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**Community of Writers at Squaw Valley**

**Omnium Gatherum & Newsletter**

2010-2011, Issue 15

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**Our Supporters**

The Community of Writers gratefully acknowledges the financial support that makes our programs possible:

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- and our many individual donors and friends, as well as Lou DiMattei, Amy Tan, Lucinda Watson and an anonymous donor for their major contributions to the Community of Writers Endowment.

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The ads which appear in this issue represent the work of Community of Writers staff and participants. These ads help to defray the cost of the newsletter. If you have a recent or forthcoming book, please contact us about advertising in our next annual issue.

**Contact Maxima Kahn for a Rate Sheet and more information:** (530) 273-3566 or maxima@squawvalleywriters.org

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**Please Note:** We are not able to fact-check the submitted news. We apologize if any incorrect information is published.
Welcome to the Omnium Gatherum & Newsletter!

Jack Kerouac in his “Belief and Technique for Modern Prose: List of Essentials” gives as number 19: “Accept Loss Forever.” Number 20 is “Believe in the holy contour of life.” We’ve had to weather some very heavy losses in the Community of Writers in recent years: first our co-founder Oakley Hall II, then beloved staff members James D. Houston and Lucille Clifton, and now suddenly Oakley “Tad” Hall III, as well as Pokey, mascot for so many years. It’s not so easy to accept that loss is woven into the fabric of our lives, and from that acceptance to find our renewed belief in the holy contour of those lives. But that is precisely part of the enduring work of great writing. One of the earliest and longest-standing tasks of our poets and writers has been to help us grieve, acknowledge and celebrate what we’ve lost and help us find the holy contour in it all, the beauty and mystery, the thread of sense, the story.

Thank you to each of you who continues this grand tradition of meaning-making, story-weaving and bringing out the sometimes-obscured holy contour. I hope this issue inspires and helps you to continue through the inevitable losses and gains, the celebrations and tragedies, and to remember that community is essential to our well-being.

—Maxima Kahn
maxima@squawvalleywriters.org

Send Us Your News!

PAST PARTICIPANT OR STAFF?
Do you have news you would like us to include in the next newsletter? The Omnium is published once a year. We print publishing credits, awards and similar new writing-related achievements, and also include births. News should be from the past year only. Please compose it in third person, using complete sentences. Include titles, periodicals, publisher, and publication dates, as needed. Deadline: September 1, 2011 for next issue.

We dedicate this issue of the Omnium Gatherum & Newsletter to the memories of long-time staff member and friend Lucille Clifton and our own beloved Oakley Hall III.
Beloved and admired friend and staff member, Lucille Clifton died Saturday, February 13, 2010. She had been invited back again to Squaw Valley for the summer of 2010 as a Special Guest. We had so looked forward to seeing her again. She had been a regular staff member since 1991 and continued to return almost every other year since then.

Lucille was a major figure in American letters. She was an award-winning poet, fiction writer and author of children’s books. BOA Editions published her most recent collection, Mercy, as well as Blessing the Boats: New and Selected Poems 1969-1999, which won the 2000 National Book Award for Poetry. Two of Clifton’s BOA poetry collections, Good Woman: Poems and a Memoir 1969-1980 and Next. New Poems, were chosen as finalists for the Pulitzer Prize in 1988, while Clifton’s The Terrible Stories (BOA) was a finalist for the 1996 National Book Award. Clifton served as Distinguished Professor of Humanities and holder of the Hilda C. Landers Endowed Chair in the Liberal Arts at St. Mary’s College of Maryland until her retirement in the fall of 2005. She continued to serve St. Mary’s as Professor Emeritus and Friend to the College. She was appointed a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and elected as Chancellor of The Academy of American Poets in 1999. In 2007 she was awarded the Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize, which honors a living U.S. poet whose lifetime accomplishments warrant extraordinary recognition. This year, 2010, she was awarded the Frost Medal from the Poetry Society of America to honor “distinguished lifetime service to American poetry.”

At the Poetry Workshop in Squaw Valley, she was a warm and wise presence, a listener as well as a storyteller. She wrote new poems each day along with the other staff poets and participants, and even her rough drafts were fine examples of her work. Lucille composed her daily poems on a typewriter, working on one of Oakley Hall’s shabby IBM Selectrics.

We still remember her final poem of the 2008 week, how it achieved what Lucille’s work did so well – three spare lines that captured the spirit of the previous night’s party at the Hall House, the week itself – and much more. That poem, the last, as it turned out, that we would see from our old friend, went something like this:

over the mountains
and under the stars it is
one hell of a ride

There is an empty place where once there was Lucille, but we are fortunate to have her words to help us fill it.


Cornelius Eady: He received an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts Degree from the University of Rochester.

Forrest Gander: He has a book of poems and two books of translations coming out in Spring 2011: Core Samples from the World (poetry, photos, haibun) from New Directions; Watchword. Poems of Pura Lopez Colome from Wesleyan; Spectacle & Pigsty. Poems of Kiwao Nomura from OmniDawn. His poem “Witness” was set to “PoemFlow,” available as an Itunes app: www.poemflow.com/776

Galway Kinnell: The Chancellors of the Academy of American Poets selected Galway Kinnell as the recipient of the 2010 Wallace Stevens Award, recognizing outstanding and proven mastery in the art of poetry.

Harryette Mullen: She was the recipient of Poets & Writers’ fourth annual Jackson Poetry Prize. Poets & Writers says of the $50,000 prize that it “honors an American poet of exceptional talent who deserves wider recognition.”

Evie Shockley: Her second poetry book, the new black, was just released from Wesleyan University Press in March 2011. She also has a book of poetry criticism, Renegade Poetics: Black Aesthetics and Formal Innovation in African American Poetry, forthcoming in the University of Iowa Press’s Contemporary North American Poetry Series later in the year.

C.D. Wright: Her collection One With Others (Copper Canyon Press) was a finalist for the National Book Awards.

Robert Hass: His most recent volume, The Apple Trees at Olema: New and Selected Poems, was published by Ecco in spring 2010. He selected the poems, wrote the introduction, and with Paul Ehenkamp provided annotations for “Song of Myself” for a new edition of Song of Myself. And Other Poems by Walt Whitman, published in February by Counterpoint.


Yusef Komunyakaa: The Chameleon Couch: Poems was released by Farrar, Straus and Giroux in March 2011. Conversations with Yusef Komunyakaa (published in April 2010 by University Press of Mississippi) brings together over two decades of interviews and profiles with the poet.
Dean Young Needs Our Help

Our brilliant Dean Young came very near to complete cardiac failure this fall. Dean’s heart condition is congenital and he’d been living with it for a while. His doctors were in the process of preparing him for a heart transplant when his heart began to fail. So they implanted external heart pumps as a temporary expedient. Dean is now out of intensive care and awaiting a heart transplant. That’s the good news.

The difficult news is that, though insurance covers most of the costs of a heart transplant operation, there are typically between $100,000 and $250,000 in expenses before and after surgery not covered by insurance. In response to this, there exists a National Foundation for Transplants through which friends of transplant patients can make tax-deductible donations to help cover their uncovered medical expenses. Dean’s friends have signed him up for the NFT website and want you to know that they are grateful for help in any amount.

Go to: www.transplants.org/donate/deanyoung. Click on “Donate Today” and make sure to put in Dean’s name where it says, “My gift is in honor of the following patient.”

Manzanita

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Deadline: March 31, 2011

the new black

Evie Shockley

“In these remarkable new poems Evie Shockley seems to step to us wearing an alluring silk gown and steel-toe guerilla boots! She possesses that rare combination of grace and subversiveness. Her synthesis of poetic styles (the sonnet, the epistle, the tarot, the diagram) produces a poetry that is recognizable and strange, engaging and revolutionary. the new black is a book of stunning urgency and invention.”—Terrance Hayes

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Bright Felon

Autobiography and Cities

Kazim Ali

“Bright Felon will steal your heart and outrage your poetics. Part memoir; part trip book; part literary discourse, there is in it an urgent sense of a life lived in words. The tale is one of both innocence and experience. Rigorous, romantic, experimental, true, and yet mysterious, it is a book for the ages.”—Laura Moriarty

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Practical Water

Brenda Hillman

“Brenda Hillman’s Practical Water doubles as an ecological treatise, in which the imagination holds a wellspring of alternatives to our society’s environmentally damaging practices. … a remarkable addition to this accomplished poet’s body of work.”—Kristin Marie Darling, The Kenyon Review

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Participant Profile: Keetje Kuipers

Keetje Kuipers was born in Pullman, WA to a fishing guide and a sociologist. Though she’s pursued all manner of careers—from midnight baker to Google desk jockey, publisher’s assistant to Off-Off-Broadway actress—poetry has been her passion for many years. She earned her B.A. at Swarthmore College, starting out as a theater major. The experience influenced her poetry: “I believe that poetry is best when recited. Therefore, I believe it should be written to be read aloud. It needs drama, music, and character—all performative elements. It also needs a story. Poems are tiny plays: they have individual personas, voices, monologues.” She went on to earn an MFA at the University of Oregon.

In 2007 Keetje was the Margery Davis Boyden Wilderness Writing Resident. She spent seven months in the wilderness in a cabin two miles down a dirt road, working on her book Beautiful in the Mouth. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the circumstances, the book explores themes of loneliness, loss and longing, as well as geography, but it also contains, in the words of Daisy Fried, “‘Brooklyn parties and Montana creeks. Merle Haggard and girls’ soccer teams. Hurricanes and gullies, eviction notices and women’s shoes.” The isolation not only helped Kuipers develop confidence in her own process and judgment of her work, the book was awarded the prestigious A. Poulin, Jr. Poetry Prize and was published in 2010 by BOA Editions. Poet Thomas Lux wrote of the collection, “I was immediately struck by the boldness of imagination, the strange cadences, and wild music of these poems.”

