

Writing From Your Threshold with Gregory Orr

One of the most powerful promises poetry extends toward us as writers is that it will help us to order the disorder of our experience, be that experience subjective and emotional or objective and experiential (or both). We bring to poetry our disorder, be it joyous or catastrophic, and poetry responds by offering its primordial ordering powers (story, symbol, incantation) as a means of shaping our disorder. The goal is not to abolish disorder but to create that dynamic of disorder and order that characterizes the most lively poems and also represents a true picture of how we live in the world.



Some of the most engaging poems, for readers and writers, come into being when the poet has positioned himself or herself on the threshold-- that place where the disorder of experience, emotion, or memory meets the primordial ordering powers of poetry. In a series of exercises, we'll work to discover the nature of our own personal threshold and explore the gratifications of writing from that dynamic location. Participants are invited to send 2 poems in advance of the workshop for review, and I will send advance reading along with a writing assignment to prepare for the work we will accomplish together.

The workshop is August 30 from 1-4 PM. Cost: \$100.00. Gregory will also be reading at the Atheneum on the 31st from 2-4 PM. Participants may contact Len Germinara of Spoken Word Nantucket at (774) 836-5035 or E-mail lensir@hotmail.com.

Gregory Orr has taught English at the University of Virginia since 1975. He is the author of nine poetry collections and the recipient of NEA and Guggenheim fellowships. Orr lives in Charlottesville, Va., with his wife, the painter Trisha Orr.

