

University of Houston

Creative Writing Program

2016 Newsletter



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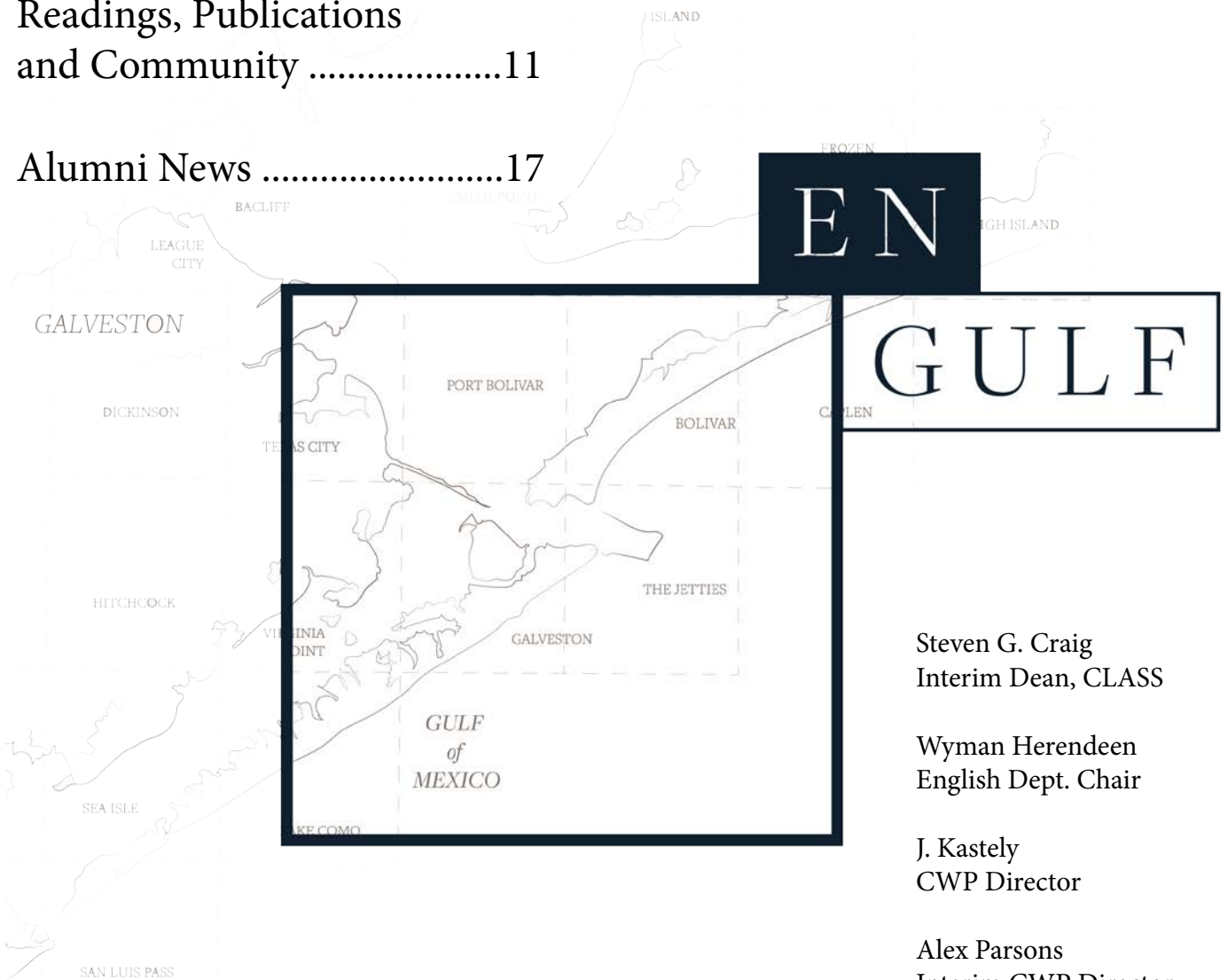
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Steven G. Craig
Interim Dean, CLASS

Wyman Herendeen
English Dept. Chair

J. Kastely
CWP Director

Alex Parsons
Interim CWP Director

Giuseppe Taurino
Assistant Director

From the Director



Fourteen years ago, I agreed to be the interim director of Creative Writing for one year. I have stayed in the position longer than I intended, and this, despite the fact that I have no interest in administration. What does interest me is the community of writers—both faculty and students—with whom I have had the privilege to work. This is a community that I admire deeply. In contemporary America, it is not easy to pursue with integrity the life of a writer or to take seriously the study of literature. It has been rewarding to work with people who value that life and who pursue that study. I feel that they are people on whose behalf it is important to work. At times, my job has been to be a firewall and to

protect the practices of writing and scholarly inquiry. Too often, they are endangered, not by direct opposition, but simply by the factitious cares that occupy so much of lives lived necessarily within bureaucracies. It may seem perverse but one of the gifts of a graduate education is to acquaint writers with the obstacles presented by a bureaucracy to the writing life. And an equally perverse gift of graduate education is providing the space for the writing life to fall apart and (hopefully) be reconstituted. One of my genuine pleasures has been to watch this process happen and to see how it promotes the development of original work.

I have enjoyed working with all of you, and I am delighted that Alex Parsons will take over as Director—I cannot imagine a more capable, innovative, and generous writer to lead the Program. I look forward to watching the Program develop under his leadership. He will have a wonderful faculty and collection of students with whom to work, and he will be an excellent steward of the writing life.

May you all continue to thrive as the fine writers that you are.

As ever,
j.

From the Interim Director...



J. Kastely spent 14 years resolutely championing our program. He has been a leader cut from the same flowing cloth as, say, the Dalai Lama or Pope Francis, though he has a saltier vocabulary. I know of no greater praise than to say that j. is the rare man who could pull off wearing a toga and laurel wreath without it seeming an affectation. That he is a scholar of Plato, and *The Republic* (ok, also *The Prince*), seems no accident. Now, however, j. dons the garb of the new English Department Chair. And it falls to someone to step in as Interim Director of the Creative Writing Program. Hence this note.

I arrived at UH in 2007 and have felt profoundly fortunate to live and work among so many talented and collegial writers. (Except in the summer, when it's hard to think beyond incipient heatstroke and appreciate anything but ice.) The signal achievement of the Program is not the many publications and awards garnered by the faculty and graduates. Nor is it the careers launched here. It is, rather, the very nature of this thriving collective of dedicated artists. Art is a collaborative endeavor, no matter the solitary hours in silent rooms. As we write we experience the gradual growth of a project, pruning and grafting and creating something fine. A similar iterative process applies when we construct communities. Our program has grown into a premier place to write and think in the company of other fine minds and generous souls by virtue of the effort and legacy of all who have passed through. This history is evident everywhere: in the curricula we offer; in the advice and counsel received and passed on in the classroom and outside of it; in the histories that inspire our donors' support; in the stories and poems we write. If literature is a great conversation, we have built a fine salon for it. Our guest list is distinguished, and the tenor of our discussions is lively, inquisitive, and constructive.

In the coming year our concern is the brass tacks for the salon's armchairs, ottomans, chaise longues, couches. We will focus on interrelated aspects of teaching and funding. First, we will increase our undergraduate enrollments. With more students in our introductory classes we can offer more sections for our MFA and Ph.D candidates to lead. Most of them, surprisingly, enjoy teaching to their passions, and are interested to develop those courses they'll lead as professors. We will first launch a large, sophomore-level, interdisciplinary course that explores poetry, fiction, and nonfiction. It will showcase various faculty who will visit to lecture, and allow students to work closely with our GAs. We hope to expand this model as more students crowd our subsequent courses. UH is heavily invested in the undergraduate experience and timely graduation rates. As we connect to this we will lobby for more GAships, faculty lines, and expanded funding. Second, we will refine the virtual CWP. That is, redesign the website and widely advertise the Program's strengths: publications, job placements, awards, student-to-faculty ratio, competitive funding, etc. Third, we will push to create GAships that are unrelated to teaching and funded from multiple sources, not just the CWP. This should broaden our institutional and local support, pull in students who aspire to write but not teach, and contribute via the work performed—grant-writing, for example, or web design and maintenance.

I welcome your comments and suggestions and look forward to fostering the program as it has me and so many of my fellow writers.

Yours in mourning for j.,
Alex Parsons

In Memory

Claire Kageyama-Ramakrishnan

(Ph.D., 2004)

1969 – 2016

“My Seedling, My Yonsei”

For you, I will keep the ripe weight,
plums, apricots, budding persimmons.
The limes and climbing wisteria vines.
Strawberries. Eggplants edging the house.
Their slender, cylindrical bruises among
cream, papery blossoms. For you,
the powdery outline of monarchs, spread
petals, seeds of lilies, orchids, gladiolas,
bougainvillea, Birds of Paradise. For you,
salamanders under the rocks, the hatch,
slide, spin, glint of fish under a bridge.
The lizards shedding their skin. Child,
when seasons unwind and take turns,
and sun filters a first glimpse of you-
I will give you my life, each word, each
breath, each cell, each wish. For you.

