Foreword: A Writing Apprenticeship

Have you made the commitment?

Rigorous

Personalized

Advanced
Foreword: A Writing Apprenticeship

*Foreword* is a rigorous, nurturing program for serious writers who are looking for an alternative to academic study. Developed by The Loft Literary Center—one of the nation’s leading independent nonprofit literary arts centers—*Foreword* allows you to develop your craft, pursue an active writing life, and enjoy the company and feedback of fellow writers.

This flexible two-year immersion program is ideal for writers who want to pursue artistic development and receive one-on-one critique and guidance from accomplished literary artists in one of four genres:

- Poetry (maximum of eight admitted annually)
- Fiction (maximum of eight admitted annually)
- Creative Nonfiction (maximum of eight admitted annually)
- Children’s Literature (maximum of four admitted annually)

Small by design, *Foreword* is a traditional apprenticeship based on time-honored methods of learning a creative craft. As a participant, you will work one-on-one with an award-winning, accomplished artist in your genre. You’ll also have the support of a community of serious writers with similar goals.
Foreword lets you focus on your individual development as a writer. Foreword benefits include:

- Individual guidance from a writing advisor to create a personal plan for your writing goals. Throughout the program, you will meet one-on-one with your advisor and receive constructive comments on your work.
- Ten percent discount on Loft classes and conferences.
- Participation in facilitated and peer-led writing groups to share drafts and build your writing community.
- A celebration reading with fellow participants upon completion of the program.
Jude Nutter was born in North Yorkshire, England, and grew up in northern Germany. Her poems have appeared in numerous national and international journals and she is the recipient of several awards and grants. Her first book-length collection, *Pictures of the Afterlife* (Salmon Poetry, Ireland), was published in 2002. *The Curator of Silence* (University of Notre Dame Press), her second collection, won the Ernest Sandeen Prize from the University of Notre Dame and was awarded the 2007 Minnesota Book Award in Poetry. A third collection, *I Wish I Had A Heart Like Yours, Walt Whitman* (University of Notre Dame Press) was awarded the 2010 Minnesota Book Award in Poetry. In 2004/2005 she spent two months in Antarctica as a participant in the National Science Foundation’s Writers and Artists Program. She has been living and working in Minneapolis since 1998.

www.judenutter.net

*Students write:*

“I am indebted to my advisor, Jude Nutter, for her invaluable support, guidance, and good humor throughout the program."

“Jude goes the extra mile on all counts, teaching, evaluation, and workshopping. Fantastic!”

“Jude is a wonderful instructor, so supportive and constructive and has such wisdom about writing.”
Thomas R. Smith is the author of five full-length poetry collections, *Keeping the Star*, *Horse of Earth*, *The Dark Indigo Current*, *Waking Before Dawn*, and *The Foot of the Rainbow*. He is also editor of a US selection of the Canadian poet, Alden Nowlan, *What Happened When He Went to the Store for Bread*. He has given talks at the “Robert Bly in This World” symposium at the University of Minnesota and at the Temenos Academy in London. His work has been included in Scribner’s *Best American Poetry* series, as well as Garrison Keillor’s *The Writer’s Almanac* radio program and Ted Kooser’s American Life in Poetry newspaper column. He lives beside the Kinnickinnic River in River Falls, Wisconsin, with his wife, artist Krista Spieler.

[www.thomasrsmithpoet.com](http://www.thomasrsmithpoet.com)

Students write:

“Thomas has an incredible wealth of reading and bibliographical material. He encouraged me to write in a whole new way.”

“Thomas possesses profound insights, and offers a great balance between lecture, discussion, and in-class writing.”

“Thomas deeply loves and knows poetry and all its techniques, and he wonderfully showed us how to love and write it as well!”
Pamela Carter Joern has authored two books of fiction: a novel, *The Floor of the Sky*, (a Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers selection, winner of an Alex Award and a Nebraska Book Award), and a collection of related short stories, *The Plain Sense of Things*, (a Midwest Booksellers Association Connections Pick). She has won Minnesota Monthly’s Tamarack Award for short fiction twice (2001, 2008), and has received a Minnesota State Arts Board Fellowship and a Career Initiatives Grant. Her work has appeared in *Water~Stone, Minnesota Monthly, Feminist Studies, The Red Rock Review, South Dakota Review, Laurel Review, Great River Review* and other publications.

www.pamelacarterjoern.com

Students write:

“I appreciated Pam’s gentle, insightful guidance. She gets to the crux of the matter in a way that is non-threatening.”

