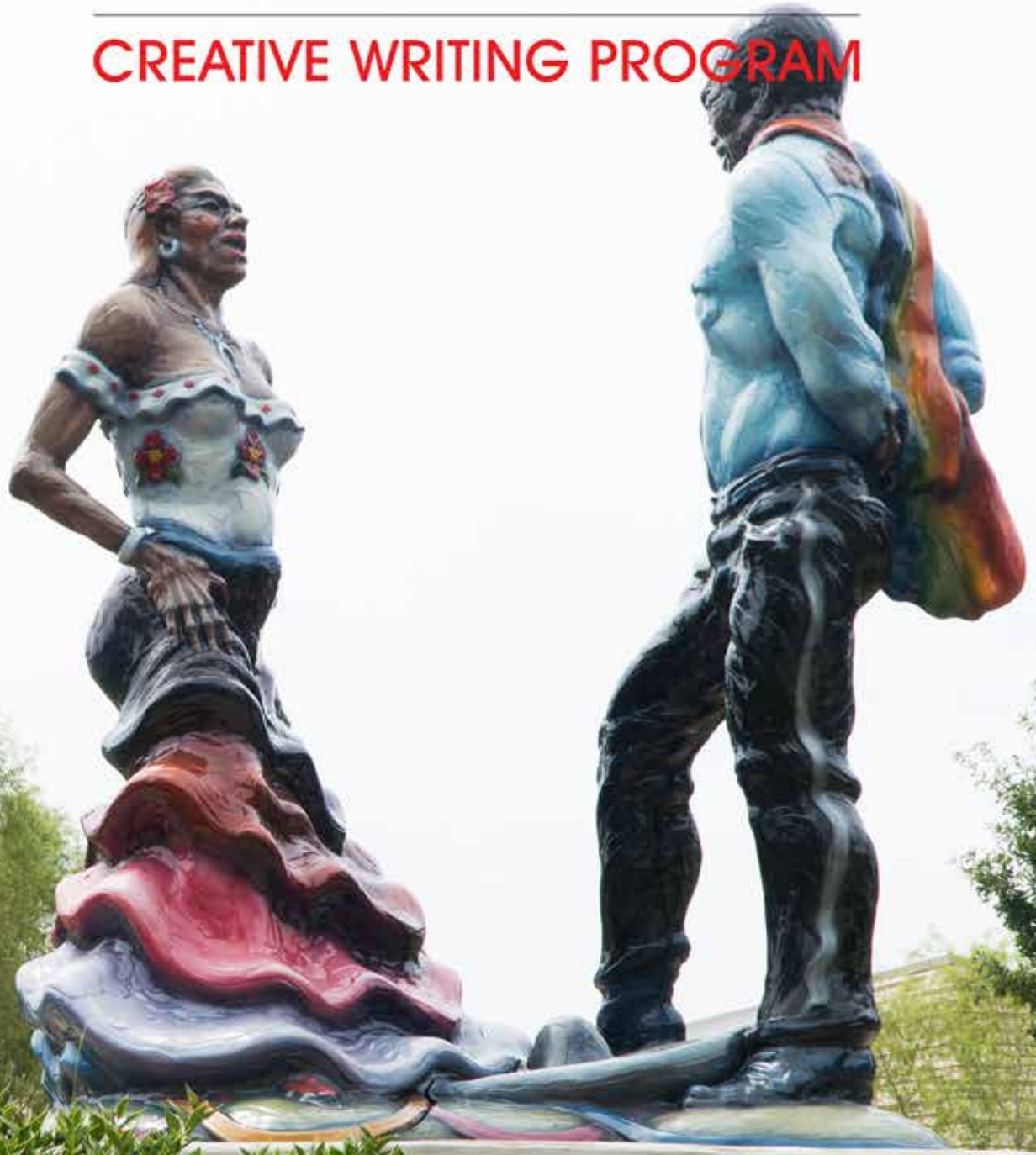


UNIVERSITY of
HOUSTON

CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM



2019 Newsletter



Inside:

Program News.....	6
Faculty News	7
Student News	9
Readings, Publications and Community	13
Alumni News	25

Dr. Antonio D. Tillis
Dean, CLASS

Dr. James Kastely
English Dept. Chair

Alex Parsons
CWP Director

Giuseppe Taurino
Associate Director

In Memory of Tony Hoagland (Poetry Faculty)

1953 - 2018



Lawrence

On two occasions in the past twelve months
I have failed, when someone at a party
spoke of him with a dismissive scorn,
to stand up for D. H. Lawrence,

a man who burned like an acetylene torch
from one end to the other of his life.
These individuals, whose relationship to literature
is approximately that of a tree shredder

to stands of old-growth forest,
these people leaned back in their chairs,
bellies full of dry white wine and the ovum of some
foreign fish,
and casually dropped his name

the way pygmies with their little poison spears
strut around the carcass of a fallen elephant.
“O Elephant,” they say,
“you are not so big and brave today!”

It’s a bad day when people speak of their superiors
with a contempt they haven’t earned,
and it’s a sorry thing when certain other people

don’t defend the great dead ones
who have opened up the world before them.
And though, in the catalogue of my betrayals,
this is a fairly minor entry,

I resolve, if the occasion should recur,
to uncheck my tongue and say, “I love the spectacle
of maggots condescending to a corpse,”
or, “You should be so lucky in your brainy, blood-
less life

as to deserve to lift
just one of D. H. Lawrence’s urine samples
to your arid psychobiographic
theory-tainted lips.”

Or maybe I’ll just take the shortcut
between the spirit and the flesh,
and punch someone in the face,
because human beings haven’t come that far

in their effort to subdue the body,
and we still walk around like zombies
in our dying, burning world,
able to do little more

than fight, and fuck, and crow,
something Lawrence wrote about
in such a manner
as to make us seem magnificent.

In Memory of Paul Otremba (PhD, 2010) *1978 – 2019*



Constellation

It's the space between them we can count on,
more constant than the light we claim
our fortunes by, and because we've proved
this janky wooden plank in the argument
we can proceed another premise, one body's-length
farther along the surface. You could bet
your hemlock on it, or the next timid step
across the fogged-up mirror of the iced-over lake.
The state is ill; therefore, I am ill.
Hippocrates thought of the crab
because of its legs reaching out like tendrils,
like gossip's sideways whispering
through the crowd of swollen flesh.

Then leaving my surgeon's office
I had to step over the splayed fingers
of a spidering slick of oil in the parking lot,
which I tried to read like the lines in my palm.
My dreams, too, have become nebulous,
intense, and frequent, and just after waking
they take on the blankness of the bayou's face
when the stars black out behind clouds.
It's like a joke from some low-grade
and obvious comedy—how do you not get
out of the way of an oncoming steamroller?

I am learning the difference between urgency
and importance. Although, they often meet
at the more accusatory places. To the monarch
butterfly breaking loose of her chrysalis,
the twitter of the state is urgent.
The icy-blue eye of the flipped-over iceberg
has been here long enough to know what's important.
I place my hand against the window
and I'm met by the dark's aged coolness.
The light passing through me in many strands from
the cluster of bees set in the night sky happened so
fast and so many years ago,
there wasn't even a thought of me being born.

-From B O D Y - November 2018

From the Director



Fellow Writers,

Tony Hoagland was one of the best teachers I've known, though any statement about his quality is deficient, positing me at the brick limit of language. While ill with pancreatic cancer Tony continued to run classes, fling his singularly funny and random postcards about like confetti, and write. He left us with so much and this, ironically, magnifies his absence. One of his final accomplishments in his waning months was his book *The Art of Voice*, which he wrote with one of our graduates, Kay Cosgrove, and which was dedicated to students of poetry, particularly his. He was acutely aware of the value of poetry and its relevance to the world, a case he argued in his funny and fearless poems and many essays, and a case sustained by the poets and writers who count him within their constellations of influence. He was that star that seemed to wink a lot. I will miss him, like many of you. Worse still, I

could write much the same sentiments about Paul Otremba, who also died. Paul was a magnificent human being and dear soul who carried the tradition of writing fine poetry, worked as a stellar professor, and also embodied a generous humor and spirit that drew people to him and inspired friends and students alike. It is hard to countenance the absence of either poet.

Tony termed metaphor the raw uranium of poetry and I've always loved this because it gets at the difficulty in handling it. Take the state of the Roy G. Cullen Building. Post-Harvey it's flooded another five times, and been scorched by fire. As I write this our home is a shell filled with discarded literary journals, boxed books, and high stacks of books desperately labeled "FREE!"; in short, the rubbly aftermath of a literary diaspora. It would be easy to employ this image as a tired metaphor for dour observations about the role of the arts in our society, the flood-plain situation of liberal arts in the cityscape of academia, and the dearth of funding for students, particularly those in the arts. Tony would likely suggest this to be lazy thinking, or cliché, or compare it to cold oatmeal fortified with too much fiber. A more interesting read might be this: That this grand building, for all the ruin, is capacious, a space that holds remnants of our accreted history like the fossils embedded in its limestone cladding. As we Marie Kondo'd the detritus of decades, all sorts of missives and keepsakes surfaced. The water-ruined carpeting was, for example, memorialized by Donald Barthelme in a memo thirty years ago: "The Committee notes that no world-class Department can be expected to function adequately while to-ing and fro-ing over said carpet, whose blotches, stains, irruptions, and rips tend to induce depression and gloomy thoughts." Post-cards echoed faculty contretemps and pledges, Ray Carver filed for reimbursements that were not timely. Now, Roy Cullen is a place of suggestive silence, all the poems and stories workshopped within transmuted into some analogue of those sea shells, a sonic ambience. The artifacts and feel of the empty building variously communicate a broad continuum. Ruin, yes, but echoes of creative destruction, sustained enthusiasm and collaboration, a space of amplification.

The emptied building also suggests a past, discrete dimension to the Program, the collective housed at UH, of a piece with the academy, defined by professors and students. As we relocate, ostensibly for two years while Old Roy enjoys several rounds of not-so-elective surgery, we have the chance to appraise this shape. While we are elsewhere, we can think on this as an invitation to be out in the world, off-campus, working in Houston and our other communities to make the same case that defined so many years of Tony's life: that writing matters, that our storytelling endures because of its relevance. Through it all, we will continue to thrive and expand. Our return to Roy Cullen should remind us that it ought not to be too comfortable a fit, even as we'll

find it repaired and serviceable.

