

# SO IT GOES...

an annual publication of Notre Dame's Graduate Creative Writing Program for alumni and friends

## Director's Letter



One of the first things everyone who walks into the creative writing office sees is a wall of books: the novels, nonfiction, hybrid, short story and poetry collections published by the graduates of our MFA program. The shelves of books appear like strata in an archeological dig—and together they do tell the story of a society: the writing program here at Notre Dame, which stretches back to 1991, the year Notre Dame awarded its first MFA. But of course, as in any archaeology, these surface features are only part of the story. As the rest of this newsletter shows, the incredible variety of publications, readings, editing, travels, and conversations with visiting authors, the writers who pass through our program are its real life. And what a lively life it's been: this year we hosted almost 30 readings, which ranged from alums **Noni Ramos**, **Tom Miller** and **Tania Sarfraz**, who returned to campus to read and be part of our ongoing literary community; to current faculty members **Azareen Van der Vliet Oloomi**, **Johannes Göransson**, and **Joyelle McSweeney** who contributed to the conversation by sharing new work; to visiting authors such as **Lidia Yuknavitch**, **Teju Cole**, **Anaïs Duplan**, and **Jeff VanderMeer**, who along with others, added their energy to campus. The scope of publications, readings, and other activities by our community members—some 16 books published this year alone, just to consider one measure—indicates the breadth of this ongoing literary conversation. Another indicator: our MFA students taught 14 classes in creative writing this year in addition to numerous efforts in outreach, and organizing off-campus events. The real significance, though, behind these poems, essays, interviews, hybrid and other writings is the depth of thought, the engagement with the world, the whole point of putting pen to paper to create art that speaks to our moment. The writing program was conceived as a program of literary immersion—deep involvement in the thought life of being a writer—and judging from the markers outlined here, the immersion has been deep, broad, and lasting.... Finally, this year also brings us the retirement of **Coleen Hoover**, who has been at the center of the creative writing office for the past 14 years, spanning five directors and over 150 graduates. She's been the one who greeted many of you when you first arrived, and kept the gears turning through graduation. For these and too many other reasons to list, we all want to say thank you, Coleen, but not goodbye.

## Readings & Events 2017-2018

**Daniel Borzutzky** and **Katherine Hedeem** kicked off the semester with strong translation readings after being introduced by **Johannes Göransson**. Their poems were political and smart, featuring family, immigration, and even an alternately-real version of Chicago, Illinois.



**Christina Pugh** first read from her earlier work then, she moved on to her most recent book, *Perception*. The audience seemed to pay close attention to each phrase, her language, and the imagery it evoked. She mentioned that she experiments with the empty spaces between phrases, which definitely rang true.

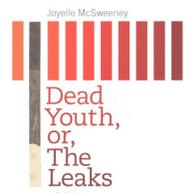


On November 8, 2017, **Jeannine Pitas** read from her collection of Marosa's four books compiled into one translation book titled *I Remember Nightfall*. Pitas voice was calm and melodious as she read the surrealistic and innovative imagery translations.

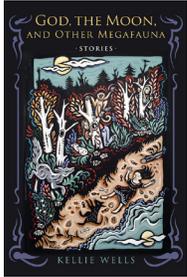


**Lidia Yuknavitch** visited campus following the publication of her novel, *The Book of Joan*. She visited with **Steve Tomasula's** writing class, where she went over the book as well as her publishing career, and then held a reading in the Hammes book store, where she read an enthralling essay about love and violence. The reading was followed by a reception, hosted by **Steve Tomasula**.

**Dead Youth, Or, The Leaks** — **Joyelle McSweeney's** experimental play exhibited several social concerns, like war, violence, and internet surveillance. There was a meta-element as well; Henrietta Lacks asserts that she is the prologue in her dramatic monologue. She, along with other compelling characters, delighted the audience throughout the performance. Going to the theater was an awesome and engaging interlude for the fictive/poetic MFAers.

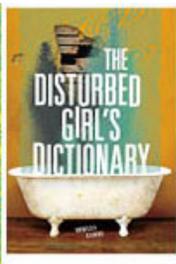
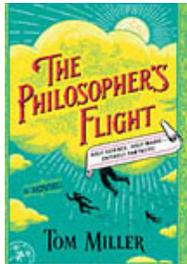


## Readings & Events 2017-2018



Novelist **Kellie Wells**, winner of the 2017 Sullivan Prize, came to read from her collection *God, The Moon, and other Megafauna*. The selection she read was a short story in its entirety, a strange and ethereal piece about a woman's romantic relationship to time, anthropomorphized.

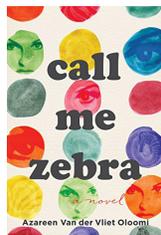
**Tania Sarfraz**, the Sparks Prize Fellowship winner, returned to Notre Dame to read from her thesis, *Metropolis*. Her reading held the room in total concentration, and afterward, people got together for some drinks. Her former classmates and professors were excited to give her a warm welcome, and the first years were excited to hear her read for the first time.



Alumni **Tom Miller** and **NoNieqa Ramos** read at the Hammes Campus bookstore on Wednesday, February 22, 2018. Ramos read first from her novel *Disturbed Girl's*

*Dictionary*, a dark and edgy book that toes the line between young adult and literary fiction. Next up was Miller, who read from *The Philosopher's Flight*, the first of a series about a world where people can fly. Both readers were phenomenal, and both had lots to say in the discussion afterward.

**Azareen Van der Vliet Oloomi** met a packed audience in the Hammes campus bookstore to read from her new novel *Call Me Zebra*. The novel focuses on Zebra, a self-proclaimed autodidact, anarchist, and atheist as she moves through the world as a perpetual exile.