“Pam was extremely conscientious, well organized, skilled, knowledgeable, and an overall wonderful teacher.”

“Pam opened my eyes to looking at fiction writing in new ways.”

*Students write:*

“Mary Gardner’s insights and understanding of each student’s progress and process were just amazing.”

“Mary is wonderful: warm, witty, and extraordinarily generous. I would take any class she offers, even if it was on preparing your income taxes.”

“I couldn’t be happier with Mary. I needed feedback to take my book to the next level. I got it!”
Cheri Register’s publications include *Packinghouse Daughter: A Memoir*, which won a Minnesota Book Award and an American Book Award, and a listing in *Best American Essays*; two influential books on international adoption, *Beyond Good Intentions* and “Are Those Kids Yours?”; a widely-read book on chronic illness, and additional books, essays, and articles. She holds a PhD in Scandinavian Languages and Literatures from the University of Chicago and taught at the University of Minnesota before leaving academe to write in her own voice. She has taught creative nonfiction at the Loft since 1993. Currently she is reading microfilm, channeling her great-grandfather’s ghost, and watching for a story to emerge from the drainage of an 18,000-acre wetland in southern Minnesota in the early 20th century.

www.cheriregister.com

Students write:

“Cheri was amazing at identifying strengths and weaknesses and putting it into words for us to ‘hear.’”

“Great teacher. Cheri is a master; I totally trust her.”

“Cheri is a sage counselor and a consummately kind person.”
Elizabeth Jarrett Andrew is the author of the spiritual memoir Swinging on the Garden Gate (Skinner House Books), a collection of personal essays called On the Threshold: Home, Hardwood, and Holiness (Westview Press), and Writing the Sacred Journey: The Art and Practice of Spiritual Memoir (Skinner House Books). Her work is also anthologized in My Red Couch and Other Stories on Seeking a Feminist Faith, Riding Shotgun: Women Write About Their Mothers, Blessed Bi Spirit, and various literary and religious journals. She is a recipient of a Minnesota State Arts Board artists’ fellowship, the Loft Career Initiative Grant, and is a Minnesota Book Awards finalist.

www.spiritualmemoir.com

Students write:

“Elizabeth conducts a class with a great mix of professionalism and intimacy, which is a difficult thing to do.”

“Elizabeth is so well organized and creates a safe setting in which to workshop our personal stories. Elizabeth is a fabulous instructor who lives what she teaches. I leave feeling inspired and knowledgeable.”

“Elizabeth is a professional, lovable, creative, and wonderful! She pushed me just hard enough—an excellent teacher! Thank you, Elizabeth, for your guidance and wisdom.”
Lisa Bullard is the award-winning author of more than 50 books for children, including Trick-or-Treat on Milton Street (Carolrhoda, 2001) and You Can Write a Story (Two-Can, 2007). Her newest middle grade novel will be published by Harcourt in 2013. Her published work includes picture books, chapter books, and nonfiction titles for a range of ages. Her books have won several honors, including a Children’s Choice Award, a Teacher’s Choice Award, a National Parenting Publications Children’s Resources Silver Award, and listing as a Storytelling World Awards Honor Title. Lisa teaches writing to adults and young people in a variety of settings and brings an insider’s view of the book industry from over 16 years of working as a publishing professional.

www.lisabullard.com

Students write:

“Her feedback is invaluable. She creates a very supportive environment in which to work and learn. Lisa works hard to meet the needs of her students.”

“Lisa provided detailed review of my work with lots of opportunities for me to ask questions. Lisa has invaluable ‘real world’ experience of the industry, and she is a lot of fun!”

“Lisa provided immense help on many levels. She is dedicated, well prepared, and loves her craft.”
Program Coursework

Working with your writing advisor, you’ll create a plan to develop your craft. Loft education staff can advise you on specific classes and teaching artists from among the hundreds of classes we offer each year.

Tuition for Loft classes is not included in your *Foreword* fees—you may enroll in as many or as few classes as your schedule and budget permit. You will receive a ten percent discount on all Loft classes and conferences.