-From Claire's collection *Shadow Mountains*

Program News



Ecopoetics

Ecopoetics on the Gulf (also known as The Shrimp Boat Projects) ran a third time this past spring, and the poetry workshop included collaborative work with senior Graphic Design students taught by Cheryl Beckett. The usual trips trawling, kayaking, birding, and marsh clearing were combined with multimedia exhibitions. First, the poets and designers created broadsides, which were sold as a fundraiser for Houston Audubon Society. Each group, led by a poet and assigned one of the four elements as a theme, created beautiful, hand-pressed broadsides. These works will soon be on display in the creative writing office. The groups also produced cinemoems (videos), which were shown in two venues: a special Poetry and Prose Series event and at the Art School. Brazos Bookstore hosted a final reading by the poets from the broadsides now bound into a limited edition book. Next time around, the class will work on a marsh installation with graduate Architecture students while again writing, critiquing poems, and studying American shore odes.



Faculty News

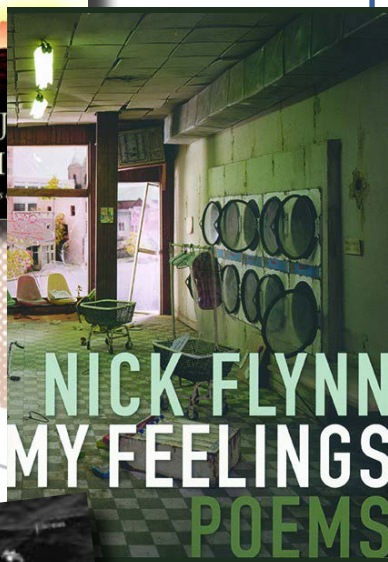
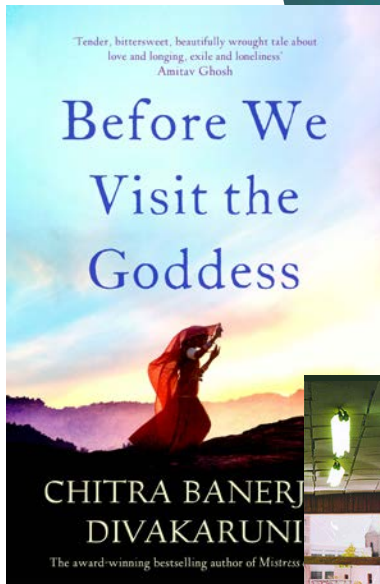
Robert Boswell published stories in *Mississippi Review* and the *Ploughshares Solo Series*. He also published an essay in *The North American Review*, and has a story forthcoming in *The Atlantic*.

Audrey Colombe's article, "An Undergraduate Novel Writing Courses" was published this past February in the AWP Writer's Chronicle "Online Exclusives."

Chitra Divakaruni received the Premio Scanno award (also known as the Italian Nobel) in fall 2015 for her novel *Oleander Girl*. Her novel-in-stories, *Before We Visit the Goddess*, published in April 2016, received glowing national and international reviews and became an international bestseller. She also received the Rhetorician of the Year award from the Young Rhetoricians Organization, and a play based on her book *Arranged Marriage* premiered in Toronto in summer 2016. Also, her youngest son graduated from college this past spring, so she is a happy mom!

This past year, **Nick Flynn** published his ninth book, *My Feelings* (Graywolf Press), a collection of poems. He also judged the 2016 APR/Honickman First Book Prize, and had work featured in the anthologies *If Bees Are Few* (University of Minnesota Press) and *Why We Write About Ourselves* (Plume), among others. The Fort Worth Opera performed the opera *Alice Invents a Little Game and Alice Always Wins*, based on his play by the same name. In 2017, Nick will be performing at the Proud Archivist in London in collaboration with musician Sarah Lipstate (aka Noveller).

Tony Hoagland's most recent book of poems, *Application for Release from the Dream*, was published by Graywolf in September 2015. A collection of translations from Celtic languages on which Tony collaborated with Martin Shaw, a UK storyteller and folklorist, called *Rough Gods* is scheduled to be published in 2018.



Mat Johnson has teamed up with British showrunner Sam Bain (*Peep Show*, *Four Lions*) to develop a half-hour dramedy series based on his novel *Loving Day*, for the Showtime Network, in conjunction with Random House Studio. Johnson will also be joining NPR's Fresh Air as a regular contributor.

Antonya Nelson's story "Jack London" was published in *Tin House*, and an essay appeared in the anthology *The House That Made Me*. She also taught at Key West Literary Festival, Tin House, Taos Writers' Conference, Aspen Writers' Conference, and Bear River.

Kevin Prufer's new edited volume, *Literary Publishing in the 21st Century*, was recently published by Milkweed Editions. The book was co-edited with Travis Kurowski and UH MFA alum Wayne Miller. Kevin's next book of poems, *How He Loved Them*, has also been accepted for publication by Four Way Books and his edited volume (with Martha Collins) on literary translation is forthcoming from Graywolf Press. Recent poems appeared in *The Paris Review*, *Kenyon Review*, and *2016 Pushcart Prize Anthology*.

This past spring, **Martha Serpas** was artist-in-residence at the Loyola Institute, Trinity College. Her commissioned poem, speaking to the relevance of Catholic theology in the Irish academy, will be installed in a permanent banner display. While in Ireland, she read at the Mountains to Sea Book Festival in Dun Laoghaire. (Bono of U2 attended Paul Muldoon's reading but not hers.) She also was Writer-in-Residence at McNeese University in Lake Charles, Louisiana. *The Dirty Coast*, a Modern Language Association panel on Katrina and other Louisiana environmental challenges, featured a reading by her from *The Diener* and *The Dirty Side of the Storm*. Between semesters, she returned to Tampa General Hospital to serve

as a trauma chaplain and to offer poetry and spiritual care workshops to chaplains and staff. Baylor College of Medicine also hosted her as a narrative medicine panelist. With Woods Nash, she co-led an Inprint workshop in prose and poetry for medical professionals and caregivers.

Roberto Tejada delivered the 31st annual George Oppen Memorial Lecture at the invitation of The Poetry Center, San Francisco State University (December 2015). His talk, entitled "Assault on the Quiet Continent: Oppen in Mexico," focused on U.S. American poets George and Mary Oppen in Mexico City, 1950-58, during the U.S. McCarthy Era, addressing George Oppen's silence in poetry during the years from 1934 (after the publication of his first book, *Discrete Series*) to 1958 (near

the end of his Mexican sojourn). In January 2016, with the publication in Spanish of his selected poems, *Todo en el ahora* (Libros Magenta; Dirección General de Publicaciones, 2015), Roberto was interviewed in the Mexico City paper *El Universal* in conjunction

with an official book launch held at the Centro Cultural Elena Garro, featuring remarks by artist Magali Lara, and authors José María Espinasa, Luis Felipe Fabrè, and Gabriel Bernal Granados. In April, introduced by Ann Lauterbach, he read from his work in the John Ashbery Reading Series at Bard College.



"La poesía es un texto crítico, no sólo ilustrativo"

Presenta 'Todo en el ahora', que refleja sus intereses en la edición, la literatura y artes



El libro de Tejada, 'Todo en el ahora', coordinado por Libros Magenta y la Dirección General de Publicaciones (DGP), tuvo una presentación con la participación de Magali Lara, José María Espinasa, Luis Felipe Fabrè y Gabriel Bernal Granados (ALEJANDRA LEYVA).

Student News



Corey Campbell's (Ph.D., Fiction) short story collection *See The Milky Way* was selected as one of fifteen semi-finalists for this year's Iowa Short Fiction Award. Her short story "Ocean-Friendly Cuisine" was selected for reprint in the forthcoming *New Stories from the Southwest* anthology (University of New Mexico Press). Corey also published an interview with fiction writer and essayist Charles D'Ambrosio in the journal *Waxwing* in October 2015.



This year, **Rachel Fairbank** (MFA, Nonfiction) had work published in the *Houston Chronicle* and *Rice Magazine*, *Vice*, and *The Billfold*. She also attended the annual National Association of Science Writers meeting in Cambridge, MA. During this meeting, she performed onstage at the Oberon Theater, telling a science story that was later used for an episode of the Story-Collider-podcast. This summer she will be attending the NYS Summer Writer's Institute in Saratoga Springs, where she'll be studying with Philip Lopate.

Sam Dinger (MFA, Fiction) had a story win honorable mention in the August 2015 *Glimmer Train* Short Story Award for New Writers.



JP Gritton (Ph.D., Fiction) was a finalist for the DisQuiet fiction prize. He has stories forthcoming in *Southwest Review* and *Greensboro Review*.



Carolann Caviglia Madden's (Ph.D., Poetry) co-translations with poet Ming Di appeared in *World Literature Today*, and her poetry appeared, or is forthcoming, in *Witch Craft Magazine*, *Nimrod International Journal*, and *The Southwest Anthology: The Best from the Writing Programs* (Texas Review Press). She was a finalist in *Nimrod International's* 2016 Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry.



Christopher Brean Murray (Ph.D., Poetry) had poems accepted at *Pleiades*, *North American Review*, *The Journal*, *New Madrid*, *Bateau*, and *New Ohio Review*. His manuscript *The Specific Ocean* was a finalist at *The Song Cave's* book competition.



Adrienne Perry's (Ph.D., Fiction) work appeared or is forthcoming in *Indiana Review*, *Black Warrior Review*, *Copper Nickel*, *The Journal of Creative Writing Studies*. This summer she has a residency on Whidbey Island through the Hedgebrook.

