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Katya Sabaroff Taylor Papers

1959-2015

2 boxes (3 linear ft.)

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Read collection overview

Earning a B.A. in Literature from Antioch College and an M.A. in Education from Columbia University, Katya Sabaroff Taylor has worked as a journalist and editor, health educator, women's studies instructor, massage therapist, yoga teacher and workshop facilitator. In 1980 she founded Creative Arts and Healing workshops, classes, and retreats to nurture the link between creativity and the healing process.

The collection features a wide range of Taylor's work, reflecting her life-long love of writing and teaching. Her poetry, essays, and fiction are included along with her memoirs and personal accounts, the collected writings of several classes of prison inmates enrolled in Taylor's creative writing workshops, and the recollections of former members of the Liberation News Service.

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Background on Katya Sabaroff Taylor

Katya on her backyard swing writing in her journal, 2014.

I have always been a writer since I was old enough to hold a pen. I also felt from an early age a desire to relieve suffering in others, to be, without putting a word to it back then, a healer.

I majored in Literature at Antioch College and earned my Masters in Education (in the teaching of English) from Columbia University. I then worked as a journalist in New York City for Liberation News Service (a radical publication which fed news to underground and college papers in the late sixties and seventies),

working to end the war in Vietnam and promoting civil rights, women's liberation, and gay liberation. I always felt that words held power.

I threw myself into the Women's Liberation movement in the 1970s, in Portland, Oregon, working at a women's free health clinic, taking photos of "my sisters," and eventually landed a job in Women's Studies at Portland Community College where I also co-taught a Human Sexuality sequence.

When I was 32, tired of "opposition politics," I changed my name from Nina to Katya, studied massage, passed my state boards, and became a healing touch therapist. Not long after, I founded Creative Arts and Healing, and began offering classes and workshops in writing (Lifestories and Haiku poetry) healing touch, and movement.

When I was 43, I married Thomas Taylor, who does conflict resolution work, and gave birth to daughter Alana, now grown and an architect. We moved to Tallahassee, Florida in 1990 and have lived here ever since.

I've self-published four books (Journal Adventure Guidebook; a fill in the blanks Seedbook; My Haiku Life; and The Wheel of Belonging, (a collection of sermons), and am working on an anthology of inmate writing, Prison Wisdom. I've volunteered in the prisons for two decades, creating anthologies so the inmates could see themselves in print, and know that their words have value. Besides working as a massage therapist for 35 years, I've taught writing to people from all walks of life: children, college students, seniors, artists, social workers, and the dying.

In order to better archive my many manuscripts -- short stories, novellas, poetry and essays -- along with my healing touch, yoga, and creative movement material -- I created Singing Bird Press, and am compiling chapbooks in hard-bound and electronic form to make them available to others.

I have kept a journal for more than 55 years, and will eventually bequeath all 500 plus volumes to UMass, probably when I am in my 80's. I joke that then I will surely be a woman with no secrets.

When not writing or teaching, I enjoy gardening, playing Scrabble, dancing, walking the Gulf beaches, cooking delicious vegetarian meals, frequenting the public library, and dreaming of which manuscript will become my next project.

I was raised by progressive parents who urged me to follow my inner callings and "try to make the world a better place." At the current age of 70, I hope I have done both.

Scope of collection

The collection is comprised almost exclusively of Katya Sabaroff Taylor's writings: poems, essays, fiction, personal accounts and memoirs. Her writing spans nearly her entire lifetime and chronicles her childhood, college years, work as a journalist and editor (Liberation News Service, Richmond Chronicle), her teaching (Women's Studies, Human Sexuality, creative writing and movement workshops and classes), and her lengthy career as a massage therapist.

Even though Taylor is a life-long diarist--she has kept a journal since she was a teenager, her journals are not yet part of the collection. These volumes, numbering more than 500 at the present, will be added to the collection in the future.

Series descriptions

[Series 1. Singing Bird Press Chapbook Editions](#)

1959-2014

1 box

These compilations were put together specifically for archival purposes, to gather together and preserve my "literary legacy" - poems, stories, essays, novellas, etc. Each concludes with a bio statement and a photo taken from the time period in which the writing occurred. Some chapbooks include photos and other graphics, others are primarily text.

[Series 2. Books, Literary Reviews, Miscellaneous Manuscripts](#)

1979-2015

1 box

This series features a wide range of writing from a personal history of childhood and poetry to anthologies, which include the reflections of former members of LNS for a Liberation News Service reunion and the writings of prison inmates who participated in creative writing workshops led by Taylor.

