

Spring 2019

# CREATIVE WRITING

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## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

FROM REBECCA LINDENBERG

I'm pleased to report that we've enjoyed another full and successful 2018-2019 academic year here at the University of Cincinnati's Creative Writing Program. We welcomed novelists Michael Griffith and Chris Bachelder back after sabbaticals, and we look forward to having our literary nonfiction professor Kristen Iversen return to the fold after a very productive year on leave with a Taft Research Fellowship. Novelist Leah Stewart continues to helm the English Department as Chair, and in that capacity she has helped us to continue to grow in stable and sustainable ways in a time when arts and humanities programs are under unprecedented pressure, even at Research 1 universities like ours. As a result of our collective efforts as a program, we have a larger and more culturally diverse graduate student body than ever. And we look forward to the conclusion of the current search for a new Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, with high hopes that a new dean will partner with our department and our program to continue to build on the legacy of excellence we currently enjoy, providing both moral and material support to one of the most successful graduate programs at our university (and one of the most successful of its kind in the nation).

Our robust Visiting Writers Series brought in a variety of amazing authors in 2018-2019. The semi-annual Fiction Festival featured readings and panels from Sloane Crosley, Uzodinma Iweala, Katie Kitamura, and Brendan Mathews; our annual Elliston Poet was the remarkable Mary Ruefle. We welcomed back alum Jillian Weise, and we hosted National Book Critics Circle Award winner Ishion Hutchinson in poetry, and National Book Award finalist Jamel Brinkley in fiction, among many others. Also of note, our new dramatist, Sharrell Lockett, had planned to bring playwright Ntozake Shange (author of *for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf*) but, tragically, Shange passed away prior to her scheduled visit. Instead, Prof. Lockett organized a

## (DIRECTOR'S NOTE CONTINUED)

celebration of her work in the Elliston Poetry Room that featured Shange scholars, playwrights, a member of the original Broadway cast of *for colored girls...*, students from UC's College Conservatory of Music and from the local School for the Creative and Performing Arts, as well as members of the Cincinnati Black Theater Company. It was a high-energy and inspiring event, and a welcome addition to our programming.

Under Lisa Ampleman's impeccable direction, submissions to *The Cincinnati Review* only continue to increase, and new student editors and volunteers continue to come on board to assist with the production of the magazine at every level – and to learn from Lisa's vision and experience. Writers from the past couple of issues have been syndicated on Verse Daily, won major book awards, and appeared in several anthologies, and we continue to be grateful to all who allow *The Cincinnati Review* the opportunity to consider their work, as well as all those who dedicate their time, energy, and talent to the curation of such an exciting magazine.

While we're bolstering our ongoing legacy as a program, we are also keeping very busy in the process of developing new avenues for local outreach, and new ways to increase our public-facing presence in our communities. I've worked closely with organizations like WordPlay and Women Writing for a Change to create internship opportunities that serve as a bridge between our Creative Writing students and some of our most active local literary organizations, in hopes of cultivating and institutionalizing our bonds. We can provide space and time and other resources to some of our local literary organizations, and they can help create opportunities for

our Creative Writing majors and our graduate students to gain invaluable experience outside of the classroom and workshop. One of our recent graduates, Michael Peterson, is staying on in the capacity of Curator in the Elliston Room, and piloting additional exciting initiatives that connect us with regional book artists (perhaps creating broadsides for our Visiting Writers) and running workshops, book clubs, and lectures for members of our community outside of our immediate program and university. Furthermore, we continue to build upon our collaboration with the Creative Writing Track in Spanish, housed in Romance & Arabic Languages & Literatures (RALL). The Elliston Room played host to a very well-attended joint social hour where faculty and grad students from both departments met to mingle and exchange ideas for working together. We also co-hosted a bilingual English-Spanish reading by Cincinnati's poet laureate Manuel Iris (a UC RALL alum) in the Spring, and he spoke with eloquence and fervor about his priorities as city poet laureate, and how we can partner with him to support those. With many of these initiatives beginning to bear fruit, we look forward to both building on that progress, and taking on new challenges next year.

Our current graduate students and alums enjoyed some notable successes this year, and I'll feature just a few. Graduating fiction writer Molly Reid's debut story collection, *The Rapture Index: A Suburban Bestiary*, is forthcoming from BOA Editions very soon, and she'll be the Emerging Writer Lecturer at Gettysburg College in the fall. Graduating poet Caitlin Doyle became the first PhD student from the College of Arts & Sciences to receive the University of Cincinnati's Presidential Medal of Graduate Student Excellence, among her many awards and

accomplishments of the past several months. Graduating poet Emily Skaja was awarded a 2019-2020 National Endowment for the Arts Literature Grant. Graduating fiction writer Ryan Ruff Smith will join the Gilman School in Baltimore in the fall as the 24<sup>th</sup> Tickner Writing Fellow. Graduating fiction writer Daniel Paul has accepted a Visiting Assistant Professorship at Rollins College in Orlando. And graduating poet Corey Van Landingham is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; her second poetry collection was accepted by Tupelo Press this year. Current poet Cara Dees's debut collection, *Exorcism Lessons in the Heartland*, was chosen by judge Ada Limón for the Barrow Street Poetry Prize, and is forthcoming this fall. Current poet Kimberly Gray's second book, *Systems for the Future of Feeling*, will also be published next year, by Persea Books. Across the board, current students have been publishing remarkable work. And several alums have also let me know they've taken thrilling new jobs at terrific universities, and I send my most heartfelt congratulations to all for the many accomplishments your hard work has helped you to realize, and which are too many for me to possibly account for here (but we love to hear your news, so please do keep in touch and send updates to be included in these newsletters).

