

## MFAW PUBLIC SCHEDULE

June 15–24, 2017

*NOTE: Schedule subject to change*

All faculty, guest, and graduate lectures and readings will be held in  
Tishman Lecture Hall, unless otherwise indicated.

All evening Faculty and Guest Readings will be held in the Deane Carriage Barn.

### Thursday, June 15

7:00 Faculty & Guest Readings: **Kaitlyn Greenidge** and **Amy Hempel**

### Friday, June 16

#### Graduate Readings

4:00 Alexander Benaim

4:20 Andrea Caswell

4:40 Michael Connor

7:00 Faculty & Guest Readings: **Benjamin Anastas** and **Mark Wunderlich**

8:00 Historical Presentation: **Lynne Sharon Schwartz**: "Historic Recordings of Great 20th Century American Authors Reading their Work." Deane Carriage Barn

### Saturday, June 17

#### Graduate Lectures

8:20 **Ashley Olsen**: "50 Shades of Consent: Sexual Desire and Sexual Violence in Contemporary Short Stories." This lecture will examine tests from contemporary female authors including Mary Gaitskill, Margaret Atwood, and Roxane Gay.

9:00 **Katie Pryor**: "Persona & Violence in Ai's *Cruelty* & Iliana Rocha's *Karankawa*." Both of these poets use persona poems to explore violence. What is powerful about this poetic device? How does the persona poem involve the reader and interrogate our notions of self? We'll explore the connections and differences between these poets and their first books.

9:40 **Karen Rile**: "The Bad Writing Competition: Introducing Narrative Distance to Undergraduates." A technique-centered workshop that offers coordinated readings and prompts can help beginning writers focus on discrete, achievable goals. But demonstrating smooth narrative distance shifts presents a practical challenge in an undergraduate workshop setting. The Bad Writing Competition, or mastery through parody, is a deft solution—with some unexpected ancillary benefits.

10:30-noon      **Director Candidate Talk: Mark Wunderlich**

### **Graduate Readings**

3:20              Mary Davis  
3:40              Michael Friedrich  
4:00              Gardner Haskell  
4:20              Danielle Holmes  
  
7:00              Faculty & Guest Readings: **Susan Cheever** and **Jean Valentine**

## **Sunday, June 18**

### **Graduate Lectures**

8:20              **Gardner Haskell:** "How My Father And *The Catcher in the Rye* Helped Me Write My Novel."  
This lecture will explain how aspects of J.D. Salinger's writing have had a profound effect on me, especially his use of time, and his use of point-of-view in *The Catcher in the Rye*. I also found that memories of my father helped me write about my protagonist.

9:00              **Grace Smith:** "Finding Your Way Home in Fiction." How is "finding the way home" in fiction complicated by a sense of shame and alienation? I'll share some insights on how I recreated my childhood village in Assam, India; we'll also visit Thomas Hardy's Wessex and V.S. Naipaul's "two worlds."

9:40              **Leena Soman:** "Show the Novella Some Love." A closer look at this distinctive form of literature and the "in between" as a site for ruthless storytelling and righteous mischief.

### **Graduate Readings**

1:00              Jennifer Mathy  
1:20              Nathalie Kirsch  
1:40              Alexis Johnson  
2:00              Jen Logan Meyer  
  
7:00              Faculty & Guest Readings: **Askold Melnyczuk** and **Peter Trachtenberg**  
  
8:30              Graduate Fellows Reading: **Libby Flores, Morgan Jerkins, Safiya Sinclair.** Deane Carriage Barn

## **Monday, June 19**

### **Graduate Lectures**

8:20              **Michael Friedrich:** "The Conjuror's Art: The Linguistic Virtuosity of Vladimir Nabokov."  
Vladimir Nabokov is widely acknowledged as the greatest prose stylist in English since Joyce. Few, however, have ever attempted to analyze his prose in detail. What makes Nabokov's style unique?