And we do continue to thrive and expand. To wit: This year we welcome two poets, both greatly talented and funny: Francine Harris and Erin Belieu. They will bring fresh perspectives, aesthetics, and energy to our faculty. Added to this we have several new, community-based fellowships that link us to Brazos Bookstore, Inprint, 9th Wonder, and Arte Público Press, with more to come. Like last year, we have fully funded 100% of our incoming graduate students with competitive fellowships. Our undergraduate literary conference, Bold-face, continues to thrive, as do our journals *Gulf Coast* and *Glass Mountain*. And so, while the Program will return to Roy Cullen, when we do we will inhabit and be defined a space greater than what is suggested by this single university building, as it should be.

I'll leave you with a Tony poem.

Lawrence

On two occasions in the past twelve months
I have failed, when someone at a party
spoke of him with a dismissive scorn,
to stand up for D. H. Lawrence,

a man who burned like an acetylene torch
from one end to the other of his life.
These individuals, whose relationship to literature
is approximately that of a tree shredder


to stands of old-growth forest,
these people leaned back in their chairs,
bellies full of dry white wine and the ovum of some foreign fish,
and casually dropped his name

the way pygmies with their little poison spears
strut around the carcass of a fallen elephant.
"O Elephant," they say,
"you are not so big and brave today!"

It's a bad day when people speak of their superiors
with a contempt they haven't earned,
and it's a sorry thing when certain other people

don't defend the great dead ones
who have opened up the world before them.
And though, in the catalogue of my betrayals,
this is a fairly minor entry,

I resolve, if the occasion should recur,
to uncheck my tongue and say, "I love the spectacle
of maggots condescending to a corpse,"
or, "You should be so lucky in your brainy, bloodless life



as to deserve to lift
just one of D. H. Lawrence's urine samples
to your arid psychobiographic
theory-tainted lips."

Or maybe I'll just take the shortcut
between the spirit and the flesh,
and punch someone in the face,
because human beings haven't come that far

in their effort to subdue the body,
and we still walk around like zombies
in our dying, burning world,
able to do little more

than fight, and fuck, and crow,
something Lawrence wrote about
in such a manner
as to make us seem magnificent.

Faculty News



Robert Boswell led two workshops in the French Alps for Writing by Writers, where he led a hike at high altitude and, overall, had (along with Toni Nelson) an amazing time. “The only bad thing about Europe,” Boz reports, “is that the Astros games start at 2:00 a.m.”



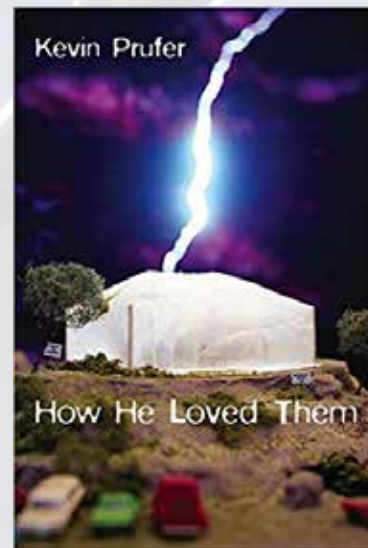
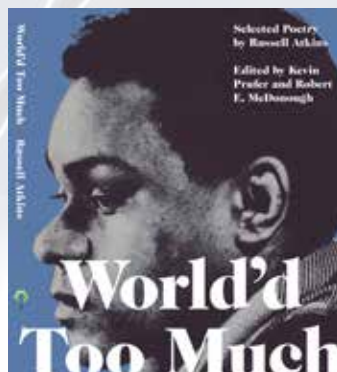
Audrey Colombe has been working with the *Glass Mountain* students and their new online publication, *Shards*—as well as the 11th annual Boldface Conference which took place this past May. Glass Mountain took ten students to AWP this year, and worked with a group of students from the business college on how to advertise the conference and improve some of the features on the organization’s websites, glassmountainmag.com and boldfaceconference.com. She is also working on a book, a guide to publishing student literary magazines. In her perfect universe, she would also be designing creative writing course software, but there are only so many hours in the day. When she joined the poetry hiring committee in late December, she had the honor of helping to bring an array of amazing candidates to UH--which resulted in welcoming two fantastic poets to the CWP faculty.

Antonya Nelson edited the anthology *New Stories From the Midwest, 2018* (New American Press).

Nick Flynn returned from sabbatical in 2019 to teach his long-running interdisciplinary workshop (this incarnation titled: *Text as Performance, Text as Object*) out of the Fine Arts building. The students, a mix of poets and fiction writers, explored various modes of presenting their work, from collaborations with live music, to projections of images / text, to solo / group performance, to filmmaking, to object-making. In September (2019) Graywolf will publish his latest collection of poems, *I Will Destroy You*. In April 2020, the Counter Current Festival Houston will present his performance piece *Blake & the Apocalypse*, based on William Blake’s visionary and largely unread epic masterpiece *Vala*.



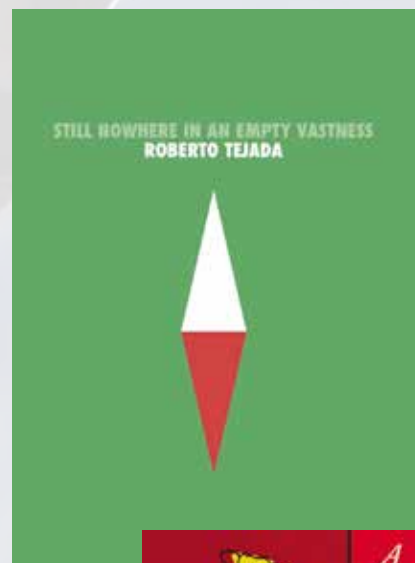
Kevin Prufer's most recent book, *How He Loved Them* (Four Way Books), was longlisted for the Pulitzer Prize, won the Julie Suk Award for the best book from the American literary press, and was a shortlist finalist for The Rilke Prize for the best poetry book from a mid-career American Poet. Kevin also co-edited *World'd Too Much: Selected Poems of Russell Atkins*, which Cleveland State will publish this summer.



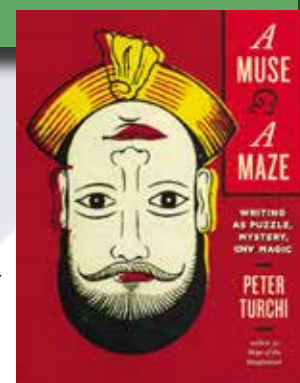
Martha Serpas did not have a baby, did publish a few poems, and has a book coming out with LSU Press in 2020. But the most important thing she accomplished this past year was moving her 94 year-old mother from Texas back to Thibodaux, Louisiana, so she could see her 98 year-old sister, Marion, again in this life. Nita Cangemi Serpas, who taught Tony Hoagland senior English at South Lafourche High School (“but I didn’t teach him much!”), traveled on LSU’s Lear jet (as does Coach O, whom she also taught). Martha called her with grammar questions almost to the present day.



Northwestern University’s Open Door Archive has now launched the digital reissue of *Mandorla: nueva escritura de las Americas / New Writing from the Americas*, the journal of poetry and translation founded by **Roberto Tejada**, co-edited with Kristin Dykstra and Gabriel Bernal Granados (1991-2013), celebrated in *Spaces for Exchange: Symposium on Mandorla*, a series of talks, conversations and readings (Northwestern University; October 12, 2018). In the spring of 2019, Tejada gave poetry readings and art history lectures as the Willson Center Distinguished Lecturer at University of Georgia, Athens (Lamar Dodd School of Art, College of Environment + Design, and Creative Writing Program; January 24, 2019); in The Poets & Writers Series at Temple University (MFA Creative Writing Program; January 31, 2019); in the Critical Dialogue Series at Temple University (Tyler School of Art; April 17, 2019) and at the symposium *Alternative Art Histories: Future Directions in U.S. Latinx Art* (Williams College, The Clark Institute; May 3, 2019). He served as faculty in the 2019 Summer Writing Program at Naropa University; and has begun to read from his new book of essays *Still Nowhere in an Empty Vastness* (Noemi, 2019), most recently at Poets House in New York (July 18, 2019).



Peter Turchi spoke at a conference on War and Literature at the United States Air Force Academy and at an international workshop for magicians at Hollywood’s Magic Castle, where he saw things he can’t tell you about. He achieved a career milestone when a quotation from his book *A Muse and A Maze* was the solution to the *New York Times* acrostic (December 9, 2018). His current projects include a book of related novellas and a collection of essays.



Student News



Theodora Bishop's (PhD, Poetry) was invited to read her work at Warren Community College for its Visiting Authors Series (Washington, NJ). She was also invited to speak on the panel, "Not a Wasted Word: A Practical Field Guide to Plotting and Structuring Novellas" at AWP (Portland, OR). Her poem, "Matryoshka Doll," has been translated into Polish; it and its translation will appear in *The Anthology of Polish-American Writers*. She has poems forthcoming in *North American Poetry Review* and *Crab Creek Review*, as well as an essay forthcoming in *The Writer's Chronicle*.



Despy Boutris (MFA, Poetry) published poems in *Palette Poetry*, *Third Coast*, and *Prairie Schooner* this year, and her manuscript is a semifinalist for the *YesYes Books* Pamet River Prize (winner to be announced in September).



Justin Jannise (PhD, Poetry) has poems forthcoming in *Copper Nickel* and *New Ohio Review*.



Carolann Caviglia Madden (PhD, Poetry) won the 2019 Inprint Verlaine Prize for Poetry, and was a finalist for this year's *Iowa Review* Awards in poetry. In June, she completed her Fulbright at NUI Galway in Galway, Ireland, and will be taking up a research fellowship for 2019-2020 in the William J. Hill Texas Artisans and Artists Archive at Bayou Bend, a branch of the MFAH.