Kuipers attended the Community of Writers in 2005. She says, “I went looking for community, and that’s exactly what I found there. Never before or since have I shared poems with such a positive, celebratory, and enthusiastic group of writers. There are plenty of summer writing conferences, but none of them places such marvelous emphasis on the role of a loving community in a writer’s life.”

She started writing poems in high school when she “fortuitously stumbled upon Dorianne Laux’s first book, Awake, and completely fell in love with her poems, and poetry in general.” She says, “I like to think of my poems as equations that I’m working out…it’s a puzzle that in some alternate reality already has a solution, I just need to work it out. If that’s struggling, then I welcome it, the same way I welcome a hike up a very steep hillside — what a feeling of accomplishment (not to mention a rewarding view) waits at the top.”

Still obsessed with restlessness and isolation, Kuipers is currently at work on a manuscript entitled The Keys to the Jail, and this past summer started a non-fiction project about the cabin in the wilderness where she lived and the woman, Margery Davis Boyden, for whom that fellowship is named. Kuipers teaches writing at the University of Montana and is currently a Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford University. She divides her time between San Francisco and Missoula. www.keetjekuipers.com

Lauren Alleyne (08): Her poetry won first prize in the Small Axe Literary Competition and will be published in Small Axe next July. Poems of hers were also published in The Caribbean Review of Books and are forthcoming in Connotation Press.

Stella Beratis (07): Her poem “The Place That Inhabits Us” was included in The Place That Inhabits Us: Poems of the San Francisco Bay Watershed, released last spring by Sixteen Rivers Press.

Bruce Bond (97): His recent collections of poetry include The Visible (LSU, forthcoming) and Peal (Etruscan Press).

Alexander Booth (03): Translations of poems by the Italian poet Sandro Penna appeared in the Summer 2009 issue of FreeVerse as well as in the Winter 2009/2010 issue of The Journal of Italian Translation. Translations of the Nobel prize winning German poet Nelly Sachs were used in the exhibit Flucht und Verwandlung in Berlin. An article, “In whose shadow? Pasolini, Gramsci & Shelley in the Non-Catholic Cemetery,” appeared in the Spring 2010 issue of the newsletter of the Friends of the Non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome. He also keeps a blog on things Rome, literary and otherwise at: miseraestupendacitta.wordpress.com

Susan Browne (10,88): Her second book of poetry, Zephyr, recently won the Editor’s Prize at Steel Toe Books (www.steeltoebooks.com) and was published in June 2010. A poem from that collection, “The Nose on Your Face,” is on Writer’s Almanac, a daily e-newsletter and podcast from Garrison Keillor.

Elizabeth Chapman (09,07,04,00): Her daughter, Maggie, gave birth to a baby girl on April 6. Her ensuing poem, “Stella”, was accepted by Rattle magazine for their Winter issue.

Sharon Charde (07,03,00): This year, she has been published in PMS (poememoirstory), The Poet’s Touchstone, Poet Lore, Cadencecs, CT River Review, The Homestead Review, The Naugatuck River Review and Rattle. In addition, she won third prize in the New Hampshire Poetry Society 2010 contest, Honorable Mention in contests sponsored by CT River Review and Naugatuck River Review, Special Merit in The Constock Review’s annual contest, and first prize in the Matt Clark Poetry Contest sponsored by the New Delta Review. A review of her collection, Branch in His Hand, was published in Calyx. She was awarded a full fellowship to the Virginia Center For The Creative Arts.

Visit our new Notable Alumni page and learn how to nominate yourself or a friend: http://squawvalleywriters.org/NotableAlumniPoets.html
Amanda Chiado (Poetry 07; WW 06): She was most recently published in Eleven Eleven and has work forthcoming in Forklift, Ohio.

Catharine Clark-Sayles (09,03): Her second book, Lifeboat, is due out from Tebot Bach Press in January 2011.


Shira Dentz (05): Her book of poetry, black seeds on a white dish, was published in November by Shearsman Books.

Charles Douthat (09,04): His first collection of poems, Blue for Oceans, was published by NHR Press in November. www.charlesdouthat.com

Sharon Fain (04): She received the 2009 Robinson Jeffers Tor House Prize, as well as a Paumanok Visiting Writer’s Prize from Farmingdale State College in New York. She had one-month residencies at the Anderson Center and at I-Park in 2010. Her work is forthcoming in Arts & Letters and Best New Poets 2010 from the University of Virginia Press.

Rebecca Farivar (formerly Guyon) (08): Her chapbook American Lit was released by Dancing Girl Press.

Molly Fisk (04,99,95,92): She read a poem from her new collection The More Difficult Beauty as part of TEDxSanFrancisco. Her poem “Hunter’s Moon” from the Sixteen Rivers Press anthology The Place That Inhabits Us was featured on Ted Kooser’s American Life in Poetry. She won a Corporation for Public Broadcasting grant for her radio commentary “Observations of a Working Poet,” and has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize.

Mark Fitzgerald (09,06): His debut collection of poems, By Way of Dust and Rain, was published in May 2010 by Cinnamon Press.

CB (‘Lyn) Follett (04,00,95): She has been named Poet Laureate of Marin County for a two year term which started in April of 2010. Her chapbook And So, Through the Years She Builds Her Houses, an Editor’s Choice from Tebot Bach Press, is forthcoming. In 2011, Time Being Books will publish her collection of poetry One Bird Falling.

Shirley Gaines (04,01): She was published in Love Over 60: an anthology of women’s poems (Mayapple Press, 2010). She was also selected by Nils Peterson, Santa Clara County Poet Laureate, as the thirtieth poet of Thirty Poems in 30 Days.

Sandra Giedeman (95,93): Her work was included in a British anthology of summer-themed poetry, Crab Lines Off the Pier, and her poem “On Reading Lorca” was published by Paris/Atlantic, the journal of the American University in Paris. A collaborative poem was published in Poemeleon.

Daniela Gitlin (05,02): She launched a humor blog: shrinkunwrapped.com

Veronica Golos (09): Her new poetry book, Vocabulary of Silence, is due for release this February by Red Hen Press. veronicagolos.wordpress.com

Lara Gularte (WW 06,03; 05 Poetry): She was nominated by Bitter Oleander Press for Best New Poets 2010. One of her poems was published by the Canadian Centre for Azorean Studies and Research. Her poetry is included in a book of essays called Imaginarios Luso-Americanos e Acorianos by Vamberto Freitas.

Judy Halebsky (06,03): She is the Artist-in-Residence for Theatre of Yugen in San Francisco. She has poems forthcoming in Poetry Kanto and Yominono. Her book, Sky=Empty, was published in April by New Issues.

Quinton Hallett (91): Her third chapbook, Refuge from Flux, was published in 2010 by Finishing Line Press. She also has work in The Medulla Review, Tiger’s Eye, and forthcoming in the anthology Collecting Life: Poets on Objects Known and Imagined.

Christine Hemp (06): Her debut collection of poems, That Fall, was chosen for publication in Finishing Line Press’ New Women’s Voices series. www.christinehemp.com

Nadine Lockhart (05): She was one of five finalists in last winter’s Sonoran Review Poetry Contest. She was also one of three poets published in Blue Mountain Review, vol. 3, an anthology series. Her work has also appeared in Sin Fronteras 2008, 2009, 2010, and in the upcoming 2011.

Margaret Mackinnon (09): She has new work in Poet Lore, the Valparaiso Poetry Review, and the South Carolina Review.

Unfurl, Kite, and Veer

Poems by Bill Yake

The second collection from this Northwest ecologist, traveler, and story-singer is a feast of “meditation and laughter, learning offered up by a generous spirit, science made to sing—these poems feel like a true gift inviting us to live and love between the stars and the mites.”

—Derek Sheffield

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Meanwhile

Poems by Kathleen O’Toole

Available February 2011 from David Robert Books
www.davidrobertbooks.com/otoole.html
In February, she was invited to read at the Library of Congress as part of the Poetry at Noon series. She was awarded a residency at the Vermont Studio Center.

**Matt Mauch (08):** His first full-length poetry collection, *Prayer Book*, was released in January of 2011 by Lowbrow. His first chapbook, *The Book of Modern Prayer*, came out in late 2010 (Palimpsest). He is the editor of *Poetry City, USA, vol. 1* (Lowbrow), an anthology of poems (plus essays) read at the inaugural Great Twin Cities Poetry Read, which will be available in April of 2011.

**Theresa McCourt (08):** She co-edited (with Linda Collins) the 2010 *Tule Review*, funded by the Sacramento Poetry Center. She is also co-editor of the Winter issue of *Tule Review*, due out January 2011. [www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org/tulereview.htm](http://www.sacramentopoetrycenter.org/tulereview.htm)


**Sara Michas-Martin (08,03):** She was a finalist for the Gulf Coast Prize in Poetry, and her work has recently appeared or is soon forthcoming in *The American Poetry Review, The Believer, Denver Quarterly, Harvard Review, Indiana Review, Jubilat, Mare Nostrum, Word For/Word* and the *Harp & Alter Anthology*. She also received full residency fellowships from Ragdale and Virginia Center for the Creative Arts.

**Sawnie Morris (07):** A selection of her poems won the 2010 Poetry Society of America’s George Bogin Memorial Award. She has poems published in the *Denver Quarterly*, and her manuscript of poems was one of four runners-up for the Marsh Hawk Press Prize.

**William Notter (95):** His collection *Holding Everything Down* (Southern Illinois University Press, 2009) won the 2010 High Plains Book Award for Poetry and was a finalist for the 2010 Colorado Book Award.

**Kathleen O’Toole (09,05,03,01):** Her first full-length book of poetry, *Meantime*, will be published in February 2010 by David Robert Books.

**Coco Owen (05):** She had poems appear in two new journals this year, *Cirque* and *Tidal Basin Review*.


**Natalie Peeterse (06):** Her poem “Mercado Oriental” was included in *I Go to the Ruined Place: Contemporary Poems in Defense of Global Human Rights*, edited by Melissa Kwasyry and M.L. Smoker, and published by Lost Horse Press last year.

