

Poet Jayne Benjulian to Present Writing Workshops at The Foundry

By John Parker



Poet and essayist Jayne Benjulian.
Photo courtesy of Jayne Benjulian

Poet and essayist Jayne Benjulian will present two writing workshops, both programs of the Berkshire Writers Project, at The Foundry this fall. The Foundry (profiled in our May 2019 issue) is the new year-round performing and visual arts venue established by Amy Brentano in the former Diana Felber Gallery at 2 Harris Street in West Stockbridge.

Jayne resides in West Stockbridge and has lived in the Berkshires since 2015. She is a published poet, author of *Five Sextillion Atoms* (Saddle Road Press, 2016), and her poems and essays appear in many literary and performance journals. She also offers developmental and copy editing and teaches the writing and performance of poetry. Jayne previously lived on the West Coast and served as chief speechwriter for Apple, as director of new play development at Magic Theatre in San Francisco, and as an investigator for the public defender in King County, Washington. Jayne currently serves as the chair of the library trustees for the West Stockbridge Public Library.

Jayne says she is “especially drawn to the lives of artists and their creative process.” She appreciates the “deep rich texture of the arts” and the community of artists she found here in the Berkshires. She is excited to be able to work with The Foundry, a local space where creative people are engaged year round in making “dangerous art”—that is, art that is provocative and asks audiences to question their assumptions.

The first workshop, “Writing & Performing the Monologue,” will be held Friday mornings, September 6 to October 4, 9 a.m. to noon. Jayne describes the art of the monologue as “accessing an interior life, and giving voice to that life in a way that an audience can believe in it.” Monologues can take the form of a speaker “unraveling the thoughts of her own mind to herself,” addressing another character, or addressing an audience. Workshop participants will read, listen to, and practice three types of monologues, write and revise (with guidance) their monologue, and then rehearse and perform their work for a friendly audience on the evening of October 4.

The “Poetry Workshop,” will be held Friday mornings, October 18 to November 22, 9 a.m. to noon, and is “designed for writers who want to understand more deeply how to make art of their feelings.” Jayne says the workshop will focus on writing and the “critical art of revising,” working with “voice, language, and structure, using as models examples of master poems in their draft and revised forms.” There will be a public reading of works in progress at The Foundry.


For more information and registration, see <https://jaynebenjulian.com/home/events/>.

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