There is much work, as ever, to be done over the summer and next year, and there are always new and interesting challenges to be met, but it has been another busy and rewarding year, and I'm already looking forward to what next year has in store. Thank you to our colleagues, graduate students, alumni, donors, and supporters for all you do to help this program to grow and thrive.

## DEPARTMENT NEWS

### CHANGES TO THE ELLISTON POETRY ROOM

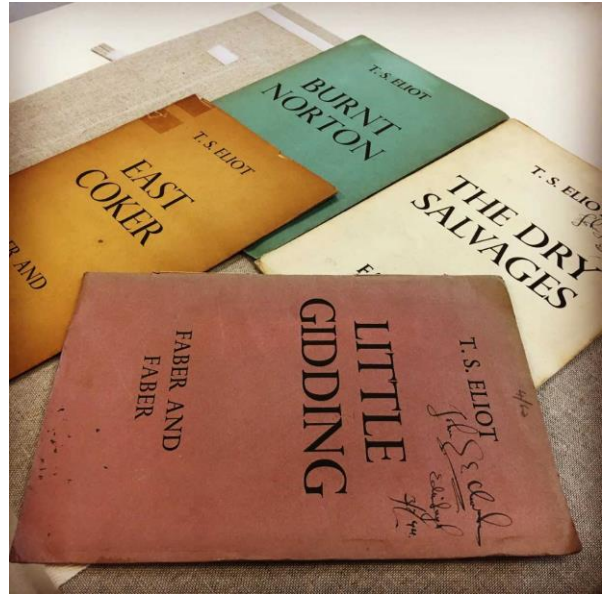


Over the past year, many changes have been made to the Elliston Poetry Room to encourage greater use of it by the UC community as well as the community at large. There is now a seminar room, some comfy new furniture, and exhibitions of rare materials from the collection. The Cincinnati Poetry Collective, a new UC poetry club, meets in the room and holds poetry slams there. And, in addition to a variety of poetry readings, the room hosted the Robert and Adele Schiff Fiction Festival, as well as a celebration of Ntozake Shange's artistic legacy. We asked Michael C. Peterson, Curator of the Elliston Poetry Room, some questions about the room, the collection, and his plans for next year.

**As you've worked on organizing, cataloguing, and preserving the Elliston collection, what are some of the most amazing texts you have encountered?**

Where to begin! There are some obvious ones and some less obvious ones. Some texts that are quite rare and overtly gorgeous, but also workaday editions that are nonetheless stunning in their own right and have a kind of inner power to them, a magnetism. Our first edition of Wallace Stevens's *Harmonium* is one of my favorites in this regard: a diminutive little glowing thing. The handstitched Albondocani Thom Gunn first editions. We are one of the oldest rooms in the nation so we've seen a lot of movements come and go. We're lucky, for instance, to own a rare complete set of the Tiber Press Poetry Portfolio, four large illustrated volumes which pair 1960's New York School Poets like John Ashbery and Frank O'Hara with second-wave Ab-Ex artists Grace Hartigan and Joan Mitchell. Huge, bright, screenprinted editions designed by Floriano Vecchi—the man who actually first taught Andy Warhol to silkscreen (Warhol himself had never been taught). We have products of Warhol's factory here too—little printed magazines, ephemera. Some of the most fascinating texts are not, in fact, texts in the book-sense: an early student print by a young Cy Twombly from Black Mountain College, a rare blue vinyl flexidisc recording of Jerome Rothenbug singing Navajo songs. Handset Christmas mailers signed by Robert Frost. Letters to the room from Etheridge Knight. This collection has always maintained a tight connection to tradesman: printers, foundrymen, publishers. With every unique text comes a unique provenance or unique human relationship linking the university and the art world.

**What are some of your favorite memories of people using the room during the past academic year?**



**Four Quartets, Part of the Elliston Collection**

I'm going to be saying "Where do I begin?" a lot, I think, because it has been such an incredibly rich and diverse year. Each event has felt like a new beginning in one way or another. The first reading of the year was a fiction/poetry double-header: Brock Clarke and Jillian Weise. I think I clocked 93 people in the room before I stopped counting. It looked like that *Time Magazine* photo of Ginsberg reading to angel-headed hipsters in a San Francisco apartment in the 50's: the energy was palpable, the smiles were abundant, and not a free seat in the place. A bellwether for the entire year I'd say. Every reading had this same striking vitality. Mary Ruefle playing John Lennon's "Imagine" at the close of her lecture and walking wordlessly back into the stacks. Poet-scholar Steven Alvarez talking "Taco Literacy" and playing us field recordings of his bilingual father. The Fiction Festival gave us three days of knockout authors—just *unrelentingly* amazing writing. Student groups have really come to utilize the space in creative ways. We've watched the founding of the undergraduate Cincinnati Poetry Collective, a

