

Book festival: It's all about ideas

Readers and writers flock together at the state's 13th annual celebration of all things literary.

Yes, the world of books is now irrevocably changed by Internet merchants and the plastic caress of the e-reader. But that doesn't mean book lovers have lost their sense of community.

As a reminder that readers embody ideas and stories, this year's Utah Humanities

Book Festival borrows Salman Rushdie's resonant question: "What Kind of Idea Are You?"

Now in its 13th year, the festival offers a menu of lectures, author readings, Q&As and book signings across so many Utah towns and cities that our selection

of highlights just skims the surface. But just because we're partial to the festival's Salt Lake City offerings doesn't mean you have to be. By all means, check out all festival offerings at www.utahhumanities.org/BookFestival.htm.

If you despair at the possibilities of hitting all your desired readings, we invite you to keep at least two

dates in mind:

Local filmmaker Jan Andrews will screen her new documentary film "Joseph Brodsky: In the Prison of Latitudes" Wednesday, Oct. 20, at 7 p.m. in the auditorium of the Salt Lake City Main Library. A full-dress documentary about the life of the Nobel Prize-winning poet and essayist, it melds interviews and spellbinding

shots of city skylines with audio of Brodsky in his own words. Last month, Andrews' film was selected for screening at the Venice Film Festival.

In a triumphant return to his hometown, David Borgenicht, president and publisher of Philadelphia-based Quirk Books, will be final judge of the festival's Mash Up Competition

Saturday, Oct. 23, with Rushdie's festival theme question as springboard. As business brains behind the ever-popular series of classic titles drenched in schlock horror details, including the best-selling *Pride and Prejudice* and *Zombies*, Borgenicht no doubt recognizes the next big trends in publishing from miles away.

— Ben Fulton

EVENTS ALL DAY LONG SATURDAY, OCT. 23

| | 11-Noon | 12:30-1:30 p.m. | 2-3 p.m. | 3:30-4:30 p.m. | 5-6 p.m. | 7:00 p.m. |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Auditorium | Dominique Browning with Phyllis Barber | Ian Frazier with Patrick Madden | Tom McGuane with Russell Burrows | Ted Gup with Phillip Bimstein | Joseph Marshall | Film: "The Sonosopher" A. Caldiero, T. Bernhard and T. Low |
| Conference Rooms A/B/C | Young Adult Panel | Poetry Slam, Open Mic (inclement weather) | | | Maximilian Werner and George Handley | |
| Browsing stacks (main floor) | Crandall Printing Museum: Working 19th C Ramage Press | | | | | |
| Level 4 Special Collections | | Rare Books Road Show (Sanders/Weller) | Mike Orenduff | Susan Vogel | | |
| 2nd floor fireplace | Awards Readings | Awards Readings | Awards Readings | Awards Readings | Awards Readings | |
| Level 4 Conference Room | Logan Hebner | e-Books and Book Lovers Panel | Brian Turner | Elisabeth Murawski/Marilyn Bushman-Carlton | James D'Arc | |
| Children's Story room | | Ann Cannon | Buehners: Snowman Story Time | Rene Colato Lainez | Treat Williams and Robert Neubecker | |
| Downstairs children's area | Children's book-making | Children's book-making | Children's book-making | Children's book-making | Children's book-making | |
| Main floor fireplace | Adult book-making | Adult book-making | Adult book-making | Adult book-making | Adult book-making | |
| Urban room West | Paper Decorating, Binding, Printing | Paper Decorating, Binding, Printing | Paper Decorating, Binding, Printing | Paper Decorating, Binding, Printing | Paper Decorating, Binding, Printing | |
| SLCC Community Writing Center | Fractured Fairy Tales Workshop for Children | | | Mash Up Competition with David Borgenicht | | |
| Amphitheater | Poetry Slam, Open Mic with Jesse Parent | | | | | |

Presented by the Utah Humanities Council at The City Library, 210 E. 400 South, Salt Lake City

EVENING EVENTS

TUESDAY, OCT. 19

Tess Gerritsen
7 p.m., ticketed event.
Library Auditorium
Free tickets at city and county libraries
In partnership with the Salt Lake City Library and Salt Lake County Library

THURSDAY, OCT. 21

Utah Literary Awards Ceremony
7 p.m.
Library Auditorium
With Utah Original Writing Contest, May Swenson Poetry Award, Utah Book Awards, Agha Shahid Ali Poetry Prize