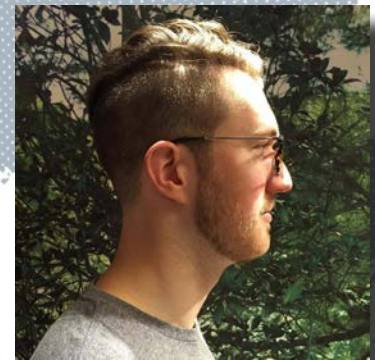
Martin Rock's (Ph.D., Poetry) book, *Residuum*, won the Editor's Choice Award for Cleveland State University Poetry Center's 2015 First Book Prize, and was published in April of 2016. His poem "Vapor" appeared on Academy of American Poets "Poem-a-Day" in June.



The opening section of **Henk Rosouw's** (Ph.D., Poetry) book-length poem *Camissa* will be published this year in *The Common*, the literary journal at Amherst College that focuses on "a modern sense of place". He attended the 2016 Home-school conference in Hudson, NY on scholarship. For the final year of his Ph.D. at UH, Henk will be a CLASS dissertation completion fellow.

Matthew Salesses's (Ph.D., Fiction) first novel, *The Hundred-Year Flood*, was published by Little A/Amazon Publishing (2015). His book, *The Murder of the Doppelgänger*, is forthcoming in 2018, and another,

Own Story: Essays is slated for publication in 2019. This past year, Matthew gave the Convocation Keynote at Wheelock College, and was featured on NPR. He also took over editing the *Pleiades* blog and has been posting about Creative Writing pedagogy.



Nathan Stabenfeldt (MFA, Poetry) published two poems in Issue #11 of *Jet Fuel Review* (<http://www.jetfuelreview.com/nathan-stabenfeldt-spring-2016.html>).

Martha Stallman's (Ph.D., Fiction) essay, "Exacerbation 17," appeared in *Electric Literature*. She has work forthcoming in *The Establishment*.



New Students

2016-17

Fiction

Sarah-Jane Abate, MFA
BA, Susquehanna University

Rachel Ballenger, MFA
BA, University of California - Berkeley

Jennifer Johnson, MFA
BA, Southern Methodist University
MA, University of Texas

Saira Nadeem, MFA
BA, University of Houston

Charlotte Wyatt, MFA
BA, Fordham University

Barbara Drumheller, Ph.D.
BA, University of Texas
JD, Texas Tech Univ School of Law
MA, Vermont College of Fine Arts

Matthew Krajniak, Ph.D.
BA, University of Eastern Michigan
MFA, University of Memphis

Alexander McElroy, Ph.D.
BA, Oregon State University
MFA, Arizona State University

Joanna Novak, Ph.D.
BA, Knox College
MA, Washington University
MFA, University of Massachusetts - Amherst

Novuyo Tshuma, Ph.D.
BS, University of Witwatersrand
MFA, University of Iowa

Poetry

Chelsea Brennan DesAutels, MFA
BA, Wellesley College
JD, University of Minnesota Law School

Michelle Orsi, MFA
BA, Gonzaga University

Timothy Saylor, MFA
BA, Messiah College

Michelle Burk, Ph.D.
BA, Roosevelt University
MFA, Columbia University

Joshua Gottlieb-Miller, Ph.D.
BA, St. Mary's College
MFA, University of Houston

Nicole Herd, Ph.D.
BA, University of Arizona
MFA, Antioch University

Caitlin Weiss, Ph.D.
BA, Kenyon College
MFA, Ohio State University

Graduates

2015-16

Fall 2015

Michelle Mariano, Ph.D.,
Fiction

Zachary Martin, Ph.D., Fiction

Stephen Sanders, Ph.D., Fiction

Spring 2016

Eleanor Boudreau, MFA,
Poetry

Catherine Cosgrove, Ph.D.,
Poetry

Carlos Hernandez, MFA, Non-
fiction

Jennifer McFarland, MFA,
Fiction

David Messmer, MFA, Fiction

Dino Piacentini, MFA, Fiction

Allie Rowbottom, Ph.D.,
Nonfiction

Danny Wallace, Ph.D., Fiction

Ashley Wurzbacher, Ph.D.,
Fiction

Writing Prizes

2015-16

*Inprint and the University of Houston's
Creative Writing Program
are pleased to announce the writing prize winners for
2015 – 2016*

INPRINT ALEXANDER PRIZE IN FICTION
Selena Anderson

INPRINT VERLAINE PRIZE IN POETRY
Meghan Martin

INPRINT MARION BARTHELME PRIZE IN
CREATIVE WRITING
Matthew Salesses

INPRINT DONALD BARTHELME PRIZE IN NONFICTION
Dana Kroos

INPRINT DONALD BARTHELME PRIZE IN FICTION
Michele Nereim and Carlos Hernandez

INPRINT DONALD BARTHELME PRIZE IN POETRY
Martin Rock and Luisa Muradyan

INPRINT DONALD BARTHELME GULF COAST Editor's
PRIZE
Carlos Hernandez

BRAZOS BOOKSTORE /ACADEMY OF AMERICAN PO-
ETS PRIZE
Daniel Chi

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!

JUDGES

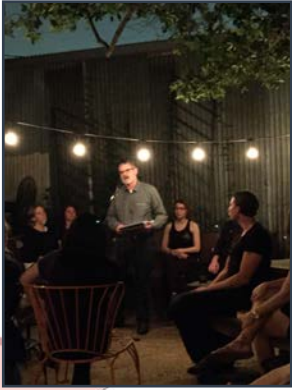
MARION BARTHELME PRIZE
Darin Ciccotelli (UH Alum)

POETRY
Nicky Beer (UH Alum)

FICTION
Jennine Capó Crucet

NONFICTION
Kate Schmitt (UH Alum)

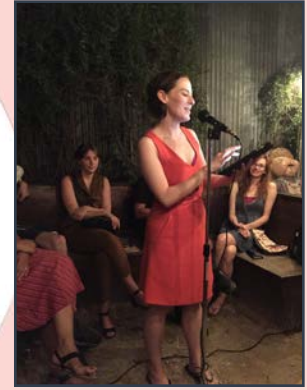
Poison Pen Reading Series



The Poison Pen reading series continued to shine in its 10th year. (You may deliver the traditional anniversary gift of tin or aluminum directly to Poison Girl Cocktail Bar.) Always on the last Thursday of the month, Poison Pen features nationally renowned writers and local talent, as well as members of the University of Houston community.

This past year, the series featured UH alums Elizabeth Lyons, Brooke Lightfoot, and Conor Bracken, current UH students Jeni McFarland, Brenden Oliva, Jonathan Meyer, Dino Enrique Piacentini, and Henk Rossouw, and UH professors Martha Serpas, Roberto Tejada, and Kevin Prufer. In addition, a smorgasbord of Gulf Coast editors read for the annual November joint reading.

Poison Pen is organized by Greg Oaks (UH PhD, 2001), Jameelah Lang (UH PhD, 2016), UH PhD student Erika Jo Brown, Scott Repass (co-owner of Poison Pen), Casey Fleming (UH MFA, 2007), UH faculty member Mat Johnson, and David Maclean (UH Ph.D., 2009). One of the highlights was the Co-organizers¹ Reading in May, which was an opportunity to witness Mat defying electrocution in a summer monsoon and to wish Jameelah the best as she heads off to her professorship at Franklin College in Indiana



Inprint News

Inprint, Houston's premier literary arts nonprofit organization, with the mission to inspire readers and writers, continues to celebrate its strong and ongoing relationship with the UH Creative Writing Program

students and faculty, and looks forward to another great season during 2016/2017.

The Inprint Margaret Root Brown Reading Series

presented in association with the UH Creative Writing Program and Brazos Bookstore, and now entering its 36th season, will feature 10 award-winning authors. Readings take place on Mondays, 7:30 pm, in downtown Houston's Alley Theatre and Cullen Theater, Wortham Center. The 2016/2017 season includes:

September 19, 2016—Jonathan Safran Foer bestselling author of *Everything Is Illuminated* and *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, reading from his new novel *Here I Am*

October 17, 2016—Lauren Groff finalist for both the National Book Award and National Book Critics Circle Award for *Fates and Furies*, and **Ann Patchett**, PEN/Faulkner Award and Orange Prize winner for *Bel Canto*, reading from her new novel *Commonwealth*

November 21, 2016—Rabih Alameddine finalist for both the National Book Award and the National Book Critics Circle Award for *An Unnecessary Woman*, reading from his new novel *The Angel of History*, and **Juan Gabriel Vásquez**, leading Latin American author of the international bestseller *The Sound of Things Falling*, reading from his new

novel *Reputations*

January 23, 2017—Annie Proulx Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award-winning author of *The Shipping News* and the story *Brokeback Mountain*, reading from her new novel *Barkskins*

March 6, 2017—George Saunders National Book Award finalist for *Tenth of December*, reading from his ninth book and first novel *Lincoln in the Bardo: A Novel*

April 3, 2017—Ada Limón National Book Award finalist for her third poetry collection *Dead Bright Things*, and **Gregory Pardlo**, Pulitzer Prize winner for his second poetry collection *Digest*

May 8, 2017—Colm Tóibín award-winning Irish fiction writer, playwright, and journalist, and author of the bestselling *Brooklyn*, reading from his new novel *House of Names*.

All of the authors will participate in on-stage interviews, many of which are conducted by UH Creative Writing Program faculty members and alumni, followed by a book sale and signing. Some of the visiting authors will also give craft talks on the UH campus and visit with graduate Creative Writing Program classes.

