BENNINGTON COLLEGE

B E N N I N G T O N W R I T I N G S E M I N A R S

Preliminary PUBLIC SCHEDULE

January 10–19, 2013

NOTE: Schedule Subject to Change

All readings and lectures will be held in Tishman Auditorium, unless otherwise indicated.

Thursday, January 10

7:00 Faculty & Guest Readings: **Benjamin Anastas** & **Jill McCorkle**

Friday, January 11

1:00-2:30 **Faculty Lecture**: **April Bernard**: **Lecture:** "Moore and Stevens: The Pleasures of Difficulty."

Graduate Readings:

4:00 Erin Kasdin
4:20 Melissa Mills-Dick
4:40 Jan Pendleton

7:00 Faculty & Guest Readings: **Askold Melnyczuk** & **Brenda Shaughnessy**

Saturday, January 12

Graduate Lectures:

8:20 **Vimi Bajaj**: "The Work Began To Disfigure Itself": The Contradictory Genius of V.S. Naipaul." What is it about V.S. Naipaul's fiction that evokes a mixed response from many of us, critics and readers alike, especially in the later works? Why do the writings that follow his literary masterpiece, *A House For Mr. Biswas*, seem to "disfigure" themselves? In order to answer this question, we will examine some of the works themselves as well as the author's background and influences and what may have led to his disillusionment with the novel form.

9:00 **J. Mae Barizo**: "The Vibrant Line." What is a sentence? Canadian experimental poet Lisa Robertson sees the internal structure of sentences as "wildly psycho-sexual-social units." Analyzing the works of Frank Bidart, Jean Valentine and Gertrude Stein, drawing on examples in contemporary art (Francis Picabia, Gerhard Richter) this lecture explores repetition and the lyric sentence ("the vibrant line"), which enabled these writers to explore their views on sexuality, mortality and artistic creation.

9:40 **Sabine Brigette**: "Necessary Violence." Writers like Toni Morrison and Flannery O'Connor, whose works often make us face violence, offer us something more than examples of bold scenes and well-written characters. They allow us as readers and writers to become sympathetic not only to the victims, but to the perpetrators, and in so doing can make us more human. (Lecture will explore a poem, a short story, and a novel.)

Graduate Readings:

4:00 Jennie Rathbun
4:20 Megan Renehan
4:40 Kathryn Savage
7:00 Faculty & Guest Readings: **Major Jackson** & **Patricia Hampl**

Sunday, January 13

Graduate Lectures:

8:20 **Leslie Kirk Campbell:** "Plot and Seduction: The Narrative Strategies of Alice Munro and Amy Hempel." I thought sex went like this: foreplay, rising action, climax, then the guy (or gal), consumed with pleasure, rolls off and falls asleep. I thought the same of plot. Until I discovered that there are as many plot options as there are positions in the Kama Sutra. Learn how plot can constrain or liberate and if you have a plot or not!

9:00 **Marie Chambers**: "Thinking in Tongues - Phonetics for Writers." "Soft," "dim" or "pale?" Why "persist" and not "persevere?" Is it possible for the sound inside a word to encapsulate meaning as eloquently as the word itself? How can the writer generate meaning via knowledge of the physical placement for individual speech sounds? Phonetics! Writers of poetry and prose welcome!!

9:40 **Elizabeth Schwyzer**: "Writing Begins in the Body: Locating a Language for Physical Experience." Writing engages the life of the mind--but what about the body? Is there a language of physicality, and how do our bodies inform our writing and reading? In this lecture, I'll probe my own obsession with the physical, consider writers (Hemingway, Dillard) who make words move, and offer tools you can use.

10:30-Noon **Associate Faculty Lecture**: **Patricia Hampl**: "First Person Singular."

Graduate Readings:

1:00 Angelyn Scarvaci
1:20 Elizabeth Schwyzer
1:40 Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney

2:30-4:00 **Faculty Lecture**: **Shannon Cain**: "An Experiment in American Autofiction."