**Teju Cole** visited campus and gave a talk titled "Inarticulacy: Language at The Limits." It was fun for the fiction writers to have him visit after having read *Open City* around the same time in the semester. He held a

Q&A after the talk, and answered questions about writing, language, and craft.



**Johannes Göransson** read from his translation of Aase Berg's *Hackers*, along with other work that varied in tone and style. Prose writers and

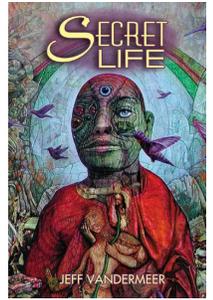
## Readings & Events 2017-2018

poets alike were enthused by the interesting transformation of Aase Berg's original text, and it was great to see the end result of such a heavy-duty project.

**Anaïs Duplan** visited the University, where their poetry drew in a healthy crowd who hung on every word. Their poems were personal, but didn't shy away from the political or societal. The crowd was also treated to little anecdotes between poems, which were very enjoyable throughout the reading.



**Jeff VanderMeer** made the most of his visit to Notre Dame, teaching a master class, giving a reading, and screening the adaptation of his novel, *Annihilation*. He read various works at his reading, and told some great anecdotes about squids. There was a good turnout of VanderMeer fans from the campus and the community.



## MFA Reading Series 2017-2018

**Erik-John Fuhrer** and **Daniel Uncapher** were the first of the MFAers to give a reading this year. Erik read some breathtaking poetry, and Daniel read short fiction over a slideshow of politically-charged text-images.

The next reading from **Abby Burns**, **Ingabirano Nintunze**, and **Daniel Tharp** was another student reading, in which the rest of the 2nd year fiction writers took the stage and shared with us their varied work; Abby read short fiction, Ingabirano read from her high fantasy novel, and Daniel read from his novel, which was more dirty-realist.

The poets **Moonseok Choi**, **Madison McCartha**, and **Jean Yoon** closed out the first semesters' readings, mesmerizing the audience with their unique imagery, masterful language, and performative readings.

**Jake McCabe**, **Jac Smith**, and **Joseph Thomas** all read fiction in their first reading at Notre Dame. McCabe read an excerpt of a short story, Smith read from her novel *The Loose*, and Thomas read from his novel *God Bless You, Otis Spunkmeyer*. It was a good night of fiction from a promising trio of writers.

The second first-year reading given by **Christina Leo**, **Ann Malin Ringwalt**, and **Lavinia Xu** was held in the new Duncan Center. It was a medley of forms, while Ann Malin read personal, conversational poetry, Lavinia read



poems featuring more naturalistic imagery, and Christina read fiction, a captivating story set in a bayou in Louisiana.

**Trish Hartland, Kim Swendson, and Jake Schepers** along with their colleague **Sade Lanay**, was a quartet of poets who offered an engaging night full of art and creativity to guests at this reading, which featured visual and installation art as well.

At the **MFA Final Thesis Reading** the graduating second-year MFAers gave us their last hurrah on the last week of the school year, reading five to seven minute excerpts of their theses followed with a nice reception in the Eck Center Auditorium. The readers included **Abigail Burns, Eric-John Fuhrer, Madison McCartha, Ingabirano Nintunze, Daniel Tharp, Daniel Uncapher, and Jean Yoon**. Congratulations and our very best wishes to the graduating class!

**Busy Students**

**Jake McCabe** has fiction forthcoming from *Meridian*.

**Madison McCartha** has poetry forthcoming from *Black Warrior Review* and *Yalobusha Review*.



**Patricia Hartman** lists the following accomplishments: “A book I translated is forthcoming with Lavender Ink/Dialogos Books; a Critical Language Scholarship to study Urdu in Lucknow, India; a collaboration with a neuroscientist with this hypothesis: the Brain while translating will use the same parts of the brain as other creative arts (i.e. Translation is Creative). The study was accepted to present at the Examined Life Conference; led a writing group at the Kid Prison; brought creative collaboration to the community. This resulted in a huge multimedia arts event that showcased the Ekphrastically produced works of 7 artists, 2 local poets, and 3 of us MFA poets; got my Intro to Poetry class to collaborate with the Silkscreen I students to create a book of poetry and silkscreen — each poetry-student paired with a silkscreen-student to generate an image and poem. We produced a full book for each of the 23 students; presented a paper on culturo-literary schisms at the French Graduate Studies Conference in

Baton Rouge, LA; won the Frederico Lorca prize in translation from the *Duende Literary Journal*; won the Gabriel Garcia Marquez prize in translation from Lunch Ticket; published some poems in *TAGVVERK* and *Black Warrior Review* (both forthcoming); published some more poetry translations in *World Literature Today*, *BrooklynRail*, and some other places I can’t remember; and participated on a panel at the ALTA conference, and did a reading there.”

**Jake Schepers** has published poems this year in *Orange Quarterly* and *Dream Pop* and was included in the anthology *My Next Heart: New Buffalo Poetry*, edited by Noah Falck and Justin Karcher (BlazeVOX 2017). His essay “‘Correction of Disfigurements’: Rhetoric, Lyric, and the Rewritten Histories of Susan Howe and Geraldine Monk” was published in *Contemporary Women’s Writing* 12.1 (March 2018). This summer he will be continuing his work on his thesis and his dissertation while attending Cornell’s School of Criticism and Theory.

**Jac Smith** spent the 2017-2018 school year writing the first half of her novel. *The Loose*, set in Key West, explores how social experimentation and acts of illusion can be combined to both entertain and extort the fallible and elastic nature of human behavior. She is also the recipient of the 2018 summer residency at The Studios of Key West. She received a generous grant from Notre Dame in the form of a Graduate Student Research Award to support her novel. She will spend the summer writing in Key West.