Inventory

Series 1. Singing Bird Press Chapbook Editions
1959-2014
1 box
Poems for a New Millenium
1999 Dec-2000 Jan
Box 1



Inspired by a pen-pal in Hawaii, who was worried about Y2K and what might happen, these poems came out in a rush in about a month's time. These are as close to "channeled poems" as anything I had ever created before. "Come, words, salvage time/circle without end/let me obey you."

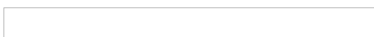
A Dream to Ride On - Selections from My Life as a Poet
2002
Box 1



This first chapbook was created for a local writer's organization when they put out a call for writers to gather and make their books available for sale. At the time I had not yet self-published the four books listed above, so I quickly pulled together a chapbook of some of my favorite poems, from age 11, to age 58 (my then age.) I included one of my collages on the cover. The anthology begins with my first serious poem (Fire), and the second to last poem is written right after 9/11.

Excerpt: What if war and peace turned inside out
And the poet had the key in her hand
That would open all the doors that lock us in...

The Odin Stories - Tales of an Enlightened Cat
2010-2014
Box 1



These tales came about thanks to two of my writer pen-pals. We created a format of 700 word stories, either based on two individually chosen nouns (which became a title, i.e. Tomato Hat) or first phrase, last phrase (the story had to fit between those parameters). Because I have an "enlightened" cat of my own, many of my stories had a feline character. I pulled together all the tales with Odin in them, and voila, this chapbook resulted. Odin (Georgie) appears in the bio picture with his mistress. These stories, like many of mine, gently blur realism and fantasy.

If I Live to Be 100 -and other Mini-Essays
2011-2014
Box 1



This collection, and the 12 that follow, were put together in a single year from manuscripts I had accumulated in file cabinets, boxes, and on my computer hard drive. They represent a lifetime of devotion to the Muse. This particular chapbook is composed of a series of short essays written between 2011 and 2014, for an on-line writing group started by a friend in West Virginia. Since I had all the essays already in electronic form, in my e-mail outbox, it was the simplest to start with. The essays are autobiographical, and make obvious my values. Some are serious, some lighthearted, and they zigzag back and forth in time to different chapters or events in my life.

Beach Typewriter: The Archer Tales
2016
Box 1



Unlike The Greta Tales, 700 word stories that include first phrase/last phrase as givens, this connected set of sixteen episodes all began with the two-noun prompt: Beach and Typewriter. As with The Greta Tales, I became enamored of my characters: Archer, a writer, Regine, a Frenchwoman he meets while at the shore, and Archer's fictional characters George and Wanda, so I included author interviews at the end in order to continue spending time with them. The Archer Tales definitely qualifies as a double love-story, as you shall see. I believe the 700 word structure works beautifully for either a single story, a quartet of stories, or however many episodes the muse tells me to write!

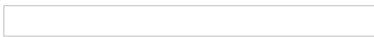
The Book of Changes

2016
Box 1



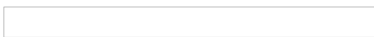
This manuscript, dated 1975, chronicles the life-changing transition of a woman at a spiritual crossroads in her life. A journal keeper since her teens, this testimony contains the transcription of 19 tape recordings of a vigil that led to assuming a new name and a new identity. An I-Ching reading led Nina to assume the nom de plume of Nina Thunderwoman during this transition period. Some of the manuscript was recorded on several islands off the coast of Canada where Nina and 13 other women were on a two week canoe trip. She carried her tape recorder (her oral journal) in a rubber bag to protect it from the elements. The book includes autoharp songs composed on her journey, as well as a magazine article written in the aftermath for a women's magazine.

The Greta Tales
2016
Box 1



This one-of-a-kind experiment began with one 700 word story, set at the foot of Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado, whose main character so appealed to me that I had to write a sequel, then another, then another. The tales were written with the help of a pen-pal who supplied either the opening or closing phrase for each episode, while I wrote the other. When I finished The Tales (episode 34) I missed my cast of characters so much I decided to interview them. Finally, I asked an artist friend to channel the artist in the tales (Norma, Greta's friend) to create five paintings, representing the canvases painted in the course of the story. This includes the cover painting of Greta with her wise friend, the owl. I call these tales a "fable" because, as you see, magic is afoot, and there are plenty of happy endings.

