

SLWG Workshop - *We're Pleased to Present:*

“Just Write—How to Get it Done.”



Robert J. Randisi

Saturday, May 1, 2010

Special Time and Place: 1-4 PM at Chesterfield Arts

444 Chesterfield Center
Chesterfield, MO 63017

Fee required: \$25 for members
\$30 for non-members.

Please register in advance.

Booklist calls Robert J. Randisi “. . .one of the last true pulp writers.” He has been published in the western, mystery, horror, science fiction and men’s adventure genres. All told, he is the author of 540 books, 54 short stories and the editor of 30 anthologies. He has also edited a *Writer’s Digest* book, *Writing the Private Eye Novel*. In 1982 he founded the Private Eye Writers of America and created the Shamus Award. In 1985 he co-founded *Mystery Scene Magazine* and the American Crime Writer’s League, both with Ed Gorman. His most recent mystery novels are *You’re Nobody ‘Til Somebody Kills You* (St. Martins Press, 2009) and *The Bottom of Every Bottle* (Perfect Crime, 2010). His most recent western is *Gallows* (Leisure, 2009). A short story collection, *The Guilt Edge*, was published in 2010 by Perfect Crime Books.

Talking Crime with Robert J. Randisi

You founded the Private Eye Writers of America (PWA) in 1982. How has P.I. fiction changed since then?

Robert J. Randisi: The P.I. has changed with technology. Computers and cell phones have become as important as a gun and trench coat. Good writers avoid clichés, but continue to honor the conventions of the genre.

You won the group's Shamus Award for Lifetime Achievement in 2009. What do you consider your biggest contribution to the genre?

RR: Probably award itself. Back when I created it, the only other major award in the genre was the Mystery Writers of America's Edgar Award and they tended to not honor the P.I. novel. In a 30-year period I think they gave the Edgar to three P.I. books, one by William Campbell Gault (Young Adult), Michael Collins (Best First Novel) and then Robert B. Parker (Best Novel). We needed our own voice, the PWA, and our own award, the Shamus.

In your opinion, which is the more vital part of a good detective story, the P.I. character or the mystery?

RR: It's always the character. A good, strong P.I. character can carry a weak plot, but even a strong plot can be damaged by an uninteresting, weak main character.

You have more than 500 books to your credit. Where do you find your inspiration?

RR: My inspiration was this: At 15, I decided I wanted to write for a living by the time I turned 30. Everything I did from that point on led toward that end. I didn't go to college. After high school, I worked during the day and wrote in my free time. I made sure I had no profession to fall back on. When I turned 30, I quit "working" and have been writing for a living ever since.

A great many of your books are westerns, and you've also written historical fiction. What about the time period appeals to you? What, if anything, do those genres have in common with detective fiction?

RR: The crossover between western and P.I. is very strong. Both are about loners who work against all outside forces. However, when writing a western there are fewer road blocks in the character's way. In the old west, the law of the gun superseded the law of man for the most part. The P.I. doesn't have that luxury.

Although this has changed in recent years, westerns and detective novels are sometimes thought of as a "male" genre and many of your most notable characters are men. What have you learned while collaborating with actress Eileen Davidson on several novels? Has your writing changed at all?

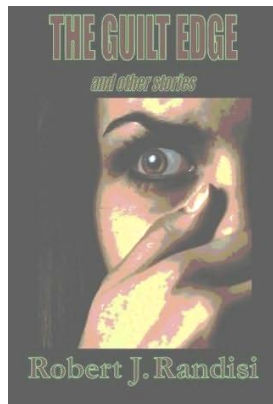
RR: Not really. Eileen had to make sure that the character remained feminine, and

remained true to what she wanted to say. My part was most of the writing, most of the plotting, and keeping the book on subject. Her contribution increased with each book but there were still many aspects of the writing process for her to learn.

What's coming up next for you?

RR: I have two more Rat Pack books to do, *I'm a Fool to Kill You* and *Fly Me to the Morgue*. I've signed another six-book Gunsmith contract, which will take us to number 354. I have several short stories to do, and I'm producing a two-book volume of the Shamus-winning short stories of the past 28 years. I have a new novel out now from a small press, Perfect Crime, called *The Bottom of Every Bottle*. Also, from the same publisher, I have a short story collection, *The Guilt Edge*. And many of my short stories are now available for download from iPulpfiction.com.

New from Robert J. Randisi: The Guilt Edge



"Fifteen hard-boiled stories by "one of the last true pulp writers" (*Booklist*)

Paperback: 244 pages

Publisher: Perfect Crime Books (January 28, 2010)

ISBN-10: 0982515731

ISBN-13: 978-0982515730

Available at [Barnes and Noble](http://BarnesandNoble.com)

More Books from Robert J. Randisi

(Limited to original novels, no reprints)

Mystery

Blood On The Arch (SMP, 2000)

Delvecchio's Brooklyn (Five Star, 2001)

East Of The Arch (SMP, 2002)

Curtains Of Blood (Leisure, 2002)

The Masks Of Auntie Laveau (*with Christine Matthews* - SMP, 2001)
Same Time, Same Murder (*with Christine Matthews* - SMP, 2003)
Arch Angels (SMP, 2004)
Cold Blooded (Leisure, 2005)
Everybody Kills Somebody Sometime (SMP, 2006)
The Picasso Flop (*with Vince Van Patton* - Warner, 2007)
Lucky Be A Lady Don't Die (SMP, 2007)
Hey There, (You With A Gun In Your Hand) (SMP, 2008)
Death In Daytime (*with Eileen Davidson* - NAL, 2008)
Dial Emmy For Murder (*with Eileen Davidson*- NAL, 2009)
You're Nobody Til Somebody Kills You (SMP, 2009)
Diva Las Vegas (*with Eileen Davidson* - NAL, 2010)
The Bottom Of Every Bottle (Perfect Crime, 2010)
The Guilt Edge (Perfect Crime, 2010)

Westerns

Miracle Of The Jacal (Leisure Books, 2001)
Lancaster's Orphans, Leisure, 2004)
Leaving Epitaph (Harpertorch, 2004)
Turnback Creek (Pocket Books, 2004)
Invitation To A Hanging (Pocket Books, 2004)
The Funeral Of Tanner Moody (Leisure, 2004)
Vengeance Creek (Harpertorch, 2005)
Pearl River Junction (Harpertorch, 2006)
Denver Draw (Harpertorch, 2007)
Butler's Wager (Harpertorch, 2007)
Texas Bluff (Harpertorch, 2008)
Gallows (Leisure, 2009)
Crowbait (Leisure, 2010)