7:00 Faculty & Guest Readings: **David Daniel** & **Alice Mattison**

Monday, January 14

Graduate Lectures:

8:20 **Lorraine Comanor**: "Casting Oneself as an Anti-Hero: Challenges for the Memoirist and Autobiographical Novelist: the Coetzee Trilogy." How and why does the memoirist or autobiographical novelist don the mask of an anti-hero? What are the advantages and challenges? We'll use Coetzee's Trilogy to explore these questions, while touching on related topics such as self-presentation, ambivalence, and truth-telling.

9:00 **Robert Faus**: "Holding Onto the Outside." Examines how prisons in fiction become microcosms of the world.

9:40 **Muriel Gibson**:

Graduate Readings:

4:00 Nicola Waldron
4:20 Lily White
4:40 Vimi Bajaj

7:00 Faculty & Guest Readings: **J.C. Hallman** & **Jim Shepard**

Tuesday, January 15

Graduate Lectures:

8:20 **Erin Glass**: "The Tallest House of Cards/The Most Seductive Armor: Larissa Szporluk's Poems." In this lecture we will explore how narrative, myth and dramatic monologue cohere to create Larissa Szporluk's alternate worlds and mood-altering landscapes. We will look at examples from *The Wind, Master Cherry, The Wind,* and *Embryos and Idiots.*

9:00 **Karen Houppert**: "W.G. Sebald's *Austerlitz*: Where Text and Image Abut." Photographs have long been used in nonfiction, but their documentary value shifts in the playful hands of a fiction writer. In this talk, I'll explore how the "truth" status of photographs affects the genres, renews possibility, and challenges assumptions.

9:40 **Erica Hunt**: "Piecing the Commotion: On Literary Collage." I consider here collage as an especially resonant method of composition. Collage calls out *structure* from amongst disparate materials, and new ways of "joining" moment to moment while suggesting alternatives to narrative and chronology. Collage is also a *technique*, the art of the forager, the magpie, the editor and curator, indexing through the materials of composition: words, sentences, notes, images, colors, tones and more. We will riffle through some examples: Ezra Pound, Anne Carson, Aime Cesaire, Michel Butor, Maggie Nelson.

10:30-Noon **Associate Faculty Lecture**: **Jim Shepard**: "The Percheron in the Tunnel."

Graduate Readings:

1:00 J. Mae Barizo
1:20 Sabine Brigette
1:40 Leslie Kirk Campbell

DARK KNIGHT—No Faculty or Guest Readings

Wednesday, January 16

Graduate Lectures:

1:00 **Erin Kasdin**: "How Stories Stand Up: Narrative Structure in Tim O'Brien's 'How to Tell a True War Story' and Alice Munro's 'A Bear Came Over the Mountain'." Mapping the sequence of events in two unusually structured short stories to see how their underlying scaffolding contributes to and supports each story's themes.

1:40 **Melissa Mills-Dick**: "Getting Political, Staying Personal: Grace Paley and Nadine Gordimer." In the short stories of these two writers, contemporary social issues deepen character and enrich the form. I will use Gordimer's concept of "the writer's freedom" and Paley's thoughts on "the struggle for truth" to consider how both use the tools of fiction to explore the political and the personal.

Graduate Readings:

4:00 Marie Chambers
4:20 Robynn Colwell

7:00 Faculty & Guest Readings: **Martha Cooley** & **Mark Wunderlich**

Thursday, January 17

Graduate Lectures:

8:20 **Jan Pendleton**: "The Mystery of William Trevor's Plots Viewed through the Lens of Flannery O'Connor's *Mystery and Manners: Occasional Prose*."
It would be helpful if students have read at least one of these Trevor novels: *The Story of Lucy Gault, Felicia's Journey,* and/or *Love and Summer.*

9:00 **Jennie Rathbun**: "The Life and Work of Jean Stafford." At 29, she published her first of 3 novels, *Boston Adventure*, an instant bestseller. Her *Collected Stories* won a Pulitzer Prize. But despite her literary success, her life was marred by depression and alcoholism, and today she is no longer as widely read as she deserves to be. We neglect her work, lit by a brilliant mordant wit, at our peril.