group of emerging writers who hold workshops, film screenings, and open-mics in the room. The Student Meditation Club visited and pored over our rare materials by Buddhist writers and American translators. They read the Vietnamese poet Thich Nhat Han and then sat in candlelit silence while performing his famous orange-peel meditation. Then they wrote poems. Quite moving, really. We were deeply saddened by the sudden loss of Ntozake Shange. We were getting so excited to host her here. Dr. Sharrell Lockett of Drama and Performance Studies choreographed a gorgeous celebration of her life and work that brought the community together at this crucial moment. I was honored to be at a rehearsal to see Aku Kadogo, original cast member of Shange's *For Colored Girls...* step in to read her part with the young actors of the School of the Performing Arts. It was like pure magic. Time sort of stopped right then. Kadogo saw that we had on display some rare broadsides from Dudley Randall's historic Detroit press on the wall. Her eyes grew wide and she exclaimed "He was our *neighbor* growing up. He was *family* to me." Generations, lives, art, all colliding in an instant. It felt... perfect.

But as a curator, it's the daily transactions that are perhaps most memorable. An aerospace engineering student who thinks he knows little of poetry but comes looking for something to read—and finds it in Srikanth Reddy's book *Voyager*. A member of the Bearcat Bhangra team who checks out an anthology of Sanskrit love poetry. The student who knows she loves Louise Glück but wants to find something strange and new.

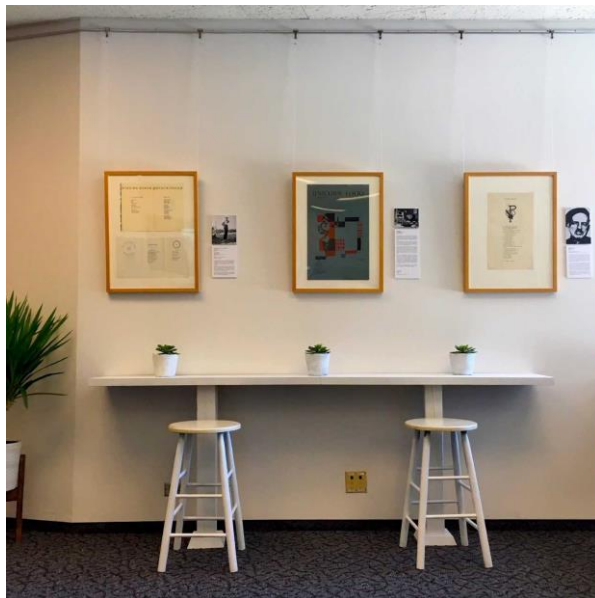


**Mary Ruefle Reads in the Elliston Room**

**We hear you are working on a new student listening station. Can you tell us more about that and any other plans you have for the room next year?**

Yes, sure: one of many ways we're reaching out into the community. With the entire Elliston archive of readings now digitized, we want to find ways of increasing the accessibility of this content to educators, visitors, alumni, and students. Faculty poet Rebecca Lindenberg is heading up the Elliston Internship Program within the room that emphasizes student research and curation of these historic recordings. Listening stations are just one step in a more comprehensive plan of visibility and outreach, from the room to the campus as a whole. There are tremendous opportunities here. When one thinks of listening stations one imagines headphones and biographical notes about what you're hearing. Biography is important, for certain, but we're interested in how these recordings, in this particular room, become an access point for our shared histories in the city and the region, and the room is an invaluable lens through which literary, institutional, and oral histories can be scribed. Dr. James Lee and the Digital

Scholarship Center are really showing us this. The audio files are acoustic records of interaction between the artist and their community: they are full of conversation, emotional response, passionate debate, and environmental sound. Listening is one part of how we learn to write our histories, but we also want to gather *your* histories as you, members of our community, write them. We want our curation to reflect *that* vast knowledge. If you were at one of these readings, if you have a history or memory of the room you'd like to share, we'd absolutely love to hear from you.



**Elliston Poetry Room Exhibit**

### **VISITING WRITERS SERIES**

One highlight of this year's Visiting Writers Series was the Robert and Adele Schiff Fiction Festival, featuring Sloane Crosley, Uzodinma Iweala, Katie Kitamura, and Brendan Mathews. In addition to giving readings, our guests took part in two panels: "The Writer as Reader," in which they discussed topics such as influences, habits, rereading, and books they recommend, and

"Troubleshooting," in which they discussed how troubles of craft or approach have created both obstacles and opportunities in their fiction.



**Katie Kitamura, Sloane Crosley, Uzodinma Iweala, Sakinah Hofler, and Brendan Mathews**

We also enjoyed Elliston Poet Mary Ruefle's visit, including her lecture on the imagination, and a joint visit from Kevin Wilson and his agent, Julie Barer. Wilson read from his fiction, and he and Barer participated in a public discussion on the role of the literary agent. New faculty member Sharrell Luckett organized a celebration of Ntozake Shange's artistic legacy that included performances, a panel discussion, and music.



