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NEXT READING JUNE
23rd 2005!

BOOKISH BITS

AT APRIL'S BROOKLYN
READING WORKS

MICHELE MADIGAN
SOMERVILLE

PAMELA KATZ

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May 2005

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What Went On

BROOKLYN
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Park Slope Books

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**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: NEXT READING JUNE
23rd 2005!**

Brooklyn Reading Works. Fiction. Memoir. Poetry. Curated by Louise G. Crawford, a monthly reading series will be moving to a new venue. Stay tuned for our new location!

JUNE 23, 2005 at 8 p.m:

Sophia Romero the author of *ALWAYS HIDING* (William Morrow), will read from a work-in-progress. About her first novel: "The author brings a sparkling humor and fresh perspective to her remarkable first novel about family, love, honor, and modern Filipino life in both the Philippines and the United States."

Carlton Schade will read from *LIE LIKE A DEAD MAN*. An Alabama prison is the setting for this gripping and existential first novel. And **Lauren Yaffe** will read from *DISTANT HOME* a novel set in Brazil.

JULY 21, 2005 at 8 p.m:

Mary Warren will read from her collection of coming-of-age stories about a girlhood in North Carolina.

Louise G. Crawford will read poems from *FIVE TEN ON TUESDAY*.

Posted by Louise Crawford on May 08, 2005 at 08:12 PM in [Schedule of Readings](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

BOOKISH BITS

*** [Tin House Summer Writer's Workshop 2005](#) is accepting applications for their writing intensive held this July 9-16 at Reed College in Portland, Oregon. Special guests include **Dorothy Allison**, **Jonathan Ames**, **Amy Bender**, **Elissa Schappell**, **Francine Prose**, and others.

*****Scott Simon**, host of NPR's Saturday Weekend

Edition has written a novel about the seige of Sarajevo. He reads from "**Pretty Bird**" at Barnes and Noble on Tuesday May 24 at 7:30 p.m. 267 Seventh Avenue.

***A Brooklyn bookstore invites visitors to break free from e-mail at a **biweekly letter-writing session**. They'll provide the pens, paper, and envelopes. Stamps are available for purchase on site, so no more toting around that note for weeks until you happen by a post office. Wednesday, 7-9 p.m., Freebird Books & Goods, 123 Columbia St. at Kane Street, Brooklyn, 718-643-8484, free.

***Brooklyn-based wildlife writers **Margaret Mittelbach and Michael Crewdson** (authors of Wild New York) will read from their new book **CARNIVOROUS NIGHTS: ON THE TRAIL OF THE TASMANIAN TIGER** at the Community Bookstore, 143 7th Ave., Park Slope, on Thursday May 26 at 7:30 p.m. journey from the American Museum of Natural History in Manhattan to the island of Tasmania in search of the tiger and its traces. The result of their expedition is a beautifully written, funny, and poignant account of a safari gone unhinged.

*****D. Nurkse**, former poet laureate of Brooklyn, is the author of eight books of poetry. His latest collection, **BURNT ISLAND**, explores tragedy both grand and intimate, in city and country, in our own troubled moment and across the greater scope o geological time. Arranged in three "suites" of lucid, often heart-wrenching verse, the book begins with a city under siege, in a group of poems that becomes a subtle homage to New York after 9/11 -- a metaphorical "burnt island." The collection then takes up the journey of a couple starting again in nature at specific place called Burnt Island. Finally, in a charming and profound series of poems centered on marine ecology, he finds the infinite in the infinitesimally small, and offers, in sparkling,

mysterious verses, the strange comfort that comes with observing the life of the ocean.

<>

***Park Slope poet **Joshua Mehigan** was named one of five finalists for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize in Poetry. In December 2004, his first full-length book of poems "**THE OPTIMIST**" was also nominated for a PEN/Joyce Osterweil Award. (Winners of both competitions will be announced in spring 2005.) Chosen by poet James Cummins as the winner of the Hollis Summers Poetry Prize, it was published in December 2004 by Ohio University Press and, soon after, named one of the top ten university press books of 2004 by ForeWord Magazine. The poems in "The Optimist" address the ordinary and the exceptional: the weather, a house fire, noise pollution, the inner life of a fourth-century ascetic.

*****Robert Levy's THE GHOSTS OF PARTITION STREET** is a serial novel of supernatural suspense centering on the residents of a Brooklyn brownstone, both living and deceased. The story is told in a series of short chapters; a new chapter will appear on partitionstreet.com every Tuesday.

*****MOTHER OF SORROWS** (Pantheon 2005) by **Richard McCann**. A book of interconnected short stories. "Because my family lived on Carroll Street for many years, just off Prospect Park, and as a child I went back and forth from our suburban house in Silver Springs, MD., to the family house on Carroll Street, which seemed more real and more wonderful than anything in our suburb could possibly have been. As I write this to you now -- from D.C. where I live -- I'm wearing my grandmother's class ring from Saint Angela Hall (now closed) in Brooklyn. I guess it's from the class of 1911 or 1912," writes Richard McMann.net.

*****FEBRUARY HOUSE**. **Shelia Tippins** tells the true story of Carson McCullers, Jane aThe Old Stone House

is located in JJ Byrne Park on Fifth Avenue between 3rd and 4th Street. nd Paul Bowles, W.H. Auden, Salavdor Dali and Gypsy Rose Lee under one roof on Middagh Street in Brooklyn Heights. At your local independent bookseller.