9: 40 **Megan Renehan**: "Too Nice? Too Mean? Does It Matter? The Place of Book Reviews in the Literary Landscape." This summer, a debate was swirling on and off the internet about whether book reviews have become "too nice." Then, a review in the *New York Times* swung the pendulum in the opposite direction. This lecture will explore how and why book reviews are written, read, and valued by today's literary community.

Graduate Readings:

1:00 Lorraine Comanor
1:20 Robert Faus
1:40 Muriel Gibson

7:30: **Note Later Start time**
Faculty & Guest Readings: Rachel Pastan & Lyrae van Clief-Stefanon

Friday, January 18

Graduate Lectures:

8:20 **Kathryn Savage**: "We Lie With Every Breath We Draw: Time, Memory, and Empathy in Fiction." Joan Silber writes, "Emotions that attach to the passage of time—regret, impatience, anticipation, mourning . . . are the fuel of plots." This lecture will discuss the ways William Maxwell and James Salter use character memories and the passage of time to evoke the reader's empathy.

9:00 **Angelyn Scarvaci**:

9:40 **Robynn Colwell**: "The Forest for the Trees." Shaping a novel to the emotional or psychological trajectory of its character(s) can make for a predicament: how to awaken readers to the novel's big ideas or revelations via characters who are confused, naive, or struggling toward self-awareness. Epiphany bombs can feel contrived; so, too can voice-over like narration. We'll look at some clever ways writers such as Tolstoy, Forster and James have met this challenge by putting secondary or minor characters to work.

10:30-Noon **Associate Faculty Lecture**: **Lyrae van Clief-Stefanon**: "Purchase: Poetry Begins at Home."

Graduate Readings:

4:00 Erin Glass
4:20 Karen Houppert
4:40 Erica Hunt

7:00 Faculty & Guest Readings: **Sven Birkerts** & **David Gates**
9:00 Dog House Band, Student Center

Saturday, January 19

Graduate Lectures:

8:20 **Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney**: "Worth More Than Words." According to Italo Calvino, the "moment an object appears in a narrative, it becomes charged with a special force." I agree. Examining the work of Flannery O'Connor, William Trevor and others, I'll discuss the responsibility we have as writers to carefully consider the power of objects in our fictional worlds.

9:00 **Nicola Waldron**: "Containing the Chaos: Growing a Text – On Spiral Structure in Memoir." In which I attempt to apply Fibonaccian principles to the writing of personal narrative that addresses a lived human struggle: with particular reference to a couple of Brits…

9:40 **Lily White**: "Music Will Save your Soul: Art and the Artist in Literature."
How much do all artists have in common? Using a backdrop of theology, Psychology, and Philosophy, we will examine the origins and mysteries of the creative process as depicted by Virginia Woolf, James Baldwin, James Lord, and Natalia Ginzburg.

10:30-12:00 **Faculty Lecture**: **Martha Cooley**: "Stevie Smith, Doodler: Or, On Not Being Serious"

Graduation Ceremony:

5:00 Commencement Ceremony, Usdan Gallery
Commencement Speaker: **Lyrae van Clief-Stefanon**

PARTICIPANTS

Benjamin Anastas is the author of the novels *An Underachiever's Diary*(Dial Press), which has been called "the funniest, most underappreciated novel of the 90s," and *The Faithful Narrative of a Pastor's Disappearance*(FSG), which was a New York Times Notable Book. His memoir *Too Good To Be True* will be published by Amazon/Houghton Harcourt in October of 2012. His essays, journalism, short fiction and reviews have appeared in *Harper's, The New York Times Magazine*, the *Paris Review, Tin House, GQ*, the *Yale Review* and *Bookforum*, and his piece "The Foul Reign of Emerson's Self-Reliance" will appear in *The Best American Essays 2012*. **Faculty**