**Curtis Perdue (10):** His poems can be seen in the Fall/Winter 2010 issues of *Cloudbank, The Common Ground Review, and H_NGM_N*.

**Emily Perez (10):** She gave birth to Wylan Alado McFadden on September 17.


**Douglas Ray (05):** He received an M.F.A. in poetry from The University of Mississippi in May 2010. He was a 2010 Lambda Literary Foundation Poetry Fellow. He now teaches literature and writing at Indian Springs School, a boarding and day school in Birmingham, Alabama.

**Renato Rosaldo (02,00):** He won the Many Mountains Moving Poetry Book contest. His collection, *Diego Luna’s Insider Tips*, will be released by Many Mountains Moving Press in the fall of 2011 and will be available through Small Press Distribution.

**Monika Rose (WW00; Poetry 97):** Her new volume of poems, *River By the Glass*, was published by GlenHill Publishing in November. The sixth volume of *Manzanita: Poetry and Prose of the Mother Lode and Sierra books*, which she edited, was released this past Fall. This volume is called *Wild Edges*.

**Yiskah Rosenfeld (03,01):** She won the 2009 Anna Davidson Rosenberg prize for poetry. New poems have appeared in *Lilith Magazine, Maggid* and *Kerem*. She gave birth to a baby boy, Noam, on August 19.

**Elizabeth Rosner (Poetry 99; WW 87,83,82):** See Writers Workshop Staff News.

**Deborah Ruth (08,01,00,98,95,93,92,91):** In June, her short play *True Colors* was produced as part of the Foothill College 2010 New Works Festival, her short play *Aptitudes* was included in a showcase of staged readings called New Writers, New Works, and five of her short plays were given a staged reading as part of a monthly series called Friday Night Footlights, sponsored by The Dramatists’ Guild. She was also invited to write the theatre column for *The East Bay Monthly*.

**Larry Ruth (08,06,04,00):** His poems were published in *Everyone’s Sense Of The World Is Invaluable* (Guardian News & Media, UK) and are forthcoming in *The Healing Art of Writing, Vol. One*, edited by Joan Baranow, Brian Dolan & David Watts.

**Marjorie Saiser (00):** She has a new chapbook, *Rooms* (Pudding House Publications), and a full-length collection, *Beside You at the Stoplight* (The Backwaters Press).

**Eliot Schain (Poetry 07,02,98; WW 99):** He was published in the anthology *The Place That Inhabits Us: Poems of the San Francisco Bay Watershed* from Sixteen Rivers Press.

Dave Seter (03): His debut chapbook, *Night Duty*, was published by Main Street Rag Publishing Company. His poem “Windows,” which appeared in *Raven Chronicles* (Vol. 14 No. 2), was nominated for a Pushcart Prize in 2009.

Gary Short (Poetry 91; WW 81): He was awarded a Fellowship in Creative Writing for 2011 from the National Endowment for the Arts.


Kevin Simmonds (10): His first poetry collection, *Mad for Meat*, from *Salmon Poetry* in 2011. He received a San Francisco Arts Commission grant for *Oriente*, a multimedia theater work about Asian-Black relations in America.

Minton Sparks (06): She released a new recording of spoken word, *Minton Sparks Live*, in October 2010. The Fellowship of Southern Writers awarded her the 2011 Award for Spoken Word.


Jeanine Stevens (10,07): She won the 2009 Ekphrasis Prize for “Frida in a White Dress,” which also received a Pushcart Nomination. Her poem “Salt Lick” received first place in the Maggie Meyer Poetry Contest. Her chapbook *Caught in Clouds* was published in November by Finishing Line Press. She had poems in *Pearl, PMS poem-memoir-story, Quercus and Cosmèmes River Review*.

Catherine Strisik (00,92): Her collection of poems *Thousand-Cricket Song* was published by Plain View Press. Poems will be included in *Studio and Canteen*.

Francine Toff (02): Her first full-length collection of poems, *Rain, Lilies, Luck*, was published in 2010 by North Star Press. North Star also published her memoir, *Joliet Girl*. She received an Elizabeth George Grant this year as well as a fellowship from the Ragdale Foundation. “Tonight and other poems,” a selection of ten poems, was awarded an Honorable Mention in the 2010 Pablo Neruda Poetry Prize Competition.


Bill Yake (96): His second full-length collection, *Unfurl, Kite, and Veer*, was released this year by Radiolarian Press. His poem “Aging…” was chosen as one of four to kick off a one-man play at the Washington Center for the Performing Arts, and a poem of his was printed in the Capitol Land Trust newsletter.

San Patricio: the Chieftains featuring Ry Cooder

An inspired collection of old and new songs about the oft-overlooked connection between Mexico and Ireland — the battalion of soldiers (The San Patricios) who left America and joined General Santa Ana to fight in the Mexican-American War. Guest artists include Lila Downs, Los Tigres del Norte, Los Folkloristas, Linda Ronstadt — and Liam Neeson.

John Prine: In Person and On Stage

A lively live collection of this singer-songwriter’s greatest hits — plus a few new tunes. Guest musicians include Emmylou Harris, Iris DeMent and Josh Ritter.

Genuine Negro Jig: Carolina Chocolate Drops

Old time music—banjos, fiddle and guitars —and more. The trio of Dom Flemons, Riannon Giddens and Justin Robinson revive and reinterpret the African-American roots of string band music.

K.D. Lang: Recollection

These two CD’s span the singer’s career from country (“Western Stars”) to nightclub (“Love for Sale”) and presents longed for highlights: “Crying” with Roy Orbison, “Calling All Angels” with Jane Siberry and two—count ‘em two — versions of Leonard Cohen’s “Hallelujah.”

Love is Strange: En Vivo con Tinto: Jackson Browne and David Lindley

Recorded live in Spain, this two CD collection showcases Browne and Lindley’s solo and collaborative work. Spanish colleagues appear throughout. Check out Luz Casal’s exquisite rendition of “These Days.”

Creedance Clearwater Revival: 20 Greatest Hits

We forgot how good they were. How is that possible?

Van Morrison: Moondance

Once again, Van Morrison’s album got a workout last summer. This classic collection served our needs. We never got tired of it and we hope you didn’t either.
First of all, we thank our magnificent staff that makes the conference what it is, and our many donors who make it possible. Many thanks to Lisa Alvarez, Diana Fuller, Andrew Tonkovich and Louis B. Jones, who despite their roles as directors and/or teaching staff are to be seen in the days before the conference moving tables and chairs, to Kaitlin Klaussen, who coordinated housing for us with Audrey Rose (6) helping out, providing witty commentary all the way; to Stacey Knapp for running the bookshop with warmth and style. Thanks also to Tracy Hall, Nicolas and Aleksandra Bailey for coordinating our snack bar. Thanks also to David Womack for bartending, driving, and helping with manuscripts at registration.

Many thanks to members of the Board and Squaw Valley locals who have been tremendously generous with their time over the years: Eddy & Osvaldo Ancinas, Amy Tan & Lou Demattei; Joan & Peter Klaussen; Barbara Hall; Mimi & Burnett Miller; Geri Thayer; and Max Byrd.

Our work waiver crews make each conference run smoothly. For their labor during Poetry we thank Claire Blotter, Molly Damm, Kat Factor, Lisa Jones, Sara Michas-Martin, Curtis Perdue, Katie Quarles, and David Spataro; for their work during the Writers Workshops, our gratitude goes to Andrea Avery, Emily Curtin-Phillips, Patrick Holian, Maxima Kahn, Kim Palchikoff, Benton Sen, and Kenny Tanemura.

Thanks also to our friends Adam Haight, Hunter Jones, Zoey Walls, Margot Miller, Tom Taylor and especially to Steve Susoyev for his unflagging energy. Thanks also to the Screenwriting surround staff: Fiona Burgess, Jason Wolos, Jason Boyce, and Christopher Upham. Thanks to Chelsea Snell for childcare. And thanks to Sands Hall for the inimitable Follies. Thanks also to Maxima Kahn for editing and designing the Omnium Gatherum & Newsletter.

The Board and Staff of the Community of Writers would especially like to thank Nancy Cushing, former President of the Squaw Valley Ski Corp. who has continued to create an environment where a conference such as ours is possible; and to their wonderful staff: Ernst Hager, Tom Kelly, Christine Horvath, Cynthia Braga, Linda Law and the Security Team (who are superb ambassadors).

And of course we couldn’t do it without our donors. As we are a fully independent organization, your support makes it happen.

On a final note, I would like to acknowledge my brother, Oakley Hall III, known to many as Tad. He died February 2011. Tad was a brilliant writer-playwright-director who founded his own critically acclaimed summer-stock theatre company in upstate New York, before his accident in 1979, which left him with traumatic brain injury. His story is long and full of tragedy and, especially recently, triumph. Most of you know him as the guy who gruffly (and simultaneously, sweetly) drove you to your houses on registration day, or the one who helped to move tables and chairs, anything, really that needed to be done during the conference. He was a tremendous asset, and for that we are grateful. Of course, the irony never escaped any of us, especially him, that but for that fall in 1979, he very well might have been a successful writer or playwright who might have had my role at the Community of Writers, if it had been his wish. Instead, his little sister would ask him to do this, and fetch that. It was with great joy that we celebrated the publication of his novel, Jarry and Me (Absintheur Press, 2010) and he was to finally return to Squaw this summer as an author! And he was to going to read from his novel to his fellow writers and friends. I can’t begin to express my regret that we weren’t able to see that moment, and congratulate him after.

—Brett Hall Jones, Executive Director
Jason Boyce: He is back in the Bay area after a year in England, working on a variety of social documentaries as well as creating an original film and music album entitled, Believe or Die Trying, due out by 2012. Other projects include a documentary shot for Jim Kerns, Destination: Rossport, Ireland, which opened at the Boston Film Festival and recently screened at the Globians Doc Fest in Stuttgart, Germany.

