

Suzanne Fox: Teaching Information for Gardens and Garden Clubs

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Garden-Themed Workshops by Suzanne Fox

Suzanne designs and offers unique courses that meld writing and literature with garden settings and inspirations. All are customized to a given host venue's focus and facility and all can be adapted to a variety of lengths, schedules, and sizes. Her garden-themed classes are summarized briefly below.

 **Inspiration from the Garden: Writers Weekend Retreat.** Treat yourself to two days of writing—and a respite from the demands of everyday life—in a serene and inspiring garden setting. This event is for writers of all genres and skill levels who want to immerse themselves in their writing or just recharge their creative batteries. Multi-published author and writing teacher Suzanne Fox will lead the group, offering a series of discussions, brief readings and exercises designed to give structure to the weekend and energize our work. You choose how many of the group sessions you'll attend, ensuring that you also have plenty of time to write, revise, and reflect on your own. Your tuition includes the Writers Weekend Retreat notebook of materials, all group sessions, and a half-hour private conference with Suzanne. *Host venues: please note that the instructor also makes herself available for an optional Saturday evening dinner with participants off-site and/or a reading and reception Friday evening if desired by the venue.*

 **Writing Your Garden: Creating A Garden Journal.** For centuries, people have kept journals on the delights and despairs of creating their personal gardens. This hands-on exploration of the garden journal will inspire your creativity, hone your writing skills, and enhance your awareness of the garden's subtle beauties. We'll read excerpts from four very different published garden journals to explore how each writer brought their gardening to life on the page. We'll also do some informal writing of our own in our garden setting. We'll close the day with a glimpse at how contemporary journalers are using tools like digital photography and blogging formats to enrich their garden writings.

 **Gardening Obsessions Literary Seminar.** Gardens and the plants that grow in them can balance the soul—or unbalance it. In this seminar, we celebrate a trio of rich and thought-provoking books about the obsessions that plants inspire: Anna Pavord's *The Tulip*, Susan Orleans' *The Orchid Thief*, and Aurelia Scott's *Otherwise Normal People*, the latter of which explores the world of competitive rose exhibitions. Our discussion will explore the books both as distinctive, stylish literary works and as stories about both the best and worst of human nature. Whether you are a reader, a gardener, or both, you'll come away with a fresh perspective on both plants and literature. *Host venues: please note that book list may change based on your preferences and/or book availability.*

 **Novelists on the Garden Literary Seminar.** This seminar explores the art of the garden and the craft of fiction at once. Three delightfully different novels inspired by gardens provide the basis for our exploration: Eva Figes' *Light*, a luminous and lyrical evocation of Monet in his great garden at Giverny; Bonnie Abbott's *Radical Prunings*, a comic novel in the form of a gardening advice column; and Kamala Nair's *A Girl in the Garden*, which melds a rich evocation of traditional India with mystery centered on a secret garden. Author and teacher Suzanne Fox leads a discussion of the forms and themes of these books that will intrigue lovers of gardens and reading alike. *Host venues: please note book list may change based on your preferences and/or book availability.*

🌀 The She-Ro in the Garden: A Woman Artist’s Journey of Creative Rebirths. This extraordinary multi-disciplinary workshop adapts the template of the “hero’s journey” to contemporary female realities to understand the arc of creative lives from a transformative new perspective. By understanding our personal stories as archetypal journeys into the unknown and back, we are better able to embrace the uniqueness of our gift, survive setbacks and self-doubt, and claim the power each of us has to matter in the world. Through the dialogue, reflection, readings, art-making and journaling we share in our time together, we redefine the notion of the female hero—the “she-ro”—in a way that encompasses apparently *un*-heroic figures—including, potentially, ourselves. The garden setting for our time together provides inspiration, relaxation, and room for reflection. *Please note that this class as described here is for women only and requires a minimum of two seven-hour days of workshop time. However, this same class can be adapted to a seminar format and/or shorter lengths of time at a venue’s request.*



Teaching Support from Suzanne Fox

As a writer whose work is profoundly inspired by place and landscape, Suzanne is a passionate believer in the benefits that gardens, both public and private, provide to our communities. Her goal as a teacher is to support the work of the host venue on all levels, from excellence of instruction to mission alignment, staff convenience, and financial benefit.