- **Will give a reading.**

April Bernard is a poet, novelist, and essayist. *Miss Fuller*, a novel, was published by Steerforth in 2012. Her fourth book of poems, *Romanticism* (W.W.Norton) is out in paperback. Her previous books of poems are *Blackbird Bye Bye* (1989, Random House; winner of the Walt Whitman Award from the Academy of American Poets); and *Psalms* (1998) and *Swan Electric* (2003), both from W.W. Norton. Norton also published her novel, Pirate Jenny, in 1990. Ms. Bernard

has contributed essays, reviews, and travel pieces to such magazines as *The New York Review of Books*, *The New Republic*, *The Nation*, *The New York Times Book Review*, and *Vanity Fair*, and has also written screenplays and plays. She was educated at Harvard, worked for more than a decade in book and magazine publishing in New York City, and has taught at Barnard, Yale, Columbia, Amherst and Bennington colleges. She received a 2003-2004 Guggenheim fellowship in poetry and the 2006 Stover Memorial Prize in Poetry. In the fall of 2009 she joined the faculty at Skidmore College as Director of Creative Writing. **Faculty.**

- **Lecture**: **"Moore and Stevens: The Pleasures of Difficulty."**

Eccentric companions in their own Modernist enterprise, Marianne Moore and Wallace Stevens were similarly occupied with questions of artifice and nature. This, along with their enthusiasm for the collage and associative modes of Modernism, and highly mannered individual styles, resulted in poems so difficult that readers often have been tempted to give up. But we will not. We will read through four of these poems, finding pleasure in difficulty and testing my proposition that a great poem will teach you how to read it.

Although hand-outs will be provided, **it is strongly advised that you read these four poems—especially the long "Auroras of Autumn" -- ahead of time to get the most out of the lecture.**

Moore's "No Swan so Fine" & "The Jerboa" and Stevens's "Anecdote of the Jar" & "The Auroras of Autumn"

Sven Birkerts has been editor of *AGNI* since July 2002. His most recent books are *The Other Walk* (2011, Graywolf), *Art of Time in Memoir: Then, Again* (2007, Graywolf) and *Reading Life: Books for the Ages* (2007, Graywolf). His other books include *An Artificial Wilderness: Essays on 20th Century Literature* (William Morrow), *The Electric Life: Essays on Modern Poetry* (William Morrow), *American Energies: Essays on Fiction* (William Morrow), *The Gutenberg Elegies: The Fate of Reading in an Electronic Age* (Faber & Faber), *Readings* (1999, Graywolf), and *My Sky Blue Trades: Growing Up Counter in a Contrary Time* (2002, Viking). He has edited *Tolstoy's Dictaphone: Writers and the Muse* (Graywolf) as well as *Writing Well* (with Donald Hall) and *The Evolving Canon* (Allyn & Bacon). He has received grants from the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Foundation and the Guggenheim Foundation. He was winner of the Citation for Excellence in Reviewing from the National Book Critics Circle in 1985 and the Spielvogel-Diamonstein Award from PEN for the best book of essays in 1990. Mr. Birkerts has reviewed regularly for *The New York Times Book Review*, *The New Republic*, *Esquire*, *The Washington Post*, *The Atlantic*, *Mirabella*, *Parnassus*, *The Yale Review*, and other publications. He has taught writing at Harvard University, Emerson College, and Amherst and has most recently been Briggs-Copeland Lecturer in Nonfiction at Harvard. He is Director of the Bennington Writing Seminars, and a core faculty member. He lives in Arlington, Massachusetts, with his wife and two children. **Faculty and Director of The Bennington Writing Seminars.**

