

UPDIKE IN TUCSON
7th Biennial John Updike Society Conference
Tucson, Arizona, Sept. 20-24, 2023



**Celebrating the 60th and 30th anniversaries
of *The Centaur* and *Collected Poems***

Keynote speaker: Arizona Poet Laureate Alberto Ríos

Conference directors: Robert Luscher and Jan Emery

**Venues: Pima Community College, Skyline Country Club,
Mission Hills Casitas, Embassy Suites by Hilton Tucson Paloma Village**



Keynote Speaker: Alberto Ríos

Co-sponsored by the Pima Foundation

Alberto Ríos, Arizona's first (and continuing) poet laureate, is the author of thirteen books of poetry, three collections of short stories, and a memoir. The son of a Mexican father from Tapachula, Chiapas, and an English mother from Warrington, Lancashire, Ríos was raised on the American side of the city of Nogales, Arizona, on the Mexican border. He is the recipient of the Arizona Governors Arts Award, Walt Whitman Award, Western States Book Award for Fiction, and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. A chancellor of the Academy of American Poets, he holds an endowed professorship at Arizona State University.

In the first part of his presentation, Ríos will talk about “What Makes for Good Poetry,” using the poems of John Updike and others as illustrations. In the second part, Ríos will read from his own work, with time for questions. Books of his will be available for purchase and signing.

Ríos' collections of poetry include *Not Go Away Is My Name* (2020); *A Small Story About The Sky* (2015); *The Dangerous Shirt* (2009); *The Theater of Night* (2006), winner of the 2007 PEN/Beyond Margins Award; *The Smallest Muscle in the Human Body* (2002), a finalist for the National Book Award; and *Whispering to Fool the Wind* (1982). *The Iguana Killer: Twelve Stories of the Heart* (1984) is considered a classic of Chicano fiction, while his short story collection *Pig Cookies* (1995) has been lauded for its magical realism and ability to capture the magic of ordinary life.



Plenary Speaker: Michael Updike

Michael Updike is a sculptor, artist and designer who graduated from Massachusetts College of Art and received an MFA from Vermont College. A juried member of the League of New Hampshire Craftsman, he is a longtime artist in many mediums and styles. Lately he has focused on slate carvings, often choosing, as his subjects, “our humbler overlooked fellow creatures, employing humor in my work.” Visitors to Plow Church cemetery can appreciate the gravestone he carved for his father.



**All sessions except for the Ríos event will be held at Embassy Suites
Tucson Paloma Village, 3110 E. Skyline Dr., Tucson, AZ 85718**

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Wednesday, Sept. 20: Pre-Conference Arrival Day

Conference organizers will make 3-4 trips from the airport to the hotel to make arrivals easier for as many attendees as possible. **Let us know your arrival time and we will try to accommodate you.**

5:00 pm: Registration—convene at all-hotel social hour, Embassy Suites Reception Area (*reception included with room*)

Evening: Dinner on your own, nearby restaurants within a 10-minute walk (**list to be provided, reservations recommended**)

Thursday, Sept. 21—Conference Day 1

Breakfast at hotel (*included with room*)

7:45-8:00 am: Registration materials available in the La Paloma Ballroom

8:00 am: Welcome

Conference directors Robert Luscher and Jan Emery

8:20 am: Load vans/ depart for Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum (*included with registration*)

9:15 am: Arrival at Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum

12:00 pm: Pre-ordered box lunches provided at Museum; vans return to hotel

1:10 pm-2:05 pm: *The Centaur at Sixty: Comparative Studies*

Moderator: Peter Bailey (St. Lawrence University, NY)

—“Dedalus and Caldwell: Joyce in Updike's *The Centaur*,” Biljana Dojčinović (University of Belgrade, Serbia)

— “The Nascent Artists: John Updike's Peter Caldwell and Danilo Kiš ' Andreas Sam,” Nemanja Glintić (Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, China)

2:15 pm- 3:30 pm: *Updike and the Southwest*

Moderator: Carla Alexandra Ferreira (Federal University of São Carlos, Brazil)

— “Lost Frontiers: John Updike and the Re-mythologizing of the West,” Christopher Love (University of Alabama)

— “Updike in the Desert,” Matthew Shipe (Washington University, MO)

— “Updike’s Arizona,” Joe McDade (Houston Community College, TX)

3:45 pm-4:40 pm: Updike in Tucson

Moderator: Shabir Hussain Mirza (Govt. College for Women, Kashmir, India)
— “Pruning the Self and Asserting Identity in ‘A Desert Encounter’,” Sue Norton (Technological University Dublin, Ireland)
— “Discovering the Updike Casitas” Jan Emery (Independent Scholar, Tucson, AZ)

5:00 pm: Social Hour at Embassy Suites (*reception included with room—please check your assigned van time beforehand so you don’t miss your casitas tour*)

5:30 pm: Vans leave for Casitas Visit at Skyline Country Club, staggered departures
VAN #1 group leaves the hotel at **5:30 pm** & explores Casitas exterior area from 5:45-6:00 pm, then the interior from 6:00-6:20 pm, and returns to hotel.
VAN #2 group leaves the hotel at **5:45 pm** & explores Casitas exterior area from 6:00-6:20 pm, then the interior from 6:20-6:40 pm, and returns to hotel.
VAN #3 group leaves hotel at **6:05 pm** & explores Casitas exterior area from 6:20-6:40 pm, then the interior from 6:40-7:00 pm, and returns to hotel.

