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PETE HOCKING For My Prayer Has Always Been Love (detail), 2019, oil on panel, 36” x 36”
The Fine Arts Work Center is an equal opportunity provider and employer. The Work Center facilities are accessible to people with disabilities.
SOME TIME AGO I WAS ASKED TO moderate a panel on inspiration at the Kauai Writers Conference. No problem, I thought. All the panelists were best-selling authors, all brilliant writers: Christina Baker Kline, Meg Wolitzer, and Greg Iles. This was going to be easy, fun—inspiring even. I had met Kline before; last July she and I shared a stage with Lily King at Poets & Writers Live in Portland, Maine, and in Kauai we picked up right where we had left off, with a conversation about the inspiration for her next novel, *Tin Ticket*, during which she told a lovely anecdote about a book she had given her father, a book she found on his shelf after her mother died. Wolitzer too opened up about one of her influences—writer and filmmaker Nora Ephron—and how Ephron was one of the inspirations for her most recent novel, *The Female Persuasion*. Both authors gamely answered questions about creativity. Iles, however, wasn’t having it. The author of seventeen novels, most recently *Cemetery Road*, he resisted any notion of *afflatus*, preferring a no-nonsense approach: You show up, you do the work. In other words he made my job as a moderator difficult—and I was grateful. By resisting the premise of our conversation, Iles breathed new life into it and, perhaps unwittingly, inspired our audience by demonstrating how inspiration can take many forms, including a resistance to the very notion that it can be cultivated.

I was reminded of this during a lunch honoring National Book Award poetry finalists Carmen Giménez Smith and Ilya Kaminsky, held a few hours before the fancy awards ceremony (at which Arthur Sze won for *Sight Lines*). Kaminsky, author of *Deaf Republic*, offered a refreshing perspective on the world of literary competition. “Prizes are like a bicycle,” he said, “You ride to the park, or you ride to the waterfront, or you ride downtown, and then you come home and you keep writing your poems.”

In this issue, in addition to studying the awe-inspiring artwork of Diane Samuels and sharing the energy of ideas generated by our fifteenth annual group of debut poets, we demystify two topics of much consternation among writers—rejection and writer’s block. Generally considered antagonists to inspiration, these obstacles take on a different light in the minds of our contributors, so that in the new year we might consider new ways of understanding old ideas: Writer’s block is an invention, rejection is an invitation, prizes are a bicycle, and everything, *everything* holds the potential for inspiration.
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 feedback from readers

What an awe-inspiring conversation with Reginald Dwayne Betts (“Name a Song” by Mahogany L. Browne, November/December 2019). As a Black man who is sixteen years into a life sentence without parole, I find it refreshing to read the undeniable success story of a man who has walked the same roads I have traveled. His path wasn’t pretty and it wasn’t without battles, but Betts’s life is a shining example of the restorative power of change. As a prisoner, a technical college graduate, a restorative justice graduate, and the proud author of a recently published book of poems, I see a limitless pathway to success because of people like Reginald Dwayne Betts. Thank you for telling his truth and for boldly presenting him as once broken but now transformed. You have an incredible magazine that has helped me develop my gifts and build my knowledge of this community of which I am now a part.

MARSHALL JONES
New Lisbon Correctional Institution
New Lisbon, Wisconsin

Thank you for the fantastic Q&A with Reginald Dwayne Betts. I love how it was constructed—Mahogany L. Browne’s observations interspersed with the questions she posed. As a writer of profiles, I found it beautiful, exciting, and inspiring. I also found a new poet to read in Betts as well as plenty of food for thought, and for that I am more than grateful. Many thanks for another great issue. I’m always eager to read the magazine when it finally arrives here in Japan and a little sad when I’m finished.

JOAN BAILEY
Tokyo, Japan

I enjoyed reading the profiles of the various indie publishers in “The Future of Independent Publishing: Eight Industry Innovators on the Book Business of Tomorrow” (November/December 2019). In particular, I’d like to give a shout-out to Fiona McCrae at Graywolf Press. She was spot-on: “The independent spirits among the agents, booksellers, critics, media, distributors, librarians, and presenters are the ones who will continue to make a difference to the work of indie publishers.” I’m a librarian who works in a public library. I catalogue all the new adult books in the collection. Many of the new tomes I handle are from indie presses, and many of those are works of literary translations. We librarians are proud to offer these diverse indie titles to our patrons. And I’ve now amassed a long list of publishers that produce literary translations.

NATHALIE HARTY
Ipswich, Massachusetts

My first copy of Poets & Writers Magazine came, and I’ve enjoyed the issue, especially 5 Over 50 (November/December 2019). What an encouragement to those who feel it is too late to get published. I’ve been writing since I was twelve, when my first poem was published by my aunt’s church newspaper. They sent me a check for $1.50, a fortune to a twelve-year-old. I was going to be a great writer and travel the world. But life sometimes gets in the way of our dreams. I did self-publish three contemporary fiction novels, and my first book published by a major publisher came out in 2009, when I was seventy-one years old. I really feel blessed. At the age of eighty-one I have just finished my ninth historical novel. To all of those would-be writers who are over sixty-five, start writing!

DIANA WALLIS TAYLOR
San Diego, California

For the past three years your annual feature 5 Over 50 has inspired me. This year is no exception. I was gratified to see Peter Kaldheim, age seventy, among the five featured debut authors. Both singer Tina Turner and actress Joan Collins have declared seventy to be the new fifty. Encouraging words, but it is sometimes difficult not to feel marginalized—even shelved—once you hit your seventh decade without publishing your most important work. Wouldn’t it be fun to see future features called 6 Over 60 or 7 Over 70? We boomers out here, faithfully reading Poets & Writers Magazine, would love it.

CAROLYN S. NEVIN
Nashua, New Hampshire
On Sundays at a community bookstore in the Washington Heights neighborhood of Manhattan, a group of a dozen or so people, ranging from high school kids to retirees, gather to make nonfiction comics. The eight-week course was started in 2018 by writer, illustrator, and graphic novelist Ellen Lindner to encourage people from all backgrounds “who are generally interested in art but for whom comics is a new medium” to tell personal stories in a new way. During the classes students learn how to draft ideas, write a script, make mockups, ink, and color, drawing inspiration from works like Lynda Barry’s *One Hundred Demons* (Sasquatch Books, 2002) and Emil Ferris’s *My Favorite Thing Is Monsters* (Fantagraphics, 2017). The session ends with presentations of the students’ work from the course.

Graphic-storytelling classes like Lindner’s have popped up all over the country in recent years, in bookstores, libraries, and other community spaces, as well as at colleges, MFA programs, and summer workshops. This boom follows the rise in popularity of graphic novels and memoirs that bring forth the literary potential of the comic form. (Practitioners often call their work “comics”—which encompasses everything from one-liner *New Yorker* cartoons to photocopied zines to hundred-page literary graphic novels and memoirs—and many of them, who refer to themselves most frequently as “cartoonists,” make work spanning all these categories.) Lindner, whose graphic novels include *The Black Feather Falls* (Soaring Penguin Press, 2015), says the mass-market success of books like Marjane Satrapi’s *Persepolis* (Pantheon, 2003) and Alison Bechdel’s *Fun Home* (Houghton Mifflin, 2006) led to graphic novels “entering the collective consciousness” in the United States in the early 2000s, while the rise of visual digital media (like Instagram) has created a culture that is more visually attuned. “Telling stories with images used to just be for children,” she says. “Now it can also be for adults.”

Cartoonist Josh Neufeld, who has taught numerous classes and workshops over the years and whose own work includes nonfiction comics that have tackled such topics as Hurricane Katrina and the cultural influence of the media, agrees. “We’re becoming more of a culture connected to visual literacy, and the pithiness and efficiency of comics fits into the era of Twitter and quick hits.”

Although he had previously given more informal workshops, Neufeld says he first started teaching “for real” in 2010, when the U.S. State Department sent him to Algeria, Burma, and Egypt to serve as a kind of cultural ambassador.
and talk about comics and lead workshops for people ranging from middle school students to local cartooning professionals. Today he teaches in the BFA program of the School of Visual Arts, Queens College’s English MFA program, and Pine Manor College’s Solstice Low-Residency MFA program. Neufeld’s art school classes tend to focus more on drawing technique and culminate in grueling critiques with the department chair, while his classes for writers emphasize questions of how images are used in storytelling and how to “convey prose with a gesture or angle”—what writing teachers like to call “showing instead of telling,” except in visual form. At Solstice and Queens College, Neufeld feels like a writing teacher, exploring the themes, characters, and pacing of a comic more than the act of drawing itself. While most of his creative writing students don’t know how to draw, he says they’re “eager and excited about working in a new form.” He helps students work past insecurities about their technically imperfect drawing skills (“I remind them of some of the great comics by people who can’t draw very well, like Matt Groening and Lynda Barry”) and breaks the class into small workshop groups.

Jason Adam Katzenstein, a cartoonist for books such as The White Man’s Guide to White Male Writers of the Western Canon (HarperCollins, 2019), says he thinks of learning to create comics as learning a new language, one that combines words and pictures in a very particular way in order to communicate. Katzenstein graduated in 2013 from Wesleyan University, with a degree from the same English department for which he now teaches; he wrote a graphic novella as his thesis project. He remembers that as a student he particularly enjoyed working with poets. “Comics are a staccato medium, with evidently small elements adding up to bigger ones,” he says. “Comics panels feel like stanzas in a poem.”

As Lindner points out, there’s a great tradition of comics poetry. She mentions Ink Brick, a “micro press dedicated to comics poetry,” and comics poets like Alexander Rothman and Paul K. Tunis (cofounders of Ink Brick), as well as Vidhu Aggarwal, Alyssa Berg, Matt Madden, and Bishakh Som, who have furthered the melding of poetry and

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“That night, when Mrs. Chamberlain called, Emira could only piece together the words ‘... take Briar somewhere ...’ and ‘... pay you double.’” Such a Fun Age (Putnam, December 2019) by Kiley Reid. First book, novel. Agent: Claudia Ballard. Editor: Sally Kim. Publicists: Elena Hershey and Ashley Hewlett.

“Depending on whom you ask, it was either the apex, the inflection point, or the beginning of the end for Silicon Valley’s startup scene—what cynics called a bubble, optimists called the future, and my future coworkers, high on the fumes of world-historical potential, breathlessly called the ecosystem.” Uncanny Valley (MCD x FSG, January 2020) by Anna Wiener. First book, memoir. Agent: Chris Parris-Lamb. Editor: Emily Bell. Publicist: Sarita Varma.


“First, there was faith—/ how a terrestrial // body pulled by the force of // attraction toward // earth’s molten center / nonetheless hung willing // from a fixed point.” Your New Feeling Is the Artifact of a Bygone Era (Sarabande Books, January 2020) by Chad Bennett. Second book, first poetry collection. Agent: None. Editor: Sarah Gorham. Publicist: Joanna Englert.

“Some of the first comics I made were illustrated poems,” Lindner says. “Comics as a discipline is all about boiling down and distilling writing.”

Tom Hart, founder of the Sequential Artists Workshop (SAW), a nonprofit comics school in Gainesville, Florida, encourages writers to take the art beyond illustration. “Writers know structure and how to tell a story,” says Hart, whose graphic memoir, Rosalie Lightning (St. Martin’s Press, 2016), was a New York Times best-seller, “but when they approach the page of a comic, the tendency is to take words and illustrate them, which is a very dry approach.” In SAW’s classes students learn instead to fuse words and pictures to help convey a coherent story. Hart, who thinks of himself as a writer first and an artist second, teaches numerous classes at SAW, including the online course Comics and Visual Storytelling for Writers. He thinks making comics helps writers to gain “more dexterity” in precise storytelling and “stimulates the visual imagination.”

Back at the bookstore in Washington Heights, Lindner takes pride in the fact that her graphic memoir class gathers such a diverse group of students. (Class materials are available in both English and Spanish.) “Comics is much nicer as a medium when people from all different backgrounds [participate],” she says. “It’s a very elastic form and one of the cheapest media on the planet. All you need is a pen and paper. It taps into the DIY tradition in American culture.” Comics also tap into the culture of democracy—it is an art form truly open to everyone, regardless of writing or artistic skill or even native language.

—ELENA GOUKASSIAN
Ahsahta Press Closes Its Doors

In September 2019 the creative writing program at Boise State University announced the closing of Ahsahta Press, a lauded poetry publisher housed at and subsidized by the Idaho university and led by director and editor Janet Holmes, a member of the creative writing faculty since 1999. “Professor Holmes has decided to step away from the editorship and to close the press to focus on her own writing,” the announcement stated. The news sent a shock wave through the national community of poets, many of whom saw Ahsahta’s closing as a blow to the tenuous edifice of independent poetry publishing. “With the loss of this press we are losing not just the work of potential poets, but also an important voice in shaping what poetry is and what it can be,” says Cody-Rose Clevidence, whose collections Flung Throne (2018) and Beast Feast (2014) were published by Ahsahta.

Holmes, who subsequently stated that she will retire from Boise State when the press closes on June 30, 2020, had hoped someone would take over her work at Ahsahta. Although graduate students worked as assistants and helped narrow the field of submissions for the Ahsahta’s annual Sawtooth Prize, which honored and published a first book of poems, Holmes was the press’s only full-time staff. She says one person from another institution had expressed interest in leading Ahsahta, but that university attorneys decided not to move the press for

“We had agreed to meet at the fountain in front of the McDonald’s in Slaveykov Square.”


“When I first arrived in the desert, I desperately wanted to be the first female explorer to cross the Sahara.”


“Whose foreheads should we kiss to check for fever, / whose memories are those that we keep // so close to our wrists.”


“The young soldier was part of the ‘Baby Bottle Conscription,’ the boys called up when there were no more men, young or old, to fight the war.”


“The sidewalk was cleansed of the blood.”


“So used to drought, the city looked astonished / at the sky & I have to believe that’s why // she didn’t see me in the crosswalk.”


liability reasons. In response to a request for comment, Boise State’s legal representatives cited an announce-ment on the creative writing department website about the press’s closure and Holmes’s retirement and declined to comment further. According to the website, “Although the Creative Writing program is not in a position to continue operations of the Press immediately after this year, all efforts to revive the Press will be considered if and when it becomes possible.”

When Ahsahta shuts down, the books that had been published by the press will go out of print, the ware-housed copies shipped to their authors. Most Ahsahta poets learned of the closure through Boise State’s announce-ment or through word of mouth, and many were upset that they had not been told personally that their books would be orphaned. “We don’t know what’s going on and why it’s being handled this way,” says Susan Tichy, who published four volumes with the press, most recently The Avalanche Path in Summer (2019). “There are a lot of angry poets out there.”

Holmes says she didn’t inform Ahsahta’s poets because, until the university released its announcement of the closure, she believed that the press would continue.

TC Tolbert, whose book Gephyromania was published by Ahsahta in 2014, heard about the shutting from a friend: “I felt foolish, like I’d been dumped by someone I loved and was committed to.” A number of Ahsahta poets have never worked with another press and are faced with the prospect of querying from scratch. “The people whom only Janet cultivated and championed, they have to figure out how to move on,” says Brian Teare, author of two Ahsahta books, The Empty Form Goes All the Way to Heaven (2015) and Pleasure (2010). “This was their only home. What is their next step? Where could they go?”

Part of the difficulty Ahsahta writers face is finding a press as aesthetically unconventional as Ahsahta, which brought a rare editorial perspective to the poetry publishing scene. According to Teare, the press has been one of the few—such as Nightboat Books and Omnidawn—that publishes postmodern, experimental poetry. “Janet made room for weird,” he says. “Smart and weird.” The books Ahsahta took on “represented a willingness to engage in innovative work,” says Tichy. “At the same time it wasn’t repudiating older poetic values like lyricism and beauty and true and deep emotion.”

The press was founded by a group of Boise State English professors in 1974, with the mission of publishing poets of the American West—absahta means “Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep” in the language of the Indigenous Mandan people of the Great Plains. Boise State provided financial stability—and the ability for editors to take risks without scrutiny of the commercial bottom line. When Holmes took over in 1999, she widened the press’s scope to include all poetry in English. In 2001 she introduced the annual Sawtooth Poetry Prize. Under Holmes’s leadership the press will have published about 130 books, including many by queer, trans, and gender non-conforming poets. Ahsahta’s catalogue of award-winning poets includes Anne Boyer, Jonah Mixon-Webster, and Rusty Morrison.

Holmes chose books that played with form and would benefit from her willingness to experiment with typesetting. Many of the books required nontraditional trim sizes, which other presses would have considered not worth the cost. “I didn’t want to publish books that I thought any other press would do,” Holmes says. “I wanted to give a chance to books that seemed a little bit more unusual.”

—JONATHAN VATNER

The Anthologist

Fight of the Century: Writers Reflect on 100 Years of Landmark ACLU Cases (Avid Reader Press, January 2020), edited by Michael Chabon and Ayelet Waldman, honors the centennial of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) with a collection of essays that explore the organization’s major cases. Contributors Geraldine Brooks, Louise Erdrich, Viet Thanh Nguyen, and others examine the histories and legacies of key decisions.

In A Map Is Only One Story: Twenty Writers on Immigration, Family, and the Meaning of Home (Catapult, February 2020), the first anthology of writing from Catapult magazine, editors Nicole Chung and Mensah Demary gather essays that offer “a new definition of home in the twenty-first century.” Victoria Blanco, Porochista Khakpour, Niina Pollari, Nadia Owusu, and others upend expected narratives of the immigrant experience.

Part literary tribute to biodiversity, part natural history, A Literary Field Guide to Southern Appalachia (University of Georgia Press, October 2019) celebrates the natural world in poetry and image. Poets including Mary Oliver and Ron Rash contribute lyrical portraits of sixty species of the region, from the luna moth to the northern slimy salamander. Editors Rose McLarney, Laura Gray Street, and L. L. Gaddy pair each poem with a scientific introduction to the plant or animal at hand.
The past few years have been rocky for Chris Doeblin, owner and cofounder of Book Culture, four beloved independent bookstores in New York City. “Before Amazon we had a viable company. I made a decent living in New York City. We bought an apartment,” he says. “Twenty-five years later I’m on the verge of bankruptcy. Our stores can go out of business any minute.” Doeblin’s story is all too familiar to many bookstore owners, and if America’s online book-buying trends—specifically the retail dominance of Amazon—continue as they are, some industry forecasts suggest that the stress on independent bookstores will only increase.

Entrepreneur and publisher Andy Hunter has a new idea for how to reclaim some of the ground lost to Amazon and direct it to support independent bookstores. In January, in collaboration with the American Booksellers Association and Ingram, he and a small staff will launch Bookshop (bookshop.org), a site that will offer indie bookstores, authors, and publishers a way to competitively sell their books online. Bookshop will also enable anyone—from “bookstagrammers” and celebrity book club hosts to book-review editors and authors themselves—to link to a point of purchase for a book without linking to Amazon. Hunter, who is cofounder of Literary Hub, Electric Literature, Catapult, and CrimeReads, hopes the site will provide independent bookstores with “a unified e-commerce strategy that is as fast and user-friendly as Amazon” and, with it, a means of continued survival.

Here’s how Bookshop plans to work: Interested parties will sign up as affiliates with the site. Anyone can be an affiliate, including authors, reviewers, publishers, and media sources. There will be no cost to participate. When affiliates link to a title on Bookshop, they will receive 10 percent of any sales that come from clicking through to Bookshop from their site. (Amazon gives 4.5 percent of sales to their partners). Another 10 percent of sales will go into a pool to be distributed equally among participating independent bookstores semiannually. “For example, if Bookshop’s sales are $4 million in six months, and we have two hundred partners,” Hunter says, “each partner will receive $2,000.” If independent bookstores link to Bookshop—the bigger site promises a larger audience than the shop would connect with on its own, as well as other conveniences—they will receive a 25 percent commission of a sale directly. (Most bookstores typically...
make 40 to 45 percent when they sell a book online themselves.)

Of the rest of the revenue on a sale, Hunter says the publisher gets about 50 percent, Bookshop gets 5 to 10 percent to cover costs, and the rest goes toward processing and shipping the book. Ingram, the country’s largest wholesaler, will fulfill all orders and provide two- or three-day shipping, customer service, and a competitive return policy. Hunter uses his own experience at Literary Hub to speak to the site’s benefits for its partners: “All publications who review books need affiliate revenue for their coverage. Literary Hub’s network has 3.5 million visitors per month,” Hunter says, “and we don’t have affiliate revenue because we won’t link the books we write about to Amazon. So we’re leaving tens of thousands of affiliate dollars on the table.”

Bookstores with successful online sales platforms, like Powell’s in Portland, Oregon, will likely not participate, and Hunter says Bookshop will do all it can to avoid competing with them. Instead, Bookshop intends to target Amazon customers who are not currently buying from independent bookstores and to direct them there, particularly by working with major media outlets to link to their site rather than to Amazon. “We are actively doing everything we can to drive people to independent bookstores,” Hunter says, noting that every Bookshop receipt will include information about local bookstores based on zip code. When customers log in to Bookshop.org, they can choose to subscribe to a local bookstore’s newsletter. Hunter posits that if Bookshop captures just 1 percent of the $3.1 billion in annual U.S. book sales going to Amazon, that would represent $31 million, a cut of which would represent a substantial payback to struggling brick-and-mortar stores.

The owner of the Raven Book Store in Lawrence, Kansas, Danny Caine, says he is excited to have a centralized outlet that is not Amazon to which to

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Small Press Points

“Poetry can change your life, and it doesn’t happen on the page; it happens in the rooms and places where poetry connects you to people who change how you are in the world,” says Megan Burns, publisher of Trembling Pillow Press (tremblingpillowpress.com) in New Orleans. This sense of poetry as a means of community animates all of the press’s work. Trembling Pillow was established in the late nineties with an initial focus on making broadsides and occasional chapbooks but turned to producing full-length poetry books in 2006. Today Trembling Pillow publishes four or five poetry titles a year, about half of which are debut collections. Burns approaches these editorial collaborations with first-time authors with particular care. “I am giving someone an experience that becomes the basis for future relationships in the writing world, and I want them to have a high bar,” she says, noting the years of devoted work that goes into a project before it ever reaches the press and a publisher’s obligation to treat a work with that same devotion. Trembling Pillow’s sensibility is eclectic—its titles vary from “feminist manifesto to punk rock memoir to collaborative eco-poetics to lyrical experimentation or rural horror manifestations”—but its poets share a willingness to take risks and to surprise. Among the press’s 2020 titles are Marty Cain’s The Wound Is (Not) Real: A Memoir, a hybrid text that mines the experiences of the author’s adolescence in Vermont; Erin M. Bertram’s It’s Not a Lonely World, about queerness and cancer; and Jenny Sadre-Orafai and Anne Champion’s Book of Levitations, a “modern-day poetic spell book.” Trembling Pillow is open for submissions year-round via Submittable; a $15 reading fee goes directly into producing more books and is waived in the month of December.
After moving to a small Norwegian village on the edge of continental Europe’s largest glacier, Beth Peterson began writing the essays that would become her debut collection, *Dispatches From the End of Ice* (Trinity University Press, November 2019). “I felt like I’d fallen into that place like a home, like I’d always lived there: cascading waterfalls, aqua-blue fjords, the seemingly endless expanse of glacial ice, even the quiet village life,” says Peterson. As the town changed—cruise ships arrived, ice melted—she felt compelled to write about it. “Where there was once ice, a pond appeared, then a lake,” she says. “I wanted to articulate this important, disappearing thing.” Peterson’s environmental consciousness and sense of place is reflected in the journals that published essays from her book, including the five below.

Peterson says she seeks out journals in which literary conversations “seem to be happening with the most candor and thoughtfulness.” She found this kind of dialogue in the online journal *Flyway* (flywayjournal.org), which published “Theory of World Ice,” her essay about visiting the Jostedal Glacier in Norway. Edited at Iowa State University, *Flyway* publishes poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and visual art dedicated to the intersection of writing and the environment. Its editors are passionate about how art can humanize the conversation about the changing earth. “We can’t talk about the environment without talking, in some way, about climate change,” says managing editor Eric Williams. “But the conversation about climate change has been increasingly polarized, reduced into a constricting binary of believers and nonbelievers…. Art, and specifically storytelling, has the unique ability to bridge the communication gap when it comes to the environment.” Submissions in all genres will open via Submittable on January 15.

◆◆

Peterson structures her essays—which combine personal narration, reportage, and description—in creative ways. (“Structure is always saying something,” she says.) Her essay “To the Center” jump-cuts between close reads of Jules Verne’s *Journey to the Center of the Earth* and narration of a summer Peterson spent in Wyoming. Peterson found a home for the piece in *Post Road* (postroadmag.com), which she values for its willingness to push traditional formal boundaries. Peter Hausler, the journal’s nonfiction editor, was in turn drawn to “her poet’s eye for detail, as she expertly moves her ever-observant lens in close and then pulls back at just the right moments.” The biannual print journal publishes poetry, fiction, nonfiction, art, plays, criticism, and a Recommendations section through which writers consider their favorite books from any angle they choose. *Post Road* will be open for submissions in all genres on February 1. ♦♦ When she first encountered the online journal *Newfound* (newfound.org), Peterson “voraciously read much of the journal’s work” and just a few months later submitted “Lost: An Inventory” to the biannual, which published it in spring 2018. Edited in Austin, Texas, *Newfound* explores how “place shapes identity, imagination, and understanding.” The latest issue includes Ashley Anderson’s essay about her neighbor in Ohio who tended the county’s beehives and Krishna Mohan Mishra’s story about three boys riding a train between India and Nepal. Submissions in poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and art are open via Submittable until May 15; contributors are paid $25 per piece. ♦♦ “I wasn’t sure what sort of journal might pick up a piece about a long-dead Austrian philosopher,” says Peterson of her essay about searching for Ludwig Wittgenstein’s cabin. “I realized I needed to find one that had an international scope and also that wasn’t scared off by a more intellectual essay.” *Mid-American Review* (casit.bgsu.edu/midamericanreview), a print biannual edited at Bowling Green State University, fits the bill. Established in 1972, *Mid-American Review* has grown from a journal of work by the university’s MFA alumni to an international publication of poetry, fiction, nonfiction, criticism, and translation. “Our fiction tends to be quirky and our poetry tends toward the lyrical,” says editor in chief Abigail Cloud. The editors accept submissions in all genres year-round via the journal’s online submission manager. ♦♦ Peterson published “The Speed of Falling”—which weaves together the story of a friend who died of a fall on a hike with descriptions of Galileo’s work on motion—in the *Pinch* (pinchjournal.com), a print biannual housed at the University of Memphis that she praises for its “sharp and committed student editors.” Editor in chief and university faculty member Courtney Miller Santos strives to empower students to “find transgressive, authentic, and prescient work.” The *Pinch* pulls more than 80 percent of its work from the slush pile and mostly publishes the work of emerging writers. Submissions in poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and art are open year-round; the journal’s new $1,000 Page Prize in Nonfiction opens on January 1 with a $10 entry fee per submission.

—DANA ISOKAWA
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link. “Anything we can do to resist Amazon and fight back, we’re going to enthusiastically participate in,” he says. “It seems like a tall order to compete with Amazon without competing with indie bookstores, but if they can do it, I’m all for it.”

Doeblin of Book Culture is a little more cautious. “It’s a nice gesture, but I’m skeptical of their ability to produce the results they’re talking about based on the limits of the market,” he says. “Amazon has closed tens of thousands of retail stores in America, and before that, Walmart did the same thing. American consumers shop with price in mind more than anything else. Still, we struggle on because just enough people choose to shop indie and shop local.”

Hunter remains steadfast. “I’m trying to create sustainable models for advocating for the culture that I love and feel indebted to, which is the culture around books. We need to make sure the people selling books are safe and strong.”

—GILA LYONS

THE WRITTEN IMAGE  ♦ ♦ This winter readers can look forward to the next installments of writer and artist Shelley Jackson’s “Snow,” which she calls a “a story in progress, weather permitting.” Since 2014, Jackson has delivered the story by writing one word at a time on the slushy playgrounds, frosted stoops, and other snowy spaces of her neighborhood in Brooklyn, New York. A photograph of each word is then shared on Instagram (@snowshelleyjackson). “To approach snow too closely is to forget what it is,” begins the text, which describes fantastical snow made up of such unexpected wonders as clock faces and the scalps of shrews. “Snow” is just one of Jackson’s projects in which ephemerality is integral to her text. “Skin” exists only as tattoos of words on the bodies of 2,095 volunteers; when each dies their word is lost from the story. The last storms of spring 2019 left “Snow” at a cliff-hanger—only the next blizzard can reveal what’s coming with “the long thaw of...”
Kelly Link Returns to Bookselling

In October 2019 author Kelly Link and editor-publisher Gavin J. Grant opened their own bookstore in Easthampton, Massachusetts. Book Moon, formerly White Square Books, carries both new and used books and features titles by local authors and a variety of indie publishers, including Small Beer Press, which Link and Grant, who are married, have run together since 2000. The two are no strangers to bookselling—they both worked at the Avenue Victor Hugo Books in Boston in the 1990s—and they are excited to return to the business. Meanwhile they will celebrate the twentieth anniversary of Small Beer, which publishes innovative fiction by writers such as Ursula K. Le Guin, Karen Joy Fowler, and Sofia Samatar. Link, a 2018 MacArthur “Genius” Fellow and the author of four acclaimed story collections, most recently the Pulitzer Prize finalist Get in Trouble (Random House, 2015), shared her thoughts on the store’s opening, the pleasure of connecting a customer to just the right book, and how her and Grant’s many ventures influence her writing life.

What role do you think independent bookstores play in the literary community, and what is your vision for Book Moon?

Independent bookstores can function as third spaces. They connect readers from their local communities with books, writers, and creative and political projects. They reflect the tastes and interests of that community. The Pioneer Valley is already rich in notable bookstores. Gavin and I have an interest in science fiction and fantasy, as well as work in translation, poetry, and children’s literature. We’ll build up those sections and, along the way, figure out what Easthampton readers want in a bookstore. My personal goal is to hand-sell as many copies of Molly Gloss’s The Hearts of Horses and Robert Jackson Bennett’s City of Stairs as possible.

This winter also marks the twentieth anniversary of Small Beer Press. What have you loved most about bringing books into the world?

I’m happiest that the books we publish continue to find an audience. Getting to design covers is also a great deal of fun.

Why did you and Gavin decide to return to bookselling?

We were both very happy as booksellers, first of all. We’re coming back to it now because my MacArthur made it financially possible, and because the previous owner of White Square Books wished to get out of the business. It was a turnkey deal: We took over everything as is, including several comfortable reading chairs and a couch. The stock is roughly 50 percent new and 50 percent used, which is more or less the same as the Avenue Victor Hugo Books in Boston, where we previously worked together twenty years ago. It all feels very full-circle. I love hand-selling books and diagnosing the tastes of people who come in looking for a book to fall in love with.