**Performance from the Celebration of Ntozake Shange**

Other readers in 2018-19 were Xhenet Aliu, Jamel Brinkley, Brock Clarke, Blas Falconer, Ishion Hutchinson, Timothy O’Keefe, Stephen Kuusisto, Joan Silber, and Jillian Weise.



Ishion Hutchinson Reads in the Elliston Room

## FACULTY NEWS

**Don Bogen:** My fifth book of poetry, *Immediate Song*, was published by Milkweed Editions in March 2019. I did a book signing at AWP in Portland and read from it at Joseph-Beth Booksellers in Cincinnati and the Blacksmith House in Cambridge, MA. I’ve had new poems in *Poetry Northwest* and *The Yale Review* and a lyric essay in *The Carolina Quarterly*. I’m enjoying life in Cincinnati and Martinez, CA as an emeritus prof., editor-at-large of *The Cincinnati Review*, and a grandfather.

**John Drury:** My biggest news is that I’m the recipient of the 2019 Excellence in Mentoring of Doctoral Students Award. I’m so honored by this support! Caitlin Doyle nominated me and gathered letters from graduate students (both past and present) and colleagues. A number of my poems have been published or are forthcoming: “Choosing a Reader” in *Passager*, “Gaslight District” in *Main Street Rag*, “Crossing Guard” in *The American*

*Journal of Poetry*, “Arguing about Computers” in *The Raintown Review*, and “Round Up” in *Valparaiso Poetry Review*. “The Ruined Aristocrat: My Mother, Ambergris, and John Waters,” a three-part poem that started as my sabbatical project during Fall 2016, has been accepted by *Able Muse* and will come out this summer. In March, I visited two of Jake Riordan’s classes at Walnut Hills High School, reading and discussing several of my poems from *Sea Level Rising*, as well as John Keats’s “On the Grasshopper and the Cricket.”

**Michael Griffith** has finished his new nonfiction manuscript, *Windfalls in the Bone Orchard*. Essays or outtakes from it have appeared lately in *Chicago Quarterly Review*, *South Carolina Review*, *Broad Street*, and *Composition Studies*.

**Kristen Iversen:** As a research fellow with the Taft Humanities Center, most of my work this year centered on conducting interviews and doing archival research for a new narrative nonfiction book, *Wink’s Lodge: The West’s Hidden African American Jazz Club and Literary Salon*. I presented this research at the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Taft Research Symposium in March. I co-edited two anthologies: *Doom with a View: Historical and Cultural Contexts of the Rocky Flats Nuclear Weapons Plant*, forthcoming from Fulcrum Books, and *Don’t Look Now: Things We Wish We Hadn’t Seen*, forthcoming from Ohio University Press. I finished up research and editing of my literary biography of Nikola Tesla—a book that has been so much fun to write that I truly will miss it—and completed a collection of personal essays, *Wide and Generous World*. New essays include “Dancing at the Trocadero,” “My Grandfather’s Books,” “Down the Rabbit Hole,” “Swinging from a Star,” and “The Kindness of Strangers” (*Wide*

*and Generous World*); “Love and Death in Mexico” (*Don’t Look Now*); and “The Accidental Activist” (*Doom with a View*). Speaking engagements included Slippery Rock University, where *Full Body Burden* was chosen for their Common Read program, and readings at Innisfree Books and Barnes & Noble in Boulder, Colorado, where the environmental controversies surrounding the Rocky Flats former nuclear weapons site continue.

The documentary based on *Full Body Burden*, for which I serve as an Executive Producer, will be out this coming fall, and the book has also been optioned for a network tv series. I was thrilled to serve on a panel at AWP, “Mining the Everyday: Using Real Life Experiences as Creative Research,” with PhD candidates in literary nonfiction Emily Heiden and Suzie Vander Vorste. On a more personal and particularly happy note, I believe my husband and I may have finally finished the kitchen remodel on our 120-year-old house.

**Rebecca Lindenberg** has poems forthcoming in *Tin House* and in *Best American Poetry 2019* (ed. Major Jackson). She has a Taft Summer Research Fellowship that she hopes to use to finish her third poetry collection, and she looks forward to teaching in Santiago, Chile for two weeks in July.

**Leah Stewart:** The paperback of *What You Don’t Know About Charlie Outlaw* will be out in June.

## ALUMNI NEWS

**Lisa Ampleman's** second book, *Romances: Poems* (a revised version of her dissertation), is due out in Spring 2020 from LSU Press.

**Ashley Anderson** is currently a PhD student in creative nonfiction at the University of

Missouri. Her work has most recently appeared in or is forthcoming from *Tahoma Literary Review*, *Newfound*, *Wraparound South*, *The Manhattanville Review*, *Badlands Literary Review*, *Hive Avenue Literary Review*, and *Assay*.