Once again, Inprint will proudly award fellowships, prizes, and provide other support to graduate students at the UH Creative Writing Program. Last year alone, Inprint awarded close to \$200,000 to UH Creative Writing Program students, and since its inception in 1983, Inprint's support has surpassed \$3 million to more than 500 graduate students. Inprint will also continue to provide annual financial support to *Gulf Coast: A Journal of Literature & Fine Arts*, run by the graduate students.

Inprint connects these talented emerging writers to the local community by hiring them as instructors for Inprint's Writers Workshops, Teachers-As-Writers Workshops, Senior Memoir Workshops, Life Writing Workshops at Methodist Hospital, and more; Inprint Poetry Buskers, who spread the joy of poetry by writing free poems on demand at festivals and special events throughout the city; and live tweeters, bloggers, and more. This synergistic relationship between the UH Creative Writing Program students, alumni, and faculty helps makes Houston a thriving literary arts haven.

For more information on Inprint visit www.inprinthouston.org or 713.521.2026.

Brazos Bookstore

BRAZOS
BOOKSTORE



Brazos Bookstore has been Houston's premier literary bookseller since 1974, a curated retail/community space featuring new fiction, poetry, nonfiction, and art books, with a special emphasis on independent publishers and literature-in-translation. The store has deep ties to, and a long-standing tradition of partnering with, the University of Houston creative writing community. Hell, in the back office, there's a framed photograph of Donald Barthelme, Edward Hirsch, Cynthia Macdonald, among others, palling around while holding tennis rackets. Tennis rackets!

More than that, Brazos Bookstore is an event space, hosting 200+ book signings each year. This past year, the store hosted many UHCWP faculty/alums/students, including Erika Jo Brown, Chitra Divakaruni, Nick Flynn, Allen Gee, J. Bradford Hipps, Cliff Hudder, J. Kastely, Leah Lax, David Parsons,

Kevin Prufer, Martin Rock, Matthew Salesses, and plenty more. (This coming year, put a book out and your name will probably be added to that list!) Brazos and Gulf Coast have also revived an old partnership, working together to present the Gulf Coast Reading Series in-store.



And yes, often times, there's free wine at these readings.

For 2016-17, Brazos has a lot more planned: partnerships with Inprint and the UH CWP; events with literary luminaries; a new series featuring book recommendations from local celebrities; and more. Come shop, come say hi, come hang out—and most importantly, keep publishing books so

the shelves stay full!

Watch BrazosBookstore.com for more announcement as the 2016-2017 schedule unfolds.

Writers in the Schools



Writers in the School (WITS) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that engages young people in the pleasure and power of reading and writing. Since 1983, WITS has worked hand-in-hand with educators and professional writers to teach students the craft of writing while encouraging critical thinking, creative self-expression, and personal responsibility. WITS programs take place in schools, museums, hospitals, community centers, parks, libraries, camps, and juvenile detention centers. WITS also provides professional development opportunities for classroom teachers, giving them the tools to make writing an adventure in learning. WITS is the largest literary arts organization in Texas and ranked the number one arts education organization in Texas by the National Endowment for the Arts.



This year, WITS was delighted to welcome new students and alumni from the University of Houston Creative Writing Program to our teaching roster. Writers including Corey Campbell, Daniel Chu, Joshua Foster, Joshua Gottlieb-Miller, Jonathan Meyer, Alexandra Naumann, Adrienne Perry, Sara Rolater, and Henk Rossouw have infused WITS classrooms with joy and inquiry through their innovative approaches to teaching writing. We are grateful for their belief in WITS and their efforts to create rigorous, reflective, celebratory learning experiences for their students.

WITS has been hard at work this year helping to cultivate and advocate for Houston's literary landscape:

- In partnership with the 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. Andrew White, a senior from the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, was named Houston's first Youth Poet Laureate.
- In celebration of National Poetry Month, WITS partnered with local artists and organizations to create colorful and interactive Poet-Trees. These installations captured the hearts of visitors at Discovery Green, Buffalo Bayou, East End Esplanade on Navigation, and Houston Public Library on Heights Boulevard throughout the month of April.
- Excerpts of creative work from WITS students, writers, and staff members were selected to be part of CORE Design Studio's installation, "Figurative Poetics." These quotes were featured on banners throughout downtown Houston, highlighting the powerful and diverse voices of our eclectic city.
- Through support from the City of Houston and the Houston Arts Alliance, WITS joined University of Houston-Downtown's GDRI (Graphic Design Research Initiative) program to transform our students' poetry into visual works of art, displayed in the tunnel beneath Downtown City Hall.

In addition to enhancing our local literary community, WITS has been developing a strong national presence through its partnership with the Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP) and Brave New Voices. 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.

WITS has been growing by leaps and bounds, serving over 36,000 students and teachers last year alone. As we continue to develop and expand our programs, we recognize that the work we do depends on the strength of our writers. WITS employs and trains approximately 200 writers and teachers every year, giving creative individuals the chance to connect with each other and with the Greater Houston community. WITS is committed to fueling Houston's creative economy by giving professional writers the opportunity not only to earn a living, but also to make a difference in the lives of young people.



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

2015 – 2016 represented another banner year for *Gulf Coast*, evidenced by our inclusion on the list of finalists for the 2015 Council of Literary Magazines and Presses' Firecracker award, along with *Poetry Magazine*, *Tin House*, and other top journals. Though we didn't win (maybe next year!) this shows that CLMP believes what we all already knew to be true: *Gulf Coast* is among the very best literary journals in the nation—and the only student run journal to be in the running!

In addition to our recognition of curatorial excellence and our value as a physical object d'arte, this year has seen *Gulf Coast's* involvement in the community reach new heights. With the addition of Erika Jo Brown as co-curator of the *Gulf Coast* Reading Series, we hosted—for the first time in GC history—a featured guest reader at each of our regularly scheduled student readings and held a number of special events. Guest readers this season included (in order) Kathleen Winter, Wendy Walters, Janaka Stucky, S. Whitney Holmes, Kim Kyung Ju & Translator Jake Levine, Robin Coste Lewis, Abe Smith, Wayne Miller, Matvei Yankelevich, and Rosa Alcalá. We also partnered with Brazos Bookstore to begin *Gulf Coast* "Pop-Ups," in which current students have a chance to read with past contributors to *Gulf Coast* who are in Houston promoting recent work.

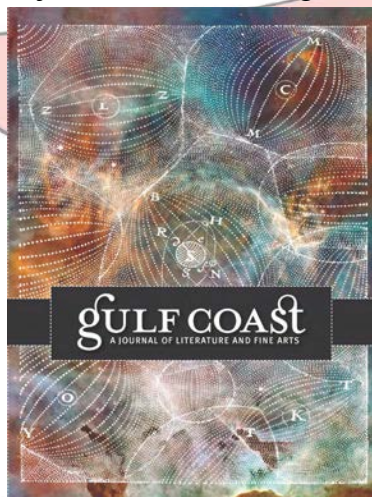
Our partnership with local organizations did not end with Brazos, however—in the past year *Gulf Coast* editors developed events with the Asia Society, The Contemporary Art Museum Houston, Poison Pen, The Menil Collection, Counter Current, Librofest, The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center, and The University of Houston Library and Special Collections to produce a splendid array of community programming. We also partnered with Pleiades Press to produce and distribute the

most recent volume of The Unsung Masters Series, a book series dedicated to promoting the work of writers whose work was under acknowledged during their time.

And in the digital realm too, *Gulf Coast* has been spreading like wildfire, only instead of destroying everything in our path we're sharing the light of profoundly good literature. To list all the incredible work our team of *GC Online* editors has published in the past year would take too much space, so let's suffice it to say that *GC Online* is working its way toward becoming one of the best producers of exclusive online literary content anywhere, and recently received a lot of attention for a series of essays curated by Matthew Salesses titled "MFA vs. POC: Rethinking the Creative Writing Workshop."

Last year we mentioned we'd established a *Gulf Coast* Prize in Translation, which we're happy to report has resulted not only in the publication of excellent work in translation through the prize, but has also put *GC* on the map as a hot spot for translators, and has resulted in an uptick in translation submissions to the journal as well.

Sadly, this year marks the end of term for our three outgoing senior editors: Carlos Hernandez, Adrienne Perry, and Martin Rock. If you see them, thank them. They've spent the better part of the past two years in service of a journal that helps promote University of Houston as one of the best writing programs in the nation. And that means it is also time to welcome the three incoming senior editors: Luisa Muryadan (as Editor), Chris Liek (as Managing Editor), and Michele Nierem (as Digital Editor). If you see these three in the halls, thank them as well, as they're about to enter the rabbit hole. And we're sure they'll do a phenomenal job!



Glass Mountain

The Undergraduate Literary Journal at the University of Houston



The 2015-2016 academic year was an eventful one, to say the least, for *Glass Mountain*. We started the year with an entirely fresh group of upper editors: Head Editor Aries Jones; Co-Managing Editors Travis Kane and Mai Tram Nguyen; Fiction Editor Cory Cook; Poetry Editor Beau McGlasson; Reviews Editor Georges Boulos; and Art Editor Laura Hill. Fiction writer Matt Salesses (see his new novel *Hundred Year Flood*) was our hard working Graduate Advisor this past year, and Audrey Colombe continued as our Faculty Advisor. The fall semester was filled with readings and events both on and off campus. The staff worked hard to gather another set of international submissions, selecting the best poetry, prose, and art to go into Volume 15. Laura Hill, art editor, redesigned the magazine's layout and we love the new

square format. The newly-created Reviews and Interviews section kept its momentum as the GM staff had the opportunity to interview poet Richard Blanco during his visit to UH. His insight and advice made for a very engaging interview and fantastic addition to the Fall issue.

