

Beach Bards Poetry & Prose Reading Series Summer 2019

June 17: Douglas Otto and Lorraine Walker Williams

July 15: Sylvia Baer (a poet who will perform as Emily Dickinson!) and Bud Cole

August 19: Michele A. Belluomini, Charles Bondhus, and Albert Tacconelli

Biographies for 2019 Beach Bards Readers

June 17 - Douglas Otto:

Doug Otto is a freelance writer whose work has appeared in The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Palm Beach Post and The Press of Atlantic City. His column, *My Turn*, was read regularly in The Courier Post, with his feature articles published in South Jersey Magazine.

Doug is affiliated with The Jersey Cape Writers, The Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Foundation, and The Kelly Writers House at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the founder of the South Jersey Poetry Festival for High School Students and the Haddonfield Speaks Prose and Poetry event.

His poetry has won honors at the Collingswood Book Festival, The Delaware Bay Days Poetry Festival, and The Joyce Indik New Jersey Wordsmith Competition. His play, *The Calling*, was workshopped by Cape May's East Lynne Theatre Company. A fulltime Ocean City resident, Doug's byline continues to appear in local print and online media.

June 17 - Lorraine Walker Williams:

Author of five books of poetry, including *Simply Sanibel Poems*, Lorraine Walker Williams recently received a Grand Prize for her poetry and read at the Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco.

Her poems are published in numerous literary journals. Nominated twice for the Pushcart Prize, she also has read at the Library of Congress and has written a weekly online poetry column for *SantivaChronicle.com* for over 4 years. She is the author of the poetry chapbooks *Between Land and Sea*, *Near Water*, *Paradise Found*, *Fire in the Grass* and *Split Poems* (2014).

She has served as Guest Editor of an online poetry column in Denver, Colorado. Creator of *ArtPoems* in Florida, a collaboration of artists and poets, she was named Literary Artist of the Year by the Alliance for the Arts. A New Jersey native, Lorraine winters in Sanibel Island, Florida. Lorrainewalkerwilliams.com

July 15 - Sylvia Baer:

Sylvia Baer is a literature professor at Rowan College and a Fellow of Yale University. She is also a writer, a poet, a translator, a tennis player, a gardener, and the creator of The Poet-Tree in Cape May, a tree in her front yard adorned with poems.

She has been researching the life and work of Emily Dickinson for over 40 years and her one-woman play, "A Passion for Life" based on Dickinson's life and poems, has been enjoyed by audiences for over twenty years. She will perform all or part of this play for Beach Bards.

She holds a Ph.D. and lives in Wenonah, N.J. and Cape May, N.J. with her husband, John Baer, a psychology professor at Rider University whose main research studies are in the field of creativity.

July 15 - Bud Cole:

Bud Cole has written poetry in all major genres, of late almost exclusively work influenced by the Japanese forms of haiku, senryu, and, haibun. He is active in a variety of literary programming in the area and has served as host for some poetry reading venues.

In 2011 Cole was awarded the Museum of Haiku Literature Award by the Haiku Society of America. His haiku, senryu, and, haibun have appeared in *The Red Moon Press*, *Befuddled Press*, and, *Frogpond*, among other nationally known journals.

Formerly of Ocean City, Bud now resides on the banks of the Delaware River in Pennsville, New Jersey, where he spent his childhood.

August 19 - Michelle Belluomini:

Michele Belluomini’s poetry has been published in *American Poetry*, *Philadelphia Poets*, *Beltway*, *The Mad Poets Review* and *Apiary*, among other print and online journals. Her poems have also appeared in various *Poetry Ink* (Philadelphia) anthologies and the anthology *Commonwealth: Contemporary Poets on Pennsylvania*.

The chapbook *Crazy Mary and Others* was a winner in the Plan B Press chapbook competition. Her most recent volume of poetry is *Signposts for Sleepwalkers*, also published by Plan B Press Alexandria, VA. She has read at many venues in the Philadelphia area, most recently for the The Moonstone Arts Center, The Watermark, the Moveable Beats Poetry Reading series, and Women’s Voices of Philadelphia.

Michele has deep roots in the Philadelphia poetry community, and was, most recently, one of the coordinators of the Monday Poetry Series at the Free Library of Philadelphia’s Main Branch. She is Adjunct Library Faculty at Community College of Philadelphia.

August 19 - Charles Bondhus:

Charlie Bondhus is the author of *Divining Bones*, Sundress, 2018, and *All the Heat We Could Carry*, Main Street Rag, 2013, winner of the Thom Gunn Award for Gay Poetry. His work has appeared in *Poetry*, *The Missouri Review*, *Columbia Journal*, *Hayden’s Ferry Review*, *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Nimrod*, and *Copper Nickel*.

He has received fellowships from the Virginia Center for Creative Arts, the Sundress Academy for the Arts, and the Hawthornden Castle International Retreat for Writers (UK). He received his MFA in creative writing from Goddard College and his Ph.D. in literature from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. He is associate professor of English at Raritan Valley Community College, N.J. More at: <http://charliebondhus.com>.

August 19 - Albert Tacconelli

Al Tacconelli’s latest chapbook of poetry, *Alone at the Border*, Finishing Line Press, 2018, deals with the tragedy known as the Syrian Civil War and the horrors of displaced families, refugees and innocent victims of war. He is also the author of the chapbooks, *Perhaps Fly*, Bordighera Press, 2014, which published his first collection of poetry, and *Scratch Marks at the Kitchen Door*, 2018.

His poetry has appeared in journals such as: *Paterson Literary Review*, *Philadelphia Poets*, *Endicott Review*; *VIA*; and the anthologies *Avanti Popolo: Italian-American Writers Sailing Beyond Columbus*; *Poetry Ink Tenth*, *Moonstone Poetry Series 2015 Anthology of Featured Readers*, and *The American Voice in Poetry: Legacy of Whitman, Williams, and Ginsberg*.

Featured poet of the month, in an on-line newsletter, A Muse: Janet Mason, and heard on the radio program, *Around The Kitchen Table*, March, 1540 AM. He has read at Robin’s Bookstore, The Free Library of Philadelphia, and Hofstra University, among others.

An artist and poet, Passaic County Community College has exhibited Tacconelli’s works, and several paintings, prints, and drawings are included in the Permanent Collection of Contemporary Art.