**Dr. José Angel Araguz:** I'll be wrapping up my second and last year teaching at Linfield College in Oregon and will be starting a tenure-track Assistant Professor position at Suffolk University. Along with teaching, I'll be assuming the role of editor-in-chief of Salamander Magazine. On the writing front, my latest poetry collection, *Until We Are Level Again* (Mongrel Empire Press), was nominated for an Oregon Book Award, specifically the Stafford/Hall Award for Poetry.

This spring, **Rebekah Bloyd** has published a new poetry collection *At Sea* (Finishing Line Press, 2019). Last summer she led a workshop on hybrid essays as part of the international conference *Liquidscapes*, held in Devon, England. In those long stretches between walks on the beach, she teaches ocean-centered writing and literature courses at California College of the Arts, in San Francisco.

**Brian Brodeur's** third full-length poetry collection, *Every Hour Is Late*, will be published during Summer 2019 by Measure Press. New poems and essays appear or are forthcoming in *Blackbird*, *Gettysburg Review*, *Kenyon Review*, *Times Literary Supplement*, and *The Writer's Chronicle*.

**Darrin Doyle** published his fourth book, *Scoundrels Among Us* (Tortoise Books, October 2018), a collection of short and flash fiction with pieces ranging from realism to horror to satire to absurdism. His fiction has



appeared recently in *Okay Donkey*, *Cockroach Conservatory*, and *The Other Stories*. His short story "Outline" was nominated for a 2018 Pushcart Prize.

**Kelcey Parker Ervick:** Recently my focus has been on storytelling that combines image and text. *DEFUNCT*, a letterpress book of my paintings and mini-essays about all things obsolete and/or dead was created by Book Arts Collaborative in Muncie, Indiana. I've got a comic about butterflies and Nabokov forthcoming in *Relief Journal*, and another about Pearl Jam in the next issue of *The Believer*. This summer I'll be a participant in the Tin House workshop for graphic narratives.

**Amy Lemmon's** second full-length collection of poems, *The Miracles*, comes out from C&R Press in May. Amy will be on the faculty of the 24th Annual West Chester Poetry Conference, *Setting Out for the Sublime: Voice, Verse & Craft*, to be held in West Chester, PA, from June 5-8. She will be co-teaching a three-day workshop, Better Together: A Workshop in Collaborative Poetry, with Kathrine Varnes. For more information go to her [website](#).

**Scott Rettberg** recently published *Electronic Literature* on [Polity](#). *Electronic Literature* considers new forms and genres of writing that exploit the capabilities of computers and networks – literature that would not be possible without the contemporary digital context. In this book, he places the most significant genres of electronic literature in historical, technological, and cultural contexts. These include hypertext fiction, combinatory poetics, interactive fiction (and other game-based digital literary work), kinetic and interactive poetry, and networked writing

based on our collective experience of the Internet. He argues that electronic literature demands to be read both through the lens of experimental literary practices dating back to the early twentieth century and through the specificities of the technology and software used to produce the work. Considering electronic literature as a subject in totality, this book provides a vital introduction to a dynamic field that both reacts to avant-garde literary and art traditions and generates new forms of narrative and poetic work particular to the twenty-first century. It is essential reading for students and researchers in disciplines including literary studies, media and communications, art, and creative writing.

**Adam Sol:** My newest book is *How a Poem Moves: A Field Guide for Readers of Poetry*. It was published in the spring by ECW Press.

**Dirk Stratton:** As a writer, I've always been plagued by the Three Worries (semi-immortal forces of nature distantly related to the Greek Erinyes, or Furies, third or fourth cousins twice removed). The First Worry attacks before the writing begins and tortures me mostly with self-flagellation about my inevitable procrastination: "Why haven't you started yet?" the Worry taunts, "What a lazy bum thou art!" (Yes, the Worries are kind of pretentious that way.) The Second Worry takes over the pain-throwing once I've succeeded in banishing the First Worry and finally begun writing. The Second Worry's usual M.O. is to immediately begin judging what's being written, long before there's really enough evidence to make any such judgement even remotely plausible or valid. "What a bunch of crap," the Second Worry moans, "Quit embarrassing yourself, give it up, please, before you pollute the world with another

boneheaded word. No one will ever want to read this trite tripe, and if they do read it, they'll regret it. There's still time to avoid the shame and humiliation." And then the Worry hisses and whispers, "Loser." Once in a while, I overcome the first two Worries and finish a piece of writing and am confident that is at least somewhat worthwhile. At that point, the Third Worry pounces. "Congratulations," it sneers, the sarcasm dripping from its lips like the blood of its previous victims, "but you'll never get anyone to publish it. Why even bother going through that stupid submission process? It's a rigged game, anyway." I will admit that my struggles with the Third Worry have been far less successful than my battles with the first two. And so, about 5 or 6 years ago, I decided to circumvent the Third Worry entirely by becoming a publisher myself, and I started a micro-press I call I-BeaM Books. Since 2014, I-BeaM has brought 7 books into the world, and despite the rationale alluded to earlier, only one of those books was authored by the publisher (it appeared via I-BeaM's vanity imprint, Eccles 1.2 Press). The rest are books created by friends of mine. In a brief author's statement in the first edition of his *Collected Poems*, Edward Dorn wrote that he had been blessed by the good fortune to have always been published by his friends, by which he meant several small presses whose publishers he knew personally. When I read this over 30 years ago, it affected me pretty profoundly. Mainly, I thought that it must be pretty cool to be published by your friends, but I also began nurturing the notion that it would also be pretty cool to be the publisher, to be the one publishing one's friends. I've never gotten around to writing an I-BeaM Mission Statement, but if I ever do, that will be the gist of it: I-BeaM exists to publish the work of the publisher's friends. As I somehow was able to make a few friends during my

