Scott Cairns' many works explore the unity between traditional dichotomies: art and belief, the body and spirit, doubt and faith. Reviewers have noted how Cairns "speaks with a literate religious conscience" (Mars Hill Review), "brings us to the very cusp of mystery" (Image), and writes poems that "may be as direct and sustained in their exploration of theological issues as any significant American poetry in decades" (The Christian Century). Yet his style is conversational, unpretentious, and often humorous.

Cairns is known for embracing an artistic method that privileges discovery and delight over certainty, a method he will share during his time with us. His keynote address, "The Poem in Progress: A Way of Knowing," will describe the poetic text as not being a means of expressing what is already known, but as a way of knowing, of seeing, of glimpsing what is not yet known. His workshop session, "The Poem: A Dialogic Endeavor" will continue that conversation.
The Ministry of Writing

Most of the workshops listed below will be repeated. Please choose one to attend in the morning and a different one for the afternoon session.

Scott Cairns — The Poem: A Dialogic Endeavor

This workshop continues the conversation begun in Scott’s keynote address. We will be reading poetry and other texts that served to provoke his response, which in many cases burned out to become out answering poems.

Scott Cairns is Professor of English at Earlham School of Religion, and during the spring of 2012 will serve as Visiting Professor of English at Saint Katherine College in Encinitas, CA. His poems and essays have appeared in Poetry, Image, Paris Review, The Atlantic Monthly, The New Yorker, and elsewhere. His most recent books are Allusions: Metaphors and Markers and Bookends and Bookends: The ESR Center, at the northeast corner of the Earlham Campus. A finalized schedule and room assignments will be available at registration.

ESR in 1997. He passed away in June, 2009. His "Writing for the Religious Market" class, first offered over 20 years ago, was the beginning of ESR’s unique emphasis in the ministry of writing. This colloquium is one way the school demonstrates its commitment to the written word as an important form of ministry. The colloquium will be held in the ESR Center at the northeast corner of the Earlham Campus. A finalized schedule and room assignments will be available at registration.

PARKING: Please turn north on College Ave. off National Road West. Turn west on "CF" St. into Earlham campus. Turn right at the stop sign, then right again into parking. Walk to the ESR Center.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, November 4

7:00 p.m. Registration

7:30 p.m. An Evening with the Presenters: Seven Leaders Road From Their Words

9:00 a.m. Worship

9:30 a.m. Workshop Address by Scott Cairns: The Poem in Progress: A Way of Knowing

10:30 a.m. Break

10:45 a.m. Workshop Sessions One (choose one)

The Poem: A Dialogic Endeavor — Scott Cairns
Putting Sacred Spaces in a Poem — Todd Davis
What Did You Mean to Say? — Erin McGraw
Momentary Revelation — Tom Montgomery-Fate
Putting the Turn: Him and Her; U and Me — Susan Yano
Pitch-Perfect Proposals — Amy Lyles Wilson

12:15 p.m. Lunch

1:30 p.m. Workshop Sessions Two (choose one)

Putting Sacred Spaces in a Poem — Todd Davis
What Did You Mean to Say? — Erin McGraw
Momentary Revelation — Tom Montgomery-Fate
Making the Turn: I and Thou, Him and Her; U and Me — Susan Yano

2:45 p.m. Break

3:00 p.m. Closing Gathering

Todd Davis — Putting Sacred Spaces in a Poem

We all come from some place, and those places mold our very lives—from our daily routines to our notions of the sacred to our relationships with other people and with the earth. In this workshop, we will focus on how space—what is most often called, "the scenery" can shape the content of a poem but also as formal influences in the structuring of that poem.

Todd Davis teaches creative writing and environmental studies at Penn State University. He is the winner of the Cimovodow Brooks Poetry Prize, author of Blood run dry—Poetry—(2002), Sound (2007), Housebound: Water, Fire, and Stone: The Thoreau Poems (2010), and The Least of These (2010)—and co-editor of Making the Poem (2010). These poems have been published in such journals and magazines as The North American Review, The Iowa Review, The Gettysburg Review, Indiana Review, and Image. His work has also been featured by Garrison Keillor on “The Writer’s Almanac” and by Ted Kooser in an American Life in Poetry.

ESR Center

Saturday, November 5

8:15 a.m. Registration/Continental Breakfast

9:00 a.m. Worship

9:30 a.m. Workshop Address by Erin McGraw: What Is Sacred Space?!

10:30 a.m. Break

10:45 a.m. Workshop Sessions Three (choose one)

The Poem: A Dialogic Endeavor — Scott Cairns
Putting Sacred Spaces in a Poem — Todd Davis
What Did You Mean to Say? — Erin McGraw
Momentary Revelation — Tom Montgomery-Fate
Making the Turn: I and Thou, Him and Her; U and Me — Susan Yano
Pitch-Perfect Proposals — Amy Lyles Wilson

12:15 p.m. Lunch

1:30 p.m. Workshop Sessions Four (choose one)

Putting Sacred Spaces in a Poem — Todd Davis
What Did You Mean to Say? — Erin McGraw
Momentary Revelation — Tom Montgomery-Fate
Making the Turn: I and Thou, Him and Her; U and Me — Susan Yano

2:45 p.m. Break

3:00 p.m. Closing Gathering

Erin McGraw — What Did You Mean To Say?