Kaj Tanaka's (PhD, Fiction) story "The Hair Child" was reprinted in the *Best Microfiction*, 2019 anthology. And his story "He Was Trying to Say Something and He Couldn't Get It Out" made *Wigleaf's* top 50 stories of 2019. He also won the Inprint Donald Barthelme Prize in Fiction.



This past year, **Cait Weiss Orcutt** (PhD, Poetry) contributed a chapter to Teachers and Writers Collaborative's new pedagogy book *Spellbound: The Art of Teaching Poetry*, edited by Matthew Burgess. Her reviews of books by Shelley Wong and Stacey Waite appeared in *Quarterly West* and *Borderlands*, and her poems were published in *The Minnesota Review*, *Puerto Del Sol*, *Prairie Schooner* and *Quarter After Eight*. Cait spent this past year leading eight weekly community classes at sites ranging from the Menil to the Jewish Community Center to Grackle and Grackle and facilitating creative workshops for the Houston Flood Museum, Writers in the Schools, the Junior Current Literature Club of Houston and Harris Health while serving as the graduate advisor for Glass Mountain and the Conference Coordinator for Boldface.



Charlotte Wyatt (MFA, Fiction) published her first story, "Hitchhiker," in *Joyland*. Her novel manuscript was a finalist for the Texas Writers' League Fiction contest.



Graduates

Fall 2018

Dylan Walsh, PhD Fiction

Spring 2019

Jeff Albers, PhD Fiction

Erika Jo Brown, PhD Poetry

Will Burns, PhD Fiction

Chelsea Brennan DesAutels, MFA Poetry

Joshua Foster, PhD Fiction

Saira Nadeem, MFA Fiction

Michele Nereim, PhD Fiction

Brenden Oliva, PhD Fiction

Michelle Orsi, MFA Poetry

Georgia Pearle, PhD Poetry

Dallas Saylor, MFA Poetry

Luisa Muradyan-Tannahill, PhD Poetry

New Students

2019 - 2020

Fiction

Dan Hunt, MFA
BA, University of Delaware
JD, Villanova University

Aris Kian, MFA
BA, University of Houston

Daniel Kennedy, PhD
BA, Boston University
MFA, Virginia Tech

Katie Milligan, MFA
BA, Dartmouth College

Kim Philley, PhD
BA, George Mason University
MFA, University of Virginia

Ernie Wang, PhD
MFA, University of Nevada,
Las Vegas
BS, Cornell University

Poetry

Erik Brown, MFA
BA, University of Wisconsin-
Madison

Joshua English, PhD
BA, Montclair State University
MFA, University of South
Carolina

Christopher Flakus, MFA
BA, University of Houston

Joshua Gregory, MFA
BA, Swarthmore College
ThM, Harvard University

Gabriella Iacono, MFA
BA, College of Staten Island/
CUNY

Kaitlin Rizzo, MFA
BA, Florida State University

Giovanni Singleton, PhD
MFA, New College of Cali-
fornia
BA, American University

Daniel Tompkins, MFA
BA, Columbia University

Writing Prizes

*Inprint and the University of Houston's
Creative Writing Program
are pleased to announce the writing prize winners
for 2018 – 2019*

INPRINT ALEXANDER PRIZE IN FICTION

Rachel Ballenger

INPRINT VERLAINE PRIZE IN POETRY

Carolann Madden

INPRINT MARION BARTHELME PRIZE IN CREATIVE WRITING

Alex McElroy

INPRINT DONALD BARTHELME PRIZE IN NONFICTION

Brendan Stephens

INPRINT DONALD BARTHELME PRIZE IN FICTION

Onyinye Ihezukwu and Kaj Tanaka

INPRINT DONALD BARTHELME PRIZE IN POETRY

Erika Jo Brown and Paige Quiñones

INPRINT MARION BARTHELME GULF COAST EDITOR'S PRIZE

Justin Jannise

ACADEMY OF AMERICAN POETS PRIZE

Emelie Griffin

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!

JUDGES

MARION BARTHELME PRIZE

SEAN BISHOP (UH Alum)

POETRY

GABRIELLE CALVOCORESSI

FICTION

VANESSA HUA

NONFICTION

MIKE SCALISE

Poison Pen Reading Series



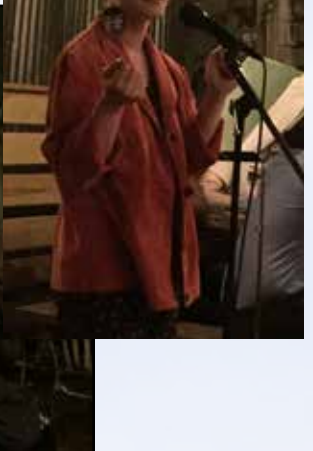
Always on the last Thursday of the month, the Poison Pen Reading Series features nationally renowned writers and local talent, as well as members of the University of Houston community. Now in its 13th year, Poison Pen continues with its sometimes raunchy, rarely class, but always exceptional ensemble of readers and audience.



This past year, we slurped jello shots, cooled off with ice pops, and more than once braved the rain, while welcoming visiting writers Adrian Blevins, Travis Mossotti, Jason Koo, Malachi Black, Ryan Black, and Esther Lin. Also featured were: local writers Ayokunle Falomo, Loyce Gayo, Rodrigo Hasbún, Bryan Washington, Ryan Call, Chris Cander, Tracy Thiebault, Matty Glasgow, Patricia Garcia and Katerhine Center; UH visiting faculty Jennifer Chang and Chinelo Okparanta; UH students Paige Quinones, Kaj Tanaka, Michelle Orsi, Obi Umeozor, Charlotte Wyatt, and Brittney Crowell. For the November reading, we hosted our first Friendsgiving reading featuring writers from Houston literary orgs Write About Now, Tintero Project, Gulf Coast, Glass Mountain, and VIP.



Poison Pen is organized by Giuseppe Taurino (UH MFA, 2006), Analicia Sotelo (UH MFA, 2012) UH PhD student Erika Jo Brown, and was founded by Scott Repass (co-owner of Poison Pen), Casey Fleming (UH MFA, 2007), David Maclean (UH PhD, 2009), and Greg Oaks (UH PhD, 2001).



Inprint News



Directly serving more than 15,000 people of all ages annually, Inprint is Houston's major literary arts nonprofit organization with programs and events that celebrate the power of creative writing. Through both of our nationally renowned reading series, fully-subscribed writing workshops, vital community writing activities, innovative literary collaborations, longstanding support for graduate students in creative writing, a podcast, and more, Inprint works hard to transform Houston into a diverse and thriving literary metropolis.

Since Inprint was founded in 1983, supporting and being a champion of the graduate students at the University of Houston Creative Writing Program (UH CWP) has been one of the organization's core priorities. Inprint is excited about another great year ahead and will proudly provide fellowships, prizes, and other support to these Program students. Last year alone the Inprint fellows and juried prize winners received \$199,500, and over the years Inprint has awarded more than \$4 million to over 500 graduate students at the UH CWP. Inprint will also once again provide an annual grant to *Gulf Coast: A Journal of Literature & Fine Arts*, helping to ensure that the student run journal continues to thrive; to date Inprint's support of Gulf



Coast totals more than \$250,000. The Inprint Fund, managed by the UH CWP and another way Inprint's support enhances the lives of the graduate students, provided more than \$29,000 last year to fund one dissertation fellowship and four author events.

Another significant way Inprint continues to support UH CWP graduate students and alumni is by providing employment and creative writing teaching opportunities. Inprint annually hires local writers and UH CWP students and alumni to teach 8-10 week



Inprint Writers Workshops, 1-2 day weekend Inprint Intensive Workshops, and 1-2 hour Inprint Writing Workouts, all open to the public, as well as tuition-free community workshops for K-12 school teachers, senior citizens, hospital employees, veterans, the incarcerated, and more. These rewarding teaching opportunities help individuals of all backgrounds to become better writers and share their stories. UH CWP students and graduates also serve as Inprint Poetry Buskers, a team of writers who demystify and spread the

joy of poetry by writing free poems on demand with typewriters at 15+ festivals and special events throughout the city annually. Inprint also now has an active team of Spanish Inprint Poetry Buskers, many of whom are UH Spanish creative writing graduate students. Additionally, Inprint is thrilled to have David Nikityn as the 2019/2020 Inprint/UH CWP Intern. Dave officially joins the Inprint team in August and will be working on a variety of the organization's program, development, and marketing initiatives with the staff.

The Inprint Margaret Root Brown Reading Series, now entering its 39th season and presented in association with the UH CWP and Brazos Bookstore, makes it possible for thousands of Houstonians to meet and hear from the world's most accomplished writers and thinkers. Over the years, the series has featured approximately 400 great writers of fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction. The 2019/2020 season features a line-up of terrific authors, including National Book Award winners Ta-Nehisi Coates, Louise Erdrich, and Colum McCann, National Book Award finalists Elizabeth Gilbert, Carmen Maria Machado, and Emily St. John Mandel, Pulitzer Prize winner Colson Whitehead, and MacArthur fellow Natalie Diaz. Readings this coming season will take place at Cullen Performance Hall on the UH campus, at the Alley Theatre in downtown, and at Stude Concert Hall at Rice University. UH CWP students receive complimentary tickets when available, and one or two writers each year give free craft talks on the UH and other area campuses. UH CWP faculty are often asked to serve as on-stage interviewers for the readings.

The Inprint Margaret Root Brown Reading Series is complimented by other free Inprint readings, including the Inprint *Cool Brains!* Series, a reading series featuring the nation's top middle-grade authors; *Escritores en la casa*, a Spanish language reading series featuring visiting and local authors; and First Fridays, the longest running poetry reading series in Houston featuring local poets hosted at Inprint House.

For more information on all of these programs and others, including the Inprint Writing Cafe, the Inprint Book Club, *Ink Well: A Podcast*, the online archive of past Inprint readings by renowned authors, and more, visit www.inprintheouston.org, where you can also join the email list and follow Inprint on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.



BRAZOS

BOOKSTORE



Brazos Bookstore, Houston's premier literary bookseller since 1974, features an eclectic mix of literary fiction, general interest nonfiction, art/architecture monographs, kids books, and sideline items. Through carefully crafted curation, Brazos proudly emphasizes independent publishers and literature in translation. It is our mission to ensure that every title on hand is something that either staff or customers feel strongly about.

