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SPOTLIGHT LITERACY THROUGH POETRY INTERVIEW WITH TRUONG TRAN AND VERONICA GOLOS

By Shiela Bushanam



This past year I had the pleasure of meeting and working with poets Veronica Golos and Truong Tran, each of whom were selected to train apprentices for Literacy Through Poetry, a program that teaches literacy skills through the writing of poetry to “at risk” students in elementary schools in the Ft. Collins Poudre R-1 School District. Truong Tran is the author of four collections of poetry and a children’s book. *The Book of Perceptions* (Kearny Street Workshop, 1999) was a finalist in The Kiriyaama Book Prize. *Placing The Accents* (Apogee Press, 1999) was a finalist in the Western States Book Prize for Poetry, *dust and conscience* (Apogee Press, 2002) was awarded the San Francisco State Poetry Center Book Prize and *within the margin* (Apogee Press, 2004). He recently ventured into the world of children’s literature, authoring *Going Home Coming Home*, published by Children’s Book Press. In 2003, he served as Writer In Residence for Intersection for the Arts. Truong lives in San Francisco where he is currently teaching at Mills College and San Francisco State University. A fifth collection of poems entitled *Four Letter Words* is scheduled for publication in 2007.

Veronica Golos is the author of *A Bell Buried Deep*, co-winner of the Nicholas Roerich Poetry Prize (Story Line Press) and nominated for a 2004 Pushcart Prize by Edward Hirsch. Her work was a finalist for the Ann Stanford Prize and for



the Tupelo Press Prize. She was a 2003 and 2005 recipient of three-month artistâ€™s residencies at the Wurlitzer Foundation of Taos, New Mexico. She is also the author of the chapbook, *No Ordinary Women*. Presently, she is working on a new book of poems inspired by Taos, New Mexico, *Intimate Red*. Presently, Ms. Golos is the Poet in Residence at the Yaxche Learning Center in Taos, New Mexico. In New York, Ms. Golos teaches poetry, memoir and multi-genre writing for the 92nd St Y, Poets&Writers Inc., and Poets House.

Though we couldn’t conduct the interview in person, our correspondence is as follows:

SB: What were your experiences with Literacy Through Poetry at C.S.U?

TT: I thought the experience of working with both Veronica and the student population at CSU was amazing. I felt like I learned more than I really taught.

Veronica’s approach to teaching is refreshing and really inspired. In witnessing her at work, I am reminded of the importance of poetry outside of the walls of academia.

VG: I was very interested in your school as a whole. That CSU can pull people towards it from its roots as a farming/ranching community to its poetry department, a cross pollination if you will. That is a unique and worthwhile combination. I felt we were warmly welcomed: from the pick up at the airport, to the lunch, the reading, the publicity, and the hotel accommodations (which were exceptional). It is refreshing for artists - especially poets, of whom society often offers barely a second glance - to be treated with such respect and interest.

I enjoyed also the combination of experiences: The reading, the discussion/workshop with the MFA students, and the actual classroom practice. It seems to be a very balanced approach, and quite literally, puts the “money where the mouth is.” I would only suggest that the classroom teaching time be expanded; perhaps the discussion period after the reading should also be lengthened.

SB: What kinds of exercises and approaches do you take in teaching children about poetry?

TT: I remind myself constantly that kids are very capable of abstract thoughts and complex ideas. I was blown away by the level of engagement and the command of language these young students displayed. Their lack of inhibition made for a real magical afternoon of poetry. I am reminded of a line in a play that goes something like this, “when you are in second grade, everything is a Kandinsky.”

VG: My approach varies with the ages of the students. I find for 2nd – 5th graders that a structured period, balanced between assigned work and free writing, works best. I like to use color and images, to ask them for “gooey” words, “sloppy” words, scary words, etc. We fill up on words. Then, they pick (out of a jar with the words written on cards) ten words, and write a poem. For these younger children, it is important to respond to them enthusiastically, not so much with critique. Children that age make poetic leaps almost organically. The “ungrammatical” out-of-context word-play fits the art form perfectly. Children, I believe are natural poets.

