA in creative writing from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a BA from Bennington College, and his fiction and critical essays have appeared in *The Millions*, *Great Plains Quarterly*, *The European Journal of American Studies*, *Eastlit*, *The Drunken Odyssey*, *Four Ties Literary Review*, and elsewhere. He lives in New Hampshire, where he works as a writer and editor.

Karen Romano Young is a science writer, children's author and illustrator. She has been involved with books and writing for as long as she can remember. The author of more than twenty books, including novels, nonfiction, and graphic novels, Karen has taken her work to the top of the world — the Arctic Ocean — and the bottom of the ocean — in a submarine. Recent work includes writing and drawing aboard an icebreaker, creating *Humanimal Doodles* — a science comic, and the children's book *Doodlebug: A Novel in Doodles*.

	8:00 – 9:00	9:00-11:30	12:00	1:00-3:00	3:00-5:00	5:00	7:30-9:00
Tues., Jan 2	Arrivals			New Student Orientation Tour of Westside Campus Ballroom	OMG Meetings CC212	Dinner	Reception & Faculty Flash Reading Hotel Zero Degrees
Wed., Jan. 3	Breakfast Ballroom	Karen Romano Young CC212	Lunch Ballroom Poor Yorick Info Session	Kateri Kosek CC212	Enrichment Projects CC212	Dinner	Jill McDonough Reading & Q&A WS218
Thurs., Jan. 4	Breakfast Ballroom	Jill McDonough CC212	Lunch Ballroom	Patricia Park CC212	E.A. Neeves CC212	Dinner	E.A. Neeves Patricia Park Reading & Q&A WS218

Fri., Jan. 5	Breakfast Ballroom	Scott Ellsworth CC212	Lunch Ballroom	Matthew Quinn Martin Ballroom	Mentor Meetings Ballroom & CC212	Dinner	Scott Ellsworth WS218
Sat., Jan. 6	Breakfast Ballroom	Erik Ofgang CC212	Lunch Ballroom Dublin 2024 Info Session	Professional Genre Panel Ballroom	Thesis Readings WS218	Dinner	Student Open Mic 7:30-8:30 followed by Bad Poetry Contest Hotel Zero Degrees
Sun., Jan. 7	Breakfast Ballroom	Joan Kwon Glass CC212	Lunch Ballroom	Ian Rogers CC212	Wrap-up Discussion 3:00-4:00 PM CC212	Departures	

***All sessions on WCSU's Westside Campus (Ballroom, CC212, and WS218)**

***Opening Reception & Bad Poetry Contest at Hotel Zero Degrees**