

[A] very generous book.
- Robert Bly

I loved your story The Bookman. I am more than happy to provide a blurb for your book.
- Gene Wolfe, Winner of the World Fantasy Award

The most subversive book on writing I have ever encountered — and the most important.
- Herbie Brennan,
New York Times best-selling author of Faerie Wars

The American writer, Stephen Harrod Buhner, author of the iconic *Ensouling Language. On the Art of Non-fiction and the Writer's Life* - and an inspiration to our editors - also appeals for openness to these wellsprings of creativity. He challenges the arid and mechanical quality of much non-fiction writing, and the danger of much creative writing being afflicted in the same way, because of formulaic teaching on American MFAs in particular. For Buhner, as for Edward Bond, there is urgent need in our time for writing, in any genre, that - to adapt Buhner's own words - attempts to extend awareness 'further than society wants it to go' - a view strongly endorsed by our editors.
- The Lampeter Review

Stephen Harrod Buhner has produced a manifesto and guide to bring American writing back from the cages of the academy and release the power of language into the streets and wildernesses where the wild things live. If you love to read, if you like to write, you have finally come to the right place.
- Charles Bowden, author of *Murder City*, recipient of the Lannan Literary Award for Nonfiction and the Sidney Hillman award.

Ensouling Language is a fierce and generous meditation on the writer's life. Fierce, because Stephen Buhner goes right at prevailing commercial and academic assumptions about literature. For him, writing is above all a portal into vividness, compassion, and discovery. Generous, because he weaves his own quest as a writer into his reflections about the art of nonfiction. Books, in both the reading and the writing, have absorbed him for a lifetime. And the connections he conveys here are always arresting, sometimes extravagant in their intensity, and very often funny. As a writer and a teacher, I've learned more from Buhner's book than from anything I've read about writing since the works of John Gardner and William Stafford. I'm truly grateful to him for having written it.
- John Elder, Director and Professor, Breadloaf School of English, Professor Middlebury College, Author of *Reading the Mountains of Home* and *The Frog Run*

Stephen Buhner's *Ensouling Language* invites you to sit down for 23 cups of coffee and talk about the mystic journey of the writer, the solitary pilgrim, the witness yearning to tell the world indelible stories that cannot be known by any other voice than yours. If you are a teacher, a writer, a friend of a writer, this book will offer companionship in this life quest. Filled with chapters in a

writer's learning, insight, stories of the craft, manifestoes, rich contradictions, and diatribes all to be savored, considered, and made your own, this book harvests lessons from a writer and helpless lover of books who is old in experience but young in perennial devotion. Would you want an expert of any other kind, as you set out to become a writer?

- Kim Stafford, Director, Northwest Writing Institute and William Stafford Center, Lewis & Clark College, author of *The Muses Among Us: Eloquent Listening and Other Pleasures of the Writer's Craft*

Ensouling Language is Stephen Harrod Buhner at his most spellbinding and enchanted. Every sentence is infused with a livingness that is rare in today's nonfiction. More than simply a book about writing, it is about wielding the power - and responsibility - of language itself. Stephen encourages us to breathe the Breath of Life into the words we write, to call forth such a deep richness of meaning that it transmits feeling from the writer to the reader like some otherworldly telepathy. If you can feel you can write, write in this way, turning otherwise empty leaden words into golden Ensouling Language."

- Daniel Vitalis

I can't easily imagine a more useful book on the craft of writing. Covering all the steps -- from glimpsing a first, furtive idea foraging in the mind's brambles to tracking that idea and coaxing it to unfurl on the page, from finding the right words to securing the right publisher -- this volume also, in the process, transforms your take on the universe. For Buhner brings all his inspired lunacy to bear, illustrating his passionate insights with lively stories and poems and with glimmering nuggets from other authors, fashioning this instructive, how-to book into a breathing compendium of word magic.

- David Abram, author of *Becoming Animal: An Earthly Cosmology and The Spell of the Sensuous*, winner of the Lannan Literary Award for Nonfiction

In an age of sound bites and high decibels, Ensouling Language urges a return to self-study, contemplative practice, and disciplined revision. If Lao-Tzu and Emerson could have a dialogue on writing, they would welcome the company of this remarkable book.

- William Howarth, Professor of English, author of *Walking with Thoreau*

If you want a kind of deep ecology for nonfiction writing, a practical guide ingrained with the spirits of William Stafford and Federico García Lorca too, Ensouling Language is your book. Its pages, studded with samples and suggestions, come via the author's fresh and liberating voice, opening up the "imaginal world" we cannot do without.

- John Felstiner, Professor of English, Stanford University, winner of the Truman Capote award for literary criticism, author of *Can Poetry Save the Earth? A Field Guide to Nature Poems*, *Paul Celan: Poet, Survivor, Jew*, and *Translating Neruda: The Way to Macchu Picchu*.

Stephen Harrod Buhner has counted beacoup coups in penning *Ensouling Language*. As history almost unanimously attests, writing well about writing is at best a rarity, perhaps mythic, a yeti of sorts. But Buhner's flair, sage advice, and most of all his passion for writing touches every sentence. The book brings writing to life, and will add life to any author's own words.

-David Cremean, Past President, Western Literature Association

Stephen Buhner writes with passion and perception about the entire range of the writer's experience. He shows us in detail how to write, issues of craft and art, but also how a writer lives--the commitment, the dreaming, the business, the way a writer uncovers secrets on many levels, even how a writer loves and hates.

- Rachel Pollack, author of *Godmother Night*, recipient of the World Fantasy and the Arthur C. Clarke awards.

Buhner's book describes how any writer, even one writing about, say, adobe walls, can achieve the sense of expansion--of traveling into larger worlds--that has always marked the best art. And although the subject is nonfiction, what Buhner has to say applies to serious writing of any kind.

- Akshay Ahuja, *The Occasional Review*, May 2010

Stephen Buhner's new book makes an extremely important contribution to the gradually changing intellectual culture which is beginning to take place in science, economics and other disciplines. The writings of Michael Polanyi (science), Herman Daly (economics), David Abram (Philosophy) all point to similar conclusions. Our centuries-long delusion that we could reduce everything to mechanistic, objective, quantifiable descriptions of reality, have deprived us of the rich experiences of life and deep understanding of the world in which we actually live. Now Buhner helps us to apply the same insights to art, especially the art of writing non-fiction. And he is quick to point out that he has not written the book so much for the benefit of professional writers and critics, as for "all the children who stayed up late, covers over their heads, flashlight on, reading when they were supposed to be sleeping. What a delight!

- Frederick L. Kirschenmann, Professor of Philosophy, Iowa State University, Distinguished Fellow Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, author of *Cultivating an Ecological Conscience: Essays from a Farmer Philosopher*.