

The Newsletter of the Creative Writing Program at the University of Houston

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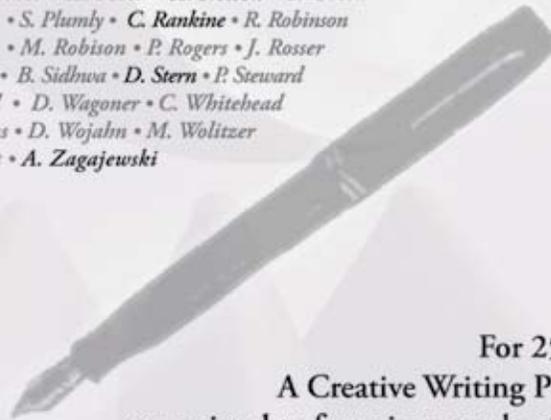
**2004-2005
Edition**

The Creative Writing Program at the University of Houston

April 16, 2005 - A Celebration

CWP@25

*D. Barthelme • R. Boswell • R. Brown • S. Bryan • K. Cambor • A. Cheuse
R. Cohen • E. Currie • C. Divakaruni • M. Doty • N. Flynn • M. Gaitskill
V. Cornick • W. Goyen • L. Gregg • Kimiko Hahn • M. Harvey • S. Hearon
E. Hirsch • T. Hoagland • A. Hollinghurst • G. Hongo • R. Howard
M. Howe • D. Hughes • K. Lee • P. Levine • P. Lopate • B. Lowry
C. Macdonald • R. Martinez • W. Matthews • G. Mazur
L. Meriwether • H. Moss • A. Nelson • S. Orlen
R. Phillips • S. Plumly • C. Rankine • R. Robinson
J. Robison • M. Robison • P. Rogers • J. Rosser
N. Shange • B. Sidhwa • D. Stern • P. Steward
M. Strand • D. Wagoner • C. Whitehead
J. Williams • D. Wojahn • M. Wolitzer
C. Wright • A. Zagajewski*



For 25 years,
A Creative Writing Program
committed to fostering people of letters
who embrace the challenges of the creative life
and who seek to advance the possibilities of
literary expression and intellectual engagement.

A Constituent Member of The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts

Every effort has been made to include faculty, students, and alumni news. Items not included will be published in the next edition.



From the Director...

The academic year 2004/2005 was a particularly full one. We welcomed Claudia Rankine to the faculty; we participated in the inaugural course for the new Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for Collaboration among the Arts; and on April 16, 2005, we hosted a celebration of the UH Creative Writing Program's 25th anniversary. This year we will welcome Kimiko Hahn to the poetry faculty and welcome Patricia Powell in the Fall and Peter Turchi in the Spring as visiting professors of fiction. And 19 new students will join the program: 10 in poetry; 8 in fiction, and 1 in non-fiction.

In 2005/2006 we will address the undergraduate concentration in Creative Writing; we will work with the Graduate Studies Program to reform our graduate programs; and we will continue our efforts to build a strong and effective alumni association.

It was especially gratifying in April to visit with alumni and former faculty. It allowed us the opportunity to recognize the special contributions of some of our former faculty, to acknowledge people in the community who have generously supported the program over the years, and to acclaim the achievements of our alumni. President Gogue hosted a wonderful reception; the M. D. Anderson Library put on a splendid night honoring the opening of the Donald Barthelme archive (the readings that evening by Grace Paley and Padgett Powell were works of art that both honored Donald Barthelme and captured the edgy comic wit of his fiction); and finally, the Program brought past and current faculty and students together in readings and discussions that showed why this is such a special Creative Writing Program. Everyone seemed to have a good time at the festivities, and the standing ovation to John McNamara, as the faculty member who first conceived of the program, provided a spontaneous tribute to John's vision some 25 years ago.

The weekend of celebration reminded us of what has been achieved, and it appropriately called us to continue to be an innovative leader in Creative Writing. It confirmed us in our commitment to think in large terms and to be willing to rethink directions and to be open to what the future will demand. Ours is an on-going task of creatively re-inventing ourselves. The most immediate place for such reinvention is the undergraduate concentration and the graduate programs. And this year we will be true to our heritage as we ask ourselves what are the best ways to create curricula and programs that are both intellectually rigorous and creatively challenging. Not content to rest on past achievement, we will embrace the generative dialectic of change and continuity and we will undertake the risks that are necessary for any program that is truly vital.

j. Kastely,
Director

Program News

Staff News

Well, we made it through the application process and the CWP 25th anniversary celebration and then Shatera Dixon, our office coordinator, left us. She's moved to Miami and will be working at the Univ. of Miami. She will be missed and we wish her luck. I just hope we didn't run her off.

We were, however, fortunate enough to find a new office coordinator quickly. She is Maria Martinez and began working with us in June. She worked at UH-Downtown for four years before going to Rice Univ. in December, 2004. She is also a student with a double major in physics and math.

Kathy Smathers, Asst. Director, continues to work with j. to make the Creative Writing Program all we think it can be. We worked hard on the 25th anniversary celebration and think the work paid off with a wonderful homecoming for our current and former students and faculty. But, we don't want to do it again for a very long time. Kathy would like to thank all of you who helped put the event together. Our plans for the future include trying to streamline our application process and working with our alumni on an alumni organization.

We were lucky enough to have Glenn Blake working with us this year as part time alumni relations coordinator, advisor to creative writing undergraduates and lecturer. He was really busy. If he can be enticed to continue doing all this, we'll try to get him his own desk next year.

Mike Doyle has been indispensable again in so many ways this year. From helping get our ads out and assisting with the newsletter, to working closely with us on all aspects of the anniversary celebration, including taking all the pictures, he jumped in where he was needed. As always, the Creative Writing Program is extremely grateful for his help and glad he's our friend.



Kathy & Maria

Inaugural Course in Collaboration Among the Arts

In Spring 2005, Professor Nick Flynn and four graduate students, Lacy Johnson, Andrew Kozma, Kelly Moore, and Nick Brown, and one undergraduate, Amanda Auchter, participated in the first course sponsored by the new Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts. Along with faculty and students from Theatre, Art, and Music, our faculty and students worked in four small groups, each group deciding upon an independent collaborative project and then carrying that project to completion. The four projects ranged from an interactive event between the students and community, to a series of staged events that sought to play with the conventions of audience expectation, to two performance pieces, each of which explored aspects of identity. Not only did the four projects succeed, but the course participants contrib-

uted to the larger goal of helping the Mitchell Center begin to create a curriculum in which the various creative units could genuinely cooperate. The Center will offer its second course in collaboration in Spring 2006.

New Faculty

Kimiko Hahn will join us in the Fall 2005 semester. She is the author of six collections of poetry: *The Artist's Daughter*, *Mosquito and Ant*, *Volatile*, *The Unbearable Heart*, which was awarded an American Book Award, *Earshot*, which received the Theodore Roethke Memorial Poetry Prize and an Association of Asian American Studies Literature Award and *Air Pocket*. She has received fellowships from the NEA, The New York Foundation for the Arts, and the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund. In 1995, she wrote ten portraits of women for the MTV special, *Ain't Nuthin' but a She-Thing* for which she also recorded voice-overs. This past year she was commissioned to write a screenplay for photos by Peter Lindbergh; the text will be narrated by Jeanne Moreau. Kimiko has just completed *The Narrow Road to the Interior*, a collection of poetry and prose, largely utilizing the classical Japanese forms, tanka and zuihitsu. Currently she is working on a series inspired by articles from the *Science Times*.



Kimiko Hahn

2005-2006 Inprint-Brown Reading Series

Celebrating its 25th anniversary—25 years of bringing over 250 of the world's great writers to Texas—the 2005-2006 season of the Inprint Brown Reading Series will feature giants of contemporary literature, including such literary masters as **John Irving, John Updike, Mary Gordon, Louise Erdrich**, and others. Presented by Inprint, in association with the UH Creative Writing Program, Alley Theatre, and Brazos Bookstore, the season features a special pre-season reading with Irving, seven regular season readings, and two family events.