decade in Cincinnati, it will be no surprise to learn that I-BeaM is currently in the process of publishing two books by authors I met while at UC: a book of poems, *Petting the Bumblebees*, by Karl Zuelke, and a book of short fiction, *Dead Sea Stories: Tales of Kibbutz Life*, by Louis Friedman. Louis earned a master's Degree in Creative Writing from UC in the early 90s, and some of the stories being published first appeared in his master's thesis. (Or maybe I'm thinking of stories that became part of *Empire Builder*, Louis's first I-BeaM book. I'm not sure: Louis has written a lot of stories.) Karl has three degrees from UC, two from the English Department, a BA (along with a creative writing certificate) and a PhD, and he won short story awards both as an undergraduate and graduate student. Both Louis and Karl are members of the RUCA Writers Group, an ongoing writing workshop first formed in 1992 by members of an Austin Wright workshop who couldn't bear to have the workshop end, and so began getting together once a month to eat dinner, drink wine, and workshop some writing. 27 years later, the RUCA Writers Group is still active, still eating, drinking, and writing. I, too, was a member of RUCA, which is where I first had the opportunity to read some of the pieces I am now publishing. Louis and Karl are my friends, and both had work that I believe deserved to be published. And as the old saying goes, If you want something done right . . . well, I've been trying to finish that sentence properly for them. If all goes well, Karl's book will be available sometime in May, and Louis's book will appear soon thereafter. So, that's a little of what I've been up to lately.

**Sarah Anne Strickley** is the winner of *Copper Nickel's* Editors' Award for Prose for her retelling of Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, "Dewey Dell: An American Ghost Story." The story is

available in Issue 28 of the journal and [online](#). Her latest flash essay, "The Pacifist," was nominated by *The Laurel Review* for a Pushcart Prize. The journal Strickley edits at the University of Louisville, *Miracle Monocle*, is the winner of AWP's National Program Director's Prize for excellent content.

**Lisa Summe's** first book, *Say It Hurts*, is forthcoming from YesYes Books in June 2020.

**Brian Trapp:** I teach fiction, creative nonfiction, and disability studies at the University of Oregon, where I also direct the Kidd Creative Writing Workshops, a specialized undergrad program for creative writers. My memoir essay "Twelve Words" is forthcoming in the September/October 2019 issue of the *Kenyon Review*. In addition, two of my essays will be anthologized in *Best of Brevity* (Rose Metal Press 2020) and in *Welcome to the Neighborhood* (OU Press/Swallow Press 2019). I was also awarded an Oregon Arts Fellowship in Nonfiction and a writing residency at the Centrum in Port Townsend, Washington.

**Anne Valente's** second novel, *The Desert Sky Before Us*, releases in May 2019 (William Morrow/HarperCollins). She also has short fiction forthcoming this spring in *Crazyhorse*, as well as essays in *Literary Hub* and *Miracle Monocle*. This summer, she will be serving as fiction faculty at the Colgate Writers' Conference. She lives in upstate New York where she teaches creative writing at Hamilton College.

**Ruth Williams:** I spent the year doing readings around the Midwest to promote *Flatlands*, my poetry collection, published in 2018 by Black Lawrence Press. In addition to publishing poems in *The Pinch* and *minnesota review*, my article "Beloved 'Yous'" in the

News: Juliana Spahr's *This Connection of Everyone With Lungs* appeared in *The Writer's Chronicle*. I continue to teach creative writing and literature as an Assistant Professor of English at William Jewell College and serve as an editor for *Bear Review*, a Kansas City-based literary journal.

**Bess Winter** has been promoted to Assistant Professor of English at Eastern Illinois University, where she will assume the role of Editor-in-Chief of *Bluestem* in Fall 2019. Her fiction appears, most recently, in *Gettysburg Review*.

## STUDENT NEWS

**Austin Allen** has published recent or forthcoming poems in *The Sewanee Review* and *The Hopkins Review*, a review of Don Paterson's *40 Sonnets in Parnassus: Poetry in Review*, and literary-critical essays forthcoming via *JSTOR Daily* and *Poetry Foundation*. He delivered a paper on Poetic Song Verse at the 2018 ALSCW (Association for Literary Scholars, Critics, and Writers) conference, will be a featured reader at the Writers & Words reading series in Baltimore this June, and was the co-winner of this year's Graduate Shakespeare Prize here at UC.