Once in a Blue Moon
2017
Box 1



What constitutes a love story? The range is wide--one can love an inanimate object, for example, and in one of my stories, two inanimate objects do fall in love. Most of these stories however are about the onset of love between humans, at the very beginning of the relationship, when all is tinged with anticipatory radiance: maybe this love will be true love.

The Inheritance
2018
Box 1

The Inheritance, a Singing Bird Press chapbook, is a selection of the author's 700 word short stories, across a span of seven years (2011-2018) written from prompts shared by writing pen pals. The collection is organized in several categories: Five Quartets (four-part linked tales), 21 Singlets (stand alone stories) and one Triplet (a three part story). As in all of Katya's stories, there is a blurring of fact and fancy: in The Visitation she meets her Mom in an old mirror in the attic; in Peace Bottle a nurse helps her patients with a special recipe; in The Old Fountain Pen, an author suffering from writer's block rediscovers the muse.

The World Whispers to Ka: A Writer's Notebook
2018
Box 1

The World Whispers to Ka, A Writer's Notebook, is a collection of prose and poetry: free verse, haiku, acrostics, short stories, fable, journal entries, all of which were originally written by hand in a large lined notebook, always in the company of another person who was writing in their own notebook. Writing by hand is, I feel, a more personal conduit to consciousness, the pen writes what the heart feels. When I started this notebook I had no idea it would become a Singing Bird Press chapbook, but when I had filled it, it said to me, "Why not?" All entries were written between August 2017 and January 2018, including three pieces composed with prison inmates in a writing workshop. The title was born from the poem, Two Roses: "Come Ka, the world whispers / release your secrets / slowly or all at once..."

The Future Café
2018
Box 1

A literary digest of 700-word tales, all written in the same year (2018), a medley of 44, winnowed down from the 125 I produced that year. The stories range from January through December, and are either written from

“two-noun” prompts, or “first-phrase/last phrase,” with ten different pen-pals (their own stories are not included in this collection.) To give you a sense of the contents, here are five two-noun titles: Brain Wagon, Grasshopper Letter (a fable), Jade Laughter, Heart Lamp, and of course the title story The Future Café. As with all my writing, some tales are semi-autobiographical, some pure fiction, and some a merger of fact and fancy. The watercolor paintings on the covers of this chapbook and The Brambleberry Inn (below) were created by my good friend, Marcia Suttnerberg.

The Brambleberry Inn
2019
Box 1

A novel in 700-word linked episodes (scenes/chapters), about a fictional Inn in an undisclosed location (but with stairs down to the sea), where guests show up, needing something the Inn always seems to provide. The Inn-keeper benefits from her guests, and there are lots of love stories embedded in the narrative. A few of the characters are Emily, the innkeeper (a widow), George, who is hoping to finish a memoir of his life as a poet, Nina Katerina, a retired ballerina, and Ross, a troubled Iraqi vet. I still believe the characters live on in some alternate reality, but isn't this always so with the best fiction?

My Secret Garden and Other Tales
2020
Box 1

This is a “duet” chapbook made up of my stories and that of my collaborator, Anne Meisenzahl. Our stories are side by side, so the reader can see how uniquely each writer approaches the same prompt -- in this case, two independently chosen nouns put together to create the title. (Examples: Coffee Heart, Ring Map, Lantern Winter, Thunder Baby.) All 29 stories were written while sheltering in place during the Covid pandemic. I believe that writing is a healing art, the imagination an oasis that provides relief and reward from the troubles of civilization. It is my hope that the reader is uplifted, consoled and delighted by these 700, 500, and 300 word creations.

The Wave is Within -- The Dreamscape Poems
2020
Box 1

This duet chapbook is the result of my collaboration with a fellow poet, Bliss Rose. Our poems, derived from the same opening prompt (i.e. The birds seem to know, There is a wave within, I wonder as I wander), appear side by side in this manuscript. Again, it is always instructive to see how the same prompt can lead to a variety of possibilities in the hands of the author. These poems, along with the chapbook My Secret Garden, were all composed during sheltering in place from a pandemic. Perhaps the verses are fueled by our need to rise above the suffering and challenge of such a difficult year, while seeking refuge in the natural world. (“The rain fell, just in time/matching the tears that overflowed/for now and then we consort together/to comfort and uplift.”) The cover painting is by a local artist: Susan Peacock.