Over the course of their travels in the world as a full-time working poet, they have become aware of an ever more subtle and sometimes overtly loud story that everything we want our point of view to be. Overdetermined storytelling leads to, at best, limp and usually obvious stories, but, if we become skillful at provoking his response, which in many cases burned out to become out answering poems.

SUSAN CAIRNS — Short Trip to the Edge

The creative process, if entered intentionally as a spiritual process. This in afternoon-workshop, we will explore the spiritual aspects of creativity—from calling and craft to commitment and cost-counting—as well as experiment with creativity exercises.

SUSAN YANO — Soul Work: Creativity and Spirituality

Writers are sometimes able to frame a single moment from their lives with such compassion and precision that it carries an entire story or essay on its back. In this workshop we will explore the way writers can create sacred space for these literary moments, and consider how to frame them—how to invite our readers into that emotional encyclo, that moment of revelation.

Tom Montgomery-Fate — Momentary Revelation

His two collections of fiction include: His book-length essay, Beyond the White Note (1997), a collection of essays, Plainly and Touchingly (2005), a spiritual memoir, and Calvin Ever (2013), a nature memoir. His essays have appeared in the Chicago Tribune, Boston Globe, Orion, The Iowa Review, Fourth Genre, Set Quarters, Christian Century, and many others; and they often air on NPR and Chicago Public Radio. He is the recipient of writing awards at Colgate University in suburban Chicago.

Susan Yano — Taking the Turn: I and Thou, Him and Her, U and Me

This workshop continues the conversation that stems from personal experience, and the writer’s way of writing. We will explore the relationship of the "I" to the "you" to the "we" and how does the “I” in the personal essay become universal? How can developing an inward gaze from memory, observation and reading become a gaze away from the self. What are the ethics of writing about the "other", which it’s, a family member? We’ll look at examples from writers of creative nonfiction and, in the workshop, we’ll try some exercises you can incorporate into your own writing practice, and in particular ‘making the turn.’

This workshop is the author’s book of fiction and nonfiction, including the spiritual autobiography Iconography and the edited collection Falling Toward Grace. Her two collections of fiction include: In the House of Other Lives, winner of the Richard Sullivan Prize and a “best book of the year” according to the Chicago Tribune as well as Fashion of Flight, winner of the Hannah O’Connor Award. Other books include Sailing the Island Sac, Inventing Hands, Essays on Making Things and Making Meaning—Twilight in Arcadia, and Big Bird’s Big Dance. She is the Demia Butler Professor of English at Butler University and teaches in the Warren Wilson M.F.A. Program for Writers.

Amy Lyles Wilson — Pitch-Perfect Proposals

This workshop is for authors trying to get published, and will be the creative process, if entered intentionally as a spiritual process. This in afternoon-workshop, we will explore the spiritual aspects of creativity—from calling and craft to commitment and cost-counting—as well as experiment with creativity exercises.

Susan Yano is the director of the Mullen Ministry of Writing Program at Earlham School of Religion. Besides teaching writing and literature classes, she has conducted writing workshops, has written and made presentations on Scripture and spirituality, and directed women’s retreats. She is the author of Woman, Sin, Free, as well as several short stories and essays, and was a winner in the Catholic Press Association’s first-time author category. She holds degrees in biology, literature, and pastoral theology.

Amy Lyles Wilson has worked in publishing since receiving her master’s degree in journalism in 1986, specializing in acquisitions and development. She is also a writer, having recently co-authored Bliss Your Heart: Saving the World One Coowed Pooch at a Time (Thomas Nelson), and contributed to a series of cultural collections for Houghton Mifflin Books, an imprint of Upper Room Books. She is a columnist and blogger for HerNashville, and leads writing workshops as an affiliate of Ambrose Writers at Ambrose University. Wilson served on the Yearling Honor Roll at the Earlham School of Religion in 2003, and earned her master’s degree in theological studies from Vanderbilt University Divinity School in 2007. Learn more at amylyleswilson.com.

esr@earlham.edu

REGISTRATION FORM

Name ____________________________________________

Address _________________________________________

Phone_________________________ E-mail ____________________

❑ Colloquium prior to Oct. 10: $65 ❑ Colloquium after Oct. 10: $70

❑ Colloquium: undergrad/grad student: $25

❑ I would like a vegetarian meal Total enclosed $_____

Workshop One preference (number first and second choice)

What Did You Mean to Say? — Erin McGraw

What Did You Mean to Say? — Erin McGraw

Making the Turn: I and Thou, Him and Her; U and Me — Susan Yano

Making the Turn: I and Thou, Him and Her; U and Me — Susan Yano

Workshop Two preference (number first and second choice)

Making the Turn: I and Thou, Him and Her; U and Me — Susan Yano

Making the Turn: I and Thou, Him and Her; U and Me — Susan Yano

Soul Work: Creativity and Spirituality — Susan Yano

Soul Work: Creativity and Spirituality — Susan Yano

A $65 registration fee covers all colloquium events, including Friday night readings, all plenary sessions and workshops, Saturday continental breakfast and lunch (please indicate vegetarian preference) and refreshments, and the readings/open mic Saturday night.

Send registration to: Writing Colloquium 2011, Mandy Ford, Earlham School of Religion, 228 College Avenue, Richmond, IN 47374. 1-800-432-1377, E-mail: fordma@earlham.edu