As the arts become increasingly crucial to Houston's identity, Brazos continues to adapt and grow as a central cultural hub. The store is honored to partner with Houston's leading

literary, arts, and community organizations and are constantly expanding the reach of these partnerships. Notable among these are the University of Houston Creative Writing Program, Inprint, Gulf Coast, Houston Public Library, Buffalo Bayou Partnership and more!

Brazos Bookstore's event programming ranges from local authors to internationally renowned figures. As one of the premier author venues in the South, Brazos features over 300 events each year, in-store and at a variety of offsite venues throughout the city. Recent notable authors include Ocean Vuong, Bryan Washington, David Sedaris, Annie Leibovitz, Celeste Ng, Patton Oswalt, Barbara Epler, Madeleine Albright, Valerie Jarrett, Marlon James, Anne Lamott, Alan Lightman, Lacy Johnson, and Hanif Abdurraqib.

It is an honor to serve the reading and writing community of Houston and we can't wait to see you in-store! Whether you're stopping by to catch your favorite author, seeking a recommendation from our knowledgeable booksellers, or just perusing our shelves, we welcome you to join us in the joy of all things books!

Upcoming Notable Events:

In-store

August 16 | Jia Tolentino
September 12 | Conor Bracken (UH CWP Alum)
September 16 | Dina Nayeri
September 23 | Attica Locke
October 4 | Mark Haber
October 9 | Annalee Newitz
October 23 | Timothy Egan
November 6 | Sid Balman Jr.

Ticketed

October 2 | Kristin Hannah
October 8 | Malcom Gladwell
October 30 | Pete Souza
November 7 | Gloria Steinem

Come visit us! 2421 Bissonnet Street | 713-523-0701 | brazosbookstore.com | [@brazosbookstore](https://www.instagram.com/brazosbookstore)

Writers in the Schools



Since 1983, Writers in the Schools (WITS) has brought professional writers into classrooms, fostering the creativity, critical thinking, and adaptive learning skills that students need to succeed in the 21st century. WITS offers creative writing, digital storytelling, and performance poetry workshops in schools, museums, hospitals, community centers, parks, libraries, and summer camps, meeting students where they are with innovative learning strategies. WITS also provides professional development opportunities for educators, giving them the tools to engage their students in the power of reading and writing.

This year, WITS was delighted to welcome new writers from the University of Houston Creative Writing Program to our teaching roster: Devereux Fortuna, Hunter Gilson, Onyinye Ihezukwu, and Colby Ornell. WITS was also glad to onboard Laura Biagi, Emelie Griffin, Nick Rattner, and Obi Umeozor as new instructors in our summer camp programs. Many congratulations to WITS writers Onyinye Ihezukwu, Brendan Stephens, Erika Jo Brown, Paige Quiñones, and Justin Jannise on winning 2019 Inprint Prizes. We are grateful for our WITS writers who infuse the classroom with fun and engaging activities and create a rigorous and celebratory learning experience for our students.

WITS has been hard at work this year helping to cultivate and advocate for Houston's literary landscape. In partnership with Houston Public Library and the City of Houston, WITS established the Houston Youth Poet Laureate program to identify young writers committed to civic and community engagement, poetry and performance, and education across Houston. Jackson Neal, a former undergraduate of the University of Houston, was named Houston's fourth Youth Poet Laureate. He was also named the regional Southwest Youth Poet Laureate. He will be attending the University of Wisconsin—Madison this fall as part of the First Wave Scholarship Program for spoken word and performance poetry.

Outside of the classroom, WITS fosters appreciation for creative writing among the general public. In celebration of National Poetry Month, WITS collaborated with Buffalo Bayou Partnership to create the interac-

tive art project, Rain Poems. When rain soaked the sidewalks along the trails of Buffalo Bayou Park, excerpts from student poems appeared as if by magic, offering words of resilience to passersby. WITS also collaborated with H-E-B to produce pop-up poetry posters in several area stores featuring student poems which play on the sensory pleasures of mangos, cookies, flowers, and more, turning a typical trip to the grocery store into a celebration of language and color.

In addition to enhancing our local literary community, WITS leads an international network of sister programs through the WITS Alliance. Each year, the WITS Alliance has a strong national presence at the Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP) Conference, fostering discussions on key issues in the literary community. Many of our writers have gone on to establish their own WITS programs as well, and we are happy to support them as members of the WITS Alliance.

For the last 36 years, WITS has helped fuel Houston's creative economy by giving creative individuals the opportunity not only to earn a living, but also to make a difference in the lives of Houston students. Through the strength and talent of our writers, we have been able to expand and grow our program and now reach over 57,000 students each year. We recognize the success of our organization depends on the quality of our writers. WITS employs and trains approximately 200 writers and teachers each year, giving them the opportunity for professional growth, to build new networks, and to connect with Greater Houston community.

For more information about WITS, including how to apply for a teaching position, please visit us at witshouston.org or call 713-523-3877.

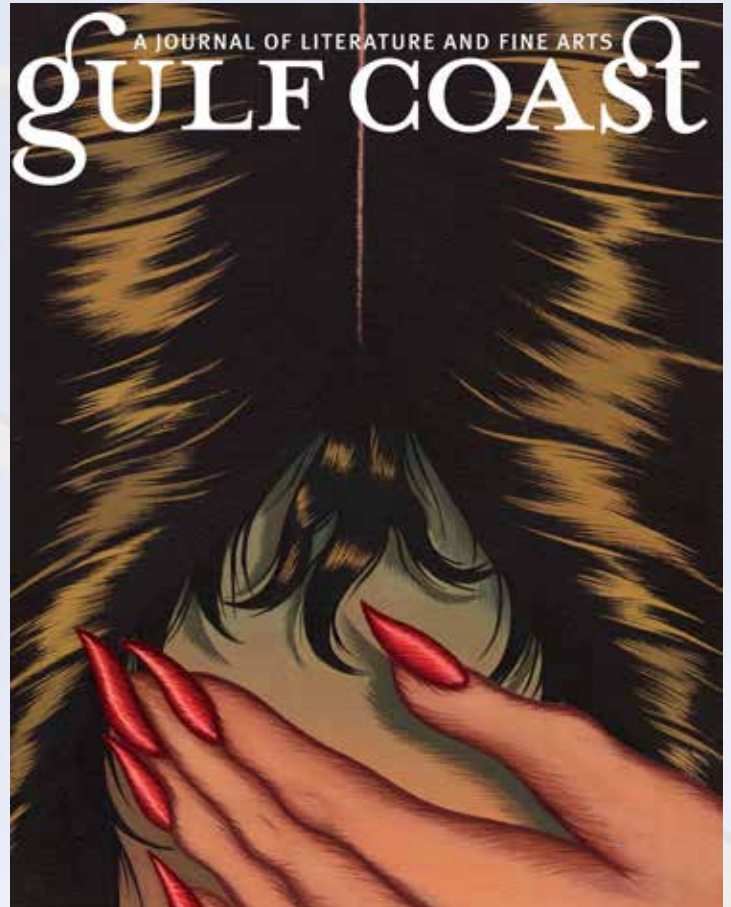


Gulf Coast

A Journal of Literature and Fine Arts

2018-2019 was an incredibly strong year for *Gulf Coast*. We launched partnerships with Lawndale Art Center and Texas Book Festival, heavily increased our subscriptions and contest submissions (as well as attendance at our Reading Series), welcomed Sharon Olds and Justin Torres to Houston, and — with the help of University of Houston business school students — improved many areas of *Gulf Coast*'s organization and functionality.

Looking back, we were thrilled to be able to continue our mission to support art and literature of consequence. With beautiful cover art by Julie Curtiss, Issue 31.1 included poetry by Hanif Abdurraqib and Tiana Clark, fiction by Joanna Novak and Kate Wisel, nonfiction by Jessie van Eerden, a roundtable on science and poetry led by Martin Rock, and art writing by Josh Pazda and Alan Ruiz. In April, we were thrilled to launch Issue 31.2, which included fiction by Matt Bell, poetry by Sharon Olds and Diane Seuss, nonfiction by Emma Eisenberg, art writing by Maria Brito, a craft essay by Tony Hoagland, translations by Mary Jo Bang and Valzhyna Mort, and a special portfolio of queer writers, curated by Justin Torres.