Readings take place at the Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Avenue, with the exception of the first two readings. The season begins in August and runs through May; readings are held on Mondays at 7:30 p.m. and family events are on Saturdays at 11 a.m. (doors open 45 minutes before reading). Admission for the Irving or Updike reading is \$10. Admission for all other readings is \$5, free for students and senior citizens. The family events are free. Readings will be followed by book sales, and all but the Irving reading will be followed by book signings. Reserved season tickets are now available through Inprint; tickets for the pre-season event with Irving are available on-line at www.inprint-inc.org or by calling 713-315-2525. For more information, contact Inprint at 713-521-2026 or visit www.inprint-inc.org.

The Inprint Brown Reading Series, twice voted “Best Reading Series” by *Houston Press*, described as the “city’s premier venue for readings . . . one of the real bargains on Houston’s cultural landscape,” by *Houston Chronicle* Book Editor Fritz Lanham, and called “famously good” by National Book Award winner Jonathan Franzen, continues to rank among the top literary showcases in the United States, paralleling the caliber of reading series in New York, Seattle, Portland, and Santa Fe.

John Irving, August 8, 2005—Great American writer, Irving is the author of 11 novels, including the bestsellers *The World According to Garp*, *The Cider House Rules*, *A Prayer for Owen Meany*, *A Widow for One Year*, and *The Fourth Hand*. The recipient of numerous honors including the National Book Award, Irving will read from his new novel, *Until I Find You*. A special pre-season event to mark the 25th anniversary season of the Inprint Brown Reading Series, this reading takes place at Cullen Theater, Wortham Center, 501 Texas Avenue.

Mary Gordon and Caryl Phillips, September 26, 2005—**Gordon** is the author of seven novels, including *Final Payments* and *The Company of Women*, as well as novellas, essays, memoir, and biography. Her latest novel *Pearl* is described by Maxine Hong Kingston as “a masterpiece. . . vital reading.” **Phillips** is the author of seven novels, including *A Distant Shore*, which won the Commonwealth Writers Prize, *Higher Ground*, and *The Nature of Blood*, and three books of nonfiction. His new novel, *Dancing in the Dark*, reimagines the life of

vaudeville star Bert Williams, the first Black entertainer in the U.S. to reach the highest levels of fame. Special location Zilkha Hall, Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, 800 Bagby Street.

Louise Erdrich, October 17, 2005—Erdrich is “universally hailed as one of the most talented writers of her generation” (*Bookmarks Magazine*). Her novels focus on an Ojibwe reservation in North Dakota and include *The Beet Queen*, *The Bingo Palace*, *Tracks*, and *The Master Butchers Singing Club*. Her debut novel *Love Medicine* won the National Book Critics Circle Award, and *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse* was a finalist for the National Book Award. She will be reading from her newest novel *The Painted Drum*.

Lucie Brock Broido and Dionisio Martinez, November 14, 2005—Award-winning poet, **Broido** has been described as having “swank, wit, humor, playfulness, and sheer brilliance” (Calvin Bedient, *Parnassus*). She is the author of three collections of poetry, including her most recent, *Trouble in Mind*. **Martinez** was born in Cuba and raised in Spain and California. Jorie Graham describes his poetry as “heartbreaking, overstuffed, seeping with history.” He is the author of three collections—*Climbing Back*, selected for the National Poetry Series, *Bad Alchemy*, and *History as a Second Language*.

Jonathan Safran Foer and Gish Jen, January 23, 2006—**Foer's** debut novel, *Everything Is Illuminated*, became an international bestseller; a film adaptation is due out in fall 2005. His latest novel, *Extremely Close and Incredibly Loud*, follows

a 9-year-old attempting to solve a mystery left behind by his father, who died at the World Trade Center on 9/11. Leading Chinese American writer, **Jen** is the author of the novels *Typical American* and *Mona in the Promised Land*, and a volume of stories, *Who's Irish?* She will read from her new novel *The Love Wife*.

John Updike, February 27, 2006—One of the greatest writers of our time, Updike is the author of more than 50 books, including 21 novels and numerous collections of short stories, poems, and literary criticism. His most well known works include the quartet of novels *Rabbit, Run*; *Rabbit Redux*; *Rabbit is Rich*; and *Rabbit at Rest*, the last two of which won the Pulitzer Prize. In addition, Updike has received many honors, including the National Book Award and the National Book Critics Circle Award. Special price of \$10 admission at the door

Louise Glück and **Franz Wright**, March 26, 2006—**Glück**, 2003-2004 U.S. Poet Laureate, is the author of nine books of poetry, including *The Wild Iris*, which received the Pulitzer Prize, and *The Triumph of Achilles*, which received the National Book Critics' Circle Award. Her tenth volume, *Averno*, will be published in spring 2006. **Wright**, the author of 14 volumes of poetry, was born in Vienna and raised in the United States. His most recent volume of poetry, *Walking to Martha's Vineyard*, was awarded the 2004 Pulitzer Prize.

UH Creative Writing Program Faculty Review, April 24, 2006—The award-winning writers that made up the UH Creative Writing Program faculty launched the Inprint

Brown Reading Series in 1980. In honor of the Series' 25th anniversary, the current UH Creative Writing Program faculty will give short readings. They include: **Robert Boswell**, fiction writer—*Century's Son*, *Mystery Ride*; **Chitra Divakaruni**, fiction writer and poet—*The Vine of Desire*, *The Mistress of Spices*; **Mark Doty**, poet and memoirist—*School of the Arts*, *Firebird*; **Nick Flynn**, poet and memoirist—*Another Bullshit Night in Suck City*, *Blind Huber*; **Kimiko Hahn**, poet—*The Artist's Daughter*, *Mosquito and Ant*; **Tony Hoagland**, poet—*What Narcissism Means to Me*, *Donkey Gospel*; **Ruben Martinez**, creative nonfiction—*The New Americans*, *Crossing Over: A Mexican Family on the Migrant Trail*; **Antonya Nelson**, fiction writer—*Female Trouble*, *Living to Tell*; **Robert Phillips**, poet and fiction writer—*News About People You Know*, *Spinach Days*; **Claudia Rankine**, poet—*Don't Let Me Be Lonely*, *Plot*; **Daniel Stern**, fiction writer—*A Little Street Music*, *Twice Told Tales*.

Family Literary Events are free and held on Saturdays, 11:00 am, at the Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Ave.:

A South Asian Performance of Story and Dance with **Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni** and **Rathna Kumar**, October 22, 2005—**Divakaruni**, bestselling novelist, poet, and faculty member of the UH Creative Writing Program, will read from her new book for young readers, *The Mirror of Fire and Dreaming*, set in India and following the adventures of a 12-year-old boy. She will also be reading several of her award winning poems. Divakaruni's reading will be accompanied by accom-

plished Indian classical dancer **Dr. Rathna Kumar**, director of Anjali Center for Indian Performing Arts.

Cinco de Mayo para Niños with **Diane Gonzales Bertrand** and *John & Juan*, May 6, 2006—Presented in collaboration with Arte Público Press, award-winning author Diane Gonzales Bertrand will read from her work, followed by a performance of David Prather's joyous *John & Juan*. Gonzales Bertrand is the author of five bilingual picture books for children, including *The Empañadas that Abuela Made/Las empañadas que hacía la abuela*, and six novels for young adults, including *Trino's Time* and *Trino's Choice*, both named Best Book of the Year in the young adult category by the National Latino Literary Hall of Fame. *John & Juan* is a short 45 minute madcap two-man play which explores the shared history of Texas and Mexico

The Inprint Brown Reading Series receives generous underwriting support from The Brown Foundation, Inc., and Weatherford International, and is also supported by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts, "which believes that a great nation deserves great art." Inprint also receives in-kind support from the Alley Theatre, Continental Airlines, Hines, *Houston Chronicle*, and KUHF 88.7 FM, as well as other support from The City of Houston through the Cultural Arts Council of Houston/Harris County and the Texas Commission on the Arts

Faculty News

Robert Boswell has had several publications this year. In 2004, his works appeared in *Ink Pot*, *Ploughshares*, *Vestal Review* and *McSweeney's Online Journal*. In 2005, he was published in *Epoch*, *Night Train*, *Mid-American Review* and a novella, *The Heyday of the Insensitive Bastards*, is forthcoming in *Fugue*. His works were also published in a couple of anthologies. *Skin Deep* was in *The Vestal Review Fifth Anniversary Issue*, edited by Mark Budman and *Swimming in the Rio Grande* appeared in *Rio Grande*, edited by Jan Reid, Univ. of Texas Press.