*****MISS GAZILLIONS**, the new novel by ex-Park Sloper **Richard Weber**, is gathering raves. Much of it is set in Park Slope. "A light hearted mystery thriller filled with unforgettable characters," writes Publisher's Weekly in it's starred review on 2/28.

Vox Pop Coffee Shop has Insta Book: an incredible, fast, cool print-on-demand technology that can format your Word or PDF file into a paper-back book, 5 x 8 trim size, with a full color cover. And 150 pages is only about \$6-\$7 bucks. 2011 Cortylou Road in Ditmas Park. Learn more about Instabook Machine: [Here](#).

Posted by Louise Crawford on May 08, 2005 at 08:00 PM in [BOOKISH BITS](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

AT APRIL'S BROOKLYN READING WORKS



There was a nice vibe at Brooklyn Reading Works last night. Twenty or more people filled the cafe at Fou Le Chakra as two talented writers read from a make-shift podium in the candle-lit red room.

It was cozy and atmospheric just the way I hoped it would be and I think everyone enjoyed themselves.

Pam Katz read two excerpts from her book *AND SPEAKING OF LOVE* (Aufbau-Verlag), her novel that alternates between the fictional voices of Lotte Lenya, Lenya's mother, and an American newspaper reporter. It is the vividly imagined world of 1930's Berlin, the first performance of "The Threepenny Opera," and the complicated marriage of composer Kurt Weil and Lotte Lenya that jumps off the pages of this beautifully written first novel.

Michele Madigan Somerville, read from her book-length poem, *WISEGAL* (Ten Pell Books), a language-driven, street-smart piece about teaching Shakespeare at a Brooklyn high school, that was not only hilarious but powerful and poignant too. Other work included "Bodies of Water," a poem dedicated to her bother, one about motherhood infused with the Brooklyn Museum of Art, and a translation of a Sappho poem that she sang in Greek and English. Somerville is a poet with great stories to tell and a passionate way with words.

As the organizer of the event, I was thrilled to pair up these two literary lights and to hear them in action.

Posted by Louise Crawford on May 08, 2005 at 05:24 PM in [What Went On](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

MICHELE MADIGAN SOMERVILLE

Bodies of Water

You were never a water wimp.
 Even at Orchard Beach,
 you were good to go. A natural swimmer,
 graceful and strong. All of us were.
 Natural swimmers, that is.
 In water, that is.
 But I was afraid to be out over my head
 afraid to swim at dawn with you
 and Brutus out on 95th Street
 when the lifeguard chairs were still

overturned in the sand
 on the Irish Riviera
 where we learned to tread
 water. You always went way out.
 You were never afraid
 to get your ass kicked
 by a wave. There was no fear
 of losing control, cramping up,
 no fear of water rushing to displace
 the spirit of your lungs. No fear
 of the Earth's humors, the protean
 green--the wet scary
 unknown, no fear of the curvaceous
 machine of the tides.
 And how you love baths!
 "Tropical Rain Forest:"
 smoke a joint, fill the tub
 with aromatic bubbles,
 darken the room, put music on,
 pull the curtain, turn the shower on
 and float away down the Nile in your vessel.

Posted by Louise Crawford on May 08, 2005 at 02:28 PM in [Featured Writer](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

PAMELA KATZ

SEX (or Tightrope) 1929

The first time I remember seeing a penis it was wrapped in bandages. I should say, it was being wrapped up, by Franz's sister. She looked like she was preparing a spoiled wurst, one that already smells. I was nine years old and I ran home, no one asked me why. Later, my Aunt Sophie did strange things to her Doctor in Zurich but I was not allowed in the room, I did not want to go in, between nine and fourteen I had seen enough to know the reasons for closed doors - especially when men have their pants down.

Of course I never saw as much as people thought. No one really knows what goes on in the dark, in the

night, in private, they see you with a man, they see you with many men, and they think you are doing whatever it is they have not done. If I did it in exchange for money, if I started very young, if I knew more than others, it was all outside of me for the longest time.

But what does it matter? I'm sitting here, aren't I, while strong men carry our furniture up the stairs. "Our furniture," you see and why? Because they clapped long and loud and came again. I have always trusted applause to bring me what I need. There are many kinds of applause, especially in Berlin these days.

Weilly and I lived in one room with a single bed for two years. Sleeping frozen solid never moving or one of us would fall out. From that bed, we could touch everything in the room, the refrigerator, the desk, the bureau. Not anymore, not here in our new, expensive apartment, they clapped long and loud for "Three Penny" and we are here, we're a success, what's a success anyway? You are not a good wife.

One light step over the threshold thick glass doors pushed lightly to the side and onto the stone balcony, leaning over the side I see our carved Jugendstyl facade and in the distance the shimmering Lietzensee. Four rooms with a view, what do you say to that? We began on a lake in a rowboat and we end up here, high above, seeing the water framed in thick glass, sun sparkling on the surface while we sip coffee, everything for us!

From AND SPEAKING OF LOVE by Pamela Katz

Posted by Louise Crawford on May 08, 2005 at 08:32 AM in [Featured Writer](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)