In November, we hosted our annual Write-A-Thon to raise money for the Boldface Conference. We fell short of our goal (20k), but still managed to raise funds to contribute to the wonderful cause that is the Boldface Conference for Emerging Writers. We loved spending the day with UH and Houston community writers running games and quizzes, providing writing prompts, and distributing prizes. Writing and fundraising for eight hours may sound daunting, but it was an enjoyable endeavor in good company. We'd like to thank

all those who contributed to Write-A-Thon and/or spent any part of their day with us. And we look forward to an even more successful Write-A-Thon this year! Several *Glass Mountain* board members joined us and we also met with them separately to do some much needed long term planning.

Spring semester began, as it does, in January with our national Poetry and Prose awards, judged by CWP faculty. *Glass Mountain* staff are always in flux. LeeAnne Carlson stepped in this spring to act as Fiction Editor, Laura Hill moved on to other endeavors, and upper editors Aries Jones and Mai Tram Nguyen worked with our new Web Editor, Tyler Sangster, on the layout of #16. We had more events and community appearances (Lone Star Book Festival, AWP, and MenilFest, among others) and *Glass Mountain's* very first themed issue (#16): "Growth." Check out the cover art at our main page <http://www.glassmountainmag.com/>. The submissions interpreted the theme widely and resulted in a fascinating collection of interpretations. Experimenting this year has inspired other content and form ideas the magazine might use in the future. This issue's launch was featured at M.D. Anderson Library's final Poetry and Prose reading in April. Contributors came from UH and all over the Houston area to read their work from issue #16.

At the end of March *Glass Mountain* was able to once again send its upper editors to the Associated Writers and Writing Programs Annual Conference (AWP), this year hosted at the Los

Angeles Convention Center. We spent an amazing – and busy – few days in L.A. attending panels, talking with other magazines editors and publishers, meeting writers from across the country, and, most importantly, representing our esteemed magazine at the book fair. We even got to visit briefly with Richard Blanco and present him a copy of issue #15, featuring his interview with *Glass Mountain* staff.

Next year, AWP will be celebrating their 50th anniversary in Washington, D.C. and we're sure that whoever gets the chance to attend will have another memorable trip.

We hosted readings throughout spring, at UH and Brasil, featuring talented writers from across the university and the Houston community. We'd like to thank all those writers who generously gave us their time and shared their work at those events. We'd also like to thank those brave individuals who participated in the open mics that followed every reading. These sessions always reveal a wealth of talent in our *Glass Mountain* community.

We also began a new "craft talk" series (as yet unnamed) this spring. Outgoing *Gulf Coast* Editor Adrienne Perry hosted the inaugural session, speaking on how to effectively use setting in your writing. In our second session Henk Rossouw, Poetry Editor for *Gulf Coast*, explored the ethics of archiving and its effect on poet-researchers. We had a packed house for both sessions, and we look forward to holding more craft talks in the coming year.



Boldface

A Conference for Emerging Writers

programs, bookstores and other literary organizations from the Houston community set up tables and shared their work.

And we can't forget the

Boldface after party, Friday evening at Calhoun's Rooftop—in the midst of a thunderstorm! Many attendees and staff braved the weather to celebrate all they had accomplished and learned in the fun-filled week of writing-nerd mania. We'd like to thank all those who attended Boldface this year—

including a new group of students from Ithaca College. Every year, the talented writers who come to Boldface make it a joy to host the writing conference.

(Check out this blog post by an attendee from Ohio: <http://alexevans.org/blog/2016/5/30/44-to-climb-the-glass-mountain-one-first-requires-a-good-reason>.) We send our thanks to the staff, the graduate students, community members and professors who took the time to help make Boldface possible--especially the UH English Department and the Creative Writing Program, Lillie Robertson and j Kastely.

Glass Mountain continues to develop new ways to include and showcase the wonderful writers and artists we have the luck to encounter. We will be in excellent hands this coming year as Lee-Anne Carlson steps in as Editor-in-Chief and the poet Erika Jo Brown joins us as Graduate Advisor.

We appreciate all of the kind support we've received over the years and with it we plan to make next year—like every year—one of our best.

Head Editor,
Aries Jones

Co-Managing Editor, Mai
Tram Nguyen



The big event that concluded the year for *Glass Mountain* was the 8th annual Boldface Conference. This year we welcomed featured writers Kimberley Meyer, Tiphanie Yanique, and Lauren Berry, three amazing women who we're proud to say are graduates of UH's Creative Writing Program. They gave marvelous craft talks and readings, as well as offering private manuscript consultations to our talented attendees.

This year we continued our tradition of graduate students leading daily creative writing workshops, craft talks, and readings. Friday was all about professionalism in the writing community, from editing tips to grad school ideas to advice on how to get your work published. Panelists included Houston publishers and writing groups, writer guilds and writing programs, literary journals, and more. Sincere thanks goes to those individuals who came out to share their knowledge of the writing world!

We also featured our first Boldface bookfair on Friday. Literary journals, writing

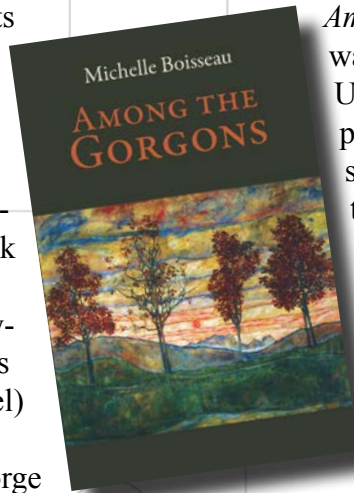


Alumni News

Christopher Bakken's (Ph.D., 1999) third book of poems, *Eternity & Oranges*, was published in the Pitt Poetry Series in February. His poem, "Sentence," was chosen for inclusion in the *Best American Poetry 2016* anthology. Bakken is Frederick F. Seely Professor of English at Allegheny College, where he has taught since 2000.



Keane, showcasing its writer Tim Rice-Oxley on piano and harmonium, to Glenna's all-original "Pig in Lipstick Blues," featuring veteran Austin players Johnny Nicholas (Asleep at the Wheel) on boogie-woogie piano/guitar and George Reiff (Joe Walsh) and Rick Richards (Ray Wylie Hubbard) on bass and drums. Glenna's music is available for download and streaming at iTunes, Spotify, etc. Glenna performs in Houston on the third Tuesday of every month from 9-11 p.m. at historic La Carafe in Market Square, Downtown.



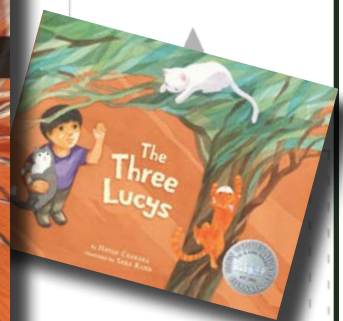
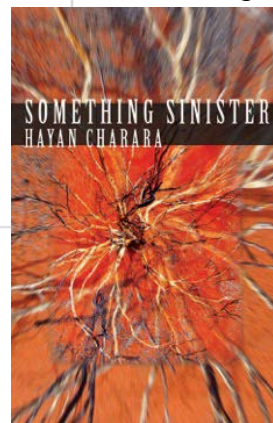
Among the Gorgons was published by the University of Tampa in April 2016; several poems from the book appeared on Poetry Daily and one will be included in *The Best American Poetry 2016*, ed. Edward Hirsch.

Laurie Ann Cedilnik (MFA, 2010) graduated with a doctorate in English Literature & Creative Writing from Western Michigan University, and spent the spring teaching creative writing at Grand Valley State University. Beginning in Fall 2016, she will be the Visiting Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at Loyola University in New Orleans.



Glenna Bell's (Ph.D., 1998) new album, *Lone Star: Songs and Stories Straight from the Heart of Texas* was released this past April. *Lone Star* offers an authentic array of songs ranging in mood and tempo from an acoustic cover of the chart-topping ballad, "Everybody's Changing" by the UK pop band

David Bernardy's (MFA, 1999 / Ph.D., 2006) picture book, *Dadblame Rabbits!*, was awarded first place in the Society for Children's Books Writers and Illustrators' illustrated fiction category. An illustration from a different book he is working on, *Please Help Me Save My Piano!* won first place in the SCBWI art contest.



Hayan Charara's (Ph.D., 2010) third poetry book, *Something Sinister* (Carnegie Mellon) was published in 2016, as was a children's book, *The Three Lucys* (Lee & Low), winner of the New Voices Award Honor.

Michelle Boisseau (Ph.D., 1985) won the *Tampa Review* Prize in 2015, and her fifth book

Patricia Clark's (Ph.D., 1986) new chapbook of poems, *Wreath for the Red Admiral*, will be published by Spruce Alley Press in August 2016

Liz Countryman's (Ph.D., 2012) poems have recently appeared in *American Poetry Review*, *AGNI*, and *The Offing*. She and alum Samuel Amadon are working on the third issue of their poetry journal *Oversound*.

