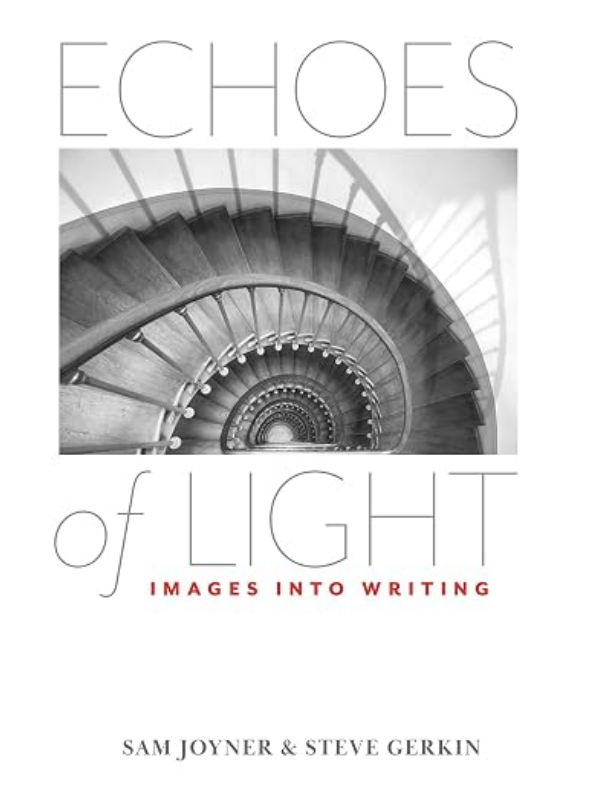
Steve Gerkin Brings Image, Story and Literary Craft Together in Three Books

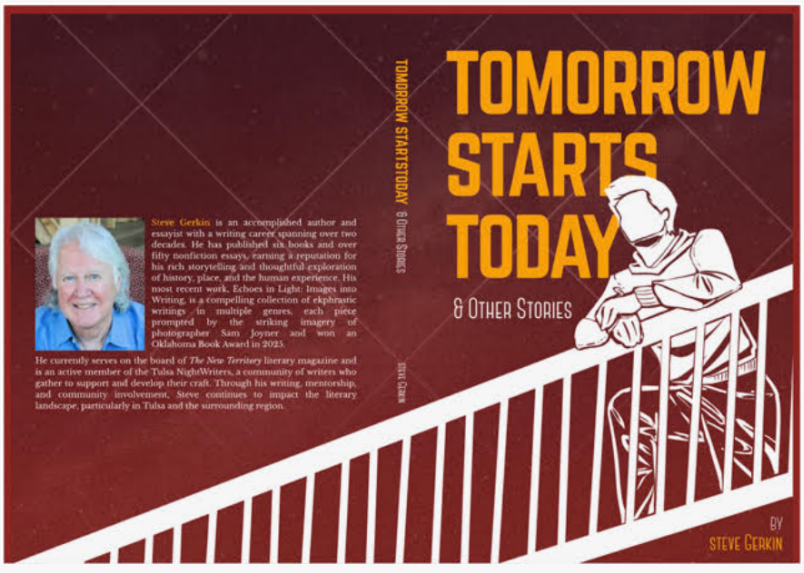
Tulsa author connects photography, fiction, poetry and literary craft across three books exploring observation, creativity, memory and legacy.

TULSA, OK, UNITED STATES, September 21, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Steve Gerkin enters a significant new chapter of his writing career with three books that approach storytelling from distinctly different directions while sharing a common interest in observation, creativity and the lasting value of the written word.



Echoes of Light: Images into Writing cover

Echoes of Light: Images into Writing, Tomorrow Starts Today & Other Stories, and What Makes Them Tick: Historic Writers Exposed reveal three dimensions of Gerkin's literary work: transforming visual images into stories, bringing previously unpublished writing into print, and examining the techniques that make literature effective.



Tomorrow Starts Today

The three-book collection also offers a broader portrait of an author whose creative interests extend across photography, fiction, nonfiction, poetry, history and literary craft.

From Images to Stories

At the center of Echoes of Light:

Images into Writing is Gerkin's collaboration with photographer Sam Joyner. The project grew from their friendship in Tulsa and from Joyner's concern that hundreds of his black-and-white photographs might eventually become unseen files.



What Makes Them Tick: Historic Writers Exposed

Gerkin responded by helping transform the photographs into a collaborative book. The resulting work brings together 49 of Joyner's photographs with Gerkin's literary responses, using ekphrasis—the practice of responding creatively to visual art—as a central creative method.

The writing moves through creative nonfiction, historical nonfiction, flash fiction, poetry and historical fiction. Rather than simply illustrating the photographs, the images act as starting points for stories, memories, characters and imagined worlds.

The project also carries a strong personal dimension. Gerkin brought boxes of the finished book to Joyner in December 2024, when Joyner's health had declined. Joyner held one of the books and told his friend, “These came just in time.” Joyner died on Father's Day 2026, giving the completed work an additional dimension as a record of friendship and preservation.

Tomorrow Starts Today

Tomorrow Starts Today & Other Stories takes a different approach, gathering 31 pieces of Gerkin's previously unpublished writing.

The collection moves between fiction, nonfiction and poetry, drawing on work developed during Gerkin's MFA studies at Lesley University and workshops at the University of Iowa. Its subjects include discrimination, protests, coming of age, gangsters and the ridiculous.

The book also reflects an important part of Gerkin's personal creative journey. He began his MFA studies at 72, demonstrating that formal creative development and new literary beginnings do not necessarily belong to an earlier stage of life.

Examining the Craft

The third book, What Makes Them Tick: Historic Writers Exposed, turns the focus from creating

stories to understanding how stories work.

The book examines 18 historic writers and the literary techniques behind their work. Writers discussed include John Steinbeck, Joan Didion, Jack Kerouac and Hunter S. Thompson, with attention given to techniques such as imagery, characterization, satire and point of view.

Positioned as a resource for both developing and experienced writers, the book explores the decisions behind effective writing and encourages readers to look beneath finished prose to understand the craft that creates interest, personality and meaning.

One Writer, Three Perspectives

Although the three books occupy different literary spaces, Gerkin's editorial feature identifies a common thread: attention.

In Echoes of Light, attention begins with a photograph. In Tomorrow Starts Today, it turns toward experience and language. In What Makes Them Tick, attention becomes an examination of literary technique.

Together, the books reflect Gerkin's continuing willingness to move between disciplines, genres, history, visual art, creative writing and literary community.

Gerkin's work is also closely connected to Tulsa and its surrounding literary culture. A retired dentist, he has maintained a writing career spanning more than two decades and has pursued formal creative-writing study later in life. He also participates in the wider Tulsa writing community.

His work received recognition through the 2025 Oklahoma Book Award for Design and Photography for Echoes of Light, and he presented “Echoes of Art: Writing Ekphrasis that Transcends the Frame” at WriterCon in Oklahoma City in 2025.

The three books ultimately point toward a larger idea about literary work: writing can preserve experiences, transform images, examine craft and create something that remains available to future readers.

About Steve Gerkin

Steve Gerkin is an author, essayist, retired dentist, mentor and longtime participant in Tulsa's literary community. His work spans creative nonfiction, fiction, poetry, historical writing and literary craft.

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