Chitra Divakaruni, Tracy Dougherty,
Antonya Nelson

Chitra Divakaruni's children's novel, *The Conch Bearer*, has been nominated for the Texas Bluebonnet Award and the Rebecca Caudill Award (Illinois). It has been translated into several languages and was chosen as one of the best books of 2003 by *Publisher's Weekly*. Stories from her collection, *Arranged Marriage*, were adapted into a play and performed by the Sacramento Theater Company in 2004. She edited an anthology, *California Uncovered: Stories for the 21st Century*, which came out in April, 2005. The collection starts off with a poem by CWP faculty member, **Ruben Martinez**. Chitra's book, *Mistress of Spices*, is being made into a movie by the directors of the movie *Bend It Like Beckham*. *Queen of Dreams*, her novel that was published last year, has been trans-

lated into German, Italian, Spanish and French. It was chosen as one of the "best books of the year" by the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *San Jose Mercury*.

Mark Doty's seventh book of poems, *School of the Arts*, was published by HarperCollins in the U.S. and by Jonathan Cape in the United Kingdom. Sutton Hoo published a limited-edition letterpress volume, *Fire to Fire*, with hand-colored woodblock prints, a silk cover, hand-stitched bindings and a five hundred dollar price tag. Individual poems appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Ecotone*, and *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, which also published an essay on Whitman in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the first publication of *Leaves Of Grass*. Mark read from his work at schools around the U.S., at the Geraldine Dodge Poetry Festival, and in London, Oxford, Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Nick Flynn won the 2005 PEN/ Martha Albrand Award for the Art of the Memoir for *Another Bullshit Night in Suck City*.



Adam Zagajewski, Nick Flynn,
Ed Hirsch

Tony Hoagland reported two things of note this year. Bloodaxe Press published *What Narcissism Means to Me: Selected Poems*, a British edition of his poems, in fall 2004. Also, in 2006, Graywolf will bring out a collection of his prose essays about poetry and craft, called *Real Sofistakashun*.



Ruben Martinez

Ruben Martinez was married to anthropologist and writer Angela Garcia last December, and they now live in northern New Mexico when Ruben is not in Houston. Ruben has signed a deal with Holt/Metropolitan for his new book on the desert, *West*. On the music front, he and CWP Ph.D. candidate **Raj Mankad** performed together recently at a music festival in Joshua Tree, CA, and also laid down some tracks in the studio for his upcoming album.

Antonya Nelson has a book named *Some Fun* coming out in March 2006. Toni and her husband, Robert Boswell, will be on leave from UH this coming academic year.

Robert Phillips has been busy again this year. Books coming out are *Circumstances Beyond Our Control: New Poems*, and *Are Those Real Poems, Or Did You Write Them Yourself?* (literary essays). He also had poems in *The Hudson Review*, *The Paris Review*, *Western Humanities Review*, *The New Hampshire Review* and *The Georgia Review*. His poem, "Tuba Girl", was made into a short film produced by Voodoo Films, Inc. His work appeared in numerous anthologies. Some of his poems were read over the air by Garrison Keillor on *The Writers' Almanac*. His first book of short stories, *The Land of Lost Content* (1970), is being reprinted by the University of Delaware Press.



Robert Phillips & Grace Paley

Claudia Rankine is the author of four collections of poetry: *Don't Let Me Be Lonely*, *Plot*, *The End of the Alphabet* and *Nothing in Nature is Private*. She is co-editor of *American Women Poets in the Twenty-First Century*. Her work has been published in numerous journals and is also in several anthologies, including *Great American Prose Poems: From Poe to the Present*, *The Best American Poetry 2001*, *Giant Step: African American Writing at the Crossroads of the Century* and *The Garden Thrives: Twentieth Century African-American Poetry*.

Daniel Stern had a new collection of short stories published this year- *A Little Street Music*. He also just sold a novella, *The Advancer*, to *The Kenyon Review*. A scholar at the University of Ghent in Belgium has written a book and, apparently, devoted two chapters to Dan- two early novels of his: *Who Shall Live*, *Who Shall Die* and *After the War*. Also the scholar placed an article on Dan's work in the forthcoming issue of *Studies in American Fiction*.



Dan & Gloria Stern

Adam Zagajewski has been really busy. He read from his poetry at the University of Michigan, Georgia Tech, the University of Washington, the PEN Conference in New York and Publis Library in Los Angeles. He also participated at the "Future-show" in Milan in November, 2004, read at poetry festivals in Parma, Italy, and Leukerbad, Switzerland. He gave a lecture at the Nexus Institute Conference on European Values in Rotterdam in December. He presented a fellowship in Spycher, Switzerland. Translations of his work were published in Spanish, Catalan, Czech, Slovak and Hungarian. Other translations are scheduled to appear in Italian and Spanish in the Fall 2005. His *Selected Poems* was published in London by Faber and Faber in Fall 2004.

Visitors

In October, at the invitation of Claudia Rankine, **D. A. Powell** read from his new book of poems, *Cocktails*. Later that month, Ruben Martinez brought **Tom Miller** to campus to lecture on borderlands literature. Creative Writing and African American Studies sponsored a lecture by **Julius Thompson**, professor of History and African American Studies at the University of Missouri, on twentieth century African American poetry.

In the spring, distinguished poet and teacher, **Ellen Bryant Voigt**, gave four masters classes in poetry and syntax. And in April, **Kevin McIlvoy** was on campus for four days, doing a residency in fiction, lecturing on the craft of fiction and reading from his latest book, *The Complete History of New Mexico*. Finally, Tony Hoagland brought **Charles Ruell**, Professor of English at Texas A&M and long-time editor of *Callaloo*, to campus to talk about the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s.

Visiting Faculty

In Fall 2005, **Patricia Powell** will be a visiting professor, teaching a graduate and upper division undergraduate workshop in fiction. Patricia is the author of 4 novels, including *The Pagoda*, *A Small Gathering of Bones*, and *Me Dying Trial*. She has taught at Harvard University, the University of Massachusetts at Boston, and Brown University. Most recently, she served as the Martin Luther King Professor of Writing and Humanistic Studies at MIT.

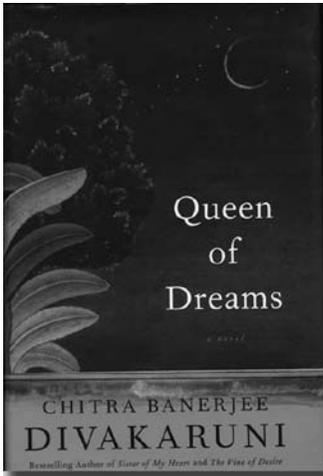
In Spring 2006, **Peter Turchi**, will be a visiting professor, teaching a graduate workshop in fiction and a Writers on Literature seminar. Currently Peter is the Director of the Warren Wilson MFA program, and he is the author of 4 books, including *Maps of the Imagination: The Writer as Cartographer*, *The Girls Next Door*, and *The Magician*. He is co-editor with Andrea Bartlett of *The Story Behind the Story: 26 Stories by Contemporary Writers and How They Work*, and with Charles Baxter on *Bringing the Devil to His Knees: The Craft of Fiction and the Writing of Life*.

