

# ***CALL FOR PAPERS***

## **UPDIKE IN TUCSON** **7<sup>th</sup> Biennial John Updike Society Conference** **Tucson, Arizona, Sept. 20-24, 2023**



**Celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of *The Centaur* and *Collected Poems***

**Keynote speaker: Arizona Poet Laureate Alberto Ríos**

**Conference directors: Robert Luscher and Jan Emery**

**Venues: Pima Community College, Skyline Country Club,  
Embassy Suites Tucson Paloma Village**

## Call for Papers (or Panels)

Papers (15-20 min.) and panels (submit names of participants) on ANY aspect of John Updike's work or life will be considered, but topics that are especially appropriate for this conference include:

—**John Updike's poetry.** His *Collected Poems* celebrates a 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023. Updike was serious about poetry and published ten volumes throughout this lifetime. Significantly, his first published book in 1958 was a volume of poetry (*The Carpentered Hen and Other Tame Creatures*), and one of his last published books in 2009 was a volume of poetry (*Endpoint and Other Poems*).

—***The Centaur***, which celebrates a 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023. The Southwest is known for inspiring artists, and narrator Peter Caldwell is an artist.

—**“A Desert Encounter,”** in which Updike describes losing a favorite hat in the casita parking lot as he was trimming bushes. Also appropriate are Updike's writings about travel, nature, and/or connections to history.

—**Comparative papers on David Foster Wallace and Updike.** “Penis with a thesaurus” remarks aside, Updike was an influence on Wallace, and their publications and career trajectories pose some interesting possibilities for discussion. Tucson is Wallace country; he attended the Univ. of Arizona.

—***Brazil***, which celebrates a 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023 and represents one of Updike's attempts to understand a culture other than his own.

**SUBMIT PROPOSALS** by **March 20, 2023** to Robert Luscher ([luscherr@unk.edu](mailto:luscherr@unk.edu)). The number of presenters may be capped, so if your participation is dependent upon having a paper accepted you should submit your proposal sooner rather than later. Presenters must be members of The John Updike Society or join after their papers have been accepted. Annual dues are \$30/year for regular membership and \$25/year for students and retirees (<https://blogs.iwu.edu/johnupdikesociety/join/>). Decision notices will be sent within three weeks of your submission, along with registration and lodging information, if your proposal is successful. Moderators are also needed, and volunteers should send an email to Robert Luscher indicating a desire or willingness to do so. **The John Updike Society** is a welcoming organization of 260+ members from 18 countries and 37 states that also owns and operates The John Updike Childhood Home in Shillington, Pa.

## Conference Highlights



—Tour of the “casitas” (pictured) that John and Martha Updike owned and lived in several months annually over the course of five years, located a short walk from the Skyline Country Club clubhouse where Updike golfed and the couple dined. Updike wrote about the casitas in “A Desert Encounter.”

—A trip to the world-renowned **Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum**: a 98-acre hybrid zoo, natural history museum, and botanical garden. The only place where the iconic Saguaro cactus grows, the Sonoran Desert is the most bio-diverse ecosystem on Earth.

—Optional day trips to: the Old West town of **Tombstone**, site of the famous gunfight at the O.K. Corral; the **Titan Missile Museum**, last of the 54 Titan II missile sites that were on alert during the Cold War; the **Arizona State Museum** at Univ. of Arizona, David Foster Wallace’s alma mater; Kartchner Caverns; and hikes at Catalina State Park and Black Sheep Cave.



## Schiff Travel Grants

Thanks to the generosity of The Robert and Adele Schiff Family Foundation, the John Updike Society will award up to FOUR \$1500 travel-to-conference grants for scholars under 40 to be able to attend the Tucson conference. Applicants need not be members at the time, but must join before grants can be paid.

In addition, up to THREE \$1000 travel-to-conference grants will be awarded to current society members at any career stage who need assistance to be able to participate in the conference.

Both grants are merit- *and* need-based, and paid after travel-to-conference has been booked. Interested scholars should **apply by Feb. 20, 2023.**

**To apply**, send a one-page proposal for a 15- to 20-minute paper appropriate for the conference, along with one paragraph about yourself, what grant you are applying for, and why the grant is important to you, to society president James Plath (jplath@iwu.edu). The selection committee will make their decisions and announce successful applicants by the end of the last week of January 2023.