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 20

Film: "Joseph Brodsky: In the Prison of Latitudes,"
7 p.m.
Library Auditorium
In partnership with the Salt Lake Film Center with Director Jan Andrews and panelists

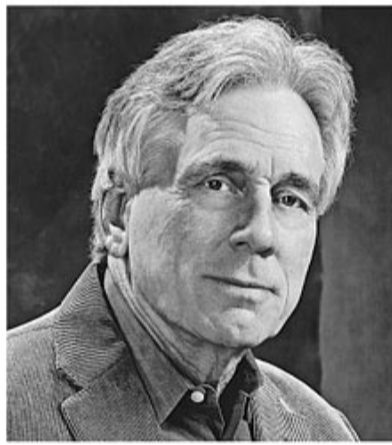
FRIDAY, OCT. 22

Henri Cole
7 p.m.
Westminster College, Jewett Center for the Performing Arts
In Partnership with the Anne Newman Sutton Weeks Poetry Reading Series

McGuane: Rim shots from a master

Literary arts » The Montana writer takes aim at regional writing, but will always side with a good character.

By **BEN FULTON**
The Salt Lake Tribune



Stephen Collector

Novelist Thomas McGuane will be at the Salt Lake City Main Library Oct. 23 as part of the 13th Annual Utah Humanities Book Festival.

favorite stomping ground.

He also lived the kind of stereotypical writer's life that civilians might imagine. As a screenwriter in the 1970s, he brushed heels with Jack Nicholson and Marlon Brando. He married actress Margot Kidder, had an affair with actress Elizabeth Ashley and went through a second divorce — all while never straying too far from his home in Livingston, Mont. It was only after surviving a 1978 crash in his Porsche that McGuane settled down to a more bucolic life of fly-fishing.

Do you ever tire of words like "place" and "wilderness" in discussions about Western writers? Is the idea of "refuge" oversold?

You're playing right into my prime prejudice. I'm completely tired of it. Novels are about people, really. I can't think of a better way to kill a narrative than to introduce it with a long passage about landscape. Not only do I not believe in a literature of the American West, I don't believe in American literature. [There] are things that all novelists concern themselves with, whether French or Italian or American. Don't get me wrong, I'm besotted by nature. I treasure the natural world, but it's not really a subject for literature. As someone far more famous than me once said, "Nature is a wonderful thing, but it makes its point rather quickly."

Your daughter Maggie McGuane is a writer. Do you ever advise her on her manuscripts? How does having a child who writes complicate or complement the parent-child relationship?

A few times she's asked me to look at her manuscripts and make suggestions. I have. She thinks of me perhaps for

my age as a useful editor. In terms of grammar and structure, I have strong views and they're quite traditional. I believe in one perception leading to another. I believe in strongly expressed things that don't waste readers' time. My views about English and grammatical structure probably aren't that different from E.B. White's.

Wallace Stegner is spoken of in almost godlike terms for aspiring writers in the West. What would you say were the most valuable lessons you learned from him?

By the time I got there, he was really tired of teaching. There was a teacher there named Richard P. Scowcroft, from Utah. He taught us at least half the time we were there. He was a much more committed teacher than Stegner. We learned more from him, but Stegner got all the credit.

How do you know when you've written a good sentence?

I take more than usual pleasure in language for its own sake. One of the real epiphanies in my life was finding a copy of *Alice in Wonderland* in our house as a kid. I loved all the verbal nonsense

Reading: Thomas McGuane

Montana writer Thomas McGuane, promoting his latest novel, *Driving on the Rim*, is a literary draw for the 13th annual Utah Humanities Book Festival.
When » Saturday, Oct. 23, 2-3 p.m.
Where » Salt Lake City Main Library auditorium, 210 E. 400 South
Info » Free. Call 801-359-9670 or visit www.utah-humanities.org for more information.

that had so much energy. I was knocked unconscious by it. To some degree when you write a page, you're looking for something that delights. You definitely feel a surge of energy when you hit that note. I'm sure that's what people feel when they play improvisatory jazz.

It's finding a way to line up all the neurons, then fire?

To a degree. Language is one of the things that give us pleasure, but as it occupies a smaller space of the cultural landscape, it still will certainly never go away. The test I

often suggest to people is that they read a 1926 newspaper, then watch an old movie reel from the same time, then read *The Great Gatsby*, *The Sun Also Rises* or *As I Lay Dying*. Which of the three has best preserved the consciousness of those days? Those rickety movies? Only art and literature seem to do the job.