The Garden of My Mind
2020
Box 1

This is another compilation of poems written by the author while sheltering in place during the 2020 pandemic. My note to the reader asks: “How does one cope and survive such turmoil?” My answer: “Writing saved me, lifting me into a transcendent place where I could actually thrive in the unfolding mystery of creation.” I went on to share that “I have had a love affair with the Muse in 2020 unlike any other era of my life. The poems flowed through me at times in a trance state, where I was no longer just me, an aging human who loved words, but a woman creating a universe in verse, as real as what will one day be written in history books of this time.” The cover collage “It's time for imagining,” one of my many collages over the years, seems to speak specifically to the contents of this collection.

The Pearl Hotel
2020
Box 1

The stories in this collection were all composed in 2020 while sheltering in place, and are based on prompts from nine different writer/pen pals. As with all my story collections, some tales are strongly autobiographical (i.e. Memory Glass, which recounts my 17 year old self looking into a mirror and seeing a panorama of faces other than her own, or Sun Mountain, in which the writer recalls her European solo journey and a mountain in Corsica where she had a memorable sunbathing experience.) Other of the 43 tales are completely fiction, some written as fables (The Golden Legacy about a lonely daffodil who wishes for others of her kin), but all arising from a very active imagination! As for the cover story The Pearl Hotel, I wish I could book a room there with my daughter for an entrancing getaway, if only the place really existed. But, in this tale, it does. Cover painting by my friend Mary Marquiss, 2020.

Lighthouse Ceremony
2023
Box 1

This two-noun story collection is especially dear to me because Harlan was my prison pen-pal when we wrote these tales together. Harlan, a poet, had never written a story before, but he took to it like a duck to water. Our friendship flourished through our creative adventures. When he was finally released from prison, he visited me and we chose the tales to include (14 out of the 50 we had written.) Harlan is an artist, and he created the cover graphic of the lighthouse. Seeing our stories put together in this duet collection is remarkable – we did it, and this book proves it.

Anthologies
1959-2014
Mr. Klein's Tomatoes and other Tales, The Early Short Stories (Age 15 to 23)
1959-1967
Box 1



Looking back, I find it remarkable that all 12 of these stories were composed on a typewriter. The Last Essay (age 16) was 20 pages long! I can't say that my writing style has changed much over a lifetime. Maybe the psychic was right when she asked me tenderly (age 28) "You've always been a writer, haven't you?" The cover graphic was created by my daughter, Alana.

Kingston and McGary: A Remembrance of Two Transformative Friendships
1963-1968
Box 1



Who could be farther apart in background than a college professor and an out of work construction worker who became a prison inmate? This braided memoir of these two individuals reveals what they had in common and their unique gift to me. I believe there is in all of us an intrinsic longing for soul companions to help us recognize and navigate our singular path in life. That is what these men were for me. Perhaps the reader will gain insight into such friendships that have impacted their own journeys. The cover is a sumi-e brush painting I did for McGary's Oriental Art and Philosophy class, age 20.

"Hello Rainbow, I've been thinking of green fields "I think if I am ever to do any worshipping I will do it in the fields or hills or on the shore or sea where one can see and feel the beauty of nature's manifestations. I can feel very reverent in the field even though it is an imaginary one..." A quote from one of Kingston's prison letters to me, 1963.

"Free Your Sisters, Free Yourself, Up from Under, Women Unite!" A Women's Liberation Collection (Age 25-31)
1969-1975
Box 1



I was actively involved in the women's movement, both as a writer and photographer. This compilation includes articles published in various movement papers, poetry, a photographic gallery with "iconic" black and white images (developed in my own darkroom), autoharp songs, and a summation essay written years later looking back at that important time in American "herstory." As I expressed in my note to the reader: "This story is still on-going, as is the story of all peoples seeking their full human rights. That said, this compilation represents one small fraction of the beauty, creativity and vision of that era."

The Mini-Book of KA, a Potpourri
1969-2007
Box 1



As I continued to sort through my many manuscripts, I discovered a few essays, stories, collages and poems that had escaped inclusion in earlier chapbooks. Thus we have an eclectic assortment, including a radical feminist essay written in 1969 (I was 25), reflections on my pregnancy at age 43, "The Adventures of Robin, a Mischievous Kitten" written when my daughter was eight, the tale of a mescaline trip I took in the hills of Berkeley, age 27, some free verse, a sonnet, and a haiku. In other words, this potpourri is a little trip through my life and times. The cover is a collage created in one of my Lifestories classes.