🌀 Long-term teamwork. While Suzanne is happy to conduct a single class, talk, or event for a venue if requested, her preference is always to work towards an ongoing relationship with the organizations that offer her classes to create the momentum, visibility, synergy and ease such partnership can offer.

🌀 Flexibility. Need to “tweak” class details such as length, timing, or focus to make it work for your organization? Suzanne is glad to adapt her offerings so that each fits perfectly for the hosting venue. She is also delighted to custom-design a workshop for your organization; email suzanne@bookstrategy.com for more information on this option.

🌀 Insightful, inspiring and entertaining instruction. No amount of class support is effective if the class itself is not strong. As the testimonials included in this packet prove, Suzanne teaches topics and themes she loves with insight and passion. Her deep knowledge of her subjects, skill at guiding class dialogue, vivid sense of humor and lively energy all make her classes fun, fruitful, and even transformative.

🌀 Course workbooks. All of Suzanne’s offerings are taught using her own detailed workbooks, which provide structure during the course and send participants home with a rich source of further exploration. Venues may duplicate workbook materials themselves as part of the class tuition or add a small (\$10 or less) materials fee and have Suzanne bring them herself. Workbook covers can be personalized with a venue’s name, address, and/or other information if desired.

🌀 Promotional, media, and press support. Suzanne works with venues to help provide materials such as postcards, flyers, and a press kit (including among other items a detailed “Q and A” that makes writing articles easy for press contacts) that can be adapted and used by the venue to get news of her classes out. She is also glad to guest-post on a venue’s blog; conduct media interviews; attend venue events to meet both staff and prospective students; and do whatever else is requested to help promote her classes and the venues that sponsor them. Naturally, all of the classes she teaches are publicized, with venue links and information, on her own websites and blogs as well; see “About Suzanne” for a listing of these links.

🌀 Financial partnership. Suzanne is open to working with venues under the financial arrangement they prefer, whether it be a flat fee or a share of tuition revenue. As noted above, her goal is always to create an offering that is financially profitable for the hosting venue as well as for her own business.

About Suzanne Fox

Suzanne Fox is a published author in fiction, nonfiction, and poetry who speaks and teaches on themes including writing, literature, creativity, landscapes and gardens, the visual arts, and the shape of women's lives.

Suzanne graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Douglass College, earning highest honors with a double major in Art History and English. She completed honors work in art history under special arrangement with Princeton University, worked in both the curatorial and education departments of the Rutgers Art Museum, received a New Jersey Women's Club award, and was selected for the highly competitive Metropolitan Museum of Art Internship in 1976.

Suzanne's professional life began in the business world, where she wrote investment and marketing materials for organizations including Blyth Eastman Dillon PaineWebber, Dean Witter Reynolds, Citibank, and Oppenheimer Mutual Funds. Working in collaboration with graphic designers to invent unique brochures, manuals, and books, she won a Direct Mail Marketing Award among other honors.

In the late 1980s, Suzanne left the corporate world to pursue her first love, creative writing. She received her MFA degree in Writing from the prestigious Columbia University School of the Arts, winning a Writing Fellowship and awards from the Benjamin Burns Foundation and the Academy of American Poets, among others. Upon her graduation in 1990, she was invited to become the School's first centralized admissions director, designing and managing the process by which over 1,500 applications each year were evaluated by faculty in film, theater, writing and visual arts.

Since leaving Columbia, she has acted as a consulting editor, writer and "book doctor" for professional clients including designer Diane von Furstenberg, career expert Rhonda Ormont, and interior designer Charlotte Moss; for organizations including the YMCA's national Arts and Humanities Office, the National Poetry Series, and the Mayor's Office of the City of New York; and for a variety of private clients.

Published by Simon & Schuster in 1997, Suzanne's first book, the memoir *Home Life: A Journey of Rooms and Recollections*, was excerpted in *Glamour* magazine, featured in *Elle* and *Mirabella*, and selected as an Editor's Choice book by the *Chicago Tribune*.

Suzanne's popular fiction has been published by Berkley Penguin Putnam (pen name Suzanne Judson) and Harlequin Enterprises (pen name Suzanne Scott), while her essays and poems have been published in *American Letters and Commentary*, *Parnassus: Poetry in Review*, *Poetry Northwest*, and the Scribners' *British Writers* biography and criticism series.

