

## “Architecture of the Novel”

A Yearlong Course in the Book Length Narrative with

Jane Vandenburg

**A book length work of fiction** – be it a novel or a collection of linked stories – often fails to be completed for reasons of its own length: the narrative weight of all its novelistic material so easily defeats a story’s need to feel effortless. Structural problems are, in fact, almost always the reason these good books of ours are never given a chance – either never started or not completed.

This year-long workshop breaks the process down by asking participants to write the story of the story out from start to finish by first writing its events and incidents. What happens, we ask, then answer this in action that is written not in chapters but in discrete scenes or episodes. Episodes can be written in any order: we need to know a story’s ending in order to get at its beginning. Story comes first. We must know the story before we can weave it into the Plot that it very naturally wants to be.

This course is modeled after a low-residency MFA program, beginning and ending with a one-week workshop at Summer Fishtrap, 2010 and 2011. The group will also convene at the midpoint for a long weekend in January 2011. The first Fishtrap year-long course started in the summer of 2008: all eight participants completed the year of work, including four who left the second summer session with a book-length draft in hand.

Between workshops participants correspond with the instructor individually, each delivering a packet of from 25 to 30 new pages in hardcopy per month for critique. Each then participates in a once or twice monthly telephone conference that offers critique and encouragement, as well as discussion of ways around individual problems.



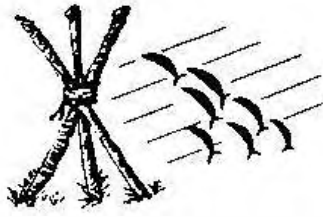
Enrollment is limited to eight participants. Previous publication credits are not required. Each applicant will submit a manuscript (up to 20 pages, double-spaced) that may or may not be related to the book-length project. Each applicant should also submit a statement (up to 5 pages) that outlines his or her idea for the project, as well as a plan for putting together the time that the book will need.

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**Jane Vandenburg** is the author of two critically acclaimed novels, *Failure to Zigzag* and *The Physics of Sunset*, as well as the memoir, *A Pocket History of Sex in the 20th Century*. Her book on the craft of writing the longer narrative, *Architecture of the Novel: A Writer’s Handbook (Plot, Story and the Mechanics of Narrative Time)*, will appear in June 2010.

Her fiction, nonfiction and criticism has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *L.A. Times*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Boston Globe*, and other publications. She is the winner of the Katherine Anne Porter Prize for Fiction and has taught writing at University of California, Davis, Georgetown and the George Washington University. She is an upcoming Djerassi Fellow and will be Writer-in-Residence at St. Mary’s College in Moraga, California, for the spring term of 2010.





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This yearlong course will start on Sunday, July 11, 2010 at Summer Fishtrap at Wallowa Lake, Oregon. Participants will join Jane Vandenburg daily during the workshop week, and will enjoy all of the activities available to other Summer Fishtrappers, including all Gathering events, which start on Thursday. Summer Fishtrap concludes on Sunday, July 18. For more information about Summer Fishtrap, please visit our website at [www.fishtrap.org](http://www.fishtrap.org).

The entire workshop group will convene for a long weekend (five days, four nights) session in January 2011. The place will be determined at a later date. It may be in Portland, the San Francisco Bay area, or elsewhere, depending on a consensus of participants and their geographical distribution.

The course will conclude with a weeklong return visit to Summer Fishtrap in 2011, which will start on Sunday, July 10, 2011.

Between these workshops participants will correspond with the instructor individually, each sending 25 to 30 new pages per month for critique and discussion.

Prospective participants must submit a manuscript (up to 20 pages, double-spaced) that can be but does not have to be an excerpt from a book-length project, and a statement (up to 5 pages) that outlines his or her idea for the project, as well as a plan for putting together the time that the book will need. A \$25 non-refundable reading fee must accompany this proposal. The deadline for manuscript submissions is May 1, 2010. All applicants, whether accepted or not, will be notified by May 15, 2010. Electronic submissions are preferred. Email them to [director@fishtrap.org](mailto:director@fishtrap.org). To pay the reading fee, go to [www.fishtrap.org](http://www.fishtrap.org) and choose “Make a Payment.” We will reply to your email submission to confirm receipt. Hardcopy submissions are acceptable, and should be mailed, with payment, to Fishtrap, PO Box 38, Enterprise, OR 97828.

The course tuition of \$6,000 includes:

- \* All activities and meals at Summer Fishtrap 2010 and Summer Fishtrap 2011
- \* All activities, meals, and lodging at the January meeting
- \* All individual instruction with Jane Vandenburg during the course

Tuition does NOT include:

- \* Lodging at Summer Fishtrap 2010 or Summer Fishtrap 2011
- \* Travel to and from Summer Fishtrap or the January meeting
- \* Materials or postage expenses

Tuition is payable either in monthly installments of \$500 for 12 months, starting June 15, 2010, or in a lump sum by June 15, 2010, in which case a \$500 discount will be granted.