The Guest Hotel and other Tales - The Middle Years Short Stories (Age 34-45)

1978-1989

Box 1

The gap in time between the early and middle stories reveals my dedication to radical journalism and other important pursuits. Between the ages of 24 and 34, I was writing for Liberation News Service or The Richmond Chronicle, working for the women's movement, or getting my massage therapy degree - no time for fiction!

The title story, my first written as Katya, was typed in a hotel room in Leadville, Colorado, on my year-long trip around America. The last story The Island Sanctuary, is literally a transcription of a dream. In between, the tales are, again, a fanciful blend of fact and fiction. Blurring genres is perhaps one of my trademarks.

In the Beginning was the Word - Selected Essays (Age 39-70)

1983-2014

Box 1

The majority of these essays were previously published in various magazines or newspapers, or purposely written for my website: (creativeartsandhealing.com). They cover a wide variety of topics, including essays on writing, creative movement, and food, teaching in the prisons, a visit to the Vietnam Wall, and prior to the onset of e-mail, "The Intimacy of Correspondence."

The Couch that Told Stories and other Tales, The Later Short Stories (Age 52-70)

1996-2014

Box 1

Again, there is a gap, between 45 and 52. I gave birth to my daughter Alana at age 44, and was deeply involved in "immersion" mothering. I wrote aplenty in my journal and for occasional writing classes, but no major short stories were created during this period.

These three anthologies of short stories together represent "the voice of a girl who grows into a woman, with themes that continue to revolve and evolve..." and are a mix of darkness and light. The title story pertains to a couch I slept on in a lake cottage near Ithaca, NY, that really did tell stories, as you shall discover.

Fancy Nanette, a Seaside Romance & The Visitation, a Hawaiian Duet

1999

Box 1

One day I picked up a second hand paperback of Harlequin romance stories. I had never read one and wondered why so many women did. I was surprised at how engaging they were, and I wondered to myself if I could write a series of lesbian-themed short stories to appeal to that group of women. However, once I started typing, the characters got a hold of me, just as with Inn at Stone Cairns, and I soon realized I had novella length fiction. Fancy Nanette remains one of my favorite examples of seaside storytelling. The cover and inner paintings were created by a local artist, Susan Peacock.

Inn at Stone Cairns, a Novella

1999

Box 1

My longest ever piece of fiction all began when one of my pen-pals suggested we write a short story based on the seed phrase "Room with a view." I later changed the title to Inn at Stone Cairns, (due to E.M. Forster already having a famous book by that title.) This is an example of a tale that ran away with itself. The characters dominated my consciousness and told me exactly what they wanted. When my pen pal finally pushed me to send the story(!) -- now a novella -- I realized I had better find an ending. You'll have to read the manuscript to see what transpired with Sandra Diego, the protagonist, Thomas the innkeeper, Dory, the innkeeper's daughter, and Sandra's fictional characters Dahlia and Liddy.

2014: One Year in the Life of A Writing Woman

2014

Box 1

At the beginning of 2015, in scrolling through my hard drive folder "Creative 2014," I was struck by how many entries there were. While every year is different (one year I wrote over a hundred sonnets, another year I wrote Out the Window poems daily, one year I was enchanted with villanelles), this particular year I had written fourteen 700-word stories, as well as essays for an on-line group, and for a women's writing circle, as well as a host of poems. This chapbook is truly a testament to my enduring devotion to "the wisdom of the pen," and the helpful guidance of my Muse. The cover is a photo of a silk painting of the author, at age 56, on her backyard swing. Compare the bio picture at the top of this catalogue, for the 70 year old version (also wearing a kimono, also on the backyard swing, feet crossed, and holding a journal of course!)

Tracking Messages on Sand - A Chronology of Poems
2017
Box 1

This collection compiles poems of Katya's that have not yet been anthologized, written between the ages of 18 to 65. The primarily free-verse poems include the author's brief notes to the reader, to place the poem in "time and space." The cover picture shows Katya at age 50, at St. George Island, her favorite beach get-away. Tracking Messages complements her first chapbook A Dream to Ride On, also a chronological selection (from age 11 to 58). From the poem "It's Been So Long, Muse": "It's been so long, muse/since you've dragged me by my hair/into your marvelous cave/the one where the writing is so bold although/ thousands of years old..."

