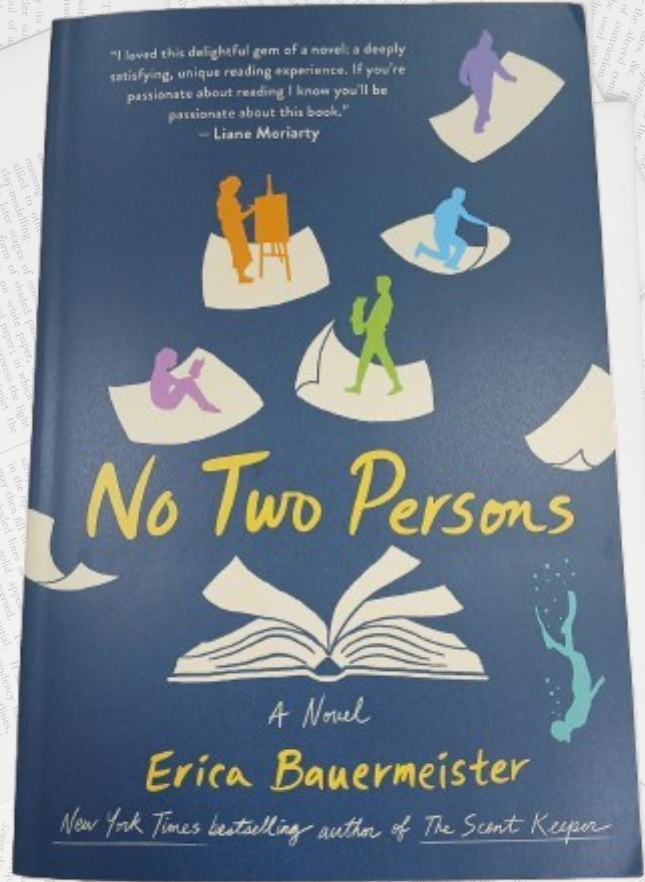


# One Book

## ONE COMMUNITY

# 2025



Sponsored by Friends of Rodman Public Library,  
Greater Alliance Foundation,  
and the University of Mount Union

# The Author



*Erica  
Bauermeister*

The following is taken from [ericabauermeister.com](http://ericabauermeister.com):

A friend suggested once that every author writes the same book over and over. “What is your book?” she asked. I thought about it, but the answer was simple. I write about the things we don’t pay attention to — our sense of smell, the food we cook, the houses we live in, the way our filters affect our perceptions of the world. I write about those quiet spaces between words, and all that goes on in them. But most of all, I write about compassion — because that is what teaches us to see everything else.

I have always wanted to be an author, but it was reading Tillie Olsen’s *I Stand Here Ironing* in college that showed me how a writer could take what many considered the “unimportant” parts of life and give them beauty, shine light on their meaning. I want to do that, I thought. But the only other thing I knew for certain back then was that I wasn’t grown up enough yet to write that kind of book.

So, I moved to Seattle, got married, and got a Ph.D. at the University of Washington. Frustrated by the lack of women authors in the curriculum, I co-authored *500 Great Books by Women: A Reader’s Guide* and *Let’s Hear It for the Girls: 375 Great Books for Readers 2-14*. In the process I read thousands of books, good and bad, which is probably the best education a writer can have. I still wrote books of my own, but thankfully that material wasn’t published. Time passed, as they say. I taught writing and literature. I had children. We lived in Italy for a couple years. We moved home. I stood by friends and parents as they faced death. I reno-

vated a house. Through it all, I wrote, and learned my craft.

And then one day I got an idea for a novel about eight people and their teacher in a cooking school. By then I’d pretty much given up on the idea of being a professional author, and I wrote it just for me. And so, of course — you can see the punch line coming — *The School of Essential Ingredients* was the book that ended up being published, three months before my 50th birthday.

