



Twelfth Annual Utah Humanities Book Festival

Salt Lake City, 2009

Books to Read...Books to Talk About

* denotes Utah author

FICTION

* Abbey, Edward. ***The Monkey Wrench Gang***. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 1975.

Program: Wednesday, October 21, 7:00-9:00pm

Edward Abbey, Earth First!, The Monkey Wrench Gang and Me with Ken Sanders

- Easily Abbey's most famous fiction work, this novel concerns the use of sabotage to protest environmentally damaging activities in the American Southwest. The book's four main characters are ecologically-minded misfits who are dedicated to the destruction of what they see as the system that pollutes and destroys their environment. As their attacks on deserted bulldozers and trains continue, the law closes in. The book was praised for its erudition, flair, down-home wit, and the accuracy of its descriptions of life away from civilization.

–*Wikipedia.com*

Baca, Jimmy Santiago. ***A Glass of Water***. Grove Press, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 3:00-4:00 pm

Jimmy Santiago Baca with Paisley Rekdal

- "This book is the best antidote around to the sorrowful, dehumanizing discourse on undocumented immigrants going on in Washington."

– *Ilan Stavans*

His first novel, *A Glass of Water*, is a gripping tale of family, loyalty, ambition, and revenge that takes us inside the tragedies unfurling along our country's borders. It is a searing, heartfelt tribute to brotherhood, and an arresting portrait of the twisted paths people take to claim their piece of the American dream.

–*Amazon.com*

Cunningham, Michael. ***Specimen Days***. Picador, 2006.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 12:00-1:00pm

Michael Cunningham with Doug Fabrizio

- In each section of Michael Cunningham's bold new novel, his first since *The Hours*, we encounter the same group of characters: a young boy, an older man, and a young woman. Presiding over each episode of this interrelated whole is the prophetic figure of the poet Walt Whitman, who promised his future readers, "It avails not, neither time or place ... I am with you, and know how it is." *Specimen Days* is a genre-bending, haunting, and transformative ode to life in our greatest city and a meditation on the direction and meaning of America's destiny. It is a work of surpassing power and beauty by one of the most original and daring writers at work today.

–*Amazon.com*

Cunningham, Michael. ***The Hours***. Picador, 2002.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 6:00-9:00pm

"*The Hours*" film screening, followed by Michael Cunningham with Robert Newman

- This novel—three interwoven novellas in varying degrees connected to Virginia Woolf—seem like the stuff of a graduate student's pipe dream. But as soon as one dips into Cunningham's prologue, the reader becomes completely entranced. The overall effect of this book is twofold. First, it makes a reader hunger to know all about Woolf, again; readers may be spooked at times, as Woolf's spirit emerges in unexpected ways, but hers is an abiding presence, more about living than dying. Second, it makes a reader believe in the possibility and depth of a communality based on great literature, literature that has shown people how to live and what to ask of life.

–*Publisher's Weekly*

*Hale, Shannon. ***The Actor and the Housewife***. Bloomsbury, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 4:30-5:30pm

Shannon Hale with Sara Zarr

- This successful sophomore turn at chick lit (after *Austenland*) from YA and graphic novelist Hale sets up a platonic relationship between a dashing movie star and a Mormon housewife. While in Los Angeles to ink a deal for a script she's written, pregnant Becky Jack holds her own against her big screen crush, Felix Callahan. Hale keeps the prose crackling with humor and has a sure hand in creating nuanced, believable characters, so when otherwise unlikely plot turns creep up—Becky getting cast opposite Felix—they're, well, likely enough. Though Becky just wants to keep her best friend and her normal life, readers will hope she gets nothing less than a fairy tale ending.