In Spring 2006, **Kathleen Lee** will rejoin the Program as a visiting assistant professor. She is the author of *Travel Among Men*, a collection of stories. She is the recipient of a 1999 Rona Jaffe Writing Award. She sometimes writes for *Conde Nast Traveler* and her travel essays appear in *Best American Travel Writing 2001* and 2003

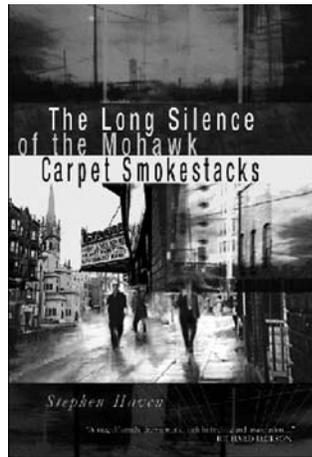


Faculty Emeritus Cynthia Macdonald

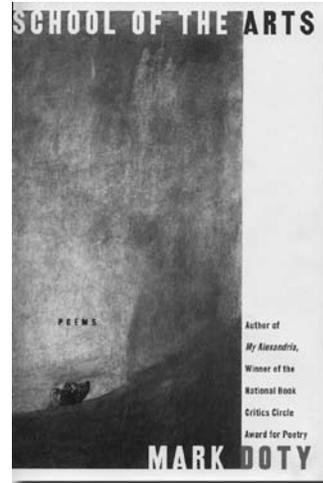
Books



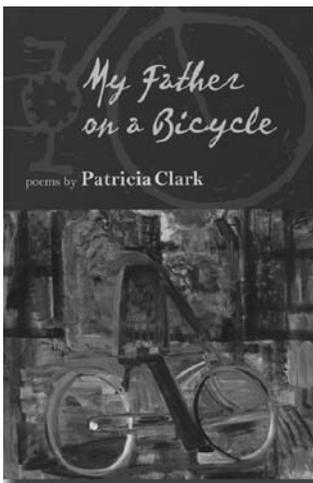
Chitra Divakaruni



Stephen Haven



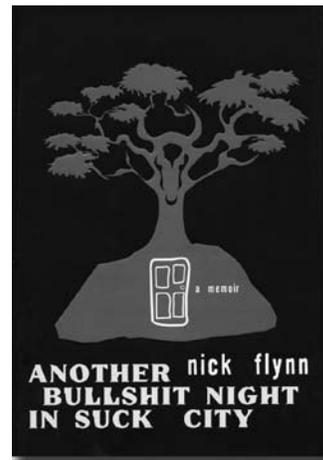
Mark Doty



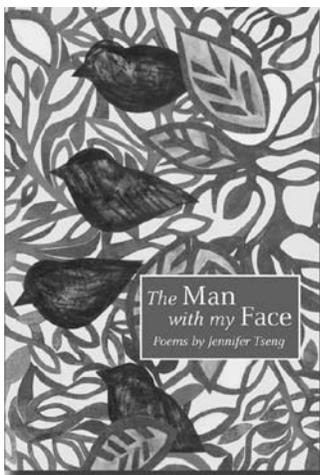
Patricia Clark



Claudia Rankine



Nick Flynn



Jennifer Tseng



Tony Hoagland

Incoming Students

This year, the Creative Writing Program welcomes 19 new students- ten in poetry, eight in fiction and one in creative non-fiction.

Fiction

Brininstool, Andrew A., M.F.A.
B.A., Univ. of North Texas

Glasser, Justin G., M.F.A.
B.A., State Univ. of New York at Binghamton
(Deferred admission from 2004)

Jones, Michael E., M.F.A.
B.A., Univ. of Texas- Austin
M.A., Univ. of Alberta

Mitra, Keya, Ph.D.
B.A., Univ. of Texas- Austin
M.A., Univ. of Houston

Mullany, Edward J., M.F.A.
B.A., Creighton Univ.
M.A., Creighton Univ.

Powers, Michael T., M.F.A.
B.A., Univ. of Houston

Rosenblum, Sophie L., M.F.A.
B.A., Bard College

Stevens, Monique M., M.F.A.
B.A., Univ. of Houston

Poetry

Beaven, R. Craig, Ph.D.
B.A., Univ. of Kentucky
M.F.A., Virginia Commonwealth Univ.

Boyleston, J. Matthew, Ph.D.
B.A., Furman Univ.

M.F.A., Univ. of South Carolina

Fathi, Farnoosh, Ph.D.
B.A., Univ. of California- Los Angeles
M.A., New York Univ.

Lamson, Brandon D., Ph.D.
B.A., Univ. of Maryland
M.F.A., Indiana Univ.

Munde, Christopher D., M.F.A.
B.A., Queens College- City Univ. of New York

Nicolet, Brian J., M.F.A.
B.A., Texas State Univ.- San Marcos

Otremba, Paul R., Ph.D.
B.A., Univ. of Minnesota
M.F.A., Univ. of Maryland

Russell, Brian B., M.F.A.
B.A., Miami Univ.

Shaheen, Glenn C., M.F.A.
B.A., Florida State Univ.

Tollides, Tryfon P., Ph.D.
B.A., Univ. of Maine at Farmington
M.F.A., Syracuse Univ.

Non-Fiction

Zaza, Nicole L., M.F.A.
B.A., Univ. Of Houston



Michael Dumanis



Todd Samuelson

Graduates 2004/05

Fall 2004

Jennifer Little, MFA., Fiction

Spring 2005

Julianne Curtin, M.F.A., Fiction
Barbara Duffey, M.F.A., Poetry
Robert Liddell, M.F.A., Fiction
Jill Meyers, M.F.A., Fiction
Keya Mitra, M.F.A., Fiction
Nicholas Morgan, M.F.A., Poetry
Monica Parle, M.F.A., Fiction
Mira Rosenthal, M.F.A., Poetry

Tracy Barnwell, Ph. D., Poetry&Fiction
Aaron Crippen, Ph.D., Poetry
Michael Dumanis, Ph.D., Poetry
Raymond Komar, Ph.D., NonFiction
Gabriela Maya, Ph.D., Fiction
Pablo Peschiera, Ph.D., Poetry
Carol Quinn, Ph.D., Poetry
Melanie Rack, Ph.D., Poetry
Tiffany Rayl, Ph.D., Fiction
Todd Samuelson, Ph.D., Poetry
Jacquelyn Shah, Ph.D., Poetry

Student News



Jericho Brown

Jericho Brown was asked back this year to the Bread Loaf Writers Conference as social staff.

Aaron Crippen is now in his first year teaching World Lit at Augusta State University. He was awarded a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship for 2005. His *Nameless Flowers: Selected Poems of Gu Cheng* was published by George Braziller, Inc., in April, 2005.

Amber Dermont- Jane Smiley selected Amber's "Lyndon" for inclusion in *Best New American Voices 2006*. There were about 400 nominations this year and Amber was one of only 15 selected. Congratulations to Amber.

Barbara Duffey has a poem forthcoming in the *Blue Mesa Review*.

Randi Faust sent this update on May 18th. "We were so inspired by David MacLean and Zehra's trip to Sri Lanka that we're going to join them. Of course David is nearly on his way home, but nonetheless. I leave tomorrow for a month. Sam (our seven-year-old) finishes school May 27 so Carl and Sam will leave Houston on May 28th to join me. Carl will stay for a week, then return here. Sam and I will be back at

the end of June. We are assigned to Project Galle - a region that was hit very hard during the Tsunami - although I don't know exactly what we'll be doing there."

Kim Garcia's book of poetry, *Madonna Magdalene*, was accepted for publication as part of the Turning Point Series. In the past year she has given readings as part of the Brookline Booksmith poetry series and the Boston College Arts Festival. She recently returned from Hambidge Center for the Arts and recommends it to Houston writers yearning for the mountains and good vegetarian food.

Jennifer Grotz has accepted the position of Assistant to the Director of the Bread Loaf Writers Conference. Some of her new poems and translations from the French have appeared this year or are forthcoming in *Ploughshares*, *New England Review*, and *Lyric*. She received this year's Michener Prize in poetry.



James Hall

James Hall was recently awarded a work-study scholarship to Bread Loaf. His poems and personal essays have appeared in *Cimarron Review*, *Rhino*, *New Delta Review*, *Margie*, *New Orleans Review*, and *Alaska Quarterly Review*.