9:00              **Benjamin Sperry:** "The Vietnam Effect: Michael Herr's *Dispatches* and the Reinvention of Storytelling."  
Employing a foot soldier's view of war, an unreliable map and a damaged narrator, Herr changed our understanding of Vietnam. Everything we as readers once had considered fixed in narrative now, in

Herr's hands, became provisional, subjective, and rooted in character – the only kind of structure that could possibly work for telling a story like Vietnam.

9:40 **Jen Logan Meyer:** *"A Message From Outer Space: The Seer Girl Device in Fiction."* The precocious girl is a widely-used storytelling device, particularly when she functions as a kind of seer. This lecture explores the variants of this character by writers including Charles Dickens, Steven Millhauser, Joy Williams (and more), highlighting the ways in which the device has evolved (or not) over the years.

10:30–noon Life of Letters Talk with Q&A: **Monika Woods**

### Graduate Readings

3:40 Duncan Murrell

4:00 Ashley Olsen

4:20 Katie Pryor

4:40 Karen Rile

7:00 Faculty & Guest Readings: **April Bernard** and **David Gates**

## Tuesday, June 20

### Graduate Lectures

8:20 **Susan Sheu:** "Despair versus Defiance: How Should a Writer Be, post-November 2016? Maggie Nelson, Natalia Ginzburg, and Rebecca Solnit on Justice and the Pursuit of Happiness When Everything is Terrible." Using the memoirs and essays of writers Maggie Nelson, Natalia Ginzburg, and Rebecca Solnit, I examine the work of activist writers and those who were politically engaged by virtue of having marginalized political beliefs or identities, in order to find guidance as a writer during this period of political upheaval.

9:00 **Shelley Strock:** "Sex, Lies, and Eating Dinner at 4 p.m." A look at ways in which the sexual desires of women over 30 are depicted (or not) in novels, and what impact the Feminist Movement, with its broad and diverse opinions on sexuality, has had on fiction over the past century.

9:40 **Lauren Wilson:** "Only the Past Is True as It Changes.\*" Fallible, malleable, and fading—how do poets rely on their memories to reconstruct the past authentically? Two contemporaries who share similar backgrounds and subject matter, Sharon Olds and Alice Notley, demonstrate two vastly different approaches to crafting memory on the page.  
*\*line from an Alice Notley poem*

10:30–noon **Associate Faculty Lecture: Amy Gerstler:** "Grief Prompts: Stretching the Elegy."

### Graduate Readings

1:00 Susan Sheu

1:20 Grace Smith

1:40 Leena Soman

2:00 Benjamin Sperry

3:00–4:00 **World Lit Cafe: Mohammed Naseehu Ali, CAPA Symposium**

**DARK KNIGHT** – No Readings

### Wednesday, June 21

#### **Graduate Lectures**

- 8:20      **Joliange Wright:** “The Rolling, Dirty Water: techniques for narrating trauma, shame and inherited violence in the first novels of Edwidge Danticat, Dorothy Allison, and Toni Morrison.” How do we approach writing trauma with confidence? Transform our drive to bear witness into a compelling narrative? We’ll look at three areas of craft specific to trauma literature: world building and social context, development of complex characters (some of whom are victims **and** perpetrators), and ways of representing violence.
- 9:00      **Alexander Benaim:** “Stories Without Stories.” How do stories that omit a crucial aspect of plot work? This lecture looks at works by Robert Walser, Deborah Eisenberg, and Anton Chekhov to find out.
- 1:00-2:30      **One Book Initiative:** A discussion of **Viet Thanh Nguyen’s** novel, *The Sympathizer*. Tishman
- 3:00-4:30      **Associate Faculty Lecture:** Mohammed Naseehu Ali, Tishman
- 4:30-5:30      **Talk with Q&A:** Sarah Bowlin, Literary Agent
- 7:00      Faculty & Guest Readings: **Sven Birkerts** and **Amy Gerstler**
- 8:00      **Celebration of Sven Birkerts, Deane Carriage Barn**