Within the last year **Daniel Uncapher** has had pieces accepted for publication in the *Chicago Quarterly Review*, *Tin House Online*, *Posit*, *The Gateway Review*, *Lotus-eater Magazine*, *Running Wild Press Novella Anthology*, *Lou Lit*, *Blood & Bourbon*, *Lunaris Review*, *1888 Center*, *Tributaries*, *The Cost of Paper*, *Buckshot Magazine*, *Visitant Lit*, *Hawai’i Pacific Review*, *HCE Review*, *Twyckenham Notes*, *The Dead Mule School*, *Chantwood Magazine*, *A-Minor Magazine*, *Ghost Parachute*, *Chicago Literati*, *Storyland*, *Abstract: Contemporary Expressions*, *Wilderness House Literary Review*, and *Flash Frontier*. His story “Flight of the Gildergoose” won Tributaries’ 2018 Fiction Prize, and his acceptance into a PhD in Creative Writing at the University of Utah has been deferred for a year in accordance with his acceptance of the 2018 Sparks Prize.



## Busy Students

### English Graduate Research Symposium

Three of the MFA students participated in an English Graduate Research Symposium.

**Joseph Thomas** participated in Panel 1, Gender, Race, and Emotion with *Melanie With Melanin: Afro-pessimistic Possibilities in "Girl with all the Gifts"*

**Ingabirano Nintunze** participated in Panel 5, poetics and Praxis, with *The Unnatural through the Natural: Writing the Impossible Across Genre*.

**Daniel Uncapher** participated in panel 7, Race and Queer Theory, with *Mississippi's Lost Progressive: Reclaiming Hubert Creekmore*.

## Faculty Updates

Professor **Orlando Menes's** poetry, prose, and poetry translations have recently appeared in the following journals: "Macho" (poem). *Crab Orchard Review*, vol. 23, no. 2 (Summer/Fall 2018), "Balsero" (poem). *Prairie*

## Faculty Updates

*Schooner*, vol. 92, no. 1 (Spring 2018), "St. Apollonia, Patroness of Dentists" (poem). *Boulevard*, vol. 33, nos. 2 & 3 (Spring 2018), "La Luz School" (story). *Crab Orchard Review*, vol. 23, no. 2 (Summer/Fall 2018), "I've Had a Great Fear" and "Amparo the Nun" (José Kozer). *Presence: A Journal of Catholic Poetry* (2018).

His poem "Courtyard of Clotheslines, Angel Hill" was anthologized in *Approaching Literature: Reading+ Thinking + Writing, Fourth Edition*. Eds. Peter Schakel and Jack Ridl. Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2017.

Finally, he participated in the following translation panel: "Neobarroco and Experimental Latin American Poetry." American Literary Translators Association 40th Annual Conference. Minneapolis, Minnesota. October 5-7, 2017.

**Roy Scranton** spent the fall of 2017 on leave finishing a book and spending time with his bouncing baby daughter Rosalind, aka Reyzi the free-jazz rooster. The book is *Total Mobilization: The Politics of Trauma, World War II, and American Literature*, and it was turned in to

## 2018 Award Winning

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The Sparks Prize was awarded to both **Daniel Uncapher** and **Jean Yoon** in a deadlocked tie.

Mitchell Award: **Abigail Burns**

Samuel and Mary Anne Hazo Poetry Award: **Madison McCartha**

The 2018 Kaneb Graduate Student Teaching Award: **Ingabirano Nintunze**.

Sparks Summer Intern Fellowships: **Christina Leo** and **Kimberly Swendson**

**Joseph Thomas**: 2018 Gender Studies G. Margaret Porter Graduate Writing Prize for his essay "Afro-Pessimism and Coming of Age in Nnedi Okorafor's *Binti*."



his editor at the University of Chicago Press in March; Reyzl's first word was "Duck," and she likes hiking and sushi. This spring, Roy saw his first essay collection through final proofs: *We're Doomed*.

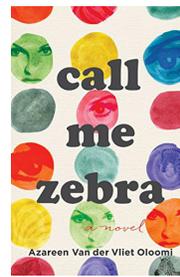


*Now What? Essays on War and Climate Change* is forthcoming from Soho Press in July, with

blurbs from Andrew Bacevich and Amitav Ghosh, among others. Other forthcoming work includes the "Anthropocene" entry in *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Theory*, the "Apocalypse" entry in *Lexicon for an Anthropocene Yet Unseen*, a short story in the Akashic Press collection *Baghdad Noir*, and articles in *Frieze* and the *New York Times*. As for what he's done that's actually done, he's written book reviews for *The New Republic*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, and *American Scholar*, wrote a catalogue essay for Itty Neuhaus's solo show *Sublimation* at the Kentler International Drawing Space in Red Hook, and gave talks and readings at Grinnell College, NDIAS, UPenn, Bryn Mawr, The Evergreen State College, and the University of Virginia. He also won a Lannan Literary Fellowship for Fiction.

**Valerie Sayers's** story "Tidal Wave" received a Pushcart Prize and was anthologized in the *Pushcart Prize XLII*. It was a home-state year: in October, she helped inaugurate the Women Writers of South Carolina series when she appeared in conversation with Bren McLain at the St. Helena Library, and in March she presented the talk, "1963 and *Who Do You Love*" for the Friends of the Beaufort County Library series at the University of South Carolina Beaufort. In April, she was inducted into the South Carolina Academy of Authors.