You wear many hats in the literary world: writer, editor, publisher, and bookseller. How do these roles affect your writing?

I’ve always written in bursts rather than daily. I would, in fact, prefer not to write at all. In order to make myself write, though, I’ve arranged my working life so that I spend at least four afternoons a week with my friends Cassandra Clare and Holly Black. We all sit at the same table and write, with short breaks for complaining, gossip, and snacks. I’ll be at Book Moon two or three days a week. There’s a desk in the fiction section of the bookstore—I may try writing there some, too.

Your work as a publisher and bookseller suggests your personal commitment to the literary community. What do you think makes a good literary citizen?

I have mixed feelings about saying anything proscriptive here. Or prescriptive. But here goes: Celebrate writing and writers you love. Don’t go out of your way to be an asshole or devalue writing that matters to other readers. And don’t buy books on Amazon!

—JOY BAGLIO
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Thanks to the generosity of the Walter E. Dakin Memorial Fund, supported by the estate of Tennessee Williams, every participant receives financial assistance. Additional funding is awarded to fellows and scholars.
**Poetry: Dark Winter Dreams**

“I had a dream, which was not all a dream. / The bright sun was extinguish’d, and the stars / Did wander darkling in the eternal space, / Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth / Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air,” wrote Lord Byron in “Darkness,” a poem composed in the summer of 1816, when unusually frigid temperatures, ominous thunderstorms, and incessant rains forced Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Mary Shelley to hole up inside a Swiss villa. While there they initiated the famous ghost story contest that launched Mary Shelley’s novel *Frankenstein* and inspired Byron and Percy Shelley to create work filled with foreboding elements of the natural environment. Write a poem inspired by extreme weather phenomena, perhaps invoking elements of an environment in crisis and apocalyptic climate change. How can you manipulate imagery, syntax, and meter to make meteorological conditions fearsome and lyrical, to make something natural seem supernatural?

**Fiction: Building a Home**

In Lee Matalone’s debut novel, *Home Making* (Harper Perennial, 2020), a woman moves into an empty house by herself while her estranged husband is dying of cancer. Throughout the story she grapples with tearing down and building both real elements and psychological concepts of home, navigating the memories, people, and places that constitute shelter, stability, and familiarity. “Can you be too old to run away from home? Can a full-grown woman run away from home? Can she run away from a home that was forced upon her? She should be allowed to, if that’s what she wants,” she writes. As thoughts of new beginnings arise with the new year, write a short story in which your protagonist is going through a period of transition, reevaluating the definition of home, and embarking on a fresh start. How are ideas of home formed in childhood, and how do we reconcile them as adults?

**Nonfiction: Begin Montage, Fade to Black**

Charles Yu’s new novel, *Interior Chinatown* (Pantheon, 2020), is formatted as a screenplay—with typewriter font, second-person narration, and camera and scene directions—to reflect the narrative’s examination of the stereotypical roles that have historically been played by Asian American actors and how those roles bleed into lived experience. By writing in this style Yu blurs the lines between the performed character and the authentic self, raising questions about assimilation, artifice, and identity. Take inspiration from Yu’s use of this form and think of a past experience in which you felt required to perform or maintain a certain persona. Write a lyric essay that incorporates scenes written like a script or screenplay. How does the form create a sense of distance or defamiliarization? How might this angle provide you with a new perspective or insight?

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—Elizabeth Strout, Pulitzer Prize winner in Fiction for Olive Kitteridge

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Writer’s Block

WRITER’S block, I have always maintained, is not real. It is an invention. A self-inflicted wound. A chimera. After all, every time we fall asleep we write stories in our dreams. And yet whenever I give a talk to young writers, eventually a hand goes up with a question about the ubiquitous phenomenon of writer’s block and how to cure it. I think we must anatomize and rename the variations of this perceived ailment in order to deprive it of its power. Another, more apt, phrase is something like the studious avoidance of writing. To call this writer’s block would be like avoiding exercise and calling it “exercise block.” I have exercise block a lot. Almost every day. It’s a real shame, but what can I do? If I told my friends I had “exercise block” they might say, “You mean you are not exercising?” And I would have to agree. Perhaps if a friend claims to have writer’s block, you might say, “You mean you are not writing?”

I believe that common instances of writer’s block fall into one of thirteen categories. The first is the aforementioned avoidance of writing. The second is waiting to write. Sometimes we do not want to work on a poem, or a play, or a story for no other reason than we should not be working on it. We should be waiting until we know more; then the writing will come to us. Perhaps this means we need to mourn for a while before writing. Or live a bit more before writing. Or read a bit more before writing. This is a natural process, like gestation, and can’t be rushed or forced.

The third category I might call walking away from the canvas. We might choose to take a break from writing because we are too close to the material; we have to step away from the canvas, as a painter does every so often, to see how the painting looks from a distance. If we are avoiding writing, waiting to write, or taking a break from writing, the writer has some choice in the matter, whereas “writer’s block” sounds like a mystical illness or a gastrointestinal problem that suddenly comes upon us.

Sometimes when my students say they are having writer’s block, I ask them what landscape they prefer—water, mountains, or meadows—and I tell them to get on the first train to that landscape and to look at it for a day before trying to write again. Many writers find it curative.

SARAH RUHL is a playwright, essayist, and poet living in Brooklyn, New York. Her first book of poetry, **44 Poems for You**, will be published by Copper Canyon Press in February.
The fourth, perhaps most awful, category is abandoning a piece of writing that is not meant to be written. This is a hard one, but occasionally a piece of writing is not worth being written and must be put aside. This is not mystical; it is a naturally occurring phenomenon that is difficult to cope with. Not all seeds become trees.

The fifth category is not wanting to write the thing someone else is telling me to write, otherwise known as not wishing to implement the stupid notes on my writing someone else is giving me. This is a particular problem for writers-for-hire or graduate students and does not apply to the majority of writers. Regardless, this is not writer’s block either. This is revulsion, pure and simple. This is resistance to doing someone else’s bidding. At times one must simply swallow one’s revulsion and get it done. Or explain patiently to the person giving the notes that they are killing your soul and ruining your ability to write.

The sixth category is a person I love will be angry with me, or their feelings will be hurt if I write what I would like to write. This applies to a large swath of confessional memoirs, revenge plays, and poems about ex-lovers. In many cases this work should be given up anyway because, as Elizabeth Bishop once said, “Art just isn’t worth that much.” If the piece is worthwhile, however, one might get permission from the ex-lover, or mother, or grandfather before writing it. Or the writer might try a shift in intention, attempting to write from love rather than from derision, and see how quickly the writing comes. That requires forgiveness, and forgiveness often requires waiting.

The seventh, unfortunately very common, category is distracted by the modern world. If this sounds like you, turn your phone off or put it in the mail and send it to yourself. My dear friend the playwright Jorge Ignacio Cortiñas gave me this idea. Before the era of smartphones he would put his modem in the mail and send it to himself when he wanted to avoid interruption; it usually took about a week for the modem to reach him again. If you find you are still distracted by the modern world while your phone is off or in the mail, you might need a more radical and ancient approach: meditation. Meditation is the equivalent of turning off your computer and finding that whatever bugs were in it are mysteriously gone when you turn it on again. My other personal cure for the modern world is riding the Amtrak “quiet car,” one of the only places in the modern world where “a library-like atmosphere must be maintained,” or so the conductor says. Truth be told, there isn’t even a library-like atmosphere at most libraries anymore.

I feel compelled to add an eighth category for those with children called distracted by my children. My prescription for this ailment is to write outside the house, or, if you are a man, to embark upon an epic Scandinavian best-seller about the way in which your children’s domestic needs engulf you. The other cure I’ve tried for this category is writing in short form. There is also a certain amount of waiting inherent in this cure—once the children go to school for six hours a day the problem naturally resolves itself, as one can really write for only two hours anyway (see the thirteenth category, general sloth).

The ninth category is the beginning was not really the beginning, the middle was not the middle, and the end was not the end. There are at least two routes for every destination, as I tell my thirteen-year-old daughter, who often knows only one way of walking somewhere. The same is true for writing. Sometimes we feel “blocked” because we started a story in the wrong place or ended in the wrong place. I find it very useful, when trying to remedy this condition, to take a few months off between writing the first and the second act of a play. A corollary to “the beginning was not really the beginning” is “there are too many plays in my play.” In this instance one will write new material only once one has cut off the offending extra material, which can be counterintuitive. It is like being bloated
The seventh, unfortunately very common, category is distracted by the modern world.

and needing to fast before eating again.

Number ten I might call the Penelope syndrome. Remember how Homer’s Penelope wove and unraveled the same shroud, waiting for Odysseus to come home, in order to deceive her suitors? Some writers effectively unweave what they write as soon as they write it, leading to the false perception of writer’s block. Actually the writing itself is not blocked; there is quite a lot of writing happening, but it is being revised and erased before the ink is dry. Perfectionists are especially prone to this syndrome. I tell perfectionists, “Please do not erase your lines.”

Eleven: the who is looking over your shoulder while you are writing? syndrome. In this form of blockage there is an overly critical parent, lover, teacher, reviewer watching you write and waiting for you to write down something stupid. You might even think that the culture you find yourself in (the culture itself) is looking over your shoulder in a smug, critical way. Prescription: Do not look over your shoulder while writing. Write for yourself. Or think of a person you would like to give a gift to and write for that person. I think many forms of perceived writer’s block fall into this category, and because the fear of judgment is so painful and personal, we try to make it mystical.

Similar to the looking-over-your-shoulder phenomenon is being overly focused on the outcome syndrome. You might call this watched-kettle syndrome, and I might also call it dog-walking syndrome. Have you ever taken a dog for a walk and the dog won’t pee? And for the whole walk you think: “Pee, Pee, Pee!” And the more you think, “Pee!” or say, “Pee!” or scream, “Pee!” the less likely it is that the dog will pee? Rather than simply taking the dog for a walk and not paying attention to whether the dog pees, you are focused on an outcome during your whole walk, and so of course you do not find it.

The last category is general sloth. My prescriptions for sloth-disguised-as-writer’s-block are caffeine, walking, healthy habits, and sleep. Tea should be used for certain writerly modes, and coffee for others. I cannot tell you which because it is very personal, as is the choice in tea. Green tea is good for some temperaments and genres, but I find Yorkshire tea the best. Short walks with animals cure many writerly problems; long walks by the sea cure others.

Also, just as with exercise, do not
overdo your daily writing habits in terms of duration. I don’t know many writers who can write more than two hours a day. If you try to write three hours a day and find you cannot, you might start perceiving that you have dreaded writer’s block when really you are only supposed to write two hours a day. Find out what time of day you are most awake and write then. Many mystics and meditators find that 4 AM is a time of bold inspiration—I myself find the boring interval between 10 AM and noon to be most fruitful. The wonderful writer Ann Patchett has a useful trick for sloth-induced writer’s block. In the title essay of This Is the Story of a Happy Marriage (Harper, 2013), she writes that when people complain they have writer’s block, they usually are simply not really trying to write. They are not going to their desk, sitting down, and spending time writing. So Patchett advises writers to sign in when they sit down at their desk, noting on a sign-in sheet how long they spent there, trying to write. When people do this, she says, eventually they do in fact write, as if by magic.

I’ve left off one category, which is dread of the desk. If you can’t stand the sight of your desk, clean it. Clean out every useless piece of paper, discard every book you meant to read but didn’t. If the dread persists, write at the kitchen table. If you are still feeling dread, you might also have fear of solitude, which is difficult but not insurmountable for a writer. Go to a coffee shop to write, and let the hum of voices around you remind you that the world still exists while you write. Or go to your local public library and write with a friend sitting across from you.

Sleep is the most wonderful cure for any kind of writer’s block, because of dreams, which remind us that stories make themselves up, if only we would let them. It is useful to have a place for sleep near one’s desk. I am serious about this; when a form of dropsy hits in the middle of writing, we should pay attention and heed the horizontal impulse. Often a dream will come that gives us the next sentence, or image, or event.

Finally, one must not confuse self-loathing or despair with writer’s block. Those are professional hazards, and there are other treatments for them. Don’t ignore them.

Now, say you have tried everything. You have anatomized your ailment, you’ve signed in at your desk, you’ve tried tea, walking, waiting, forgiveness, the Amtrak quiet car, and nothing is working. Here are some last-resort ideas.

First, a change of place. The most radical version of which is: Go to a country where people are speaking a different language. This is sure to create the desire to write in your own language in an entirely new way. Obviously that cure requires time and means, so it’s not a very practical cure.

Similar to writing while listening to another language but not involving
a plane ticket: Try writing as though you are translating a great work that has already been written by a fictional writer of your own invention. You have discovered this masterwork under your bed and need only translate it. The end has already been found by someone else. I find this gives great relief to the dread of formlessness. If the form is already there, there is less room for anxiety.

An obsession with finding the perfect place to write can be indicative of a deeper dread. There is no perfect desk or view or chair. When I start fantasizing that if only I could write at Virginia Woolf’s Monk’s House, I know that I am in trouble. Change is all. Simply go to a different coffee shop to write. A different library. A different place. Let the sounds of the new place teach you to hear differently as you write. Or change the genre. Write the poem as a story, the play as a poem, the essay as a song. Maybe you are writing your story in the wrong genre.

If change of genre or country does not work, try the water cure: A bath is usually readily available. Or a nice long swim. Many of the most disciplined writers I know swim every day. Or walk. Or dance. Find joy in your body. Writing is a terribly disembodied activity, and sometimes the body requires joy before writing.

There is also this simple remedy: Find other writers in the same pickle and create deadlines for one another. Sometimes all that is needed is a deadline and the fear of not meeting it. My friend the playwright Andy Bragen and I created punishments for each other in our early twenties if we did not meet the deadlines we had created for each other. You have not lived if you have not seen Andy do the Jane Fonda Workout in blue sweatpants in his East Village apartment—this was my chosen punishment for him if he failed to meet his deadline. The other benefit to this remedy is that you bat away perceived writer’s block and the professional hazard of loneliness in one fell swoop. And now, twenty years later, we have the pickle council—four playwright friends who meet regularly, share work, and discuss professional pickles. At first we ate pickles that Andy bought from the pickle man on the Lower East Side, now we mostly discuss pickles.

If you’ve tried all these remedies and, still, nothing is working, my last prescription is: Find a teacher. It was Paula Vogel who correctly diagnosed my inability to write after my father died—she knew that I was looking at the grief too directly. I needed to look at it sideways in order to write. Sometimes we need a teacher to see what we cannot see.

Superstition is common for writers and can be, I believe, quite useful. But “writer’s block” is an unhelpful, superstitious term made up by a psychiatrist named Edmund Bergler in the 1940s and has more to do with his views on “oral masochism” than with the writing life. As such, it should be frowned upon and relegated to the dustbin of literary history.

Winner of the 2018 Willie Morris Award for Southern Fiction

The Past Is Never by Tiffany Quay Tyson

Honoring the author of the best novel set in the Southern United States, and reflecting, in the words of the late author Willie Morris, “hope for belonging, for belief in people’s better nature, for steadfastness against all that is hollow or cross or rootless or destructive.”

Winner of the 2019 Willie Morris Award for Southern Poetry

“Mercury Poises on the Pinnacle of Nashville’s Bygone Union Station” by Melissa Cannon

Recognizing an original, unpublished poem that evokes the American South.

Judged by Susan Kinsolving, Director of the Willie Morris Award for Southern Poetry.

Tiffany Quay Tyson received a $10,000 prize and Melissa Cannon received a $2,500 prize. Both were celebrated on October 21 in New York City.

The award is sponsored by Reba White Williams and Dave Williams · www.WillieMorrisAward.org
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WE WRITERS tend not to give rejection the love or respect it deserves. We speak ill of it, as if it’s a malevolent demon, a destructive force, an uninvited guest that ruins our party. We revile it. We curse it. We reject it. Because rejection is a damnable, despicable thing that seemingly aims to only hurt and hinder. It gives us no warmth, no love, and we writers need love; in fact we don’t just need love—we need love in bounteous, fulsome heaps. We want editors to gush over our words like a teenager with a crush. We want readers to slather us with adoration.

Or that’s what we might think. Love, the purest kind of acceptance, plays a vital, necessary, and nourishing role in creation because writers, not unlike children, become more secure in the threatening terrain of the world with the more love and support they receive. That trust in the world, in oneself, can lead to creative risk-taking and bold exploration, but it can also tip into a self-satisfaction that breeds a complacent, even slothful approach, which is one of the seven deadly sins not only in a religious sense, but in a creative sense as well.

*Sloth* grew out of the Latin term *acedia*, which means “without care.” *Acedia* initially referred to monks who became lazy in their duties to God because they had begun to lack wonder; they preferred idle distractions, self-indulgent pleasures, instead of working to cultivate the “seven gifts of grace” given by the Holy Ghost: wisdom, understanding, counsel, knowledge, piety, fortitude, and fear of the Lord. The implication is that those afflicted by acedia needed to feel God’s thunder and lightning—his rejection—to jolt them from their inert tendencies so that they would serve a higher purpose through a more diligent attention to their sacred tasks, no matter how uncomfortable or unpleasurable they might be. Overcoming acedia, according to Evagrius Ponticus, one of the most influential theologians in the late-fourth-century church, brought one closer to God.

The paradox is that the deepest faith, as with the deepest type of creativity, finds a strange comfort in the discomfort of serving a higher purpose. There’s a famous story, found in *Martha: The Life and Work of Martha Graham* (Random
House, 1991), about an encounter between the two dancers and choreographers Agnes de Mille and Martha Graham. De Mille, who believed that much of her best work had been ignored by critics, was dispirited because the musical Oklahoma!, which she had choreographed, had become a popular sensation, whereas she thought it was only “fairly good” at best. At their first meeting, de Mille told Graham that when she viewed her own work, she saw only “its ineptitude, inorganic flaws, and crudities.”

“I am not pleased or satisfied,” said de Mille.

“No artist is pleased,” Graham replied.

“But then there is no satisfaction?”

“No satisfaction whatever at any time,” Graham said. “There is only a queer divine dissatisfaction, a blessed unrest that keeps us marching and makes us more alive than the others.”

It is an odd, discordant concept to have a dissatisfaction that is divine in nature. This isn’t a dissatisfaction that is the result of typical artistic self-loathing or self-doubt. It is not a dissatisfaction created by a demanding perfectionism that aims to please others. Graham’s dissatisfaction is divine, the result of the artist’s drive to create something that reaches empyreal heights. Faith in a religion or belief in God isn’t the issue here but rather the notion of creating a work that is sublime. In aesthetics the word sublime refers to the conjunction of two opposed feelings, the pleasurable anxiety we experience when confronting things that inspire awe—“a feeling of respect or reverence mixed with dread and wonder, often inspired by something majestic or powerful,” according to the American Heritage Dictionary.

Graham spoke of dance with such religiosity. She viewed the body as a “sacred garment” and dancers as “messengers of the gods.” In her striving to create a sublime work, a work that is elevated, exalted, lofty, beyond the mediocrity of the human realm, Graham’s state of “blessed unrest” propels and animates the artist—attuning her to life in a way that others cannot be if they reside in the more slothful contentedness of satisfaction.

Such “blessed unrest” is a powerful force that springs from deep within, but it is also a gift that rejection bestows on us because rejection teaches us to hone a sensibility of divine dissatisfaction. If handled properly, without knee-jerk chagrin or defensiveness, rejection can lift us beyond the childlike state of looking for probation and allow us to see our work in a bigger sphere, from a multiplicity of perspectives. The “blessed unrest” that rejection gives us sparks a perpetual questioning, an expansion of our senses, and forces us to confront our resolve.

We have to ask what’s missing in a story or poem. We have to probe our work to see if it lives up to our vision. We have to question the vision itself. Are we willing to buck the opinion of others to realize our concept of a work? Do we compromise in order to find acceptance, or does rejection illuminate another path altogether? Does rejection weaken us and make us buckle under its weight, or does it motivate us to go deeper into our work and push harder?

There’s an old saying: “The strongest fish is the one that swims upstream.” Rejection’s gift is that it gives us something to push against, a necessary pressure that can help a writer sharpen focus, define vision, and accept (and perhaps even relish) the discomforts required to make a work better.

Literary history is, of course, filled with authors who have persisted in the face of rejection. One of the editors who rejected Herman Melville’s Moby-Dick asked if the whale could be deleted and if the captain could instead be “struggling with a depravity toward young, perhaps voluptuous, maidens.” Madeleine L’Engle faced a crisis as a midlife, struggling writer when A Wrinkle in Time was repeatedly rejected because it dealt with the problem of evil and was thought to be too difficult for children. Jack Kerouac’s On the Road was rebuffed for its “frenetic and scrambled prose.” Marlon James received seventy-eight rejections for his novel John Crow’s Devil (Akashic Books, 2005). He even went so far as to destroy the manuscript but was able to retrieve it from his e-mail archives. “There was a time I actually thought I was writing the kind of stories people didn’t want to read,” James said, and he briefly abandoned writing.

Rejection can lacerate the soul like few other things, and at its worst it can lead to self-rejection, especially if you have not yet been published and you don’t consider yourself part of the publishing world’s “in-crowd.” Rejection can feel like not just one person rejecting you, but an entire conspiracy of all the universe’s forces. Fear of rejection is in our cells—we don’t want to be expelled from our tribe. We want to belong. Evolutionary psychologists assume the brain developed an early warning system to alert us when we were at risk of ostracism, which is why rejection can feel like physical pain. But at its best, rejection can give you a more rigorous stringency so that not even the smallest piece of dreck can sneak into a sentence.

Ernest Hemingway said, “The most essential gift for a good writer is a built-in, shockproof, shit detector.” Rejection is the hammer that builds a good shit detector and the screwdriver that tightens the screws when it falls out of maintenance. The urge of the child who creates something and then runs to a parent seeking praise never truly leaves us, and that urge explains submitting a story before it has been properly churned through a good shit detector. When I read stories for my literary journal, 100 Word Story, most of the stories that get rejected aren’t necessarily bad ideas or horrifically written; they just need further revision. In other words they’ve been written with too much satisfaction. I can feel the writer’s complacency, the writer’s acedia, the writer’s inability to
face the uncomfortableness necessary to take the story to the next level.

I confess that I am susceptible to submitting a story before its time as well, even when I think I’ve thoroughly and diligently revised it. After I receive a round of rejections, I’ll reread my story, and I almost always spot areas that need improvement, if not reimagining. I chastise myself for submitting such flabby, subpar work. I’m disturbed that my shit detector worked so poorly. Yet, at the same time, I’m grateful that rejection served to intensify my efforts and open a door for me to go deeper into the story. Rejection is my best revision tool in the end.

Zadie Smith advises writers to resign themselves “to the lifelong sadness that comes from never being satisfied.” Perhaps “never” is an overstatement, for we need satisfaction to put our work, ourselves, into the world. Or maybe it’s that “divine dissatisfaction” leads to a different type of satisfaction.

Martha Graham found her truest satisfaction in the assiduousness of practice, which for her was akin to religious observance. Practice meant “to perform, over and over again in the face of all obstacles, some act of vision, of faith, of desire” in an effort to overcome the primary sin she knew: mediocrity. For Graham, practice was “a means of inviting the perfection desired.” This type of practice doesn’t serve to shape your work into a form that pleases others so that it will get published. This type of practice serves a higher calling, one that has no concerns with whether a work finds acceptance or leads to ostracization because it speaks to an a more elevated, even sacred truth.

Graham faced many kinds of rejection because of the revolutionary nature of her productions. She said, in the 1994 documentary Martha Graham: The Dancer Revealed, “I have spent all my life with dance and being a dancer. It’s permitting life to use you in a very intense way. Sometimes it is not pleasant. Sometimes it is fearful. But nevertheless, it is inevitable.”

The same thing can be said of being a writer. We permit life to use us in a very intense way. It’s a strange pleasure, this essentially masochistic pursuit, this endurance test, this endless reaching for perfection. But it is inevitable, or it certainly feels that way.

“I love my rejection slips. They show me I try,” said Sylvia Plath.

Many writers are cosseted by a world in which rejection hasn’t been risked, or they’ve taken the comfortable approach of disregarding rejection’s lessons. A rejection is an invitation—a peculiar invitation, a cold invitation, but still an invitation—to keep trying, to keep serving the higher purpose of your story.
WHEN I open a book, I open my life,” says artist Diane Samuels. “I find worlds to explore beyond my own. Doors open to experience solace and pleasure and joy.” Writers and readers the world over can surely relate to that feeling of escape that so often accompanies the creative, imaginative, even spiritual engagement with a book. But the Pittsburgh-based visual artist takes that experience a step further with her series of art pieces One Book, One Drawing, which she has been slowly creating for nearly a decade.

Samuels is primarily a visual artist, but she is also an equally committed reader and activist. Her artistic practice is a unique form of creative rewriting that involves transcribing every word of a published poem, novel, essay, or play in her beautiful microscript, making ekphrastic works, often on handmade paper, that are monumental in size or scale. Samuels typically devotes more than a year to each major work in a process that begins with reading the book from start to finish, then reading it again, this time slowly, out loud, recording herself while she puts her pen to paper and rewrites one phrase, one line, one sentence at a time.

“When I read a line or a sentence from a book out loud, I hear the music of the sentence or the line in a way that I don’t hear it when I am reading to myself,” she says.
Metamorphoses, Ovid (2014)
In *The Arabian Nights*, a collection of Middle Eastern and Indian stories nearly three thousand pages long that was compiled in Arabic three centuries ago, the beautiful Scheherazade survives her captivity at the hands of King Shahryar by telling a sequence of stories that lasts 1,001 nights. Samuels transforms this epic of world literature in a work titled *Scheherazade*, which is made up of more than ten thousand fragments of paper and resembles a carpet with a bloody crimson center and gold edging. Samuels has copied out the book’s text onto the paper in a spiraling microscript, thus bringing the book’s 1,001 stories together into a single, transporting narrative.

On a Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Residency in 2013, Samuels created *Metamorphoses*, *Ovid* after the Roman poet’s magnum opus. The poem contains 11,995 lines, including a prologue that begins: “spin me a thread from the world’s beginning down to my..."
Samuels transcribed the entire poem onto a single “thread” of paper measuring a kilometer in length. We see a “ball” of paper thread washed with a hint of pale green watercolor representing land and immediately understand that the artist has, in fact, wound Ovid’s poem into the shape of our globe. To read it would require unraveling the world.

Samuels chooses books from her extensive personal library in her home in Pittsburgh as well as her husband’s antiquarian collection. She also draws inspiration from the exiled writers who come to live for a time at City of Asylum, the nonprofit she cofounded with her husband, Henry Reese, in 2004. City of Asylum offers a home, stipend, and transitional support to exiled writers on the city’s North Side. The organization also runs Alphabet City, a programming space and bookstore housed in a former Masonic temple where Samuels regularly attends readings.

Often it is the first line of a work that compels her. For instance: “I celebrate myself, and sing myself.” At more than seven feet in height, *Leaves of Grass*, Walt Whitman contains all 438 pages of the poem, each one handwritten in green ink along a single line that rises from the drawing’s base like individual blades of grass in a field. Samuels was inspired to begin the work during a reading by Chinese poet Huang Xiang, a City of Asylum writer in exile who read from the first edition on the 150th anniversary of the poem’s publication.
Calling the drawing “a literal embodiment of the poem’s central metaphor and theme ‘One’s-Self I sing, a simple separate person, / Yet utter the word Democratic, the word En-Masse,’” Samuels sees herself and the viewer of her work in dialogue with each other and the world.

The relationship between the individual and “the other,” as well as the natural world, was the inspiration for tackling Herman Melville’s *Moby-Dick, or The Whale*, which begins with one of literature’s most famous first lines: “Call me Ishmael.” *Moby-Dick, or The Whale*, Herman Melville unfurls like a forty-seven-foot wave. The 209,117 words of the novel are handwritten in blue ink, seeming to float on strips of multicolored paper like foamy ripples on the surface of the sea.

In confronting Samuels’s work, we are seeing and reading. We are examining fragments and details, taking in the parts and the whole simultaneously. We are invited to follow her line of microscript across the paper, and we must move our bodies to take in the size and scale of the work.

After Samuels heard Richard Powers read from his latest novel, *The Overstory*, in May 2018 at Alphabet City, she tackled her most recent Herculean work. Samuels loved both the form that the Pulitzer Prize–winning novel took as well as its content, not least because Powers references and quotes from several literary works that she already transcribed, including those by Ovid and...
Moby-Dick, or The Whale,
Herman Melville
(2015)
Photo credit: David Pace.
Whitman. She appreciated the double entendre in Powers’s title—referring to both the definition of an overstory in dendrology and the structure of the novel, which has an overarching narrative and nested stories within it, much like *The Arabian Nights*.

The novel begins, “First there was nothing. Then there was everything.” *The Overstory, Richard Powers* features white microscript on top of densely textured shades of burgundy, sienna, brown, gold, and green, which is suggestive of the layers of earth, bark, and leaves that Powers describes containing past, present, and future. At 160 feet in length, the work appears either as a scroll or a tree stump, depending on how it is displayed.

For this piece, Samuels wanted to work with materials that had a relationship to one another and the novel. Working as she always does with recycled paper, Samuels mounted “The Overstory, Richard Powers” on silk and backed it with mulberry paper. Silk-worms do their handiwork in mulberry trees—the tree Powers associates with one of his characters, Mimi Ma, who inherited a Chinese scroll from her father and carries it with her in the story.

The four sections in Powers’s novel—Roots, Trunk, Crown, and Seeds—reference the circular system of nourishment and growth in a tree; when we view the artwork from above, we can see the sections like growth rings in a tree. In Roots, Powers introduces nine characters in eight distinct stories.
Samuels creates roots for these stories that run adjacent to one another for fourteen feet. The roots include leaf rubbings from the nine trees associated with each character surrounding a central image of the needles and cones of the *Sequoia sempervirens* on the work’s verso, like historiated initials in illuminated manuscripts. The transcription of the Crown section’s text is written on strips of paper glued across other barklike strips to resemble branches; the Seeds section drops and wiggles down through the completed transcription of the previous two sections, stopping at Roots.

Both Powers and Samuels are magnifying a theme of our time: the struggle against powerful forces that seem bent on destroying the only things that can save us. How can this struggle find expression in a literary and artistic work? Powers writes a hopeful message near the end of the novel that includes a quotation from Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass*: “They will come to think like rivers and forests and mountains. They will grasp how a leaf of grass encodes ‘the journeywork of the stars.’” Samuels shares that hope. “Reading fiction teaches empathy,” she says.