Suzanne reviews books for *Publishers' Weekly*, the book industry's leading journal, and has been selected for residencies at the Yaddo, Atlantic Center for the Arts, and Vermont Studio Center artists' colonies.

In 2002, she left her New York apartment and clients to spend more time with her parents, both now deceased, in Vero Beach. Suzanne used this experience in her participation in the 2007 Art of Hospice

collaboration between the VNA Hospice and the Vero Beach Museum of Art and in a series of recent small books include *Grief Country: A Meditation on the Landscape of Loss*; *Wearing the D*; and *Not Broken: Poems from the Art of Hospice*.

Suzanne is a gifted and popular speaker who teaches regularly at the Vero Beach Museum of Art and the Lotus Center in Vero Beach, Florida. Articles on Suzanne and her work have appeared in *Vero Beach Magazine*, *Vero Beach 32966*, and the *AARP Newsletter*.

Suzanne's current works in progress, like her existing books, are inspired by homes and landscapes. She is currently working on a literary novel set in the nineteenth century, inspired by a British home now owned by the National Trust. In addition, she is writing a memoir that focuses on her parents' possessions and the complex journey of sorting them after her parents' death. When not writing or teaching, she enjoys yoga, blogging, jewelry design and crafting, altered book arts, spending time outdoors, visiting museums and gardens, and, of course, reading.



For more information on Suzanne, her books, and her upcoming classes, please visit www.bookstrategy.com. To contact Suzanne regarding teaching or speaking engagements, email suzanne@bookstrategy.com. To read her blogs, visit www.workingwriterwonders.blogspot.com, www.decluttered.creative.blogspot.com; and www.griefglow.blogspot.com

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Praise for Suzanne Fox

The comments below respond to Suzanne’s speaking, teaching, book consulting, and creativity coaching. Titles of individuals quoted are as of the time they provided their testimonial, and may in some cases have changed since the comment was offered.

☞ Through writing, consulting, and speaking, Suzanne Fox helps people weave together the fragments of life, including the broken, hidden, lost or undiscovered pieces, into stories of wholeness that heal. Her own journey serves as testimony to living a life guided by one’s heart and soul, an adventure filled with integrity and passion. An encounter with Suzanne in any form—through speech, story, or conversation—is always filled with laughter. Her work sharpens one’s determination to invent—and reinvent—both a life and a body of work that are creative, coherent, and compelling. —*Dr. Elizabeth Mount, president, Capacity Works*

☞ Suzanne Fox is a natural and gifted teacher. I am among a growing group of people who have become serious fans of Suzanne’s teaching: anytime she offers a class, I want to attend, regardless of the topic. I always learn something new. Her handouts are packed with useful information and resources. But the best thing about her classes are that she presents topics in a way that makes you think differently about something you thought you knew. —*C.J. Madigan, owner, Shoebox Stories, and author, Behind the Studio Door*

☞ Suzanne’s workshops give such a charge of energy! At the first presentation of hers I went to, I left feeling more in touch with my creativity than I had in years, and ready to take on the world. Suzanne has immense talent as a speaker. She pulls people into her fiery, thoughtful visions, and brings them closer to their own. —*Abby Walters, President, Flying Turtle Enterprises*

☞ Suzanne Fox is a dynamic writer, editor, and coach, and a wonderful human being. Her insight into human language and psychology is deep, and her skill in assisting others to achieve their goals is vast. Working with Suzanne is a pleasure and a great gift. —*Jeremy Geffen, author of The Journey Through Cancer*

☞ In both short-format and day-long intensive sessions, Suzanne offered a rich, entertaining, informative and valuable presentation that helped me take my own work from high-potential to publishable. I credit Suzanne’s insights for many of the improvements in my novels and vital help at the beginnings of what has become a rewarding and, I’m pleased to say, successful career. —*Roxanne St. Claire, New York Times bestselling author, winner of the RITA, Maggie, Daphne du Maurier, and Readers Best Awards*

☞ Your talk was the best we've had in the seven years I've been attending--no faint praise! —*Eleanor Wade, president, American Association of University Women, Vero Beach Chapter*