**Steve Tomasula** published "Entanglement: Fish Not Stories" in *Dalhousie Review* (Canada). He published the book chapters "Our Tools Make Us (And Our Literature) Post" in *The Handbook of Electronic Literature*, Joseph Tabbi ed. (Bloomsbury) and "Vast Landscapes, Small Screens & Altered Perspectives" in *Paradoxa: Small Screen Fiction*, Astrid Ensslin, Paweł Frelik and Lisa Swanstrom eds., and "Time Capsule: Self-Capsule" in *Eduardo Kac: Telepresence, Bio Art & Poetry* (VDB TV). His fiction was the subject of a chapter in Flore Chevaillier's *Divergent Trajectories: Interviews with Innovative Fiction Writers* (Ohio State UP).



In February, **Azareen Van der Vliet Oloomi's** second novel, *Call Me Zebra*, was published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. It has since been named a Most Anticipated Title by a Woman of Color in 2018 by *Electric Literature*; a Most Anticipated Literary Fiction Title of Spring 2019 by *Publishers Weekly*; a Most Anticipated Fiction Title of Winter 2018 by *iBooks*; and a Most Anticipated Title of February 2018 by the *Boston Globe*, *Nylon Magazine*, *Elle Magazine*, *Book Riot*, *The Millions*, *Bustle*, *Bitch Media*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *Read it Forward*, *Shondaland*, *Refinery 29*, and *Hello Giggles*. It was also an *Amazon Best Book of the Month*, an *Amazon Pick of the Week*, and an *Amazon Number One Release in Absurdist Fiction*. Azareen has been on book tour this spring, appearing at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books; the Bay Area Book Festival; The Muse & the Marketplace Writers' Conference; and the Austin Public Library New Fiction Confab. She has been invited to discuss *Call Me Zebra* at the Asian American Writers' Workshop in New York City, Books Are Magic with Lynne Tillman in Brooklyn, Washington University, and various bookstores across the country. She has also recorded podcasts/done live interviews with WNYC/NPR; the Los Angeles Review of Books Radio Show; the Otherppl Podcast with Brad Listi; Between the Covers with David Naimon; and The Public Library's iHeart Radio. Her essay "Reading 'The Odyssey' Far From Home: What Homer's poem taught me about making a life on the Great Lakes" was published by *Electric Literature* in March; "A Case of Literature Sickness," an essay on Henry James and Lynne Tillman was published in April by *The Believer*; and "Watching the Phantom of the Opera in Tehran" was published by *The Paris Review* to coincide with the release of the novel. This month, she is celebrating the U.K. release of *Call Me Zebra* by Alma Books in London.

### **Emeriti Update**

**William O'Rourke** continues as Editor Emeritus of the *Notre Dame Review* and contributed a review-essay titled "Richard & Roger" for its Winter/Spring 2018, No. 45, issue, as well as a long review of a Patty Hearst biography in its Summer/Fall 2017, No. 44, issue. He had a letter published in the *NY Times Book Review* (2/18/18) on Richard Elman, a former professor at ND. And he published a review on a bio of Dan Berrigan, *At Play in*



*the Lions's Den*, by Jim Forest, on April 20, 2018, in the *National Catholic Reporter*. He continued to write for the *Huffington Post* (on Donald Trump, Ken Burns' Vietnam War film, Cuba, etc.) till December when the now named *HuffPost* changed its format. His and Valerie Sayers' penultimate pick for 2017 Sullivan Prize, **Kellie Wells**, appeared on campus for a reading in December. And he was interviewed on WTIF fm, in Harrisburg, PA, on September 12, about the Harrisburg 7 trial and his book. On the local scene, he appeared at the History Museum on June 29, at an event/reading honoring the poet Kenneth Rexroth and the plaque the state of Indiana erected in front of Rexroth's home on Park Avenue, celebrating his birth in South Bend. And he published two articles in the *South Bend Tribune* (September 18 & April 5) on the eventual relocation of the South Shore railroad station, yet to happen.

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**Margaret Emma (Meg) Brandl** ('13) is finishing her fourth year in the English-Creative Writing PhD at Texas Tech University. For the coming (final) year of her PhD, she has been awarded a Dissertation Completion Fellowship, which will release her from teaching (though she loves it) and allow her to

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focus fully on her three-novella dissertation and the job market. She has continued to serve as an associate editor for *Iron Horse Literary Review* and has publications out or forthcoming in *Thin Air*, *The Cincinnati Review*, *Pithead Chapel*, *Cumberland River Review*, and *Gravel*. She was recently invited to give a fiction reading at a Texas Tech Medieval and Renaissance Studies Symposium and showed a video essay at Texas Tech's Sowell Collection Conference. This summer will be her fourth year running teaching with Duke University's TIP summer academic program. Say hey on twitter (seriously!): @margaret\_emma.

**Brenna M. Casey** ('08) and **Veronica Fitzpatrick** ('08) are still kicking

**2020 MFA Candidates**

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**Poets**

- Khajavipour (Jahan Khajavi), Andrew Jahan**, John Cabot University
- Berclaz, Maxime Jonas**, Oberlin College, 2016
- Bostwick, Sebastian**, Western Washington University, 2016
- Wardrop, Scarlett Eliza**, University of Michigan, 2016

**Prose**

- Aguilar, Kirsten V**, Middlebury College, 2014
- Ali, Natasha**, University of Michigan, 2017
- Havrilak, Gregory**, Hunter College, 2002
- Koca, Nazli**, Koc University, 2011

Welcome to ND!

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it after all these years. Both have finished PhDs — Veronica in English and Film Studies from the University of Pittsburgh and Brenna in English and Feminist Studies from Duke University. Veronica has accepted a Visiting Assistant Professorship in the Department of Performing and Media Arts at Cornell University and will move to Ithaca in the fall. Brenna will continue on as a Visiting Professor at Duke with a joint appointment in the Departments of English and Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies. In the past year, their critical and creative work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Ploughshares*, *Bright Wall/Dark Room*, *Bitch Magazine*, *Leviathan*, *The Boiler*, and *The*

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*Point*. Veronica also has an essay featured in the edited collection *The Apartment Complex* forthcoming from Duke University Press this year. They will co-teach a writing workshop in Ireland this summer where they hope to take more selfies like the attached.