In other pieces, Samuels has transcribed work by Homer, Shakespeare, and Gertrude Stein, as well as 198 of her favorite poems in *Poetry Quilt*, which measures more than seven feet tall. In each, Samuels honors the writer and engages with writing beyond reading—opening the book to reveal the worlds contained on every page.
For our fifteenth annual look at debut poetry, we chose ten poets whose first books struck us with their formal imagination, distinctive language, and deep attention to the world. The books, all published in 2019, inhabit a range of poetic modes. There is Keith S. Wilson’s reimagining of traditional forms in Fieldnotes on Ordinary Love, and Maya Phillips’s modern epic, Erou. There is Maya C. Popa’s lyric investigations in American Faith, Marwa Helal’s subversive documentary poems in Invasive species, and Yanyi’s series of prose poems in The Year of Blue Water. The ten collections clarify and play with all kinds of language—the language of the news, of love, of politics, of philosophy, of family, of place—and, as Popa says, they “slow and suspend the moment, allowing a more nuanced examination of what otherwise flows through us quickly.”

While the books share a sense of urgency and timeliness, in fact these collections got their starts years, even decades ago. So we asked each of the poets to share the stories behind their debuts—what experiences or scraps of language incited the book’s first poems and what insight pulled them through the process of writing and publishing a collection.

Many of the poets described accepting the time it takes for poems to arrive and learning that making poetry doesn’t always entail sitting at the desk, pen in hand. “If I am looking at the world through poetic lenses and thinking of all of my work through the lens poetry has gifted me, then the poems are being written and will touch the page when it is time,” says Camonghne Felix. Sara Borjas reminds herself that everyday activities like reading and cooking are also “a making.”

Several of the poets also said their books began when they wrote through their original subject to its opposite or counter. In writing about Blackness, Felix wrote about survival but also thriving. Heidi Andrea Restrepo Rhodes took on the ghost as “both the obstinate echo, as well as a willful, living fury calling us into question.” Jake Skeets wrote about the fields of Gallup, New Mexico, as a site of both desire and violence; Patty Crane found inspiration in beauty, but also the suffering and injustice that brings it into relief.

And all the poets credit the people who helped them along the way—friends who pored over drafts, editors who challenged them to be better, mentors who encouraged and advised, family members who offered support. All the people who remind us that behind every book is a poet, and behind every poet is a community—or as Crane says, “the threads that bind us to one another and to the world.” So we hope that when we lift up these poets and their collections, it is also a testament to the communities that stand behind them as artists and nurture them far beyond the pages of a book.

Dana Isokawa is the senior editor of Poets & Writers Magazine.

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as if desire is a kind of blindness
that listening unveils
—from “Frogsong”

HOW IT BEGAN: I didn’t set out to write a book. I set out to write the poems that came to me and compelled me to keep writing. Poem by poem, that writing was mainly driven by my daily life, the awareneses unfolding from my roles as a woman, a mother, a friend, a citizen of a community, a country, and the earth—all the threads that bind us to one another and to the world, however tenuous and ephemeral. At some point I had a critical mass of poems and was eager to explore ways to connect them.

INSPIRATION: My richest sources of inspiration stem from my deepest connections. Rich because they’re deep. Deep because they require tending. My family and loved ones, especially my incredible daughters, who I once carried in my body and now carry at all times in my consciousness. My home and place, especially the natural world that surrounds me and informs how I live, work, and relate to the world. My translating, which allows me to inhabit another speaker and be the author of poems I did not write, their temporary surrogate and shepherd. My fellow artists—being around them, experiencing their work and inspirations. Beauty catches my eye everywhere, and everywhere its edges are defined, even heightened, by injustice and suffering, as if they’re beauty’s very outline—the way the dark shadings around [Giorgio] Morandi’s bottles suggest the power of the unseen. They’re what bring the bottles into relief, defining them as bottles.

WRITER’S BLOCK REMEDY: If I find myself losing a staring contest with the blank page, I usually set a timer for twenty minutes, put my pen to the paper and write, stream-of-consciousness, until the timer goes off. This often helps me uncover a subject hidden in the weeds of distraction or overthinking and gets me back in the groove. I try to stay open to the possibility inherent in letting the mind’s reins go. What gets me going is the timer and zero pressure to write anything “worthy.”

ADVICE: Believe in the work, be patient, persist. Quiet all the voices except the inner one. Less is more. If you’re not sure whether the poem belongs in the collection, it probably doesn’t. Make the book the final poem. Submit the manuscript to presses whose publications you love. Keep moving forward, thinking about poems for the next book.

AGE: 59. RESIDENCE: Windsor, Massachusetts, and Craftsbury, Vermont. JOB: After a decades-long career as a registered nurse working in a variety of roles and settings—my undergraduate degree is in nursing, my master’s in creative writing—I’m now a literary translator, Swedish to English, and the president of a community-building nonprofit. TIME SPENT WRITING THE BOOK: About fifteen years. The buildup to writing them surely took far longer, probably my whole life. A good number of those fifteen years involved setting the poems aside and letting them steep, free from my meddling long enough that I could come back to them with fresh-eyed amnesia. TIME SPENT FINDING A HOME FOR IT: I started sending out this version about a year ago. If you count other wildly different versions of the book, then ten years or so.
HOW IT BEGAN: In my MFA program at Bard, Ann Lauterbach asked me, “Are you representing or presenting?” And I wanted to see if I could present Blackness both in theory and in practice without performing it or decodifying it for the consumption of non-Black readers. I had to ask myself a series of questions that ultimately came down to one question—what is the project of Blackness? The answer I found was that Blackness is survival. And then that question led me to the question behind the entire book project—what goes beyond survival? What comes after it? What does it look like to depart from a journey of survival and enter a journey of thriving?

INSPIRATION: The Black Arts movement, psychology, the way a good R&B
album pushes at the edges of your spirit and makes you feel new things, *In the Break* by Fred Moten, the everyday joy of being a Black girl, the everyday trauma of being a Black girl.

**WRITER’S BLOCK REMEDY:** Two things. One, I learned from a Black studies professor at the community college I attended that there is no such thing as “being a genius” but that we all have a genius, and that your genius comes and goes on her own accord. She will eat when you feed her but will rest when she’d like. I turn to this thought when I am afraid that I’ll never write a good poem again, because it reminds me that the first poem wasn’t up to me and neither will the last one. And two, I remember that by living with intention I am in the process of writing poems. A poem or a series of poems may ruminate in your brain for days, weeks, months—and you may sit down four or five times to write it, but it won’t come until it’s ready. But if I am looking at the world through poetic lenses and thinking of all of my work through the lens poetry has gifted me, then the poems are being written and will touch the page when it is time.

**ADVICE:** You’ll never get another debut! Your first is your first. Fight for yourself, advocate for your project, and trust your community if they tell you it’s not ready.

**AGE:** 27. **RESIDENCE:** Boston—but I’m a proud and loud New York City native. **JOB:** I’m a political media strategist, currently working on the Warren for President team. **TIME SPENT WRITING THE BOOK:** Five years. **TIME SPENT FINDING A HOME FOR IT:** Well, I didn’t worry too much about trying to find a publisher until people started asking me if I had a full-length book. When Haymarket reached out, I knew it was the right time and the right press.
How it began: It started with the body. The learning of desire prompted many of the poems in the early versions of the manuscript. My life shifted when I moved back home to the reservation. I noticed that the fields that surround Gallup, New Mexico, where I first experienced desire during summers and winters home, were also fields where other men would lose their lives. I also returned to the portrait of my uncle—a photograph Richard Avedon took of him in 1979—that is on the cover of the book. I began excavating the layers that exist in the narrative and violence of Gallup. Suddenly the fields that surround Gallup became a place for reflection, both in the collection and in my real life.

Inspiration: First, the land. The other day I noticed how quickly smoke from nearby forest fires can be cleared out by strong winds. Second, the way my mom and dad tell stories. They are the best storytellers. Third, the Black Mountain poets. Finally, all the other Diné poets.

Writer’s block remedy: I turn to craft. I turn to experimentation. If I am stuck on a particular image or trigger, I will give myself rules to compose a poem. I will use random word generators or word scramblers online. I give myself prompts that force me away from the left margin. I try to approach the poem through its language. This work and energy is a way to honor language and honor the image or trigger that inspired the poem.

Advice: Carry your manuscript everywhere with you.

Age: 27. Residence: Tsaile, Arizona. Job: English faculty at Diné College. Time spent writing the book: About three years. Time spent finding a home for it: I submitted the collection to several prizes before I heard from the National Poetry Series. I am very fortunate that the book was published only a year after finishing my MFA.
THE YEAR OF BLUE WATER
Yale University Press (Yale Series of Younger Poets)

It is a certain life and not its answer that is worthy of being repeated. Invitation, invocation, request.
—from The Year of Blue Water

HOW IT BEGAN: A series of events forced me into a major emotional reckoning. I was barely able to go through the motions of everyday life anymore. So, the urgency of being present with myself and my body. And the will to be alive on my own terms.

INSPIRATION: Maggie Nelson’s *The Argonauts* showed me that an integrated self was possible in writing. Aldrin Valdez’s poem “Shuffled Slides of a Changing Painting (After Robert Gober),” numbered like Nelson’s *Bluets*, was crucial to my understanding the technical power of a poem out of, and still in, order. And of course the person who told me to start the notebook, who learned that from Carolyn Forché.

WRITER’S BLOCK REMEDY: I read recently in an advice column that time is not what heals relationships: It is that things happen in time. I don’t see silence as an impasse. I work to be available to writing when it arrives. In silence I focus my erotic energy on my relationship with the world. I work on eating, sleeping, feeling, and enjoying my life. I read. I allow myself to change. The writing comes to me when there is something to say.

ADVICE: I’ve found that it is more important to love your own book than getting it published. I mean the kind of nourishing love you feel when you read the poetry you admire. This is the love that will help you edit it. It will help you advocate for it and send it out again and maybe one day read it over and over as though it is still new to you. Because it should be. Become your own reader and someone else will read it too.

AGE: 28. RESIDENCE: Jersey City. JOB: I worked for several years as a software engineer and am now exploring life as a full-time student and writer. TIME SPENT WRITING THE BOOK: About eight months, then two years of editing until I handed it in to Yale. TIME SPENT FINDING A HOME FOR IT: About a year.
HOW IT BEGAN: Wanting to bear witness to the experience my family went through in immigrating, wanting to find others who had similar experiences, wanting to highlight the flaws in the “legal” immigration system—a conversation this country doesn’t want to have—they would rather focus on what they deem “illegal” immigration when in fact they are the ones who are illegal, if anyone is. I didn’t know at the time that Homeland Security would become ICE, and ICE would become children in cages by the time the book was out. My story is just a small snapshot of the systemic abuse inherent in the immigration-industrial complex.

INSPIRATION: My teachers—the forms they have introduced me to, the language first my learned i second see see for mistaken am i native go i everywhere—from “poem to be read from right to left”
possibilities they’ve shared in editing, reading, and delivering the work; the Nile Delta; the heart and resilience of Randa Jarrar; Philip Metres’s *abu ghraib arias* and *Sand Opera*; the Egyptian people past, present, and future; the ocean; all of the ways journalism fails—especially “objectivity,” and how that’s where poetry begins; the America we are making together...

**INFLUENCES:** Harryette Mullen for her playfulness and subversiveness; Evie Shockley for her transformation of old forms and aphorisms; Rilke’s searching; Simone White for archive and music; and Suheir Hammad for syntax, witness, ancestry, and teaching others how to use resources. (You thought I’d say DJ Khaled?)

**WRITER’S BLOCK REMEDY:** I turn to photography. Or a dream will get me back in the space I need to keep going. Integrating the liminal.

**ADVICE:** Take your time—or, I am paraphrasing, “Time is your friend,” which is what my teacher Sigrid Nunez once told me. Trust your path and your work. Talk about it; don’t be shy about sharing your dreams. You never know who is listening or willing to point you to the next step in your path.

**AGE:** 38. **RESIDENCE:** Brooklyn, New York. **JOB:** Teaching, writing, readings. **TIME SPENT WRITING THE BOOK:** About ten years. **TIME SPENT FINDING A HOME FOR IT:** I’m grateful to Nightboat for taking on this project and giving me the time to make it what it became. I don’t know how long I had been thinking about *Invasive species* when they selected it. They were only the second press I submitted to, and it looked very, very different when I did!
HOW IT BEGAN: The heart of the book is a series in which different things—all, to some degree, metaphorical—are “canceled,” a term that’s deliberately glib paired against its subjects: the bees, the government, “the return to nature,” etc. The casualness of “canceled” felt at once chilling and right. The other poems in the book touch on themes and motifs from this series.

INSPIRATION: Certainly, for this project, the news. One of poetry’s many strengths is that it slows and suspends the moment, allowing a more nuanced examination of what otherwise flows through us quickly. Responding to world events or headlines through poetry allows me turn these things over in the light, to puzzle out the implications beyond the immediate reaction.

It was earth that taught me
names for all the planets, how to look
at an angle for the hummingbird,
dark satellite of sugar in the blossom’s mouth.
I could picture that vast absence of us,
moons spinning coolly in unscripted pasts.
—from “American Faith”

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The reality is that poems are often the only answer to all that restless cogitation I feel daily.

**WRITER’S BLOCK REMEDY:** I may work in prose if I need more space to think on the page, or I may return to older drafts if I want the wild pleasure of making radical leaps and cuts.

**ADVICE:** Don’t worry about how much or how little you write. It’s judicious to practice some degree of self-discipline, assuming you’re serious about completing a project. But don’t compare your practice with that of others. Trust that as long you’re paying the right sort of attention to your life and the world, there’s a lot going on in the brain that will allow for writing to happen later on.

**AGE:** 30. **RESIDENCE:** New York City, but I go back and forth to London. **JOB:** I teach English literature and direct the creative writing program at an all-girls school. **TIME SPENT WRITING THE BOOK:** About four years. **TIME SPENT FINDING A HOME FOR IT:** I first sent the manuscript out long before it was ready. I am grateful, in retrospect, that the early versions of this book were not the ones that stuck. I reordered and retitled the book one summer morning on Long Island, using various objects to keep the pages from blowing away and recognizing that I finally had what Zadie Smith calls “the head of a smart stranger.” I could look at the book impartially and see what needed to be done—which, in my case, was to cut a large portion of it. That was in August 2017, and I sent it out that fall. I was offered a contract with Sarabande as the runner-up for the Kathryn A. Morton Prize judged by Ocean Vuong about six months later.
Sara Borjas

HEART LIKE A WINDOW, MOUTH LIKE A CLIFF
Noemi Press

I am the scrape of the lowrider as it exits the driveway, bothering the neighbors.
—from “Ars Poetica”

HOW IT BEGAN: In my heart I wanted to love better. We are a colonized people putting ourselves together for hundreds of years. Much of our lives, ideas, values, and traditions are survival tactics. I wanted to see my parents as individuals but also through this lens and love them wholly. I didn’t want my heartbreak, or theirs, to be for nothing. So in each poem I asked: How am I making myself and my family more simple and responsible for our lives than we actually are? And I never really stopped answering, even through all the revisions and drafts, and even now. Many of these poems are me puzzling together how I show love and what and who I think deserves it and why. When I began working with Noemi, one of the first things my editor, Carmen Giménez Smith, told me was that I had a manuscript...
but not a book yet. This stands out as the beginning for me. This is when I felt for real compelled, capable, and honestly challenged to write this very specific collection.

**INSPIRATION:** Oldiez. Fresno. The reliability of crop rows and how you can see all the way to the end no matter what. Books like *Whereas* by Layli Long Soldier, *Crush* by Richard Siken, *Blood* by Shane McCrae, and *MyOther Tongue* by Rosa Alcalá; Anne Sexton; Rumi; “punk poetics,” as Juan Felipe Herrera says; the word *no* out of any woman of color’s mouth; Lifetime movies; *Real Housewives*; really, any drama where the protagonists are women; oranges from my dad’s tree and zucchinis from his garden; my mom’s sense of humor; all shit-talkers everywhere; my sister’s ruthless sentimentality and her writing—she’s an amazing writer but stays low-key; and watching and helping my friends work on their books at the same time.

**WRITER’S BLOCK REMEDY:** I try to break the habit by being okay with not writing. I watch TV and films, talk to my friends and family, read, watch shows about outer space, and go down rabbit holes looking up phenomena. I cook. And all that, to me, is a making.

**ADVICE:** Write toward honesty, then, really write toward honesty. Stop lying.

**AGE:** 33. **RESIDENCE:** Leimert Park, Los Angeles. But I’m from Fresno, California. **JOB:** I teach creative writing at UC Riverside and moonlight as a bartender. **TIME SPENT WRITING THE BOOK:** The oldest poems in the book are eight years old but are wildly different. **TIME SPENT FINDING A HOME FOR IT:** About three or four years.

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HOW IT BEGAN: I’ve always been obsessed with mythology, and for years I knew I was, at some point, going to start writing about my relationship with my dad. It was a topic I kind of wrote around for a while, but our relationship, and the complicated ways that my family worked and related to one another, obviously had a deep impact on me. He died in 2014, and in those next few months I started writing about him but knew I needed some help shaping the work and the project, because I had been feeling a bit untethered from my work for a while. I started my MFA program, at Warren Wilson College, in 2015, and I wrote this collection almost wholly in that two-year period.

INSPIRATION: Mythology certainly. In

Erou born in the county of Kings raised in the lap of Queens sitting on the throne of his mama’s front stoop.

Isn’t this how an Erou begins? —from “Erou I.”
particular, Greek myths, the epics, but I’ll broaden it and also say any kind of mythology or fairy tale or fanciful story in which there are heroes and villains and gods and quests. I like that sense of scope, of the largeness of humanity, and, beyond that, of some version of god, some kind of agency of fate.

WRITER’S BLOCK REMEDY: I panic a bit, honestly. I’m very hard on myself and struggle a lot with anxiety, so creative blocks are tough. I usually just try to push through, but if that doesn’t work, I try switching to another form of writing—there’s always a new article or review to write. Or I might try an essay or fiction or a play or something. Or I’ll just switch to another poem. I pace a lot when I’m stuck with poems, say the words aloud over and over again and try to let the sounds lead me somewhere new, because sounds and rhythms are really important to my work. I go from one room to another or just change seats to kind of trick myself into getting into a new headspace. A walk is usually my last resort—but sometimes that does the trick.

ADVICE: I’d probably say to be bold. Experiment with your work, and don’t edit out all the fun and the strangeness and the wonder.

AGE: 29. RESIDENCE: Brooklyn, New York. JOB: Copy editor/web producer/contributor at the New Yorker and a freelance culture writer. TIME SPENT WRITING THE BOOK: Two to two and a half years. TIME SPENT FINDING A HOME FOR IT: Three weeks. I know that isn’t typical, and I feel so fortunate that this is how it worked out, but I had a list of publishers I knew I wanted to submit to, and I sent the manuscript to Four Way first and heard back less than a month later. I was pretty floored—and thrilled.
HOW IT BEGAN: This book emerged as a result of poetry as a mode of survival and healing at the intersections of my own autoimmune illness and excavations into historical memory, generational trauma, and collective responsibility. I was undertaking familial genealogical research, as well as human rights research in militarized regions, while contending with illness that left me bedbound. Across the work, to be haunted is to live in an ongoing encounter with what will not let us rest, with what we face in the ongoing repetitions of violence in the afterlives of conquest, capital, coloniality. It felt necessary to write through some of the threads that intertwine our bodies with the world, with the political, with historical grief—to respond to the ghost as both the obstinate echo,

these five hundred years in our bones striated conquistas dragging the letters of the harrowed tongue into the geography of our marrow, down—from “prayer for the children who will be born with today’s daggers in their tomorrow eyes”
as well as a willful, living fury calling us into question.

INSPIRATION: Family stories and ephemera passed down, prophetic dreams and how we carry our dead, colonial archives, histories of science, cultural mythologies and childhood legends, art and music and photography, monster studies, human rights reports and newspaper headlines, testimonies from survivors of state violence and authoritarian regimes.

WRITER’S BLOCK REMEDY: I take walks or go to museums or read work by others—activities that draw me outward to listen and be in relation to the world around me, whether that be the sensory delight of pausing for a trail of flowers, or taking in new ideas through an art exhibition.

ADVICE: Writing an abstract that articulates what the collection is about can help to communicate your work to editors while allowing you to create a map for what else your manuscript is asking to become.

AGE: 38. RESIDENCE: Brooklyn, New York. JOB: I am finishing up my PhD in political theory. TIME SPENT WRITING THE BOOK: Three years. TIME SPENT FINDING A HOME FOR IT: Raspa, a queer Latinx journal and press founded by César Ramos, had invited me to publish a chapbook version of the book in 2014, but a whole confluence of things for which no one was to blame kept that from happening. I continued to build the manuscript, which came together in its current form at the end of 2017, and submitted it to the Andrés Montoya Poetry Prize. It was my sister, Chelsea, who dropped it at the post office, as I was too sick to leave my apartment the week of the deadline.
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Keith S. Wilson

FIELDNOTES ON ORDINARY LOVE Copper Canyon Press

You bankrupt the sun, underwater statue. Dark galaxy of faults, our bed
a garden of the littlest sighs of our waking. Our room, abstract.
—from “Aubade to Collapsed Star”

HOW IT BEGAN: At Callaloo, Gregory Pardlo challenged us to write the hardest poem we could write. So I started writing about love, which became heartbreak. And because of what’s happening on the news, that also became heartbreak for the world. I wanted to write through it.

INSPIRATION: I’ve always been indiscriminate about art: I would read either The Invisible Man by Wells or Invisible Man by Ellison. Comic books or video games or modernist art—nothing is more inspiring to me than someone who loves something so much that they can’t help but sing with it.

WRITER’S BLOCK REMEDY: Time. They say time heals all wounds, which is a lie, but it is true that no wound healed without time. I hope that given enough time, I will come to an epiphany, or someone will happen to teach me just the right something, or I’ll learn to let go. It used to be harder.

ADVICE: Being published is a call someone else makes. It’s hard to know what to do to please others, and it’s maybe contrary to the place your poetry comes from. But someone’s first book changed you. Know that there are people waiting for yours.

AGE: 36. RESIDENCE: Chicago. JOB: Adjunct professor at Spalding University and writing and design contract work in video games. TIME SPENT WRITING THE BOOK: The earliest publication in the book, “The Lost Quatrain of the Ballad of a Red Field,” was published in Tidal Basin Review in 2010. TIME SPENT FINDING A HOME FOR IT: I’ve been trying since I was sixteen, but I got real serious about it ten years ago. I was so used to getting generic rejection letters! A week after I had decided to scrap the entire book again, I got a voice mail from Michael Wiegers. As I was calling him back I remember thinking, “They definitely already rejected me, didn’t they?”
Fifteen years ago we published our first look at debut poets in an effort to brighten the spotlight on emerging poets. Every year since then we have featured ten to eighteen poets who have recently published their debut books—172 poets in total—and given them the space to offer advice and talk about how they wrote their books “word by word, line by line, poem by poem,” as Tyehimba Jess said in our first debut poets roundup, in 2005. Here are some highlights:

**ON GETTING UNSTUCK**

“When my own work is not coming along, I try to stop and recognize the people doing the same challenging, at times unforgiving, art—and I feel happy. I think it’s hard, in our day and age, not to think, ‘It’s me against the world,’ or, ‘I have to do this for my career because everyone else is hammering away and if I stop now, I will fall behind and be forgotten.’ But that’s a toxic and self-defeating gaze. I think we are more productive—even in stillness—when we can recognize one another, when we say to each other, ‘Thank you for doing this with me. Thank you for carrying on when I cannot.’” —Ocean Vuong (2017), whose debut, *Night Sky With Exit Wounds*, was published by Copper Canyon Press. In 2019 he published his first novel, *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous* (Penguin Press), and received a MacArthur “Genius” Fellowship.

“When I was at Harvard, Jamaica Kincaid once said in our workshop, ‘Write about that which most embarrasses you.’ I think that’s profoundly good advice. It’s so easy, isn’t it, to climb atop a soapbox and recite a poem about the ways in which we believe the world is fucked up? When I write that way, I’m certain all I’m doing is insulting my reader. Who, for example, doesn’t know the whole world is in cinders? And so I believe my work can be more effective, can reach deeper inside the reader, if I say, ‘It is I who feel profoundly fucked up,’ and then explore why meticulously. I like to use tenderness as a weapon, a seduction, a door to leave ajar so that my reader will walk inside the poem and feel safe, even in the face of profound historical horror.” —Robin Coste Lewis (2016), whose debut, *Voyage of the Sable Venus and Other Poems* (Knopf), won the 2015 National Book Award in Poetry.

**ON COMMUNITY**

“Humility and a desire for excellence are really important traits in a poet—not insecurity, but humility. Read a lot of poetry, and support fellow poets by buying books. Finally, try to remain positive about yourself, and be positive toward other poets. It’s so easy in this environment to think that everything related to poetry is a big conspiracy. True, some aspects of the poetry world can be sketchy, but there are still a lot of people in poetry who have integrity and believe in the integrity of the work. One can waste a lot of energy focusing on all the wrong things.” —Victoria Chang (2005), who spent ten years writing her debut, *Circle*, and submitted it to more than thirty contests before it was accepted by Southern Illinois University Press. Chang is now the author of five poetry collections, including *Obit*, forthcoming from Copper Canyon Press in 2020.

“Read five poems for every one poem that you write. You have to understand the broader landscape and community in which your work exists.” —Saeed Jones (2015), who, five years after publishing his debut poetry collection, *Prelude to Bruise*, with Coffee House Press, released his memoir, *How We Fight for Our Lives* (Simon & Schuster), which won the 2019 Kirkus Prize in Nonfiction.

“Be kind to yourself and to other poets. There are so many people in the world who would conspire against our joy, who would mistake our reverent wonder for idleness. Against everything, we have to protect our permeability to wonder. That’s the nucleus around which all interesting art orbits.” —Kaveh Akbar (2018), whose debut, *Calling a Wolf a Wolf*, was published by Alice James Books.
ON PATIENCE
“I’ve been reading this feature since it first appeared in 2005 and have noticed that, with very few exceptions, the more time a poet says she spent writing her book, the less time she seems to have had to spend convincing someone to publish it. So the first bit of advice I'd give is to tend to your craft, take as long as you need to write the best book you can, work hard until you are genuinely satisfied. Then send it out and hope for the best. Second, know that what’s meant for you will find you; what isn’t, won’t. It’s a waste of both time and energy worrying about where this person publishes or what that person wins. So-and-so’s success or lack thereof has nothing to do with the poems you need to write. Don’t hate, hustle.” —John Murillo (2011), who spent seven years writing his debut, *Up Jump the Boogie* (Cypher Books). His second book, *Kontemporary Amerikan Poetry*, is forthcoming from Four Way Books in 2020.

ON PUBLISHING
“Let people hear your work. Editors have approached me after hearing me read.” —Vievee Francis (2006), whose debut, *Blue-Tail Fly*, was published by Wayne State University Press. Francis’s third poetry collection, *Forest Primeval* (Northwestern University Press, 2015), won the 2016 Hurston/Wright Legacy Award for Poetry and the 2017 Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award.

“Ask yourself, ‘Which books do you love? Who is publishing them? Whose vision...works with yours? What is your ideal scenario?’ Remember that you have choices and that you have power—publishing is mutually beneficial, not just for you, but for the press, too. If you have questions, ask them.” —Aracelis Girmay (2007), the author of *Teeth* (Curbstone Press, 2007), *Kingdom Animalia* (BOA Editions, 2011), and *The Black Maria* (BOA Editions, 2016).

ON REJECTION
“If your manuscript keeps coming back to you, don’t be afraid to toss it out and start again. It’s scary, but it might prove exhilarating as well.” —Ada Limón (2006), who submitted her debut, *lucky wreck*, to at least fifteen contests over six years before Autumn House Press published it. Limón is the author of five poetry collections, most recently *The Carrying* (Milkweed Editions, 2018).

“The best advice I ever got was at an artist training from Creative Capital: If you aren’t getting rejected from 90 percent of the things you apply to, you aren’t aiming high enough.” —Alicia Jo Rabins (2016), the author of two books, most recently *Fruit Geode* (Augury Books, 2018).

ON WRITING AFTER THE DEBUT
“I am working hard now to try to get back to the kind of specific ignorance one writes from before the first book gets published: when you’re simply writing poem by poem because of some insistence that you have to; this poem must be written, alone, individual, not as a sequence necessarily, not because of some ‘theme’ or ‘project,’ but simply because it demands itself to be written, and for you to write and learn by it.” —Rickey Laurentiis (2016), author of *Boy With Thorn* (University of Pittsburgh Press).

ON THE BIG PICTURE
“I don’t have answers about ‘how to be an artist’; I’m not trying to make it sound like I do. But I do want to have that conversation. What do you want to do as a writer in the world? What do you see the arc of your writing life to be? How is your first book a launch to that arc? To discuss the book itself, the writers themselves—myself included—is a misdirection. Or as Forough Farrokhzad said: ‘Remember the flight / the bird will die.’” —Solmaz Sharif (2017), author of *Look* (Graywolf Press).

“Enjoy yourself, treat people well, don’t take writing too seriously, don’t take writing too lightly, make friends and loved ones and spend lots of time enjoying their company.” —Nick Demske (2011), author of *Nick Demske* (Fence Books).

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Say you’ve written a young adult novel and you think Emily van Beek is the right literary agent to represent your work. You’ve read her bio on the website for her agency, Folio Literary Management in New York City, and studied her recent book deals on Publishers Marketplace. You have assiduously followed her guidelines for unsolicited submissions, but what you may not realize as you press Send on your query letter is that van Beek will likely never see it unless her assistant, Elissa Alves, thinks the book is right for her boss.

Such is the quiet power of literary agent assistants, not just at Folio, but at most literary agencies, where these unheralded individuals handle the unglamorous but essential tasks of answering office telephones, tracking royalty payments, proofreading contracts—and, in many cases, vetting their boss’s unsolicited submissions.

For assistants like Alves, who is a recent graduate of Drew University in New Jersey, this last task can require a form of readerly ventriloquism as she sets aside her own literary sensibilities to find submissions that will fit well on van Beek’s list.

“I really have to distance my own taste from it because of course we don’t have the exact same taste, and I have to pretend as if I’m reading it with Emily’s taste,” Alves says. “So I know she loves a great sense of voice. I know she loves a sense of humor. She’s particularly looking for humorous middle-grade books right now, so that’s what I’m looking for, or anything that has a really great hook, perfect for a series for middle grade.”

While there is no one profile for literary agent assistants, most are in their twenties (Alves is twenty-six) and working in one of their first full-time jobs after college. Some attend a summer training program such as the Columbia Publishing Course at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, while others come to the job through a series of unpaid internships. On average, according to the job search site Glassdoor, they earn about $34,000 a year, which is very much an entry-level wage in New York City, one of the most expensive cities on the planet. And most assistants aspire to become literary agents themselves one day, which is one important
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reason writers ignore the assistant at their peril.