–*Publisher's Weekly*

*Hale, Shannon. ***The Book of a Thousand Days***. Bloomsbury USA Children's Books, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 4:30-5:30pm

Shannon Hale with Sara Zarr

- When Dashti, a maid, and Lady Saren, her mistress, are shut in a tower for seven years for Saren's refusal to marry a man she despises, the two prepare for a very long and dark imprisonment. But the arrival outside the tower of Saren's two suitors—one welcome, and the other decidedly less so—brings both hope and great danger, and Dashti must make the desperate choices of a girl whose life is worth more than she knows. With Shannon Hale's lyrical language, this forgotten but classic fairy tale from the Brothers Grimm is reimaged and reset on the central Asian steppes; it is a completely unique retelling filled with adventure and romance, drama and disguise.

–*Amazon.com*

*Hale, Shannon. ***Forest Born***. Bloomsbury USA Children's Books, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 4:30-5:30pm

Shannon Hale with Sara Zarr

- War has come to Bayern again, and Rin is compelled to join the queen and her closest allies—magical girls Rin thinks of as the Fire Sisters—as they venture into the Forest toward Kel, the land where someone seems to want them all dead. Many beloved Bayern characters reappear in this story, but it is Rin's own journey of discovering how to balance the good and the bad in herself that drives this compelling adventure.

–*Amazon.com*

Landis, Dylan. ***Normal People Don't Live Like This***. Persea, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 4:30-5:30pm

Publishing First Fiction: A Conversation with Pam Balluck, Dylan Landis, and Lynn Kilpatrick

- The characters in Dylan Landis's debut story collection are blessedly extraordinary. Evocative, lyrical prose, and vivid imagery couple with a subtle fictional approach, mysterious references, and ambiguities. Buy this for your literary fiction readers and short story fans—they'll appreciate it.

–*Ellen Loughran, Booklist*

* Spooner, Michael. ***Entr@pment***. Margaret K. McElderry, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 1:30-2:30pm

Michael Spooner with Chris Crowe

- At the urging of a cynical friend, Annie, Bliss and Tamra agree to impersonate exchange students (one from England and the other from Albania). They will each spend time in a chat room with the other girl's boyfriend, attempting to lure him into an online romance.

Both girls seem convinced that the boys won't cheat, but still throw themselves into the dangerous game. Meanwhile, the guys try to resist but soon weaken. A subplot deals with the cynical friend, Annie, and her reasons for proposing the deception in the first place.

–*Miranda Doyle, San Francisco Unified School District*

* Zarr, Sara. ***Once Was Lost***. Little, Brown Young Readers, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 4:30-5:30pm

Shannon Hale with Sara Zarr

- Samara Taylor used to believe in miracles. She used to believe in a lot of things. As a pastor's kid, it's hard not to buy in to the idea of the perfect family, a loving God, and amazing grace. But lately, Sam has a lot of reason to doubt. Her mother lands in rehab after a DUI and her father seems more interested in his congregation than his family. When a young girl in her small town is kidnapped, the local tragedy overlaps with Sam's personal one, and the already-worn thread of faith holding her together begins to unravel. In her third novel, acclaimed author Sara Zarr examines the coexistence of affliction and hope, and what happens when everything you thought you believed—about God, about your family, about yourself—is transformed.

–*Amazon.com*

POETRY

*Howe, Susan. ***Stone Spirits***. Signature, 1997.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 4:30-5:30pm

Jason Whitmarsh with Susan Howe

- Rocks are prominent elements in Howe's poetic landscape. But Howe's West is not limited to the arid canyon-lands; it also extends to the cow-casino-bordello town of Elko and to the urbanized valleys of the Wasatch Front. It is apparent from the broad topical and thematic range that her poetry is not limited by geography though it is defined by it. Even when the subject matter ranges most widely, there is always something Western in the perspective.

– *Barnesandnoble.com*

* Long, Joel. ***Winged Insects***. White Pine Press, 1999.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 10:30-11:30pm

Gary Soto with Joel Long

- These are humane and demanding poems. Their craft and power is in their ability to spin the reader around in a narrative darkness only to have a lyric wit and resolve suddenly lit up, revealing beautifully organized spaces of power and emotion. This is persuasive writing: a poetry in which almost every gesture of language is working its passage back into a world of true, powerful feeling.