Andrew Kozma has had poems accepted by or published in *Caketrain*,

Cranky, *Hunger Magazine*, *Lilies and Cannonballs*, *Rhino*, *Willow Springs*, *Spoon River Poetry Review*, and *Washington Square*. He has also become the non-fiction editor, along with Nina McConigley, for *Gulf Coast* magazine for 2005-2006.

Laurie Clements Lambeth reports that her poetry appeared in *The Bark*. She was named runner-up in *The Iowa Review's* nonfiction contest, and her piece will be published in their December issue.

James May reports that the journal, *Chronogram*, published one of his poems in April, 2005.

Gabriela Maya and **John Harvey** wed in October 2004, and Gabriela gave birth to their son Demian in March 2005, a week after she defended her Ph.D. dissertation (successfully). Gabriela reports that natural birth is the way to go if possible and welcomes all future mothers to ask her why. John has been steadily writing plays; Mildred's Umbrella, the theater company he co-founded, is currently staging his *Needful Creatures* (May 2005).

Nina McConigley won the Barthelme Memorial Fellowship Sponsored by Inprint, Inc. this year for her non-fiction manuscript, "Cowboys and East Indians". Her play, *Owen Wister, Considered*, was chosen for production for the 2005 Edward Albee New Playwrights Festival. The play was produced by Pulitzer Prize winning playwright, Lanford Wilson, and performed at the Lab Theatre here at the University of Houston.

Kim Meyer's poems have recently appeared in *Columbia*, *Greensboro Review*, *Spoon River Poetry*, *Tar River Poetry* and *Versé Daily*. And her

essay on ants, motherhood and free will was published in *Fourth Genre*. She's working on a book of essays on pilgrimages she and her family have been making to America's sacred and secular shrines.

Keya Mitra and **Robert Liddell** were Honorable Mention winners for the *Atlantic Monthly* student contest. Their names will be in a list of winners in the magazine and their stories are being considered for possible publication.

Keya won the Barthelme Memorial Fellowship Sponsored by Inprint, Inc., for fiction this year and was fiction runner up for the Inprint/Michener Fellowship in Honor of Donald Barthelme. Her fiction is forthcoming in the *Ontario Review*. She also received a work-study fellowship to the 2005 Bread Loaf Writers Conference. Robert has fiction coming out in *The Gettysburg Review*.

Carol Quinn got married on August 7, 2004, to Tom Sedlak ("Finally!", her mother would say). Her essay, "Dickinson, Telegraphy, and the Aurora Borealis" was in *The Emily Dickinson Journal* in the fall of 2004. This year, her poetry has appeared or will appear in *Verses's* second decade anthology, *The Alaska Quarterly Review*, *The Sow's Ear Poetry Review*, *The California Quarterly*, *Perpetuum Mobile*, and the anthology called *Open Windows* that's put out by Ghost Road Press. And then she graduated ("Finally!", her mother would say).

Tiffany Rayl graduated with her Ph.D. in fiction in May, 2005. She has work recently accepted in the *Harrington Lesbian Fiction Quarterly* coming out some time this year.



Mira Rosenthal

Mira Rosenthal tells us that she has new poems in *Ploughshares*, *The American Poetry Review*, *Seneca Review*, *Harpur Palate*, *The Beloit Poetry Journal* and elsewhere. This year she edited a special issue of *Lyric Poetry Review* on new Polish poetry in translations, defended her MFA in poetry, and accepted a place as a Ph.D. student in comparative literature at Indiana University for fall, 2005. She and her boyfriend, historian Greg Domber, currently live in Washington, DC, where she is the managing editor for a scientific journal.

Kate Schmitt has poems forthcoming in a new Houghton Mifflin anthology called *I Just Hope It's Lethal* which will be published in October.

This past year, **Bradford Gray Telford's** poems and translations appeared in *Agni*, *Diner*, *Inkwell*, *Lyric Review*, *Phantasmagoria*, *Borderlands*, *Carquinez Review*, *Oasis*, and *Birmingham Poetry Review*. He has new work forthcoming in the *Yale Review*, *Pleiades*, *McSweeney's Internet Tendencies*, *Zone 3*, *Epicenter*, *Art Times*, *Edison Review*, and *American Literary Review*. Brad's essay, "Grief, Ownership, and Cultural Reminders: Notes on Translation," appeared in *Lyric*, and he is completing his translation of French poet

Genevieve Huttin's *The Story of My Voice*. An essay dedicated to hybrid writing pedagogies is set to appear in a UK book in 2006/7.

Joni Tevis has had essays published in *Shenandoah* and *Isotope* this spring, and is scribbling away up in Minneapolis. The lilacs are blooming.

Jamie Thomas had a review appear this year in *Third Coast* and poems appear in *Sycamore Review* and *Nimrod*. He also has poems forthcoming in *Rattle* and *Verses*. Jamie was chosen by Alan Shapiro for the 2005 Academy of American Poets Prize.

Gemini Wahhaj has a story that was recently accepted for publication by *Night Train*.

Sasha West had two poems accepted to *American Letter and Commentary*. She was also asked back to the Bread Loaf Writers Conference as social staff.

Jacob White was nominated this year for a Pushcart Prize for his story "You Will Miss Me When I Burn", which appeared in *New Letters*.



Tiphonie Yanique

Tiphonie Yanique was published in *Ariel* and was accepted in the Calaloo Writers Workshop this summer.

As many of you know, on December 26, 2004 a massive earthquake, off the coast of Indonesia, triggered a deadly tsunami, which devastated much of the coastline of Southeast Asia. In the aftermath over 200,000 people have died, and millions more have been displaced from their homes, and left without food, water or shelter.

The relief effort is ongoing. While many countries donate money and supplies, many individuals have given up the comforts of their homes to do what they can to help. Our students are no different. Contrary to the notion that “writers write...” some of our students have traveled half-way around the world to help out and make a difference. We are thankful for their correspondences and grateful for their efforts.

Randi Faust is an MEA candidate in fiction. She spent a month overseas, involved in tsunami relief efforts.

I’ve been working on the “Mother and Child Nutrition Program” which was already in existence before the Tsunami, but is even more necessary now with all the displaced and out-of-work families. Low birth weight is a greater problem post-Tsunami, and the pregnant and nursing mothers are also having serious nutrition issues. Many of the families are fisher-folk, who’ve lost their boats, etc., in the Tsunami. Their situation is further complicated by the fact that a lot of them have been moved to camps miles inland and can’t realistically or regularly get to and from the sea to work, even if they didn’t lose their equipment. Other families include widows who are pregnant or have small children, who lost their husbands/fathers in the Tsunami. Hence, the increasing need for a nutritional supplement for pregnant women, nursing mothers and children under five.

This past week, my job was to purchase 6 sets of about 40 different items (including portable gas stoves, pots, pans, sieves, etc.) and pack them up to be distributed to each of the 6 Tsunami-affected MOH districts in the Galle region. It’s been very interesting bargain hunting for things like “pittu bombus”(a strange-looking steamer that resembles a Samovar). Lots of weird shopping adventures.



Clockwise, from the top: Randi with village children, Randi’s son Sam, Randi with Anne Curry of NBC’s Today show

David MacLean, a PhD student in Fiction spent the spring semester volunteering in Sri Lanka with the rebuilding process after the December 26th Tsunami. The following is one of his dispatches back home.

March 29th, 2005

It had been a hard day already before I got the phone call concerning what would turn out to be only a pseudo-tsunami.

I was working at a site an hour away building forty temporary houses. Wood had been scarce that day so I spent most of the day inventing tasks to keep me busy, justifying my presence at the work site. The site manager – a six five three hundred and twenty pound former O-lineman for the Green Bay Packers finally squeezed into a rickshaw and cruised the main Galle Road – the two-lane road between Colombo and Galle – looking for lumber trucks to hijack. Thirty minutes later, he showed up with one in tow.