I’m now the author of five novels including *The Scent Keeper*, which was a Reese’s Book Club pick, as well as a memoir, *House Lessons: Renovating a Life*. My most recent novel, *No Two Persons*, is a novel-in-stories, an exploration of how differently any one story can be perceived by the various readers who encounter it, and how differently each of those people is changed by its words. It is a novel inspired by all the readers and book clubs I’ve talked with, all the students I have taught. Each with their own opinions. Each with their own love of words.

## About the Book

***“That was the beauty of books, wasn’t it? They took you places you didn’t know you needed to go...”***

One book. Nine readers. Ten changed lives.

Alice has always wanted to be a writer. Her talent is innate, but her stories remain safe and detached, until a devastating event breaks her heart open, and she creates a stunning debut novel. Her words, in turn, find their way to readers, from a teenager hiding her homelessness, to a free diver pushing himself beyond endurance, an artist furious at the world around her, a bookseller in search of love, a widower devastated by grief.

Each one is drawn into Alice’s novel; each one discovers something different that alters their perspective, and presents new pathways forward for their lives.

Together, their stories reveal how books can affect us in the most beautiful and unexpected of ways — and how we are all more closely connected to one another than we might think.

# Cast of Characters

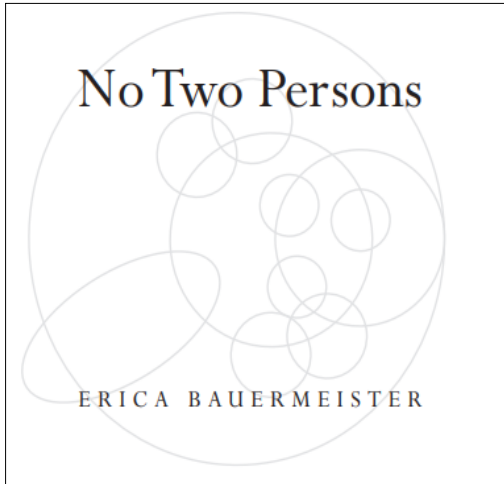
Here's a quick look at the characters we meet in *No Two Persons*:

- **Writer (Alice Wein):** whose painful past gives birth to the story – *Theo* – that changes her readers' lives.

Each reader represents a different life experience and perspective, allowing the novel to explore a wide range of human emotions and situations.

The readers include:

- **Assistant (Lara):** a new mother who's struggling to keep up with the demands of a job and motherhood.
- **Actor (Rowan):** who becomes an audiobook narrator to hide from the world after he develops a skin condition.
- **Artist (Miranda):** who is desperate for some inspiration.
- **Diver (Tyler):** who pushes his physical limits to escape the fears that call to him on the surface.
- **Teenager (Nola):** a homeless teenager who is trying to create a better life for herself.
- **Bookseller (Kit):** who is caught in an unfulfilling relationship.
- **Caretaker (William):** who escapes to a ghost town to mourn the loss of his wife.
- **Coordinator (Juliet):** who works in the movie business as an intimacy coordinator but seems to lack the same intimacy in her own life.
- **Agent (Madeline):** who has had a meaningful journey with books.



Chapter graphics at the beginning of each chapter of *No Two Persons* are intended to help readers visualize the interconnectedness of each of the main characters.

# Study Guide

Some questions to ponder while reading *No Two Persons*:

- ◆ The title *No Two Persons* comes from the quote “no two persons ever read the same book, or saw the same picture.” What does that mean to you?
- ◆ The opening line of *Theo* is “Wandering is a gift given only to the lost.” What does the phrase mean to the characters in *No Two Persons*? Have you ever felt like a wanderer?
- ◆ Which characters in *No Two Persons* elicited the strongest reactions in you? Why do you think that was?
- ◆ Which connections between characters surprised you most?
- ◆ Why do you think Lara, the literary assistant, has such a strong response to *Theo*?
- ◆ In the chapter “The Bookseller,” Kit says to Annalise: “I’m just saying that a character can be as real as a person. Or teach you as much, anyway.” Do you agree? If so, what fictional characters have been meaningful in your life?
- ◆ In “The Caretaker,” Abigail’s margin comments in her copy of *Theo* draw a connection between *Theo*, William and the mules in the mine. What do you think she was seeing?
- ◆ In “The Coordinator,” Juliet’s experience of *Theo* is affected because she listens to an audiobook. How do you think audiobooks affect our reading experiences?
- ◆ In “The Agent,” Nola and Madeline have a conversation about what kind of endings they like in books. What kind of endings do you prefer? What do you think about Madeline’s choice for her own ending?
- ◆ At the end of the book, Alice finds inspiration in an unlikely place. Where have you found inspiration?

