



For further information and interviews, contact:
Tyler Perry, Communications & Marketing
press@bentwriting.com
206.353.8607

MISSION

- Promoting and encouraging written and spoken word among LGBTIQTS people and in our community, since 2000.

HISTORY

- To date, Bent Writing Institute is the only queer arts organization of its kind in the nation.
- Founded in the living room of Tara Hardy in August 2000, prompted by a longing for a community of queer writers in Seattle.
- The first class was attended by 15 people - from just one flyer posted in town.
- In 2001, Bent grew to 2 full classes, and then 5 full classes in 2002, at which point Tara quit her 'day job' as a social worker in order to devote her efforts full-time to Bent.
- To date, over 300 students have attended Bent classes.
- August 2003, Bent opened the doors to its first official classroom and office space, at 12th and Pike on Capitol Hill.
- In 2004, Bent officially became a 501(c)3 organization.
- August 2004, Bent moved to 12th and Terrace for a wheelchair accessible space.
- October 2004, Bent successfully held its first annual fundraiser "Homo-coming," with an energized afternoon football game between the 'jocks' and the 'poets', and a packed evening homo-coming dance, honoring queer community activists in the 'royal court'.
- April 2005, Bent applied for and received a Pride Foundation grant.
- October 2005, Bent held its second annual Homo-coming fundraiser.
- May 2005, with growing student rolls, Bent moved to its current location at 1115 E. Pike St., within the LGBT Center, on Capitol Hill.

MENTOR SHOWCASES

- Annually, Bent produces a showcase of current student talent - which also serves as an opportunity to honor and highlight our queer writing mentors. These are two-night events, with 20-30 students each night performing with a featured mentor.
- As of October 2005, Bent has had four Mentor Showcases. The first showcase took place in June 2003; the second soon followed in January 2004, and the third in August 2004. These first three were at the Re-Bar in downtown Seattle, with standing-room-only crowds and growing student rolls.
- In these prior showcases, Bent honored inter/nationally renowned queer writers and mentors: Justin Chin, Michelle Tea, Ivan Coyote, and Sini Anderson.
- In 2005, Bent received an unnamed donation to bring Bent to a larger venue - in order to accommodate the growing audiences. The fourth showcase took place at the Broadway Performance Hall. Over the two nights, we honored Juba Kalamka and Buddy Wakefield, and packed the house at just under 300 each night.

1115 east pike st. seattle, washington 98122 phone: 206.860.3035

e-mail: info@bentwriting.com web: www.bentwriting.com goodies: www.cafepress.com/bentwriting



SYLLABUS

- Weekly classes in poetry, fiction, memoir, performance poetry, and more
- For beginning to seasoned writers, in a low-impact, high-support environment that encourages risk and growth
- 2-hour classes, 4-week cycles, on Monday through Thursday evenings
- Sliding scale, starting at \$75 (and \$125 for fiction classes)
- Find us at: www.bentwriting.com
- Goodies and products can be found at: www.cafepress.com/bentwriting

THE COLLECTIVE

- Students of Bent are, well, bent. Students include: slam poets, queer orators, a syndicated columnist, published writers, original Bent members, a documentarian, Seattle and national activists, and founders and members of other artistic collectives. They have gone on to enter graduate schools in writing and other programs; to have work published in various local and national journals; to begin production companies; to tour the West Coast; consistently feature at poetry venues; and to simply get their 'sea-legs' before entering the waters of the writing world.
- Bent students are well sought after in the Seattle area. To date, students have performed regularly at and won slam competitions, provided entertainment at local festivals, brought down the house at openings and special events of local organizations, contributed to movements on college campuses and in local communities, taken their show on the road and brought Bent to neighboring communities and states, held audiences captivated at Pride and QueerFest in Seattle, and much, much more.

TARA HARDY, FOUNDER and DIRECTOR OF ART AND EDUCATION

- Tara Hardy is the femme dyke working class Seattle Poet Populist and 2002 Seattle Poetry Grand Slam champion. She is the founder and director of Bent, the Seattle queer writers institute, where she has been teaching and mentoring queer artists for over five years. She has been seen on "The Rolling Thunder Democracy Tour," "Strombolis Island of Donkeys and Dolls Tour," the "All Girl, All Word Tour," and can be found in *Without a Net* out on Seal Press. She holds a MFA in Creative Writing and a Masters in Social Work.

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