“We are—I wouldn’t say the backbone of the agency, but we’re definitely some important bone, maybe like a femur,” says Renée Jarvis, an assistant at the MacKenzie Wolf agency in New York City. “We’re super important, and we deal with a lot.”

What precisely an assistant has to deal with varies from agency to agency and from assistant to assistant, though in nearly all cases the job is principally administrative. At Folio, Alves splits her day in two, working from home in the mornings as an assistant to van Beek, then commuting to Folio’s Manhattan offices in the afternoon to assist the agency’s contracts director and office manager. At the start of her workday, Alves logs on to Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to update the social media feeds for Folio Jr., the children’s and young adult literature division of the agency. Once that’s finished, she opens her boss’s submission inbox to read the ten to twenty queries van Beek receives on a typical day.

With forty-two active clients, van Beek has a relatively full client list, Alves says, so of the roughly four hundred queries van Beek receives a month, she typically requests full manuscripts from only two or three writers, and even fewer will receive offers of representation. In fact, in the year Alves has been an assistant at Folio, she says she has seen van Beek take on six new clients, but none have come through unsolicited submissions.

Jarvis, on the other hand, who started at MacKenzie Wolf in early 2018, only recently began reading queries for one of the agency’s two partners, Gillian MacKenzie. At present Jarvis estimates that her job is about 85 percent administrative, with the remaining fraction devoted to assisting agents in making submissions to book editors.

Still, Jarvis sees her many back-office tasks as invaluable hands-on training for becoming an agent. It is essential, she says, for her to have a full grasp of the nitty-gritty details of the publishing business so that once she’s actively seeking clients of her own, she can rely on more than a simple gut reaction to a piece of writing when she’s deciding whether to take on a project.

“As I begin working with the queries and submissions, I will have more to report on,” she says. “It won’t just be about the content. I’ll have more to back up or to critique based on what I know about how the auction and the submissions and the pitches may have to go.”

This on-the-job training is in many ways the raison d’être of the agent assistant position. Literary agents work exclusively on commission, typically netting 15 percent of an author’s domestic book earnings, but a busy agent must perform a host of administrative tasks ranging from picking up the...
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phone to routing royalty payments that are key to keeping clients happy but take time and energy away from the income-generating work of hon- ing client manuscripts and pitching them to editors. Assistants take on much of this more mundane work in exchange for a paid apprenticeship in the agenting world. Ideally, over time, as assistants become acculturated to the business, their editorial respon-
sibilities grow until they are ready to take on writers themselves.

Aemilia Phillips, who has been working as an assistant at the Stuart Krichevsky Literary Agency in New York City for three years, is far enough along in her career that she has begun co-agenting clients with the agents she assists, Mackenzie Brady Watson and David Patterson. Phillips, who helps screen queries for the agency, says there’s no formal process for deciding which new writers will work with Watson or Patterson and which will stay with Phillips. “It’s not really a competitive thing,” she says. “If I read something and say, ‘I love this. I would love to be involved in it,’ most of the time they’re going to give the go-ahead, and it will be a very collaborative process.”

With each of the five writers she is co-agenting, Phillips has worked with the writers to shape and refine their books, and Watson and Patterson have stepped in to help her connect with ed-
itors once the manuscripts are ready for submission. “They will be co-agents on the project,” she says, “and their expertise is essential in terms of submitting and having the personal relationships with the editors.”

The apprenticeship model, which is prevalent at publishing houses as well, is not without its problems, notes Patterson, Phillips’s boss at the Krichevsky agency. Assistants typi-
cally arrive with a prestigious college degree and months of unpaid intern-
ships only to spend years more an-
swering phones and filing contracts at minimal pay. This is excellent training for an agenting career, but it can drive away applicants from less privileged backgrounds who may find it hard to stick it out for the years it can take to rise out of the assistant ranks and build a sustainable client list.

All of this contributes to the well-documented lack of diversity in the publishing industry, Patterson says. And while there are signs the industry is diversifying, especially in the assistant ranks, it remains to be seen how lasting those gains will be, given how long it can take for an assistant fresh out of college to earn enough to set down roots in New York City. “I do think there has been some progress, but the progress is far, far from complete,” Patterson says. “The question is not, Is the apprentice-level staff that’s been hired more inclusive than it used to be? The question is, Are those people still going to be working in book publishing in ten or twenty years?”

Patterson has seen firsthand how having a more racially diverse staff can influence the books he takes on. Patterson, whose mother is Puerto Rican, says he has been pleasantly surprised by how much Phillips, whose father is from Mexico, has helped him broaden his client list.

“I’ve wanted for quite some time to represent more Latinx writers,” he says, “and it’s been a slight challenge for me partly because I don’t think anyone sees my name online and thinks, ‘Oh, that’s someone who’s going to be eager to welcome me’ if they’re coming from that background. But it’s a real and sincere interest of mine, and because she and I share that and we read almost everything together, when Latino or Latina writers arrive, we can support each other.”

Jarvis, who is Antiguan American and from a working-class neighbor-
hood in Staten Island, New York, says she herself has witnessed the industry’s blind spots on issues of race and class. Jarvis vividly recalls an episode when she was applying for one of her early internships and wrote a scathing reader’s report on a novel the agency represented, which she thought was deeply racist. The book was ultimately
# Northwestern

## Litowitz MFA+MA

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<th>Renowned Faculty</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chris Abani</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eula Biss</td>
<td>• Living stipend $32,844</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brian Bouldrey</td>
<td>• Full tuition scholarship</td>
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<td>John Bresland</td>
<td>• Health insurance</td>
<td>Write and study at a university with graduate programs in other arts including music, theatre, writing for screen and stage, and dance, plus access to the literary and artistic communities in Chicago.</td>
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<td>Sheila Donohue</td>
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## Apply

in Poetry or Creative Nonfiction in fall 2020

**Upcoming application rotation**

- 2021 Creative Nonfiction or Fiction
- 2022 Fiction or Poetry
- 2023 Poetry or Creative Nonfiction
published unchanged, and Jarvis later found a review online that brought up all the points she had raised.

“That fortified my desire to become an agent because it was seen by so many eyes,” Jarvis says. “It was read by the agent, possibly the publishing board, by the editor over and over again, and not one of the things—that I had pointed out, nobody noticed they were racist.”

Today, with two years of practical experience under her belt, Jarvis is excited about the prospect of diving into the slush pile looking for authors and stories that reflect the people and places she grew up around. “Being from New York City, I’ve always been surrounded by people from a vast variety of backgrounds and histories and walks of life, so those are the stories that I’m interested in,” she says. “Whether it’s down the line when I’m working as an agent or even as I’m reading queries and submissions and helping out at the agency, I might be able to vouch for these people and for their experiences where there may be a lack of understanding.”

Not all assistants are as sure as Jarvis that they’re cut out for agenting, however. Being a literary agent is mainly a sales job, ideal for extroverts who like to schmooze and aren’t afraid to cold-call an editor to pitch a book. In her year at Folio Literary, Elissa Alves says she has found herself drawn more to her administrative work than to the client-facing side of agenting. “You want your agent to be an advocate for you, someone who is fierce and willing to negotiate, and I’m a little shier than that,” she says. “I enjoy the spreadsheets. I enjoy looking at the royalty statements. Paperwork is something I’ve always loved doing, which is crazy, I know, but still I enjoy it.”

Assistants who are keen to make the shift into full-time agenting can be a resource for aspiring writers. Many agencies now list their assistants on their websites, and many junior agents who have recently left the assistant ranks will name-check the agents who mentored them. This can be valuable information because assistants and junior agents tend to share literary tastes with their mentors and lean on them for help in reaching out to editors. If a highly esteemed agent is too busy with current clients to take on many new writers, a former assistant may have more time to work with a new writer and be able to tap the more senior agent’s contacts at publishing houses.

“I don’t think many literary agents’ assistants get into this business unless they’re looking to build a career,” says Phillips, “so writers shouldn’t be afraid to work with young literary agent assistants, even if they only have a client or two to their name, because we’re young and we want to make our way in the industry, and we have the time and space to work really hard and prioritize the writers we’re working with to create the best books.”

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**Welcoming Our Newest Debut Poets**

**Erou, Maya Phillips** (Fall 2019)

"...The difficult, perhaps selfish, repeatedly mourned dead father in 'Erou' competes with and sometimes merges into Phillips's scenes from Greek mythology...whose stark tableaus can echo those of Louise Glück."


**In an Invisible Glass Case Which Is Also a Frame, Julia Guez** (Fall 2019)

"In this direct and imaginative debut, Guez weaves disparate images to grapple with the stages of modern life...This expansive debut helps readers to see the world and the stages of life afresh."

*Publishers Weekly*

**Fantasia for the Man in Blue, Tommye Blount** (Spring 2020)

"We have waited a long time for a full collection of the evocative provocations of Tommye Blount to be released. Poem by poem Blount's first book has become one of the most anticipated books of poetry of his generation..."

Vievee Francis
New Titles

The Donner Party
By George Keithley
George Braziller, Inc.

“The Donner Party is one of the three or four finest book-length American poems ever written.”—Poetry. “Out of the western migration of the 1840s...Keithley has made a lean, taut narrative poem that moves with the speed and terseness of a killer shark.”—The New York Times. “Keithley’s account of the Donner tragedy is a major event in American letters.”—X.J. Kennedy.

Amanda Goes to Las Vegas
By Nancy Dick
www.worksbynancydick.com

David and Bathsheba
By Aida Bode
CreateSpace
David and Bathsheba has all the elements of a Shakespearean tragedy. Yet, this adaptation predates Shakespeare by a few thousand years. Aida Bode has written a vivid narrative that illuminates on the love and relationship of David, King of Israel, and Bathsheba, wife to one of David’s military leaders.

Lonely Voyagers
Images by Simon Blake; Text by Dalt Wonk
Luna Press
These collages are assembled from La Nature, a 19th century French magazine. Simon Blake meticulously dissects the illustrations with carbon scissors and surgical scalpels. He then pastes these pieces together to form new, imaginative pictures. “Word and image combine seamlessly to bring to life a fantastic world.”—David Gordon Green.

So Long As We Speak Their Names
By Ann Howells
Kelsay Books
These narrative poems offer a glimpse into the lives of watermen who risk their lives harvesting the diminishing bounty of Chesapeake Bay and the women and children who can only wait and pray for their safe return—another facet of southern culture.

Riding the Rainbow
By Trudy Kleckner
Friesen Press
This book explores a wide spectrum of universal experiences that have the power to unite or divide us as human beings. Kleckner's poems are rich with sensory imagery and emotion that connect readers with the heart and lead them to reflect, mourn, rejoice, wonder and embrace the adventure of being alive.

Savagery
By JC Mehta
Airlie Press
Savagery joins Mehta’s oeuvre, addressing what it means to be indigenous in today’s increasingly hostile, post-colonial America. Reflecting on self, place, and space, Savagery provides a lens (and mirror) into indigenous issues and disparities while also providing a constant offering of hope. These poems are raw and very, very necessary.
Cast Iron
By Cameron Cowan
Widgery Omnimedia
When Randy Carruth’s mother marries a new husband, Randy begins a life in a new family. All seems perfect until Randy finds a secret about his new Dad that ends in murder. After prison, Randy must rebuild his life and find forgiveness but neither is very easy to find.

www.thewidgeryreadingboutique.com

Capturing the High Priestess
By Dawn Leger
Lefora Publishing LLC
Book Three of the Casie Thornton Mystery Series begins with an explosion that destroys her detective boyfriend’s car as well as Casie’s last chance at an ordinary life. Since “Embracing the Fool,” her fresh start has turned into a rollercoaster ride, tracking down killers and battling a murderous mother-in-law. As the threats escalate, Casie must fight ancient Gypsy curses.

www.leforapublishing.com

I Asked the Wind: A Collection of Romantic Poetry
By Valerie Nifora
The Unapologetic Voice House
Heartfelt and beautiful poetry transports the reader into a world of sensuality, passion, desire and innocence. “This is a collection for the romantic in you, for you to share with your lover and for everyone who wants to have their breath taken away.” — Robert Robinson.

www.amazon.com/author/valerienifora

The Ice Meadows
By Edmund Burwell
Page Publishing
The story of one man, a priest and attorney, who battles the vindictive hierarchy of the Church and the bumbling incompetence of the medical profession to rescue his wife and son from a life of addiction.

www.amazon.com/author/irenezabytko

Three Raven Gate
By Brian R. Martens
McCaa Books, McCaa Publications
Three Raven Gate is the first book of poetry by Brian R. Martens. It encapsulates his years of study about the mystery of life. While offering no magic solutions to life, many of the well-tuned haiku and poems challenge us to pause and think.

www.brianmartens.com

The Shepherd of Lost Children
By Ronald W. Pies
Kindle Direct Publishing
Adam and Rebecca Levov have experienced the most painful loss any parents can experience, and their marriage is now in jeopardy. To make matters worse, Adam has had the bizarre experience of seeing his “double.” Their journey back to love and sanity brings the couple into the life of a young, traumatized orphan girl, who changes everything.

www.amazon.com

Once Removed
By Colette Sartor
University of Georgia Press
The women in the linked short story collection Once Removed carry the burdens imposed in the name of intimacy—the secrets kept, the lies told, the disputes initiated—as well as the joy that can still manage to triumph. For all these women, grief lies at the core of love.

www.amazon.com

Dusting for Prints
By Bonnie Roberts
Anne Pellech, Flownwords, Swansea, Wales
These paradoxical lines from the collection describe Dusting for Prints: “We search for What is Lost, / but never find it, / though it is still here, / as long as one fingerprint of Memory can be dusted and taped.”

www.amazon.com

Find Grace: Daily Comfort for Uncertain Times
By Eiman Al Zaabi
Balboa Press
Responding to the challenges of the modern world is an endurance event, not a sprint. It’s essential that we learn how to swim through the darkness to reach the light. In Find Grace, spiritual teacher Eiman Al Zaabi offers 365 inspirations to help us overcome anxiety and hopelessness, realize our true destiny, and make our contribution on planet Earth.

If you have a book to promote in the New Titles section, e-mail advertising@pw.org
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POETS & WRITERS MAGAZINE ANNOUNCES state, national, and international prizes in poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. We list only prizes of $1,000 or more, prizes of less than $1,000 that charge no entry fee, and prestigious nonmonetary awards. Applications and submissions for the following prizes are due shortly. Before submitting a manuscript, first contact the sponsoring organization for complete guidelines. When requesting information by mail, enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE). See Submission Calendar for deadlines arranged by date and the Anatomy of Awards for a closer look at the numbers behind Grants & Awards. For announcements of recently awarded prizes, see Recent Winners.

Deadlines

42 Miles Press

42 MILES POETRY AWARD
A prize of $1,000, publication by 42 Miles Press, and 50 author copies is given annually for a poetry collection. Current and former students of Indiana University in South Bend are ineligible. David Dodd Lee will judge. Submit a manuscript of 45 to 100 pages with a $25 entry fee by March 15. Visit the website for complete guidelines.
42 Miles Press, 42 Miles Poetry Award, Indiana University South Bend, English Department, 1700 Mishawaka Avenue, P.O. Box 7111, South Bend, IN 46634. 42milespress@gmail.com www.42milespress.com

92Y Unterberg Poetry Center

DISCOVERY POETRY PRIZES
Four prizes of $500 each and publication in the Paris Review Daily are given annually for a group of poems. Winners also receive lodging and travel expenses to give a reading at the 92nd Street Y in New York City in May. Poets who have not yet published a full-length poetry collection are eligible. Timothy Donnelly and Diana Marie Delgado will serve as preliminary judges; Jericho Brown, Paisley Rekdal, and Wendy Xu will serve as final judges. Submit a 10-page manuscript, including at least two unpublished poems and two poems that are one page in length, with a $15 entry fee by January 10. Visit the website for complete guidelines.
92Y Unterberg Poetry Center, Discovery Poetry Prizes, 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10128. www.92y.org/discovery

Academy of American Poets

AMBROGGIO PRIZE
A prize of $1,000 and publication by Bilingual Press/Editorial Bilingüe is given annually for a book of poetry originally written in Spanish by a living writer and translated into English. The poet and translator will split the prize. Pablo Medina will judge. Using only the online submission system, submit a poetry manuscript of 48 to 100 pages in the original Spanish along with the English translation by February 15. There is no entry fee. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

RAIZISS/DE PALCHI BOOK PRIZE
A fellowship of $10,000 is given biennially for a book of modern Italian poetry translated into English and published in the United States during the previous year. Maria Frank, Giorgio Mobilì, and Michael Palma will judge. Publishers may submit four copies of a book published in 2019 by February 15. Publishers may nominate one title or more. There is no entry fee. Visit the website for the required entry form and complete guidelines.

AIRLIE PRESS

A Prize of $1,000 and publication by Airlie Press is given annually for a poetry collection. The editors will judge. Using only the online submission system, submit a manuscript of 48 to 90 pages with a $25 entry fee by March 1. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (SEE RECENT WINNERS.)
Airlie Press, Airlie Prize, P.O. Box 68441, Portland, OR 97268. Jennifer Perrine, Editor. editors@airliepress.org www.airliepress.org

Alabama State Council on the Arts

LITERARY FELLOWSHIPS
Fellowships of $5,000 each are given annually to poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers who have lived in the state of Alabama for at least two years. Submit 10 to 20 pages of poetry or prose, a résumé, and a list of publications by March 1. There is no application fee. Visit the website for the required entry form and complete guidelines.
Alabama State Council on the Arts, Literary Fellowships, 201 Monroe Street, Suite 110, Montgomery, AL 36104. (334) 242-4076, ext. 236. Anne Kimzey, Contact. anne.kimzey@arts.alabama.gov www.arts.alabama.gov
American Short Fiction
AMERICAN SHORT(ER) FICTION PRIZE
A prize of $1,000 and publication in American Short Fiction is given annually for a piece of flash fiction. Deb Olin Unferth will judge. Using only the online submission system, submit up to three stories of no more than 1,000 words each with a $17 entry fee by February 1. All entries are considered for publication. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

American Short Fiction, American Short(er) Fiction Prize, P.O. Box 4152, Austin, TX 78765. editors@americanshortfiction.org americanshortfiction.org

Association of Writers & Writing Programs
AWARD SERIES
Two prizes of $5,500 each and publication by a participating press are given annually for a poetry collection and a short story collection. In addition, two prizes of $2,500 each and publication by a participating press are given annually for a novel and a book of creative nonfiction. For the Donald Hall Prize for Poetry, submit a manuscript of at least 48 pages; University of Pittsburgh Press will publish the winning collection. For the Grace Paley Prize for Short Fiction, submit a manuscript of 150 to 300 pages; University of Massachusetts Press will publish the winning collection. For the AWP Prize for the Novel, submit a manuscript of at least 60,000 words; New Issues Press will publish the winning novel. For the AWP Prize for Creative Nonfiction, submit an essay collection or memoir of 150 to 300 pages; University of Georgia Press will publish the winning book. Using only the online submission system, submit a manuscript with a $30 entry fee ($20 for AWP members) by February 29. Visit the website for the required entry form and complete guidelines.

(SEE RECENT WINNERS.)

Association of Writers & Writing Programs, Award Series, 5700 Rivertech Court, Suite 225, Riverdale Park, MD 20737. (301) 226-9710. www.awpwriter.org/contests

Austin Community College
BALCONES PRIZES
Two prizes of $1,500 each are given annually for a poetry collection and a book of fiction published during the previous year. Authors and publishers may submit three copies of a book published in 2019 (poetry collections must be at least 42 pages) by January 31. The entry fee is $25 for poetry and $30 for fiction. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Austin Community College, Balcones Prizes, Poetry and Fiction Prizes, Austin Community College, 6101 Airport Boulevard, Austin, TX 78752. balcones@austincc.edu sites.austincc.edu/crw/balcones-prizes

Autumn House Press
RISING WRITER CONTEST
A prize of $1,000 and publication by Autumn House Press is given annually for a debut poetry collection by a writer age 33 or younger. Yona Harvey will judge. Submit a manuscript of 50 to 70 pages with a $25 entry fee by January 31. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

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Autumn House Press, Rising Writer Contest, 5530 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15206. (412) 362-2665. info@autumnhouse.org www.autumnhouse.org

Bauhan Publishing
MONADNOCK ESSAY COLLECTION PRIZE
A prize of $1,000, publication by Bauhan Publishing, and 50 author copies is given annually for an essay collection. Aine Greaney will judge. Submit a manuscript of 50,000 to 60,000 words with a $25 entry fee by January 31. Visit the website for complete guidelines.
Bauhan Publishing, Monadnock Essay Collection Prize, P.O. Box 117, Peterborough, NH 03458. www.bauhanpublishing.com

Binghamton University
BOOK AWARDS
Two prizes of $1,000 each are given annually for books of poetry and fiction published during the previous year. The Milt Kessler Poetry Book Award is given for a poetry collection of at least 48 pages. The John Gardner Fiction Book Award is given for a novel or a short story collection. Publishers or authors may submit two copies of books published in 2019 by February 1. There is no entry fee. Visit the website for the required entry form and complete guidelines.
Binghamton University, Book Awards, Creative Writing Program, Department of English, General Literature, and Rhetoric, Library North Room 1149, Vestal Parkway East, P.O. Box 6000, Binghamton, NY 13902. Maria Mazziotti Gillan, Director. mgillian@mail.binghamton.edu www.binghamton.edu/english/creative-writing/binghamton-center-for-writers/book-awards.html

Black Caucus of the American Library Association
SELF-PUBLISHING LITERARY AWARDS
Two prizes of $500 each are given annually for a poetry e-book and a fiction e-book by an African American writer self-published in the United States during the previous year. The awards honor books that depict the “cultural, historical, and sociopolitical aspects of the Black Diaspora.” Using only the online submission system, submit an e-book self-published in 2019 by February 28. There is no entry fee. Visit the website for complete guidelines.
Black Caucus of the American Library Association, Self-Publishing Literary Awards, Suffolk Public Library, 2000 Bennetts Creek Park Road, Suffolk, VA 23435. Tiffany Duck, Chair. tiffany.duck3@gmail.com bcala.librariescreate.com/bcalaz2019

Black Lawrence Press
BIG MOOSE PRIZE
A prize of $1,000, publication by Black Lawrence Press, and 10 author copies is given annually for a novel. The contest is open to traditional novels “as well as novels-in-stories, novels-in-poems, or other hybrid forms that contain within them the spirit of a novel.” The editors will judge. Using only the online submission system, submit a manuscript of 90 to 1,000 pages with a $25 entry fee by January 31. All entries are considered for publication. Visit the website for complete guidelines.
(SEE RECENT WINNERS.)
Black Lawrence Press, Big Moose Prize, 279 Claremont Avenue, Mount Vernon, NY 10552. (412) 559-6649. Diane Goettel, Executive Editor. diane@blacklawrencepress.com

2019 Omnidawn 1st/2nd Book Prize
Judged by Dawn Lundy Martin
Nathalie Khankan
quiet orient riot

The Finalists (in alphabetical order by last name) are:

Tracy Fuad
Ranya, Iraq

Kevin Holden
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Ethan Plau
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Broc Rossell
Singapore

Lisa Wells,
Seattle, Washington

Upcoming Omnidawn Poetry Contests

$3,000 Omnidawn 1st/2nd Book Prize
Judge: Jericho Brown
Fee: $27 Nov 1, 2019–Feb 18, 2020

$1,000 Single Poem Broadside
Judge: Jennifer Cheng
Fee: $10 Mar 1–Apr 13, 2020

Postal & online submissions—For details visit: www.omnidawn.com
www.blacklawrence.com/submissions-and-contests/the-big-moose-prize

**Broadside Lotus Press**

**NAOMI LONG MADGETT POETRY AWARD**
A prize of $500 and publication by Broadside Lotus Press is given annually for a poetry collection by an African American poet. Submit two copies of a manuscript of 60 to 90 pages by March 1. There is no entry fee. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Broadside Lotus Press, Naomi Long Madgett Poetry Award, c/o Gloria House, 8300 East Jefferson Avenue #504, Detroit, MI 48214. (313) 736-5338. broadsidelotus@gmail.com www.broadsidelotuspress.org

**Caine Prize for African Writing**
A prize of £10,000 (approximately $12,600) is given annually for a previously published short story by an African writer. Shortlisted candidates will receive £500 (approximately $550). Writers who were born in Africa, who are African residents, or who have a parent who is African by birth or nationality are eligible. The winner and shortlisted writers will be invited to participate in workshops in Africa and London. Publishers may submit six copies of a story between 3,000 and 10,000 words published after January 31, 2015, via postal mail by January 31. There is no entry fee. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (See recent winners.)

Caine Prize for African Writing, 51 Southwark Street, London SE1 1RU, England. info@caineprize.com www.caineprize.com

**Center for Fiction**

**NEW YORK CITY EMERGING WRITERS FELLOWSHIP**
Nine fellowships of $5,000 each, membership to the Center for Fiction in New York City, and access to the Writers Studio writing space at the center are given annually to fiction writers living in New York City who have not yet published a book of fiction. Winners also have the opportunity to meet with editors and agents who represent new writers. Students enrolled in a degree-granting program or who are currently under contract with a publisher for a work of fiction are ineligible. Submit a short story or novel excerpt of up to 7,500 words, a résumé, and proof of New York City residency by February 14. There is no application fee. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Center for Fiction, New York City Emerging Writers Fellowship, 15 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11217. Thierry Kehou, Writing Programs Manager. www.centerforfiction.org

**Chattahoochee Review**

**LAMAR YORK PRIZES**
Two prizes of $1,000 each and publication in *Chattahoochee Review* are given annually for a short story and an essay. Using only the online submission system, submit a story or essay of up to 6,000 words with an $18 entry fee, which includes a subscription to *Chattahoochee Review*, by January 31. All entries are considered for publication. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Chattahoochee Review, Lamar York Prizes, Georgia State University Perimeter College, 555 North Indian Creek Drive, Clarkston, GA 30021. Anna Schachner, Editor. tcr@gsu.edu chattahoocheereview.gsu.edu

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**GRANTS & AWARDS**

**Deadlines**

**P O E T S  &  W R I T E R S**

**Chicago Tribune**

**NELSON ALGREN SHORT STORY AWARD**

A prize of $3,500 is given annually for a short story. Using only the online submission system, submit a story of up to 8,000 words by February 1. There is no entry fee. All entries are considered for publication. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

*(SEE RECENT WINNERS.)*

*Chicago Tribune*, Nelson Algren Short Story Award, 160 North Stetson Avenue, Chicago, IL 60601. algren.submitable.com

**Colgate University**

**OLIVE B. O’CONNOR FELLOWSHIPS**

Two nine-month residencies at Colgate University, including a stipend of $42,745, health benefits, and travel expenses, are given annually to poets, fiction writers, or nonfiction writers. The 2020–2021 fellowships will be given to a poet and a nonfiction writer working on their first books. Each fellow will teach one creative writing course per semester and give a public reading. Writers who have recently completed an MFA, MA, or PhD in creative writing are eligible. Using only the online submission system, submit up to 20 pages of poetry or 30 pages of prose, a résumé, and three letters of recommendation by February 15. There is no application fee. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Colgate University, Olive B. O’Connor Fellowships, English Department, 13 Oak Drive, Hamilton, NY 13346.

www.colgate.edu/academics/departments-and-programs/english/creative-writing-fellows

**Colorado Review**

**NELLIGAN PRIZE**

A prize of $2,000 and publication in Colorado Review is given annually for a short story. Lori Ostlund will judge. Submit a story between 2,500 and 12,500 words with a $15 entry fee ($17 for online submissions) by March 14. All entries are considered for publication. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

*Colorado Review*, Nelligan Prize, Colorado State University, 9105 Campus Delivery, Fort Collins, CO 80523. (970) 491-5449. o’connor@colostate.edu coloradoreview.colostate.edu/nelligan-prize

**Crazyhorse**

**LITERARY PRIZES**

Three prizes of $2,000 each and publication in Crazyhorse are given annually for a poem, a short story, and an essay. Cyrus Cassells will judge in poetry, Janel Brinkley will judge in fiction, and Sue William Silverman will judge in nonfiction. Using only the online submission system, submit up to three poems or a story or essay of up to 25 pages with a $20 entry fee, which includes a subscription to Crazyhorse, by January 31. All entries are considered for publication. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

*Crazyhorse*, Literary Prizes, College of Charleston, English Department, 66 George Street, Charleston, SC 29424. crazyhorse.cofc.edu

**Fish Publishing**

**FLASH FICTION PRIZE**

A prize of €1,000 (approximately $1,100) and publication in the Fish Publishing anthology is given annually for a short story. Tania Hershman will judge. Submit a story of up to 300 words with a €14 (approximately $15) entry fee by
**GRANTS & AWARDS**

**Deadlines**
February 28. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

**SHORT MEMOIR PRIZE**
A prize of €1,000 (approximately $1,100) and publication in the Fish Publishing anthology is given annually for a short memoir. David Shields will judge. Submit a memoir of up to 4,000 words with a €17 (approximately $19) entry fee for online entries or €19 (approximately $21) for postal entries by January 31. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Fish Publishing, Durrus, Bantry, County Cork, Ireland. Clem Cairns, Editor.
info@fishpublishing.com
www.fishpublishing.com

**Furious Flower Poetry Center**
**FURIOUS FLOWER POETRY PRIZE**
A prize of $1,000 and publication in the literary journal of Illinois State University, is given annually for a group of poems. The winner also receives accommodations and a $500 honorarium to give a reading at James Madison University. Poets who have published no more than one collection of poetry are eligible. Kei Miller will judge. Using only the online submission system, submit three poems exploring Black themes totaling no more than six pages with a $15 entry fee by February 10. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Furious Flower Poetry Center, Furious Flower Poetry Prize, James Madison University, 500 Cardinal Drive, MSC 3802, Harrisonburg, VA 22807.
www.jmu.edu/furiousflower/poetryprize

Hidden River Arts
**WILLOW RUN POETRY BOOK AWARD**
A prize of $1,000 and publication by Hidden River Press is given annually for a poetry collection. Using only the online submission system, submit a manuscript of 75 to 100 pages with a $20 entry fee by February 15. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

(SEE RECENT WINNERS.)

Hidden River Arts, P.O. Box 63927, Philadelphia, PA 19147. (610) 764-0813. Debra Leigh Scott, Founding Director.
hiddenriverarts@gmail.com
hiddenriverartssubmissions.submittable.com

**ELUDIA AWARD**
A prize of $1,000 and publication by Sowilo Press is given annually for a first book of fiction by a woman writer over the age of 40. Submit a story collection or novel of any length, a synopsis, an outline of the book, and a résumé with a $20 entry fee by March 15. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

(SEE RECENT WINNERS.)