February  
**18**  
Tuesday  
7 p.m.

## Community Event

At Rodman Public Library

Registration required  
at [rodmanlibrary.com](http://rodmanlibrary.com)

### “Perception is Reality: Looking Through the Lens of Mental Illness” with Shannon Ortiz

Each character in *No Two Persons* is dealing with some kind of trauma or grief.

To expand on those themes, Shannon Ortiz will present “Perception is Reality: Looking Through the Lens of Mental Illness” to kick off the 2025 One Book One Community programming on Tuesday, February 18 at 7 p.m.

The thought-provoking discussion in relation to *No Two Persons*, a novel that beautifully weaves together diverse, interlocking narratives, will explore the intricate ways mental illness, trauma, and suicide shape individual experiences and perspectives, emphasizing how no two journeys — or perceptions — are ever the same.

Drawing parallels between the book’s themes and real-life challenges, the program invites participants to delve deeper into how personal stories and struggles influence the way we see the world. This discussion creates a space for understanding, empathy, and connection, reminding us of the power in honoring each person’s unique reality.

Ortiz is the founder of Light after Loss @ The Hope and Healing Center, and now The Traumatic Loss Care (TLC) Institute. Shannon lost her husband, Craig, to suicide on August 3, 2016, leaving her and their two young girls behind. She was the director of counseling services at The University of Mount Union and the president of NAMI Stark County at the time. In 2018, she stepped down from her positions to heal and to help her two young daughters heal. As a result of her own difficult and lonely journey through suicide loss she wants to be a light for others to spreading hope for healing.



March  
**1**  
Saturday  
11 a.m.

## Community Event

At Rodman Public Library

Registration required  
at [rodmanlibrary.com](http://rodmanlibrary.com)

### “*No Two Persons*: A Conversation About Creating Art” with Chelsea Shar

One novel impacted the lives of ten characters in very different ways in *No Two Persons*.

To explore that theme of the 2025 One Book One Community selection, Chelsea Shar will lead “*No Two Persons: A Conversation About Creating Art*” at 11 a.m. on Saturday, March 1 inside the Rodman Auditorium.

The aim of the program is to be an insightful and inspiring discussion of *No Two Persons* as it delves into the complexities of creativity, artistic intention, and the profound impact art has on our lives.

Whether you're an artist seeking to connect with like-minded individuals or someone who simply appreciates the power of storytelling, this discussion will explore the themes of inspiration, the role of the artist, and how personal experiences shape the act of creation. Participants will reflect on the characters' journeys, the book’s exploration of art, and how the novel invites readers to think more deeply about the creative process.

The discussion will provide a space for open dialogue, where participants can exchange ideas, ask questions, and explore how art reflects and influences our lives.

Artists of all mediums are especially encouraged to attend. Whether you're a visual artist, writer, musician, or simply someone with a passion and appreciation for art, come be part of the conversation.

Shar is the video production teacher at Alliance High School and director of Spectrum Channel 1022. She began her career as a writer in the newspaper industry and has since expanded her expertise into video, audio, and written storytelling.



March  
**12**  
 Wednesday  
 7 p.m.

## Community Event

At Rodman Public Library

Registration required  
 at [rodmanlibrary.com](http://rodmanlibrary.com)

### “No Two Persons: A Novel Together” with Hagan Faye Whiteleather

Hagan Faye Whiteleather, professor of creative and critical writing at Kent State University, will lead an interactive book club experience at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 12 centered on story creation and personal narrative.