### Thursday, June 22

#### **Graduate Lectures**

- 8:20      **Andrea Caswell:** “The Hitchcockian Way.” What can writers learn about suspense from Alfred Hitchcock? This lecture will examine ‘Hitchcockian’ techniques at work in some of the director’s most popular films. We’ll identify similar elements of suspense in famous works of literature, namely *Romeo and Juliet* and Tolstoy’s *The Death of Ivan Ilych*.
- 9:00      **Michael Connor:** “What’s the Sin in Synchronicity?” We witness meaningful coincidences with no apparent cause — what Carl Jung called *synchronicity*. In literature, these moments can seem like plot contrivances. But there’s a serious case for them, in fiction and non, from Dickens to Sebald to Roth to Auster, and a few more.
- 9:40      **Mary Davis:** “Wickedly Complex: Stepmothers in Literature.” Exploring Elizabeth Gaskell’s *Wives and Daughters* and Elizabeth Bowen’s *Death of the Heart* to see what makes their stepmother characters complicated and interesting women we want to read about and not just women we love to hate.

#### **Graduate Readings**

- 3:00      Angelique Stevens  
3:20      Shelley Strock

3:40	Lauren Wilson
4:00	Joliange Wright
7:30	Faculty & Guest Readings: <b>Susan Choi</b> and <b>Ed Ochester</b> <b>NOTE later start time</b>
9:30	Doghouse Band, Carriage Barn

## Friday, June 23

### Graduate Lectures

8:20	<b>Danielle Holmes:</b> "Creating Worlds, Metaphorically Speaking." Explore the ways setting can transcend the superficial to become an essential component of story. Diverse environs from a variety of contemporary fiction will be examined, including pieces by Elizabeth Strout, Tim O'Brien, Vladimir Nabokov, and Donald Antrim.
9:00	<b>Alexis Johnson:</b> "Sex Scenes in Literature." Sex scenes can serve useful purposes in a literary work. I examine several novels and short stories for how the authors effectively use sex scenes to advance plot and character, through description of sexual acts, including intercourse, masturbation, or verbal descriptions of sexual acts.
9:40	<b>Nathalie Kirsch:</b> "Conformity and Revolution: The Subversion of the Renaissance Sonnet Tradition by Contemporary Women Poets." A.E. Stallings, Aimee Nezhukumatathil, and Bernadette Mayer subvert the expectations of the Renaissance sonnet through rhyme scheme and meter. But what about the less obvious devices, like their use of a female speaker/subject in a tradition that has long kept the woman at arm's length?
10:30-noon	Talk: <b>James Wood &amp; J.D. Daniels:</b> "On Style."
3:15-4:45	<b>Director Candidate Talk: Don Lee</b>
7:00	Faculty and Guest Readings: <b>Don Lee</b> and <b>Dinah Lenney</b>

## Saturday, June 24

### Graduate Lectures

8:20	<b>Jennifer Mathy:</b> "The Wild Inside: Maurice Sendak and Leveraging Personal Trauma to Create Truth in Fiction." Sendak used an unlikely form, the picture book, to explore his own childhood crises, to enhance character, and to achieve "truth" in his made-up stories. "I refuse to lie to children," he said. How might writers use personal trauma to inform their work – <i>without</i> letting the personal become the story?
9:00	<b>Angelique Stevens:</b> "The Darkness Beyond the Circle: Reading the Holocaust in Martin Sherman's, <i>Bent</i> and C.P. Taylor's, <i>Good</i> ." Holocaust literature exposes readers to the psychological complexities of human decision-making particularly in terms of understanding the victim and the perpetrator. This lecture will deconstruct the two plays through the lens of Lawrence Langer's idea of the "Disappeared Criminal" and Maxine Kumin's poem, "Woodchucks."

9:40            **Duncan Murrell:** "Sympathy for the Devil: Writing Monsters and Monstrousness." Monsters inhabit our literature, films, and our politics. The word "monster" peppers our casual vocabulary. But the monster in literature is a very specific creature, embodying anxieties about our culture that transcend good and bad. Writing convincing monsters is a feat. This lecture explores how great writers have done it.

1:00-2:30     Master Class: **April Bernard:** "Elizabeth Bishop."