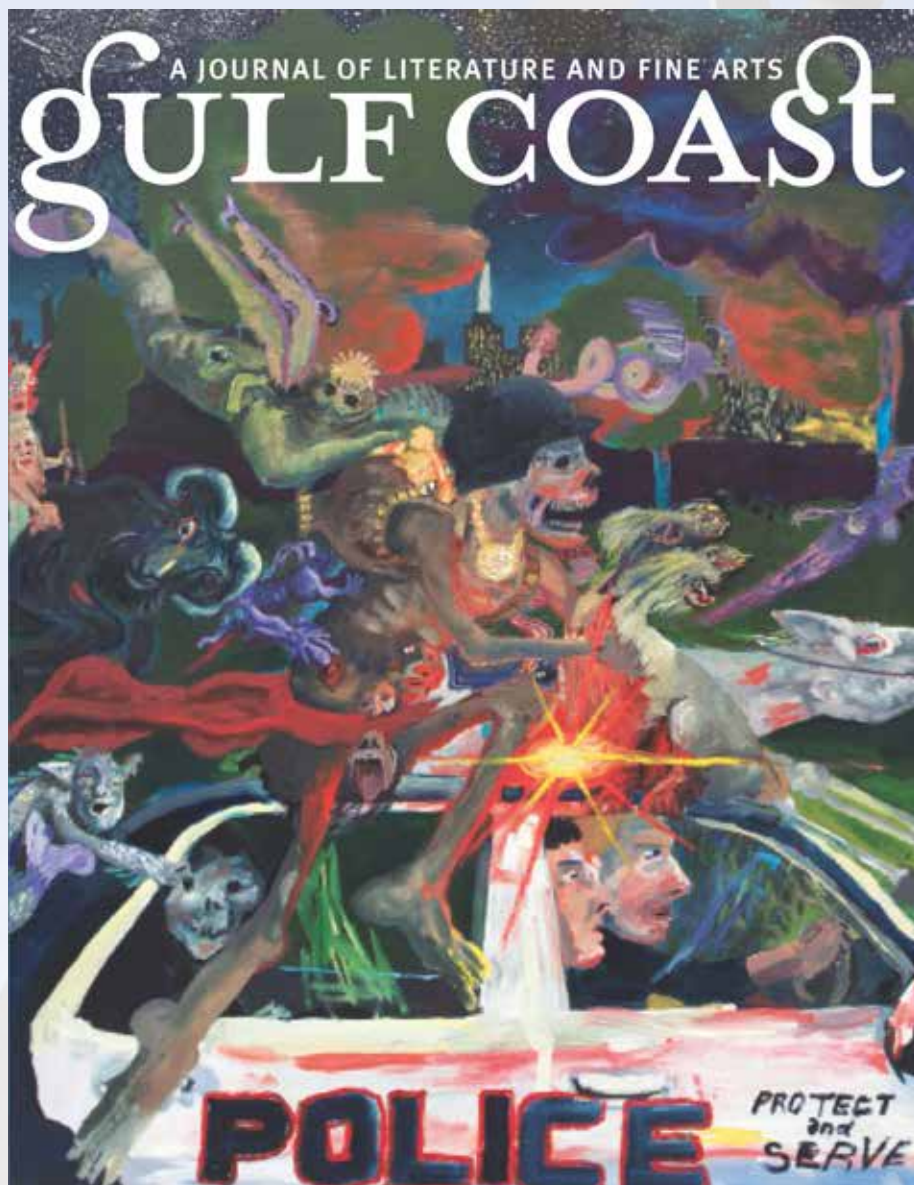
We are also proud of the work we've done to grow the *Gulf Coast* Reading Series. This past year, we switched the location of the Reading Series from Rudyard's Pub to Lawndale Art Center. Not only did we elevate the tone of the event, we made it more accessible to disabled attendees and youth under 21. Lawndale was also a good choice in that it helped highlight our identity as a journal of both literature and fine art. By making these changes and bringing in readers such as Lacy Johnson, Jamel Brinkley, Hanif Abdurraqib, Eloisa Amezcua, Joshua Wheeler, and Justin Torres, we found that our attendance reached new heights, averaging more than 100 guests for the entire season! Our most-attended event totaled more than 130. Our 2018-2019 Reading Series season came to a close in May with a combined Spring Launch event. Held at the Houston Public Library's Julia Ideson Building, the event featured a reading by Justin Torres and announced the debut of Issue 31.2.

As you may know, we now run a total of six contests a year, including the Barthelme Prize for Short Prose, the Beauchamp Prize for Critical Art Writing, and the *Gulf Coast* Prizes in Poetry, Fiction, Nonfiction, and Translation. We are proud to have secured some of the hottest names in literature to judge our prizes, including Garth Greenwell, Leslie Jamison, Laura van den Berg, and Ilya Kaminsky. All our contests received record numbers of submissions, which puts *Gulf Coast* into the hands of many more

readers.

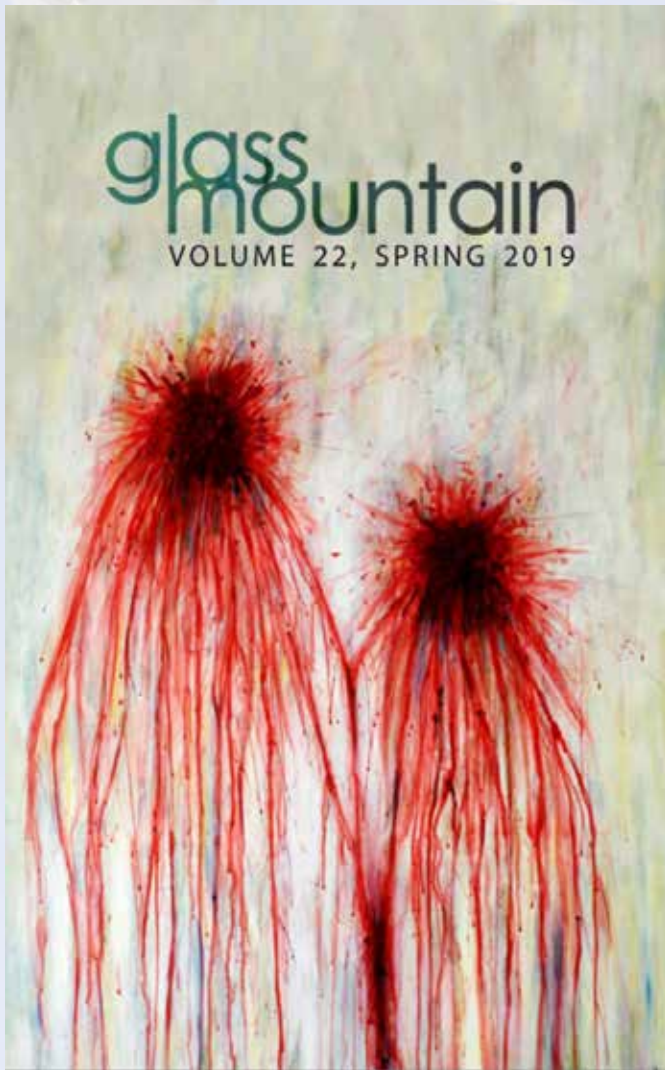
Our presence online has also seen improvement and growth. This past year, *GC Online* featured new work by Francine J. Harris, Xuan Julia Wang, Aram Mjorian, and Charlotte Matthews. We revamped the Gulf Coast Instagram page, which now includes livestreamed video from our Reading Series and has a total of 1,200 followers. Add this to our more than 21,100 followers on Twitter and 3,800 Facebook followers.

2018-2019 was also a strong year for *Gulf Coast* public programming. In the fall, we partnered with *Copper Nickel*, Culture Ireland, and Archway Gallery to bring three Irish poets to Houston. We also traveled to Austin to host an unconventional reading as part of the Texas Book Festival, which featured participation by Roger Reeves and Yuki Tanaka. Partnerships with Brazos Bookstore and the University of Houston Creative Writing Program brought in Laura van den Berg and Ange Mlinko for additional readings. Our partnership with Writers in the Schools allowed local high school students to chat in person with one of their favorite poets, Hanif Abdurraqib. In March, we traveled to Portland for AWP and co-hosted one of the weekend's most popular offsite readings, featuring Tiana Clark, Natalie Shapero, Maggie Smith, and others.



Glass Mountain

The Undergraduate Literary Journal at the University of Houston

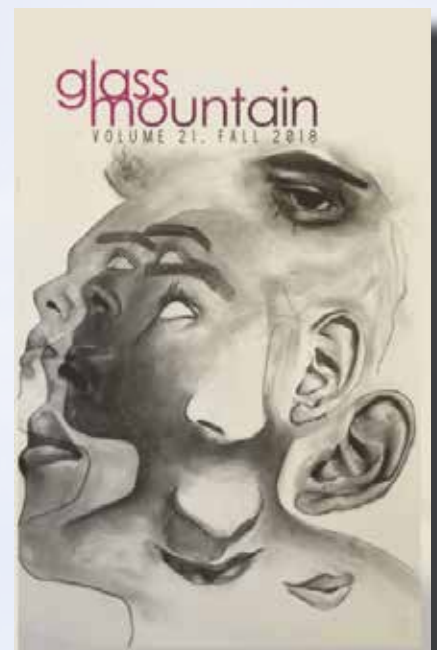


our hearts with some terrific work. For our Volume 21 launch party, we found ourselves at Café Brasil, where we celebrated with UH's Robertson Prize winner Cassandra Waggett, and *Glass Mountain* contributors Sophia Hashmi, Daniellie Silva, and Kinza Muzahir.

Volume 21 came together as a beautiful collection of surreal and contemplative pieces questioning what it means to have identity, and to exist within a specific moment that will, before we know it, be over. In addition, for the first time in the magazine's history, Volume 21 included color inserts that highlighted published work. We also published two issues of our online journal, *Shards*.

2018-19 was an exciting year for *Glass Mountain*. We returned to work under the steady hand of familiar faces (Audrey Colombe returned as Faculty Advisor, Austin Svedjan returned as a Co-Managing Editor, Aubrey Cowley as a Co-Prose Editor, Tamara Coleman as Shards Editor, and Stephanie Matthiesen as Art Editor) and welcomed an infusion of fresh blood (Quentin Key-Tello joined as Co-Managing Editor, Vinh Hoang as Co-Prose Editor, Alexis Mercedes as Poetry Editor, Miranda Ramirez as Reviews and Interviews Editor, Christian Su as *Shards* Managing Editor, Elaine Naong as Public Relations Manager, Cait Weiss Orcutt as Graduate Advisor, and Kathy Hill as the Editor). Together, this incredible case proved to be an unstoppable bunch as we jumped into action and never stopped.

Our reading series enjoyed another successful run at Bohemeo's, each month featuring the varied line-ups we've come to be known for. We heard from community members Chris Flakus and Jessica Wilbanks, CWP student Rachel Ballenger, and undergraduates Jessica Rodriguez, Dragon Tran, and Trip Nguyen, to name a few. They were joined through the year by a diverse group of open mic readers who wowed audiences and won their ways into





2018 - 2019 *Glass Mountain* Staff



ettes and subjects, further strengthening the *Glass Mountain* aesthetic of ever-changing voices and representation.

As *Glass Mountain* moves into its next stage, it will do so with an entire new make-up (almost all of the 2018-19 staff has graduated or will not be returning). While challenging, this will also pave the way for a flood of new ideas and loving attention from the next staff. One thing that will not waver, however, is the work *Glass Mountain* remains committed to—championing the voices of emerging writers!