- **Will also give a reading.**

Shannon Cain's short story collection, *The Necessity of Certain Behaviors*, was awarded the Drue Heinz Literature Prize for 2011. Her work has been recognized with an O. Henry Prize, two Pushcart Prizes, a grant from the Arizona Commission on the Arts and a fellowship from the NEA. Her stories have appeared in the *New England Review*, *The Colorado Review*, *Tin House*, and *American Short Fiction*. She earned her MFA from Warren Wilson College in 2005. She is the editor of the forthcoming anthology *Roadside Curiosities: Short Stories about American Pop Culture* (University of Leipzig Press, 2013) and the co-editor of *Powder: Writing by Women in the Ranks, from Vietnam to Iraq* (Kore Press, 2008). Shannon was the Summer 2011 Picador Guest Professor for Literature in the American Studies program at the University of Leipzig. She lives in downtown Tucson. **Faculty.**

Lecture: "An Experiment in American Autofiction."

- Aroused at the June 2012 Bennington residency by all the flirting going on between fiction and nonfiction ("what's the diff?"), the author returned home to try her hand at a bit of harmless cross-genre experimentation. She found herself immersed in a bizarre and fertile netherworld of form and pseudo-constraint that felt eerily right for her difficult material. In this lecture the author shares her tentative exploits in autofiction and how this definition-defying French genre has led her to adventures in narrative stance, artifice, politics, and internet dating.

She also takes a look at the unique ways in which this emerging genre problematizes the relationship between writing and experience. Several texts will be discussed, but for best results the author recommends an advance reading of *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien, especially the final story in the collection, "The Lives of the Dead."

Martha Cooley's first novel, *The Archivist* (Little, Brown, 1998) was a national bestseller and has appeared in translation in eleven languages. Her second novel, *Thirty-Three Swoons* (also by Little, Brown, 2005) was published in the U.S. and Italy. Ms. Cooley's short fiction, nonfiction, and translations have appeared in *A Public Space, AGNI, The Common, PEN America, Washington Square,* and elsewhere. She has taught in the M.A. programs in writing at Boston University and Manhattanville College. An Associate Professor of English at Adelphi University, she lives in Brooklyn, New York, but is on sabbatical for the 2012-2013 year in Castiglione del Terziere, Italy. **Faculty.**

- **Lecture**: "Stevie Smith, Doodler: Or, On Not Being Serious"

Poet, novelist, story-writer, book reviewer, and doodler: Stevie Smith is a deliciously complex verbal and visual artist. I'll talk about the life she made for herself as a writer and a woman, and what we can learn from her sneakily serious unseriousness. Smith's chronic ambivalence (about, well, everything) got transported and transformed into weirdly wonderful verbal/visual mixes that were called silly by her detractors. Where do you park your own ambivalence, these days—on Facebook, perhaps? *Tant pis*. To be discussed.

- **Will also give a reading.**

David Daniel's collections of poems include *Seven Star Bird* (Graywolf), for which he won the Levis Reading Prize; and his chapbook, *The Quick and the Dead* (Haw River). Daniel recently completed a new collection, *Ornaments and Other Assorted Love Songs*, that he hopes Graywolf will also publish. He is currently working on a new manuscript, *American Recordings*, which traces the history of music in America. He is a regular contributor to *The American Poetry Review*, and poems, essays and reviews have appeared in numerous other journals, including the *Harvard Review, Agni, Post Road, Witness, Boston Review,* and *Ploughshares*, where he served as the Poetry editor from 1992 to 2007. He holds degrees from Vanderbilt, Johns Hopkins, and the University of Virginia, where he was a Henry Hoyns Fellow. Daniel is the Director of the undergraduate creative writing program at Fairleigh Dickinson University, where he created WAMFEST (The Words and Music Festival http://www.arts.gov/about/NEARTS/2011_v3/webf/wamfest/index.php), which has featured such artists as Bruce Springsteen, Robert Pinsky, Exene Cervenka, John Doe, Rosanne Cash, and many others. He lives in Boston, with his wife and three sons. **Faculty.**