**Caitlin Doyle** has recently been awarded the Meringoff Nonfiction Prize through the Association of Literary Scholars, Critics, and Writers, a Pushcart Prize Special Mention, a Joseph Wydeven Scholarship, and a residency fellowship through Guild Hall's Artist-In-Residence Program. Since the start of the academic year, her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *American Life in Poetry*, *Literary Matters*, and *Compendium of Kisses* (Terrapin Books), among other periodicals

and anthologies. Caitlin has been selected as one of two recipients of the university-wide Presidential Medal of Graduate Student Excellence at UC, and she has also received both the Exemplary Scholarship Award in Arts & Humanities and the Excellence Award for Exemplary Service in Arts & Humanities. In recognition of her endeavors as a teacher in the Department of English and Comparative Literature, she has been awarded the University of Cincinnati Excellence in Teaching Award at the doctoral level and the McMicken College of Arts & Sciences Excellence in Teaching Award, and she has been nominated by the University of Cincinnati for a Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools' Excellence in Teaching Award. Caitlin served as the Spring 2019 Visiting Poet at Miss Porter's School in Farmington, CT, moderated a panel titled "Diaspora and Endurance: Immigrant Legacies in American Poetry" at the AWP Conference, and presented her work on panels at the MELUS Conference, the humanitiesNow Conference, the ALSCW Conference, and the Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature Conference. Her collaboration as a librettist with Grammy-nominated composer Anna Clyne premiered as part of the *Silent Voices: If You Listen* program at the National Sawdust Theatre in Brooklyn, NY. As the recipient of the 2018 Presidential Endowed Scholar Award through the P.E.O. Foundation, she will deliver one of the keynote addresses at the P.E.O. Convention in late spring, and she will join the faculty of the Frost Farm Poetry Conference this summer. Currently an Associate Editor of *The Cincinnati Review*, Caitlin will graduate with her doctorate in May.

**Kimberly Grey's** second book, *Systems for the Future of Feeling*, will be published by

Persea Books next year. Her work appeared this year in *The Kenyon Review*, was featured in *Plume Magazine*, and was chosen as one of the Top Five Poems of the Week by *Narrative Magazine*. Two new poems were also included in the anthology *The Eloquent Poem: 128 Contemporary Poems and Their Making*, forthcoming in May 2019 from Persea Books. She was awarded a grant from the Taft Research Center for Summer 2019.

**Emily Heiden's** work has recently appeared in *Literary Hub*, *Colorado Review*, and *The Hartford Courant*. NPR interviewed her about her writing regarding reproductive rights, and the impact Supreme Court case rulings have on the lives of everyday citizens. She presented on two AWP panels this year and was featured on the podcast *Just the Gist Please*. She also received an honorable mention for the William C. Boyce Teaching Award.

**Sakinah Hofler** is the 2017 winner of the Manchester Fiction Prize and the 2017-2018 winner of the Sherwood Anderson Fiction Prize. A writer of poetry and prose, her work has appeared in *Mid-American Review*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Philadelphia Stories*, and elsewhere. One of her poems was recently selected to appear in the upcoming anthology *Bettering American Poetry*. She was a finalist for the 2016 Manchester Prize. She has received an Honorable Mention for the Sandy Crimmins National Poetry Prize and a Notable Mention for the Gemini Magazine Poetry Prize. This fall, she's looking forward to working as an Assistant Editor for *The Cincinnati Review*!

**Toni Judnitch:** I've got two new stories coming out with *AGNI* and *Yemassee*, a story anthologized in *New Writing from the Midwest* (chosen by Antonya Nelson), and

I've been awarded a place at The Mastheads residency for the month of July.

In the past year, **Jess Jelsma Masterton's** fiction has appeared in *The Arkansas International*, *CRAFT Literary*, *Flyway*, *The McNeese Review's Boudin*, and *The Southern Review*. Her essays and audio memoir have been featured in *Entropy*, *The Normal School*, *Pembroke Magazine*, and *Quarterly West*. She was selected as a Tennessee Williams Scholar in Fiction for the 2018 Sewanee Writers' Conference, and in the fall, she served as a co-instructor of The Fundamentals of Fiction Workshop at the Mercantile Library. She's loved working as an Assistant Editor for *The Cincinnati Review* during the academic school year, and was awarded a Ricking Fellowship for the fall 2019 semester. She was recently interviewed about her MFA experience on Katherine Griffith's *Just the Gist Please* podcast, and can be found online at [jessejelsma.com](http://jessejelsma.com).

**Daniel Paul** had pieces accepted for publication by *The Iowa Review* and *New Ohio Review*, and accepted a visiting assistant professor position at Rollins College.

**Molly Reid's** debut story collection, *The Rapture Index: A Suburban Bestiary*, is coming out through BOA, with an official release date of May 14. She has a story forthcoming in the *Mississippi Review* and has accepted the Emerging Writer Lecturer position at Gettysburg College for the next academic year.

**Emily Skaja's** first book, *BRUTE*, won the Walt Whitman Award from the Academy of American Poets (Graywolf, April 2019). She is also the recipient of a 2019-2020 Creative Writing fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

**Ryan Ruff Smith** received his PhD from UC in May 2019. Beginning in the fall, he will be the 24th Tickner Writing Fellow at Gilman School in Baltimore. A piece on the late Swiss writer Markus Werner is forthcoming in Dalkey Archive's *Review of Contemporary Fiction*.