Series 2. Books, Literary Reviews, Miscellaneous Manuscripts
1979-2015
1 box
Subseries A. Miscellaneous Manuscripts
2004-2015
[Time-Line, from birth \(1944\) to age 70](#)
2015
Box 2

A brief trajectory of seven decades of living. Written on a beach retreat at St. George Island, FL in one week's time. (Feb. '15) The cover shows me at age 27, with my Nikkormat camera.

This Is My Life -- Ninka from One to 60
2004
Box 2

As my 60th birthday approached, I decided to create a slideshow of my "life and times," from earliest photos to latest (age 59 1/2). I combed through boxes of old photos and chose 27 to represent the different stages of my life. For each picture, I wrote an accompanying haiku. The first photo (and haiku) shows me in my mom's arms when I was a baby. The last shows me on a swing in Costa Rica at the age of 59. And everything in between: childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and all the various personas and chapters that followed. I then made three copies of the slide show in booklet form. (Alas, the original show has not survived.) I hope at some point to bring this record up to date (from 60 to 70).

Subseries B. Self-published Books
2008-2011
Journal Adventure Guidebook -- a Lifestories Companion
2008
Box 2

This book was compiled as a way to pass on my methodology of teaching writing over a period of more than 25 years to people from all walks of life. My hope was that individuals who couldn't personally enroll in my classes, would use the book as a curriculum, and form their own groups. Each chapter offers a different technique or set of exercises, and many seed phrases are offered to help evoke the material waiting to be expressed. A student-writing sampler is included.

Lifestories, A Seedbook
2008

Box 2

This is a blank lined book a person is invited to write in, with seed prompts on the top of each page to help evoke their stories.

Examples: A magic time... My name... A road not taken...

My Haiku Life

2009

Box 2

A compilation of many years of my own Haiku poems and the poems of my diverse students -- schoolchildren, elders, prison inmates, artists, high school and college students, etc. Chapters are based on themes familiar to this Japanese essence poem: moon haiku, rain haiku, haiku of the seasons, etc. The book is written such that the reader is encouraged to write their own haiku, or offer a Haiku Hour on their own.

Under the covers/ I lie enchanted - ping ping/ here comes the Spring rain

The Wheel of Belonging - The Faith Columns and Sermons of KA

2011

Box 2

A compilation of Faith columns written for the local newspaper (The Tallahassee Democrat), and eight sermons delivered at my local Unitarian Universalist Church, on such themes as: Poetry and the Religious Experience; Rediscovering my Jewish Origins; Mother's Day; Zen Eyes, Beginner's Eyes; and The Wisdom of the Pen.

Subseries C. Other Compilations

1979-2000

Coming Home: Poems of Living and of Lives to Come

1979

Box 2

At the age of 34, I took a year-long journey around America, looking for a new place to settle. I conducted healing touch workshops and kept a detailed journal of my trip, as well as writing a variety of poems. While packing for my adventure, I put in a sheaf of some of my favorite poems from age 18-33. When I arrived in Blacksburg, Virginia where my parents (both professors) were living, I decided to stay with them long enough to produce a volume of my poetry, in time for my upcoming 35th birthday. The book has two sections, the "early" poems, and the "Pilgrimage" poems composed during the first six months of my time on the road. The cover photo shows me at the summit of a mountain I climbed in Vermont.

Fly wild bird / your feet are roses falling in the sky, / You quack at me wanting everything / ducks want, so simple I have to turn away (1970, age 26)

Dancing with the Runes

1988

Box 2

I settled in Roanoke, Virginia where I met a kindred spirit, Lyn Yeatts, a local artist and writer. We occasionally got together to share creative moments. One day we decided to open a bag of Norse rune stones -- with engraved "letters" -- and use them to inspire poems. We each wrote a verse spontaneously on whatever the rune brought to mind. We enjoyed the results so much we decided to put together an anthology. Meanwhile, we had met up with a local photographer who enjoyed photographing us dancing. The cover and inside photos (black and white silhouettes) helped us choose the title for our collection. The figure on the left (with long hair) is Katya; a series of us is also on the inside back cover.

