

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Longtime Omega Teacher Lynda Barry Awarded Famed MacArthur Fellowship

*‘Genius’ Grant Given to Graphic Novelist & Cartoonist who has
Taught Writing Workshops at Omega Since 1998*

RHINEBECK, NY—Acclaimed graphic novelist and cartoonist [Lynda Barry](#) was announced on September 25th as one of the [26 new MacArthur Foundation fellows](#), earning her a \$625,000 prize for “inspiring creative engagement through original graphic works and a teaching practice centered on the role of image making in communication.” Known widely for works such as her long-running (1979-2008) syndicated weekly comic strip *Ernie Pook’s Comeek*, and graphic novels such as *The Good Times Are Killing Me*, Barry has taught writing workshops annually at [Omega Institute](#) in Rhinebeck, New York since 1998.

“We are absolutely thrilled Lynda Barry is being recognized, not only for her exceptional accomplishments, but as a person whose ‘originality, insight, and potential’ are worth investing in,” said Carla Goldstein, Omega president. “Lynda inspires students with her skill, wit, and dedication to teaching. Her sold-out workshops at Omega have been among our most popular writing programs for more than 20 years. We are truly honored to count her as a member of our faculty.”

In 2020 Barry will teach two 5-day workshops at Omega: [Writing the Unthinkable](#), and [Writing From Workbook 52](#), the latter will be co-led by writer Dan Chaon. In her description of *Writing the Unthinkable* she wrote, “Focusing first on memory, we embark on a journey into the unexpected. Memories come as uncontrollably as dreams—you may end up remembering things you haven’t thought of since you were a kid. Then we move into fiction. It’s a way of writing that’s freaky, vivid, and a lot of fun.”

Barry has published several illustrated novels, including *Cruddy*, which was described by the *New York Times* as “a work of terrible beauty.” Her book on the creative process, *What It Is*, was hailed by *Salon* as “insightful and bubbling with delight in the process of artistic creation.”

Omega’s commitment to the arts includes several writing workshops offered annually as part of its holistic studies curriculum. Other prominent teachers have included Billy Collins, Sharon Olds, Cheryl Strayed, Joy Harjo, Major Jackson, Julia Cameron, Saul Williams, Robert Bly, Marge Piercy, Natalie Goldberg, Pam Houston, Sapphire, and Dani Shapiro. Recent offerings in 2019 included programs led by Nick Flynn, Nancy Slonim Aronie, Maia Danziger, Kelly Notaras, Mark Matousek, Marta Szabo, and Krista Vernoff.

Additionally, Omega presented two environmental writing workshops this year in conjunction with *Orion* magazine, on its Rhinebeck campus and at the American Museum of Natural History Southwest Research Station in Arizona’s Cave Creek Canyon.

For more information visit eOmega.org, and follow Omega on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Pinterest.

About Omega Institute for Holistic Studies

Founded in 1977, Omega Institute for Holistic Studies is the nation's most trusted source for wellness and personal growth. As a nonprofit organization, Omega offers diverse and innovative educational experiences that inspire an integrated approach to personal and social change. Located on 250 acres in the beautiful Hudson Valley, Omega welcomes more than 23,000 people to its workshops, conferences, and retreats in Rhinebeck, New York, and at exceptional locations around the world. eOmega.org

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