Eugene Corr: He is producing a documentary feature, From Ghost Town to Havana.

Diana Fuller: She is developing a documentary feature, TRASH24, with Debbie Brubbaker, Eli Noyes and Banker White.

Pamela Gray: She wrote the screenplay for Conviction, starring Hilary Swank, Sam Rockwell, Minnie Driver, Melissa Leo, and Juliette Lewis. The film was released by Fox Searchlight in the fall, had gala premieres at the Toronto and London Film Festivals, was the opening night film at the Mill Valley Film Festival, and was named Best Picture at the Boston Film Festival.

Patricia Meyer: Her family comedy, The Ex-Boy, will star young Jae Head (Blind Side, Hancock) and is slated for production in 2011. Packaging for her noir/thriller Waikiki is in progress, and she has a new one-hour drama series in development.

Christopher Monger: He wrote the screenplay for Temple Grandin, which aired in February on HBO, starring Claire Danes as Temple Grandin. The film garnered seven Emmys, a Voice Award, the Monte Carlo TV Festival Amade Prize and three Satellite Awards, and Monger received a Humanitas Prize and was nominated for a Writer’s Guild Award.

Tom Rickman: He is currently writing the Miles Davis story for producer Rudy Langrich (Hotel Rwanda).

Lisa Rosenberg: She is writing an American historical drama work-for-hire and marketing her adapted psychological drama, Crawd Space, for European producers.

Camille Thomasson: Her latest film, Stacey Bess, will air in April in a Hallmark Hall of Fame production for CBS. She is working with producer Bryan Gambogi on a feature film about Shirley Chisholm.

Christopher Upham: His feature-length documentary, War Within, was awarded grants from Pacific Pioneer and the Fleishhacker Foundation, and is in fine-cut stage. Current writing projects include a feature narrative for Cambodian-American director Daron Ker, and story consulting for arms trafficking expert Kathi Austin’s African memoir for Paramount Pictures.

Michael Urban: He is currently working on a dark comedy, produced by Then Production and Bold Pictures, with David Duchovny attached to star. He is in post production on his first feature as director, Longer Lasts Longer. He has a television series with Warner Brothers that was slated to go to the networks at the end of 2010.

Jason Wolos: He is in post-production for his feature debut, Trattoria, produced in partnership with Jeremiah Birnbaum of Fog City Pictures. Three of our screenwriting mentors penned stories that earned their leading actors SAG nominations this year: Claire Danes in Christopher Monger’s Temple Grandin, Winona Ryder in Camille Thomasson’s Lois Wilson, and Hilary Swank in Pamela Gray’s Conviction.
Massoud Alemi (09): He was selected for the second round for the 2011 January Screenwriters Lab at Sundance for his script, Dear, Dirty D.C.


Eva Benedikt (10,09): She has written a trilogy of comedy features set in Italy, which was selected for a MEDIA development workshop in Europe last May and is now in preproduction.

Sheri Davenport (08): Her screenplay Furies Rising was the Grand Prize Winner in Cynosure’s National Screenwriting Competition in the Female Category. Lucky Christmas, was just picked up by the Hallmark Channel.

Skye Dent (94): Her newly-created production company, The Roxbury Projects, is in development on a romantic war epic starring Dennis Haysbert, as well as a contemporary romantic comedy and a sci-fi film noir. She also optioned the remake rights to Sidney Poitier’s A Warm December. www.theroxburyprojects.com

William Farley (08): Currently he is directing a documentary about one of San Francisco’s own luminaries, Jerry Barrish, filmmaker, artist and bale-bondsman, produced by Janis Plotkin.

Megan Feldman (10): She is co-writer with Stacy Keane of Tesoro, a Latin American action thriller which made the second round at the Austin film festival and was a semi-finalist in Write Movies International. She was named a finalist for the PEN Literary Award in Los Angeles, for her cover story “Gimme Shelter.”

Noelle Foster (09): Martha and Dee Visit the Fifth Dimension, which she wrote and directed, won Best Short Film at the San Francisco New Media Festival.

Christina Ferguson (08): Her original screenplay The Last Trip was a Sundance finalist in 2009, and a Nicholl semi-finalist and Austin finalist in 2010. Her new script is Sensitive New Age Guys.

Ellen Furman (08): She has written eight screenplays since attending Squaw, one of which, Manuel, was optioned by HBO.

Lisa Gold: Her short film, The Death of Toys, which she made as a participant in the AFI Directing Workshop for Women, recently premiered at the Anchorage Film Festival. She just received her first writing assignment; she will be writing a documentary on Muhammad Yunus and his Nobel Peace Prize-winning microcredit lending program in Bangladesh.

Marjory Kaptanoglu (07): She won the 2010 Slamdance short screenplay competition for her script Dead in the Room. Slamdance will produce the film and premiere it at their 2011 film festival. Her short script Dearly Departed was a finalist in the Page Awards contest. It was produced by So Rare Productions of Oakland, CA, and is currently under consideration for a major U.S. film festival premiere. Aces Over Eighties, based on her award-winning screenplay, Raise You One Dead Body, premiered in June at the Seattle True Independent Film Festival. Her suspense thriller, Graves Light, was a top five finalist in the Santa Fe Writers Project and made the second round in the Austin screenplay competition. Her comic thriller, Just Kill Me Now, was a top five finalist in the ThrillSpy film festival screenplay competition.

Stacy Keane (10): She is co-writer with Megan Feldman, of Tesoro, a Latin American action thriller which made the second round at the Austin film festival and was a semi-finalist in Write Movies International. Her script Sadie Hawkins Day was a 2010 Finalist in The Movie Script/Golden Brad Awards.

Felicia Lowe (09): See Profile on page 25.

Carmen Madden (07): She wrote, directed and produced Everyday Black Man, now making the festival route. It has won numerous awards, including Best Narrative at the Tallahassee and Pan African Film Festivals, and Best Feature at the Peachtree Village International Film Festival, and it was an official selection at the San Francisco Women’s and Oakland International Film Festivals and the San Diego Black Film Festival.

Nevada McPherson (09): Her screenplay Piano Lessons was the first place winner of the Honolulu Film Festival Screenwriting Competition. She recently completed her first graphic novel, Uptowners, which is based on one of her screenplays.

Amanda Micheli (09): She is developing a short documentary film for ESPN in conjunction with the women’s soccer world cup in 2011, as well as a project for HBO called One Nation Under Dog.

Erica Milsom (10): She is heading off to Cambodia to do research on the principal character in her film Best Intentions. She will be visiting with young women who have escaped from sex-trafficking and are working with local non-profits to redefine their lives. Additionally, she has started a new project, Maria, Lucia and the White Lions, the story of a returning Iraqi war veteran Maria Chacon.

Kari Nevil (09): She has just accepted an offer to direct Santa’s Dog in conjunction with Animal Planet’s Pit Boss reality TV show, to be filmed in the Bay Area in 2011.

Nicole Oliver (10): Her film Chicken Dreams was a finalist in the 2010 Sundance
C. J Palmisano (10): Her screenplay The Grand View received third place in Cynosure’s National Screenwriting Competition in the Female Category.

Holly Payne (07): She had a baby girl on April 2. Her novel Kingdom of Simplicity won the Benjamin Franklin Award for Best First Book from Skywriter Books. It was sold to publishers in the Netherlands and Taiwan. Holly is currently at work on a new novel set in medieval Bulgaria and continues to teach screenwriting at the California College of the Arts MFA writing program in San Francisco.

Kimberly Reed (06): Her much-awarded film, Prodigal Sons, is now distributed by First Run and opened in New York City in February 2010. She plans to shoot her narrative feature, Please Check One, late in 2011.

Tamuira Reid (09): Her screenplay, Luna’s Highway, placed as a semi-finalist (top thirty) in the 2010 Nicholl Fellowship and as a finalist in the Zoetrope Screenwriting Competition. Francis Fisher (Titanic, Law of Attraction) has agreed to star as Luna. Presently in development, Luna’s Highway is being produced by Squaw Valley alumni Cynthia Phillips and SF Film Commission member Debbie Brubaker. Discussions are underway with several Los Angeles-based production companies.

Erich Stonestreet (06): His latest satire with co-author Gan Golan, The Adventures of Unemployed Man, was published by Little, Brown in October 2010. He writes under the pen name Erich Origen. www.unemployedman.com

Stephanie Storey (09): She is a Consulting Producer for Tavis Smiley on PBS.

Kaherawaks Thomason (06): She was selected as one of four 2010 Ford Foundation Fellows by the Sundance Institute. This is a two stage development program of participation in the Sundance Institute Lab, which includes year round support, financial assistance and mentoring. Her original feature is entitled Close to Death.

Mabel Valdiviezo (08-05): She has joined forces with Spain-based producer Julia Steinweg to develop her feature narrative Soledad’s Awakening. She is also in late development with her documentary Prodigal Daughter, which is being shot in Peru, Japan and the U.S.A.

Gretchen Hayduk Wroblewski (09): She wrote, directed and edited a short narrative, Red, in August, co-produced with a production company in Colorado.

Yun Suh (08): City of Borders, a feature documentary, had its world premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival and won the Teddy Audience Award. The film has now screened in over 90 festivals worldwide, has won 7 awards and continues to tour. It was broadcast on PBS for Pride Month in June. Currently Yun Suh is developing her next documentary.

Derek Zavala (06): He has a key investor and producer for his screenplay The Long Walk and is currently determining a budget and shoot schedule. He hopes to be in production later this year with a 2012 release.