3:00-4:00     Lecture: **Lisa Lucas**

### **Graduation Ceremony**

7:30            Commencement Ceremony, Usdan Gallery  
Commencement Speaker: **Lisa Lucas**

## PRESENTERS

### Mohammed Naseehu Ali

Mohammed Naseehu Ali is a writer and musician from Ghana. He is the author of *The Prophet of Zongo Street*, a collection of short stories. Ali's fiction and essays have appeared in the *New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *Mississippi Review*, *Bomb*, *Gathering of the Tribes*, *Essence*, *Open City*, and others. He was the recipient of fellowships from The Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers at the New York Public Library and Yaddo. Ali lives in Brooklyn, New York, and teaches undergraduate fiction at NYU's Creative Writing Program. **Visiting Writer.**

**Hosting the World Lit Café.**

**Lecture:**

### Benjamin Anastas

Benjamin Anastas is the author of the novels *An Underachiever's Diary*, recently re-released in paperback by the Dial Press, 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* was published in October of 2012 by New Harvest/HMH. Other work has appeared in *The Paris Review*, *Harper's*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Bookforum*, *The Yale Review* and *The Best American Essays 2012*. He teaches literature at Bennington College. **Faculty.**

**Will give a reading.**

### April Bernard

April Bernard is a poet, novelist, and essayist. *Brawl & Jag*, her fifth collection of poems, was published last year by W.W. Norton. *Miss Fuller*, a novel, came out in 2012. Her previous books of poems are *Romanticism*, *Swan Electric*, *Psalms*, and *Blackbird Bye Bye*. Bernard is a regular contributor to *The New York Review of Books* and other journals. She has received a Guggenheim and a Whitney Humanities Center fellowship. Educated at Harvard University, she worked in book and magazine publishing in New York City, and has taught widely. She is Professor of English and Director of Creative Writing at Skidmore College.

**Will give a reading.**

### Sven Birkerts

Sven Birkerts has been editor of *AGNI* since July 2002. His most recent books are *Changing the Subject: Art and Attention in the Internet Age* (2015, Graywolf), *The Other Walk* (2011, Graywolf), *The Art of Time in Memoir: Then, Again* (2008, 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. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts & Sciences in 2012. Birkerts has reviewed regularly for *The New York Times Book Review*, *The New Republic*, *Esquire*, *The Washington Post*, *The Atlantic*, *Mirabella*, *Parnassus*, *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, and other publications. He has taught writing at Harvard University, Emerson College, and Amherst and has served as Briggs-Copeland Lecturer in Nonfiction at Harvard. Birkerts is Director of the Bennington Writing Seminars, and a core faculty member. He lives in Arlington, Massachusetts. **Director.**

**Will give a reading.**

### **Sarah Bowlin**

Sarah Bowlin joined Aevitas Creative Management as an agent in early 2017. Before moving to agenting, she spent a decade as an editor, first at Riverhead Books and most recently at Henry Holt & Company. She has worked with a list of acclaimed writers including Juan Gabriel Vásquez, Sheila Heti, Salvatore Scibona, Helen Phillips, Aria Sloss, Kseniya Melnik, Matt Sumell, Ramona Ausubel, Julie Buntin, Rachel Khong and many more. As an agent, she is focusing on bold, dynamic voices in literary fiction and nonfiction. Originally from the south, she recently moved from New York to sunny Los Angeles. **Literary Agent.**

**Will give a talk with Q&A.**

### **Susan Cheever**

Susan Cheever's most recent book *Drinking in America*, a look at American History through the lens of alcoholism, was published in October, 2016 and was long listed for a PEN nonfiction award in 2017. Her most recent biography, *E.E. Cummings: A Poet's Life*, was published in February 2014. *Louisa May Alcott: A Personal Biography*, was published in the fall of 2010 and a previous book on the American transcendentalists, *American Bloomsbury: Louisa May Alcott, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Henry David Thoreau: Their Lives, Their Loves, Their Work* was published in 2006. She has published seven other books of nonfiction and five novels. Her short work has appeared in dozens of publications and anthologies including *The New Yorker* and *The New York Times*, and as a weekly column in *Newsday* where she contributed to coverage that won the Pulitzer Prize in 1997 after the crash of TWA Flight 800. She has been nominated for a National Book Circle Award and won the Boston *Globe* Winship medal and a Guggenheim Fellowship. She is a member of the Authors Guild Council and the board of the Yaddo Corporation. Cheever took a B.A. from Brown and has taught at Yale, Brown University, The New School, and elsewhere. She lives in New York City. **Faculty.**