– *Eavan Boland*

Soto, Gary. ***Partly Cloudy: Poems of Love and Longing***. Harcourt Children's Books, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 10:30-11:30 pm

Gary Soto with Joel Long

- Soto skillfully captures the voice and emotions of young teens in love. The free verse poems are grouped together in two sections: "A Girl's Tears, Her Songs" and "A Boy's Body, His Words." There are selections about first kisses ("I haven't been kissed, /But I'm waiting"), young love ("We were young, not yet fourteen./What chance could our love have/In a world so rough?"), jealousy ("You narrowed your eyes at me,/Flashed red coals from deep inside you"), and rejection ("When she said no,/I took my loneliness to the river"). Since many of the narrators are 13 or 14 years old, these short, accessible poems will appeal to middle schoolers, especially.

—Ann Nored, Wilson Central High School, Lebanon, TN

Torres, Edwin. ***Holy Kid*** (audio CD). Kill Rock Stars, 1998.

Program: Friday, October 23, 7:00-8:00pm

Poet Edwin Torres at Westminster College

- With so many poets working the American idiom these days, it is a wonder to find one with an original voice, but Jason Whitmarsh has carved out a verbal territory for himself unlike anyone else's. It is the kind of voice that whistles for our attention

—Billy Collins

Whitmarsh, Jason. ***Tomorrow's Living Room: Poems***. Utah State University, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 4:30-5:30pm

Jason Whitmarsh with Susan Howe

- With so many poets working the American idiom these days, it is a wonder to find one with an original voice, but Jason Whitmarsh has carved out a verbal territory for himself unlike anyone else's. It is the kind of voice that whistles for our attention

—Billy Collins

NONFICTION

*Aton, James A. ***The River Knows Everything: Desolation Canyon and the Green***. Utah State University Press, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 3:00-4:00pm

Desolation Canyon and the Tavaputs Plateau: Making a Living for 13,000 Years, with James M. Aton, Jerry D. Spangler, and Donna K. Spangler

- In a word, *The River Knows Everything* is invaluable. Jim Aton has revealed the stories, the characters, and the long-forgotten history of the area. There are no books that even come close to the level of detail on the subject and depth of research that this one reveals. Dan Miller's beautiful color photographs make the book doubly attractive for river runners and

everyone else.

–Roy Webb, *author of Riverman: The Story of Bus Hatch*

Bartlett, Allison Hoover. ***The Man Who Loved Books Too Much: The True Story of a Thief, a Detective, and a World of Literary Obsession.*** Riverhead Books, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 3:00-4:00pm

Allison Bartlett with Ken Sanders

- John Charles Gilkey is an obsessed, unrepentant book thief who has stolen hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of rare books from book fairs, stores, and libraries around the country. Ken Sanders is the self-appointed "bibliodick" (book dealer with a penchant for detective work) driven to catch him. Bartlett befriended both outlandish characters and found herself caught in the middle of efforts to recover hidden treasure. Immersing the reader in a rich, wide world of literary obsession, Bartlett looks at the history of book passion, collection, and theft through the ages, to examine the craving that makes some people willing to stop at nothing to possess the books they love.

–*Amazon.com*

*Cannon, Brian Q. ***Reopening the Frontier: Homesteading in the Modern West.*** University Press of Kansas, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 1:30-2:30pm

Beehive Archive: A Conversation about Utah History

- The offer of free farmland after World War II may not have sparked the same stampede that it did in frontier days, but, as Brian Cannon shows in this path-breaking study, postwar homesteading continued to shape the modern West in important ways.

—*University Press of Kansas*

“Cannon's insightful and sensitive treatment impressively captures the hopes, dreams, and struggles of these latter-day pioneers. . . . A fine addition to the history of the West, environmental history, and rural and agricultural history.”