Kathy Hill
Outgoing Editor, *Glass Mountain*

The spring semester brought a number of dynamic changes, beginning with the masthead. Co-Prose Editor Aubrey Cowley began her first semester as the solo Prose Editor, and Vinh Hoang returned as a PostBac student to serve as Public Relations Manager. Midway through the semester we saw Rosalind Williamson and Brenna Rogers join as Co-Art Editors, tag-teaming management of their section and *Glass Mountain* design. We jumped headfirst into planning for the Boldface Conference, where we introduced a bilingual Spanish writing workshop option. Nine editors traveled to Portland, Oregon for the AWP conference. We met up with *Gulf Coast* editors and crashed the CWP mixer, making memories with faculty and alums we all know and love.

Lastly, we produced Volume 22, featuring nonfiction that contemplates morality, whimsical fiction about gods and people, striking poetry, and an interview with Dr. Gabriela Baeza-Ventura, a strong woman and proponent for the bilingual Spanish workshop. The issue's vibrant and colorful cover shows what some might consider two shots into a green background (we affectionately regard the art as two fuzzy jellyfish) and subtly draws the attention of onlookers with its soft and strong design. A step darker than its fall predecessor, both covers contrast one another in their pal-

Boldface

A Conference for Emerging Writers



The 2019 Boldface Conference for Emerging Writers experienced its most dynamic year yet as we introduced a bilingual Spanish writing workshop opportunity. Attended by writers from around the country and the Houston community, we came together for the eleventh year to celebrate writers and their craft, joined by three amazing experts who came to share their wisdom through readings and craft talks: Bryan Washington, author of *Lot*, sharpened our fiction; Jessica Wilbanks, author of *When I Spoke in Tongues*, improved our nonfiction; and Jason Koo, author of *More Than Mere Light*, aided our poetry.

This year, the conference employed ten CWP students to lead workshops in fiction, poetry, nonfiction, and multi-genre Spanish and English. Each workshop leader participated in a reading, and shared their ideas through masterclasses that delved into subjects ranging from dark humor to apocalypse poetry. Additionally, we heard about writing trauma, the art of horror writing, and two-tongued story exploration.

All attendees, regardless of genre, gained a vast amount from craft talks on setting, writing of the self, and the difference between ambiguity and confusion. Bryan Washington spoke of setting as character, while Jessica Wilbanks instructed us in how to find and write ourselves. And Jason Koo tackled the difference between being ambiguous and confusing. In between reading and sharing their ideas, our visiting writers mingled with conference attendees, who developed connections and memories they will carry with them.

Behind the scenes, conference coordinator Cait Weiss Orcutt and faculty advisor Audrey Colombe provided the muscles that allowed the bones of the conference to take off running. Cait's amazing enthusiasm and patience kept all logistics on track without detracting from the overall joy of the conference, while Audrey Colombe kept spirits up with her handling of set-up and food logistics, introducing our writers to a variety of meals. From LeeAnne Carlson's fantastic goat cheese to Melange Creperie's exciting crepe-creating display, the conference left everyone immensely satisfied. We can't thank Cait and Audrey enough for everything they did.

Our first-ever bilingual Spanish workshop was an incredible success, featuring five recipients of the Nelson scholarship and community members. They all came together to raise money for a scholarship through the creation of a zine, and thanks to those efforts, we are proud to share that the bilingual workshop will support an additional Boldface attendee in 2020. Our conference ended with a panel day full of wisdom about publishing and insightful conversation. Looking forward to next year!

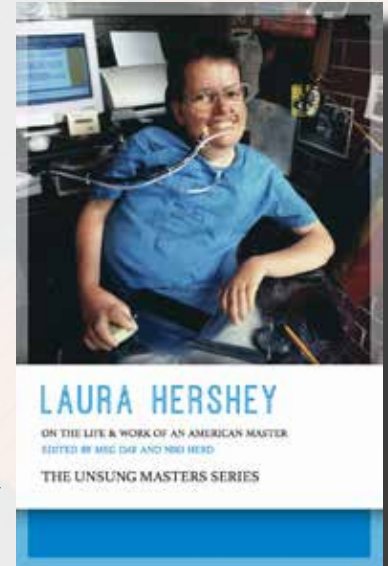
Special thanks to j. Kastely, Alex Parsons, Lillie Robertson, Dr. Antonio Tillis, Giuseppe Taurino, and the UH English Department for their support.



Unsung Masters

Laura Hershey: The Life & Work of an American Master

Laura Hershey: The Life & Work of an American Master is an introduction to the work of poet and disability activist Laura Hershey (1962-2010). As an activist, Hershey advocated for transportation accessibility and home health-care services in Colorado, where she and her family resided. In the middle of downtown Denver, you'll find a plaque honoring Hershey, and a protest she was part of, in which the activist and others parked their wheelchairs in front of traffic to demand equal access to buses for the disabled. On the national level, Hershey was instrumental in making sure the Americans with Disabilities Act passed and was enforced. And though she herself was one of Jerry's Kids as a child, Hershey, who was born with spinal muscular atrophy, is perhaps most known for protesting the Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy Telethon as an adult. In Hershey's mind, the annual fundraiser portrayed disabled people as weak, in need of fixing and pity, instead of focusing on their strengths. It was a fight that went all the way to the White House, with the telethon eventually conceding a bit and changing their format. Hershey received the President's Award for her disability advocacy work from President Clinton in 1998.



It's hard to know which came first for Hershey—her life as a poet or her life as an activist? As co-editor of the volume, this was a question I had last November while conducting research through the nearly 50-plus boxes that comprise the Hershey archive at the Denver Public Library. She began writing poetry at a young age, but she was also vocal about the lack of civil rights for the disabled in her youth as well. What is clear is that the attention to her poetry, which she published throughout her life, was overshadowed by her activism at the local and national level, within the states and abroad.

As a radical crip feminist poet and out lesbian, Hershey served as a kind of mentor and role model for poet Meg Day, my co-editor of the volume and the reason this project came to be. When Hershey died in 2010, Day began searching for a press to publish the poet's work. At some point, she sent a query to the Unsung Masters Series suggesting the project. According to Day, she says "I didn't hear from them for so long, I assumed they had not chosen the project, so I went back to querying other publishers. I was really surprised when I got the news!"

As with all books in the Unsung Masters Series, the Laura Hershey volume is comprised of a selection of poems, ephemera, and essays. This particular volume features a wide selection of poems that have never been published, as well as four essays, two of which are written by writers close to the poet. The Hershey volume is the tenth Unsung Masters book to be published since the series began in 2010. The series, which is a partnership between *Gulf Coast*, *Pleiades Press*, *Copper Nickel*, and the University of Houston Department of English, features the work of writers who have not gotten the recognition they deserve for their poetry to inspire further scholarship into their work.

The official publication date for *Laura Hershey: The Life & Work of an American Master* is August 1st. To order early copies, visit Small Press Distribution [Small Press Distribution](http://SmallPressDistribution.com) *Laura Hershey: On the Life & Work of an American Master*. Meg Day and I will discuss Hershey and the making of the book Wednesday, October 30th at the Lawndale Art Center.

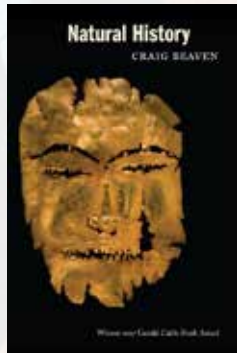


Alumni News



Samuel Amadon's (PhD, 2012) third book of poems *Listener* will be published by Solid Objects in fall 2019. He is now the Director of the MFA Program at the University of South Carolina.

Craig Beaven (PhD, 2009) published his first collection of poems, *Natural History* (Gerald Cable Book Award, Silverfish Review Press).



Glenna Bell's (PhD, 1998) new album *Let Freedom Ring: Songs for a New Generation*

is available for download and streaming at iTunes, Spotify, and all the usual virtual spaces. You can hear the single, "Let Freedom Ring," at <https://americanahighways.org/>. For updates on the new record and more, subscribe to the monthly online newsletter at glennabell.com and check out videos on Youtube.

Layla Benitez-James's (MFA, 2014) first publication as editor, *Desperate Literature: The Unamuno Author Series Festival, A Bilingual Anthology* was published in May as part of Madrid's first anglophone poetry festival, hosted by The Unamuno Author Series and Desperate Literature. She serves as the Unamuno Author Series's Director of Literary Outreach and the anthology gathers over 60 poems from festival poets and presents their work bilingually in Spanish translation, including work by UH CWP alumni Jericho Brown, Michael Dumanis, and current faculty and alum Martha Serpas, as well as former faculty Mark Doty. Her most recent poem,



"Trapeze," came out in *The London Magazine* in May.

Lauren Berry (MFA, 2009) has poems forthcoming in *Silk Road*, *White Wall Review*, and *Eckerd Review*.



Conor Bracken's (MFA, 2015) translation of Mohammed Khair-Eddine's *Scorpionic Sun* comes out with Cleveland State University Poetry Center September, 2019. Selections appeared in BOMB, Nashville Review, Poetry Northwest, and *Waxwing*.

Eleanor Mary Boudreau (MFA, Poetry, 2016) has poems in recent issues of *Tin House*, *APR*, *Barrow Street*, *Willow Springs*, and *Waxwing*. She presented a paper titled "They May Be to the Next: Elegiac Consolation After Wilfred Owen" at the University of Oxford, UK in October of 2018.

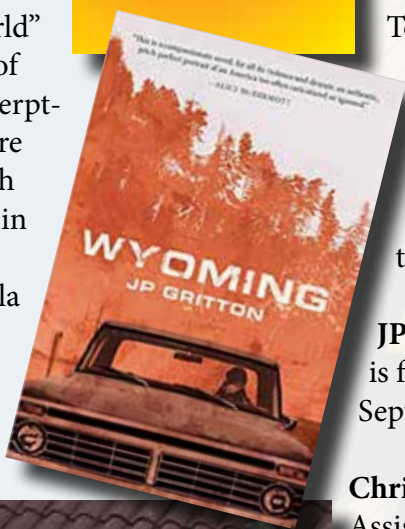
Katherine (Pannill) Center's (MA, 1999) sixth novel, *How to Walk Away* (St. Martin's Press), was an instant *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestseller last May—and *Booklist* named it in the Top Ten Womens' Fiction of 2019, the American Library Association shortlisted it for Best Women's Fiction for 2019, Book of the Month Club nominated it for Book of the Year, and it was a Goodreads Choice Awards Best Fiction 2018 semifinalist. Katherine also sold the film rights to her fourth novel, *The Lost Husband* (Ballantine), last summer to Six Foot Pictures, and they shot the movie in Texas last fall starring Leslie Bibb, Josh Duhamel, and Nora Dunn. The paperback of *How to Walk Away* hits the stores this July, and Katherine's seventh novel, *Things You Save in a Fire* (St. Martin's Press), goes on sale August 12. She's finishing up her 2020 novel right now.