**Will give a reading.**

### **J.D. Daniels**

J. D. Daniels has been a frequent contributor to *The Paris Review* since 2010. Recent articles appear in *Esquire*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, and *The Oxford American*; earlier work appeared in *n+1*, *Agni*, and elsewhere. His "Letter from Majorca" was reprinted in *Best American Essays 2013*. "Letter from Kentucky" was included in *The Unprofessionals: New American Writing from The Paris Review*. Daniels is the recipient of a 2016 Whiting Award and *The Paris Review's* 2013 Terry Southern Prize. His collection *The Correspondence* was published in 2017 by Farrar, Straus and Giroux and by Jonathan Cape-Penguin Random House UK; *Die Korrespondenz* is forthcoming from Suhrkamp Verlag. **Visiting Writer.**

**Will give a talk with James Wood.**



### Elizabeth Flores

Libby Flores is a 2008 PEN Center USA Emerging Voices Fellow. Her short fiction has appeared in *American Short Fiction*, *Post Road Magazine*, *Tin House*, *The Open Bar*, *The Guardian*, *The Rattling Wall*, *Paper Darts*, *Bridge Eight*, *FLASH: The International Short-Short Story Magazine*, and *The Los Angeles Review of Books*. Libby is the Director of Literary Programs at PEN Center USA. She has taught creative writing workshops at San Diego Writer's Ink and PEN. She lives in Los Angeles but will always be a Texan. She can be found at [libbyflores.com](http://libbyflores.com). **Graduate Teaching Fellow.**

**Will give a reading.**

### David Gates

David Gates is the author of the novels *Jernigan* (Knopf, 1991) and *Preston Falls* (Knopf, 1998), and two collections of stories, *The Wonders of the Visible World* (Knopf, 1999) and *A Hand Reached Down to Guide Me* (Knopf, 2015). Gates's fiction, articles, and reviews have been published in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times Book Review*, *The Paris Review*, *Esquire*, *Rolling Stone*, *Tin House*, *Granta*, *The Oxford American*, *The Journal of Country Music*, and frequently in *Newsweek*, where he was a longtime writer and editor. He's received a Guggenheim fellowship, and his books have been finalists for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics' Circle Award. Gates has taught at Harvard, Columbia, the University of Virginia, Hunter College, Williams College, and The New School. He is currently teaching in the MFA program at the University of Montana. **Faculty.**

**Will give a reading.**

### Amy Gerstler

Amy Gerstler is a writer of poetry, nonfiction and journalism. She has published thirteen books of poetry, and a collaborative artists book (with Alexis Smith.) *Scattered at Sea*, a book of her poems, published by Penguin in June, 2015, was longlisted for the National Book Award, shortlisted for the Kingsley Tufts Award, and was a finalist in poetry for the PEN USA literary award. Her book *Dearest Creature* (Penguin 2009) was named a New York Times Book Review Notable Book, and was short listed for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize in Poetry. Her previous twelve books include *Ghost Girl*, *Medicine*, *Crown of Weeds*, which won a California Book Award, *Nerve Storm*, and *Bitter Angel*, which won a National Book Critics Circle Award in poetry. She was the 2010 guest editor of the yearly anthology *Best American Poetry*. Her work has appeared in a variety of magazines and anthologies, including *The New Yorker*, *Paris Review*, *American Poetry Review*, *Poetry*, several volumes of *Best American Poetry* and *The Norton Anthology of Postmodern American Poetry*. She has taught writing and/or visual art at the California Institute of the Arts, Cal Tech, Art Center College of Design, the University of Utah, Pitzer College, and elsewhere. She currently teaches in the MFA Writing Program at the University of California at Irvine.