- **Will give a reading.**

David Gates is the author of the novels *Jernigan* (Knopf, 1991) and *Preston Falls* (Knopf, 1998), and a collection of stories, *The Wonders of the Visible World* (Knopf, 1999). Mr. Gates's fiction, articles, and reviews have been published in *The New Yorker, The New York Times Book Review, Esquire, Rolling Stone, Tin House, Bomb, Salon.com, The Oxford American, The Journal of Country Music*, and frequently in *Newsweek*, where he was a longtime writer and editor. He edited the fiction anthology *Labor Days*, and has written introductions to works by Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, and Donald Barthelme. He took a B.A. from the University of Connecticut and was ABD in graduate studies there. He's received a Guggenheim fellowship, and his books have been finalists for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics' Circle Award. Mr. Gates has taught at Harvard, Columbia, the University of Virginia, Hunter College, Williams College, the University of Montana and The New School. He is currently teaching in the MFA program at the University of Montana. **Faculty.**

- **Will give a reading.**

J.C. Hallman grew up in Southern California, and studied creative writing at the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Iowa, and Johns Hopkins University. He is the author of several books of nonfiction, including *The Chess Artist* and *In*

Utopia, and a book of short stories, *The Hospital for Bad Poets*. In 2013, he will publish a short biographical work on the correspondence of William and Henry James, and in 2014 he will publish a literary relationship-memoir about author Nicholson Baker. **Faculty.**

- **Will give a reading.**

Patricia Hampl's most recent books are the memoir *The Florist's Daughter* and another work of nonfiction, *Blue Arabesque*, both on many year-end "best" lists including the *New York Times* "100 Notable Books of the Year." Her first memoir, *A Romantic Education*, about her Cold War travels to Prague, and subsequent books established her as a leading voice in contemporary memoir. Her work has appeared in *The New Yorker, Paris Review, Best American Essays, Best American Short Stories, Granta,* and *The New York Times Book Review*. In 1990 she was awarded a MacArthur Fellowship. She is Regents Professor at the University of Minnesota and a member of the permanent faculty of the Prague Summer Program. **Associate Faculty.**

- **Lecture**: "First Person Singular." The first person voice is a glinting thread in American literature. The least reliable narrative agent--in poetry, fiction and of course memoir and nonfiction--it is also the signature voice of our age. In this lecture, Patricia Hampl will consider its habits, irritations and values.

- **Will also give a reading.**

Major Jackson is the author of three collections of poetry: *Holding Company* (2010, Norton); *Hoops* (2006, Norton); and *Leaving Saturn* (2002, University of Georgia Press). He has published poems and essays in AGNI, A*merican Poetry Review, Callaloo, The New Yorker, Poetry, Tin House*, and other fine literary periodicals. *Hoops* was selected as a finalist for a NAACP Image Award in the category of Outstanding Literary Work in Poetry, and *Leaving Saturn* was awarded the Cave Canem Poetry Prize for a first book of poems and was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award in poetry. He has been a fellow at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown. He is a recipient of a Pushcart Prize, a Whiting Writers' Award and has been honored by the Pew Fellowship in the Arts and the Witter Bynner Foundation in conjunction with the Library of Congress. He served as a creative arts fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University and as the Sidney Harman Writer-in-Residence at Baruch College. He took a B.A. from Temple University and an M.F.A. from the University of Oregon. Mr. Jackson has worked as the curator of literary arts at the Painted Bride Art Center in Philadelphia and the Mountain Writers' Center in Portland, and has taught at Columbia University, Xavier University of Louisiana, New York University, and University of Massachusetts - Lowell as the Jack Kerouac Writer-in-Residence. He lives in South Burlington, Vermont, where he is the Richard Dennis Green and Gold Professor at University of Vermont. He serves as the Poetry Editor of the Harvard Review. **Faculty.**