☞ Suzanne has the knack of solidly nailing the topic in a tight relatable fashion. Healthy doses of humor and wit are sprinkled throughout her workshops. You take away a refreshing sense that you've learned what you came to learn *and* encouragement for more positive growth ahead. —*Cynthia Grabenbauer, director of publicity, Vero Beach Book Center*

🌀 Suzanne is an expert communicator. I have been struck by her ability to relate deftly to a wide array of people with consistently impressive levels of grace, charm, humor, and efficacy. As a speaker, she truly entralls her audience—imparting information and wisdom in a way that makes it easy to grasp and remember. —**Dawn Bailey, (former) director of publicity, Vero Beach Book Center**

🌀 Thank you for the extraordinary job you did presenting at our Teen Writers Workshop. The energy in the room was palpable. Not only were the students enthralled with your personal writing journey, but they were also tremendously excited by your interactive writing exercises. Perhaps the best commentary came from a Sebastian River High School, who appeared on a local television show to discuss her own writing and the workshop. “It’s a thrill to be exposed to professional writers,” she said. “Suzanne Fox is great!” We concur. —**Charlotte Terry and Pam Proctor, directors, Teen Writers Workshop at the Laura (Riding) Jackson Foundation**

🌀 Suzanne Fox’s recent *A Resonant Heart* program at the Center for Spiritual Care was a poignant and moving experience for those who attended and a resounding success for our Center. Through careful planning, meticulous preparation, professional execution and a congenial working style, Suzanne made this event a pleasure for us to offer and a powerful way to share our services with the community. It is a joy to work with Suzanne. —**Carol Ludwig, spiritual director and co-founder, Center for Spiritual Care**

🌀 Suzanne Fox is an energetic, informative, creative teacher of literature and writing. I first met her when I took a one day course on *Jane Eyre* at the Vero Beach Museum of Art. What an enjoyable day of delving into this classic work! Suzanne’s friendly demeanor coupled with her wealth of knowledge combined to make the day an adventure in learning. Since that first day, I have been Suzanne’s student, both in private and group sessions, and she has proven herself to be a teacher of extraordinary talent. Her warm, affirming personality makes each of her students feel special and accepted. —**Sue Holbrook**

🌀 What is especially exciting—to a literary agent, and to readers—about Suzanne Fox’s work is that she is multi-talented. Most writers must confine themselves to one genre. From literary fiction and nonfiction to commercial novels, Suzanne can do it all. —**Wendy Lipkind, founder, Wendy Lipkind Literary Agency**

🌀 Most of us have a limited understanding of poetry that reaches back to high school and all of those “old” and often confusing poems we are required to read. So it was with a certain reluctance that I decided to attend Suzanne’s event, *A Resonant Heart*. I was not only surprised, but actually enthralled. I thoroughly enjoyed the evening, which ended before I knew it. Suzanne is an artist with words when she speaks and when she writes. That evening I truly fell in love with poetry, grasping for the first time its ability to evoke strong emotion in just a few lines. It was like a gourmet meal: I savored every moment. —**Robert Konforti, founder, Konforti Wellness Center**

The comments below were offered by students and speaking audiences on anonymous evaluations.

🌿 What generosity you give your teaching. The day was full of information, and I can't believe the detail and depth of the workbook you sent us home with.

🌿 I especially liked the fact that you never referred to your notes, even when the discussion was most complicated. It's so hard to stay interested when an instructor just reads from her material.

🌿 Both your lecture and the discussion following it were excellent. You have a real gift for articulating concepts, and also for guiding dialogue in a way that is respectful but keeps it on track.

🌿 I loved every moment. Brilliant, inspiring, and above all, fun!

🌿 It was a real treat to take a class that blends writing and the visual arts. I especially loved seeing the connections between the craft of writing and the craft of painting. The writing exercises inspired by the art were wonderful.

🌿 DeCluttering Your Creativity was unique and excellent. It went so far beyond the usual organizational guidance, helping me pinpoint the inner connection between creative blocks and clutter. It assured me that I wasn't alone in struggling with these issues. I'm going home energized and inspired.