**Associate Faculty.**

**Lecture:** "Grief Prompts: Stretching the Elegy." As writers, we might think of elegy as a literary wail or moan, a song of shock and bereavement. But perhaps elegiac modes, both in prose and poetry, could be more capacious than they seem at first glance/read? Can the elegy wrestle with the erotic, fury, great plumes of emotional energy that shoot into the sky and can be seen miles off? Can elegy, in part or as a whole, traffic in humor, nostalgia, surprise, among other, perhaps less expected elements? Can we stretch our definitions of elegy in literature, and attempt to use enlarged views of its capacities for longing, mourning, grief, revenge, a sense of freedom and relief, as generative forces in our writing?

**Will also give a reading.**

### Kaitlyn Greenidge

Kaitlyn Greenidge's debut novel is *We Love You, Charlie Freeman* (Algonquin Books), one of the *New York Times* Critics' Top 10 Books of 2016. Her writing has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Elle.com*, *Buzzfeed*, *Transition Magazine*, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *The Believer*, *American Short Fiction* and other places. She is a contributing writer for Lenny Letter. She lives in Brooklyn, NY.

**Will give a reading.**

### Amy Hempel

A recipient of awards from the Guggenheim Foundation, the United States Artists Foundation, and the Academy of Arts and Letters, Amy Hempel is the author of *Reasons to Live*, *At the Gates of the Animal Kingdom*, *Tumble Home*, and *The Dog of the Marriage*, and is co-editor of *Unleashed*. Her stories have appeared in *Harper's*, *GQ*, *Vanity Fair*, and many other publications, and have been anthologized in *The Best American Short Stories* and *The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction*. Her *Collected Stories* was named by the *New York Times* as one of the ten best books of 2007, and won the Ambassador Book Award for best fiction of the year. In 2008 she received the REA Award for the Short Story, and in 2009 she received the PEN/Malamud Award for Excellence in the Short Story. She has a BA in Journalism from San Jose State University, and has taught at Sarah Lawrence, The New School, Duke, Princeton, and Harvard. She currently lives in Florida. **Faculty.**

**Will give a reading.**

### Morgan Jerkins

Morgan Jerkins is a Harlem-based writer and Contributing Editor at *Catapult*. A Princeton alumna and Bennington MFA graduate, her work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *ELLE*, *Rolling Stone*, *Vogue*, and *BuzzFeed*, among many others. Her debut essay collection, *This Will Be My Undoing: Living at the Intersection of Black, Female, and Feminist in (White) America*, is forthcoming in 2018 from Harper Perennial. **Graduate Teaching Fellow.**

**Will give a reading.**

### Don Lee

Don Lee is the author of the novels *Lonesome Lies Before Us*, *The Collective*, *Wrack and Ruin*, and *Country of Origin*, and the story collection *Yellow*. He has received an American Book Award, the Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature, and the Sue Kaufman Prize for First Fiction. He is currently the director of the M.F.A. program in creative writing at Temple University and splits his time between Philadelphia and Baltimore. **Director Candidate.**

### Dinah Lenney

Dinah Lenney is the author of a memoir-in-essays, *The Object Parade* (Counterpoint Press), and of *Bigger than Life: A Murder, a Memoir*, selected for the American Lives series by the University of Nebraska Press. She co-edited *Brief Encounters: A Collection of Contemporary Nonfiction* with the late Judith Kitchen (W.W. Norton, 2015), and co-authored *Acting for Young Actors* with Mary Lou Belli. Other work has appeared in a variety of publications and anthologies including *The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *AGNI*, *Creative Nonfiction*, the *Harvard Review*, the *Paris Review Daily*, and the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, where she serves as an editor-at-large. **Faculty.**

Will give a reading.

### Askold Melnyczuk

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 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. A chapter from his new novel, *Excerpts from Smedley's Secret Guide to World Literature, Part I*, by Jonathan Levy Wainwright the IV, age 15 has been published as a chapbook by Anomalous Press, and new work is out or forthcoming in *The Boston Globe*, *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, *the Antioch Review*, and *The Gettysburg Review*. **Faculty.**

Will give a reading.