Participant Profile: Felicia Lowe

Felicia Lowe is an award-winning independent television producer, director, and writer with more than 30 years of production experience. When asked what drew her to attend the Community of Writers screenwriting program in 2009, she replied, “Writing can be isolating and when you’ve worked on a project for a long time, one can get tunnel vision, so I welcomed the opportunity to get honest feedback in a supportive environment.” Her documentary, Chinese Couplet, is now in post production. She worked with Lisa Rosenberg on revising a treatment for the film, which was inspired by the revelation of a family secret that led her to search for answers about the circumstances surrounding her mother’s illegal emigration from China to America.

Giving voice to the Chinese-American experience has been Lowe’s consistent passion in filmmaking. Growing up in Oakland’s Chinatown with two immigrant parents, Lowe says, “I had this profound sense of having to tell the stories to a world that never heard them before. As a culture, we were taught to have a low profile, to become invisible. Something was lost to us because of that.” She created a documentary, Chinatown, for KQED’s series Neighborhoods: the Hidden Cities of San Francisco, to tell the stories of the Chinatown behind the tourist façade. It premiered in 1996 to critical acclaim and received an EMMY for Best Cultural Documentary.

Lowe studied journalism at San Jose State and broadcast journalism at Columbia University before becoming a reporter and field producer in commercial and educational television. Her documentary China: Land of My Father was broadcast on PBS, received an EMMY nomination, and the CINE Golden Eagle and American Film Festival Red Ribbon Award in 1980.

She went on to make Carved in Silence, a documentary partially funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities about the experiences of Chinese immigrants detained on Angel Island Immigration Station, where her father was held for three weeks. In the film Lowe looks at the Chinese Exclusion Act and the way Chinese immigrants were treated “almost like criminals” upon entering this country. Lowe says, “We have the most diverse population in America, and we have the most beautifully crafted ideals in terms of equality for all. And it’s a story and a goal we chase after all the time. But it’s not without its pimples. Those blemishes that defy some of our ideals are the very things we need to look at.”

Carved in Silence won numerous awards, was broadcast on PBS and used in classrooms nationwide. The film helped raise awareness and funding for the preservation and restoration of Angel Island Immigration Station. In 2009 Lowe created multi-source audio track installations that are now played as part of the interpretative tour of the rooms where immigrants were detained. Carved in Silence will screen at the Chinese American Museum in Los Angeles on May 26, 2011. A discussion with Felicia Lowe will follow the screening.

Lowe is in the process of working on Barefoot Historian, which tells the story of Him Mark Lai, the “dean of Chinese-American history.” Jason Boyce edited the trailer for the film which can be seen on her website: www.lowedownproductions.com
Published Alumni Reading Series . . . . . . . . .

Each year, the Community of Writers has welcomed some remarkable writers back to Squaw Valley for the Published Alumni Reading Series to read from their books and talk about their journey from unpublished writers to published authors.

In 2010 we featured these Published Alumni:

MARISA MATARAZZO (06) is the author of Drenched: Stories of Love and Other Deliriums (Soft Skull Press, 2010). Her stories have been published in Faultline and Hobart. www.marisamatarazzo.com

VICTORIA PATTERSON’s (06) interlinked story collection, Drift (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), was selected as one of the best books of 2009 by the San Francisco Chronicle and was a finalist for the California Book Award in First Fiction. Her novel, This Vacant Paradise, will be published in March 2011 by Counterpoint Press. www.victoriapatterson.net

DORA WANG (05, 04, 02, 01, 00) is the author of a memoir, The Kitchen Shrink: A Psychiatrist’s Reflections on Healing in a Changing World (Riverhead). She has been the recipient of a Lannan Foundation writer’s residency. www.doracalottwang.com

This coming summer 2011, we are pleased to feature:

ALIA YUNIS’ (04) novel The Night Counter (Random House, 2009) was chosen as a top summer read by the Chicago Tribune and Boston Phoenix. www.aliayanis.com


MICHAEL DAVID LUKAS’ first novel, The Oracle of Stamboul, was published by HarperCollins in February. www.michaeldavidlukas.com

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MARK CHILDRESS  
Author of GEORGIA BOTTOMS

“Georgia Bottoms is one of my favorite characters in recent years….Childress’s best book yet.”  
—Anne Lamott

JOSHUA FERRIS  
Author of THE UNNAMED

“Ferris’s prose is brash, extravagant, and, near the end, chillingly beautiful.”  
—The New Yorker

FREDERICK REIKEN  
Author of DAY FOR NIGHT, coming in trade paperback, April 2011

“A fascinating, emotionally acute and, at times, mind-bogglingly complex story to which we surrender with delight.”  
—Washington Post

ERIC ORIGEN  
Co-author of ADVENTURES OF UNEMPLOYED MAN

“Surely the funniest economic primer ever written.”  
—Salon.com

ALICE SEBOLD  
Author of THE LOVELY BONES

“A stunning achievement.”  
—The New Yorker

LUIS ALBERTO URREA  
Author of INTO THE BEAUTIFUL NORTH

“Magical.”  
—Vanity Fair

Proudly published by Little, Brown and Company

Bill Barich: *Long Way Home: On the Trail of Steinbeck’s America* was published by Walker and Co. in October.

Michael Jaime-Becerra: His novel *This Time Tomorrow* was released by Thomas Dunne Books in February 2010.

Greg Bills: His story “Before The Red” was published in *Fairy Tale Review*.


Clark Blaise: His 25th book, *The Meagre Tarmac*, stories of the India diaspora, will appear in April 2011 (Biblioasis). In September 2010 he was inducted as an Officer of the Order of Canada, his nation’s highest civilian honor.

James Brown: His new memoir, *This River*, was just released by Counterpoint Press in March 2011. Counterpoint also reissued Brown’s earlier memoir, *The Los Angeles Diaries*, which has been optioned again, this time by producer Jude Prest of Los Angeles. He is Director of the M.F.A. Program in Creative Writing at Cal State San Bernardino.

Alan Cheuse: His newest novel, *Song of Slaves in the Desert: A Novel of Slavery and the Southern Wild*, has just been published by Sourcebooks this March.


Leslie Daniels: Her novel, *Cleaning Nabokov’s House*, was just published by Touchstone (an imprint of Simon & Schuster). The book has been selected for the Indie booksellers “Great Reads” list for March.

Carol Edgarian: Her new novel, *Three Stages of Amazement*, just came out from Scribner. The novel has been selected for the Indie booksellers “Great Reads” list for March.


Lynn Freed: Her short story “Sunshine,” originally published in *Narrative Magazine*, has been selected for the 2011 PEN/O. Henry Prize Stories and is the first story from an online magazine ever to win an O. Henry Prize. www.narrativemagazine.com/node/75289

Dagoberto Gilb: His latest collection of short fiction, *Before the End, After the Beginning*, will be released this fall by Grove Press. He had short fiction published in *The New Yorker* (May 10—story and interview available online) and in *Harper’s* (June) and a long essay in the Spring issue of *Callaloo*, which was reprinted abroad by the *Barcelona Review*. He also had an article about the poet Ai in the Fall issue of *Cimarron Review*.

Molly Giles: She won this year’s Arkansas Arts Council Award for an essay titled “Nobody’s Friend” which was based on a craft talk she gave at Squaw in 2009. The essay has just been published in *Gulf Coast*.

DeWitt Henry: His memoir, *Sweet Dreams: A Family History*, was published in December 2010 by Hidden River Press.

Louis B. Jones: His new novel, *Radiance*, will be published in May by Counterpoint.
He received a grant. Her collection of stories, *Blue Nude* (Houghton-Mifflin/Harcourt), was published in the U.K. and Australia, and *Miss New India,* *Blue Nude*, and *Indian Voices: Listening to Native Americans* were published by Bellevue Literary Press in February 2011.

**Teresa Jordan:** She is well along with her year-long blog project, *The Year of Living Virtuously (Weekends Off)*, a meditation on the search for meaning in an ordinary life, inspired by Benjamin Franklin's list of 13 virtues and the 7 deadly sins. She blogs at www.yearoflivingvirtuously.com.

**Nancy Kelly:** *Trust: second acts in young lives,* a documentary on the Albany Park Theater Project in Chicago, premiered at the Mill Valley Film Festival in October. Nancy directed, wrote and co-produced (with Kenji Yamamoto) the film.

**Adair Lara:** *Naked, Drunk and Writing: Shed Your Inhibitions and Craft a Compelling Memoir or Personal Essay* was re-released by Ten Speed Press (Random House) in August 2010 as a paperback.

**Michelle Latiolais:** Her collection of stories, *Widow,* was published by Bellevue Literary Press in February 2011.

**Bharati Mukherjee:** Her new novel, *Miss New India,* will appear in May 2011 (Houghton-Mifflin/Harcourt).

**Alison Owings:** Her latest oral history- and fiction-based book, *Indian Voices: Listening to Native Americans,* was published by Rutgers University Press in April, 2011. www.alisonowings.com

**Frederick Reiken:** His third novel, *Day For Night,* was published this year by Reagan Arthur Books of Little, Brown. It was also published in the U.K. and Australia, and translations are forthcoming in French, Spanish, Dutch, and Hebrew.

**Elizabeth Rosner:** The paperback edition of her novel *Blue Nude* was released by Simon & Schuster in September.

**Martin J. Smith:** His as-yet-untitled nonfiction book about the strange and wonderful world of competitive duck painting will be published by Bloomsbury in the fall of 2012.

**Gregory Spatz:** He received a grant from Artist Trust to continue work on a new novel, *Ice Masters.* He has a story forthcoming in *Epoch.*

**Andrew Tonkovich:** Lately he is book reviewer for *Riviera* magazine, with recent profiles of authors Peter Heller (*Kook*) and Leslie Brody (*Irrepressible: The Life and Times of Jessica Mitford*) and a “Best of” survey of Orange County literature.

**Susan Trott:** Her new book, *Flamingo Thief,* is available at Amazon.com. Her novel *Sightings* is still under option with Vox3 Films.