“No Two Persons: A Novel. Together” will explore the interconnected web of characters found in *No Two Persons*, the book’s short story cycle construction, and author Erica Bauermeister's ability to showcase the vast and varied community that art can create.

#### ONE BOOK ONE COMMUNITY SELECTION COMMITTEE

**Eric D. Taggart, chairman**  
 Director of  
 Rodman Public Library

**Cheryl Paine**  
 Retired Librarian from  
 University of Mount Union

**Chelsea Shar**  
 Visual Arts Teacher  
 at Alliance High School

**Marcia Addison**  
 Director of Library Services  
 at Stark State College

**Libby Patterson**  
 Retired Teacher from  
 Alliance High School

**Jack R. Weber Jr.**  
 Community Relations Manager  
 at Rodman Public Library

**Steve Daskalov**  
 Retired from Board  
 of Developmental Disabilities

**Carla Sarratt**  
 Director of Libraries  
 at University of Mount Union

**Michael Zerbe**  
 Associate Professor at  
 Stark State College

**JoAnn Jones**  
 Retired Teacher from  
 Sebring and Mount Union

**Louise Schwartz**  
 Retired Creative Director  
 for Advertising Agencies

March  
**15**  
 Saturday  
 11 a.m.

## Community Event

At Rodman Public Library

Registration required  
 at [rodmanlibrary.com](http://rodmanlibrary.com)

### “The Storyteller’s Story: How Audiobooks Are Made” with Dan Popp

The advent of audiobooks have made great literature like Erica Bauermeister’s *No Two Persons* accessible to wider audiences.



Those with vision problems can now enjoy novels at a push of a button. Drivers on long journeys can tick off the miles chapter by chapter. And adults who enjoyed being read bedtime stories read to them can do so again through audiobooks.

In *No Two Persons*, Rowan is an actor who leaves Hollywood due to a skin condition and finds success as a voice actor who has a knack for recording audiobooks.

Dan Popp, a veteran voice actor, will explain how the written words on a page become the spoken words in your ear when he presents “The Storyteller’s Story: How Audiobooks are Made” at 11 a.m. on Saturday, March 15.

Popp began a career in radio at age 16. In the late 1980s, he made the transition from broadcasting to voice acting and audio production, founding Akron-based Colors Audio in 1989.

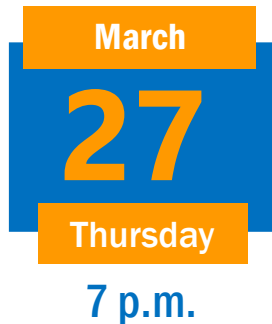
Through the transitions from tape to digital recording, and from fax-and-Fedex to electronic delivery, Dan has provided high quality sound for commercials, eLearning courses and more, including audiobooks.

In 2014 he began coaching the next generation of voice actors. Dan lives in Akron with his wife Vicky, and one too many cats.

# Author Visit

At Brush Performance Hall  
inside the Giese Center  
at Mount Union

No Registration Required



## Meet the Author, Erica Bauermeister

Erica Bauermeister, author of *No Two Persons*, will visit the Alliance community on Thursday, March 27 at 7 p.m. at Brush Performance Hall inside the Giese Performing Arts Center on the campus of the University of Mount Union.

Bauermeister will discuss her work, including the 2025 One Book One Community selection, take questions from the audience, and sign books following her remarks.

Books will be for sale at the event for those who do not already have a copy.

No registration is required to attend the free, public event.

### Key Honors for *No Two Persons*

- **Newsweek Best Books of 2023:** Listed as one of the best books of the year by Newsweek.
- **Indie Next Pick:** Chosen by independent bookstores as a recommended read.
- **Amazon Best Book of the Month:** Featured as a top pick on Amazon's book selection.