Evening: Dinner on your own, nearby restaurants within a 10-minute walk (*list to be provided, reservations recommended*)

Friday, Sept. 22—Conference Day 2

Breakfast at hotel (*included with room*)

7:35 am: Meet outside hotel entrance for announcements and van departures—**same van assignments as Thursday evening**

7:45 am: Depart for Tombstone, AZ (Full Day Excursion, Lunch on your own in Tombstone, food and souvenirs are **cash only**)

5:00 pm: Vans depart from Embassy Suites for dinner in mid-size groups at restaurants at St. Philip’s Plaza; re-board vans after dinner for transport to keynote venue.

7:00 pm: Vans depart St. Philip’s Plaza for Keynote Address

7:30 pm: Keynote Address, Arizona Poet Laureate Alberto Ríos, Pima Community College’s Downtown Campus, Amethyst Room (CC Building off Stone Ave.). Book signing to follow.

Saturday, Sept. 23—Conference Day 3

Breakfast at hotel (*included with room*)

7:50 am: Announcements (meeting rooms)

8:00 am- 8:55 am: Concurrent Session 1

Irony in Bech/ Tantric Yoga in *S.*

Moderator: Biljana Dojčinović (University of Belgrade, Serbia)

— “The Irony of Being ‘A Son of Israel Loyal to Melville’s Romanticism’: John Updike’s Bech Books,” Olga Karasik-Updike (Independent Scholar, Newbury, MA)

— “Yoga and Tantric Love: Inadequacy and Futility in Updike’s *S.*,” Pradipta Sengupta (M.U.C. Women’s College, Burdwan, West Bengal, India)

8:00 am- 8:55 am: Concurrent Session 2

Mirroring *Brazil*

Moderator: Sylvie Mathé (Aix-Marseille University, France)

— “Brazilians on *Brazil*: The Novel’s Reception in the South American Country,” Carla Alexandra Ferreira (Federal University of São Carlos, Brazil)

— “*Brazil* as a Mirror of Neo-liberalist U.S. Society: Updike at the End of the Cold-War Era,” Takashi Nakatani (Yokohama City University, Japan)

9:05 am- 10:00 am: Concurrent Session 1

Intersections of Fiction and Reality

Moderator: Matthew Koch (Tarrant County College-South, TX)

— “Veiled Autobiography: Domesticity and Divorce in Updike’s *My Father’s Tears and Other Stories*,” Shabir Hussain Mirza (Govt. College for Women, Kashmir, India)

— “Taking ‘Nakedness’ Personally: Updike’s Art History Ruminations,” Jim Plath (Illinois Wesleyan University)

9:05 am- 10:00 am: Concurrent Session 2

Literary Apprenticeship & Literary Conversation

Moderator: Sue Norton (Technological University Dublin, Ireland)

— “‘My Idea Is to Walk to My Own Funeral’: An Early Model of Educator Burnout in Updike’s *The Centaur*,” Heather Levy (Western Connecticut State University)

— “John & Linda: A Singular Literary Apprenticeship,” Jim Schiff (University of Cincinnati, OH)

10:15 am-11:15 am: Updike Family Presentation

“The Un-launched Cartooning Career of John Updike,” Michael Updike (Newbury, MA)

11:15 am -12:15 pm: Break before van travel to Titan Missile Museum

12:15 pm: Pick up box lunches (included) and board vans for Titan Missile Museum [45-minute tour at 2 pm] & San Xavier del Bac Mission (**masks required**).