Audrey Colombe has been working with the *Glass Mountain* students and their new online publication, *Shards*—as well as the 11th annual **Boldface Conference** which took place this past May. *Glass Mountain* took ten students to AWP this year, and worked with

a group of students from the business college on how to advertise the conference and improve some of the features on the organization's websites, glassmountainmag.com and boldfaceconference.com. She is also working on a book, a guide to publishing student literary magazines. In her perfect universe, she would also be designing creative writing course software, but there are only so many hours in the day. When she joined the poetry hiring committee in late December, she had the honor of helping to bring an array of amazing candidates to UH--which resulted in welcoming two fantastic poets to the CWP faculty.

Tracy Daugherty (PhD, 1986) published *Leaving the Gay Place: Billy Lee Brammer and The Great Society* (University of Texas Press) in October, and in April published *Dante and the Early Astronomer: Science, Adventure, and a Victorian Woman Who Opened the Heavens* (Yale University Press). The latter is a biography of the astronomer and Dante scholar Mary Evershed, the former a biography of Texas novelist and LBJ aide Bill Brammer. A short story, "Frank at the End of the World" appeared in the Spring 2018 issue of the *Gettysburg Review* and was excerpted in Literary Hub. Forthcoming are two novellas, *So Much Straw*, which will appear as a Ploughshares Solo in the fall, and *High Skies*, the winner of Red Hen Press's inaugural novella contest. It will appear in 2020.

Robin Davidson (PhD, 2001) was inducted in the Texas Institute of Letters in April 2019. Her second book of translations of poems from the Polish of Ewa Lipska, translated in collaboration with Lipska and Ewa Elżbieta Nowakowska, was accepted by poet and editor, Carl Adamshick, of Tavern Books and will appear in late 2019.



The book is entitled *Dear Ms. Schubert (Droga pani Schubert)*.

Will Donnelly (PhD, 2013) was recently awarded tenure and promoted to the rank of associate professor at Berry College in Rome, Georgia. During the summer of 2019, he taught a course in advanced creative writing as an international guest lecturer at Amsterdam University College in the Netherlands.

Laura Eve Engel's (MFA, 2010) first book, *Things That Go*, came out this past January from Octopus Books. She is also in an electronic pop duo called The Old Year, with musician Paul Erik Lipp. Their first single, "I've Been Dreaming," is available for streaming on Spotify, Apple Music, and other streaming services. This summer, they'll be going on their first tour, playing in New York, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.



To celebrate the writing program's 40th anniversary, **Jessica Greenbaum** (MA, 1981), a member of the inaugural class, read from her third book, *Spilled and Gone*, which came out from the University of Pittsburgh Press this past spring, at the Brazos Bookstore with other alumni.

JP Gritton's (PhD, 2018) novel *Wyoming* is forthcoming from Tin House Books in September, 2019.

Chris Hutchinson (PhD, 2018) started as Assistant Professor in the English department at MacEwan University in Edmonton, Alberta in the fall of 2018. His next poetry collection *In the Vicinity of Riches* will be published in Canada by Goose Lane / icehouse poetry in spring 2020.

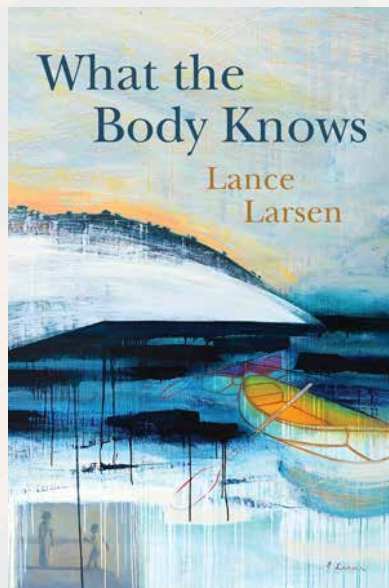
Janine Joseph's (PhD, 2013) *Driving Without a License* received an Honorable Mention for the 2018 Sheila Margaret Motton Book Prize from the New England Poetry Club. She published work in *Quarterly West*, wrote two book reviews for *The Atlantic*, and had a poem selected for inclusion in *Ink Knows No Borders: Poems of the Immigrant and Refugee Experience*. Janine was also commissioned to write a fourth libretto, in celebration of Houston Methodist's 100th anniversary, for the Houston Grand Opera's Seeking the Human Spirit initiative (November 2019 premiere). UndocuPoets, of which she is a co-organizer, was recently named a recipient of a 2019 Poetry Fund grant from the Amazon Literary Partnership & Academy of American Poets.

Peter Kimani's (PhD, 2014) new book, *Nairobi Noir*, will be published in February 2020 by Akashic Books. He has also edited a short story anthology that features generations of Kenyan writers, including Ngugi wa Thiong'o, one of Africa's best known writers, and UH alumnae, Wanjiku wa Ngugi, and is chair of this year's Caine Prize for African Writing, the continent's preeminent literary award.

Sophie Klahr (MFA, 2013) will be the 2019/20 Kenan Visiting Writer at UNC-Chapel Hill. Her often-literary-themed hand-embroidered clothing is available for sale via her social media accounts!

Andrew Kozma (PhD, 2007) will have his second book of poetry, *Orphanotrophia* released this fall by Cobalt Press.

Laura Lark (MA, 1989) recently became one of the freelance contributors for Team Rubicon, a veteran-run organization that focuses on vulnerable and at risk populations affected by disaster. In Houston, specifically, their members and volunteers are rebuilding homes for those who were displaced by 2017's Hurricane Harvey. Here is a link to her first post that was recently published on their site: <https://teamrubiconusa.org/blog/houston-rebuild-chfp-leads-the-way/?fbclid=IwAR0q04EIJbQC6fYV9eAtFFL-J1m68HMhoRtWQAJ0I3SFUdEr9TLCAMogSeFM>. She is also currently in a group exhibition of paintings at Devin Borden Gallery in Houston called "Joy of Painting" with four other Houston painters. (<http://www.devinborden.com/gallery-information/>)



Lance Larsen (PhD, 1993) recently published his fifth poetry collection, *What the Body Knows* (Tampa 2018), with cover art by his wife, Jacqui. He teaches at Brigham Young University, where he serves as department chair and dabbles in aphorisms: "When

climbing a new mountain, wear old shoes." His nonfiction has six times made the Notables list in *Best American Essays*.

Leah Lax (MFA, 2004) is deep in the slog writing her book *Not From Here*. An essay from an earlier version of the book was a finalist for a New Millennium writing award. Also, translation into Arabic of her memoir *Uncovered* about her Hasidic years is under way by Ideas Beyond Borders (under the auspices of Democracy Now) for an online library of books that challenge totalitarian systems, for free download. She also has an extensive interview about gender and Orthodoxy in a new anthology by NYU Press.

Nina McConigley (MFA, 2006) has been named the Walter Bate Jackson Bate Fellow at Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard for the 2019-2020 school year.



Ann McCutchan (MFA, 1998) appeared in a new documentary about author Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings., which premiered in Gainesville, FL last October and

was recently aired on Denver Public Television. “Here is Home: Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and Cross Creek” can be viewed here: <https://vimeo.com/297967055>. Her biography of Rawlings, *The Life She Wished to Live: a biography of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings*, will be released by WW Norton in fall 2020. Also, her opera *Purewater*, based on a novella by Andre Gide, with composer Andrew Rudin, will be premiered by the Center for Contemporary Opera in NYC this coming season.



Marc McKee (MFA 2003) accepted a position as managing editor for the *Missouri Review* in August of 2018. His poems have appeared most recently in *American Poetry Review*, *Bennington Review*, *Los Angeles Review*, *Offending Adam*, *Inter|rupture*, and *Matter*. His new poetry collection, *Meta Meta Make-Belief*, was published in March of 2019 by Black Lawrence Press. He and his wife, Camellia Cosgray, and their 3½ year old son, Harold, just moved into a new house.

David MacLean (PhD, 2009) had one of his essays “The Golden Friendship Club” named as one of the notable essays for *Best American Essays* as well as an Honorable Mention for the same essay but as fiction by the Pushcart Prizes. David lives in Chicago with his two kids and wife.

Jonathan Meyer (MFA, 2017) published the short story “Digging for Gold” in *Into the Void*, issue 12. (Link: <https://intothevoidmagazine.com/article/digging-for-gold/>)

Kimberly Meyer’s (PhD, 2008) received a MacDowell Fellow Writing Residency and was there for a month this past spring. Her article, “Waste Land, Promised Land,” published in *Orion Magazine*, won the Excellence in Reporting Award from the American Society of Journalists and Authors.

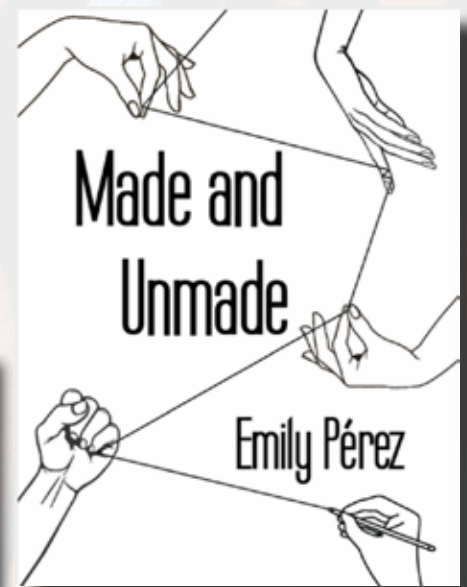
Dave Parsons (MA, 1991) has



poems appearing or accepted for publishing in *By the Light of a Neon Moon*, edited by Janet Lowery, 2019, *Level Land: Poems for and about the I-35 Corridor*,

Edited by Crag Hill & Todd Fuller, University of Oklahoma, 2020. His poem “Texian” will be installed at the Lone Star Monument & Historic Flag Park next to the Central Library. He was featured poet at the San Miguel Literary Sala in Mexico, continues to co-direct the Writers In Performance Series at Lone Star College Montgomery with fellow alum, Cliff Hudder, and leads a NEA Writing Workshop, Planting the Oar, for Vets and Friends of Vets.