When there's wood, there's work. The site popped into action: the truck was unloaded and siding was going up within fifteen minutes. It wasn't a flurry, it was a blizzard of activity. Ninety-five degrees and humidity, we're sweating like lawn sprinklers. Five o'clock passed us by unnoticed, so did six and seven. At a work site, OSHA would've shut down during normal activity, we pushed ourselves to greater levels of precarious negligence. It got dark and the fluorescent tubes we had strapped to stakes were, at best, decorative. I finally quit when I was cutting something with the power saw and I was bent so close to see my line that my nostrils were even with the blade.

I caught the bus home, had a beer and braced myself for the fall into bed. Then the phone rang. It was just coming over the teletype, my friend said. An 8.7 earthquake off the coast of Sumatra. I had to tell people, he said, and get myself to higher ground.

Of the jobs that my guidance counselor in high school had selected for me based on a personality test and my SAT scores ('benign tumor' being the most prominent option) never had this occupation come up: the guy who runs around telling people that a tsunami may or may not be coming. It is not the job for me.

There was panic. Within an hour, the police were slow-rolling through with megaphones, yelling in Sinhala and Tamil to get to higher ground. Cars, motorcycles, buses, trucks, rickshaws, bicycles screamed down the road, horns blaring. Waiters carried tables and chairs to the rooftops of nearby buildings. I was up until five in the morning at a hillside temple with crying babies and tourists chattering into cell phones. One chain-smoking Danish woman, two days in-country, spoke to me at three o'clock in the morning about the horror she felt upon seeing the devastation wrought by the December 26th Tsunami, "It's just like t.v. without the bodies." I tried to sleep, but the billion frayed nerve endings kept me stark awake.

I got to work at ten the next day.

No one was in a good mood.

The trauma of the first tsunami had burst its scab and everyone was either deeply withdrawn or hysterically laughing after this scare. I tried to go back and nail siding, but my brain was a slop of exhaustion and nerves. When the O-lineman told me about the Buddhist monks next door who were having problems with their computer, I jumped at the chance. A sit down job, doing a simple virus hunt and delete.

I went over to the temple, took off my shoes, and flopped on the offered stool and proceeded to work. It was slow going. The computer, though promised to be a Pentium four with 256 of ram, worked slower than a Commodore 64 filled with molasses. The three monks watched over my shoulder as I clicked through error messages and navigated the settings. I couldn't find anything terribly wrong and suddenly the mouse stopped working. I reached behind the computer to jiggle the cord and found that the rear of the computer was live. 240 volts of electricity went through all five foot nine of me, from bare hand to bare foot.

If there were a Spiderman, if I lived in the Marvel universe, this would be the secret origin of my super-powers: shocked by a monk's computer in Sri Lanka. I would've pulled my hand from the computer and punched the wall and the entire compound would go up like an atom bomb. Then I'd go fight crime and evil or something.

Instead, the monks laughed, did imitations of my spasms, and laughed some more.

I called it a day and went home.

The O-lineman called me later that night, said he'd heard the story from the monks, and made fun of me until I fell asleep.



Writing Competitions

The Creative Writing Program's 2004-2005 writing competitions were judged by Colson Whitehead for non-fiction, Patricia Powell for fiction and Alan Shapiro for poetry.

The winners were:

Inprint/Michener Fellowships in Honor of Donald Barthelme **Gemini Wahhaj** for fiction and **Jennifer Grotz** for poetry. Alternate was **Keya Mitra** for fiction. There was no alternate in poetry.

Barthelme Memorial Fellowships Sponsored by Inprint, Inc. **Keya Mitra** and **Giuseppe Taurino** for fiction, **Nina McConigley** for non-fiction and **Nicholas Morgan** and **Joshua Rivkin** for poetry. **Miho Nonaka** was the runner-up for the non-fiction prize. **David Bernardy** and **Robert Liddell** were alternates for the fiction prize and **Sasha West** was alternate for the poetry prize.

Brazos Bookstore/Academy of American Poets Prize
The winner was **Jamie Thomas**. Honorable mentions were **James May** and **Jeanine Walker**.



Front Row: *Laurie Clements Lambeth, Miho Nonaka, Tracy Barnwell* Back Row: *Michael Dumanis, Sasha West, James Hall, Barbara Duffy, Mark Doty, David Vance*

AWP 2005—AWP 2006

Through the generous support of Inprint fellowships, 22 UH Creative Writing graduate students attended the AWP convention in Vancouver, BC in April 2005. Also at the convention, *Sasha West*, editor of *Gulf Coast*, chaired a session in which faculty, alumni, and current students read their work as part of a celebration of UH's 25th anniversary. Reading were faculty members Robert Boswell and Nick Flynn, alumni Cate Marvin and Tracy Daugherty, and graduate student Jennifer Grotz. They read to a packed room.

The UH Creative Writing Program and *Gulf Coast* are major co-sponsors of the 2006 AWP convention that will be held in March in Austin, TX. Thanks to the support of Inprint and John Antel, Dean of CLASS, we were able to be a key sponsor. Our sponsorship means that registration fees will be waived for 75 UH students. So UH should be a major presence in Austin, and we are planning to host a reception, so please check the convention's schedule of events for further information on the reception.



Lacy Johnson

Residencies

In Fall 2005, **Richard Siken**, whose collection of poems, *Crush*, was selected by Louise Gluck as the winner of 2005 Yale Younger Poets series, will offer a residency in poetry. In Spring 2006, **Grace Paley**, author of several collections of short stories, including *Enormous Changes at the Last Minute*, *The Little Disturbances of Man*, and *Later the Same Day*, will offer a residency in fiction.



Bradley Telford



Raj Mankad & Pablo Peschiera

Gulf Coast

Gulf Coast has received much recognition for literary excellence in the last year. In an August 2004 article for *The Boston Globe*, literary critic and editor Sven Birkerts listed *Gulf Coast* as an “established player... in the progressive mainstream” alongside such heavy-hitters as *The Gettysburg Review*, *Ploughshares*, and *Tin House*. Steve Orlen’s poem “I Love You. Who Are You?” from Volume 16.2 will be featured in *The Best American Poetry 2005*, edited by Paul Muldoon. Interviews, essays, and poems from *Gulf Coast* issues are regularly featured on *Poetry Daily*. Recent grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and The Cullen Foundation reflect both local and national support. The journal was also very pleased to receive a technology grant from Dean John Antel and the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences; the new computers and other much-needed equipment support the graduate and undergraduate students who work to produce the journal. Subscriptions, submissions, and sales continue to increase. In fact, both issues produced this year, Volumes 17.1 and 17.2, have rapidly sold out. This fall, the journal will again increase its print run to respond to this demand.

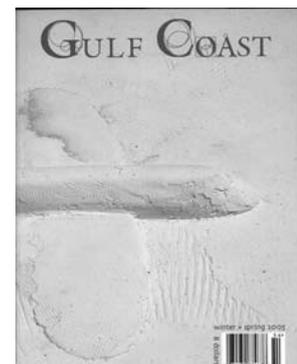
Locally, *Gulf Coast* helps to make the literary arts a vital and vibrant part of Houston. The annual reading series at Brazos Bookstore was voted “Best Reading Series” by *Houston Press* in September 2004. Many thanks to this year’s readers and deep gratitude to Randi Faust, who recorded each event. In the

coming year, look for archives of the reading series on the GC website. *Gulf Coast* also partnered with Brazos Bookstore, the NEA, and the Council of Literary Magazines and Presses (CLMP) for the second annual Literary Magazine and Independent Press Fair in February at Brazos Projects. A huge success, this free fair offered publications and books from all over the country as well as two editor panels on aspects of publishing. The annual fundraiser/issue launch was held last October at the lovely Rouge restaurant and featured a reading by Antonya Nelson. This year’s dinner, on October 20th, 2005, will honor Karl Killian at the Bayou Club, featuring readings by Justin Cronin and Mark Doty. Contact the office for details and ticket and table prices. If you are in the Houston area and would like to be added to our email list for notification of upcoming readings, fairs, and events, please send an email to editors@gulfcoastmag.org.