The paperback edition of **Tracy Daugherty's** (Ph.D., 1985) biography of Joan Didion, *The Last Love Song*, will be published by Picador in October. In hardcover, the book made the Bestseller lists in the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*. Texas Review Press recently published his book of Texas-themed novellas and stories, *American Originals*. In Spring 2017, the University of Georgia Press will publish, as part of its new Crux Series in Innovative Nonfiction, a book of Tracy's literary essays, *Let Us Build Us a City*.

Robin Davidson (Ph.D., 2001) was promoted to full professor in the Department of English at University of Houston Downtown (Fall 2015), and was appointed Houston Poet Laureate (2015 – 2017) by Mayor Annise Parker.

Viet Dinh's (MFA, 2003) debut novel, *After Disasters*, will be published in September by Little A Books. He also has a story forthcoming in *Ploughshares*.

Barbara Duffey's (MFA, 2005) second collection of poems, *Simple Machines*, won the 2015 Washington Prize from The Word Works. She was a 2015 NEA Literature Fellow

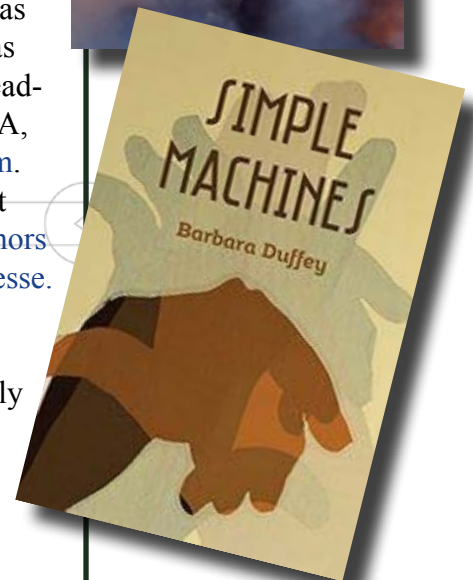
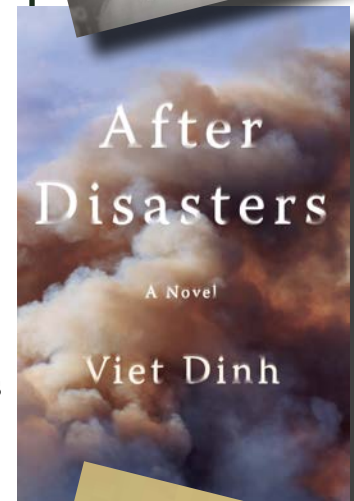
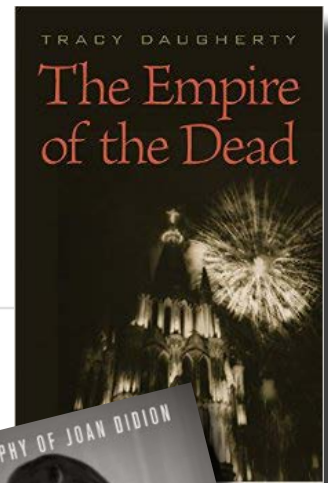
in poetry, and is using her fellowship money to work on her third collection, tentatively titled *Cultivar*. She is currently an assistant professor of English at Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell, SD, and will be promoted to chairperson of the Department of English and Languages starting in the fall.

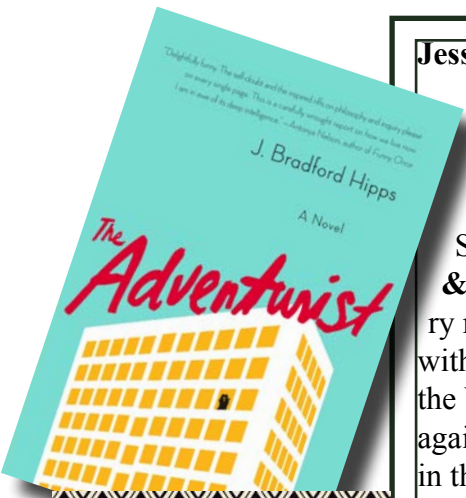


Farnoosh Fathi (Ph.D., 2011) founded the Young Artists Language & Devotion Alliance—YALDA—to support the work of

young women writers ages 12-19. Farnoosh mentors young writers individually to develop their work year-round, and this past June, YALDA held its first NYC-based summer literary intensive for its inaugural cohort of four young women authors. Ugly Duckling Presse and Poets House are partnering with YALDA to publish and launch their chapbooks. At UDP, YALDA authors will learn to print and bind their own letterpresses chapbooks, and Poets House will host YALDA's writing and performance workshops, a seminar for publishing as young woman authors, as well as the YALDA chapbook launch reading. To learn more about YALDA, please visit www.yalda-web.com. You can help support YALDA at www.gofundme.com/yalda_authors and <http://www.uglyducklingpresse.org/yalda/>.

Aja Gabel (Ph.D., 2015) recently sold her first novel, *In Common Time*, to Riverhead/Penguin Random House.





Jessica Greenbaum (MA, 1981) was the recipient of a 2015 NEA award, and a 2016 Alice Fay di Castagnola Award from the Poetry Society of America. She received a grant from **Poets & Writers** to continue a poetry reading and writing workshop with 9/11 first responders through the WTC Health Program, and will again be teaching at Barnard College in the spring.

Houston Grand Opera/HGOco was performed across Houston venues, courthouses, and middle and high schools during the months of April and May. This past year, she served as co-Vice President of the Writers at Work Executive Board and was awarded an RSPG/Hemingway Vitality grant to attend the Home School Conference in Miami. She recently accepted a Howard Nemerov Scholarship to attend the Sewanee Writers' Conference in July.



J. Bradford Hippis's (MFA, 2007) first novel, *The Adventurist*, was published in April by St. Martin's. In a praiseful *New York Times* review, Dwight Garner described the book as "bright and large-souled... a brisk and polished and somehow very American novel."

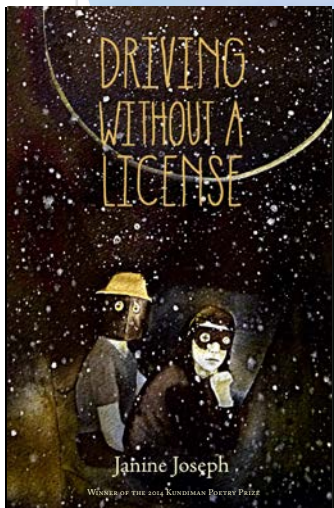
Irene Keliher (MFA, 2009) had essays come out in *The Millions*, *The Weeklings*, *Literary Mama*, and *Narrative Magazine* over the past year. The *Narrative* essay is about writing her first libretto for the Houston Opera. She recently accepted a position as a Content Strategist for Rover.com, and offers fiction and nonfiction classes at Seattle's Hugo House to get an occasional teaching fix. Meanwhile, she's raising two kids and working on a novel.



Layla Benitez-James (MFA, 2014) has been living in Spain since October of 2014, where she continues to work on projects, and has had several poems translated into Spanish. She is currently at work on the translation of the novel *Hombre en azul* (Man in Blue) by the Spanish poet Óscar Curieses. She has recently published work in *Revisita Kokomo* and *La Galla Ciencia Numero IV*.

Peter Kimani's (Ph.D., 2014) new novel, *Dance of the Jakaranda*, will be published by Akashic Books in February 2017.

Sophie Klahr's (MFA, 2013) first full-length collection, *Meet Me Here At Dawn*, is forthcoming from Yes-Yes Books (2016).



Janine Joseph (Ph.D., 2013) accepted a position as Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at Oklahoma State University. Her debut poetry collection, *Driving Without a License*, which was profiled in the Sunday edition of the *Los Angeles Times*, was released by Alice James Books in May 2016. Her third commissioned libretto, *What Wings They Were: The Case of Emeline*, for the

Andrew Kozma's (Ph.D., 2007) poem "Ode to a Common Housefly" was chosen by Sherman Alexie to appear in Best American Poetry 2015.

Laura Lark's (MA, 1989) third solo exhibition at Devin Borden Gallery, Houston, "The Misuses of Enchantment" opened in the fall of 2015 and ran through January 2016. A 6'x5.5

foot drawing on Tyvek, “Janice”, was acquired by Hobby Airport, Houston, in January, 2016. Two chapters from the handwritten and illustrated series “Dear Johnny Depp” were featured in issue number 5 of *No Tokens* literary journal in April of 2016.

Lance Larsen (Ph.D., 1993) has recently had essays in *Southern Review*, *Southwest Review*, *River Styx*, and *Brief Encounters*, a Norton anthology featuring contemporary short nonfiction, and his poems are forthcoming in *Ploughshares*, *Bombay Gin*, *American Poetry Review*, and *Crazyhorse*. He currently serves as the MFA coordinator at BYU and as the Utah poet laureate. He and his wife, Jacqui, are collaborating on a soon-to-open art show titled *Three-Mile Radius*, which is 93% Jacqui, 7% Lance. His teenage daughter, Tessa, is quite sure she wants to be a chemist.

Leah Lax’s (MFA, 2004) memoir, *Uncovered* (August 2015), has been a finalist for three different literary prizes and is currently a finalist for a Chautauqua Prize. Right now, she is immersed in writing a libretto/production design based on her memoir for American composer Lori Laitman, who is already composing the music. *Uncovered*, the opera is also a finalist for the 2016 Pellicciotti Prize for new initiatives in opera.