Emily Pérez (MFA, 2006) chapbook *Made and Unmade* was recently published by Madhouse Press.



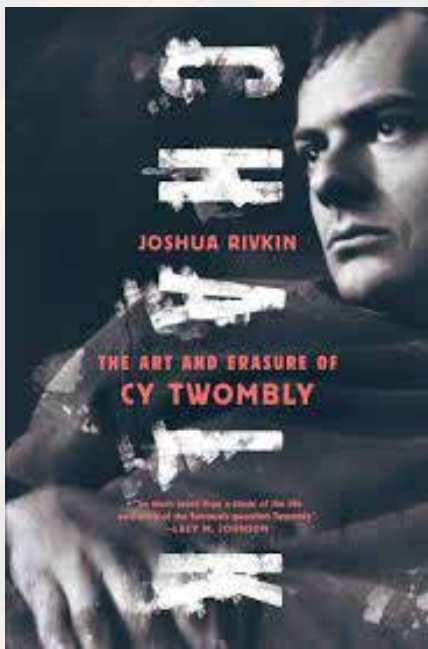
Adrienne Perry (PhD, 2018) just completed her first year as an Assistant Professor at Villanova University. She received the Larry Levis Stipend for her novel *See Through Girls*, chosen by judge Paul Lisicky.

Celeste Prince (MFA, 2013) is currently a high school English teacher in St. Louis, MO. In April, her school (Mary Institute and

St. Louis Country Day School or MICDS) awarded her the Craig E. Jones Chair of Distinguished Chair, which is awarded to promising teachers who seem capable of becoming the master teachers of the future.

Robin Reagler's (PhD, 1995) *Teeth & Teeth*, winner of the Charlotte Mew Prize, selected by Natalie Diaz, was a top-three best seller at Headmistress Press for 2019. Also Robin was elected Chair of the AWP (Association of Writers and Writing Programs) Board of Trustees.

Joshua Rivkin's (MFA, 2006) first



book of nonfiction *Chalk: The Art and Erasure of Cy Twombly* (Melville House, October 2018) was a finalist for both the 2019 PEN/Bograd Weld Prize in Biography and the 2019 Marfield Prize, the National Award for Arts Writing. Through her Tarot collective (Typewriter Tarot), **Cecily Sailer** (MFA, 2007) is launching Wild Moon Retreat, a weekend immersion that blends Tarot and writing

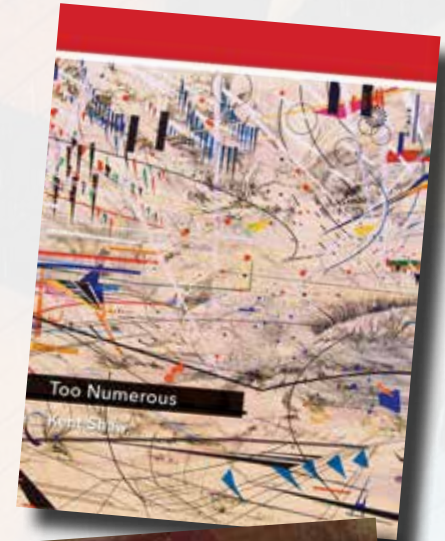
to help creatives navigate artistic projects and processes. Participants will learn to use Tarot for rituals, reflection, and creative guidance. The retreat takes place November 14-17 at Full Moon Ranch in Dripping Springs, Texas. More information can be found here: <https://www.typewritertarot.com/wild-moon-retreat>

Martha Serpas did not have a baby, did publish a few poems, and has a book coming out with LSU Press in 2020. But the most important thing she accomplished this past year was moving her 94 year-old mother from Texas back to Thibodaux, Louisiana, so she could see her 98 year-old sister, Marion, again in this life. Nita Cangemi Serpas, who taught Tony Hoagland senior English at South Lafourche High School (“but I didn’t teach him much!”), traveled on LSU’s Lear jet (as does Coach O, whom she also taught). Martha called her with grammar questions almost to the present day.



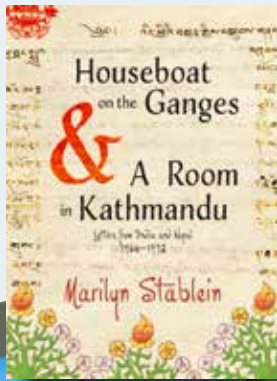
Patty Seyburn (PhD, 2002) is a professor at California State University, Long Beach. Her fifth collection of poems, *Threshold Delivery*, was published in May 2019 by Finishing Line Press.

Kent Shaw's (PhD, 2011) book, *Too Numerous*, was published April 2019 by University of Massachusetts Press.



Jacquelyn Shah's (PhD, 2005) chapbook, *Small Fry* was published in 2017. Her book, *What To Do with Red*, was published in 2018. She also won the 2018 *Literal Latté* Food Verse Contest winner.

Matthew Siegel (MFA, 2009) had poems in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Cincinnati Review*, and forthcoming in *Pleiades*.

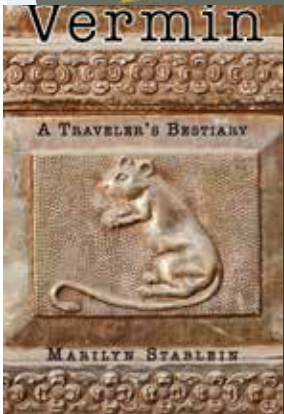


Marilyn Stablein's (MA, 1984) published three books this past year. *Vermin: A Traveler's Bestiary* (Spuyten Duyvil, NY 2019). Fiction about critters: leeches, rats, dung beetles & beyond. *Houseboat on the Ganges & A Room in Kathmandu: Letters from India & Nepal 1966-1972* (Chin Music Press, 2019). An epistolary counter-culture memoir illustrated with photographs, drawings and art. *Milepost 27: Poems* (Black Heron Press, 2019) poems on loss, impermanence and the catastrophic effects of climate change in the west & southwest.

Liverpool University Press's "Romantic Reconfigurations: Studies in Literature and Culture 1780 - 1850" series.

Robert Tinajero (MFA, 2004) was hired as Assistant Professor of English at the University of North Texas at Dallas in August 2018. He received a grant from Communities Foundation of Texas in Spring 2019 to put on a race relations symposium in spring 2020.

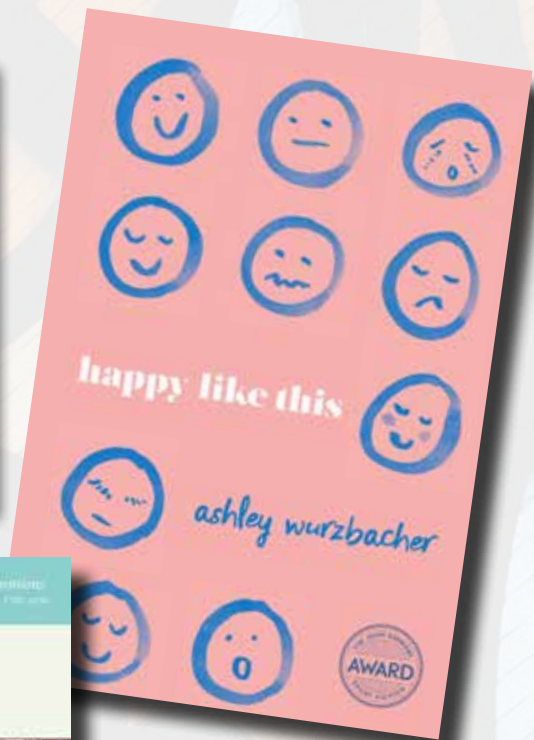
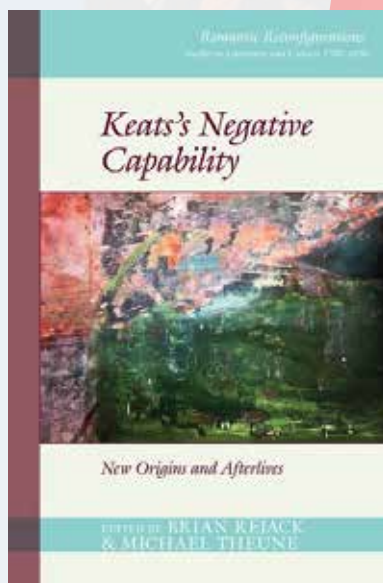
Eric Miles Williamson earned the first MFA in Creative Writing awarded by the University of Houston (MFA Fiction 1991). He has since published 3 novels, a short story collection, and 3 books of literary criticism. He has won many awards both here in the USA and abroad. His extensive journals and correspondence is being published by Down and Out Books, approximately 30 volumes. He lives in South Texas with his sons.



Gail (Donohue) Storey (MA, 1982 and Administrative Director of the CWP, 1982-86) made art out of her reasons for open-heart surgery with a lighthearted video-poem, "[The Nature of My Heart](#)"

Yerra Sugarman (PhD, 2016), Visiting Assistant Professor of Creative Writing, started to work in the English Department at the University of Toledo in Fall 2018. She has poems forthcoming in *Colorado Review*, *American Literary Review*, and in *Cherry Tree*.

Michael Theune (PhD, 2002) co-edited *Keats's Negative Capability: New Origins and Afterlives* (2019), part of



Ashley Wurzbacher's (PhD, 2016) debut short story collection, *Happy Like This*, won Iowa's 2019 John Simmons Short Fiction Award and is forthcoming in October from the University of Iowa Press. Stories in the collection have recently appeared or are forthcoming in the *Colorado Review*, *The Kenyon Review Online*, *Michigan Quarterly Review*, and *The Florida Review*.