Sample Loft Poetry Courses:

- The Craft of Poetry with Jude Nutter
- Form and Imagination with Thomas R. Smith
- Intermediate Poetry with Deborah Keenan

Sample Loft Creative Nonfiction Courses:

- Intermediate Memoir: Working the Memory Muscle with Laura Flynn
- Shaping Creative Nonfiction with Elizabeth Jarrett Andrew
- The Personal Essay with Cheri Register

Sample Loft Fiction Courses:

- Intermediate Fiction Workshop with Robert Voedisch
- Advanced Fiction Workshop with Dale Gregory Anderson
- Master Class: The Novel with Mary Gardner

Sample Loft Children’s Literature Courses:

- Advanced Picture Book Workshop with Molly Beth Griffin
- The Middle Grade Novel with Kelly Barnhill
- Young Adult Literature with Swati Avasthi
Program Fees

*Foreword* costs $5,850 for the entire two years of the program. Admitted students can make annual payments or pay $250 monthly, automatically deducted from a credit card, for a total cost of $6,000.

Over the two years of the program, you will receive:

- 50 hours of advising, critique, and review with your writing advisor. (This includes the advisor’s time reading and reviewing your work.)
- 48 hours in professionally facilitated writers’ groups with your fellow *Foreword* students.
- 48 hours in peer-facilitated writers groups with your fellow *Foreword* students.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q Does the Loft have space available where I can write, away from the distractions of my home?

A Yes. Our second floor literary commons serves as our “Student Union,” with comfortable chairs and tables where you can work. The Loft also offers individual writer’s studios (available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day) for an additional fee.
Q May I apply to work with a specific writing advisor, even if I am not working in her/his genre?

A No, your primary work must be in your writing advisor’s genre. Depending upon how you choose to use your time in the program, your writing advisor may be willing to look at some work outside her/his genre.

Q My writing is multigenre. May I work with more than one writing advisor?

A You are welcome to take classes in multiple genres (e.g., fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction); however, you will work individually with a single writing advisor in a primary genre over your two years in the program.

Q Are there scholarships available?

A Not for *Foreword*; however, a limited number of scholarships are available for select Loft classes. Students who meet the Loft’s income guidelines may receive one class scholarship per year.

Q Whom do I contact for further information?

A Please call the Loft’s education department at 612-379-8999 to schedule an appointment or to arrange a tour of Open Book, the home of The Loft Literary Center, Milkweed Editions, and the Minnesota Center for Book Arts.
Application Guidelines

Admission to the program is based on three criteria:
1. Potential for quality writing.
2. A demonstrated commitment to revise work and consider the possibilities offered by constructive critique.
3. The ability to articulate individual writing goals for the two-year program (e.g., generating new writing on particular themes, mastering new forms, or drafting a manuscript).

Applications are due by November 1 of each year for January admission and must include the following:
1. A cover letter describing your interest in Foreword.
2. A personal essay (2–3 pages, double-spaced) on your writing experience and goals. (Please note that while publication may be one of your goals, no writing program, including Foreword, can guarantee publication.)
3. A brief statement (1–2 pages, double-spaced) describing your experience (if applicable) in writing groups, writing workshops, revision, creative writing classes, and submission of work for publication.
4. A writing sample from the genre to which you are applying (see below).
5. A nonrefundable application fee of $60.

Send three copies of all documents and include your name and contact information on each copy.
Documents must be typed double-spaced on standard paper; we cannot accept email submissions. Applicant interviews will take place in November and December. Admitted students will begin the program in January.
Writing Samples

Your writing sample is the most critical piece of your application. It should be recent work (please note if it has been published), and it should represent the type of writing you want to pursue in the Foreword program. Writing sample requirements vary by genre:

- **Poetry:** 6–10 poems, total maximum 25 pages
- **Fiction, Novels:** 20–40 pages of manuscript
- **Fiction, Short Stories:** 1–2 complete stories, total maximum 25 pages
- **Creative Nonfiction, Book-length:** 20–35 pages and a one-page sketch of the project
- **Creative Nonfiction, Essay:** 1–3 pieces, total maximum 20 pages
- **Children’s Literature:** 2–3 picture book drafts or first 20 pages of chapter book

Application Checklist

- __ Cover letter (3 copies)
- __ Writing sample (3 copies)
- __ Essay (3 copies)
- __ Experience statement (3 copies)
- __ $60 non-refundable application fee payable to The Loft Literary Center

Submit materials by November 1 (not a postmark deadline) to:

The Loft Literary Center
Attn: Foreword
Suite 200, Open Book
1011 Washington Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55415
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Discover