Have you read Jonathan Franzen's new novel, *Freedom*, yet?

No, but I intend to. To some degree the current generation of writers has had their minds blown by Raymond Carver, who was a specialist in domestic agonies and travails. I've really been longing for a lighter heart in American literature. Dickens, Fielding and Twain were all great writers who could write with humor. We're at the point now where Dostoevsky is funnier than the average American novel. It's always possible to be perfectly serious and also humorous. I've been reading firsthand accounts from survivors of Battle of the Little Bighorn, both white and American Indian. Even in the worst of times, there were bursts of comedy in what they wrote.

bfulton@sltrib.com

Meet some of the authors

By **BEN FULTON**
The Salt Lake Tribune

Dominique Browning » Oct. 23, 11 a.m., auditorium of Salt Lake Main Library

Howls of derision first greeted the release of *Slow Love: How I Lost My Job, Put On My Pajamas & Found Happiness*. And that's completely understandable. When 1 out of 10 Americans still seek work in the middle of our "Great Recession," the tale of one woman's cozy journey into a life of pajamas, pruning and piano practice after 13 years as editor-in-chief of *House & Garden* isn't the stuff of tragedy or sympathy. What naysayers forget is that, contrary to F. Scott

Fitzgerald's famous words, we are a nation of second acts. They also forget that much great writing follows in the slip-stream of personal transformation. Lucky though she is to be free of life's biggest pressures, Browning's book lets us know that even when money's no problem, life still demands meaning and purpose. Her memoir isn't about solving pragmatic problems, but ones far more elusive, and that's a life transformation many readers can understand.

Tess Gerritsen » Oct. 19, 7 p.m., auditorium of Salt Lake Main Library. Free tickets available

If suspense is about making the human body react to

stress and surprise, it's no surprise that a retired internist would one day turn out some of the best titles in the rarefied genre of "medical suspense." Tess Gerritsen, a physician who tried her hand at writing while on maternity leave, has become so good at this game that she eventually stopped practicing medicine altogether. For die-hard fans, her characters of Boston medical examiner Maura Isles and homicide detective Jane Rizoli are every bit on par with Sir Arthur Doyle's Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John H. Watson. Gerritsen's abound in both pulp elements (sex slavery) and the fringe (religious cults). Critics may complain that too many of her books read like "television in print," but her numerous titles chosen as main selections

by both the Literary Guild and Mystery Guild say that Gerritsen will make plenty of more pulses race on.

Ted Gup » Oct. 23, 3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m., auditorium of Salt Lake Main Library with Phillip Bimstein

Nonfiction books based on the most surprising and spellbinding of actual and historical events are almost the stuff of routine. In the case of Ted Gup's *A Secret Gift*, however, the treasure trove of discovery at its core reveal more than mere wonder. They're pertinent to history, humanity and secrets hidden deep within author Ted Gup's own family. Sifting through a suitcase of letters left by his father, Gup discovered the stories of hundreds of people who lived lives of bare subsistence

during the Great Depression in Canton, Ohio. They wrote to an pseudonymous donor at the local newspaper who, as it turned out, was Gup's grandfather. Tracing down the descendants of those letter writers Gup, a Pulitzer Prize-finalist and Fulbright Scholar who worked as an investigative reporter for *The Washington Post*, has written a book rich in stories of human endurance and hope. Salt Lake City composer Phillip Bimstein will provide musical accompaniment to letters compiled in Gup's book.

Ian Frazier » Oct. 23, 12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m., auditorium of Salt Lake Main Library with Brigham Young University Professor Patrick Madden

Frazier, a staff writer for *The New Yorker* since 1974, is known in some circles as "the

travel writer's writer." He isn't the kind of writer who imbibes quaint little meals in rustic European cafés, but rather the kind of big-spirited scribe who gets a special charge out of chronicling places most people rarely think about, let alone travel to. His 1989 book, *Great Plains* told readers everything they wanted to know about our nation's tumbleweed-strewn, missile-silo rich middle regions between Texas and the Dakotas. For his eagerly awaited encore, this year's *Travels in Siberia*, he condenses the best of five trips over 12 years to Russia's hinterland, and with arms wide open. Siberia is, Frazier writes, "the greatest horrible country in the world." Madden, essayist and author of *Quotidiana*, will lead the conversation.

bfulton@sltrib.com