**Luis Alberto Urrea:** He won an Edgar Award, sponsored by the Mystery Writers of America, for his short story “Amapola,” published in the book *Phoenix Noir.* He was also given an award from the National Hispanic Cultural Center for the breadth of his work in non-fiction, poetry, novel, short fiction, essay and memoir. His graphic novel, *Mr. Mendoza’s Paintbrush,* with illustrator Christopher C. Vardinale came out from Cinco Puntos Press in June. The paperback of his novel *Into the Beautiful North* was also released by Back Bay Books in June. In 2011, the University of Arizona will re-reissue of his first novel, *In Search of Snow,* and his story “The Southside Raza Image Federation Corps of Discovery” was published in the January issue of *Orion.* You can listen to him read it at orionmagazine.org.

**Al Young:** He is included in the anthology *Working Words: Punching the Clock and Kicking Out the Jams,* edited and introduced by M.L. Liebler (Coffee House Press, Fall 2010).

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**The Pleasures—and Necessity—of Browsing**

Alan Cheuse

Originally published in the Land’s End catalog

For as long as I can remember, I’ve been a browser. But it didn’t begin for me with books. My maternal grandparents owned a series of cigar and cigarette shops—candy stores, we called them in the family—and from an early age I’d find myself standing in front of the candy counter trying to decide among various bars of chocolate and commercial candy bars and malt balls and licorices, the decision especially difficult not because I could buy only one but because I could have any one that I choose without paying.

The same went for the comic books. My grandparents didn’t allow me more than one or two free comics a week, though when it came time for garnering an allowance by doing extra chores around the house or running errands for my parents, both of whom worked a forty hour week and—the case of my father—more, I’d save and purchase more and more comics. Archie, The Heap, Superman—these were some of the “books” I chose.

And when it came upon me, like a slow-mastering fever, that it was books—mainly fiction—that I really cared about, I increased my browsing to an exponential level. In junior high school I found my way to the only book store—more a narrow hole in the wall, on our Jersey town’s main street—and discovered my true addiction. My first? A paperback reprint of D.H. Lawrence’s novel *The Plumed Serpent* in the old Vintage paperback—one of the first trade paperbacks—series. I treated this, and all subsequent purchases of these new trade reprints—made with cash from an after school job as a stock boy at a womens’ sportswear shop a few blocks west—as old wine in new bottles. First I held the pages up to my nose, to take in the bouquet of the paper. And then I lavished my attention on the covers, front and back, all this before I even attempted to read a word. And when I finally did begin to read such work as this, alone in my room or sprawled on the front stoop of our row house a block from the Raritan River where it flowed into Raritan Bay, I savored the sentences, even as I rushed forward into the story.

When I saved enough money I bought new fiction, too, particularly horror and science fiction. How did I know what I liked? I browsed the shelves of our local store, reading opening pages, and snippets here and there from the rest of these books. Richard Matheson became one of my favorites, along with Alfred Bester, and Ray Bradbury, Robert Heinlein, and Isaac Asimov. I worked harder and put in for longer hours so I could buy a book a week.

I browsed the library shelves as well. That’s how I found, much too early in my life as an unsophisticated reader, a copy of Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man,* a novel that took me a number of false starts to catch up with, though I finally did, and have since reread it a few times for emphasis.

Thus I became a browser, and yes, browsing did it all. Remember the stacks of a university library, the row upon row of unanticipated pleasures you find there if you drift among them, dreamy and a little delirious with browsing? Imagine a world without bookstores, so that...

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continued on next page
you could not find your attention pulled away from one cover by the enticing design of another wholly unfamiliar work of fiction by a writer about whom you’ve never heard.

Some of our greatest scientific discoveries occurred by accident. Think of Madame Curie!

A world of only on-line purchases is a world without serendipity, a world without accident, a world without spice and flavor. Think of all the good accidents we know in life, from our parents to our siblings to our choices—and how sorry we are that we can only be one traveler in certain circumstances—of friends and lovers and spouses.

Browsing is a form of dreaming. It’s the way of the old world and new. I urge you—browse, browse!
Unforgettable Fiction from Squaw Valley Writers!

CHRISTINA MELDRUM
Amaryllis in Blueberry

In the stirring tradition of The Secret Life of Bees and The Poisonwood Bible, Amaryllis in Blueberry weaves together the past and the present of a family harmed—and healed—by buried secrets.

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—New York Times bestselling author Susan Wiggs

COMING IN JULY 2011

ALMA KATSU
The Taker

Immortality comes at a price.... In the tradition of Anne Rice and Elizabeth Kostova comes a hauntingly atmospheric tale spanning several lifetimes—a love story featuring alchemy, lust, and betrayal.

COMING IN MARCH 2011

Writers Workshop Participant News


Emily Adelsohn-Corngold (04): The Music Lover, was a runner-up in the 2009 Miami University Press Novella Contest.

Andrea Alban (04): Anya’s War, her debut novel, which she brought to Squaw Valley in 2004, was just released by Feiwel & Friends/Macmillan in February 2011.

Kate Amatruda (09,08): “Suburbia” won an honorable mention in the 2010 Lorian Hemingway Short Story Competition, and three of her non-fiction articles were published: “Disaster in Haiti: A Personal Journey” in The Therapist, July/August, “Want to go to exotic (and sometimes not so exotic) places? Become a Disaster Mental Health Volunteer with the Red Cross!” in Play Therapy Magazine, September and “May the Force Be With You—Oh...You are the Force!” in the San Francisco Disaster Medical Assistance Team CA-6 Chronicles.

Eddy Ancinas: She won first place in the 2010 Nevada Magazine Writers’ Contest for her essay “Back in the Saddle.”

Frederick R. Andresen (03): His novella, Dos Gringos (workshopped at Squaw Valley), was released through Outskirts Press in April.

Michael Jaime-Becerra (02,99): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

Greg Bills (94): See Writers Workshops Staff News.

Elise Blackwell (90,88): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

Debra Borchert (05): An essay she wrote about her experience in the South of France was published in the San Francisco Chronicle on May 9 as “Spirit of Resistance lives on in French village,” and also in The Writer magazine’s October 2010 Off-the-cuff column as “Not so picture-perfect.”

Denise Bostrom (WW 07; Screen 93,89): She was one of the screenwriters for the award-winning documentary, Children of the Amazon (www.childrenoftheamazon.com), which was broadcast on PBS on Earth Day this past April. The premiere was featured on over 100 PBS stations nationwide and also carried by Link TV. One of her poems, “Meditation on the Breath,” was published in the City College of San Francisco’s literary journal, City Lit Journal, in May 2010.

James Brown (94): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

Visit our new Notable Alumni page and learn how to nominate yourself or a friend: http://squawvalleywriters.org/NotableAlumniWriters.htm
Two mysterious deaths unlock one man’s past and another’s future in this moving tale of art, love, and history.

“Soulful and poetic . . .”
—Bookpage

“Powerful . . . ambitious . . . audacious.”
—Publishers Weekly (starred review)


Kate Campbell (08): Her story “The Tao of Do-it-Yourself” won an Editors’ Choice Award from the Fiction Writers’ Platform. www.fictionwritersplatform.net

Mauro Javier Cardenas (02): An excerpt from The Revolutionaries Try Again, his novel-in-progress, was published by Guernica Magazine in their May issue.

Julie Chibbaro (01,99): Her second novel, Deadly, came out from Atheneum/Simon & Schuster in February. juliechibbaro.com

Terence Clarke: He published his newest novel, A Kiss for Señor Guevara, through Booklocker.com in June.

Meg Waite Clayton (00): Her third novel, The Four Ms. Bradwells, will be released by Ballantine in March. Ballantine will also release her first novel, The Language of Light, in paperback in June. She’s working on a fourth, tentatively titled The Wednesday Daughters, to be published by Ballantine in 2013.

Denise Emanuel Clemen (10,06): Her essay “Holding Him Softly” was included in the anthology Saying Goodbye (Dream of Things, October 2010). http://goodbyebook.com

Mark Coggins (WW 96; Screen 01): His fifth novel, The Big Wake-up, won the Independent Publishers Book Award (IPPY) in the crime fiction category. www.markcoggins.com

Jody Cohan (94): Her What If Your Prince Falls Off His Horse?—The Married Woman’s Primer on Financial Planning won the Business Category at the 2009 New York Book Festival and was a finalist in the Women’s Issues Category of The National Best Books 2009 Awards.

Myfanwy Collins (05,04): She won the Flanmancrooked Fiction Prize (judged by Benjamin Percy) and has been published most recently in Mississippi Review, Potomac Review, Quick Fiction and other venues. She is a consulting editor at Narrative Magazine. www.myfanwycollins.com

David Corbett (WW 99,91,89,88; Screen 2001): Do They Know I’m Running was published in March by Ballantine (Mortalis imprint).

Eileen Cronin (09,06,05): She had four stories published this year in Slice, The Literary Review, Third Coast, and Coe Review.

Debra A. Daniel (01): Her poetry chapbook, As Is, was published by Main Street Rag in 2009. She was the kick-off poet for the Sundown Poetry Series of readings at this summer’s Piccolo Spoleto in Charleston, SC.

Terry DeHart (96): His first novel, The Unit, was published in July, as part of a two-book deal with Orbit Books.


Frank DiPalermo (09,05,04): His short story “Body of Christ” was published in the on-line journal Slow Trains. www.slowtrains.com

Heather Donahue (08): Her book Growgirl: The Blossoming of an Unlikely Outlaw was bought by Gotham/Penguin and will be released in 2012. www.heatherdonahue.com

Merridawn Ducker (07): She was given a National Endowment of the Arts Award for her performance piece “Guide to An Exhibitionist,” which will appear at Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and her play The Relatives was accepted into the Emerging Female Voices Playwright Fest with the Manhattan Shakespeare Project.

Katherine Easer (08): Her first novel, Vicious Little Darlings, will be published by Bloomsbury in June 2011.

Jennifer Egan (89): See Profile page 51.

Joshua Ferris (03): His novel, The Unnamed, was published by Reagan Arthur Books (an imprint of Little, Brown).