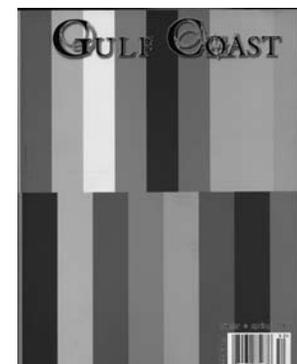
Be sure to check out recent and upcoming issues of *Gulf Coast*. The spring issue (Volume 17.2) featured reprints of two Donald Barthelme stories as part of UH’s tribute to him; pieces by Rikki Ducornet, Mark Halliday, Karen An-Hwei Lee, Debra Marquart, Ander Monson, Lucia Perillo, J. Allyn Rosser, and Dara Wier; and work by alums Christopher Bakken, Glenn Blake, Lance Larsen, and David Lazar. The fall issue (18.1) promises to be another stunner, featuring contest winners chosen by judges Justin Cronin, Susan Howe, and Wayne Koestenbaum, as well as interviews with emerging authors A. Van Jordan, Richard Siken, and John Weir. You may already have seen the cover art—“Inversion” by Dan Havel and Dean Ruck—featured on CNN.

Subscriptions to *Gulf Coast* are offered to UH CWP affiliates for a special price of \$25 for two-years (a savings of \$7 off the cover price) and \$13 for one-year (\$3 off the cover price). Send check or money order along with subscription address to:

Gulf Coast
Department of English,
University of Houston,
Houston, TX



Volume 17.1



Volume 17.2

Alumni News

Mary Adams was awarded a 2004 NEA grant in poetry and teaches at Western Carolina University.

Liz Ashton reports that after a long hiatus—alarms and excursions—she's back to solid work. She says that she has no published work yet, but still holds "dear" Donald's comment that "We are doing art here." And she is doing art. As well, she's in the process of launching an acting career in film—reprising theater work of 30 years ago. She has an agent, head shots, etc. Nothing hot yet, other than as a stand-in for Louise Fletcher in a film, but she remains hopeful. "Perhaps vicious old ladies will be the crest of the future."

Christopher Bakken has new poems printed or forthcoming in *The Paris Review*, *Gettysburg Review*, *Raritan*, *Mid-America Review* and elsewhere. He won the 2005 Willis Barnstone Translation Prize for his work on the Greek poet, Titos Patricios. In fall 2004, he also won the Brick and Morter Poetry Prize for his poem, "Aegean: Flight 651".

Kerry Neville Bakken's book of stories ("sometimes titled 'Necessary Lies', sometimes titled 'Search and Rescue'") was chosen as winner of the Chandra Prize for Short Fiction and will be published next year by BkMk Press, a very solid literary press out of the Univ. of Missouri-Kansas City. One of the only stories in the collection NOT set in Long Island, "The Effects of Light," was just accepted by *Glimmer Train*, so look there in coming months for an "appetizer to the collection itself."

Ann Bogle reports that she has published two short stories online in *Poetic Inhalation*. Also she published her first published poem with International Poetry Library of America. Her account with them for the hard-cover volume was sent to collection. The poem, "Florence's Weekend," is from 1983 and is about her mother having a tall oak tree taken down in the yard.

Shannon Borg's first book of poems, *Corset*, is forthcoming in March 2006 from Cherry Grove Collections' Lyre Series. She lives in Seattle, where she is the communications manager for Chefs Collaborative, a national nonprofit committed to sustainable cuisine. She also writes about food and wine for various magazines and Web sites. Recently, she received an award from the Society of Professional Journalists for a wine/travel article published last year in *Seattle Magazine*.

Aliki Caloyeras is in her first year of the PhD program in English Literature at the University of Pennsylvania. Consequently, she was in the middle of finals and couldn't make it to the CWP anniversary celebration in April.

Patricia Clark has a new book of poems out in 2005, *My Father on a Bicycle*, from Michigan State Univ. Press. She was also named to a 2 year term as Poet Laureate of Grand Rapids this year.

Deborah Cummins's second poetry collection, *Counting the Waves*, has been accepted for publication by Word Press with a scheduled release date of summer 2006. And, she received a 2005 Illinois Arts Council Fellowship in Poetry of \$7,000.

Andrew Feld's collection of poems, *Citizen: Poems*, was featured in the January 9th issue of the *The New York Times Book Review*.



Annie Finch & Mark Doty

Annie Finch recently moved to Portland, Maine, as the new director of the Stonecoast Brief-Residency MFA Program in Creative Writing. Her book, *The Body of Poetry: Essays on Women, Forms and the Poetic Self*, is just out in the Poets on Poetry Series from the University of Michigan Press.

Christa Forster and her husband **David Brown** married in 2002. In February 2005, they welcomed their daughter, Clara Ysidora Brown, into the world. Since 2000, Christa has premiered two one-woman shows at Diverse-works. She also performs regularly with Infernal Bridegroom Productions, and she works as a freelance writer, editor and teacher. Her husband David Brown created, developed and currently runs Spacetaker.org, Houston's Culture Guide. They continue to live in Houston, TX.

Greg Fraser was awarded a 2004 NEA grant in poetry. He teaches at the University of West Georgia.

Rich Lyons recently had his manuscript "Fleur Carnivore" selected as the Washington Prize 2005 by Word Works Publishers in Washington, D.C.

Stephen Haven's book of poems, *The Long Silence of the Mohawk Carpet Smokestacks* (West End Press, 2004), came out right around the time the newsletter came out last year. The book is distributed by the University of New Mexico. There will be a review in the next issue of *The Ohioana Quarterly*, and another in the spring '06 issue of *The Journal*. A brief review appeared earlier in *The Amherst Review*. Steve spent one year in the Ph.D. in Creative Writing Program here from 1984-1985. He left UH to take a teaching job at Baylor Univ.

Sean Hill was awarded a Bush Fellowship from the Archibald Bush Foundation. The Bush Foundation's Artist Fellows program will provide financial support to 11 artists from the Twin Cities metropolitan area, two from Greater Minnesota and one each from Wisconsin and South Dakota to continue and develop their work. The Fellowships recognize the strong visions of artists at any stage in their life's work, their potential for continued development and the contribution to their communities that may come from their artistic and professional growth. The 15 fellows were selected from a field of more than 500 applicants by a panel of nationally known artists and curators. Each fellow will receive \$44,000 over a 12- to 24-month period.

Sean, now living in Bemidji, Minn., has written poetry about and in the voices of black characters, real and imagined, and based on the history of his home town, Milledgeville, Georgia. His work has been published in *Callaloo*, *Indiana Review*,

Pleiades, the anthology *Blues Poems* and the *Cave Canem* anthology among others.

Cliff Hudder is the program director for the Montgomery County Literary Arts Council, Writers in Performance Series at Montgomery College in Conroe, TX. His first child is due in September, 2005.

Eline Lipkin wanted to forward the good news that her book has been accepted! Her poetry manuscript, "The Errant Thread", was chosen by Eavan Boland for the Kore Press First Book Award in 2004 and will be out from Kore Press this fall. In other news, her fellowship at Berkeley has been renewed so next year she will again be a Postdoctoral Scholar with the Beatrice M. Bain Research Group on Gender at UC/Berkeley.

Mary Jo Mahoney's essay "Signs of Waking" was featured in the December issue of *Northwest Review*.

Ann McCutchan became Interim Director of the Creative Writing Program at the University of Wyoming in 2003 where she's been teaching since 2001. However, she's leaving there to teach creative non-fiction at the University of North Texas, beginning in August, 2005. She says, "This move represents two returns: one to pure teaching, which I love (and which will give me more time to write), the other to Texas, which is home." She also had a two-month residency at the MacDowell Colony in the summer of 2004. And, she had an essay in the summer 2004 issue of *Image*. Also, in July, 2005, she gave a lecture, "Making Prose Sing," at the Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Writers Conference on the Southwest, in Dallas. She was a participant in the Creative Writing

Program's 25th anniversary celebration.

Farnoosh Moshiri reports that his collection of short stories was published in the fall of 2004 under the title of *The Crazy Dervish and the Pomegranate Tree*. He'll have a novel out in January 06. It's called *Against Gravity* and Penguin is the publisher.

