For Immediate Release
Contact: Layne Nelson
Director Extended Studies
(970)943-2885
lnelson@western.edu

NEWS

Gunnison, Colorado 81231

WESTERN STATE COLORADO UNIVERSITY OFFERS SUMMER POETRY INTENSIVES

Western's MFA in Creative Writing is offering a series of intensive poetry workshops, July 15-27. The intensives are open to anyone with or without an undergraduate degree.

There are three intensives: "Meter in English," "Poetry in Performance," and "Poetry and Music." The intensives are taught by acclaimed poets and WSCU MFA Poetry faculty David J. Rothman, David Yezzi and Ernest Hilbert.

"Meter in English," taught by MFA Poetry Concentration Director David J. Rothman, offers students the basic understanding of how meter and rhythm work in the English poetic line, along with an outline of how this aspect of craft came to be as it is. Students read and analyze brief passages of verse in every major metrical form that has developed over the course of the history of English poetry, ending with a study of free verse forms. Students also write exercises in all the major metrical forms and practice scansion of their own poems. Rothman has published five books of poems, most recently *Part of the Darkness* (Entasis Press, 2013) and *The Book of Catapults* (Whiter Violet Press, 2013). He also teaches at Lighthouse Writers Workshop of Denver and the University of Colorado at Boulder. A former Finalist for the Colorado Book Award, he is Poet in Residence at Colorado Public Radio and the Editor of a new journal of poetry and criticism, *Don't Just Sit There*. His poetry and essays have appeared in hundreds of journals.

"Poetry in Performance," taught by MFA Professor David Yezzi, is a hands-on performance workshop. Yezzi is a professional poet with Equity acting experience and conservatory training from Carnegie Mellon. His course combines literary and theatrical practice to examine what makes a dramatic reading, recitation, or lecture compelling, clear, and resonant. Through textual analysis, vocal technique, and group discussion and critique, students will create a pliant and powerful performance style to best serve their work. Students will enhance their ability to communicate with an audience, with marked improvement in both confidence and execution. Yezzi (poet, actor, playwright) is a founding member of San Francisco's Thick Description theater company, and his Off-Broadway credits include *The Grand Guignol* (Playhouse 91). Off-Off-Broadway he has appeared in *Parlor Problems* (St. Mark's Church), *Rich White Farmers* (Ohio Theater), *Man, Oh Man Ray!* (St. Mark's Church), all under the direction of Robert Cucuzza; *Drums in the Night* (Ralph Lee, director), *Dog Spelled Backwards* (The Kitchen), and *Cafe Not So Vivaldi* (Rapp Arts Center). He also has many regional credits. His dramatic writing includes the verse dramas *On the Rocks* (Verse Theater Manhattan/Bowery Poetry Club, 2007), *Dirty Dan & Other Travesties* (Verse Theater Manhattan/Bowery Poetry Club, 2010), *Schnauzer* (Verse Theater Manhattan, Fall 2012), the libretto for David Conte's opera *Firebird Motel* (The Thick House, 2003), and, forthcoming, the libretto for Cyril Deaconoff's *The Last Tycoon* (West Bay Opera, 2012). A former the director of the Unterberg Poetry Center of the 92nd Street Y, his books of poetry include *The Hidden Model* (TriQuarterly, 2003)

and *Azores* (Swallow Press, 2008), a *Slate* magazine best book of the year. He is the editor of *The Swallow Anthology of New American Poets*, with a foreword by J. D. McClatchy, and executive editor of *The New Criterion*.

In "Poetry and Music," taught by Visiting MFA Professor Ernest Hilbert, students learn the practical art of the opera libretto. Students will benefit from short readings on the theory and practice of writing words for music and classroom colloquia. They will also meet with a composer via Skype and take part in an ongoing workshop to develop a one-act opera scenario and libretto of their own! Hilbert's latest evening-length epic opera with composer Stella Sung, *The Red Silk Thread*, set in the court of Kublai Khan, was recently performed at the Michigan Opera Studio and will receive its grand premiere in 2014 at the Curtis M. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Florida. His second book of poems, *All of You on the Good Earth*, recently appeared from Red Hen Press.

The cost for the two-week intensive is $295, which includes registration for the Writing the Rockies Conference as part of the program. Complete details of the program can be viewed at www.western.edu/mfa and at www.formalversemfa.org.

To register for the workshop, download a registration form at www.western.edu/mfa, call Western Extended University Studies at (970) 943-2885, or contact Poetry Concentration Director David J. Rothman at drothman@western.edu and MFA Director Mark Todd at mtodd@western.edu.

END