Hidden River Arts, P.O. Box 63927, Philadelphia, PA 19147. (610) 764-0813. Debra Leigh Scott, Founding Director.
hiddenriverarts@gmail.com
hiddenriverartssubmissions.submittable.com

**Hippocrates Prize**
**PRIZES FOR POETRY AND MEDICINE**
A prize of £1,000 (approximately $1,260) and publication in the Hippocrates Prize anthology and on the website is given annually for a single poem on a medical theme. A prize of £1,000 is also given for a single poem on a medical theme written by a health professional. Submit a poem of up to 50 lines with a $10 entry fee by February 14. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Hippocrates Prize, Prizes for Poetry and Medicine, 37 Newbold Terrace East, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV32 4EY, England. hippocrates.poetry@gmail.com
www.hippocrates-poetry.org

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**Writing Workshop:** July 6 - 13, 2020

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Knopf © Little, Brown & Company © Riverhead Books © Santa Monica Review © ZYZZYVA and more

www.communityofwriters.org
Hunger Mountain
LITERARY PRIZES
Three prizes of $1,000 each and publication on the Hunger Mountain website are given annually for a poem, a short story, and an essay. Submit up to three poems or a story or essay of up to 10,000 words with a $20 entry fee by March 1. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (SEE RECENT WINNERS.)
Hunger Mountain, Literary Prizes, Vermont College of Fine Arts, 36 College Street, Montpelier, VT 05602. hungermtn@vcfa.edu www.hungermtn.org/submit-contests

Iowa Review
IOWA REVIEW AWARDS
Three prizes of $1,500 each and publication in Iowa Review are given annually for works of poetry, fiction, and nonfiction. Stephanie Burt will judge in poetry, Lan Samantha Chang will judge in fiction, and Leslie Jamison will judge in nonfiction. Using only the online submission system, submit up to 10 pages of poetry or up to 25 pages of prose with a $20 entry fee by January 31. All entries are considered for publication. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (SEE RECENT WINNERS.)
Iowa Review, Iowa Review Awards, University of Iowa, 308 English-Philosophy Building, Iowa City, IA 52242. (319) 335-0462. Harilaos Stecopoulos, Editor. iowa-review@uiowa.edu iowareview.org/rules

James Jones Literary Society
FIRST NOVEL FELLOWSHIP
A prize of $10,000 is given annually for a novel-in-progress by a U.S. writer who has not published a novel. A selection from the winning work will be published in Provincetown Arts. Two runners-up will each receive $1,000. Submit the first 50 pages of a novel-in-progress and a two-page outline with a $30 application fee ($33 for electronic submissions) by March 15. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (SEE RECENT WINNERS.)
James Jones Literary Society, First Novel Fellowship, Wilkes University, Creative Writing Program, 84 West South Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18766. Bonnie Culver, Program Director. jamesjonesfirstnovel@wilkes.edu www.wilkes.edu/pages/1159.asp

Little Tokyo Historical Society
SHORT STORY CONTEST
A prize of $500 and publication in Rafu Shimpo and on the Discover Nikkei website is given annually for a short story that takes place in the Little Tokyo district of Los Angeles. Submit a story of up to 2,500 words via e-mail by January 31. There is no entry fee. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (SEE RECENT WINNERS.)
Little Tokyo Historical Society, Short Story Contest, 319 East Second Street #203, Los Angeles, CA 90012. imaginelittletokyo@gmail.com www.littletokyohs.org

Mad Creek Books
JOURNAL NON/FICTION COLLECTION PRIZE
A prize of $1,500 and publication by Mad Creek Books, the trade imprint of Ohio State University Press, is given annually for a collection of short prose. Michelle Herman will judge. Using only the online submission system, submit a collection of short stories, essays, or novellas (or a combination thereof) of 150 to 350 pages with a $25 entry fee, which includes a subscription to the Journal,
Deadlines from February 1 to March 1. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Mad Creek Books, Journal Non/Fiction Collection Prize, c/o Journal, Ohio State University, English Department, 164 Anne and John Glenn Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210. prize@thejournalmag.org thejournalmag.org/book-prizes/prose-prize

**Masters Review**

**SHORT STORY AWARD FOR NEW WRITERS**

A prize of $3,000 and publication in *Masters Review* is given twice yearly for a short story by an emerging writer. The winning story will also be reviewed by a select group of literary agents. Writers who have published a book with a circulation of 5,000 or more copies are ineligible. Submit a story of up to 6,000 words with a $20 entry fee by January 31. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

*Masters Review*, Short Story Award for New Writers, 70 SW Century Drive, Suite 100442, Bend, OR 97702. contact@mastersreview.com mastersreview.com

**Milkweed Editions**

**BALLARD SPAHR PRIZE FOR POETRY**

A prize of $10,000 and publication by *Milkweed* is given annually for a poetry collection by a poet currently residing in Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, or Wisconsin. Submit a poetry manuscript of at least 48 pages by February 14. There is no entry fee. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

*Milkweed Editions, Ballard Spahr Prize for Poetry, 1011 Washington Avenue South, Open Book Building, Suite 300, Minneapolis, MN 55415. (612) 215-2553. Lee Oglesby, Managing Editor. lee_oglesby@milkweed.org milkweed.org/ballard-spahr-prize-for-poetry

**Mississippi Arts Commission**

**LITERARY ARTIST FELLOWSHIPS**

Grants of up to $5,000 each are given in alternating years to Mississippi poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers. This year the fellowships will be offered in poetry and fiction. Applicants must be permanent residents of Mississippi at the time of application and through the duration of the grant. Students enrolled full-time in a degree-granting program are ineligible. Using only the online submission system, submit 15 to 20 pages of poetry and fiction written in the past three years, a résumé, a brief biography, and a writer’s statement between February 1 and March 1. There is no application fee. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (See Recent Winners.)

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www.wwcmfa.org
Mississippi Arts Commission, Literary Artist Fellowships, 501 North West Street, Woolfolk Building, Suite 1101A, Jackson, MS 39201. (601) 359-6030. Kristen Brandt, Contact. kbrandt@arts.ms.gov arts.ms.gov/grants/grants-for-individuals/artist-fellowships

Money for Women/Barbara Deming Memorial Fund

INDIVIDUAL ARTIST GRANTS FOR WOMEN
Grants of up to $1,500 each are given in alternating years to feminist poets, fiction writers, and nonfiction writers who are citizens of the United States or Canada. The current round of grants will be awarded to fiction writers and mixed genre writers working in text and image. Using only the online submission system, submit a sample of 10 to 15 pages of fiction or text and images, a statement regarding interest in receiving support from a feminist fund, a project description, a budget, and a résumé with a $25 application fee by January 31. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Money for Women/Barbara Deming Memorial Fund, Individual Artist Grants for Women, P.O. Box 717, Bearsville, NY 12409. deming.fund@gmail.com demingfund.org

Mudfish

MUDFISH POETRY PRIZE
A prize of $1,200 and publication in Mudfish is given annually for a single poem. Erica Jong will judge. Submit up to three poems of any length with a $20 entry fee ($3 for each additional poem) by March 15. All entries are considered for publication. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Mudfish, Mudfish Poetry Prize, 184 Franklin Street, Ground Floor, New York, NY 10013. Jill Hoffman, Editor. www.mudfish.org

National Poetry Series

OPEN COMPETITION
Five prizes of $10,000 each and publication by participating trade, university, or small press publishers are given annually for poetry collections. Publishers include Beacon Press, Ecco, Milkweed Editions, Penguin Books, and University of Georgia Press. Using only the online submission system, submit a manuscript of at least 64 pages with a $35 entry fee by February 28. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

National Poetry Series, Open Competition, 57 Mountain Avenue, Princeton, NJ 08540. www.nationalpoetryseries.org

New American Press

POETRY PRIZE
A prize of $1,200 and publication by New American Press is given annually for a book of poetry. Corey Van Landingham will judge. Using only the online submission system, submit a manuscript of at least 48 pages with a $20 entry fee by January 15. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

New American Press, Poetry Prize, P.O. Box 1094, Grafton, WI 53024. David Bowen, Executive Editor. david@newamericanpress.com www.newamericanpress.com/contests

New Millennium Writings

NEW MILLENNIUM AWARDS
Four prizes of $1,000 each and publication in New Millennium Writings are given twice yearly for a poem, a short

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**POETRY BY THE SEA**

May 19–22, 2020
Madison, CT @ The Mercy Center

Keynote Speaker: Marilyn Nelson

Spotlight Readers: Chad Abushanab, Angela Alaimo O’Donnell, Micheal O’Siadhail

Workshop Faculty: Dan Albergotti, Austin Allen, Melissa Balmain, Barbara Crooker, Anna M. Evans, Allison Joseph, Joshua Mehigan, Matt Miller, Anna Lena Phillips Bell, Clare Rossini, Marilyn L. Taylor, Keith S. Wilson

Director: Kim Bridgford

www.poetrybythesea.org

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story, a work of flash fiction, and a work of creative nonfiction. Previously unpublished works or works that have appeared in a journal with a circulation of under 5,000 are eligible. Alexis Williams Carr and Don Williams will judge. Submit up to three poems totaling no more than five pages, a work of fiction or creative nonfiction of up to 6,000 words, or a work of flash fiction of up to 1,000 words with a $20 entry fee by January 31. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

New Millennium Writings, New Millennium Awards, 4021 Garden Drive, Knoxville, TN 37918. Alexis Williams Carr, Editor. hello@newmillenniumwritings.org www.newmillenniumwritings.org

North Carolina Writers’ Network
THOMAS WOLFE FICTION PRIZE
A prize of $1,000 is given annually for a short story. The winning story will also be considered for publication in Thomas Wolfe Review. Randall Kenan will judge. Submit two copies of a story of up to 3,000 words with a $25 entry fee ($15 for NCWN members) by January 30. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Omnidawn Publishing
FIRST/SECOND POETRY BOOK PRIZE
A prize of $3,000, publication by Omnidawn Publishing, and 100 author copies is given annually for a first or second poetry collection. Jericho Brown will judge. Submit a manuscript of 40 to 120 pages with a $27 entry fee ($30 to receive a book from the Omnidawn catalogue) by February 18. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Omnidawn Publishing, First/Second Book Prize, 1632 Elm Avenue, Richmond, CA 94805. (510) 237-5472. Rusty Morrison and Ken Keegan, Coeditors. submissions@omnidawn.com www.omnidawn.com/contest

Passaic County Community College
ALLEN GINSBERG POETRY AWARD
A prize of $1,000 and publication in Paterson Literary Review is given annually for a single poem. Submit three copies of up to five poems of no more than two pages each with an $18 entry fee by February 1. All entries are considered for publication. Visit the website for the required entry form and complete guidelines.

PATERSON POETRY PRIZE
A prize of $1,000 is given annually for a book of poetry published in the previous year. The winning poet is expected to participate in an awards ceremony and give a reading at the Poetry Center in Paterson, New Jersey. Books of at least 48 pages are eligible. Publishers may submit two copies of books published in 2019 by February 1. There is no entry fee. Visit the website for the required entry form and complete guidelines.

Passaic County Community College, Poetry Center, 1 College Boulevard, Paterson, NJ 07505. (973) 684-6555. Maria Mazziotti Gillan, Executive Director.

Fred Leebron
Director, Advanced Novel

Pinckney Benedict
Multi-genre

Rachel Ekstrom
Agent, Fiction/Nonfiction

Barbara Jones
Editor, Fiction/Memoir

Mesha Maren
Fiction

Jim McKean
Nonfiction

Thorpe Moeckel
Poetry

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**Persea Books**

**LEXI RUDNITSKY EDITOR’S CHOICE AWARD**

A prize of $2,000 and publication by Persea Books is given annually for a poetry collection by a U.S. poet who has published at least one book of poetry. Using only the online submission system, submit a manuscript of at least 40 pages with a $30 entry fee by March 7. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Persea Books, Lexi Rudnitsky Editor’s Choice Award, 90 Broad Street, Suite 2100, New York, NY 10004. (212) 260-9256. Gabriel Fried, Poetry Editor. info@perseabooks.com

**Prairie Schooner BOOK PRIZES**

Two prizes of $3,000 each and publication by University of Nebraska Press are given annually for a poetry collection and a short story collection. An editorial board will select finalists; Kwame Dawes will serve as the final judge. Submit a poetry manuscript of at least 50 pages or a fiction manuscript of at least 150 pages with a $25 entry fee between January 15 and March 15. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Prairie Schooner, Book Prizes, Attn: Fiction or Poetry, 110 Andrews Hall, Lincoln, NE 68588. (402) 472-0911. Jamaica Baldwin, Book Prize Coordinator. pbsbookprize@unl.edu

**Red Hen Press**

**WOMEN’S PROSE PRIZE**

A prize of $1,000 and publication by Red Hen Press is given annually for a book of fiction or nonfiction by a woman. Martha Cooley will judge. Using only the online submission system, submit a story or essay collection, a novel, or a memoir of 45,000 to 80,000 words with a $25 entry fee by February 28. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (See recent winners.)

Red Hen Press, Women’s Prose Prize, P.O. Box 40820, Pasadena, CA 91114. (626) 406-1203. Rebeccah Sanhueza, Editorial Assistant. editorial@redhen.org

**Regal House Publishing**

**TERRY J. COX POETRY AWARD**

A prize of $1,000 and publication by Regal House Publishing will be given annually for a poetry collection. Peter Schmitt and the editors will judge. Submit a manuscript of 48 to 100 pages with a $25 entry fee by January 31. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (See recent winners.)

Regal House Publishing, Terry J. Cox Poetry Award, 4718 Longhill Lane, Raleigh, NC 27612. Jaynie Royal, Editor in Chief. regalhousepublishing.com

**Robinson Jeffers Tor House Foundation**

**POETRY PRIZE**

A prize of $1,000 is given annually for a single poem. Marie Howe will judge. Submit up to three poems of no more than three pages each with a $10 entry fee by March 14. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Robinson Jeffers Tor House Foundation, Poetry Prize, P.O. Box 223240, Carmel, CA 93922. (831) 624-1813. Elliot Ruchowitz-Roberts, Coordinator.
GRANTS & AWARDS

Ruminate
WILLIAM VAN DYKE SHORT STORY PRIZE
A prize of $1,500 and publication in Ruminate is given annually for a short story. Using only the online submission system, submit a story of up to 5,500 words with a $20 entry fee, which includes a copy of the prize issue, by February 15. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (See recent winners.)

editor@ruminatemagazine.org
www.ruminatemagazine.org

Salem State University
CLAIRES KEYES POETRY AWARD
A prize of $1,000 and publication in Soundings East is given annually for a group of poems. Erika Meitner will judge. Submit 8 to 10 pages of poetry (no more than one poem per page) with a $10 entry fee ($15 for a subscription to Soundings East) by February 15. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Salem State University, Claire Keyses Poetry Award, English Department, 352 Lafayette Street, Salem, MA 01970. Kevin Carey, Advisory Editor.
kcarey@salemstate.edu
www.salemstate.edu/campus-life/arts/creative-writing/soundings-east

Sarabande Books
MORTON AND MCCARTHY PRIZES
Two prizes of $2,000 each and publication by Sarabande Books are given annually for collections of poetry and fiction. For the Kathryn A. Morton Prize in Poetry, submit a poetry collection of at least 48 pages with a $29 entry fee by February 15. For the Mary McCarthy Prize in Short Fiction, submit a collection of stories or novellas or a short novel of 150 to 250 pages with a $29 entry fee by February 15. Alberto Ríos will judge in poetry and Alice Sebold will judge in fiction. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Sarabande Books, Morton and McCarthy Prizes, 822 East Market Street, Louisville, KY 40206.
info@sarabandebooks.org
www.sarabandebooks.org

Schaffner Press
NICHOLAS SCHAFFNER AWARD FOR MUSIC IN LITERATURE
A prize of $1,000 and publication by Schaffner Press is given annually for a poetry collection, a novel, a short story collection, an essay collection, or a memoir that “deals in some way with the subject of music and its influence.” Submit a poetry collection of approximately 60 pages, a short story collection of 50,000 to 80,000 words, or a novel, memoir, or essay collection of 75,000 to 100,000 words with a $25 entry fee by January 31. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Schaffner Press, Nicholas Schaffner Award for Music in Literature, P.O. Box 41567, Tucson, AZ 85717.
www.schaffnerawards.com

Selected Shorts
STELLA KUPFERBERG MEMORIAL SHORT STORY PRIZE
A prize of $1,000 and tuition for a 10-week writing class through New York City’s Gotham Writers Workshop is given annually for a short story. The winning work will be published in Electric Literature and recorded.
live at a Selected Shorts performance at Symphony Space in New York City. Nicole Chung will judge. Using only the online submission system, submit a story of up to 750 words with a $25 entry fee by March 1. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Selected Shorts, Stella Kupferberg Memorial Short Story Prize, c/o Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, New York, NY 10025. (212) 864-1414, ext. 295. Vivienne Woodward, Producer for Literary Programs. shorts@symphonyspace.org

Selected Shorts, Stella Kupferberg Memorial Short Story Prize, c/o Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, New York, NY 10025. (212) 864-1414, ext. 295. Vivienne Woodward, Producer for Literary Programs. shorts@symphonyspace.org

Sixfold
SHORT STORY AND POETRY AWARDS
Two prizes of $1,000 each and publication in Sixfold are given quarterly for a group of poems and a short story. Using only the online submission system, submit up to five poems totaling no more than 10 pages or up to 20 pages of prose with a $3 entry fee by January 24. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Sixfold, Short Story and Poetry Awards, 10 Concord Ridge Road, Newtown, CT 06470. (203) 491-0242. Garrett Doherty, Publisher. sixfold@sixfold.org

Southern Illinois University
DEVIL’S KITCHEN READING AWARDS
Three prizes of $1,000 each are given annually for a poetry collection, a book of fiction, and a book of creative nonfiction published in the previous year. Each winner will also receive an all-expenses paid trip to give a reading at the Devil’s Kitchen Fall Literary Festival at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. Authors or publishers may submit a poetry collection, novel, novella, short story or essay collection, or memoir published in 2019 along with a brief author bio, including publication history, and a $30 entry fee by February 8. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (See Recent Winners.)

Southern Illinois University, Devil’s Kitchen Reading Awards, English Department, Mail Code 4503, 1000 Faner Drive, Carbondale, IL 62901. www.grassroots.siuc.edu/dkawards.html

Stadler Center for Poetry & Literary Arts
PHILIP ROTH RESIDENCIES
Two four-month residencies, which include a stipend of $5,000 each, at the Stadler Center for Poetry at Bucknell University are given annually to fiction and nonfiction writers working on a first or second book. Writers over the age of 21 who are not enrolled in a college or university are eligible. Using only the online submission system, submit up to

Southern Indiana Review
MICHAEL WATERS POETRY PRIZE
A prize of $4,000 and publication by Southern Indiana Review Press is given annually for a poetry collection. Michael Waters will judge. Submit up to 80 pages of poetry (no more than one poem per page) with a $35 entry fee by February 3. All entries are considered for publication. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (See Recent Winners.)

Southern Indiana Review, Michael Waters Poetry Prize, University of Southern Indiana, 8600 University Boulevard, Evansville, IN 47712. (812) 228-5145. Ron Mitchell, Editor. sir.contest@usi.edu

www.usi.edu/sir/awards-contests
Deadlines

20 pages of prose, a curriculum vitae, and three letters of recommendation by February 1. There is no application fee. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (See recent winners.)

Stadler Center for Poetry & Literary Arts, Philip Roth Residencies, Bucknell University, Bucknell Hall, 1 Dent Drive, Lewisburg, PA 17837. Andrew Ciotola, Program Manager. ciotola@bucknell.edu

Stanford Libraries
WILLIAM SAROYAN INTERNATIONAL PRIZE FOR WRITING
Two prizes of $5,000 each are given biennially for books of fiction and nonfiction. The awards, cosponsored by the Stanford Libraries and the William Saroyan Foundation, are “intended to encourage new or emerging writers and honor the Saroyan legacy of originality, vitality, and stylistic innovation.” Writers who have published four books or more are ineligible. Submit five copies of a fiction or nonfiction book published between January 1, 2018, and December 31, 2019, with a $50 entry fee by January 31. Visit the website for the required entry form and complete guidelines.

Stanford Libraries, William Saroyan International Prize for Writing, 557 Escondido Mall, Stanford, CA 94305. (650) 736-9538. Sonia Lee, Contact. sonialee@stanford.edu

Sustainable Arts Foundation
WRITING AWARDS
Up to twenty awards of $5,000 each are given annually to poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers with children. Writers with at least one child under the age of 18 are eligible. Using only the online submission system, submit up to 10 poems totaling no more than 15 pages or up to 15 pages of prose with a biography, an artist statement, and a $20 entry fee by February 28. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Sustainable Arts Foundation, Writing Awards, 1032 Irving Street #609, San Francisco, CA 94122. apply.sustainableartsfoundation.org/portfolio_requirements

Tupelo Press
SNOWBOUND CHAPBOOK AWARD
A prize of $1,000 and publication by Tupelo Press is given annually for a poetry chapbook. Submit a manuscript of 20 to 36 pages with a $25 entry fee by February 29. All entries are considered for publication. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

Tupelo Press, Snowbound Chapbook Award, P.O. Box 1767, North Adams, MA 01247. (413) 664-9611. Jeffrey Levine, Publisher.

University of Texas
DOBIE PAISANO FELLOWSHIPS
Two residencies, cosponsored by the Texas Institute of Letters, at a rural retreat west of Austin are given annually to writers who are native Texans, who have lived in Texas for at least three years, or who have published significant work with a Texas subject. The six-month Jesse H. Jones Writing Fellowship is given to a writer in any stage of his or her career and includes a grant of $18,000. The four-month Ralph A. Johnston Memorial Fellowship is given to a writer who has

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Paper Brigade
A Publication of Jewish Book Council

Paper Brigade, the annual literary journal of the Jewish Book Council, is pleased to announce its first open call for short story submissions.

Stories should be between 1,500 and 7,000 words and in the spirit of our publication’s commitment to giving voice to Jewish-interest authors of all backgrounds. Submissions must be previously unpublished. All authors will be paid for published work.

For more details including information on how to submit, please visit:

JEWISHBOOKCOUNCIL.ORG/PAPER-BRIGADE/SUBMISSIONS #JOINTHEBRIGADE

Submit your original fiction!
demonstrated “publishing and critical success” and includes a grant of $24,000. Submit three copies of up to 50 pages of poetry, fiction, or creative nonfiction, three copies of the entry form, and a $20 application fee ($30 to enter both competitions) by January 15. Visit the website for the required entry form and complete guidelines.

University of Texas, Dobie Paisano Fellowships, Graduate School, 110 Inner Campus Drive, Mail Stop G0400, Austin, TX 78712. Michael Adams, Director. adameve@austin.utexas.edu dobiepaisano.utexas.edu

University of Wisconsin WISCONSIN INSTITUTE FOR CREATIVE WRITING FELLOWSHIPS An academic year in residence, which includes a stipend of at least $38,000, at the University of Wisconsin in Madison is given annually to at least five writers working on a first or second book of poetry or fiction. Fellows teach one workshop in creative writing each semester, assist in judging the English department’s writing contests and fellowships, and give one public reading. Writers with an MFA or PhD in creative writing who have not published more than one book are eligible. Submit 10 pages of poetry or one story or novel excerpt of up to 30 pages, a curriculum vitae, and contact information for two references with a $50 entry fee by March 1. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (SEE RECENT WINNERS.)

University of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Institute for Creative Writing Fellowships, English Department, 600 North Park Street, H.C. White Room 6195, Madison, WI 53706. Sean Bishop, Coordinator. institutemail@english.wisc.edu www.creativewriting.wisc.edu/fellowships.html

Virginia Commonwealth University LEVIS READING PRIZE A prize of $5,000 and an all-expenses paid trip to give a reading at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond is given annually for a first or second book of poetry published during the previous year. Students and faculty of the MFA program in creative writing at Virginia Commonwealth University will judge. Publishers or writers may submit three copies of a book of at least 48 pages published in 2019, and a brief author bio, by February 1. There is no entry fee. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (SEE RECENT WINNERS.)

Virginia Commonwealth University, Levis Reading Prize, English Department, 900 Park Avenue, Hibbs Hall, Room 306, P.O. Box 842005, Richmond, VA 23284. A J White, Contact. whiteaj6@vcu.edu english.vcu.edu/mfa/levis-reading-prize

W. B. Yeats Society of New York YEATS POETRY PRIZE A prize of $1,000 and publication on the W. B. Yeats Society of New York website is given annually for a single poem. The winner is also invited to a ceremony in New York City in the spring. Spencer Reece will judge. Submit a poem of up to 60 lines with a $15 entry fee ($12 for each additional poem) by February 1. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

W. B. Yeats Society of New York, Yeats Poetry Prize, National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park South, New York, NY 10003. yeatssociety.org/yeats-poetry-prize

What’s your story?

Whether you want to create a children’s book, stage production, or movie script, Hollins’ summer graduate programs are here to help. Learn from experienced professionals in a collaborative atmosphere during our six-week sessions.

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• Playwriting (M.F.A.)
• Screenwriting & Film Studies (M.A. & M.F.A.)

Visit hollins.edu/grad to get started.
### Willie Morris Awards

**Willie Morris Award for Southern Fiction**
A prize of $10,000 is given annually for a novel published during the previous year that is set in the South and reflects Willie Morris’s “hope for belonging, for belief in a people’s better nature, for steadfastness against all that is hollow or crass or rootless or destructive.” The winner will also receive an all-expenses paid trip to New York City in October. Submit a novel of at least 50,000 words published in 2019 by February 29. There is no entry fee. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

**Willie Morris Award for Southern Poetry**
A prize of $2,500 is given annually for a single poem that evokes the American South. Susan Kinsolving will judge. Submit one poem of up to three pages by February 29. There is no entry fee. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

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### Winter Anthology Writing Contest
A prize of $1,000 and publication in Winter Anthology is given annually for a group of poems, a story, or an essay. Using only the online submission system, submit up to 10 pages of poetry or up to 25 pages of prose with a $10 entry fee by January 31. All entries are considered for publication. Visit the website for complete guidelines.

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### PW.ORG/GRANTS
Visit our Grants & Awards database to browse a year’s worth of contests and sort by entry fee, deadline, or genre, and check the Submission Calendar for upcoming deadlines.
Anatomy of Awards: January/February 2020

This issue’s Deadlines section lists a total of 96 contests, sponsored by 65 organizations, offering an estimated $747,430 in prize money. Of this total an estimated $228,000, or about 30 percent, comes from the Wisconsin Institute for Creative Writing Fellowships, which include an academic year in residence at the University of Wisconsin in Madison as well as a minimum stipend of $38,000 each to at least five writers working on a first or second book of poetry or fiction. Previous fellows include Jamel Brinkley, Danielle Evans, and Emma Straub. The chart below further breaks down the numbers behind Grants & Awards.
Poets & Writers
50 & FORWARD

We are pleased to announce the recipients of the

2020 LEADERSHIP AWARD
OPRAH WINFREY

2020 BARNES & NOBLE WRITERS FOR WRITERS AWARDS
MICHAEL CHABON
AMANDA GORMAN

to be presented on March 16, 2020, at our 50th Anniversary Gala

For additional information, visit at.pw.org/annual_dinner or e-mail gala@pw.org.
Recent Winners

Academy of American Poets

WALLACE STEVENS AWARD
Rita Dove of Charlottesville, Virginia, won the 2019 Wallace Stevens Award. She received $100,000. The Academy’s Board of Chancellors judged. The annual award is given to a poet to “recognize outstanding and proven mastery in the art of poetry.” There is no application process.

ACADEMY OF AMERICAN POETS FELLOWSHIP
Ilya Kaminsky of Atlanta won the 2019 Academy of American Poets Fellowship. He received $25,000 and a residency at the T. S. Eliot House in Gloucester, Massachusetts. The Academy’s Board of Chancellors judged. The annual fellowship is given to an American poet for distinguished poetic achievement. There is no application process.

LENORE MARSHALL POETRY PRIZE
Kyle Dargan of Washington, D.C., won the 2019 Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize for Anagnorisis (TriQuarterly Books, 2018). He received $25,000; a ten-day residency at Glen Hollow in Naples, New York; and distribution of his book to members of the Academy of American Poets. Major Jackson, Patricia Smith, and David Wojahn judged. The annual award is given for a book of poetry published in the United States in the previous year. The next deadline is May 15.

RAIZISS/DE PALCHI FELLOWSHIP
Will Schutt of Baltimore won the 2019 Raiziss/de Palchi Fellowship. He received $25,000 and a five-week residency at the American Academy in Rome. Maria Frank, Giorgio Mobili, and Michael Palma judged. The fellowship is given biennially to a U.S. translator for a work-in-progress of modern Italian poetry translated into English. The next deadline is February 15, 2021.

JAMES LAUGHLIN AWARD
Aditi Machado of Saint Louis won the 2019 James Laughlin Award for Emporium (Nightboat Books, 2020). She received $5,000, a weeklong residency at the Betsy Hotel in Miami, and distribution of her book to members of the Academy of American Poets. Gillian Conoley, Fady Joudah, and Cole Swensen judged. The annual award is given for a poet’s second collection, forthcoming in the next calendar year. The next deadline is May 15.

HAROLD MORTON LANDON TRANSLATION AWARD
Clare Cavanagh of Chicago won the 2019 Harold Morton Landon Translation Award for her translation from the Polish of Asymmetry by Adam Zagajewski (Farrar, Straus and Giroux). She received $1,000. Dunya Mikhail judged. The annual award is given for a book of poetry translated from any language into English and published in the United States during the previous year. (See Deadlines.)

ACADEMY OF AMERICAN POETS, 75 Maiden Lane, Suite 901, New York, NY 10038. (212) 274-0343. Nikay Paredes, Programs Manager. awards@poets.org www.poets.org/academy-american-poets

Airlie Press

AILRLE PRIZE
Megan Alpert of Watertown, Massachusetts, won the 2019 Airlie Prize for The Animal at Your Side. She received $1,000, and her book will be published by Airlie Press in fall 2020. The editors judged. The annual award is given for a poetry collection. (See Deadlines.)