### Ed Ochester

Ed Ochester's new book of poetry is *Sugar Run Road* (Autumn House Press). His others include *Unreconstructed: Poems Selected & New* (Autumn House Press, 2007), *The Republic of Lies*, a chapbook, (Adastra Press, 2007), *The Land of Cockaigne* (Story Line, 2001), *Snow White Horses: Selected Poems 1973-1988* (Autumn House, 2000), *Cooking in Key West* (Adastra Press, 2000), *Changing the Name to Ochester* (Carnegie Mellon, 1988), *Miracle Mile* (Carnegie Mellon, 1984), and *Dancing on the Edges of Knives* (University of Missouri Press, 1973). He is the editor of the Pitt Poetry Series at the University of Pittsburgh Press, and edited *American Poetry Now* (Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 2007). He is also the general editor for the Drue Heinz Literature Prize for short fiction at the press. With Peter Oresick, he edited *The Pittsburgh Book of Contemporary American Poetry* and for many years, with Judith Vollmer, he edited the poetry magazine, *5 AM*. Ochester has received fellowships in poetry from the NEA and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. He received the George Garrett Award from the Association of Writers and Writing Programs and the "Artist of the Year" award from the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, a major cash award given annually to one established artist in Western Pennsylvania, selected from all fields. His poems have appeared in *Best American Poetry 2007* and *2013*, and the *Pushcart Prize* anthologies. Educated at Cornell, Harvard, and the University of Wisconsin, Ochester has taught at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and was for twenty years the director of the writing program at the University of Pittsburgh. He was twice elected president of AWP. He lives, as he says, "in the sticks" outside Pittsburgh. **Faculty.**

Will give a reading.

### Lynne Sharon Schwartz

Schwartz is the author of 23 books, including novels, short-story collections, nonfiction, poetry, and translations. Her most recent books are the poetry collection, *No Way Out But Through*; the essay collection, *This Is Where We Came In*; and the novel *Two-Part Inventions*. Her first novel, *Rough Strife*, was nominated for a National Book Award and the PEN/Hemingway First Novel Award. Other novels include *The Writing on the Wall*; *In the Family Way: An Urban Comedy*; *Disturbances in the Field*; and *Leaving Brooklyn*, nominated for the PEN/Faulkner Award. Her latest story collection is *Referred Pain*, published in 2004. She is also the author of the memoirs, *Not Now*, *Voyager* and *Ruined by Reading*, the essay collection, *Face to Face*, and the editor of *The Emergence of Memory: Conversations With W.G. Sebald*, which includes interviews and essays. Her translations from Italian include *A Place to Live: Selected Essays of Natalia Ginzburg*, and *Smoke Over Birkenau*, by Liana Millu. Schwartz has received grants from the Guggenheim Foundation, the NEA, and the New York State Foundation for the Arts. Her stories and essays have been reprinted in many anthologies, including *The Best*

*American Short Stories*, *The O. Henry Prize Stories*, and *The Best American Essays*. She has taught writing and literature at colleges and universities here and abroad. She lives in New York City. **Faculty.**

**Presentation:** “Historic Recordings of Great 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Authors Reading their Work.” James Baldwin, Philip Roth, John Updike, and others. Lynne Sharon Schwartz and her husband Harry Schwartz recorded these authors at the start of their careers. The readings were originally issued as 8 inch LPs and now have been re-released as CDs and downloads. An exciting listening experience!

### **Safiya Sinclair**

Safiya Sinclair was born and raised in Montego Bay, Jamaica. She is the author of *Cannibal* (University of Nebraska Press, 2016), winner of the Prairie Schooner Book Prize in Poetry, the Addison M. Metcalf Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the OCM Bocas Prize for Caribbean Literature in Poetry, and selected as an American Library Association Notable Book of the Year. Sinclair is the recipient of a Whiting Writers’ Award. Her other honours include a Pushcart Prize, a Ruth Lilly and Dorothy Sargent Rosenberg Fellowship from the Poetry Foundation, fellowships from Yaddo, the Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference, and the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, as well as the Amy Clampitt Residency Award. *Cannibal* was also longlisted for the PEN Open Book Award, and the Dylan Thomas Prize. Her poems have appeared in *Poetry*, *Kenyon Review*, *Granta*, *The Nation*, *New England Review*, *Boston Review*, *Oxford American*, and elsewhere. Sinclair received her MFA in poetry at the University of Virginia, and is currently a PhD candidate in literature and creative writing at the University of Southern California. **Graduate Teaching Fellow.**