Sarah Flood (09): The story she workshoped at Squaw in 2009 was accepted for publication in the Santa Monica Review.

Jamie Ford (06): His debut novel, Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet, won the 2010 Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature and has been published in 23 languages. His follow-up, Whispers of a Thunder God, was recently sold to Ballantine for release in Fall 2011. www.jamieford.com

Vicki Forman (94): She won the 2010 PEN USA Literary Award for creative nonfiction for This Lovely Life (published by Mariner Books/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt in 2009).

Amy Franklin-Willis (09,07,06): The Lost Saints of Tennessee will be published by Grove Atlantic in January 2012 under the name A.E. Willis.

Aleta George (10.05): Her essay “Poetic Gesture: A California Crown for Lord Byron” was published in the Summer issue of California. Her work also appeared in High Country News, Bay Nature and the San Francisco Chronicle. She was the inaugural recipient of an Early California Fellowship from New Pacific Studio for her book-in-progress about Ina Coolbrith, California’s first poet laureate.


Lise Haines (99): Her third novel, Girl in the Arena (a young adult novel), was published by Bloomsbury in August. www.lisehaines.com

Jane Hammons (08): “All Bones,” a prose poem, was published in Poetry Quarterly, Winter 2010, and she had short stories published in decomp (May 2010), JMWW (Summer 2010), A Twist of Noir (August 2010), and Crimespree Magazine (July/August 2010).

Michael Harris (08): His novel The Chieft Hoi Saloon was published last fall by PM Press of Oakland.

Susan Henderson (09): Her debut novel, Up From the Blue, was published by Harper Collins in September 2010 and has been chosen as a 2010 Great Group Reads selection by Publishers Marketplace. Holland, Australia, and New Zealand have bought foreign rights to the book. She has a weekly column at thenervousbreakdown.com called “The Evolution of the Book,” chronicling the ups and downs of writing and selling her first novel.

Sara J. Henry (07,06): She has a two-book deal with Shaye Areheart. The first novel, Learning to Swim, was published in February. sarainvermont.blogspot.com

Ann Hillesland (02): In the past year, her fiction has appeared in The Los Angeles Review, NANO Fiction, SmokeLong Quarterly and in the anthology A la Carte: Short Stories that Stir the Foodie in All of Us from Main Street Rag Press.

Vanessa Hua (08): Her short story “The Deal” was published by the Atlantic Monthly/Kindle in September 2010. An essay of hers appeared in the New York Times Magazine in April, and her short fiction was published in the Hopkins Review in October. www.vanessahuacom

Buzzy Jackson (WW 01; Screen 97.94): Her book Shaking the Family Tree: Dispatches from the Frontlines of American Genealogy was published by Touchstone in July 2010.


Louis B. Jones (89): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

Len Joy (09.08): He has had short fiction pieces published in Right Hand Pointing (August 2009), Pindeldyboz (September 2009), LitHtIMAGE (October 2009), Dogzplot (October 2009), Bartleby & Stokes (January 2010) and The Foundling Review (October 2010). His short story “Casualties,” which was published by the Short Story Library in October 2009, was nominated for Dzanc Books “Best
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Paulette Livers (07): She completed an MFA at the University of Colorado in May. After moving from Boulder to Chicago this summer, she visited the residency program at Artcroft, Kentucky, and was a contributor at the Sewanee Writers’ Conference.

Laura Glen Louis (WW 88; Screen 87): A chapbook of her elegiac poetry, Some, like elephants, was published by El León Literary Arts in May 2010.

Li Miao Lovett (06): Her novel In the Lap of the Gods was published by Leapfrog Press in November 2010. Her essay about soul searching in Japan was a top-ten finalist in inspirational essay in the 79th annual Writer’s Digest contest.

Krista Lukas (03): (formerly Krista Benjamin) She has new poems in Margie and the Jewish Women’s Literary Annual. Her poem “Letter from My Ancestors” was translated into Russian by Aleksey Porvin and published in Polutuna Magazine.

Michael Lukas (09): His novel The Oracle of Stamboul is due out in February 2011 from HarperCollins.

Dale Madison (07): His second book, Sissy Sammy in the Land of WEHO 90069, which he workedshop (and performed at Squaw during the Follies) was published in September.

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—Susan Salter Reynolds, Los Angeles Times

“A riveting historical tale... with beautifully detailed, often conversational, language, Sharp describes a lost world.”
—Christian Science Monitor

Grey Sparrow Journal, Camroc Press Review, and three anthologies, and was nominated for the PEN/O’Henry Prize and inclusion in the Best American Short Stories anthology last year. Her short story “Why Won’t You” also took first place in Barleby Snopes’ dialogue-only contest.
www.annammanthiram.com

Robin Martin (99,97-95): Her short story “On the Ocean Boulevard” won the Sanibel Island Writers Conference Contest and will be published in the Spring 2011 issue of Mangrove Review. “Same Initials as Jesse James” won First Prize in the 2010 Alabama Writers Conclave Short-Short category and received an honorable mention in the New Millennium contest. Her short story “1969” was honored at the 2010 San Francisco PEN Women Nob Hill John Keats Soul Awakening Competition and was published in the 2010 New Orleans Review. A 55-page segment of Old Scores won Honorable Mention in the 2010 Long Story International Contest. Old Scores was also short-listed in the Cinnamon Press 2010 contest. She was awarded a residency from the Eastern Frontier Foundation. A short co-written screenplay, My Happy Faces, screened at The 2010 Los Angeles International Women’s Film Festival and the 2010 Charlotte Film Festival.

Christina Meldrum (05): Her second novel, Amaryllis in Blueberry, was published by Simon & Schuster’s Gallery Books in February 2011. Her first novel, Madapple, was a finalist for the PEN USA Literary Award and the William C. Morris Award, an ALA Best Book, a Booklist Editor’s Choice and a Kirkus Best Book.
www.christinameldrum.com

Anthony J. Mohr (08): His essay “My Father Died Fifty Times” appeared in the Spring 2010 issue of ZZYZX.

www.jwmmorgan.com

Lisa Braver Moss (03): Her novel The Measure of His Grief was published in November 2010 by Notim Press.

Nami Mun (02): Her story “The Anniversary” was published in Granta 114.

Jessica O’Dwyer (07,06): Her first book, Mamalita: An Adoption Memoir, was published by Seal Press in November 2010.

Lucia Orth (95): “Departure,” an excerpt from her second novel, was published in the Asia Literary Review, vol. 10 (Hong Kong). She also received an artist’s grant from the Kansas Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts, in support of her work on her second novel.

Mary Otis (01): She accepted a position with PEN USA as a literary advisor in The Mark Program. This past year she was invited by the NEA to attend the Guadalajara Book Festival as a fiction writer.

Kim Palchikoff (04): She received an National Endowment for the Humanities grant to do a large oral history on Russian circus performers in Nevada.

Victoria Patterson (06): Her novel, This Vacant Paradise, was just released in March 2011 by Counterpoint Press. Drift, her interlinked story collection, was selected as one of the best books of 2009 by the San Francisco Chronicle and was a finalist for the California Book Award in First Fiction. Her story “The Case of Violeta Lois Stokes” was in Five Chapters. “Nobody’s Business” was published in the Fall & Winter 2010 edition of the Alaska Quarterly Review.
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SUSAN HENDERSON

UP FROM THE BLUE

HARPER

Bill Pieper (10): He published his new novel, What You Wish For, through Strategic Publishing Group.

Shira Potash (08): With her husband she produced and directed the documentary film Food Stamped, which follows a couple as they attempt to eat a healthy, well-balanced diet on a food stamp budget. The film was an official selection for the Mill Valley Film Festival.

Yoav Potash (08,05): With his wife he produced and directed the documentary film Food Stamped, which follows a couple as they attempt to eat a healthy, well-balanced diet on a food stamp budget. The film was an official selection for the Mill Valley Film Festival.

Ismet Prcic (07): His debut novel (...shards...) will be published in 2011 by Grove Atlantic. His short story “At the National Theater” is appearing in McSweeney’s Quarterly Concern #36.


Jerry Ratch (06,05): He published his memoir, A Body Divided, in November 2009 with Atelier Books of Santa Fe. www.jerryratch.com

Judy Reeves (01): The revised edition of her book A Writer’s Book of Days, featuring a foreword by Janet Fitch, was released by New World Library, September 2010.

Frederick Reiken (95): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

Sue Repko (06): An essay, “Life from the Planet SAHM,” was published in the anthology I’m No Superwoman from Coffeetown Press. www.suerepko.com

Harriet Rohmer (05): Chronicle Books published her Heroes of the Environment: True Stories of People Who Are Helping to Protect Our Planet in fall 2009. It has been selected by Booklist as one of the 10 Best Environment Books for Children for 2010. She also received a Lifetime Achievement Award from Pen Oakland for her work with Children’s Book Press, the award-winning publisher of multicultural and bilingual books, which she founded in 1975.

Elizabeth Rosner (Poetry 99; WW 87, 83,82): See Writers Workshop Staff News.