- **Will also give a reading.**

Bret Anthony Johnston is the editor of *Naming the World and Other Exercises for the Creative Writer* and the author of *Corpus Christi: Stories*, both from Random House. His many honors include a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship and a National Book Award for writers under 35. His fiction and essays have been appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly, The Paris Review, Esquire, The New York Times Magazine, Tin House*, and in numerous anthologies, including *The Best American Short Stories, The Pushcart Prize, New Stories from the South: The Year's Best, and The Best American Sports Writing*. A graduate of the Iowa Writers' Workshop, he is the Director of Creative Writing at Harvard University. **Faculty.**

Alice Mattison's new novel, *When We Argued All Night*, was a *New York Times Book Review Editor's Choice*. Her collection of connected stories, *In Case We're Separated*, was a *New York Times* Notable Book and won the Connecticut Book Award for Fiction. Ms. Mattison's earlier novels include *Nothing Is Quite Forgotten in Brooklyn, The Wedding of the Two-Headed Woman, The Book Borrower* (a *Times* Notable Book), and *Hilda and Pearl*. She is the author of three earlier collections of stories, including *Men Giving Money, Women Yelling* (also a *Times* Notable Book), and a collection of poems, *Animals*. Her stories, poems, and essays have appeared in *The New Yorker, The New York Times, Ploughshares, The Threepenny Review, Ecotone,* and elsewhere, and have been reprinted in *The Pushcart*

Prize, *Best American Short Stories*, and *PEN/O.Henry Prize Stories.* She holds a bachelor's degree from Queens College and a Ph.D. in English literature from Harvard. She lives in New Haven, Connecticut. Her website is www.alicemattison.com. **Faculty.**

- **Will give a reading.**

Jill McCorkle is the author of ten books--four story collections and six novels--five of which have been selected as *New York Times* Notable Books. Her latest novel, *Life After Life* is due out in the spring of 2013. Two of the stories in *Going Away Shoes*, were included in the Best American Short Stories Series. She is the winner of the New England Book Award, the John Dos Passos Prize for Excellence in Literature, and the North Carolina Award for Literature. She was a Briggs Copeland Writer in Residence at Harvard, and was one of the original five core faculty members of the Bennington Writing Seminars. She currently teaches writing at North Carolina State University and lives with her husband in Hillsborough, North Carolina. **Faculty.**

- **Will give a reading.**

Askold Melnyczuk has received a Lila Wallace Reader's Digest Grant in Fiction, as well as the McGinnis Prize in Fiction. His first novel was a *New York Times Notable*, his second was an *LA Times Best Books of the Year* selection, and the most recent was chosen by the American Libraries Association's *Booklist* as an Editor's Choice. He has received the Magid Prize from PEN for his work as founding editor of *Agni* and in 2011 was honored by AWP with the George Garret Award. His recent work has appeared in *Glimmer Train, The Antioch Review, The Massachusetts Review*, and *The Denver Quarterly*. An essay on the art of fiction appeared as a cover story in *The Writer's Chronicle* this past spring. An essay on taking his father back to his childhood home appeared in celebrated photographer Jim Krantz's book on Chernobyl. Other work has appeared in *The Nation, The New York Times, Ploughshares, The Boston Globe, Grand Street*, and elsewhere. He will be the featured fiction reader at the Northeast MLA conference this coming March. An Associate Professor in the MFA Program at the University of Massachusetts, he also teaches at the Bennington Writing Seminars, and has taught at Boston University and Harvard. An excerpt from *Smedley's Secret Guide to World Literature* aired on WBUR in Boston. **Faculty.**

- **Will give a reading.**

Rachel Pastan is the author of two novels, *Lady of the Snakes* (Harcourt 2008) and *This Side of Married* (Viking 2004). Her short fiction has been published in *The Georgia Review, The Threepenny Review, Mademoiselle, Prairie Schooner*, and elsewhere. A graduate of Harvard College and the Iowa Writers' Workshop, Rachel also teaches fiction writing at Swarthmore College. She is Editor-at-Large at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia where she writes the blog *Miranda*. **Faculty.**