Chapters: The Continuing Saga

1989

Box 2

At age 43 I married Tom Taylor, and gave birth to our daughter, Alana. Soon we moved from Virginia to Oklahoma where my husband got a job teaching at the university in Norman. I was now 46 years old. I noticed a class being offered to "seniors" on Writing our Life Stories. Since I taught journal- keeping I thought it would be fun to take a class taught by someone else. The instructor allowed me in even though I was not yet a senior. The course was taught chronologically: birth, early school years, later school years, college, career, children, etc. etc. We wrote a chapter for each session, and enjoyed sharing aloud. I hired a part time baby sitter so I would have two hours a day free to write. By the end of the course, I had completed five long chapters, from "My Story Begins" up through "The High School Years." I included a few xeroxed photos at the end. Since I had every intention of continuing my memoir, I titled it Chapters: (The Continuing Saga.) This is the original copy I turned in to Martha Nelson's Life Story Class. It is a poignant (60 page double space) life review up to the tender age of 17! (The college years would follow.)

"I, Katya Nina Sabaroff Taylor, was born on a Sunday with a head full of black hair that the nurses combed into a wave when they brought me to my mother for the first time. It was January 23, 1944, and war time. My father, who was 25 at the time, was about to be drafted into the army to go overseas and fight Hitler...."

Poems for a Summer's Course

1992

Box 2

I was 48, and my daughter was 4, when I signed up for a poetry class with a popular professor at FSU in Tallahassee, where Tom, Alana and I had recently settled. Delightfully referring to poetry as Vitamin P, David Kirby gave us interesting assignments (i.e. a List poem, a Symbolist poem, a "Take off on a famous poet poem" etc.) Towards the end of the course I was diagnosed with a cyst on my ovary and had to have surgery. This explains the "Lament" poem included. While my Mom flew here to help me convalesce, I used my brand new computer and put together this collection.

13 Ways of Looking, My Year at Full Flower

1994

Box 2

I was hired to teach journaling and poetry at an alternative middle school. At the semester's end, I encouraged each student to put together a booklet of their favorite writings. I followed suit with this one. As always, I used a variety of stimuli to encourage my students' (and my own creativity), including pictures from magazines, writing to music, a Cast of Characters exercise, and "13 ways of looking" a take off on a Wallace Steven's poem. My collection ends with a "Once upon a time" parable.

Haiku Duet

1998

Box 2

My writing pal, Frank Martin, who lived in South Florida, was also very fond of the Haiku form, and we decided to write "Breakfast Haiku," which meant sending (through e-mail) a haiku every morning to one another. This went on for some time. One day Frank suggested we compile these Haiku into a little book with our poems presented side by side.

And the Word was Made Flesh

1983-1998

Box 2


Excerpts from my journals, and notes from teaching journal-keeping (later, Lifestories).

When I received a questionnaire from a woman writing a book on the benefits of journaling, I took the time to go through some of my journaling anthologies (made for each 6 week class), and assembled a variety of samples of my own class writing, as well as syllabi, brochures explaining the benefits of journaling, etc. This collection reflects both my own style of writing and my teaching methodology. Alexandra Johnson's book came out (Leaving a Trace) and included a few quotes from what I had sent her. Later I was pleased that an article appeared in Oprah Magazine using some of my words!

A Ride Inside the Magnificent Frontier and Future--a collage collection

2000

Box 2



In my Journal/Lifestory classes, I often spend one session asking students to create a "visual" journal entry in the form of a collage (images and words collected from a variety of magazines.) I have long been drawn to collages -- and find them to be artistically as well as emotionally satisfying to create. When my parents' 60th wedding anniversary approached, I decided to put together a collection to share with them. Since that time, I have created many more such works, a few of which appear in some of my Singing Bird Press chapbooks. Below is an excerpt from another collage in this compilation.


Subseries D. Anthologies

1991-2012

Everything is Green and Bright, a book of children's poems

1996

Box 2




When my daughter was enrolled in Betton Hills, a small private school in Tallahassee with an art-based curriculum, I was invited in by the headmistress to teach poetry to Alana's combined 2nd and 3rd grade class. I asked each student to go out onto the school's grounds and find a tree to sit under. Taking their time, they would "commune" with the tree, then write a poem about it, come back to the classroom, and share. Each child also drew a sketch of "their" tree. Alana's teacher and I both participated and our poems and drawings are also included.

Liberation News Service Reunion Anthology

2000

Box 2

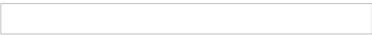


Somehow we all decided to come together at a farm in upstate New York in Fall of 2000 and celebrate the existence of LNS (1968-81). I realized this was an opportunity to create a reunion "packet" -- just as for years we had typed and collated and sent out news packets to our subscribing papers. I asked all attendees and those who wished they could be there, but couldn't travel, to write two pages of camera-ready copy, about how they came to work for us, their experience at LNS, and what they've been doing since. I was thrilled that we had 33 entries, and I gathered them together into this document, summing up, with our stories, an era of radical journalism that was unique in American history.