Penelope Rowlands (91): Her latest book, Paris Was Ours: 32 Writers Reflect on the City of Light, is due out from Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill on February 8, 2011. The book is a collection of essays about the transformative effect of living in Paris. Three of the pieces were contributed by members of the Community of Writers: Diane Johnson, Roxane Farmanfarmaian and Penelope. www.peneloperowlands.com; www.pariswasours.com

Kris Saknussemm (00): A thriller, Private Midnight, was published by the Overlook Press in 2009. It has since become a bestseller for Zanzibar Editions in France and has been sold in Italy to Rizzoli. In March 2011 Del Rey Books will bring out his third novel, Enigmatic Pilot. A new imprint of the Eraserhead Press in Portland will publish his collection of short stories, Sinister Miniatures, in May 2011. PS Publishing in the UK will publish a novella in limited edition hardcover in Fall 2011. www.saknussemm.com

Eric Sasson (07): In the past year, his stories have appeared in The Nashville Review, The Ledge, The 2nd Hand, MARY Magazine, Trans, and The 2010 Robert Olen Butler Prize Anthology. He was awarded a residency fellowship to the Anderson Center in Minnesota and was a
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—ForeWord magazine
Participant Profile: Jennifer Egan

Erica Rohrbach, writing for *Kirkus Reviews*, describes Jennifer Egan’s latest novel, *A Visit from the Goon Squad* (Knopf, 2010), as “the uncanny love child of conceptual insight gleaned from years of reading Proust and structural inspiration drawn from The Sopranos. Best yet by time as the ultimate goon, Egan’s richly eclectic cast of music-industry have and have-nots confront one another across three decades, multiple points of view, even a chapter written in PowerPoint.” The book, Egan’s fifth, is a finalist for three major awards—the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction, the Los Angeles Times Book Prize and the National Book Critic’s Circle Award—and was on numerous top ten lists including New York Times Book Review, Washington Post, Publisher’s Weekly, Time Magazine, People Magazine, and many others. But the writing life didn’t always come easily for Egan.

Jennifer Egan made an unwavering decision to be a writer while on a trip through Europe before college: “My mother and step father were in the midst of divorcing. I just felt very alone in a big way, and at that point, experience, coming too soon in her career, she says. “That story really hung over me and cast a long shadow, and I felt that I would never even match it, much less top it.” The following year, in 1989, she attended the Community of Writers. It wasn’t until 1995 that her first novel, *The Invisible Circus*, was published. The story became a feature film starring Cameron Diaz in 2001. *Emerald City and Other Stories* came out in 1996, followed by her novel *Look at Me*, which was a finalist for the National Book Award in 2001. In *Look at Me*, Egan says she “set out to examine the impact of image culture on human identity. How, I wondered, has America’s emphasis on display—on appearances, literal and metaphorical—altered the makeup of people’s private selves?”

Playing with style and the formal structure of the novel has been important to Egan. “[In] what’s come to be thought of the standard novel, there’s no play at all with the artifice itself….My impulse would be to play with that a little more.” At the same time she acknowledges the importance of “emotional resonance” in the novel, and also lets enjoyment lead the process of writing. “I know that if I’m not having fun, the reader is not having fun. Fun is actually my best guide as to whether something is working or not.”

It was a difficult time. She had moved to New York, and was working as a temp. Then, at 26, she sold a story to the *New Yorker*. This early success turned out to be a difficult experience, coming too soon in her career, she says. “That story really hung over me and cast a long shadow, and I felt that I would never even match it, much less top it.” The following year, in 1989, she attended the Community of Writers. It wasn’t until 1995 that her first novel, *The Invisible Circus*, was published. The story became a feature film starring Cameron Diaz in 2001. *Emerald City and Other Stories* came out in 1996, followed by her novel *Look at Me*, which was a finalist for the National Book Award in 2001. In *Look at Me*, Egan says she “set out to examine the impact of image culture on human identity. How, I wondered, has America’s emphasis on display—on appearances, literal and metaphorical—altered the makeup of people’s private selves?”

In 2006 her novel *The Keep* was a national bestseller. Now she is working on a historical war novel. The mother of two children, she has published dozens of short stories and book reviews and regularly contributes investigative journalism pieces to the *New York Times Magazine* and other publications.

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All But Dissertation: a short short story

Janet Fitch

From Janet Fitch’s blog: janetfitchwrites.wordpress.com. This is part of a weekly series of short short stories based on a writing exercise, The Word. Inspired by a simple word, chosen at random, write a two-page double-spaced story, using The Word at least once. The word for this story: CLIP.

H

e sat on the sprung couch they’d found the summer before on 112th Street and clipped his nails over the floor. Maya could never convince him to do it over the wastebasket or in the toilet. You’re so bourgeois, he said, resting his big foot on his knee. Like your whole family in Sherman Oaks. The invisible ironic quotation marks. Sherman Oaks.

He did it defiantly. She didn’t believe only bourgeois people cut their nails over the wastebasket. Surely plumbers and bakers and machinists did too. People who worked in fast food. People who cleaned up in airports. Only a grad student of philosophy would think of it as liberation politics to cut his toenails and let the half moons fall onto the floor, those little sharp crescents gouging into her bare soles in the middle of the night.

She watched him, rain weeping down the dirty window behind him overlooking Broadway. The horns, honking out their impotency, echoed her mood. And tried to remember what she’d ever seen in him. His untrimmed beard. His glasses, taped in the middle. His habit of finishing the milk or the orange juice or the eggs and never telling her. As if food miraculously appeared in the refrigerator. His friends came over and drank whatever happened to be in the apartment, they seemed to believe in miracles as well.

She imagined Sartre. Would Sartre have done anything so disgusting as clip his nails over the floor and then accuse Simone of being bourgeois if she didn’t like it? She hoped he hadn’t. She knew it had been a problematic relationship. But she didn’t think it was of the toenail nature. Buried in the same grave. She hoped their relationship, hers and Phil’s would not last that long. Really, she hoped it wouldn’t last another year. She wished she had the energy to end it, but something about him sucked the life out of her. It made her tired just thinking about it.

How long could the rain keep up? She sat on the bed, wishing Phil would go do something so she could have the apartment to herself for a while. But ever since he finished coursework for his PhD, he never left the apartment anymore. He was supposed to be working on his dissertation. But mostly he wrote long e-mails to colleagues in Germany and France, and, she suspected, watched internet porn when she was working. She’d never heard the term ABD until she’d met him. She thought you went to grad school, wrote your dissertation, you published, you began the road to tenure.

That limbo, that academic mangrove swamp. All But Dissertation. Since coming to Columbia, she learned PhD candidates could be ABD for years, becalmed between studenthood and life.

She’d once thought she and Phil would marry. She imagined brilliant, German-inflected children, Grethe and Marta and Jan. Like the Royal Tennenbaums. They would go to a progressive New York pre-school, make sculptures in clay and march against the war. Phil would play the guitar for them and take them onto the roof and point out the stars and the George Washington Bridge.

Now she was just waiting. For the rain to stop. For Phil to go. Her friends said it must be working for her on some level, or she would leave. But they didn’t understand the strange torpor that came over her.

Clip. Clip. Could you kill someone over his nail clippings? Would it be exculpatory? Please Judge, he knew all about the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus but he never bought milk, and he clipped his nails over the floor.

She opened the window, startling two sheltering pigeons. The cacaphony of horns, the swish of the rain. It would end. It just had to.

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Oakley Maxwell Hall III
May 26, 1950 - February 13, 2011

Oakley Hall III, eldest son of the late novelist Oakley Hall, was a playwright, director, and author. In the mid-70s, when he was a rising star in the New York theatre scene, his play Mike Fink was optioned by Joseph Papp of the Public Theatre. He founded and was the Artistic Director of the legendary Lexington Conservatory Theatre, in upstate New York, where his plays Grinder’s Stand and Beatrice and the Old Man, and his adaptation of Frankenstein enjoyed their premiere productions. Lexington Conservatory Theatre moved to Albany in 1979 and continues today as Albany Rep.

In 1978, Oakley suffered traumatic and massive head injuries in a fall from a bridge. He eventually returned to California to live in Nevada City near his family; his play Grinder’s Stand was produced by the Foothill Theatre Company, directed by Philip Sneed. The story of this production, intertwined with Oakley’s fall and the slow process of creating a new life, are movingly told in Bill Rose’s award-winning documentary, A Trance After Breakfast, plus several collections of short fiction. His new novel, Song of Slaves in the Desert, was just published this spring. Cheuse has been a regular contributor to National Public Radio’s All Things Considered since 1982. His short fiction has appeared in The New Yorker, Boston Globe Sunday Magazine, The Southern Review, The Antioch Review, and elsewhere. His three-volume introduction to literary study, Literature: Craft & Voice, which he wrote with Nicholas Dell’Bianco, came out from McGraw-Hill last year.

Oakley made a life-long study of the surrealist playwright, Alfred Jarry, and over the years translated several of his plays from the original French. In 2008, Hall moved to Albany, New York, to live with Hadiya Wilborn, who helped set in motion a collaboration with acclaimed puppeteer Ed Atkeson. This resulted in a production of one of those translated plays, Ubu Roi, at an Albany theater, Steamer 10, directed by Oakley, with Steven Patterson in the title role. In the fall of 2010, Moving Finger Press published Oakley’s novel, Jarry and Me, in which Oakley intertwines a memoir of his own life with a sly “autobiography” of Jarry. One of the last sentences of the book is, “Jarry dies with a grin on his face.” We are told that Oakley too had a grin on his face, at the end. As Oakley would say: “Merde.”

He is survived by his two children, Oakley and Elizabeth, his mother, Barbara E. Hall, his sisters Sands Hall, Tracy Hall, and Brett Hall Jones, four loving nephews and a niece—Justin, Nico, Hunter, Dashiell, and Emma—and his cherie, Hadiya Wilborn.

Contributors This Issue

LISA ALVAREZ is co-director of the Community of Writers’ Writers Workshops and is a professor of the English department at Irvine Valley College. Her essays and short stories have appeared in journals and anthologies. With Alan Cheuse, she edited Writers Workshop in a Book: The Community of Writers on the Art of Fiction.


BRETT HALL JONES has been the Executive Director of the Community of Writers for 18 years. Before that, she was director of catalogue photography for the San Francisco Auction House, Butterfield & Butterfield. She continues to be a photographer, focusing lately on author portraits.

MAXIMA KAHN is a poet, fiction writer and essayist. She teaches workshops on writing and creativity in Nevada County, California. She attended the Writers Workshop in 2010 and 2006 and the Poetry Workshop in 2007.

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FAULTLINE: UC Irvine’s literary journal. www.humanities.uci.edu/faultline
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