- **Will give a reading.**

Brenda Shaughnessy's most recent collection of poetry is *Our Andromeda*, (Copper Canyon Press, 2012.) She's also the author of *Human Dark with Sugar*, which was a finalist for the 2008 NBCC Award and winner of the James Laughlin Award from the Academy of American Poets, *and Interior with Sudden Joy*, finalist for the Lambda Literary Award. Shaughnessy was the recipient of a Bunting Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University, an NEA/ Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission Fellowship, and most recently, a 2010-11 Howard Foundation Fellowship from Brown University. She has taught at Columbia University, The New School, New York University, and Princeton University. Her poems have appeared in *Harpers, McSweeney's, The Nation, The New Yorker, The Paris Review, Slate.com* and elsewhere. She is curently Assistant Professor of English and in the M.F.A. Program at Rutgers University at Newark. She lives in Brooklyn with her husband, son, and daughter. **Faculty.**

- **Will give a reading.**

Jim Shepard is the author of six novels, including most recently *Project X*, and four story collections, including most recently *Like You'd Understand, Anyway*, which was a finalist for the National Book Award and won The Story Prize, and *You Think That's Bad*, released in 2011. *Project X* won the 2005 Library of Congress/Massachusetts Book Award for Fiction, as well as the ALEX Award from the American Library Association. His short fiction has appeared in, among other magazines, *Harper's, McSweeney's, The Paris Review, The Atlantic Monthly, Esquire, Tin House*, the *New Yorker, Granta, Zoetrope: All-Story*, and *Playboy*, and he was a columnist on film for the magazine *The Believer*. Four of his stories have been chosen for the *Best American Short Stories*, two for the *PEN/O. Henry Prize Stories*, and one for a Pushcart Prize. He's won an Artists' Grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and a Guggenheim Fellowship. He teaches at Williams College. **Associate Faculty.**

- **Lecture**: "The Percheron in the Tunnel."

  A consideration of the opportunities and problems involved in making use of non-fictional sources such as history and science in the creation of literary fiction.

- **Will also give a reading.**

Lyrae van Clief-Stefanon is the author of *Open Interval*, a finalist for the National Book Award, and *Black Swan*, winner of the 2001 Cave Canem Poetry Prize. She teaches in the English Department at Cornell University. She is currently at work on *The Coal Tar Colors*, her third collection of poems, and *Purchase*, a collection of essays. **Associate Faculty and Commencement Speaker.**

- **Lecture**: "Purchase: Poetry Begins at Home."

- **Will also give a reading and the Commencement Talk.**

Mark Wunderlich is the author of *The Anchorage*, which was published by the University of Massachusetts Press in 1999, and received the Lambda Literary Award, *Voluntary Servitude*, published in 2004 by Graywolf Press, and *The Earth Avails*, forthcoming from Graywolf. He has received fellowships from the NEA, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Wallace Stegner Fellowship Program at Stanford, the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, and the Amy Lowell Trust. His poems, interviews, reviews and translations have appeared in journals such as *Slate, The Paris Review, Poetry, Yale Review, Fence* and *Tin House*, and his poems are widely anthologized. He has taught at Stanford and Barnard College and in the graduate writing programs at Columbia University, Ohio University, San Francisco State University and Sarah Lawrence. As an arts administrator, he has worked at the Academy of American Poets, Poetry Society of America, the University of Arizona Poetry Center, *Poets & Writers* and the Napa Valley Writers Conference. He holds a BA in German Literature and English from the University of Wisconsin, and an MFA from Columbia University School of the Arts. He teaches literature and writing at Bennington College, and lives in the Hudson River Valley. **Faculty.**

- **Will also give a reading.**