**Daniel Casey** ('03) has had poems most recently in *North of Oxford* and *Rise Up Review*, a review essay in *Tupelo Quarterly*, and an article in *Midfield Press*.

**Dawn Comer Burns** ('98)



reports that the past year has brought changes both in life and writing. In August 2017, Dawn and her partner Becky moved their family to Syracuse, IN.



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Dawn teaches at Manchester University and Ivy Tech in Warsaw, co-leads a local writer's group, and walks to Lake Wawasee at sunrise every chance she gets. Her daughter Lucy (10) has developed a love of poetry, and her son Elliot (13) this year thinks he'd like to be a celebrity chef. Shifting towards creative nonfiction, Dawn began writing *Picking Persimmons: Encounters with Midwestern Men*, a collaborative venture with her poet-partner Becky. In May they will present "Leaving Farm" at the Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature symposium, and Dawn will co-lead with novelist Jan Maher a creative panel on "Pathological Midwestern Niceness," a disorder familiar to any Midwesterner. A highlight of the past year has been Dawn's involvement in her new community, including working with the Syracuse Public Library to coordinate and emcee FrankenHOWL, an open mic night celebrating 200 years of Frankenstein to be held in the city park on July 20th. She continues to shamelessly hit up both novice and experienced writers to take part in the event. In choosing what to include, Dawn muses that the unwritten and the written, the silent and the spoken, are all a part of the same unfolding story. She trusts that while life isn't always easy, life is always good, and the words

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will always come for all the stories she needs to write.

**Melanie Cotter Page** ('10) teaches at Holy Cross College. Starting the fall semester of 2017, she began teaching with the [Westville Education Initiative](#), which is a collaboration between the University of Notre Dame and Holy Cross College to offer AA and BA degrees to incarcerated men. Teaching men of varying abilities who are passionate about learning has been rewarding, as well as challenging. It's back to chalkboards and pen and paper, but it sure stretches her pedagogical methods in a healthy way. In the spring of 2018, Page began teaching introduction to creative writing on Holy Cross's main campus. While poetry isn't her main genre, it was invigorating to help students craft poems using experimental poetry texts. Lastly, Page took on the role of capstone cohort leader, helping Holy Cross seniors prepare for a 45 minute speech that analyzes their experiences in liberal arts education. Many students are just now learning things about themselves by examining their academics, service learning, and global perspectives, and Page is proud to be part of that process. Outside of Holy Cross, Page continues to write for [Grab the Lapels](#) and develop bookish

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relationships around the globe. GTL is in its 5th year, which is old for the internet. During the summer of 2017, she took two self-funded writing retreats and plans to do so again this summer. Future work will likely reflect Page's obsession with Tonya Harding/Nancy Kerrigan, which was reignited thanks to the movie *I, Tonya*.

**Paul Cunningham's** ('15) translations of Helena Österlund recently appeared in *EuropeNow*, *Interim*, and *Asymptote*. His own original poetry recently appeared in *SAND: Berlin's English Literary Journal* and *Omniverse*. His manuscript *The House of the Tree of Sores* was selected by Myung Mi Kim as a finalist for Omnidawn's 2018 1st/2nd Poetry Book Prize. His poem "The Forest Below" was a finalist in the Agnes Scott College Creative Writing Competition. Artist Sarah E. Brook selected one of Cunningham's poems to be etched into a new public art sculpture called *Viewfinding*. The sculpture will be installed in Manhattan's Riverside Park in August 2018. His collaboration with artist Sam Shoemaker — *Evidence from Lunar Rocks* — was published by 7x7 this past February.

**Renée E. D'Aoust's** ('06) recent book reviews have been published in *Brevi-*

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*ty* and *Fourth Genre*, and recent essays were included in the anthologies *Flash Nonfiction Funny* and *Rooted: The Best New Arboreal Nonfiction*. Renée was a 2017 National Endowment for the Humanities Scholar at the "City/Nature" Summer Institute. Renée continues to teach online at Casper College and North Idaho College, and she lives in Switzerland with her husband and tube of fur Tootsie. Visit [www.reneedaoust.com](http://www.reneedaoust.com) and follow her [@ida-hobuzzy](https://twitter.com/ida-hobuzzy). The below picture of Renée and Tootsie, flight practice in Liguria, Italy.



This year **Ailbhe Darcy** ('11) published her second collection of poetry, *Insistence*, with Bloodaxe Books. She also helped kickstart the *Fired! Irish Women Poets and the Canon* movement, which asks writers, academics, editors, publishers and organizers on the Irish literary scene to pledge only to participate in publications and events that make an effort to achieve gender parity. Many have signed the pledge and there have been readings and events throughout Ireland celebrating women's contribution to poetry.



More information is at <https://awomanpoetspledge.com/> John and



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Schuyler are well too!