—*David B. Danbom, author of Born in the Country: A History of Rural America*

* Crowe, Chris. ***Thurgood Marshall (Up Close).*** Viking Juvenile, 2008.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 1:30-2:30pm

Michael Spooner with Chris Crowe

- Marshall served 24 years as the first African American judge on the U.S. Supreme Court, but this biography in the Up Close series focuses on his pioneer work as a lawyer and civil rights activist and on the landmark cases in which he fought segregation in public education and elsewhere. Crowe is frank about Marshall's disagreements with Malcolm X and Martin Luther King and also about the racist insults (including the n-word) that were part of Marshall's experience as citizen, lawyer, and activist. Marshall argued 32 cases before the

Supreme Court and won 29 of them, and the eloquent quotes from his speeches are the core of this biography.

– Hazel Rochman

*Davis, France A. ***France Davis: An American Story Told***. University of Utah Press, 2006.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 1:30-2:30pm

Carlotta Walls LaNier with Pastor France Davis

- Using parables told to him by his father in rural Georgia, the Rev. France Davis' memoir, which includes snippets from his sermons, is compelling — the result of interviews conducted by Nayra Atiya. Atiya captures the voice of this gentle, yet powerful, pastor who talks of the way he receives inspiration for his sermons and his one-on-one counseling. He is a good storyteller, in part because he "practiced talking to trees in the woods and empty pews in church."

–Dennis Lythgoe, *The Deseret News*

*Dougan, Terrell H. ***That Went Well: Adventures in caring for my sister***. Hyperion, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 3:00-4:00pm

Terrell Dougan with Robert Kirby

- In this compassionate memoir, Dougan writes for the first time about her mentally disabled sister, Irene. To tell Irene's story, she begins with a traumatizing childhood event; when she was 12 and Irene was six, they witnessed Irene's babysitter die from a massive brain hemorrhage. The lives of the sisters intertwined: Terrell became obsessed with swimming and ice skating; Irene learned to swim and ice skate, but not to read and write. Influenced by Benchley and Thurber, Terrell is a skilled humorist with amusing anecdotes about Irene, such as her behavior during the family's Venice vacation. Writing with honesty, she is equally impressive in relating the haunting memories of sadness and despair surrounding Irene's darker days.

–*Publisher's Weekly*

* Gunter, Susan. ***Alice in Jamesland: The Story of Alice Howe Gibbens Hames***. University of Nebraska Press, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 3:00-4:00pm

Susan Gunter with Jean Cheney

- Susan E. Gunter in *Alice in Jamesland* draws a sharp, subtle, and sympathetic portrait of the woman whom Henry James Senior announced would be suitable for his ambitious and neurotic son. The fact that Alice Gibbens emerges as the most sane member of the James family does not perhaps mean much; luckily for us all, the family did not value sanity as highly as, say, talent, or the molding of talent toward genius. In her biography, Gunter manages to recreate, with some ingenuity and tact, the life of a wife and mother in these years in an upper- middle-class Boston household; she charts what it was like to care for one of the most needy and talented figures to emerge from that class."

–Colm Toibin, *New York Review of Books*

* Kirby, Robert. ***Kirby Soup for the Soul***. White Horse Books, 2003.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 3:00-4:00pm

Terrell Dougan with Robert Kirby

- This series of columns from the *Salt Lake Tribune* by Robert Kirby bring the LDS culture into a humorous spot light. Much of the humor would only be understood by members of the LDS Church or locals who are familiar with Mormon culture. Pat Bagley, the political cartoonist for the *Salt Lake Tribune*, provides great cartoons throughout the book.
–Bill Lund

LaNier, Carlotta W. ***A Mighty Long Way: My Journey to Justice at Little Rock Central High School***. One World/Ballantine, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 1:30-2:30pm

Carlotta Walls LaNier with Pastor France Davis

- At 14, Lanier was the youngest of the Little Rock Nine, who integrated Little Rock Central High School in 1951; she went on to become the first African –American young woman to receive a diploma from the school. Her memoir provides a firsthand account of a seismic shift in American history. In a sense, Lanier didn't make history, history made her. Her plainspoken report from the front line is, nevertheless, a worthy contribution to the history of civil rights in America.
–*Publisher's Weekly*