**Audie Award for Multi-voiced Performance (2024):** Won the award for its exceptional audiobook narration with multiple voices.

## Praise for *No Two Persons*

"Unforgettable. *No Two Persons* is a beautiful and haunting love letter to the redemptive power of stories and the impressive mark it leaves on readers. Bauermeister is a powerful storyteller who weaves a brilliant narrative, while painting portraits of compelling characters." —Kim Michele Richardson, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek*

"Wondrous and moving . . . a love letter to every writer, reader and human who has ever opened their heart to the transformative power of story." —JoAnne Tomkins, author of *What Comes After*

"This is a novel of almost unbearable truth and beauty and depth. Plot, character, prose—the perfect book." —Louisa Morgan, author of *A Secret History of Witches*

"As perfect a depiction of the power of story as one could ever find, or need." —Natalie Jenner, bestselling author of *The Jane Austen Society* and *Bloomsbury Girls*

"Gorgeous, nuanced, and intimate, *No Two Persons* will stay with you well after the last page is turned." —Anna Quinn, author of *The Night Child*

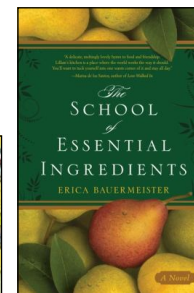
### Other Books by Bauermeister

500 Great Books  
by Women  
(1994)

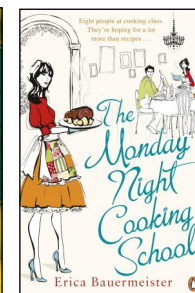


Let's Hear It  
For the Girls:  
375 Great Books  
For Readers 2-14  
(1997)

Credited as co-author



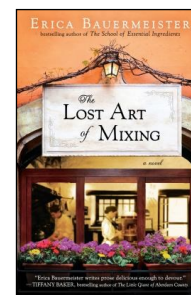
*The School of  
Essential Ingredients*  
(2009)



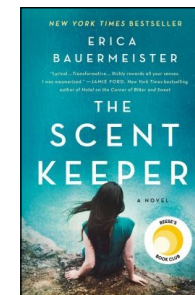
*The Monday Night  
Cooking School*  
(2010)



*Joy for Beginners*  
(2011)



*The Lost Art  
of Mixing*  
(2013)



*The Scent Keeper*  
(2019)



*House Lessons:  
Renovating a Life*  
(2020)

## ONE BOOK ONE COMMUNITY HISTORY

One Book One Community was established in 2004 to involve the citizens in and around Alliance in reading the same book at the same time. Past titles include:

- ◆ 2004 – *The Color of Water* by James McBride
- ◆ 2005 – *Riding the Bus with My Sister* by Rachel Simon
- ◆ 2006 – *Real Time* by Pnina Moed Kass
- ◆ 2007 – *Beyond the River* by Ann Hagedorn
- ◆ 2008 – *Plenty* by Alisa Smith and J.B. MacKinnon
- ◆ 2009 – *Blood Done Sign My Name* by Timothy Tyson
- ◆ 2010 – *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin
- ◆ 2011 – *Make the Impossible Possible* by Bill Strickland
- ◆ 2012 – *One Amazing Thing* by Chitra Divakaruni
- ◆ 2013 – *Thunder Dog* by Michael Hingson
- ◆ 2014 – *The Essay* by Robin Yocum
- ◆ 2015 – *Lisa's Story: The Other Shoe* by Tom Batiuk
- ◆ 2016 – *A Deadly Wandering* by Matt Richtel
- ◆ 2017 – *The Life We Bury* by Allen Eskens
- ◆ 2018 – *What Stands in a Storm* by Kim Cross
- ◆ 2019 – *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood
- ◆ 2020 – *Orphan Train* by Christina Baker Kline
- ◆ 2022 – *A Most Beautiful Thing* by Arshay Cooper
- ◆ 2023 – *The Children's Blizzard* by Melanie Benjamin

