

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### St. Mary's University College Welcomes Eugene Stickland as Writer-in-Residence



**Calgary, AB (October 21, 2010)** – St. Mary's University College is proud to welcome one of western Canada's most prominent playwrights, Eugene Stickland, as writer-in-residence.

Having led playwriting workshops across Canada and internationally, Eugene will focus this year on imparting his theatre and writing expertise to St. Mary's students by co-teaching a contemporary drama course, offering guidance in creative writing and overseeing the institution's Literary Guild.

"We have some incredibly talented and gifted students at St. Mary's," said Eugene. "For me personally, I think all artists are exploring and maybe even exploiting a spiritual yearning. We may hope to find spiritual fulfillment in the work we create, but I seem to find it more and more in the Creator. Understanding this and finding some kind of balance is part of my journey right now as an artist and as a man. I thought what better place to be than at St. Mary's, where I would hope many of us are on similar paths to discovery and who knows, maybe even enlightenment."

A native of Saskatchewan, Eugene's career took off after he moved to Calgary in 1994. His plays have been widely produced including, most recently, a production of *Queen Lear*, now in Turkish translation in Istanbul. Previously, as playwright-in-residence at Alberta Theatre Projects for 10 years, he wrote 10 plays, all of which were produced across North America. Often characterized by black humour, his best known plays are offbeat and satirical comedies that explore the complexities of dysfunctional families and failed relationships. Among his most notable works are *Some Assembly Required*, a finalist for the Governor General's Award (1995), *Excavations*, winner of the Alberta Playwriting Award (1995) and *A Guide to Mourning*, winner of the Betty Mitchell Award for Best New Play (1998).

"Having such an experienced playwright as writer-in-residence provides students with a unique opportunity to receive direct mentoring and encouragement in their desire to become writers," said Dr. Mark Charlton, VP Academic and Dean.

Eugene holds a MFA Theatre from York University and a BA in English from the University of Regina. He was also a feature columnist for the Calgary Herald for five years. He is currently working on a poetry collection and a new, as yet untitled play.

#### About St. Mary's University College

St. Mary's University College is a Catholic post-secondary, liberal arts and sciences teaching and research institution open to all faiths and traditions. St. Mary's offers Bachelor of Arts degrees, a Bachelor of Education (Elementary) degree and university courses in 33 academic disciplines. For more information, visit [www.stmu.ab.ca](http://www.stmu.ab.ca)

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