Airlie Press, Airlie Prize, P.O. Box 68441, Portland, OR 97268. Jennifer Perrine, Editor. editors@airliepress.org www.airliepress.org

Association of Writers & Writing Programs

AWARD SERIES
Four writers won the 2019 Association of Writers & Writing Programs Award Series prizes. Joy Priest of Louisville, Kentucky, won the $5,500 Donald Hall Prize for Poetry. Her collection, Horsepower, selected by Natasha Trethewey, will be published by University of Pittsburgh Press. Cécile Barlier of Lafayette, California, won the $5,500 Grace Paley Poetry Prize.
Prize for Short Fiction. Her collection, *A Gypsy’s Book of Revelation*, selected by Dan Chaon, will be published by Red Hen Press. Robert Shuster of Bedford, New York, won the $2,500 Award Series for the Novel. His novel, *To Zenzi*, selected by Bonnie Jo Campbell, will be published by New Issues Press. Megan Harlan of Berkeley, California, won the $2,500 AWP Prize for Creative Nonfiction. Her memoir, *Mobile Home*, selected by Debra Monroe, will be published by University of Georgia Press. The annual awards are given for books of poetry, fiction, short fiction, and creative nonfiction. (See deadlines.)

Association of Writers & Writing Programs, Award Series, 5700 Rivertech Court, Suite 225, Riverdale Park, MD 20737. (301) 226-9710. www.awpwriter.org/contests

**Atlanta Review**

**INTERNATIONAL POETRY COMPETITION**

Kurt Luchs of Kalamazoo, Michigan, won the 2019 International Poetry Competition for “Suzie.” He received $1,000, and his poem was published in the Fall 2019 issue of *Atlanta Review*. Dan Vera

judged. The annual award is given for a poem. The next deadline is May 1.


**Backwaters Press**

**BACKWATERS PRIZE**

Jennifer K. Sweeney of Redlands, California, won the 2019 Backwaters Prize for *Foxlogic, Fireweed*. She received $2,500, and her book will be published by Backwaters Press in fall 2020. Indigo Moor of Sacramento, California, received an honorable mention for *Everybody’s Jonesin’ for Something*. He received $1,000, and his book will be published by Backwaters Press in spring 2021. Grace Bauer judged. The annual award is given for a poetry collection. The next deadline is May 31.

Backwaters Press, Backwaters Prize, University of Nebraska Press, 1111 Lincoln Mall, Lincoln, NE 68588. nebraskapress.unl.edu

**Bauhan Publishing**

**MAY SARTON NEW HAMPSHIRE POETRY PRIZE**

Dorsey Craft of Lake City, Florida, won the 2019 May Sarton New Hampshire Poetry Prize for *Plunder*. She will receive $1,000, publication by Bauhan Publishing in spring 2020, and 100 author copies. Deborah Gorlin judged. The annual award is given for a poetry collection. The next deadline is June 30.

Bauhan Publishing, May Sarton New Hampshire Poetry Prize, P.O. Box 117, Peterborough, NH 03458. www.bauhanpublishing.com/may-sarton-prize

**Bitter Oleander Press**

**LIBRARY OF POETRY AWARD**

Sean Thomas Dougherty of Erie, Pennsylvania, won the 2019 Library of Poetry Award for *Not All Saints*. He received $1,000, and his collection will be published by Bitter Oleander Press in spring 2020. Patty Dickson Pieczka judged. The annual award is given for a poetry collection. The next deadline is June 15.

Recent Winners

Prize for Short Fiction. Her collection, *A Gypsy’s Book of Revelation*, selected by Dan Chaon, will be published by Red Hen Press. Robert Shuster of Bedford, New York, won the $2,500 Award Series for the Novel. His novel, *To Zenzi*, selected by Bonnie Jo Campbell, will be published by New Issues Press. Megan Harlan of Berkeley, California, won the $2,500 AWP Prize for Creative Nonfiction. Her memoir, *Mobile Home*, selected by Debra Monroe, will be published by University of Georgia Press. The annual awards are given for books of poetry, fiction, short fiction, and creative nonfiction. (See deadlines.)

Association of Writers & Writing Programs, Award Series, 5700 Rivertech Court, Suite 225, Riverdale Park, MD 20737. (301) 226-9710. www.awpwriter.org/contests

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Backwaters Press, Backwaters Prize, University of Nebraska Press, 1111 Lincoln Mall, Lincoln, NE 68588. nebraskapress.unl.edu

**Bauhan Publishing**

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Bauhan Publishing, May Sarton New Hampshire Poetry Prize, P.O. Box 117, Peterborough, NH 03458. www.bauhanpublishing.com/may-sarton-prize

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Backwaters Press, Backwaters Prize, University of Nebraska Press, 1111 Lincoln Mall, Lincoln, NE 68588. nebraskapress.unl.edu

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Bauhan Publishing, May Sarton New Hampshire Poetry Prize, P.O. Box 117, Peterborough, NH 03458. www.bauhanpublishing.com/may-sarton-prize

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£25,000 (approximately $31,500). The
finalists, each of whom received £2,500
(approximately $3,150), were Lucy Eli-
mann of Edinburgh, Scotland, for Ducks,
Newburyport (Galley Beggar Press); Chigozie Obioma of Lincoln, Nebraska,
for An Orchestra of Minorities (Little,
Brown); Salman Rushdie of New York
City for Quichotte (Jonathan Cape); and
Elif Shafak of London for 10 Minutes 38
Seconds in This Strange World (Viking).
Liz Calder, Peter Florence, Xiaolu Guo,
Afua Hirsch, and Joanna MacGregor
judged. The annual award is given for a
novel published in the previous year that
is written in English and published in
the United Kingdom. As of this writing,
the next deadline has not been set.
Booker Prize Foundation, Booker Prize
for Fiction, 28 St. James’s Walk, London
EC1R 0AP, England.
themanbookerprize.com

Boulevard
SHORT FICTION CONTEST FOR EMERGING
WRITERS
Claire Boyles of Loveland, Colorado,
won the 2018 Short Fiction Contest for
Emerging Writers for “Lost Gun, $1000
Reward, No Questions.” She received
Caine Prize for African Writing
Lesley Nneka Arimah of Las Vegas, Nevada, won the 2019 Caine Prize for African Writing for “Skinned.” She received £10,000 (approximately $12,600). The finalists were Meron Hadero of San Francisco for “The Wall”; Cherrie Kandie of Nairobi, Kenya, for “Sew My Mouth”; and Ngwah-Mbo Nana Nkweti of Cameroon for “It Takes A Village Some Say.” They each received £500 (approximately $630), and their stories were published in the 2019 Caine Prize anthology. Sefi Atta, Peter Kimani, Maggie Orford, Scott Taylor, and Olufemi Terry judged. The annual award is given for a published short story by an African writer. (See Deadlines.)

Caine Prize for African Writing, 51 Southwark Street, London SE1 1RU, England. info@caineprize.com
www.caineprize.com

Cave Canem
POETRY PRIZE
Chekwube Danladi of Chicago won the 2019 Cave Canem Poetry Prize for Semiotics. She will receive $1,000, and her book will be published by the University of Georgia Press in fall 2020. Evie Shockley judged. The annual award is given for a debut poetry collection by a Black poet of African descent. As of this writing, the next deadline has not been set.

Cave Canem, Poetry Prize, 20 Jay Street, Suite 310-A, Brooklyn, NY 11201. (718) 858-0000.
www.cavecanempoets.org

Chicago Tribune
NELSON ALGREN SHORT STORY AWARD
Barry Pearce of Chicago won the 2019 Nelson Algren Award for “Chez Whatever.” He received $3,500. The finalists, who each received $750, were Stephanie Green of Alexandria, Virginia, for “Host Mother”; Elizabeth Poliner of Roanoke, Virginia, for “Sabelle”; Abhijith Ravinutala of Atlanta for “Definition(s)”; Dalia Rosenfeld of Charlottesville, Virginia, for “If You Do Not Shave This Rabbit, He Will Get Stoned”; and Steve Trumpeter of Chicago for “A Pamphlet for This.” The winner and finalists were all published in the Chicago Tribune. Jennifer Acker, Mona Simpson, and Jane Smiley judged. The annual award is given for a short story. (See Deadlines.)

Chicago Tribune, Nelson Algren Short Story Award, 160 North Stetson Avenue, Chicago, IL 60601.
algren.submittable.com

Dayton Literary Peace Foundation
RICHARD C. HOLBROOKE DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
Poet, fiction, and nonfiction writer N. Scott Momaday of Santa Fe, New Mexico, won the 2019 Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award. He received $10,000. The annual award honors an author whose complete body of work reflects the Dayton Literary Peace Prize’s mission to

“The Rites of Passage is like encountering a gay Portnoy’s Complaint in its distinctive blend of Jewishness, sex, moral panic, and maternal dominance. And it’s painfully realistic in its depiction of what ‘coming out’ is.”
— Patrick Mulcahey, Emmy Award-winning screenwriter of The Bold and the Beautiful

“Taylor tells the story from Jamie’s perspective in a polished prose enlivened with the protagonist’s neurotic humor.”
— The Kirkus Review

www.arnolandpress.com

$1,500, and her story was published in the fall 2019 issue of Boulevard. The editors judged. The annual award is given for a short story by a writer who has not published a book with a nationally distributed press. The next deadline is December 31.

Boulevard, Short Fiction Contest for Emerging Writers, 4125 Juniata Street B, St. Louis, MO 63116. Jessica Rogen, Editor.
www.boulevardmagazine.org

Recent Winners

Cave Canem
CHEKWUBE DANLADI of Chicago won the 2019 Cave Canem Poetry Prize for Semiotics. She will receive $1,000, and her book will be published by the University of Georgia Press in fall 2020. Evie Shockley judged. The annual award is given for a debut poetry collection by a Black poet of African descent. As of this writing, the next deadline has not been set.

Cave Canem, Poetry Prize, 20 Jay Street, Suite 310-A, Brooklyn, NY 11201. (718) 858-0000.
www.cavecanempoets.org

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Chicago Tribune, Nelson Algren Short Story Award, 160 North Stetson Avenue, Chicago, IL 60601.
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“foster peace, social justice, and global understanding.” There is no application process.
Dayton Literary Peace Foundation, P.O. Box 461, Wright Brothers Branch, Dayton, OH 45409. (937) 298-5072. Sharon Rab, Chair.
sharon.rab@daytonliterarypeaceprize.org
www.daytonliterarypeaceprize.org

DIAGRAM

CHAPBOOK CONTEST

Blanche Brown of Philadelphia won the DIAGRAM/New Michigan Press Chapbook Contest for Consider the Oyster. She received $1,000, and her chapbook will be published by New Michigan Press in January 2020. Ander Monson judged. The annual award is given for a chapbook. As of this writing, the next deadline has not been set.

DIAGRAM, Chapbook Contest, University of Arizona, English Department, P.O. Box 210067, Tucson, AZ 85721. Ander Monson, Editor. editor@thediagram.com
www.thediagram.com/contest.html

Emrys Press

POETRY CHAPBOOK CONTEST

Richard Lyons of Mississippi State, Mississippi, won the 2019 Emrys Press Chapbook Contest for Heart House. He received $1,000, publication of his chapbook by Emrys Press, and a week-long residency at the Rensing Center in Pickens, South Carolina. Joseph Millar judged. The annual award is given for a poetry chapbook. The next deadline is July 1.

Emrys Press, Poetry Chapbook Contest, P.O. Box 8813, Greenville, SC 29604. emrys.info@gmail.com
www.emrys.org/emrys-press

French-American Foundation

TRANSLATION PRIZES

Chris Clarke of Philadelphia and Linda Coverdale of New York City both won the 32nd annual Translation Prize in fiction. Clarke won for his translation of Marcel Schwob’s story collection Imaginary Lives (Wakefield Press); Coverdale won for her translation of Patrick Chamoiseau’s novel Slave Old Man (New Press). They each received $5,000. Malcolm DeBevoise of New Orleans won the prize in nonfiction for his translation of

BRIANNA FLAVIN
New Letters
Patricia Cleary Miller Award for Poetry

TERRANCE MANNING JR.
New Letters
Conger Beasley Jr. Award for Nonfiction

CHRISTINA LEO
Salamander
Fiction Prize

YOUR WORDS
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Kevin Clouther | kclouther@unomaha.edu
mfa.unomaha.edu

2019 Visiting Writer
Jennifer Egan

TEN-DAY RESIDENCIES
In Nebraska City

APPLICATION DEADLINES
Nov 15
Jun 15

Kevin Clouther | kclouther@unomaha.edu
mfa.unomaha.edu
Pierre Rosanvallon’s book *Good Government: Democracy Beyond Elections* (Harvard University Press). He received $10,000. The annual awards are given for books of fiction and nonfiction translated from French into English and published during the previous year. The next deadline is January 15.

French-American Foundation, Translation Prizes, 28 West 44th Street, Suite 902, New York, NY 10036. (646) 588-6782. kdemallie@frenchamerican.org

www.frenchamerican.org/translationprize

Hidden River Arts

**WILLOW RUN POETRY BOOK AWARD**

Roy Bentley of Pataskala, Ohio, won the 2019 Willow Run Poetry Book Award for *Hillbilly Guilt*. He received $1,000, and his poetry collection will be published by Hidden River Press, an imprint of Hidden River Publishing. The editors judged. The annual award is given for a poetry collection. (SEE DEADLINES.)

**ELUDIA AWARD**

Elisa Atchison of Livingston, Montana, won the 2019 Eludia Award for *Crazy Mountain*. She received $1,000, and her novel will be published by Sowilo Press, an imprint of Hidden River Publishing.

Hidden River Arts, P.O. Box 63927, Philadelphia, PA 19147. (610) 764-0813. hiddenriverarts@gmail.com

hiddenriverartssubmissions.submittable.com

Hunger Mountain

**LITERARY PRIZES**

Daniel Arias Gómez of Fresno, California, won the 2019 Ruth Stone Poetry Prize for “Cathedrals,” “Ode to Sprinklers,” and “Say Your Hands Scar”; Benjamin Naka-Hasebe Kingsley of Norfolk, Virginia, won the 2019 Howard Frank Mosher Short Fiction Prize for his story “Beautiful Bembé”; Arielle Schussler of Walnut Creek, California, won the 2019 Creative Nonfiction Prize for her essay “Sunrise on Pluto.” They each received $1,000, and their winning pieces were published on Hunger Mountain’s website. Natalie Diaz judged in poetry, Erika T. Wurth judged in fiction, and Elissa Washuta judged in nonfiction. The annual awards are given for a poem or group of poems, a story, and an essay. (SEE DEADLINES.)

Hunger Mountain, Literary Prizes, Vermont College of Fine Arts, 36 College Street, Montpelier, VT 05602. hungermtn@vcfa.edu

www.hungermtn.org/submit-contests

James Jones Literary Society

**FIRST NOVEL FELLOWSHIP**

Marco Kaye of Maplewood, New Jersey, won the 28th annual James Jones First Novel Fellowship for his manuscript “Levon.” He received $10,000 and publication of an excerpt of his novel in *Provincetown Arts*. The runners-up were Lorinda Toledo of West Hollywood, California, for her manuscript “The Nature of Fire” and Latifa Ayad of Columbus, Ohio, for her manuscript “The Realm Unknown.” They each received $1,000. Greg Hrbek, Nancy McKinley, and Mary Kay Zuravleff judged. The annual award is given for a novel-in-progress that “honors the spirit of unblinking honesty, determination, and insight into modern culture exemplified by the late James Jones.” (SEE DEADLINES.)

The Carson McCullers Center for Writers and Musicians Presents

**The Marguerite and Lamar Smith Fellowship for Writers**

Live and work in Carson McCullers’s childhood home in Columbus, GA

Sept. 1 - Dec. 1, 2020

**Call for Applications**

**Deadline: April 1, 2020**

APPLY FOR FELLOWSHIP

www.mccullerscenter.org
KIRKUS PRIZES

Colson Whitehead of New York City and Saeed Jones of Columbus, Ohio, won the 2019 Kirkus Prizes. Whitehead won in fiction for his novel *The Nickel Boys* (Doubleday, 2019) and Jones won in nonfiction for his memoir, *How We Fight for Our Lives* (Simon & Schuster, 2019). They each received $50,000. Min Jin Lee, Michelle Malonzo, and David L. Ulin judged in fiction, and Aaron John Curtis, Jack E. Davis, and Richard Z. Santos judged in nonfiction. The annual awards are given for a book of fiction and a book of nonfiction that were published in the previous year and received a starred review in *Kirkus Reviews*. There is no application process.

*Kirkus Reviews*, 65 West 36th Street, Suite 700, New York, NY 10018.
kirkusreviews.com/prize

LITTLE TOKYO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SHORT STORY CONTEST

Cody Uyeda of Irvine, California, won the 2019 Little Tokyo Historical Society Short Story Contest for “Promise Me You’ll Remember.” He received $500 and publication in *Rafu Shimpo* and on the Discover Nikkei website. Sesshu Foster, Irene Simonian, and Teresa Watanabe judged. The annual award is given for a short story that takes place in the Little Tokyo district of Los Angeles. (See deadlines.)

Little Tokyo Historical Society, Short Story Contest, 319 East Second Street #203, Los Angeles, CA 90012.
imaginelittletokyo@gmail.com
www.littletokyohs.org

LOST HORSE PRESS

IDAHO PRIZE FOR POETRY

Julia Kolchinsky Dasbach of Philadelphia won the 2019 Idaho Prize for Poetry for *Don’t Touch the Bones*. She received $1,000, and her collection will be published by Lost Horse Press in spring 2020. Sandra Alcosser judged. The annual award is given for a poetry collection. The next deadline is May 15.

Kate Hagesfeld, grieving the death of her husband, travels to Italy just after 9/11 to re-start her career as an archaeologist. Caught up in efforts to aid refugees from the Kosovo War, she must make the choice of a lifetime.

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MacArthur Foundation
MACARTHUR FELLOWSHIPS
Poet and fiction writer Ocean Vuong of Amherst, Massachusetts; fiction and nonfiction writer Valeria Luiselli of Annandale-on-Hudson, New York; graphic novelist and graphic nonfiction writer Lynda Barry of Madison, Wisconsin; and translator Emily Wilson of Philadelphia won 2019 MacArthur Fellowships. Vuong, whose most recent book is the novel On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous (Penguin Press, 2019); Luiselli, whose most recent book is the novel Lost Children Archive (Knopf, 2019); Barry, whose most recent book is the graphic nonfiction work Making Comics (Drawn & Quarterly, 2019); and Wilson, whose most recent book is her translation from the ancient Greek of The Odyssey (Norton, 2017), each received a $4,000 Literary Arts Fellowship from the Mississippi Arts Commission. The fellowships are given in alternating years to Mississippi poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers. The next round of fellowships will be awarded to poets and fiction writers. (See Deadlines.)

Mississippi Arts Commission
LITERARY ARTIST FELLOWSHIPS
Nonfiction writers Lee Durkee and Aimee Nezhukumatathil, both of Oxford, Mississippi, each received a $4,000 Literary Arts Fellowship from the Mississippi Arts Commission. The fellowships are given in alternating years to Mississippi poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers. The next round of fellowships will be awarded to poets and fiction writers. (See Deadlines.)

Mississippi Arts Commission, Literary Artist Fellowships, 501 North West Street, Woolfolk Building, Suite 110A, Jackson, MS 39201. (601) 359-6030. Kristen Brandt, Contact. kbrandt@arts.ms.gov arts.ms.gov/grants/grants-for-individuals/artist-fellowships

Mudfish
MUDFISH POETRY PRIZE
Mark Wagenaar of Valparaiso, Indiana, won the 2019 Mudfish Poetry Prize for “Fluencies.” He received $1,200, and his poem will be published in Mudfish. John Yau judged. The annual award is given for a single poem. (See Deadlines)

Mudfish, Mudfish Poetry Prize, 184 Franklin Street, Ground Floor, New York, NY 10013. Jill Hoffman, Editor. www.mudfish.org

Narrative
NARRATIVE PRIZE
Brenden Willey of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, won the 2019 Narrative Prize for his story “Things That Don’t Keep a Lightning Bug Alive.” He received $4,000. The annual award is given for a poem or group of poems, a short story, a novel excerpt, or a work of creative nonfiction published in Narrative during the previous year. The next deadline is June 15.

POETRY CONTEST
Hannah Perrin King of New York City won the 11th annual Poetry Contest for “Addendum and Other Poems.”
She received $1,500 and publication in *Narrative*. The annual award is given for a poem or group of poems. The next deadline is July 20.

*Narrative*, 2443 Fillmore Street, #214, San Francisco, CA 94115. Tom Jenks, Editor. www.narrativemagazine.com

**National Book Foundation**

**NATIONAL BOOK AWARDS**

Arthur Sze of Santa Fe, New Mexico, won the 2019 National Book Award in poetry for *Sight Lines* (Copper Canyon Press). The finalists in poetry were Jericho Brown of Atlanta for *The Tradition* (Copper Canyon Press), Toi Derricotte of Pittsburgh for “I”: *New and Selected Poems* (University of Pittsburgh Press), Carmen Giménez Smith of Blacksburg, Virginia, for *Be Recorder* (Graywolf Press), and Ilya Kaminsky of Atlanta for *Deaf Republic* (Graywolf Press). Susan Choi of New York City won the 2019 National Book Award in fiction for *Trust Exercise* (Henry Holt). The finalists in fiction were Kali Fajardo-Anstine of Denver for *Sabrina & Corina* (One World), Marlon James of Saint Paul and New York City for *Black Leopard, Red Wolf* (Riverhead Books), Laila Lalami of Los Angeles for *The Other Americans* (Pantheon Books), and Julia Phillips of New York City for *Disappearing Earth* (Knopf). Sarah M. Broom of New York City won the 2019 National Book Award in nonfiction for *The Yellow House* (Grove Press). The finalists in nonfiction were Tressie McMillan Cottom of Richmond, Virginia, for *Thick: And Other Essays* (New Press), Carolyn Forché of Bethesda, Maryland, for *What You Have Heard Is True: A Memoir of Witness and Resistance* (Penguin Press), David Treuer of the Leech Lake Reservation in Cass Lake, Minnesota, and Los Angeles for *The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee: Native America From 1890 to the Present* (Riverhead Books), and Albert Woodfox of New Orleans with Leslie George for *Solitary* (Grove Press). Martin W. Sandler of Cotuit, Massachusetts, won the 2019 National Book Award in young people’s literature for *1919: The Year That Changed America* (Bloombury Children’s Books). The finalists in young people’s literature were Akwaeke Emezi of New Orleans for *Pet* (Make Me a World), Jason Reynolds of Washington, D.C., for *Look Both Ways: A Tale Told in Ten Blocks* (Atheneum/ Caitlyn Dlouhy Books), and Randy Ribay of San Francisco for *Patron Saints of Nothing* (Kokila), and Laura Ruby of Chicago for *Thirteen Doors, Wolves Behind Them All* (Balzer + Bray). László Krasznahorkai of Szentlászló, Hungary, won the 2019 National Book Award in translated literature for *Baron Wenckheim’s Homecoming* (New Directions), translated from the Hungarian by Ottile Mulzet of Prague. The finalists in translated literature were Khaled Khalifa of Damascus for *Death Is Hard Work* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux), translated from the Arabic by Leri Price of Cheshire, England; Scholastique Mukasonga of Lower Normandy, France, for *The Barefoot Woman* (Archipelago Books), translated from the French by Jordan Stump of Lincoln, Nebraska; Yoko Ogawa of Tokyo for *The Memory Police* (Pantheon Books), translated from the Japanese by Stephen Snyder of Middlebury, Vermont; and Pajtim Statovci of Helsinki for *Crossing* (Pantheon Books), translated from the Finnish by David Hackston of Helsinki. Sze, Choi, Broom, and Sandler each won $10,000; Krasznahorkai and Mulzet each won $5,000. The finalists each received $1,000. The poetry judges were Jos Charles, John Evans, Vievee Francis, Cathy Park Hong,
and Mark Wunderlich; the fiction judges were Dorothy Allison, Ruth Dickey, Javier Ramirez, Danzy Senna, and Jeff VanderMeer; the nonfiction judges were Erica Armstrong Dunbar, Carolyn Kellogg, Mark Laframboise, Kiese Laymon, and Jeff Sharlet; the young people’s literature judges were Elana K. Arnold, Kristen Gilligan, Varian Johnson, An Na, and Deborah Taylor; and the translated literature judges were Keith Gesseen, Elisabeth Jaquette, Katie Kitamura, Idra Novey, and Shuchi Saraswat. The annual awards honor books of poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and translated literature by U.S. writers published during the award year. As of this writing, the next deadline has not been set.

5 UNDER 35
Five fiction writers were selected as the National Book Foundation’s 2019 5 Under 35 honorees. They are Anelise Chen of New York City for her novel, *So Many Olympic Exertions* (Kaya Press, 2017), selected by Dana Spiotta; Isabella Hammad of New York City for her novel, *The Parisian* (Grove Press, 2019), selected by Viet Thanh Nguyen; Johannes Lichtman of Portland, Oregon, for his novel, *Such Good Work* (Simon & Schuster, 2019), selected by Garth Greenwell; Bryan Washington of Houston for his story collection, *Lot* (Riverhead Books, 2019), selected by Nafissa Thompson-Spires; and Ashley Wurzbacher of Birmingham, Alabama, for her story collection, *Happy Like This* (University of Iowa Press, 2019), selected by Brandon Hobson. They each received $1,000. The annual awards are given to writers under the age of 35 who have published their first book of fiction in the previous five years. There is no application process.


National Poetry Series
OPEN COMPETITION
Five poets won the 2019 National Poetry Series Open Competition. They are Heid E. Erdrich of Minneapolis for *Little Big Bully*, selected by Amy Gerstler and to be published by Penguin Books; Alexandria Hall of Los Angeles for *Field Music*, selected by Rosanna Warren and to be published by Ecco; Diane Louie of Paris for *Fractal Shores*, selected by Sherod Santos and to be published by University of Georgia Press; Benjamin Garcia of Finger Lakes, New York, for *Thrown in the Throat*, selected by Kazim Ali and to be published by Milkweed Editions; and Michael Torres of Mankato, Minnesota, for *An Incomplete List of Names*, selected by Raquel Salas Rivera and to be published by Beacon Press. They each received $10,000. The annual awards are given for poetry collections by U.S. poets, whose winning books are published by participating trade, university, and small press publishers. (See Deadlines.)

National Poetry Series, Open Competition, 57 Mountain Avenue, Princeton, NJ 08540. www.nationalpoetryseries.org

New American Press
POETRY PRIZE
Emily Mohn-Slate of Pittsburgh won the 2019 New American Poetry Prize for *The Falls*. She received $1,000, and her book will be published by New American Press in fall 2020. Sara Gelston judged. The annual award is given for a poetry collection. (See Deadlines.)
Recent Winners

Ploughshares
EMERGING WRITER’S CONTEST
Aurielle Lucier of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, won the 2019 Emerging Writer’s Contest in poetry for “a psalm in which i demand a new name for my kindred.” Ruby Todd of Melbourne, Australia, won the 2019 Emerging Writer’s Contest in fiction for “Creation.” Jung Hae Chae of Montclair, New Jersey, won the 2019 Emerging Writer’s Contest in nonfiction for “Pojangmacha People.” They each received $2,000, publication of their work in the Winter 2019–2020 issue of Ploughshares, and a consultation with literary agency Aevitas Creative Management. Fatimah Asghar judged in poetry, Ottessa Moshfegh judged in fiction, and Leslie Jamison judged in nonfiction. The annual awards are given for a poem or group of poems, a short story, and an essay. The next deadline is May 15.

New Letters, Literary Awards, University of Missouri, 5101 Rockhill Road, Kansas City, MO 64110. (816) 235-1169. Ashley Wann, Contest Manager. newletters@umkc.edu www.newletters.org/writers-wanted

Ploughshares, Emerging Writer’s Contest, 120 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116. (617) 824-3757. Ellen Duffer, Managing Editor. pshares@pshares.org www.pshares.org

Poetry Society of America
CHAPBOOK FELLOWSHIPS
Laura Cresté of New York City and Darien Hsu Gee of Waikoloa, Hawai‘i, won the 2019 Chapbook Fellowships. Cresté won for You Should Feel Bad, chosen by Stephanie Burt; Gee won for Other Small Histories, chosen by Patricia Smith. Isabella DeSendi of New York City and Dujie Tahat of Seattle won the 2019 Chapbook Fellowships 30 and Under. DeSendi won for Through the New Body, chosen by Evie Shockley; Tahat won for Here I Am O My God, chosen by Fady Joudah. The winners each received $1,000, and their winning chapbooks will be published by the Poetry Society of America in 2020. The Chapbook Fellowships are given annually to two poets for chapbook-length poetry collections; the Chapbook Fellowships 30 and Under are given annually to two poets ages 30 and under for chapbook-length poetry collections. The next deadline is December 23.


New American Press, Poetry Prize, P.O. Box 1094, Grafton, WI 53024. David Bowen, Executive Editor. david@newamericanpress.com www.newamericanpress.com/contests

New Letters
LITERARY AWARDS
Brianna Flavin of Saint Paul won the 2019 Patricia Cleary Miller Award for Poetry for “Grape Tomatoes” and “Orion.” Angie Sijun Lou of Berkeley, California, won the Robert Day Award for Fiction for “Jessica touches my guts.” Terrance Manning Jr. of Pittsburgh won the Connor Beasley Jr. Award for Nonfiction for “Break Down Easy.” They each received $2,500 and will be published in the Winter 2020 issue of New Letters. Gary Dop judged in poetry, Kevin Wilson judged in fiction, and Sheila Kohler judged in nonfiction. The annual awards are given for a group of poems, a story, and an essay. The next deadline is May 18.

New Letters, Literary Awards, University of Missouri, 5101 Rockhill Road, Kansas City, MO 64110. (816) 235-1169. Ashley Wann, Contest Manager. newletters@umkc.edu www.newletters.org/writers-wanted
Princess of Asturias Foundation
AWARD FOR LITERATURE
Poet and fiction and nonfiction writer Siri Hustvedt of New York City won the 2019 Princess of Asturias Award for Literature. Hustvedt, whose most recent book is the novel *Memories of the Future* (Simon & Schuster, 2019), received €50,000 (approximately $55,000). A jury appointed by the Princess of Asturias Foundation judged. The annual award is given to a writer who is “fostering and advancing literary creation in all its genres.” There is no application process.

Princess of Asturias Foundation, Juan Benito Argüelles, 2, 33004 Oviedo, Principality of Asturias, Spain. fpa.es/en/princess-of-asturias-awards

Rattle
POETRY PRIZE
Matthew Dickman of London won the 2019 Rattle Poetry Prize for “Stroke.” He received $10,000 and publication of his poem in Issue 66 of Rattle. The editors judged. The annual award is given for a poem. The next deadline is July 15.