**Eric Van Hoose:** Eric's story "Pizza" was nominated for a Pushcart Prize. He recently published a story in *Bluestem Magazine*, and this summer he'll attend the Virginia Quarterly Review's Writers' Conference in Charlottesville.

**Natalie Villacorta** published her first short story in *Hobart*. She has an essay forthcoming in *Moss*, a literary journal of the Pacific Northwest, and *Assay: A Journal of Nonfiction Studies*.

## INCOMING STUDENTS

We are delighted to welcome ten new students next year:

**Taylor Byas** is a Chicago native who has spent her last six years in the south. She completed her MA at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, where she edited and read poetry for *Birmingham Poetry Review* and *NELLE Magazine*. Giving in to her mother's demand to "bring her butt closer to home," she is excited to pursue her PhD in creative writing at the University of Cincinnati. She is a sucker for ekphrastic and formal poetry, and had the honor of publishing an ekphrastic poem in High Shelf Press. Her poems also appear in *Sanctuary Literary Art Journal*. She's fun-sized, but packed to the brim with energy and positivity. She also gives fantastic hugs.

**Marianne Chan** grew up in Stuttgart, Germany, and Lansing, Michigan. She is the author of *All Heathens*, forthcoming from

Sarabande Books in 2020. Her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *The Cincinnati Review*, *Indiana Review*, *West Branch*, *The Journal*, *The Rumpus*, and elsewhere. She holds an MFA from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and currently serves as poetry editor for *Split Lip Magazine*.

**Alida Dean** was born and raised on the island of Martha's Vineyard. She attended Smith College and served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Nepal. She was the 2015 *Arcadia* Nonfiction Award Winner and the 2016 Merriam Frontier Award Winner at the University of Montana, where she received her MFA in fiction and edited prose for *Cutbank*. In recent years she has ridden her bike across the country, taught Adult Education ESL classes in Texas, and worked on a cut flower farm in upstate New York.

**Alena Flick** is excited to be back home in Cincinnati to pursue her master's degree after earning a BA in English - Creative Writing from University of Central Florida—a school which coincidentally hosts wonderful faculty members who also did graduate work at University of Cincinnati and has therefore fostered in Alena a growing conviction that she will one day uncover evidence of a grand Florida-Ohio pipeline conspiracy at the highest levels of creative writing academia. Her short fiction has been published in *Strange Horizons*, and she has previously written for the Bookmarked section of feminist cultural criticism site *Women Write About Comics*.

**Sarah Haak** is from Albuquerque, New Mexico, and her work appears or is forthcoming in *Essay Daily*, *Conceptions Southwest*, and other journals. She holds an MA in creative nonfiction from Ohio University where she served as an Assistant

Editor for *Brevity* and received the Department of English Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award.

**Anessa Ibrahim** is a fiction writer from Los Angeles. She holds an MFA in fiction writing from the University of Minnesota. She is the recipient of a 2018 Minnesota State Arts Board artist initiative grant and is a 2018-2019 Loft Mentor Series fellow. Her work has appeared in *American Short Fiction*.

**Lily Meyer** is a writer and translator from Washington, D.C. She's a regular reviewer for NPR Books, and her work has appeared or is forthcoming in the *Atlantic*, *Catapult*, *Longreads*, the Poetry Foundation, the *New Yorker*, *Tin House*, and more. She studied creative writing at Brown University and the University of East Anglia. She won the Sewanee Review's First Annual Fiction Contest, judged by Danielle Evans, and is a two-time fiction grant recipient from the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

**Nicholas Molbert** was born and raised in south-central Louisiana. He is the author of the forthcoming chapbook *Goodness Gracious* (Foundlings Press, 2019), and his poems and prose have appeared in *American Literary Review*, *The Cincinnati Review*, *Missouri Review*, *Ninth Letter*, *Permafrost*, and others. He holds degrees from University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Louisiana State University, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he received his MFA.

**Maia Morgan** graduated from Carleton College, and after a brief turn as a performance poet, worked in theater as a playwright, actor and monologist in Chicago where she also taught writing and theater in schools, health care facilities, and jails. Her writing has appeared in *The Best American*

*Nonrequired Reading, Glamour, Creative Nonfiction, The Chatahoochee Review, Hayden's Ferry Review, The Rumpus, and Cosmonauts Avenue.* She holds an MFA in fiction from Rutgers University-Newark, where she taught for the Writing Program and Arts, Culture and Media department.

**Connor Yeck** holds an MFA from Western Michigan University, where he edited for *Third Coast* and *New Issues Poetry and Prose*. His poems can be found or are forthcoming in *Best New Poets, Prairie Schooner, Passages North, Carolina Quarterly, phoebe, Columbia,* and have received awards from *Crab Orchard Review* and *JuxtaProse*. A finalist for prizes at *Sonora Review, Sycamore Review,* and *Smartish Pace,* Connor's work has also recently been nominated for a Pushcart, long-listed for the Vice-Chancellor's International Poetry Prize, and appears in *Waters Deep: A Great Lakes Poetry Anthology*. He was born and raised on the Michigan coast.