

# utlered chaos

*AN INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES F. THIELMAN*

*12/2/11*

**UC: Who are you? Can you tell us a little bit about yourself?**

CFT: Raised in Charleston, S.C., and Chicago, educated at red-bricked universities and on Chicago's streets, I've worked as a youth counselor, truck driver, city bus driver and enthused bookstore clerk.

**UC: What do you do when you are not writing?**

CFT: Recently married on a Kauai beach, it's now my job to take out the garbage. A loving Grandfather for five free spirits, I often pray for Peace. My inspired work as Poet, Artiste and shareholder in an independent Bookstore's collective continues! I organize readings at the store and am active on the Board of our county writers' organization & take on projects for the Oregon Poetry Association. I so believe in the Community of Artists, Writers & Musicians. I also fire off oft-published Letters-to-the-Editor, volunteer for political campaigns and have been a member of GreenPeace for 35+ years—and am now an avid supporter of the OCCUPY Movement.

**UC: What is your writing process? Do you follow a regular routine?**

CFT: I routinely write in the early morning, pre-dawn start, & produce 3+ poems/week.

**UC: What are the most important elements of good writing? According to you, what tools are must-haves for writers?**

CFT: Must-haves starting with the self-discipline to remain very committed to a routine writing time, on-going literary self-education, being willing to share one's initial drafts & listen to critique suggestions [a good critique group can be most helpful]. Necessary elements should include the avid gathering of experience and striving to become globally knowledgeable.

**UC: What motivates you to write?**

CFT: Born a Poet—honoring that is step one. I have much to express. In managing 4 major health conditions, I've found writing to be quite helpful, and it is no wonder to me that the writing of poetry has helped many & is often used in medical therapies—the growth in the popularity of Masters in Art Therapy programs is cause for celebration.

**UC: Do you ever suffer from writer's block? If so, what do you do about it?**

CFT: I write at will. And there's been a few eras where work has gotten in the way. ReVision often leads to the springboard into new writing.

**UC: Do you have any advice for other writers?**

CFT: Seek diversity in experience, be original.

**UC: What is the message in your book? What are your readers' reactions to it?**

CFT: I write about love, + social and political issues. Have received praise, and no criticisms.

**UC: Did you learn anything from writing your book and what was it?**

CM: Yes. Manuscript 101 with Laura LeHew teaching, was a great lesson in how to write and produce a cohesive manuscript of poems!

**UC: What are your current / future projects?**

CM: I'm working on a full-length manuscript, "Upright Outside the Lost and Found," and will be sending it out to Presses. I'm also working on an Op-ed essay for the local daily newspaper, and am supporting the OCCUPY Movement as much as possible.

**UC: What book(s) / author(s) have influenced your life and writing?**

CFT: *Leaves of Grass*, *Grapes of Wrath*, *Diving Into the Wreck*, *Letters to an Imaginary Friend*, most of the books by Robert Bly, Gary Snyder, and Carolyn Forché= hungry for MORE.

**UC: Tell me about the cover and/or title?**

CFT: While working on this book, I re-affirmed that my totem animal is an Owl—a thought born one cold cold Minnesota dawn while snowshoeing in a forest...

**UC: Do you have anything specific that you want to say to your readers?**

CFT: May one or more of these poems be most enjoyable!