* Papanikolas, Helen. ***The Peoples of Utah***. Utah State Historical Society, 1976.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 1:30-2:30pm

Beehive Archive: A Conversation about Utah History

- People of many cultures and ethnicities have traveled through the Utah area or settled here. The *Peoples of Utah* collection contains images that show some of this great diversity. Helen Papanikolas collected and donated these photographs.
– *Utah State History*

Perl, Jed. ***Antoine's Alphabet: Watteau and his World***. Vintage, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 4:30-5:30pm

Jed Perl with Lela Graybill

- Art critic Perl focuses on a single artist, his favorite, the early-eighteenth-century French painter Jean-Antoine Watteau. Perl ponders what little is known of this quicksilver painter, who died at 36 in 1721, and muses over the insights of such fellow Watteau enthusiasts as Samuel Beckett. The ebullience, mischief, and discernment of this artful lexicon perfectly embody the shimmer and steeliness of Watteau's incisive drawings and paintings.
– *Donna Seaman, Booklist*

* Rekdal, Paisley. *The Night My Mother Met Bruce Lee: Observations on Not Fitting In*. Vintage, 2002.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 3:00-4:00pm

Jimmy Santiago Baca with Paisley Rekdal

- Rekdal, half-Chinese, half-Norwegian, hailing from Washington State, cleverly dissects what it means to be biracial in America and overseas in this artful collection of essays. The essays recall experiences from childhood, adolescence, and adulthood in America and as a student and teacher in Korea, Japan, and China. The narrative structure is inventive and draws from her sharply honed skills as a poet. Tapped by the *Village Voice* as an up-and-coming "writer on the verge," Rekdal has a lot to say.

— *Ted Leventhal, Booklist*

Richardson, Mark. *Zen and Now: On the Trail of Robert Pirsig and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. Vintage, 2009.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 1:30-2:30pm

Mark Richardson with Guy Lebeda

- Richardson's strong narrative thread results in a page-turner that does right by the original. *Zen and Now* is sure to inspire a new generation of riders and readers to pick up Pirsig's book and take to the open road in search of quality.

—*Vince Darcangelo, Rocky Mountain News*

Fans of Pirsig's cult classic should read Richardson's book if they want the true story of the author. . . . Richardson digs deep to unearth the motives behind his tormented mentor's search for quality while embarking on a search of his own. . . . [*Zen and Now* is] an engrossing tale recounted with a journalist's attention to fact and an adventurer's appetite for the enlightening surprise.

—*Scott Driscoll, Seattle Post-Intelligencer*

*Spangler, Jerry and Donna. *Horned Snakes & Axle Grease*. Uinta Publishing, 2003.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 3:00-4:00pm

Desolation Canyon and the Tavaputs Plateau: Making a Living for 13,000 Years, with James M. Aton, Jerry D. Spangler, and Donna K. Spangler

- *Horned Snakes and Axle Grease* is the premier roadside guide to the archaeology, history, and rock art of Nine Mile Canyon in central Utah. In addition to the chapters on history, archaeology, and rock art, the roadside guide introduces 85 sites from the area, including maps, photographs, drawings and UTM locations.

—*Amazon.com*

Horned Snakes & Axle Grease is worthy of its subject, a beautiful and creative work of art and history.

—*Joe Bauman, author of Stone House Lands: The San Rafael Reef*

*Walker, Ronald. ***Massacre at Mountain Meadows***. Oxford University Press, 2008.

Program: Saturday, October 24, 1:30-2:30pm

Beehive Archive: A Conversation about Utah History

- Coauthors Walker, Turley, and Leonard provide the fullest account yet of the darkest chapter in Mormon history: the massacre of a wagon train of California-bound immigrants passing through southern Utah in 1857. The drama leading up to the massacre brings to view a score of memorable personalities. But the most famous—namely, Brigham Young—plays a role of surprising impotence, as his urgent letter directing the militia to let the immigrants pass in peace leaves a Mormon captain lamenting, “too late, too late.” An essential acquisition for any western history collection.

— *Bryce Christensen, Booklist*

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