Rattle, Poetry Prize, 12411 Ventura Boulevard, Studio City, CA 91604. (818) 505-6777. Timothy Green, Editor. tim@rattle.com
www.rattle.com

Red Hen Press
WOMEN’S PROSE PRIZE
Beth Gilstrap of Charlotte, North Carolina, won the 2019 Women’s Prose Prize for *Deadheading & Other Stories*. She received $1,000, and her story collection will be published by Red Hen Press in fall 2021. The annual award is given for a book of fiction or nonfiction by a woman. (SEE DEADLINES.)

Red Hen Press, Women’s Prose Prize, P.O. Box 40820, Pasadena, CA 91114. (626) 406-1203. Rebecca Sanhueza, Editorial Assistant. editorial@redhen.org
www.redhen.org

Ruminate
JANET B. MCCABE POETRY PRIZE
John Sibley Williams of Portland, Oregon, won the 2019 Janet B. McCabe Poetry Prize for “Encroachment.” He received $1,500 and publication of his poem in Issue 53 of Ruminate. Craig Santos Perez judged. The annual award is given for a poem. The next deadline is May 15.

WILLIAM VAN DYKE SHORT STORY PRIZE
Joshua Gray of McAllen, Texas, won the 2019 William Van Dyke Short Story Prize for his story “DrownTown.” He received $1,500 and publication of his story in Issue 52 of Ruminate. Tyrese Coleman judged. The annual award is given for a work of short fiction. (SEE DEADLINES.)

VANDERMEY NONFICTION PRIZE
Porter Huddleston of West Palm Beach, Florida, won the 2019 VanderMey Nonfiction Prize for his essay “The Foundation Above Us.” He received $1,500 and publication of his essay in Issue 51 of Ruminate. Jessica Wilbanks judged. The annual award is given for a work of creative nonfiction. As of this writing, the next deadline has not been set.

Ruminate, 1041 North Taft Hill Road, Ft. Collins, CO 80521. Brianna Van Dyke, Editor in Chief. editor@ruminatemagazine.org
www.ruminatemagazine.org

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http://lsa.umich.edu/bearriver | bearriver-questions@umich.edu

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Fiction // Nonfiction // Poetry
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**Salamander**

**FICTION PRIZE**

Christina Leo of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, won the 2019 Salamander Fiction Prize for “The Blue Bull.” She received $1,000, and her story will be published in *Salamander*. Wayétu Moore judged. The annual award is given for a short story. The next deadline is June 1.

**Salamander**, Fiction Prize, Suffolk University, English Department, 8 Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108. Katie Sticca, Managing Editor. www.salamandermag.org/contests

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**Southern Humanities Review**

**AUBURN WITNESS POETRY PRIZE**

Dante Di Stefano of Owego, New York, won the 2019 Auburn Witness Poetry Prize for “Burning Churches.” He received $1,000, publication in *Southern Humanities Review*, and travel expenses to read with contest judge Vievee Francis at Auburn University. The annual award is given for a poem of witness in honor of the late poet Jake Adam York. As of this writing, the next deadline has not been set.

Southern Humanities Review, Auburn University, 9088 Haley Center, Auburn, AL 36849. (334) 844-9088. shr@auburn.edu www.southernhumanitiesreview.com

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**Southern Illinois University**

**DEVIL’S KITCHEN READING AWARDS**

Emily Jungmin Yoon of Chicago won the 2019 Devil’s Kitchen Reading Award in emerging poetry for her collection, *A Cruelty Special to Our Species* (Ecco). Lucy Jane Bledsoe of Berkeley, California, won the award in fiction for her novella and short story collection *Lava Falls* (University of Wisconsin Press). Bill Sullivan of Minneapolis won the award in creative nonfiction for his memoir, *Lemon Jail: On the Road With the Replacements* (University of Minnesota Press). They each received $1,000 and an invitation to read at the 2019 Devil’s Kitchen Fall Literary Festival at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. The annual awards are given for books of poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction published in the previous year. (SEE DEADLINES.)

Southern Illinois University, Devil’s Kitchen Reading Awards, English Department, Mail Code 4503, 1000 Faner Drive, Carbondale, IL 62901. www.grassroots.siuc.edu/dkawards.html

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**Sow’s Ear Poetry Review**

**CHAPBOOK AWARD**

Karen Donovan of East Providence, Rhode Island, won the 2019 Chapbook Award for *Exploded Assembly*. She received $1,000, publication of her chapbook by Word Process in spring 2020, and 25 author copies. Sam Rasnake judged. The annual award is given for a poetry chapbook. The next deadline is May 1.

Sow’s Ear Poetry Review, 8 Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108. Katie Sticca, Managing Editor. www.sowsearpoetry.com

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**Grants & Awards**

**Recent Winners**

**Southern Humanities Review**

**Auburn Witness Poetry Prize**

Dante Di Stefano of Owego, New York, won the 2019 Auburn Witness Poetry Prize for “Burning Churches.” He received $1,000, publication in *Southern Humanities Review*, and travel expenses to read with contest judge Vievee Francis at Auburn University. The annual award is given for a poem of witness in honor of the late poet Jake Adam York. As of this writing, the next deadline has not been set.

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**Southern Humanities Review**

**Auburn Witness Poetry Prize**

Dante Di Stefano of Owego, New York, won the 2019 Auburn Witness Poetry Prize for “Burning Churches.” He received $1,000, and her story will be published in *Southern Humanities Review*. The annual award is given for a short story. The next deadline is June 1.

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**Southern Illinois University**

**Devil’s Kitchen Reading Awards**

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Stadler Center for Poetry & Literary Arts

PHILIP ROTH RESIDENCIES

Fiction writers Leah Hampton of Waynesville, North Carolina, and Monterica Sade Neil of Memphis won the 2019–2020 Philip Roth Residencies in Creative Writing. They each received $5,000 and a four-month residency at the Stadler Center for Poetry at Bucknell University. The annual residencies are given to fiction writers and creative nonfiction writers. (SEE DEADLINES.)

Syracuse University Press

VETERANS WRITING AWARD

Dewaine Farria of New Orleans won the 2019 Veterans Writing Award for his novel, Revolutions of All Colors. He received $1,000, and his book will be published by Syracuse University Press in fall 2020. Tobias Wolff judged. The biennial award is given for a novel or short story collection; U.S. veterans, active duty personnel in any branch of the U.S. military, or the immediate family members of a veteran or active duty personnel are eligible. As of this writing, the next deadline has not been set.

Talking Gourds

FISCHER PRIZE

Carlos Andrés Gómez of New York City won the 22nd annual Fischer Prize for “C(h)ord.” He received $1,000 and publication of his poem on the Talking Gourds website. He also received a $500 travel stipend to accept the award at the Telluride Literary Arts Festival in May 2020. Rafael Jesús González judged. The annual award is given for a poem. The next deadline is August 30.

University of Wisconsin

WISCONSIN INSTITUTE FOR CREATIVE WRITING FELLOWSHIPS

Seven writers received the 2019–2020 Wisconsin Institute for Creative Writing Fellowships in Poetry and Fiction. Claire Agnes of New York City received the James C. McCreight Fiction Fellowship; R. Cassandra Bruner of Cheney, Washington, received the Jay C. and Ruth Halls Poetry Fellowship; Sean Hammer of New York City received the Hoffman-Halls Emerging Artist Fellowship; Gabriel Louis of Washington, D.C., received the Carol Houck Smith Fiction Fellowship; and Xandria...
Phillips of Shalersville, Ohio, received the First Wave Poetry Fellowship. Each fellow receives a stipend of $38,000 plus benefits, and teaches one creative writing workshop at the University of Wisconsin each semester and gives one public reading. The nine-month fellowships provide time, space, and an intellectual community for poets and fiction writers working on a first or second book. Applicants must hold an MFA or PhD in creative writing and must have published no more than one book.

University of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Institute for Creative Writing Fellowships, English Department, 600 North Park Street, H.C. White Room 6195, Madison, WI 53706. Sean Bishop, Contact. institutemail@english.wisc.edu

Virginia Commonwealth University
LEVIS READING PRIZE
Jenny Xie of New York City won the 22nd annual Levis Reading Prize for Eye Level (Graywolf Press, 2018). She received $5,000 and an all-expenses paid trip to give a reading at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. The annual award is given to honor a first or second book of poetry published during the previous year.

(SEE DEADLINES.)

Virginia Commonwealth University, Levis Reading Prize, English Department, 900 Park Avenue, Hibs Hall, Room 306, P.O. Box 842005, Richmond, VA 23284. AJ White, Contact. whiteaj6@vcu.edu english.vcu.edu/mfa/levis-reading-prize

White Pine Press
POETRY PRIZE
Gary McDowell of Nashville won the 2019 White Pine Press Poetry Prize for Aflame. He received $1,000, and his book will be published by White Pine Press in fall 2020. Sean Thomas Dougherty judged. The annual award is given for a poetry collection. As of this writing, the next deadline has not been set.

White Pine Press, Poetry Prize, P.O. Box 236, Buffalo, NY 14201.

www.whitepine.org

Whiting Foundation
CREATIVE NONFICTION GRANTS
Wil S. Hylton of Baltimore; Channing Gerard Joseph and Walter Thompson-Hernandez, both of Los Angeles; Jim Morris of Washington, D.C.; Kristen Radtke, Albert Samaha, and Damon Tarbor, all of New York City; and Ilyon Woo of Cambridge, Massachusetts, won 2019 Whiting Creative Nonfiction Grants. They each received $40,000. The annual awards are given to writers in the process of completing a book of nonfiction. As of this writing, the next deadline has not been set.

Whiting Foundation, Creative Nonfiction Grants, 16 Court Street, Suite 2308, Brooklyn, NY 11241. (718) 701-5962. info@whiting.org

www.whiting.org/awards/creative-nonfiction-grant

Grants & Awards and Conferences
& Residencies are written by EMMA
KOMLOS-HROBSKY.
Coffee House Press Anthology: Call for Submissions

We invite submissions for an essay anthology that takes a fresh, contemporary look at the silences around class and caste systems that divide us, to be co-edited by a collective of award-winning incarcerated writers and published by Coffee House Press. We define “class” as any “group of belonging” that distinguishes you from other “groups of belonging.” We want the anthology to explore the complex fluidity of class systems and their constantly changing rules. We welcome work that examines, or even redefines, unique aspects of class and counteracts the silence around this topic.

This is an opportunity to confront the unspoken definitions that make us human and to reshape the layers of the social stratum. The pieces should tell the stories of the unseen and the unspoken, and articulate lines of our division. The anthology will address themes around culture, silence, and othering, and in doing so, it will offer healing for some of the world’s fractures.

We warmly encourage submissions from people from all walks of life and across the gender spectrum. The anthology is not about incarceration or the incarcerated.

If you would like your essay to be considered for this publication please submit via email to: wheredoibelonganthology@gmail.com.

We are accepting essays, 2,500–7,500 words in length. We are not accepting queries. Please submit your complete work as a Microsoft Word file. We are open to accepting essays written in any language. We will be accepting approximately 15 essays.

Submissions will be open until April 3, 2020. We hope to respond to all submissions by July 1. All accepted contributions will be paid.

Potential Topics
(a brief list, not a prescription)

- Learning to navigate new “groups of belonging” be they religious, gender, educational.
- Experiences as a member of the creative class
- Health problems stemming from class
- When you’re “kicked out,” of your class i.e., class integration or disintegration
- Relationships across class (those that have succeeded and/or failed)
- Experiences with class forgers or imposters
- Parenting in a different class than you were raised in
- Class warfare
POETS & WRITERS MAGAZINE ANNOUNCES application information for writers conferences, literary festivals, residencies, and colonies of interest to poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers. Applications for the following events are due shortly. Conferences and festivals with rolling, first-come, first-served admission are listed well in advance. Some accept registration on the date of the event. Contact the sponsoring organization for an application and complete guidelines. When requesting information by mail, enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE). All accessibility information has been provided by the sponsoring organizations.

Conferences & Residencies

A.I.R. Studio Paducah
A.I.R. Studio Paducah offers residencies of two weeks to three months to poets, fiction writers, and nonfiction writers in the Lower Town Arts District of Paducah, Kentucky. Residents are provided with a private apartment and studio space. The cost of the residency is $550 for two weeks and $875 for a month. For residencies in 2021, submit up to five poems of any length or up to 10 pages of prose, a résumé, a writer’s statement, and contact information for three references with a $25 application fee by February 15. Visit the website for more information.

Accessibility accommodations include an accessible front sidewalk and entrance; accessible studio doorways; and a walker-accessible bathroom with handrails.

A.I.R. Studio Paducah, 4410 Oglethorpe Street #609, Hyattsville, MD 20781. (301) 454-0433. Kay Lindsey, Communications Coordinator.
airstudiopaducah@gmail.com
www.airstudiopaducah.com

Anderson Center Artist Residency
The Anderson Center for Interdisciplinary Studies offers residencies of two to four weeks from May through October to poets, fiction writers, nonfiction writers, and translators at Tower View, a 350-acre historic estate in Red Wing, Minnesota. Residents are provided with lodging, meals, and studio space. The center also features a Deaf Artists Residency program in June for writers whose primary language is ASL. Using only the online application system, submit a writing sample of up to 10 pages; a résumé, curriculum vitae, or biographical statement; a work plan; and a $20 application fee by February 15. There is no fee for Deaf Artists Residency program applicants. Visit the website for more information.

Accessibility accommodations include elevators or ramp access to all event spaces; accessible parking; and ASL interpretation for events upon request. Contact Stephanie Rogers, executive director, at (651) 388-2009, ext. 1, or stephanie@andersoncenter.org, for additional accessibility details.
Anderson Center Artist Residency, 163 Tower View Drive, P.O. Box 406, Red Wing, MN 55066. (651) 388-2009. info@andersoncenter.org
www.andersoncenter.org

Aspen Summer Words Writing Conference and Literary Festival
The 44th annual Aspen Summer Words Writing Conference and Literary Festival will be held from June 21 to June 26 at the Gant, a resort in the mountains of Aspen, Colorado. The conference features workshops, panels, and readings, as well as opportunities to meet with agents and editors. The faculty includes poet Yolanda Wisher; fiction writers Christopher Castellani, Lan Samantha Chang, Christina Baker Kline, Scott Lasser, and Rebecca Stead; and nonfiction writers Steve Almond, Sarah M. Broom, Aran Shetterly, and Claire Bidwell Smith. Tuition is $1,525, which includes some meals. A limited number of scholarships are available. Lodging is available at the Gant for discounted rates. To apply for a workshop in poetry, fiction, personal essay, memoir, or book editing, submit a writing sample of up to 10 pages with a $30 application fee by February 27.

Registration for a non-juried, generative writing workshop and a three-day readers retreat are first come, first served. Visit the website for more information.

Accessibility accommodations include public transportation near the venue; elevator access to all event spaces, including a service elevator for entry to the building; accessible doorways, pathways, and ramps in all conference center spaces; accessible bathrooms with handrails; accessible parking; and signage in Braille in the conference center rooms, bathrooms, and fitness centers. Contact Whitney Hart, Gant representative, at whitney.hart@destinationhotels.com for additional accessibility details.
Aspen Summer Words Writing Conference and Literary Festival, 110 East Hallam Street, Suite 116, Aspen, CO 81611. (970) 925-3122, ext. 5. Ellie Scott, Program Coordinator.
aspenwords@aspeninstitute.org
aspenwords.org

Association of Writers & Writing Programs Conference and Book Fair
The 2020 AWP Conference and Book Fair will be held from March 4 to March 7 at the Henry B. González Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas. The conference features more than 550 events, panel discussions, and readings;
and a book fair. The keynote speaker is fiction writer Helena María Viramontes. The cost of the conference is $320 for nonmembers, $220 for members, and $70 for students. Lodging is available at the conference hotel for discounted rates. Registration is first come, first served. Visit the website for more information.

Accessibility accommodations include public transportation near the venue; elevator access to all conference center spaces; accessible doorways, pathways, and ramps in all conference center spaces; accessible bathrooms; reserved seats in event spaces for individuals with accessibility needs; accessible parking; ASL and Cued Speech Interpretation and Computer Assisted Real Time (CART) captioning; and Braille copies of the event program. Contact Colleen Cable, associate director of conferences, at colleen@awpwriter.org or (240) 696-7742 for additional accessibility details.

Association of Writers & Writing Programs Conference and Book Fair, 5700 Rivertech Court, Suite 225, Riverdale Park, MD 20737. (240) 696-8273. registration@awpwriter.org www.awpwriter.org

Bread Loaf Conferences
The 2020 Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference will be held from August 12 to August 22 in the Green Mountains of Ripton, Vermont. The conference features workshops in poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction, as well as lectures, craft classes, meetings with editors and agents, and readings by faculty and guests. The faculty includes poets Reginald Dwayne Betts, Victoria Chang, and Ilya Kaminsky; fiction writers Garth Greenwell, Mat Johnson, Laura van den Berg, and Paul Yoon; and creative nonfiction writers Jane Brox, Jennifer Finney Boylan, and Luis Alberto Urrea. Participating publishing professionals include editor Steve Woodward (Graywolf Press) and agent Anjali Singh (Ayesha Pandé Literary). Tuition is $2,450, which includes lodging and meals. The fee for auditors who do not have a manuscript is $2,086. Financial aid is available. Submit up to eight pages of poetry or up to 4,000 words of prose with a $20 application fee by February 15. Space is limited; admissions are first come, first served. Visit the website for more information.

The 2020 Bread Loaf Translators’ Conference will be held from June 10 to June 16 in the Green Mountains of Ripton, Vermont. The conference, designed for poets and prose writers whose work deals with the environment and the natural world, features workshops in poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction, as well as lectures, craft classes, meetings with editors and agents, and readings by faculty and guests. The faculty includes poet Dan Chiasson, fiction writers Jennine Capó Crucet and Lauren Groff, and nonfiction writers Jennifer Ackerman, Kazim Ali, J. Drew Lanham, and Emily Raboteau. Participating publishing professionals include editor Amy Brady (Guernica) and agent Sarah Bowlin (Aevitas Creative Management). Tuition is $2,450, which includes lodging and meals. The fee for auditors who do not have a manuscript is $2,086. Financial aid is available. Submit up to eight pages of poetry or up to 4,000 words of prose with a $20 application fee by February 15. Space is limited; admissions are first come, first served. Visit the website for more information.

The 2020 Bread Loaf Retreat will be held on March 14 at the Barred Owl Retreat in Leicester, Massachusetts. The faculty includes poets and editors Joan Houlihan and Ellen Doré Watson. The cost of the retreat is $475, which includes tuition and meals. Submit a brief bio and statement of interest via e-mail. There is no application fee. Admissions are made on a rolling basis. Visit the website for more information.

Accessibility accommodations include accessible pathways and doorways.

Colrain Poetry Manuscript Retreat
A one-day Colrain Poetry Manuscript Retreat will be held on March 14 at the Colrain Poetry Retreat in Colrain, Massachusetts. The faculty includes poets and editors Joan Houlihan, Ellen Doré Watson, and Ilya Kaminsky. Tuition is $475, which includes tuition and meals. Submit a manuscript with a $20 application fee by February 15. Space is limited; admissions are first come, first served. Visit the website for more information.

For all three conferences, contact Jodi Litchfield, Middlebury College’s ADA Coordinator, at litchfi@middlebury.edu for accessibility details.

Bread Loaf Conferences, Middlebury College, 204 College Street, Middlebury, VT 05753. (802) 443-5286. Noreen Cargill, Administrative Director; Jason Lamb, Coordinator. blwc@middlebury.edu www.middlebury.edu/blwc

Brown Foundation Fellows Program
The Museum of Fine Arts in Houston offers residencies of one to three months from July 1 to November 30 to mid-career poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers at the Dora Maar House in Ménerbes, France. Residents are provided with travel expenses, private lodging, work space, and a $50 daily stipend. Using only the online application system, submit two work samples of up to 20 pages each, a curriculum vitae, a project description, a proposal for a community event, and two letters of recommendation with a $20 application fee by February 15. Visit the website for more information.

Brown Foundation Fellows Program, Dora Maar House, Museum of Fine Arts, P.O. Box 6826, Houston, TX 77265. (713) 639-7345. doramaarhouse@mfah.org www.mfah.org/fellowships/doramaarhouse

Cuttyhunk Island Writers’ Residency
The Cuttyhunk Island Writers’ Residency for fiction writers will be held from September 16 to 23 and October 2 to 9 at the Avalon Inn on Cuttyhunk Island, seven nautical miles off the coast of southeastern Massachusetts. The residency offers workshops, readings, nightly salons, and time to write. The faculty includes fiction writer Karen Thompson Walker. The cost of the residency, which includes lodging, workshops, meals, and round-trip transportation on the ferry from New Bedford, Massachusetts, ranges from $950 to $1,900 depending
Conferences & Residencies

P O E T S  &  W R I T E R S

will be held from June 21 to July 3 in Lisbon, Portugal. The conference features workshops in poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction, as well as lectures, craft talks, and literary walks. The faculty includes poets Shayla Lawson and Terri Witek, fiction writers Tayari Jones and Maaza Mengiste, nonfiction writer T Kira Madden, and editors from the Common and Granta. Tuition is $1,950; transportation, lodging, and meals are not included. Lodging is available for discounted rates at area hotels and hostels. The annual DISQUIET Prize, which includes full tuition, airfare, and lodging, will be given to one poet, fiction writer, or creative nonfiction writer; submit up to six poems totaling no more than 10 pages or up to 25 pages of prose with a $15 entry fee by January 3. Four full scholarships, including tuition, lodging, and airfare, are also available for North American writers of Luso descent; submit up to 10 pages of poetry or prose and a personal statement by January 3. There is no application fee. For general conference applications, submit three poems or up to 10 pages of prose and a refundable $150 tuition deposit. Financial aid is available.

Desert Nights, Rising Stars Writers Conference
The 2020 Desert Nights, Rising Stars Writers Conference will be held from February 21 to February 22 on the Arizona State University campus in Tempe. The conference features workshops in poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and publishing, as well as craft classes, lectures, panel discussions, and readings. The faculty includes poets Sherwin Bitsui, Natalie Scenters-Zapico, and Solmaz Sharif; fiction writers Ingrid Rojas Contreras, Cristina García, and Nafissa Thompson-Spires; and fiction and nonfiction writer Vanessa Hua. The cost of the conference is $300. Single-day passes are available for $150. Registration is first come, first served. Lodging is available at nearby hotels and inns. Visit the website for more information.

Accessibility accommodations include public transportation near the venue; elevators in all conference spaces; accessible sidewalks, pathways, and doorways; accessible bathrooms with handrails; reserved seats in event spaces for individuals with accessibility needs; accessible parking; ASL interpretation, assistive listening devices, and text copies of talks upon request; and closed captioning for media. Contact Ashley Wilkins, the Piper Center’s coordinator, at ashley.wilkins@asu.edu and (480) 965-7103 for additional accessibility details.

Desert Nights, Rising Stars Writers Conference
Arizona State University, Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing, 450 East Tyler Mall, P.O. Box 875002, Tempe, AZ 85287.
piper.asu.edu/conference

DISQUIET International Literary Program
The 2020 DISQUIET International Literary Program, sponsored by Dzanc Books and Centro Nacional de Cultura, will be held from June 21 to July 3 in Lisbon, Portugal. The conference features workshops in poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction, as well as lectures, craft talks, and literary walks. The faculty includes poets Shayla Lawson and Terri Witek, fiction writers Tayari Jones and Maaza Mengiste, nonfiction writer T Kira Madden, and editors from the Common and Granta. Tuition is $1,950; transportation, lodging, and meals are not included. Lodging is available for discounted rates at area hotels and hostels. The annual DISQUIET Prize, which includes full tuition, airfare, and lodging, will be given to one poet, fiction writer, or creative nonfiction writer; submit up to six poems totaling no more than 10 pages or up to 25 pages of prose with a $15 entry fee by January 3. Four full scholarships, including tuition, lodging, and airfare, are also available for North American writers of Luso descent; submit up to 10 pages of poetry or prose and a personal statement by January 3. There is no application fee. For general conference applications, submit three poems or up to 10 pages of prose and a refundable $150 tuition deposit. Financial aid is available.

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• Write & workshop — in English
• Explore jazz spots
• Stroll along the Seine
• Linger at a café

Join Patricia Tennison, university writing teacher, Paris resident, Chicago journalist. All writing levels welcome.
Juniper Summer Writing Institute
The Juniper Summer Writing Institute will be held from June 14 to June 20 on the University of Massachusetts campus in Amherst. The program features workshops in poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction, as well as craft seminars, manuscript consultations, and readings. The faculty includes poets CAConrad, Khadijah Queen, and Dara Wier; fiction writers Stephen Graham Jones, Noy Holland, and Maaza Mengiste; and nonfiction writer Paul Lisicky. Visiting writers include poet Peter Gizzi and nonfiction writer Jaquira Díaz. Tuition, which includes some meals, is $1,700. Manuscript consultations are available for an additional $300. Lodging ranges from $25 to $50 per night for a campus dorm room to $159 per night for a room at the campus hotel. Lodging at area hotels and inns is also available from $75 to $205 per night. Scholarships are available. Using only the online application system, submit 5 pages of poetry or up to 10 pages of prose with a $40 application fee. General applications are accepted on a rolling basis; the deadline
for scholarship applications is January 15. Visit the website for more information.

Accessibility accommodations include elevator access to all program spaces; accessible sidewalks, pathways, and doorways; accessible bathrooms and all-gender, single-occupancy bathrooms; “scent-safer” rooms and seating areas; accessible parking; ASL interpretation by advance request; text copies of all talks; closed captioning for presented media; and signage in Braille throughout the space. Contact Betsy Wheeler, managing director, at ejwheele@umass.edu or (413) 545-5503 for additional accessibility details.

Juniper Summer Writing Institute, University of Massachusetts, English Department, E354 South College, Amherst, MA 01003. (413) 545-5503. Betsy Wheeler, Managing Director. juniperinstitute@hfa.umass.edu www.umass.edu/juniperinstitute

Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts
The Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts offers two- to eight-week residencies year-round to writers of all genres, including poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers in Nebraska City, Nebraska. Residents are provided with lodging, private studio space, and a $100 weekly stipend. For residencies from July 6 to December 18, using only the online application system submit 10 poems totaling no more than 30 pages or two stories, essays, or book chapters totaling no more than 7,500 words; a résumé; two artist statements; and contact information for two references with a $35 application fee by March 2. Visit the website for more information.

Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts, 801 Third Corso, Nebraska City, NE 68410. (402) 874-9600. www.khncenterforthearts.org/residency

Lit Camp
The 2020 Lit Camp will be held from May 10 to May 15 at the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California. The conference features workshops, panels, and yoga for fiction writers and creative nonfiction writers. The faculty includes fiction writers Rebecca Makkai, Dana Spiotta, and Claire Vaye Watkins; agent Bretne Bloom (The Book Group); and editor Ethan Nosowsky (Graywolf Press). The cost of the conference, including lodging and meals, ranges from $995 to $2,295, depending on lodging. Registration is limited to 40 participants. Using only the online application system, submit a writing sample of up to 4,000 words of fiction or creative nonfiction with a $30 application fee by January 31. Visit the website for more information.

Accessibility accommodations include accessible lodging (available with advance booking) and accessible parking.

Lit Camp, c/o 379 Laidley Street, San Francisco, CA 94131. Janis Cooke Newman, Founder. info@litcampwriters.org litcampwriters.org

MacDowell Colony
The MacDowell Colony offers residencies of up to two months year-round to poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers on a 450-acre estate in Peterborough, New Hampshire. Writers are provided with lodging, meals, and studio space. Travel aid and personal expense grants are available based on need. Students enrolled in a degree-granting program at the time of application are ineligible. For residencies from June through September, using only the online application system, submit 10 poems totaling no more than 30 pages or two stories, essays, or book chapters totaling no more than 7,500 words; a résumé; two artist statements; and contact information for two references with a $35 application fee by March 2. Visit the website for more information.

Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts, 801 Third Corso, Nebraska City, NE 68410. (402) 874-9600. www.khncenterforthearts.org/residency

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Martha’s Vineyard Institute of Creative Writing Summer Writers’ Conference, 7 East Pasture Road, Aquinnah, MA 02535. (954) 242-2903. Alexander Weinstein, Director. mvicwinfo@gmail.com mvicw.com

Millay Colony
The Millay Colony offers two- and four-week residencies from April through November to poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers at Steepletop, the former estate of Edna St. Vincent Millay in Austerlitz, New York. Each residency includes a private room, studio, and meals. For residencies from August through November, using only the downtown Edgartown on the island of Martha’s Vineyard, Massachusetts. The conference features weeklong seminars with daily workshops in poetry and fiction, as well as manuscript consultations, panel discussions, and readings. The faculty includes poets Amelia Martens, Adrian Matejka, Elizabeth Schmunl, Britton Shurley, and Keith Taylor; and fiction writers Tia Clark, John T. Howard, Wendy Rawlings, Samrat Upadhyay, and Alexander Weinstein. Tuition is $1,075 per week. Lodging is available at the VAP campus for $625 to $975. General registration is first come, first served. To apply for financial aid, submit three poems or 10 pages of prose and a letter of interest with a $25 application fee by May 1.

The conference also offers full fellowships (valued at $1,700 each), which include full tuition and lodging, and partial fellowships, which include a $500 tuition waiver, to educators, writers with children who are 16 or younger, writers of color, and queer writers; the application deadline is January 10 for educators, January 31 for parents, February 14 for writers of color, and February 28 for queer writers. Two full and two partial

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The Tomaž Šalamun Prize is open to poets at any stage of their careers. The winner’s chapbook will be published by Factory Hollow Press. The winner also will receive $500, ten copies of their chapbook, and a free one-month residency at the Tomaž Šalamun Centre for Poetry in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Final judge: Bianca Stone

DEADLINE: MARCH 15, 2020

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MacDowell Colony
The MacDowell Colony is an international artists’ community dedicated to nurturing artistic vision, fostering personal and creative growth, and promoting the exchange of ideas. The MacDowell Colony offers residencies from April through November to artists in all fields of creative endeavor—writing, painting, composition, music, and multi-disciplinary work. The Colony is home to the VAP campus for $625 to $975. General registration is first come, first served. To apply for financial aid, submit three poems or 10 pages of prose and a letter of interest with a $25 application fee by May 1.

The conference also offers full fellowships (valued at $1,700 each), which include full tuition and lodging, and partial fellowships, which include a $500 tuition waiver, to educators, writers with children who are 16 or younger, writers of color, and queer writers; the application deadline is January 10 for educators, January 31 for parents, February 14 for writers of color, and February 28 for queer writers. Two full and two partial

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Final judge: Bianca Stone

DEADLINE: MARCH 15, 2020

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MacDowell Colony, 100 High Street, Peterborough, NH 03458. (603) 924-3886. admissions@macdowellcolony.org www.macdowellcolony.org

Martha’s Vineyard Institute of Creative Writing Summer Writers’ Conference
The 2020 Martha’s Vineyard Institute of Creative Writing Summer Writers’ Conference will be held from June 7 to June 13 and from June 14 to June 20 at the Vineyard Arts Project (VAP) campus
the conference, which includes tuition, lodging, and meals, ranges from $1,100 to $1,900, depending on lodging. Using only the online application system, submit up to six poems or up to 1,500 words of prose by February 1. There is no application fee. Visit the website for more information.

