

Dramatists Guild Conference  
Thursday, July 16, 2015  
4:00 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

**USING THE SENSES:  
CHARACTER AND STORY CREATION**

hands-on workshop

Presenters:

Debbie Bolsky  
Robin Byrd  
Laurel Wetzork

Two optional after-hours events

Friday, July 17

8:00 pm to 8:50 pm: Microreads  
and  
9:00 pm to 9:50 pm:  
Readings from "Using the Senses" workshop

All information presented herein is for educational purposes

we support these organizations



We actively support the goals of the LA Female Playwrights Initiative, to ensure that women playwrights are fairly represented on stages in the Greater Los Angeles area.

## Presenters Biographies

### **Debbie Bolsky**

Debbie Bolsky is a playwright and screenwriter whose award-winning work consists of over eleven stage plays and screenplays. Her stage play *Biking With Andrew Scott* enjoyed a successful run in Los Angeles in 2008. She is currently immersed in her screenplay *The Umpire Has No Balls* as well as the rewrite of her stage play *Ashes to Ashes* and is in the early development stages of two other plays *Three Sides* and *Bringing a Urine Sample to Hitler and Other Stories of My Crazy Mother*.

Debbie's experience is multi-faceted, having worked as Associate Producer on Laurel Wetzork's independent film, *Rogues*, as Executive Producer on Katie Rogers' documentary, *Carless In L.A.*, and at Columbia Pictures in motion picture media advertising and marketing for over 16 years and through nine regimes. Debbie successfully planned and implemented media strategies for over 400 films including such diverse releases as; *Men in Black*, *Airforce One*, *As Good As It Gets*, *My Best Friend's Wedding*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Ghostbusters*, *The Last Emperor*, *When Harry Met Sally*, *A Few Good Men*, *A League of Their Own*, and many more.

Debbie is also a contributor and associated with the Los Angeles Female Playwrights Initiative (LAFPI), the International Centre for Women Playwrights (ICWP), and is also a member of the Dramatists Guild, and Film Independent.

[www.dbolskywriter.com](http://www.dbolskywriter.com)

### **Robin Byrd**

Robin Byrd is a playwright, poet, screenwriter and actor. A Midwestern voice residing in southern California, Byrd likes to incorporate authentic regional flavor in her work. Growing up in Indianapolis (sometimes referred to as the 'northernmost southern city') attributes to the playwright's affinity toward southern themes and language in some of her pieces. Her work also deals with things of the spirit; she is known for sifting through memories and ghosts and other intangible things for her stories. Byrd has studied acting under Kim Fields and Ben Harney (Tony Award winner for "*Dreamgirls*") to enhance her voice as a writer.

Her newest plays include *Fiddlin' on the Mountaintop* (an expanding of her monodrama *Me, My Fiddle, An' Momma*) and *Sweet Lorraine's Bag of Waters*. The playwright's work has been read and produced in Los Angeles as well as read in Nebraska, Maine, North Carolina and Washington D.C. Byrd has performed *Me, My Fiddle, An' Momma* in Los Angeles; the piece was also read at the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual SWAN Day event in Portland, Maine in March of 2008. Her plays *Tennessee Songbird* and *Dream Catcher* have won "Best Concurrent Play Lab Script at the 2008 Great Plains Theatre Conference" and been selected as a semi-finalist for the 2008 O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, respectively. Her poetry has been read in venues in Los Angeles and Indiana and has been published in two *International Library of Poetry* books.

The playwright is a member of The Dramatists Guild of America, Inc., the Theatre Communications Group (TCP), the Alliance of Los Angeles Playwrights, and the American Film Institute from which she holds a certificate in screenwriting, The Edward Albee Society and the Academy of American Poets. The playwright is also blog editor for the LAFPI and a member of Native Women Writers (at the Autry).

[www.ladybyrdcreations.com](http://www.ladybyrdcreations.com)

## Laurel Wetzork

Laurel divides her time between theatre and film projects as a director, writer, and producer. Her historical WWII play, *Blueprint for Paradise*, was a semi-finalist in the 2015 O'Neill National Playwrights Conference. Other plays include, *Last Dance at the Raffles Hotel, or the Golden Lion*, another WWII play, set in Singapore; *The Critic*, a one-act play about two old hoofers who confront an especially caustic theatre critic; *Icebreaker*, a screwball comedy set aboard a cruise ship in the Antarctic; *Devil Inside*, about schizophrenia, and *Levels*, a play showing the levels of domestic abuse and the possibility of healing.

In June 2015, Laurel and four other female playwrights had a successful (sold out!) run at the Hollywood Fringe Festival with their play: *5 SIRENS: Beware of Rocks!* The show was five 10-minute plays about miscommunication and the longing for connection. Laurel was the main producer for the show. In December 2014, Laurel directed a long version music video for musician/singer Caron Tate, and while at USC, co-produced a 30-minute film *SHADOW*, by Autumn McAlpin.

Laurel graduated with highest honors from the University of Southern California (USC) with a Master of Professional Writing (MPW) degree (stage and screen concentration) in May 2014. For the 2103-14 year, she was the Stage and Screenplay Editor for the *Southern California Review*, the literary journal for USC's MPW program. She increased the submission rate by 1000%. While at the MPW program, she studied with such professionals as Prince Gomolvilas, Jon Robin Baitz, Tim Kirkman, Dinah Lenney, Michael Price (*The Simpsons*), Mark Richard (*Hell on Wheels*), Natalie Chaidez (*12 Monkeys TV series*), Brighde Mullins, and Sandra Tsing Loh. She also graduated with a BA from USC's film school (highest honors); Her SAG experimental feature film *Rogues*, was featured at four of the top 20 U.S. film festivals.

Laurel is actively involved with the LAFPI, where she volunteers as the editor for the Women at Work Onstage page, is a member of the Dramatists Guild, TCG, and is a member of ICWP. Laurel has also been an adjunct instructor in Santa Barbara County (film and TV production, film history, and screenwriting) and won awards for her artwork.

[www.mojewetzorkstudios.com](http://www.mojewetzorkstudios.com)