Elline Lipkin (Ph.D., 2003) was recently named Poet Laureate of Altadena for 2016-2018. Elline has also received a fellowship from the Dorland

Mountain Arts Colony and this past year had essays included in *Difficult Dialogues about Twenty-First Century Girls and Staging Women’s Lives: Gendered Life Stages in Language and Literature Workplaces*, both published by SUNY Press. At AWP she moderated a panel about teaching creative writing to teenage girls. She



is a Research Scholar with UCLA’s Center for the Study of Women and teaches poetry workshops for Writing Workshops Los Angeles.

Laura Long (Ph.D., 2000) co-edited *Eyes Burning at the Edge of the Woods: Fiction and Poetry from West Virginia*, an anthology of over 60 contemporary writers, which will be published Spring 2017 by Vandalia/West Virginia University Press.

Richard Lyons’s (Ph.D., 1991) fourth book of poems *Un Poco Loco* was published by Iris Books in Oak Ridge, TN. This book is a companion to his last book, *Fleur Carnivore*, which



won the 2005 Washington Prize from Word Works in Washington, D.C. These books employ the lives, personae, and art theories of jazz artists like Duke Ellington, John Coltrane, Horace Silver, Ornette Coleman, Woody Shaw, et. al. as co-conspirators in the battle for global justice and tolerance.

David Stuart MacLean’s (Ph.D., 2009) essay “Golden Friendship Club” was published by *The Bennington Review* in their inaugural issue. He currently teaches creative writing in Chicago, where he lives with his wife, Emily, and their two kids.



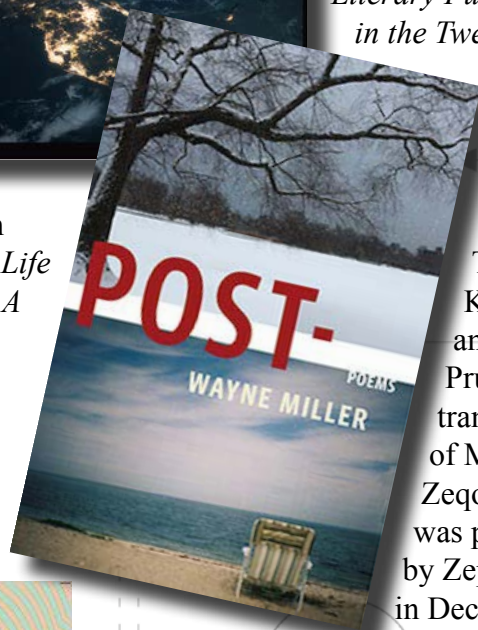
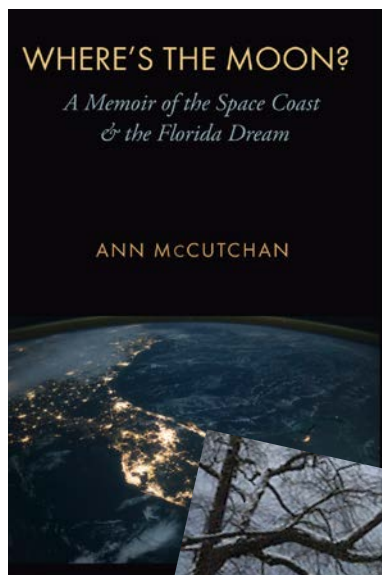
James Davis May (MFA, 2007) won the Poetry Society of America’s Cecil Hemley Memorial Award, and his first book, *Unquiet Things*, was published by Louisiana State University Press.



Karyna McGlynn’s (Ph.D., 2015) third chapbook, *The 9-Day Queen Gets Lost on her Way to the Execution*, was recently published by Willow Springs Books. Her second full-length book, *Hothouse*, will be out from Sarabande

Books in April 2017. Also, starting this fall, she'll be a Visiting Assistant Professor of Poetry and Translation at Oberlin College.

Ann McCutchan's (Fall, 1998) fifth book, *Where's the Moon? A Memoir of the Space Coast and the Florida Dream* will be published in October by Texas A & M University Press. She also recently signed a contract with W.W. Norton for *The Life She Wished to Live -- A Biography of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, Author of 'The Yearling.'* This past year she retired from the University of North



Wanderings (Little, Brown), won the American Society of Journalists and Authors 2016 Award for Memoir/Autobiography, and was a finalist for the PEN Southwest Nonfiction Award.

Wayne Miller's (MFA, 2002) fourth poetry collection, *Post-*, was published by Milkweed Editions, as was the essay collection *Literary Publishing in the Twenty-First Century*, which he co-edited with Travis Kurowski and Kevin Prufer. His translation of Moikom Zeqo's *Zodiac* was published by Zephyr Press in December, 2015. Since he

and UH alums Brian Barker and Nicky Beer relaunched the journal *Copper Nickel*, work from its pages has been reprinted in *Best American Poetry*, *Best American Short Stories*, and the *Pushcart Prize Anthology*.

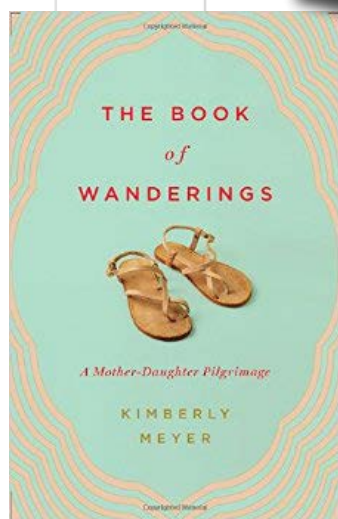
Shortly after graduating from the CWP, **Whitney Mower** (MFA, 2014) was offered a record deal through a small label based out of Austin, which led her to Los Angeles where she made her first studio EP as "Iva Dawn," with the help of producer Tom Biller

(Warpaint, Liars, Kanye West). Her longtime bandmate Lucas Gorham (Grandfather Child), is featured on the record, along with drummer Matt Chamberlain (Soundgarden, Tori Amos). Whitney is currently working on her second album, "True Voodoo," with the same producer, as well as a music video and corresponding graphic novel by the same name, which will be released late 2016. Her music is available on iTunes, Bandcamp, and Spotify.

Oindrila Mukherjee (Ph.D., 2009) is an assistant professor in the department of Writing at Grand Valley State University. Last year, she began contributing a literary column along with other features for the Indian magazine *Scroll*. In the US her short stories appeared in *Silk Road Review*, *Arts & Letters*, and *Philadelphia Stories*, where her story "Cul de Sac" won second place in the Marguerite McGlenn Prize for Fiction. She also published work in *EssayDaily* and *The Writer's Chronicle* Online Exclusives. She was a finalist for the Rona Jaffe Foundation award in 2015. As coordinator of the Grand Valley Writers Series, she has been able to invite some accomplished UH CWP alumni to her campus.

Kerry Neville's (Ph.D., 2000) second short fiction collection, *Remember to Forget Me*, will be published by Braddock Avenue Books in Summer/Fall 2017.

David Parsons's (MA, 1991) co-edited with Wendy Barker, *Far Out: Poems of the 60's*. An AWP panel for the book featured



Texas to write full-time.

Kimberly Meyer's (Ph.D., 2008) first book, *The Book of*

poets Patricia Smith, Alicia Ostriker, Tim Seibles, Wendy Barker and David. David continues to teach Creative Writing at LSC-Montgomery and co-direct the Writers in Performance Series, in its 25th year, with good friend and fellow UH Alum, Cliff Hudder.

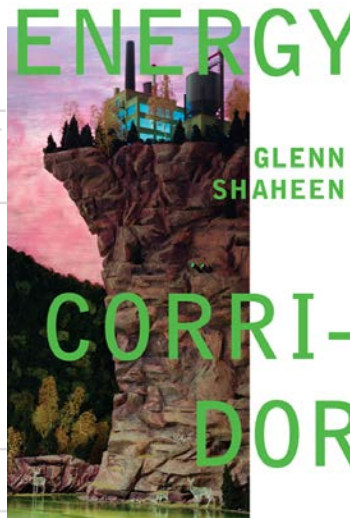
Nancy Pearson's (MFA, 2015) second collection of poems *The Whole By Contemplation of a Single Bone* was published by Fordham Press in early spring 2016, and was named winner of The Poets Out Loud Prize.

Emily Perez's (MFA, 2006) first full-length poetry collection, *House of Sugar, House of Stone*, which explores the anxieties of childhood and parenthood through the lens of fairytales, was published in March by The Center for Literary Publishing. She was awarded a CantoMundo fellowship for 2016, and this summer she'll work with a community of Latino/a poets at the University of Texas.

Dan Rifenburg, a Vietnam Era Army veteran, has been teaching writing workshops for veterans at the DeBakey VA Hospital as part of the Houston Grand Opera's community outreach program. His latest book, *Isthmus*, was published by Houston's Mutabilis Press. He gave a reading from the work at The Jung Center in Houston.

Kent Shaw (Ph.D., 2011) and his wife welcomed their first child in

November, 2015 (Viola Louise Shaw). Kent also accepted a position at Wheaton College in Massachusetts.

