

PUBLISHING TALKS LED BY NICKOLE BROWN—

“Promoting Your First Book of Poems”

A practical talk about what it takes to get a book out into the world and what steps a debut author might need to take should the first publisher be an independent with limited marketing resources. Drawing on ten years of experience working at Sarabande, her work as publicist for Arktoi Books, and her experience working as a freelance publicist, Nickole Brown will walk aspiring authors through the steps that they can take to see that their first book makes it into the hands of readers.

“Independent Publishing 101”

Independent. Nonprofit. Literary. What do each of these words mean in the world of publishing? Why would a press decide to become a nonprofit enterprise? And what are the key differences between such a press and a larger, corporate house? What effect do these two forces have on the literary world at large? Drawing on her ten years of experience working at Sarabande Books, her three years with Arktoi Books, and her current work with the Marie Alexander Series at White Pine, Nickole Brown will answer some of these questions and share some of the successes (and challenges) of publishing poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction from an independent press. This talk would be informative for those wanting to start their own press or simply wanting to understand how independent publishing works.

“Anthologies: How-to”

Based on her experience publishing *Air Fare: Stories, Poems and Essays on Flight* and the prose poetry anthologies of the Marie Alexander Series, Nickole Brown walks through the process of putting together an anthology, from researching your idea to gathering work, editing the materials, submitting a proposal to publishers, and finally marketing and publicizing the finished product.

GENERATIVE, CRAFT, AND PEDAGOGICAL WORKSHOPS LED BY NICKOLE BROWN—

“Genre-bending: Limning the Borders Between Poetry, Fiction, and Prose”

What happens when the barriers of form are broken down, when poetry is knocked from its pedestal, and the pragmatics of prose are finessed to carry the lyricism of poetry? What happens when the democratic, accessible form of prose is dressed up in the garb of poetry? What word experiments and subversions can ensue? In this seminar, we'll explore these questions with a close examination of work by contemporary authors Michael Ondaatje, Ander Monson, Victoria Redel, and Maggie Nelson, among others. We'll try our hand at writing in this liminal, uncharted space between the genres for a deeper understanding of what's possible. Able to be adjusted for students of any level, this seminar is designed not to debate the predicament of genre but to explore its possibilities and have students benefit from what they find.

“Writing in the Mother Tongue: Approaches to Dialect and Colloquial Speech”

Is it possible to write in a spoken voice, preserving not only *what* is said but *the way* something is said? And what is the best approach to get dialect on the page, to translate the rhythms and pronunciations of speech into written language? Based on Nickole Brown's M.F.A. thesis of the same title that was published in *The Writer's Chronicle*, this lecture on writing in dialect includes a frank talk about the pitfalls of “regional” writing, balancing cultural stereotypes and political correctness, and

making craft choices of spelling, punctuation, and grammar. This workshop is intended for high-level writers, preferably at a college level or higher.

“Re-cognition and Re-vision: A Craft Talk”

Nickole Brown has worked nearly fifteen years as an editor and teacher helping writers hone their final drafts. As a writer, she took seven years to write her debut collection, *Sister*, and another seven to write her second book, *Fanny Says*; most of that time spent on revision. Through this experience, she has developed a strong sense of the essentials to making a poem work. This workshop focuses on specific elements of poetry such as tone, metaphor, imagery, form, and sound to walk students through a step-by-step process by which they can revise their poems. This straightforward, pragmatic talk could be informative to writers who are currently working on drafts of existing poems.

“Breaking Into the House: Generative Techniques for Beginning and Revising Poems”

Using a series of closely guided exercises, this workshop focuses on digging down into the subconscious strata with participants to find creative expressions of their playful, “night-time” mind. A spontaneous and often intense roundtable, this generative workshop will have participants writing for the duration of the workshop with the goal of accessing words hidden from plain sight. A generative workshop that can be adjusted for writers of all ages and levels.

“The Line and How To Break It: A Craft Talk”

Unless you’re writing a poem in strict form, where to break a line can be a mystery—each decision has as much potential to make a poem shine as it does to dull it into mediocrity. This poetry talk will discuss the different effects line breaks can have on a poem’s rhythm, pacing, and emotional intensity. When is the best time during the revision process to take on line breaks? How can line breaks control the speed by which a reader reads? In what ways can the visual experience of a poem reflect its inner content? Nickole Brown will address these and other questions. This talk would be best for writers with some familiarity with poetry.

“Teaching By Design: Using Imitation in the Classroom”

Dancers follow choreographers, visual artists try to copy great works of art or to replicate a subject placed in the middle of a studio, vocalists and players of musical instruments all learn pieces composed by others. So why should writers be any different? Why this immense pressure to write unlike anything else that’s ever been inked? Why wouldn’t poets need to be taught as apprentices, modeling their work after others until they master the craft? As Nicholas Delbanco mentions in his introduction to *The Sincerest Form*, sincere imitation—imitation that truly emulates a poet’s original work and uses it as a starting place—can help a writer to “earn” her own originality. This talk, designed for teachers of writing, is a pedagogical discussion of using imitative exercises in the classroom.

“Teaching Poetry: Breaking Through Resistance and Fear in the Classroom”

A pedagogical talk designed to assist teachers attempting to teach poetry to resistant students who are either afraid of poetry or dismiss it unreachable or without value. Using her six years of experience teaching many disenfranchised, working-class, first-generation students, Nickole Brown will share in-class writing exercises and poems to use with students of all ages to get them engaged with poetry. This talk aims to help teachers get through to their charges with pragmatic advice and exercises.