**Will give a reading.**

### **Peter Trachtenberg**

Peter Trachtenberg is the author of *7 Tattoos*, *The Book of Calamities*, and *Another Insane Devotion*, a 2012 *New York Times* Editors’ Choice. His essays, journalism, and short fiction have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Harper’s*, *A Public Space*, *Bidoun*, *The New York Times’s* travel magazine, *The Virginia Quarterly Review* and *Story Quarterly*. His honors include the Whiting Award, the Nelson Algren Award for Short Fiction, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and residencies at Yaddo and the Rockefeller Foundation’s Bellagio Center. He is an Associate Professor in the Writing Program of the University of Pittsburgh. He’s currently working on a novel about the bankruptcy and death of Ulysses S. Grant and a book-length essay on impunity in America. [www.petertrachtenberg.com](http://www.petertrachtenberg.com) **Faculty.**

**Will give a reading.**

### **Jean Valentine**

Jean Valentine was born in Chicago, earned her B.A. from Radcliffe College, and has lived most of her life in New York City. She won the Yale Younger Poets Award for her first book, *Dream Barker*, in 1965. Her 13<sup>th</sup> book of poetry is *Shirt in Heaven*, published by Copper Canyon Press in 2015. *Door in the Mountain: New and Collected Poems 1965-2003* was the winner of the 2004 National Book Award for Poetry. Jean was the State Poet of New York for two years, starting in the spring of 2008. She received the 2009 Wallace Stevens Award from the Academy of American Poets, and has received a Guggenheim Fellowship and awards from the NEA, The Bunting Institute, The Rockefeller Foundation, The New York Council for the Arts, and the New York Foundation for the Arts, as well as the Maurice English Prize, the Teasdale Poetry Prize, and the Poetry Society of America’s Shelley Memorial Prize in 2000. In 2014 she was given an award for exceptional accomplishment in literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 2017 she won The Bollinger Prize from Yale University. She has taught at Sarah Lawrence College, The Graduate Writing Program of New York University, Columbia University, and the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y in Manhattan. **Visiting Writer.**

**Will give a reading.**

### **James Wood**

James Wood has been a staff writer and book critic at *The New Yorker* since 2007. He was the chief literary critic at the *Guardian*, in London, from 1992 to 1995, and a senior editor at *The New Republic* from 1995 to 2007. His critical essays have been collected in four volumes, *The Broken Estate: Essays on Literature and Belief* (1999), *The Irresponsible Self: On Laughter and the Novel* (2004), which was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award, *The Fun Stuff and Other Essays* (2013), and *The Nearest Thing to Life* (2015). He is also the author of a novel, *The Book Against God* (2003), and a study of technique in the novel, *How Fiction Works* (2008). He lives in Boston, and teaches half time at Harvard University, where he is Professor of the Practice of Literary Criticism. **Visiting Writer.**

**Will give a talk with J.D. Daniels**

### **Monika Woods**

Monika Woods is a literary agent at Curtis Brown, Ltd. She is a graduate of the Columbia Publishing Course and has worked at Trident Media Group and InkWell Management, where she worked closely with leading voices in contemporary literature. Her interests include literary and commercial fiction and compelling non-fiction in food, popular culture, journalism, science, and current affairs. Monika is particularly excited about plot-driven literary novels, non-fiction that is creatively critical, unique perspectives, a great cookbook, and above all, original prose. **Visiting Agent.**

**Will give a Life of Letters talk.**

### **Mark Wunderlich**

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* published by Graywolf in 2014 which was a finalist for the Kingsley Tufts Award, and received the 2015 Rilke Prize. 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, the Amy Lowell Trust and the Civitella Ranieri Foundation. His poems, interviews, reviews and translations have appeared in journals such as *Slate*, *The Paris Review*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *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 and Director Candidate.**