**Dónal Kevin Gordon, MD, FAAFP, MFA** ('96) the Program Director of the Cedar Rapids (Iowa) Family Medicine Residency since April 2012, was also made Executive Director of the residency in December 2017. He continues to practice Family Medicine, Hospice and Palliative Medicine, Advanced Wound Care and Hyperbaric Medicine, and he remains an Assistant Clinical Professor at the nearby University of Iowa College of Medicine. Dónal has been on the Board of Directors of the Iowa Academy of Family Physicians since 2014. In 2015, he received the Michael J. Daly Humanitarian Award, and in 2016 was cited by the American Academy of Family Physicians for one of its Program Director Recognition Awards. That same year, Dónal was also conferred with an advanced degree in Family Medicine, when he was named a Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians, hence the alphabet soup of FAAFP after his name. He is currently the Chair of Family Medicine at St. Luke's Hospital in Cedar Rapids. Dónal's most recent medical writing will appear in the 2018 and 2019 editions of *5-Minute Clinical Consult*. He continues to write poetry, and he was a winner in the 2014

**Alums Keeping It Real**

and 2016 Iowa City Poetry in Public competitions, sharing that honor with the likes of Marvin Bell, James Galvin and Christopher Merrill, and he recently learned that he is also one of the winners in the 2018 competition. Dónal and Karen live in Solon, Iowa, a small town outside of Iowa City, where their home is graced by a brace of Irish wolfhounds, prompting some to remark, "Those are the biggest damned dogs I've ever seen in my life!" Yep. Agreed. And gentle as lambs, utterly loving.



**Darin Graber** ('08) writes, "I thought I would include a picture of

Delaney, who hasn't eaten a potted cactus in many years but still likes to go on ski trips more than anything. She has survived cancer and being my only child whose boredom during years of dissertation writing was only punctuated by frustrated walks around the trails behind my apartment and occasional trips into the mountains. She continues to typify the toughness and indomitable optimism that only a small dog can possess.

As far as my life goes, I have finished my PhD at Colorado University Boul-

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der and am currently teaching for the English department and Continuing Ed program. I will be working with CU's Upward Bound program ("Native Pathways to College Success") for the first time this summer as well, and I'm excited and a bit nervous to see how that goes. I still like fishing, climbing, and long walks that aren't on a beach, and I've helped make some music since the last time I updated you (you can find our band, The Longest Day of the Year, on Spotify or any other way you like to listen to music). I'll have a couple of "scholarly" articles coming out this spring, one in *Dickens Studies Annual* and one in *Wolf Studies Annual*, so you can be one of the tens or dozens of people to read those if you feel so inclined. Also, this last fall I sold my house on Terrace Lane, so no chance that I'll someday get rich and leave it to the program, as much as I would have liked that. It was such short walk to Nick's Patio."



**Jarrett Haley's** ('08) The years Jarrett Haley was involved in working on Curtis Dawkins' *The Graybar Hotel* ultimately amounted

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to something with its publication by Scribner in last July. The State of Michigan got some guff with it, but hopefully that works out. Still, its an important book about prison life and he hopes people read it. It's out in paperback this summer. Apart from that, he still runs UC San Diego's alumni magazine and raises those 3 kids with Nicolle!

**Lily Hoang** ('06) recently moved to paradise and is an Associate Professor at University of California San Diego. She spent last summer as a Mellon Scholar in Residence at Rhodes University in South Africa, and this summer, she will be the writer in residence at La Ira de Dios in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Her book *A Bestiary* was a finalist for the PEN USA Non-Fiction Prize.

**Kevin Johnson** ('99) and **Josie Cameron Johnson** (**Vodicka** '00) are still waiting for spring to hit Maine. Kevin is a Content and Program Manager at Garmin where he manages a marketing program and writes true-life stories about people surviving hurricanes, climbing mountains, navigating remote trails, and more — in short, featuring people who are far more adventurous than he and his wife. Josie also writes vicarious adventures.

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Her debut novel, *Maybe A Mermaid*, is about a girl navigating truth, lies, and the hope that grows between. It will be out in April 2019 with Farrar, Straus, & Giroux Books for Young Readers (Macmillan) and with Carlsen Publishing in Germany, too!



**Christina Kubasta** ('03) had two books published in December 2017: her second poetry book *Of Covenants* from Whitepoint Press, and *Girling*, a winning selection from the Driftless Novella series from Brain Mill Press. Her novel, “This Business of the Flesh” is due out Fall 18 from Apprentice House Press. She is an associate professor of English at Marian University in Wisconsin, where she teaches and co-directs the Honors Program. She and John live with their Mastiff-St. Bernard mix, a little lonely, since their cat Cliff — who once lived in South Bend with them — recently departed.

**Katie Lattari** ('13) of Bangor, Maine, became engaged this year. A summer

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2019 wedding in Maine is planned. Professionally, she was promoted to Manager of Research and Data at the University of Maine Foundation, where she works in fundraising and philanthropy. Additionally, she will be a University of Maine Honors College fiction thesis advisor during the 2018-2019 school year for a graduating senior. As for her own creative endeavors, she is in the midst of manuscript revisions on her latest work, a psychological suspense novel which she hopes to publish in the future. Some books she’s been really into since the last check-in: *My Absolute Darling* by Gabriel Tallent; *In the Woods* by Tana French; *It* by Stephen King; *Since We Fell* by Dennis Lehane.

**Jayne Marek** '05 writes, “Since last year, I have had acceptances for poetry and art photos from *Grub Street*, *The Lake*, *Shantih*, *The Cortland Review*, *Raven Chronicles*, *Lunch Ticket*, *Amsterdam Quarterly*, and elsewhere. My three-poem pamphlet *River Triptych* is available from Red Bird Chapbooks, and a chap of 11 poems (*Why Horses?*) appeared in a fine-paper art edition from Red Mare Press, #13 (available through the artist, Su Zi, on Etsy). I attended Marge Piercy’s intensive poetry workshop in Cape Cod in June. And closer

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to (your) home, I’ll have three poems in an anthology titled *Celestial Musings: Poems Inspired by the Night Sky* that will support the Charles W. Brown Planetarium at Ball State University. It should be out soon!”