Laurie Newendorp was a semi-finalist for the Nimrod Hardman Pablo Neruda Prize in spring 2004. Publications are pending. She was also listed as "Underground poet, playwright, and Houston icon" in the British magazine *Dazed*. Her work was reviewed in the *Houston Chronicle* in November, 2004. She was profiled in the Museum of Fine Arts-Houston's *Palette*, in winter 2004. Laurie participated in Austin International Poetry Festival, spring 2004 and will have work in an AIPF anthology. She also attended and participated in the Creative Writing Program's 25th anniversary celebration.

Dave Parsons- The reading series, Montgomery County Literary Arts Council Writers in Performance Series, that Dave founded in 1993 with the help of Montgomery College, the Conroe Arts Commission Grants and a generous missionary reached a milestone this year of over 100 visiting writers. This was the catalyst for Commissioners Court and the Montgomery County Judge to proclaim Dave to be the Poet Laureate of Montgomery County for 2005 – 2010. The first readings in the performance series in 1993 were by Ed Hirsch, Richard Howard and Robert Phillips.

Dave also has poems in the last two issues of *Louisiana Literature* and

a poem forthcoming in *The Texas Review*. He is still teaching Creative Writing/American Literature at Montgomery College and chasing handballs around the court as best he can. He also attended and participated in the Creative Writing Program's 25th anniversary celebration.

Tom Phau says he has no book yet, but poems have appeared most recently in the *Colorado Review*, *The Wallace Stevens Journal*, *The Paris Review* and *Poetry*.

Alexis Quinlan had two poems in the Fall 2004 issue of *The Paris Review*.

Daniel Rifenburg is currently enjoying a six-months' Dobie Paisano Creative Writing Fellowship offered jointly by the Graduate School, University of Texas at Austin and the Texas Institute of Letters, and is living at the 250-acre Paisano Ranch outside of Austin. In January he held workshops for armed services members returning from the Middle East at Cannon Air Force Base in Clovis, New Mexico as a participating writer in the National Endowment for the Arts' "Operation Homecoming" program, and is editing the NEA's upcoming anthology of armed service members' writings. He also taught a poetry workshop for Inprint, Inc. He has work recently or forthcoming in *Poetry*, *Southwest Review*, *Texas Review* and elsewhere. His second book, *The Catastrophe & Other Poems*, is due out in 2006 from Waywiser Press, London.

Anna Stepanek reports that she won the National Poetry Series prize for "Three, Breathing". Congratulations!

Art Smith has poems this year in *TriQuarterly*, *Poetry International*, *Sonora Review* and *Descant*.



Young Smith

Young Smith was selected for an NEA in poetry in 2004. He says that his job at Eastern Kentucky is going well and he and his family have adjusted "nicely to life in the Bluegrass (horses everywhere, actual winters, etc.)"

Gail Donohue Storey has moved to Boulder, CO, where she's writing a tragicomic memoir about her recent hike with her husband on the Pacific Crest Trail from Mexico to Canada. She also attended and participated in the Creative Writing Program's 25th anniversary celebration.

Amy Storrow is in Hermosillo, Mexico, now working as a vice consul in our consulate. Mostly she spends the day adjudicating visa applications and says she hears incredible stories. "It's funny how quickly you become inured to drug dealers and alien smugglers." She also says it's a gigantic change from her old life in Houston, but for the most part, she's really enjoying it.

Jennifer Tseng's first book of poems, *The Man With My Face*, won the Asian American Writers' Workshop's first poetry competition and was published in February.

Randall Watson reported last fall, too late for last year's newsletter, that he won the Blue Lynx Poetry Prize from Lynx House Press in 2004 for his new book *The Sleep Accusations*. The book should be in the stores this summer. Randy also continues to work as a lecturer at the University of Houston.

Eric Miles Williamson now lives in rural Missouri on his farm with his wife, Judy, and their children, Samantha and Guthrie. His second novel, *Two-Up*, will be published this summer by Texas Review Press. In October, 2004, he was a featured author at the Festival America in Vincennes, France. His first novel, *East Bay Grease* (a PEN/Hemingway Award Finalist in 1999) has been translated into French, Finnish and German, and was published in England by Bloomsbury. David Brown, the producer of movies such as *Jaws*, *A Few Good Men*, *Cocoon*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Chocolat*, and *Angela's Ashes*, has optioned *East Bay Grease* for film. Eric is on the Board of Directors of the National Book Critics Circle. He is Associate Editor of *Boulevard*, Essays Editor of *Pleiades*, and an Editor of *American Book Review*.

In Memoriam

Marty Scott passed away suddenly of heart failure at the age of 46 on March 31, 2005. He was a Professor of creative writing, poetry and American literature at Eastern Illinois University and has a book forthcoming called *Stealing Books: Personal Essays* from Water Press. He earned his MA from the University of Iowa and his Ph.D. here at UH in 1994. A memorial service was held for him at Rothko Chapel on Friday, April 15th, the day before our 25th anniversary celebration.

Alumni Association

This Spring we have begun to create a formal alumni association for the Creative Writing Program. All alumni should have received a letter inviting them to join and asking whether they wished to take a leadership role in the new association.



Gail Donohue Storey, Karen Lewis, Glenn Blake

Glenn Blake will be the liaison between the association and the Creative Writing Program, but we are hoping to locate alumni who would like to assume active roles in the new association. Our goal is to build a strong and on-going relationship with our alumni. We are hoping to build an association that will assist alumni and continue to involve them in the life of the program. Once the association is up and running, we are looking forward to it helping us bring alumni back to campus for readings and to organizing events that bring alumni back to campus to meet old friends and to forge new relationships with our students and current faculty

During the 25th anniversary we learned again how important this Program has been to its students and how important they are to the Program. Help us build an association that allows this relationship to flourish. Please join the new alumni association and, if you have the time and interest in becoming a leader in that association, please let us know. We welcome your help, and hope to hear from you.

Please contact us via email at cwp@uh.edu

The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary

In April 2005, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Creative Writing Program at the University of Houston. The celebration took place over three days. On Thursday, April 14 President Gogue hosted a dinner honoring the Program in which he acknowledged both the achievement of the Program and its importance to the University.

On Friday, April 15, the M.D. Anderson Library gave a reception honoring the opening of the Donald Barthelme Archive. The reception was organized by Julie Grob. The evening included a brief program in which Grace Paley and Padgett Powell read from the work of Donald Barthelme. Both readings were wonderful and were genuine tributes to Donald and both provided reminders of what an original and powerful writer Donald Barthelme was and how important he was to Creative Writing Program. And together Grace and Padgett succeeded in celebrating Donald as both an extraordinary friend and as a generous teacher.



Dr. McNamara with CWP alums

On April 16, there was a day-long celebration of the Creative Writing. In the morning, there were readings by alumni and current students. In the afternoon, there were panel discussions on creative non-fic-

tion, on creative writing pedagogy, on the future of linear narrative, and on the place of poetry in the twentieth century. These discussions were followed by readings by former faculty and seven prominent alumni. Faculty who read were Rosellen Brown, Kathleen Cambor, Ed Hirsch, Beverly Lowry, and Cynthia Macdonald. The alumni who read were Michelle Boisseau, Tracy Daugherty, Annie Finch, Richard Lyons, Gary Myers, Padgett Powell, and Gail Donohue Storey. Following the readings the contributions of these alumni, some past faculty, past program directors, and long-time community supporters were honored in a brief ceremony in which certificates of appreciation were awarded. The final event of the day was a student reading of current faculty work. The reading was organized by Jericho Brown and Brad Teleford, two doctoral students in poetry. It was not simply the culminating event of the day, but a deeply moving tribute by our students to our faculty.

The weekend was a wonderful success, and, just as important, it was our inaugural event in formally inviting alumni to return and read. As we develop our alumni association, there will be more such readings, and we encourage all alumni to join the association and to help us make it a vital part of the program.



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<p>Inprint Brown Reading Series</p>	<p>MA, MFA, Ph.D.</p>	<p>Faculty</p>	
University of Houston			