5:00 pm: Social Hour at Embassy Suites (*reception included with room*)

7:00 pm: Conference Dinner, Embassy Suites (*included with registration*)
Brief remarks by society president Jim Plath

Sunday, Sept. 24—Conference Day 4

Breakfast at hotel (*included with room*)

7:50 am: Announcements & Conference wrap-up
Conference directors Robert Luscher and Jan Emery

8:00 am- 8:55 am: Concurrent Session 1

Updike's Poetry

Moderator: Christopher Love (University of Alabama)

—“Taking Updike's Light Verse Seriously,” Edward Allen (University of South Dakota)

—“The Reception of John Updike's Poetry in Georgia,” Inga Zhgenti (International Black Sea University, Republic of Georgia)

8:00 am- 8:55 am: Concurrent Session 2

Updike & His Contemporaries

Moderator: Larry Mazzeno (Emeritus, Alvernia University, Reading, PA)

— “Growth Is Betrayal: John Updike's Work through the Lens of his Peers,”

Townes Fricke (Independent Scholar, Tumwater, WA)

—“Updike's Craft & Process as a Writer: A Comparative Study,” Matthew Koch (Tarrant County College-South, TX)

9:05 am- 10:10 am: Updike's *The Centaur* at Sixty: Panel Discussion

Moderator: Quentin Miller (Suffolk University, MA)

Peter Bailey (St. Lawrence University, NY)

Olga Karasik-Updike (Independent Scholar, Newbury, MA)

Sylvie Mathé (Aix-Marseille University, France)

Quentin Miller (Suffolk University, MA)

Matthew Shipe (Washington University, MO)

10:15 am: Closing Remarks

Conference directors Robert Luscher and Jan Emery

10:30am—Post-Conference Hikes (*only for pre-registrants*)—*weather permitting*

Vehicle #1—Easy 1.4 mile hike to Catalina State Park

Vehicle #2—Intermediate 5-mile hike to Black Sheep Cave



James Plath, President
James Schiff, Vice-President
Peter Bailey, Secretary
Marshall Boswell, Treasurer
Sylvie Mathé, Director
Biljana Dojčinović, Director
Robert Luscher, Director
Matthew Shipe, Director

Conference Participants & Special Guests

Phyllis Adelsberger, Bloomington, IL
Edward Allen (U. of South Dakota, Emeritus), Vermillion, SD
Fran Bailey, Canton, NY
Peter Bailey (St. Lawrence U., Emeritus), Canton, NY
Lupita Barron-Ríos, Chandler, AZ
Marshall Boswell (Rhodes College), Memphis, TN
Biljana Dojčinović (U. of Belgrade), Belgrade, Republic of Serbia
Jan Emery, Tucson, AZ
Jim Emery, Tucson, AZ
Carla Alexandra Ferreira (Federal U. of São Carlos), São Carlos, Brazil
Ava Finley, Tumwater, WA
Stine Fricke, Tumwater, WA
Townes Fricke, Tumwater, WA
Nemanja Glintić (Guangdong U. of Foreign Studies), Guangdong, China
Rebecca Ihlenfeldt, Rehrersburg, PA
Olga Karasik-Updike, Newbury, MA
Jeffrey Kern, Rockport, MA
Michael Kline, Rehrersburg, PA
Matthew Koch (Tarrant County College-South), Dallas, TX
Heather Levy (Western Connecticut State U.), Danbury, CT
Christopher Love (U. of Alabama), Tuscaloosa, AL
Diana Luscher, Phoenix, AZ
Robert Luscher (U. of Nebraska-Kearney, Emeritus), Phoenix, AZ
Sylvie Mathé (Aix-Marseille U., Emerita) Aix-en-Provence, France
Larry Mazzeno (Alvernia U., Emeritus), Arvada, CO
Joe McDade (Houston Community College), Houston, TX
Quentin Miller (Suffolk U.), Boston, MA

Shabir Hussain Mirza (Gov't College for Women), Kashmir, India
Takashi Nakatani (Yokohama City U.), Tokyo, Japan
Marianne Nichols, Skokie, IL
Declan Norton, Washington, D.C.
Sue Norton (Technological U. Dublin), Dublin, Ireland
Karla Anderson Olterman, Marietta, GA
Jim Plath (Illinois Wesleyan U.), Bloomington, IL
Zarina Plath, Bloomington, IL
Alberto Ríos (Arizona State U.), Chandler, AZ
Saraya Rogers, Mountain Home, AR
Jim Schiff (U. of Cincinnati), Cincinnati, OH
Pradipta Sengupta (M.U.C. Women's College), West Bengal, India
Matthew Shipe (Washington U.), St. Louis, MO
Michael Updike, Newbury, MA
Miranda Updike, Rockport, MA
Inga Zhgenti (International Black Sea U.), Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia
Lang Zimmerman, Mountain Home, AR

Special Thanks

Phyllis Adelsberger, Bloomington, IL
Christopher Atkins, Embassy Suites Tucson Paloma Village
Nina Corson, Downtown Campus Vice-President, Pima Community College
Monika Davis, Embassy Suites Tucson Paloma Village
Jim Emery, Tucson, AZ
Marcy Euler, President & CEO, Pima Foundation
Mike Kline, Rehrersburg, PA
Diana Luscher, Phoenix, AZ
Rebecca Rhodes, Blue Flower Arts, LLC
Katrina Welsh, Embassy Suites Tucson Paloma Village