**Mark Marino** ('96) and his kids have released their fourth interactive Mrs. Wobbles story: *Spy EYE* (<http://markmarino.com/tales/storybook-6switch.html>). In another collaboration Mark and fellow artists updated Homer’s *Odyssey* in *Salt Immortal Sea*, forthcoming *New River Journal*. Last year, Mark also created a Twitter bot that generates plots of Hallmark holiday movies (@HolidayMovieBot)

**David Mayer**, ('01) remains a human being residing in Cleveland, OH with his wife and 2 kids. He is high-key excited for his new gig as Executive Director of Creative Innovation & Digital at American Greetings. If you have any breakthrough ideas on the future of meaningful connections give him a shout. Also, go Cavs. [www.linkedin.com/in/davidalyn-mayer](http://www.linkedin.com/in/davidalyn-mayer)

**Courtney McDermott** ('11) teaches in the Master’s in Writing Program at Southern New Hamp-

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shire University and is the program administrator of the Film and Media Studies Program at Tufts University. Her flash fiction piece, “The Rib Strangler,” was published in *A3 Review* and nominated for a Pushcart Prize. She was a panelist at the Boston Book Festival in October where she spoke on the challenges of small press publishing. She is a finalist for this year’s Poetry Matters Literary Prize and the winner of the 2018 **WOW! Women on Writing flash fiction contest**. She is currently shopping a novella around (which she began writing in Steve Tomasula’s workshop) and finishing a novel.

**Janet McNally**’s ('05) next YA novel, *The Looking Glass*, comes out in August from HarperCollins. She’s working on the next three or four projects at once, or she will be when summer hits. In the meantime, she’s teaching creative writing at Canisius College (as an associate professor, as of this year) and wrangling her three small girls (who just turned 7 and 5).

**Monica Mody** ('10) was the recipient this past academic year of the Cultural Integration Fellowship Integral Fellowship. She presented her paper “The Borderlands Feminine: A Feminist, Decolonial Framework for Re-mem-



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bering Motherlines in South Asia/Transnational Culture” at the 2017 Association for the Study of Women and Mythology Symposium, and at the 2017 American Academy of Religion, Western Region Annual Conference. A version of the paper was published in the *Special Issue on Integral Education, Women’s Spirituality and Feminist Pedagogies of the Integral Review* (2017), 13(1). Monica also presented her paper, “Serpents, Earth Energies, and the Priestesses that Awakened Them: India’s Pasts, Presents, Futurities Available for a Borderlands Reclaiming” at the 2018 Association for the Study of Women and Mythology Conference. In 2017, she facilitated in-person and online “Ancestor Writing Circles” for people wanting to attune to and write in tandem with ancestral consciousness. She has been practicing as a traditional diviner in the Bay Area, while she writes her PhD dissertation and other things.



**Chris Muravez** ('17) is now hungover in California, breathing in the toxic byproducts of a USDA research facility in his backyard. He teaches at

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a community college and has confused ideas about education and art. No one wants his manuscript, so he decided to distill its words into moonshine. Something about family (they’re healthy and happier than he). Something about publications (a few exist). There’s a website with his name on it, you might want to go incognito if you view it. Have a good weekend.



**Steve Owen** ('13) has a story, “Humansed,” coming out in the *Notre Dame Review* sometime in 2018. He’s also taking a year off to write and finish a couple of books, one, a surreal memoir, for his dissertation. All of that will happen in Oregon, on an “organic” farm, next to a pastoralish, triangular lake. He just finished four years of the University of Utah PhD program where author Melanie Rae Thon observed one of his creative writing classes and remarked, “I’ve never seen better teaching. I was transported.” Steve liked this comment so much, he’s decided to quote it sometime.

**Sami Schalk** ('10) began a new position as Assistant Professor of Gender &

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Women’s Studies at University of Wisconsin-Madison this year. She published new academic work in *Palimpsest* and *Mosaic*. Her first academic monograph, *Bodyminds Reimagined: (Dis)ability, Race, and Gender in Black Women’s Speculative Fiction*, was published in March 2018 by Duke University Press. The book has been thus far met with positive reception and strong sales. It was recently selected to be featured in a new book “Author Meets Critics” sessions at the Cultural Studies Association conference in Pittsburgh this summer and at the National Women’s Studies Association conference in Atlanta this fall. Sami has begun new research on disability politics in contemporary black art and activism and she continues to facilitate creative writing circles in non-profit spaces in her spare time.

**Cyndy Searfoss** ('95) writes, “Who would have thought that getting a master’s in creative writing would lead to all sorts of career activities that didn’t include creative writing? Thanks to those special letters (MA) behind her name, Cyndy has been able to expand her resume to include adjunct faculty/limited term lecturer in professional and technical communications as well as become the director of education at South Bend’s Center for Hospice Care/Hospice Foundation.

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When the Hospice Foundation took over management of Global Partners in Care in 2017 Cyndy was given the task of managing the organization’s 75 multinational palliative care partnerships. She also took a trip to Uganda that year to present on using storytelling to convey palliative care work at an international palliative care conference. The biggest adventure of that trip was riding a horse through rush-hour traffic in Kampala.

Her oldest son just finished his sophomore year at IU Bloomington and is set on becoming a writer. She wishes him well. Her youngest son is a sophomore in high school and wants to be an architect. Horses, a dog, and cats add their own challenges and rewards. The photo was taken after she completed the Chicago Marathon in 2014 – minus seven toe nails. She learned after-



wards that you’re supposed to use duct tape to cover the tops of your feet when you’re running in wet conditions.

She’s also trying to figure out how to work that into a story...”