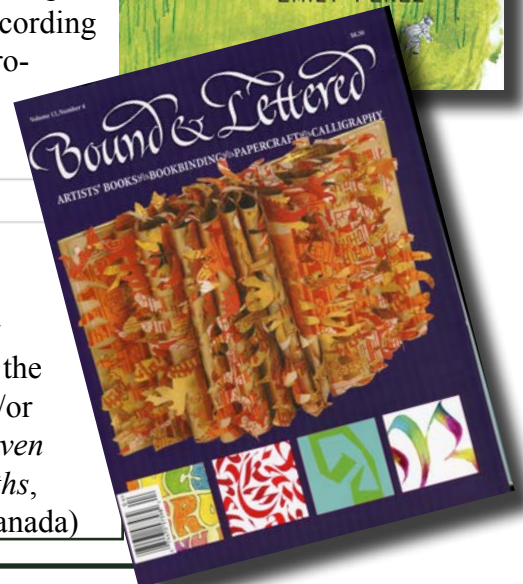
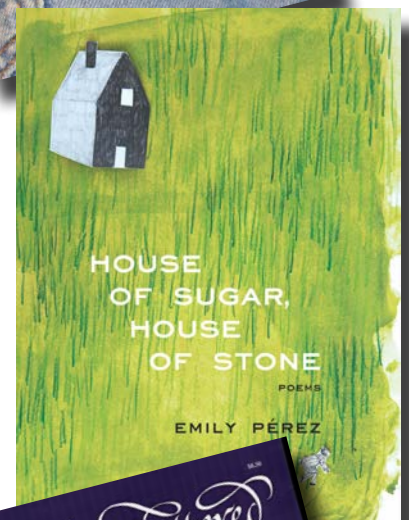
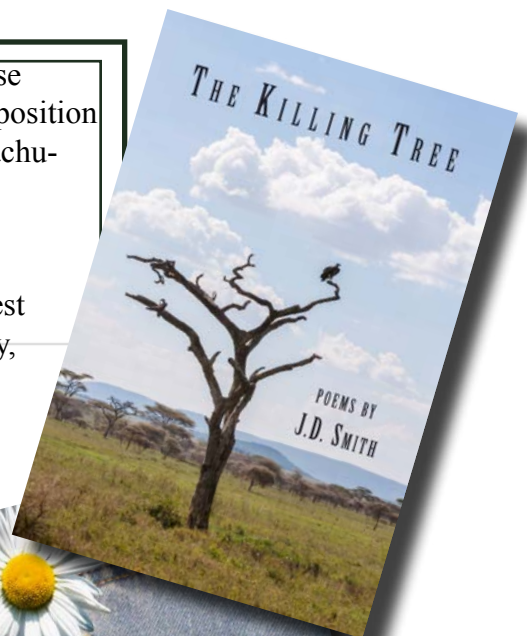


Glenn Shaheen's (MFA, 2008) newest collection of poetry, *Energy Corridor*, was published by the University of Pittsburgh Press in March.

J.D. Smith's (MA, 1989) fourth full-length collection of poetry, *The Killing Tree*, was published by Finishing Line Press.

Analicia Sotelo's (MFA, 2012) poems were recently published in *The New Yorker*, *Meridian*, and *The Collagist*, and she was the 2016 Disquiet International Literary Prize Winner in Poetry.

Marilyn Stablein's (MA, 1984) work was featured in the *Vancouver (BC) Sun* and the *Hollywood Star News*. She taught workshops in Memoir ("Living and Recording the Creative Life"), an "Introduction to Artist Books" and read from her work in Vashon Island (WA), Milwaukee and Portland, OR. She published two essay reviews, "Loba Revisited" on Diane di Prima and "My Dinner with Paul Reps" (in the *Kyoto Journal*). Poems and/or art were also featured in *Raven Chronicles*, *Windfall*, *Otoliths*, the *Cascadia Anthology* (Canada)



and a *Portland Marijuana Anthology*. Her artist book “Inflamed” was featured on the cover of *Bound & Lettered Magazine*, which reviewed her recent monograph *Bind, Alter, Fold: Artist Books* (Book Arts Editions).

Gail (Donohue) Storey (MA, 1982; CWP Administrative Director, 1982-1986) and her memoir, *I Promise Not to Suffer: A Fool for Love Hikes the Pacific Crest Trail* (winner of the National Outdoor Book Award and others) were featured in the *The Costco Connection* (January 2016), in a piece titled “Epic Storey.”

Russel Swensen’s (Ph.D., 2011) book *The Magic Kingdom* was recently released by Black Lawrence Press.

Giuseppe Taurino’s (MFA, 2006) stories have recently appeared in *Bridge Eight* and *Green Mountains Review*. He continues to serve as Assistant Director of the UH CWP, and as a contributing editor for *American Short Fiction*.

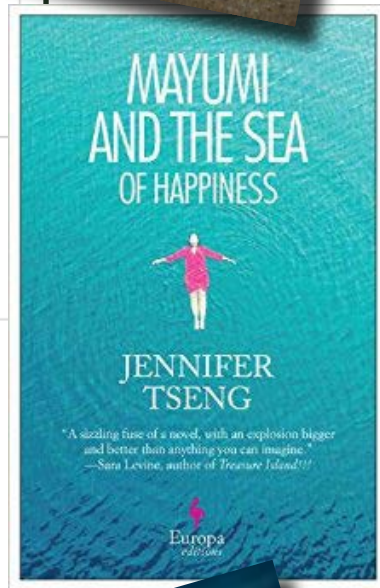
Robert Tinajero (Ph. D., 2004), was named a 2016 Emerging Scholar by *Diverse News in Education* <http://diverseeducation.com/article/80934/>. He was also named Co-Director of Race Relations Institute at Paul Quinn College in Dallas, TX and delivered talk at

TEDx El Paso in summer of 2015 about race/racism https://youtu.be/huO_PSbO2L8.

Jennifer Tseng’s (MFA, 2002) debut novel *Mayumi and the Sea of Happiness* (Europa Editions 2015) was shortlisted for the PEN/Robert W. Bingham Prize for Debut Fiction.

Jessica Wilbanks’s (MFA, 2011) memoir, *On the Far Side of the Fire*, will be published by Beacon Press in late 2017. The book draws on her experiences growing up Pentecostal, her departure from the church as a teenager, the messy birth of the faith in places such as Kansas City, Houston, and Los Angeles, and its subsequent growth to all corners of the globe.

Tiphonie Yanique’s (MFA, 2006) poetry collection, *Wife*, was published in November and has won the Bocas Prize in Caribbean Poetry. It is also a finalist for the Forward Prize for best first collection. She recently accepted an Associate Professor position in creative writing at Wesleyan University, and this past March, she and her husband welcomed their third child.



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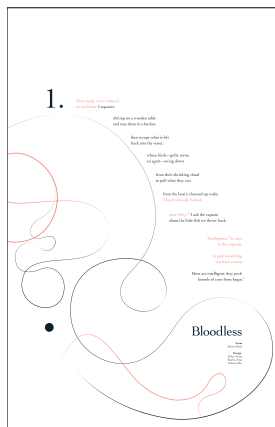
Thank to the Writers and Graphic Designers in the EcoPoetics for providing the graphics in the newsletter this year



“Apiary” Nathan Stabenfeldt (MFA Poetry, 2017), Jose Diaz (BFA Graphic Design, 2016), Enrique Garza (BFA Graphic Design, 2016), and Paulina Papke (BFA Graphic Design, 2016)



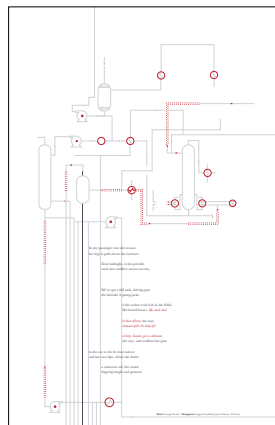
“The Meeting of the Waters” Melanie Brkich (MFA Poetry, 2017), Candice Cantu (BFA Graphic Design, 2016), Daniel Cardoza (BFA Graphic Design, 2016), and Matt Hughes (BFA Graphic Design, 2016)



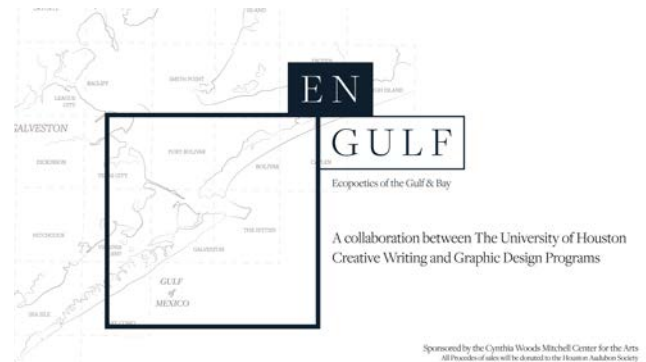
“Bloodless” Martin Rock (Ph.D Poetry, 2017), Helen Nerio (BFA Graphic Design, 2016), Rafia Jessa (BFA Graphic Design, 2016), and Vanessa Ros (BFA Graphic Design, 2016)



“The Burgeo Gut” Dana Kroos (Ph.D. Fiction, 2017), Roxana Dominguez (BFA Graphic Design, 2016), and Tracy Ngo (BFA Graphic Design, 2016)



“Refinery” Georgia Pearle (Ph.D. Poetry, 2017), Aggie Forouhideh (BFA Graphic Design, 2016), Jesus Palacios (BFA Graphic Design, 2016), and Thi Tran (BFA Graphic Design, 2016)



“En Gulf” Raafia Jessa (BFA Graphic Design, 2016)



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