LifeStories Reviews

2006-2012

Box 2




I have been offering Journaling and LifeStories classes to people from all walks of life since 1982, more than three decades. Every time I teach a class (usually in Spring and Fall), I put together a little publication (LifeStories Review) for the students to have a memento of our special time together. Each person chooses two or three pages of their favorite writing from class, I put them all together with a table of contents and a cover, and we either bind in class (with a 3 hole punch and embroidery thread) or students can opt to have their copy spiral bound. These compilations represent a wide range of stories and poems from my students - a poignant record of a diverse humanity, all sharing their unique journeys with pen and paper.

Includes: Spring, 2006, private class; Fall, 2011, Assisted Living Center, through Osher Lifelong Learning Institute; Fall, 2012, Assisted Living Center, and including Haiku poems.

Prison Inmate Writer's Digests

1995-2012

Box 2



The story of how I became interested in volunteering to teach creative writing in the prisons goes back to my Kingston and McGary chapbook (see Singing Bird Press editions earlier in this catalog). Suffice it to say I have been offering writing to inmates for more than two decades, and find it to be deeply fulfilling. I always write with my students, and employ the same methodology (using seed phrases to evoke material) no matter whether I am teaching prisoners, seniors, college students, self-help groups, or any other category of humanity. However, because prison is a place where masks and protective armor seem necessary for survival, inmates are especially grateful to be free, in my class, to reflect, express, and share, without

judgment, and to be affirmed that their voice, their life, has value, as we connect with each other at the heart level.

Includes: Out of Sight and Mind, FCI, Tallahassee, male inmates Spring 1995; Out of Sight and Mind, FCI, Tallahassee, male inmates Spring 1996; Beauty Behind Walls, Jefferson Correctional, women, Fall 1998; Imaginations Uncovered, FCI, Tallahassee, women, Fall 2010; Imaginations Uncovered, FCI, Tallahassee, women Spring 2011; Imaginations Uncovered FCI, Tallahassee, women Fall 2011; Imaginations Uncovered, FCI, Tallahassee, women Spring 2012; Imaginations Uncovered, FCI, Tallahassee, women Winter 2012.

Journeys: Tallahassee's Forum for Personal and Spiritual Growth
1991-1993
Box 2

Contributed articles and poems.

Prison Wisdom
2017
Box 2

This book invites you behind the barbwire into the lives, stories and poems of 115 inmates. From 1991 to 2015 I entered the gates of four Florida prisons, offering creative writing to those behind bars, and created 12 anthologies which compiled their favorite writings from our sessions together. These anthologies have been excerpted in Prison Wisdom to showcase the beauty and diversity of the humanity hidden behind walls. The book also includes the correspondence and artwork of prison pen pals I have been writing to for many years.

Prison Wisdom reveals the methodology of how I evoke writing from my students, and the prompts and exercises are outlined so that anyone wishing to teach writing, in the prisons or elsewhere, has a template for doing so. As I explain on the back cover blurb: "I believe every person has a creative spark within them, and I hope to evoke 'the wisdom of the pen' in each and every one of my students. As you, the reader, experience the poignant and heartfelt writing in this unique collection, I hope you will be inspired to pick up a pen to tell your own stories."

The Lemon Journey & Other Tales
2017
Box 2

These two-noun 700-word tales were written, long-distance, by me, in Florida, and my friend Mary, in Oregon. I had invited her to participate in the "700 Word Story Club." We have found 700 words to be just long enough to create a viable character and plot. Each partner thinks of a noun independently, shares it, and the two words become the title. Mary, an artist, created the cover images of some of the nouns in this collection i.e. spoon, lemon, flower. Our stories, side by side, reveal to the reader how each of us has our own imaginative response to the same title. Other stories include: The Spoon and the Window, the Swan Newspaper, and the Raven Painting

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Acquired from Katya Sabaroff Taylor, May 2015. Additions to the collection expected.

Processing Information

Processed by Dex Haven, June 2015.

Related Material

For additional information on Katya Sabaroff Taylor's work and writing, see her website:

- creativeartsandhealing.com

Language:

English

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Contributors

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