**Amy Thomas** ('11) and her husband, an intrepid Notre Dame PhD candidate,



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welcomed baby Penelope in late February. Amy continues to write and teach high school in wonderful South Bend. She has recently started a new poetry project that deals largely with the body horror surrounding pregnancy, motherhood, and gruesome domesticity.

**Peter Twal** ('14) is the author of *Our Earliest Tattoos*, selected by Fady Joudah and Hayan Charara as the winner of the 2018 Etel Adnan Poetry Prize from the University of Arkansas Press. His poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in *The Believer*, *Best New Poets*, *Kenyon Review*, *West Branch*, *Pleiades*, and elsewhere. After a treasured six year spree in Indiana, Peter and his partner Erin are moving to Arizona this summer as Erin has accepted a tenure track position at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University. They're excited for the adventure ahead but will surely miss their home in Indiana.



**2018 - 2019 Reading & Events**

**Fall**

**Farid Matuk**  
September 24

**&Now Conference**  
October 5-7  
**Johanna Drucker**  
**Renée Gladman**  
**Douglas Kearney**  
**Lance & Andi Olsen**

**Peter Twal, TBA**  
**Sade Lanay, TBA**

**Thirii Myint, TBA**

**Eileen Myles, TBA**

**Spring**

**Daniel Uncapher, TBA**

**Jean Yoon, TBA**

**John Mort, TBA**

**Robert Gibb, TBA**

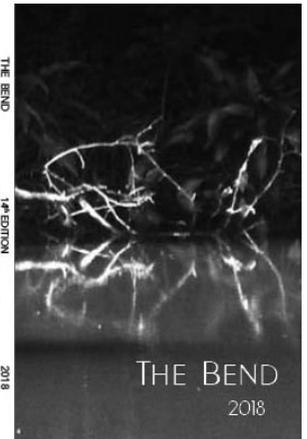
**MFA Thesis Reading, TBA**

NOTRE DAME

**REVIEW**



The *Notre Dame Review* issue number 45 Winter/Spring 2018, *Somewhere Nowhere* included three poems: “The Geometry of Donald Judd; The Invisible Puvis Figure;” and “The Other Woman’s Hat” by alumnus **Desmond Kon Zhichong-Mingde**. Emeriti **William O’Rourke** wrote a review of Richard & Roger and emeriti **John Mathias** wrote an essay: “At Large: The Dedication of a Sculpture for Notre Dame Poets.”



The 14th edition of *The Bend* was completely and most impressively accomplished by the magnificent managing editor (including designing and laying out the edition) — **Kimberly Swendson** with assistant copy editing from **Daniel Uncapher**. Editions are available to read online at: <https://english.nd.edu/creative-writing/publica->

tions/student-publications/the-bend/. Many thanks to the following contributors: **Daniel Casey, Thade Correa, John Crawford, David Ewald, C Kubas-ta, Alan Lindsay, Jessica Maich, Jayne Marek, Stuart Ross, and Elizabeth Smith-Meyer**. And again, thanks so much to **Kimberly Swendson**’s amazing fortitude.

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**Program Director:**  
**Steve Tomasula**

**Writers: Jake McCabe, Lavinia Xu**  
**Editor: Coleen J. Hoover**



Thank You for Saying Thank You  
Charles Bernstein

*I am using this poem as my  
goodbye to the program and  
to all of the wonderful people  
I have met.*

This is a totally accessible poem. There is nothing in this poem that is in any way difficult to understand. All the words are simple & to the point. There are no new concepts, no theories, no ideas to confuse you. This poem has no intellectual pretensions. It is purely emotional. It fully expresses the feelings of the author: my feelings, the person speaking to you now. It is all about communication. Heart to heart. This poem appreciates & values you as a reader. It celebrates the triumph of the human imagination amidst pitfalls & calamities. This poem has 90 lines, 269 words, and more syllables than I have time to count. Each line, word, & syllable have been chosen to convey only the intended meaning & nothing more. This poem abjures obscurity & enigma. There is nothing hidden. A hundred readers would each read the poem

in an identical manner & derive the same message from it. This poem, like all good poems, tells a story in a direct style that never leaves the reader guessing. While at times expressing bitterness, anger, resentment, xenophobia, & hints of racism, its ultimate mood is affirmative. It finds joy even in those spiteful moments of life that it shares with you. This poem represents the hope for a poetry that doesn't turn it's back on the audience, that doesn't think it's better than the reader, that is committed to poetry as a popular form, like kite flying and fly fishing. This poem belongs to no dogma. It follows no fashion. It says just what it says. It's real.

*Coleen Hoover*

*PS please visit the website's  
NEW and improved address  
[english.nd.edu/creative-writing](http://english.nd.edu/creative-writing)  
and see the most recent  
newsletter, the Flickr account,  
and all of the wonderful You-  
Tube's — best wishes to all.*

**Alums Keeping It Real  
and not to forget...**

**Rumit Pancholi ('08)**

is currently Communications Officer in the Editorial and Production division of the Communications Department of the International Monetary Fund, where he manages several flagship publications of the Fund, including *Fiscal Monitor*. He has most recently worked as project manager in the Editorial and Publishing division of the World Bank since 2013. He has previously served as journal production editor at Wolters Kluwer Health, editor in the Caribbean department of the Inter-American Development Bank, copyeditor at Taylor & Francis Group, and managing editor at Heldref Publications. He enjoys volunteering, gardening, hiking, and writing, as well as traveling with his partner Luke and their two dogs, Charlie and Ruckus.

**Jayme Russell's ('14)**

writing has most recently appeared in *The Fanzine*, *Dream Pop Press*, *The Spectacle*, *Jellyfish Magazine*, and *Timber*. Her poetry is forthcoming in the future-themed issue of *Heavy Feather Review*. She will attend the Spring Lit-Away writer's residency in May.