Orion in the Wilderness, Orion Magazine, 187 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230. kyale@orionmagazine.org orionmagazine.org/workshops

UCLA Extension Writers Studio
The Writers Studio, sponsored by the UCLA Extension Writers’ Program, will be held from February 27 to March 1 on the UCLA campus in Los Angeles. The conference features workshops in fiction, creative nonfiction, and marketing and publicity for writers and agents. The faculty includes fiction writers Noel Alumit, Natashia Deon, Jeanne De Vita, and Erin Entrada Kelly; nonfiction writers Antonia Crane and Amy Friedman; and publishing professional Katie Dunham. The cost of the conference is $936 with use of the early enrollment discount code “EARLY” through January 27 and $985 thereafter. Registration is first come,
CONFERENCES & RESIDENCIES

first served. Visit the website for more information.

Accessibility accommodations include public transportation near the venue; elevator access to all conference spaces; accessible sidewalks, pathways, and doorways; accessible bathrooms with handrails; and accessible parking; additional accessibility requests, such as requests for text copies of talks or ASL interpretation, may be made through the UCLA Office of Disability Services. Contact the UCLA Office of Disability Services at (310) 825-9355 for additional accessibility details.

UCLA Extension Writers Studio, 1010 Westwood Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90024. (310) 825-9415. Nutschell Anne Windsor, Program Coordinator. writers@uclaextension.edu writers.uclaextension.edu/programs-services

Voices of the Wilderness Artist in Residence Program
The U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service offer residencies of one to two weeks from June through August to poets, fiction writers, and creative non-fiction writers to take part in stewardship projects in the wilderness of Alaska. Residents are paired with a wilderness ranger, with whom they explore the

locate 27 miles southeast of Sheridan. Residents are provided with lodging, private studio space, and meals. For residencies from mid-August through early December, using only the online application system submit 10 pages of poetry or 20 pages of prose, a project description, and two letters of recommendation sent directly to Ucross with a $40 application fee by March 1. Visit the website for more information.

Contact Cyndi Reed, program associate, at creed@ucross.org or Tracey Y. Kikut, program director, at tkikut@ucross.org for accessibility details.

Ucross Foundation Residency Program, 30 Big Red Lane, Clearmont, WY 82835. (307) 737-2291. info@ucross.org www.ucrossfoundation.org/residency-program

Vermont Studio Center
The Vermont Studio Center offers 2- to 12-week residencies year-round to poets, fiction writers, creative nonfiction writers, and translators in Johnson, Vermont, a village located in the heart of the northern Green Mountains. The center provides time and space to write, as well as readings, craft talks, and conferences with two visiting writers each month. The fee for a four-week residency is $4,250, which includes a private room, private studio space, and meals. Fellowships are available, as well as service exchange for reduction of the fee. Using only the online application system, submit up to 10 pages of poetry or 15 pages of prose or translation (including the original text), a curriculum vitae, contact information for two references, and a $25 application fee. The deadline for full fellowships is February 15. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Visit the website for more information.

Vermont Studio Center, P.O. Box 613, Johnson, VT, 05656. (802) 635-2727. writing@vermontstudiocenter.org www.vermontstudiocenter.org/fellowships

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Voices of the Wilderness Artist in Residence Program, P.O. Box 129, Girdwood, AK 99587. Barbara Lydon, Program Coordinator. blydon@fs.fed.us www.fs.usda.gov/goto/votw

Wellspring House Retreat
Wellspring House offers residencies of one week to three months year-round to poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers, on five acres of land in Ashfield, Massachusetts. The retreat accommodates five residents at a time in a converted carriage house and provides private working and living quarters, as well as a large communal space that features a kitchen, living room with fireplace, enclosed sunroom, patio, and gardens. The cost of the residency ranges from $310 to $360 per week, depending on residency room and season. Using only the online application system, submit up to three poems or one story or essay, a cover letter, and a résumé. There is no application fee. Admissions are made on a rolling basis. Visit the website for more information.

Contact Aubry Crosby or John T. Howard, writers-in-residence, for accessibility details.

wellspringhouseretreat@gmail.com
www.wellspringhouseretreat.com

Winter Poetry & Prose Getaway
The 26th annual Winter Poetry & Prose Getaway will be held from January 17 to January 20 at Seaview Hotel, a resort near Atlantic City, New Jersey. The program, sponsored by Murphy Writing of Stockton University, offers workshops in poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction, as well as one-on-one tutorials, featured readings, and open mics. The faculty includes poets Renée Ashley, Denise Duhamel, Yusef Komunyakaa, Laura McCullough, and Peter E. Murphy; fiction writers Judith Lindbergh and Paul Lisicky; and creative nonfiction writers Tom McAllister and Mimi Schwartz. Tuition, which includes some meals, is $525; lodging is not included. The cost for room and meal packages is $325 for a shared room, $535 for a private room, or $735 for a shared room package with a non-participating guest. Registration is first come, first served. Visit the website for more information.

Winter Poetry & Prose Getaway, Murphy Writing of Stockton University, 30 Front Street, Hammonton, NJ 08037. (609) 626-3594. Peter Murphy, Founder, and Taylor Coyle, Coordinator.
info@wintergetaway.com
stockton.edu/wintergetaway

Conferences & Residencies
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ALLPOETRY.COM—Join the largest poetry community, more than 500,000 poets strong. From beginners to experts, get friendly encouragement and detailed critiques when you’re ready. No-fee contests, $50 cash prizes, active discussion forums, and join our annual anthology. Totally free with optional monthly memberships. For more information, visit: www.allpoetry.com/pw.

CALLING ALL poets to submit an original poem to be included in the 2020 Poetry Leaves Exhibition. Submit poems at www.poetryleaves.com/submit-your-poem. Poems will be published in the 2020 anthology. The exhibition is an outdoor exhibit in Waterford, MI, designed to bring poetry into the everyday lives of people. Go to www.poetry-leaves.com.

TELLING OUR Stories Press is seeking visual and literary short memoir submissions for the short memoir projects—Show & Tell. Show seeks visual memoir and Tell seeks literary memoir. For info and to learn about the 10Friends salon centered around a year-long mutual journaling experience, visit tellingourstoriespress.com.


CHALLENGES IN LIFE monthly online newsletter is seeking personal essays from women of all ages. New writers are encouraged to submit their work. For further details and submission guidelines, please visit the website at: www.changesinlife.com.

The AwakeMagazine is seeking exceptional, original work by both established and emerging writers. Writing that first appeared in Bayou Magazine has been shortlisted for the Pushcart Prize and named in the long list of Notable Essays in Best American Essays. Bayou Magazine reviews submissions from September 1 to May 1. Website: bayou magazine.org.

CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

Books

ATELIER26 BOOKS welcomes submissions of literary fiction, creative nonfiction, and hybrid work that displays sensitivity to the nuances, power, and infinite potential of language while also surprising the reader with its larger vision. Give us imagery that’s unforgettable in its expression, juxtapositions, and collisions. Guidelines at atelier26books.com.

TINTERBOX Editions is looking for full-length poetry manuscripts, including hybrid, prose poetry, and lyric essay, for the months of December and January. We read prose in summer. Tinterbox is a nonprofit independent press located in M.N. Go to www.tinterboxeditions.org for more details. We look forward to reading your work!

CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

Chapbooks

LEFORA PUBLISHING will be accepting submissions of work by authors writing about or living in New England from January 1 to March 31, 2020. Please follow the submission guidelines on our website at www.leforapublishing.com. Work submitted without cover letters will be discarded.

GREEN LINDEN Press—named by Entropy as one of the best small presses—invites you to submit poetry chapbook manuscripts during our open reading period, now until March 20. One or more manuscripts will be selected for publication in late 2020; authors will receive 20 copies and publicity. For details, see www.greenlindenpress.com.

BAYOU MAGAZINE is seeking literary and visual art concerned with the impact of violent conflict and military service beyond the combat zone. We read year round, charge no fees, and publish each May and November. Submit through our website: www.collateralljournal.com.

CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

Magazines

2018 NOMINEE: One of the Top 10 literary blogs on the web. The RacinVerb Literary Magazine seeks submissions of well-crafted poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and visual art. For submission guidelines, visit us at theravensperch.com.

AJI MAGAZINE is calling for poetry, short fiction, literary nonfiction, reviews, photography, and graphic art from established and emerging writers and artists. Submissions open on May 1 and November 1 and close once the upcoming issue is filled. Back issues are available at www.ajimagazine.com; e-mail queries can be sent to ajimagazine@gmail.com.

THE AWAKENINGS Review, a leading literary magazine for writers and poets with a relationship to mental illnesses—either self, family member, or friend—is now accepting e-mail submissions to its 2020 issue. Send your work with a cover letter to ar@awakeningsproject.org or by mail to The Awakenings Review, P.O. Box 177, Wheaton, IL 60187. See new submission guidelines at www.awakeningsproject.org.

ComStock Review opens January 1 through March 31, 2020. See website for details for paper and online submissions. Now entering our 34th
CALL FOR: MAGAZINES

PEN + BRUSH IN Print, the publishing arm of a 125-year-old nonprofit supporting the work of emerging and mid-career women writers, seeks poetry and short literary fiction by women and nonbinary authors. No submission fee! We also accept novels: see our website for more information: www.penandbrush.org/explore/literary.

PLATH PROFILES: essays, art, poetry, comments, memoir, book reviews. Deadline: July 22, 2020, for V.12. Submit to battenforplath@gmail.com.

RATTLE SEAKS submissions of Postcard Poems for the Summer 2020 issue: Poems may be any style or subject, but must have been written on and accompanied by a related postcard (original or public domain artwork preferred). Deadline: January 15. Online submissions accepted as image files. For more information, visit our website: www.rattle.com.


SAPIENS—A digital magazine that illuminates anthropology for a general audience—invites submissions of literary anthropological poems to celebrate World Poetry Day and National Poetry Month in 2020. Submit up to
3 poems. Must have an anthropology background. Guidelines and to submit: www.sapiens.org/poetry. Deadline is January 7, 2020. Queries: chris@christineweber.net.

Taggart. Tebot Bach Publisher. Submit 3–5 poems in a single document. Check website for guidelines: www.spillway.org. E-mail submission only: spillwayz@spillway.org.


TAHOMA LITERARY Review is open January 1 through March 1 for submissions in poetry, fiction, and nonfiction. We pay $55 for poetry & flash prose, $135 for longer work. Everything we accept comes from the open submission queue. Work from TLR has appeared in major anthologies. Guidelines: tahoma literaryreview.com.

TIMEWORN Literary Journal is a bi-annual publication seeking short historical fiction (2–5k words) highlighting unrepresented corners of history. Speculative elements strongly encouraged! No submission fee. Contributors are paid $25 + contributor copy. Submissions open January 1–31 for April 2020 release. Find guidelines and Issue 1 at timewornlit.com. E-mail queries: timewornlit@gmail.com.

TRUE STORY, A monthly mini-magazine from the editors of Creative Nonfiction, seeks unpublished works of longform narrative nonfiction between 5,000 and 10,000 words long, on any subject and in any style. No deadline. Complete guidelines at www.creativenonfiction.org/submissions.

TWO HAWKS Quarterly is an online journal affiliated with Antioch University Los Angeles’s BA program in Creative Writing and is setting the bar for contemporary literature with bold and illuminating poetry, fiction, CNF, and quality experimental work. Read us. Write for us. Submissions accepted year-round. For guidelines, see www.twohawksquarterly.com.


THE WESTCHESTER Review, an annual print journal, seeks poetry, short fiction, graphic novels, nonfiction, and one-act plays for its upcoming issue by established and emerging authors wherever they reside. We continue to spotlight Westchester authors in a dedicated folio. See website for guidelines: www.westchesterreview.com.

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VERMONT STUDIO CENTER

ALL artists & writers may apply for a VSC Fellowship—February 15, 2020, deadline! VSC residencies include private room, private studio space, and all meals.

For a complete list of special awards & eligibility requirements, visit: www.vermontstudiocenter.org/fellowships

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THE LUSA ISSUE: WOMEN WRITING THE LUSOPHONE WORLD

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The VINCENT BROTHERS Review

Short Story Contest
Deadline: April 30th, 2020
First Prize: $1,000 and Issue #24 publication
Second Prize: $500 and Issue #24 publication

vincentbrothersreview.org

One Story Leads to Another

JAN FEB 2020 124
$1,500 PRIZE!  
**River Styx** Microfiction Contest. 500 words maximum per story, up to 3 stories per entry. $20 entry fee includes 1-year subscription, or $15 fee for 1 issue with the winning stories. Mail or submit via Submittable by December 31. Address: **River Styx**, 3301 Washington Ave., Ste. 2C, St. Louis, MO 63103. Website: www.riverstyx.org/submittable/microfiction-contest.

$2,250 IN CASH awards, partial developmental editing, and travel to Paris in June for the First Pages Prize. Submit the first 5 pages of your fiction or creative nonfiction manuscript. Enter January 1–February 2, 2020 (extended deadline—February 16). Open to un-agented writers worldwide. Enter at [firstpagesprize.com](http://firstpagesprize.com).

$4,000 IN AWARDS. Enter **New Millennium Writing Awards** by January 31—best poetry: $1,000; fiction: $1,000; nonfiction: $1,000; flash fiction: $1,000. All winners are published in our anthology and online. “This feels like a safe place for artists...Every communication I get from you has the same encouraging tone: Never give up. Keep writing. Your gift is important.”—Jessica M. (recent contest submitter). Visit [www.newmillenniumwritings.org](http://www.newmillenniumwritings.org).


22ND ANNUAL Blue Lynx Prize, $2,000 plus publication is awarded for an unpublished, full-length volume of poems. Submit manuscripts and $28 reading fee to P.O. Box 96, Spokane, WA 99210 or lynxhousepress.submitable.com. The 2019 winner is Kirsten Kaschock for her manuscript *Explain This Corpse*. Former winners include Jim Daniels, Carolyne Wright, Robert Gregory, Suzanne Lummis, and Lue Lipsitz. Judges have included Yusel Komunyakaa, Melissa Kwasny, Christopher Buckley, Dana Wier, Dorianne Laux, and Robert Wrigley. Deadline: June 1, 2020.


**2020 BREAD LOAF DESERT WRITING PRIZE** will accept submissions January 1 through April 1, 2020. The prize honors nonfiction that illustrates artistic excellence, sensitivity to place, and desert literacy, with the desert as subject and setting. It recognizes the vital role deserts play worldwide in the ecosystem and the human narrative.

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**BREAD LOAF TRANSLATORS’ CONFERENCE**

**FACULTY**

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Abu-Zeid  
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Jody Gladding  
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Kevin Morgan Watson

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Nov. 1 to Feb. 15.  
Enrollment is limited.

Focused on literary translation of poetry and prose

Introductory and advanced workshops

Inspiring schedule of readings and lectures

All in Vermont’s Green Mountains

[go.middlebury.edu/bltc](http://go.middlebury.edu/bltc)
Emerging, mid-career, or established nonfiction writers are welcome to apply. The prize will recognize 1 writer with a $2,500 award, a reading and reception at the High Desert Museum in Bend, OR, and a residency in Central OR. Submission guidelines: writingprize.org.

AFTER 25 YEARS of brewing, Literal Latte is taking a coffee break. Submissions to the Literal Latte Fiction Awards are still being accepted through January. All other submissions are frozen until we finish reading and publishing all the treats we have in-house. Stay tuned for a feast of treats we have in-house. and publishing all the

ANNOUNCING THE first Annual Book Architecture GIT-R-DONE Travel Grant. What do we think is most helpful for the writers that we work with? A travel stipend for the author of a work-in-progress to get away and finish the thing. Grant money awarded: $2,500. Deadline: January 15. For submission criteria, visit bookarchitecture.com/git-r-done.

THE ANNUAL Rattle Chapbook Prize offers 3 winners $5,000 for a chapbook (up to 36 pages), plus 500 author copies, and distribution to Rattle’s 6,000+ subscribers. Entry fee of $25 includes a 1-year subscription to the magazine. Deadline: January 15. For guidelines and to read past winners, visit our website: www.rattle.com/chapbooks.


BARRY SPACKS Poetry Prize. Gunpowder Press is accepting book-length manuscripts of 48–100 pages for the sixth annual Barry Spacks Poetry Prize, which honors Barry’s legacy of accessible yet challenging work. The prize is $500 + 50 author copies. Entry fee is $20. Jessica Jacobs will judge. Full details at gunpowderpress.com.


BE PART OF A 150-year legacy! California’s oldest literary journal is seeking original works of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and visual art for Reed Magazine. Each of our 4 contests offer $1,000 or more, and applicants receive a complimentary copy. Submissions June 1–November 1. Let your voice be heard. Website: www.reedmag.org/submit.

BELLINGHAM Review’s annual contests for fiction, poetry, and nonfiction are open December 1 to March 15. $1,000 first-place prizes. $20 entry fee. General submissions are open September 15 to December 1. Bellingham Review is dedicated to offering continual support to our authors. See complete submission guidelines at bhreview.org.

C&R PRESS is pleased to announce our $1,000 prizes in fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction and memoir open. Winners, runners-up, and a shortlist are announced in January 2020. Winners receive the prize and publication. All manuscripts are considered for publication. Authors are invited to read at our Spring AWP, and Summer and Fall New York City events. C&R Press publishes a range
Classifieds

CHATTahooCHEE Review, Lamar York Prizes, November 1–January 31. Two prizes of $1,000 each and publication in Chattahoochee Review are given annually for a short story and an essay. Anthony Varallo will judge in fiction and Alice Bolin will judge in nonfiction. Visit the website for complete guidelines: chattahoocheereview.gsu.edu/lamar-york-prizes.

CLOUDBANK awards a $200 prize for 1 poem or flash fiction in each issue. Deadline for CLOUDBANK 14 submissions is February 28. Full guidelines— and more—at www.cloaubankbooks.com. Revive us with your fire!


ENTER -1000 Below, Midway Journal’s annual flash prose and poetry contest. The contest runs from March 1–May 31. $500 grand prize. $250 second prize. $50 third prize. $10 entry fee. Unlimited entries. For more details, go to midwayjournal.com.


FLASH FICTION on a supernatural theme. $500 first prize, $100 each for 2 honorable mentions, in The Screw Turn Flash Fiction Competition, plus publication on The Ghost Story website and in our paperbound anthology, “21st Century Ghost Stories.” Editors judge. $10 submission fee; January 31 deadline. Complete guidelines at: www.ghoststory.com/flash-fiction-competition.

THE FLORIDA Review Editors’ Awards in fiction, creative nonfiction, and poetry: Winners receive $1,000 each and publication. Deadline: March 31. All submissions considered for publication. Entry fee, $25, includes a subscription to TFR. For guidelines and online submission link, see our website: http://floridareview.cah.ucf.edu.

FOURTH GENRE Steinberg Essay Contest is accepting submissions from January 1 to March 15 at fourthgenre.submittable.com. The 2020 contest judge is former editor Laura Julier. Winning author receives $1,000 and publication in the issue that’s featured at AWP. $20 per entry, up to 6,000 words. Detailed submission guidelines: fourthgenre.msu.edu.

FROM JANUARY 1 TO January 31, Crazyhorse will accept entries for prizes in fiction, nonfiction, & poetry. Winners receive $2,000 and publication. The $20 entry fee includes a 1-year subscription; all manuscripts entered will be considered for publication. For more information and to see our judges, visit: crazyhorse.cofc.edu/prizes.


CHATTahooCHEE Review. Lamar York Prizes, November 1–January 31. Two prizes of $1,000 each and publication in Chattahoochee Review are given annually for a short story and an essay. Anthony Varallo will judge in fiction and Alice Bolin will judge in nonfiction. Visit the website for complete guidelines: chattahoocheereview.gsu.edu/lamar-york-prizes.

DANAHY FICTION Prize/Tampa Review Prize. $1,000 and publication in Tampa Review for a previously unpublished short story, 500-5,000 words. Enter now! Year-end deadline approaching. $20 entry includes free subscription. All stories considered for publication. Address: Danahy Fiction Prize, Tampa Review, 401 W Kennedy Blvd., Tampa, FL 33606. Website: www.ut.edu/tampa/review.

POETS & WRITERS 127

of work from a variety of voices. Website: www.crrpress.org.

SMART, ESSAYS FROM A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW

“A clear-eyed and open-hearted reflection on our place in the American landscape, Ghosts helps the reader navigate . . . the fragile natural world. . . . Throughout . . . we dig through ‘strata’ and examine the bones Davis unearths in poems that connect modern living to a pervasive but opaque past.”—Courtney Bambrick, Poetry Editor, Philadelphia Stories

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GHOSTS, POEMS BY NANCY L. DAVIS

“A clear-eyed and open-hearted reflection on our place in the American landscape, Ghosts helps the reader navigate . . . the fragile natural world. . . . Throughout . . . we dig through ‘strata’ and examine the bones Davis unearths in poems that connect modern living to a pervasive but opaque past.”

—Courtney Bambrick, Poetry Editor, Philadelphia Stories

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Marilyn Nelson
Joseph Millar
Mary O’Donnell, etc.

Luis Alberto Urrea
Laura van den Berg
Paul Yoon

SPECIAL GUESTS

Julia Alvarez
John Elder
Robert Hass
Brenda Hillman

Middlebury Bread Loaf Writers’ Conferences
GRAYSON BOOKS Chapbook Contest. $500 and 50 gorgeous copies to winner. 16–32 pages of poetry, $20 reading fee. January 31 deadline. Simultaneous submissions accepted if we are notified immediately upon acceptance elsewhere. Christine Beck to judge. For complete guidelines, see www.graysonbooks.com.


THE KATHRYN A. Morton Prize in Poetry and the Mary McCarthy Prize in Short Fiction are open for submissions through February 15. Each awards a prize of $2,000, publication of the manuscript, and a standard royalty contract. $29 entry fee for each. Alberto Ríos will guest judge for the Prize in Poetry and Alice Sebold will guest judge the Prize in Short Fiction! Guidelines can be found at www.sarabandebooks.org/morton and www.sarabandebooks.org/mccarthy.


NEW STORIES FROM the Midwest 2020 will celebrate its 10th anniversary by presenting selected stories from previous volumes alongside new stories published in 2018 or 2019. Journals may submit 6 stories published 2018–2019 for free; writers may submit unlimited stories published 2018–2019 for $3 each. A $100 Heartland Fiction Prize will be awarded to a story of exceptional power. All contributors receive 2 copies and discount on more. Guest editor is Michael Martone. Deadline: February 1, 2020. To submit, visit: https://newamericanpress.submittable.com/submit.


THE RACHEL Wetzsteon Chapbook Award, run by Map Literary: A Journal of Contemporary Writing & Art, seeks fiction

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submissions for its 2020 contest. Submissions are due by January 31, 2020. Website: www.map
literary.org.

THE RUBYRY BOOK
Award accepts books by self-published authors and independent presses. Prize pot approx. $2,800 for Book of the Year and category winners. Winners also receive write-ups on GoodReads and a glass plaque. Reputable judges. Entry fee: $60. Closing date: March 31, 2020. Website: www
.ruberybookaward.com.

SELECTED SHORTS’
Stella Kupferberg Memorial Short Story Contest. Prize includes $1,000, publication on electricliterature.com, a 10-week course with Gotham Writers Workshop, and 2 tickets to a performance of Selected Shorts featuring your winning story chosen by judge Nicole Chung. Max: 750 words. Fee: $25. Due: March 3, 2020. For complete guidelines, visit www
.symphonyspace.org/selected-shorts/the-stella-kupferberg-memorial-short-story-prize.

STOCKHOLM
Writers Prize. Win a 7-day residency in Stockholm, Sweden! Prize includes accommodation, $1,000 stipend, and entry to the Stockholm Writers’ Festival (May 22–24). Open to all emerging writers working on social justice themes. Genre writers are especially encouraged. Entry fee is $25, submissions close February 15. For details, see https://stockholmwriters
festival.com.

TAMPA REVIEW
Prize for Poetry. $2,000, hardcover and paperback book publication, portfolio in Tampa Review for unpublished manuscript by new or established poets. $25 entry includes subscription. Enter now! Year-end deadline approaching. Address: Tampa Review Prize, University of Tampa, 401 W. Kennedy Blvd., Tampa, FL 33606. Website: www.ut.edu/tampa-review.

UNIVERSITY OF THE
Arts Art Alliance Writers’ Workshop Poetry Prize. Free to enter. $100 prize + publication in Horsethief Magazine + 10 broad-sides of winning poems + invitation to read in Philadelphia. Two winning poems selected. To submit, visit uarts .edu/ce/creativewriting and follow directions on the tab “Opportunities for writers.”

WERGLE FLOMP

WHEELBARROW

WIN $100, $50, AND publication for a poem about “wilderness.” New Mexico Wild is sponsoring a poetry writing contest; deadline January 31, 2020. To see requirements and to enter today, go to https://interland3.d onorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.

ZONE 3 PRESS IS
excited to announce the 2020 First Book Award in Poetry. We are looking for poetry manuscripts of 48–80 pages. The reading period is January 1–April 1, 2020. Winner receives $1,000 and publication. Find us on Submittable or visit zone3press.com/books/poetry-contest.

Miscellaneous

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SEPTEMBER
20–26, 2020
Rolling admissions through April 15. Enrollment is limited.
willing to correspond through USPS. Qualified: 1991 BA in English + GRE + LSAT. Family able to pay tuition. Contact Matthew Feeney #173012, 1000 Lakeshore Dr., Moose Lake, MN 55767 or authormdf@gmail.com.

The application period typically opens in February and closes in March of each fiscal year. Guidelines for the FY2020 application round (now closed) may be found at: https://nysca.org/downloads/guidelines/FY2020/FY20_Literature_Guidelines.pdf (see Literary Translation on pg. 9). Please check the NYSCA website (https://www.arts.ny.gov) in early 2020 for updates on literary translation opportunities. NYSCA may offer funding for FY2021.

**Publications**

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**Porch’s Writing Retreat**

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**Wellspring House Retreat**

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WRITING RETREATS with the Cambridge Writers’ Workshop in New Orleans (March 19–22, 2020) and Paris, France (July 19–22, 2020). Poetry, fiction, nonfiction, playwriting, and multi-genre workshops will be taught by faculty


Residencies


BRUSH CREEK Foundation for the Arts—residency deadline: March 1, 2020. Writers, visual artists, musicians, and composers are encouraged to apply for the foundation’s 3-week artist residency programs, complete with lodging, meals, working facilities, and incredible natural beauty. For more information, visit www.brushcreekarts.org.

Djerassi Resident Artists Program offers residencies, at no cost, to artists in the disciplines of literature, visual arts, media arts, music composition, choreography, and science. Located in the Santa Cruz Mountains 1 hour south of San Francisco. Private studios and all meals included. Six sessions running from mid-April to mid-November. The program also offers workshops with varying deadlines in writing and movement alchemy. Application deadline: March 16, 2020, for residencies in 2021. E-mail: programdirector@djerassi.org. Website: www.djerassi.org.

DORLAND Mountain Arts Colony located in the hills overlooking the beautiful Temecula Valley wine country of Southern CA. Five self-contained cottages with workspace, porch, and use of communal studio space. Hiking trails/ponds/views. Peaceful, serene, inspiring. Finish your project. All 2020 openings filling quickly, so apply/reserve now! E-mail: info@dorlandartscolony.org; website: www.dorlandartscolony.org; phone: (951) 302-3857.

MINERAL SCHOOL: Join a 1- or 2-week summer 2020 writing, screenwriting, or visual arts residency in Mineral, WA, near Mt. Rainier. Live inside a historic schoolhouse with fellow residents, in a private studio/bedroom, with all meals provided. Fellowships available. Applications close on February 15, 2020. To apply, visit www.mineral-school.org.


SAGINAW VALLEY State University. The Fredericks-Follett-Roethke Graduate Fellowship in the Arts & Humanities awards funded residential fellowships each year to support original research or creative work on Marshall Fredericks, Ken Follett, or Theodore Roethke, using one of SVSU’s 3 principal archival collections in the

Maggie Straw

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A Jubilee Year

The year 2020 marks the fiftieth anniversary of Poets & Writers. As we look back on a half century of service to writers—and forward to decades more of bringing you the inspiration, information, and guidance you count on from Poets & Writers Magazine, plus expanded online resources and growing national programs—we want to share a few stories that authors have told us over the years:

“Poets & Writers is a great leveler of the playing field. The magazine—easy to find, affordable to purchase—gives a beginning writer living in a small town the same access to information as a connected veteran living in Manhattan. Poets & Writers gave me, a young writer, a crash course in the writing life, giving me access to the opportunities that changed my life.” —Tayari Jones, author of An American Marriage.

“Having once been a young, unpublished writer myself, the idea of having any kind of life in letters—or, for that matter, of publishing so much as a single story—felt a little like trying to fly to Jupiter in a spacecraft made entirely of whatever happens to be around the house. Poets & Writers was a crucial resource for me, in terms of the otherwise-mysterious process by which a story or novel gets, as it were, to Jupiter. It remains every bit as crucial to the new generation of the young and unpublished.” —Michael Cunningham, author of The Hours.

“When I first started writing I used to pore over the back pages of Poets & Writers Magazine. I entered lots of contests that way. When at last I placed in a contest and my name was listed in the back of Poets & Writers Magazine, I thought I’d died and gone to heaven. I walked around my apartment clutching a copy of the magazine in my arms. I remain grateful to P&W for giving me hope when things felt rather hopeless.” —Min Jin Lee, author of Free Food for Millionaires and Pachinko.

“My most important connection with Poets & Writers has been through the Readings & Workshops program, which has for years supported events that I’ve participated in, both in California and New York. One of the touchstones of this program is making sure that writers get paid for their work. Another is helping to create a range of experiences in which writers meet and engage with audiences. Both—the money and the encounters with audiences—are invaluable.” —Quincy Troupe, author of ten volumes of poetry, including Errançities, and six nonfiction works, including Miles and Me.

Finally, when Joy Harjo received the 2019 Jackson Poetry Prize—just days before she was named U.S. poet laureate—she said, “Poets & Writers has accompanied me on my whole journey to becoming a poet and writer.” As you pursue your writing in the years ahead, we’ll be here to help you along your journey too.

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Authors Tayari Jones, Michael Cunningham, Min Jin Lee, Quincy Troupe, and Joy Harjo.
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