🌿 Your program was wonderful: full of information, yet informal and entertaining too. It made my mind wander to all the right (write?) places.

🌿 I can't tell you what an "up" feeling the class today gave me. I can't wait to get started on my writing again. I'm only sorry I didn't find you and your teaching twenty years ago.

🌿 As a lifelong Jane Austen fan, I wasn't sure how much new perspective I would gain from your class, but my uncertainty *wasn't* justified. Your introduction to her work and life showed me how modern it was in many ways, yet also honored the realities of her time. You also helped me see *Pride and Prejudice* in an entirely new and deeper way. Your scholarship is first-rate, and your presentation was lively and never dull.



Selected Speaking/Teaching Clients, Organizations and Venues

- ✿ Vero Beach Museum of Art
- ✿ Metropolitan Museum of Art
 - ✿ Rutgers Art Museum
 - ✿ Vero Beach Book Center
 - ✿ Indian River State College
- ✿ American Association of University Women
 - ✿ New York Institute of Technology
- ✿ Romance Writers of America National Conference
- ✿ Teen Writers Workshop at the Environmental Learning Center
 - ✿ Space Coast Writers Guild
 - ✿ Center for Spiritual Care
- ✿ VNA Hospice of the Treasure Coast
 - ✿ Bay State Hospice
 - ✿ Write by Night LLC
 - ✿ Lifelong Learning Institute
- ✿ Daughters of the American Revolution
 - ✿ The Lotus Center
- ✿ Riverside Theater Benefit Committee



Praise for the Writing of Suzanne Fox

🌀 In *Home Life*, Suzanne Fox has truly found her elegant place of residence as a writer. She brings together memoir and cultural criticism with warmth, humor and sharp self-scrutiny. Fox's domestic metaphor, beautifully contemplated, reflects the many moves of a woman's life that take her from the memorialized houses of childhood to the stark reality of an emotional rental market in which she must finally find herself at home. —**Maureen Howard, author of *Facts of Life among other books and winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award***

🌀 Fox has organized her memories around a witty and beguiling conceit... While some memoirs reek of self-involvement, this one invites the reader in: to her parents' suburban home in New Jersey; to an artistically shabby *pensione* in Paris; to a friend's sun-drenched California guest room where there was, almost literally, a monster hidden. Good writing sometimes comes cheap, but here the writing is lapidary without being overly precious. Welcome and thoughtful as a night-light in a dark entrance hall. —**Booklist**

🌀 *Home Life* is a work of keen passion and intellect, fascinating and obsessive in its desire to bare the souls of the rooms that shape and reveal us. —**LeAnne Schreiber, author of *Midstream and Light Years***

🌀 A spare homage to the mystery and vitality of interior spaces that has all the intimacy of a memoir and all of the inventiveness of an armchair travelogue. —**Elle Magazine**

🌀 Linked yet self-sustaining thematic chapters (Kitchen, Playroom, Sickroom) invite us in, and Fox's sure sense of pacing draws us easily through her life's passage-ways and resting places... Though unsentimental, her memoir serves in part as an elegy to long-gone rooms of the past and the human struggles heating them. —**Kirkus Reviews**

🌀 I read *Home Life* with much pleasure. It's a fine book, highly intelligent and carefully wrought. The prose was delicate yet never effete, precise yet never pedantic. It's self-contained and thoughtful, enamored of the sensuous without succumbing to excess of metaphor or tone. I hope the book reaches the large audience it deserves. —**Herb Leibowitz, editor and publisher of Parnassus: Poetry in Review and author of *Fabricating Lives***

🌀 *Home Life* is a clear, subdued but charming look at life from the midpoint. The author has a sure knack—a sort of homing ability—for finding the details that turn the keys to her unfolding story. —**Daniel Halpern, founder of *Antaeus magazine* and *The Ecco Press*, now an imprint of HarperCollins**

🌀 What a beautiful and unusual book you've made in *Home Life*. It is meticulously constructed, beautifully written, seamless, without a false step. The inner and outer worlds seem to emerge simultaneously on the page. I want to steal lines—and your own line, “something so perfect it seemed tinged with a kind of grief”—expresses the feeling of the book for me. I can't wait to read the next book you create. —**Sylvia Foley, author of *Life in the Air Ocean***