For middle and high school students, I find that at least half the time should be spent reading a wide variety of established, multicultural poets, with the teacher pointing out depth, context, nuance, and formal structure. But most important is the teacher’s own enthusiasm for a poem, or poet. I find that odes (Neruda’s especially) and Haiku fit the bill very well. If the combination is teaching them to write poetry, as well as to read it, then a sense of trust needs to be established in the classroom.

It is good to have the students write from and respond to the poets they’ve read. For the older teens, I encourage them to write about their own experiences. This will make them love poetry – because they are being listened to, because they’re the experts of their own lives.

SB: What did you learn from your teaching partner, especially considering you’d never met them before?

TT: Veronica should be teaching at a university. In working with her, I am reminded of my role as a teacher not just at a university but also in the world. She possesses a commitment, passion and clarity of vision that is so often missing from academia. It was an honor to share a reading with her and an even greater honor to share a teaching experience with.

VG: My partner was Truong Tran. When he showed us examples of the poems he uses with teens, it struck me how he didn’t lessen the depth. No talking down, no “kid speak.” He approached every student as a thinking adult.

The opportunity to teach second graders together revealed an amazing chemistry between us, an almost psychic completion of each other’s sentences. To this I must credit the instincts of the curators who organized the program.

In addition, our private conversations, poet to poet, were extraordinary. In our teaching we both agreed, and had used, a completely multicultural curriculum.

SB: How had your backgrounds with teaching and/or writing towards children shaped or influenced your training?

TT: As a student growing up in the public school system in CA, I was not always exposed to art and literature in my education, I sought this out during my college years and well into my adult life. As a teacher now, I continue to reflect on this and am determined to bring art, literature and writing into the lives of our young students. It is not only important but also absolutely necessary if they are to become the thinkers and leaders of our society. It is my hope that this country and this society will one day be lead by teachers, writers and artists. I have to believe that this is possible or I would not be a teacher myself.

VG: Teaching is teaching. You (teacher or student) want to be engaged, enthralled, and entranced. It is a dynamic interplay. You begin with a curriculum that you must be willing to throw over in the face of the unfolding experience. The energy, the literacy level, knowledge, cultural background, combinations of students, all make each class a unique encounter. I use an intuitive approach at first, to see what reactions I get – and then I fine-tune the curriculum as is needed.

SB: Was your experience with Literacy Through Poetry beneficial to you? Were you able to carry anything you learned into other settings, teaching experiences, etc.?

TT: This experience has been entirely beneficial. It reminded me of the importance of teaching and writing and the impact of such endeavors when we are able to extend it beyond the boundaries of academia, that poetry does in fact have a place in the world and in the lives of all and not just the few who choose to be in a creative writing class. Sometimes I find that art and writing can be such selfish, indulgent acts. It is in teaching that I find redemption. Thank you for this wonderful experience.

VG: I would really love to do more work with MFA students. It was an opportunity for me to develop a packet about teaching poetry to children, which will be useful in the future. But it was the discussions, formally and informally, about the role of political discourse in poetry for example, or about understanding poems outside their context, or about experimental forms and paginations, that were so interesting for me. Here were students coming to learn to write/read poetry while still young enough to enjoy passionate debate.

As part of their MFA program they've volunteered to teach young people the role of the word. That takes a kind of idealism, which in the world as it is presently constituted is wonderful to see.

Are we helping literacy in doing this, and if so, why? To form a poem, almost more than any other writing form, is to be able to chew and ingest words, to bring your self to them. Instead of learning by rote, you fully incorporate the word, its magic and flexibility. You learn what it feels like to be in an experience, and not mechanically read or write about it. This is true literacy.

SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW WITH ALUMNI ARYN KYLE

By Shiela Bushanam



Aryn Kyle was an English major with a concentration in Creative Writing at Colorado State University. Before graduating in 2001, she won the Creative and Performing Arts Scholarship and an award at the Undergraduate Creativity and Research Symposium. She has continued to achieve great success as a writer. Her fiction has appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Georgia Review*, *StoryQuarterly*, *Best New American Voices 2005*, and elsewhere. She is the recipient of a Rona Jaffe Award and a National Magazine Award in fiction. She currently lives in Missoula, Montana. Her first novel, *The God of Animals*, was published by Scribner in March 2007. Here is a brief interview with her.

SB: How have your experiences at CSU helped or been apart of your writing career?

AK: I had never taken a class in creative writing before I started at CSU. I'd never even heard of a creative writing workshop. Basically, I had no idea what I was doing. But after my first creative writing class, I was hooked. I took a workshop almost every semester that I was in school. I even took poetry classes, which, thinking back, makes me laugh out loud (I'm not much of a poet). I think that my writing has really developed in stages: some things I figured out quickly, others have taken me longer to understand. Becoming a better writer is a little bit like building a muscle; you have to continually work at it. CSU was where writing first became a significant part of my life. Between classes and readings, I somehow came to the decision that I was going to be a writer. Of course, I didn't have any concrete idea of what that meant. I didn't even know if I was any good. But of all the doors that creaked open while I was in college, that was the one I most wanted to walk through.

SB: Were any creative writing faculty influential in helping you with your career?

AK: All of them. Well, maybe not every single one, but many. I've been really lucky throughout my life to have had so many incredible teachers. Early on, someone advised me to take writing classes from as many different people as possible. Everyone brings something different to the table, everyone approaches a story in a slightly different way. I've done my best to follow that advice, and I think it was sound. At CSU I took classes (in both fiction and poetry) from Leslee Becker, David Milofsky, Deanna Ludwin, Judy Doenges, and Bill Tremblay. They were all really important, and not just in the classroom. Office doors were always open; it was easy to ask questions, to sit and talk about books, writing, graduate school applications, the phys. ed. requirement and if it was really necessary, whatever. My development as a writer has been pretty gradual. Studying writing, you rarely have that "aha!" moment, rarely sit up at your desk and declare, "I get it! I understand good dialogue!" Often, it isn't until years later that you realize what you've learned from people.

SB: Has living in Colorado influenced your work in any way?

AK: It's hard to say. I grew up in Grand Junction, and my novel takes place in a town that's basically Grand Junction with a different name. So in that sense, yes. But I never really intended to write about the West, or to try and capture my hometown. Initially, I only used that particular landscape because it was easier than setting the story in a place I'd never been. But as the novel progressed, the setting began to feel more like a character to me. It became much more important to the book than I'd initially thought. Ultimately, I don't think I'll know how my upbringing in Colorado has influenced my work until I have more distance from it. For the most part, I don't understand why I write about anything. Maybe someday I'll look back and it will all be clear.

INTERVIEW WITH MFA ALUMNI

CHRIS ARIGO AND JACQUELINE LYONS

By Michael McLane

MM: Each of you have published your first collection of poems (Lit Interim and The Way They Say Yes Here, respectively) since graduating from CSU, can you give a little insight into the process that went into getting your manuscript accepted and published?

JL: A very kind poet, Chuck Wachtel, read at the University of Utah while I was a PhD student there and, after asking me to describe my poems, suggested that Hanging Loose Press might be a good place for my work. I began by submitting a few poems to their journal, which they accepted, and then I let them know that those poems belonged to a manuscript, and could I send it to them. They agreed to read the manuscript, which later became the book *The Way They Say Yes Here*. About a year passed between submitting the individual poems and acceptance of the manuscript, and then another year or so until the publication. Being able to submit individual poems for publication in the journal was a wonderful way to get the press' attention, and to learn what kind of poems they were interested in publishing.

CA: I suspect a lot of blind luck was involved....sending out manuscripts to contests strikes me as being much like horse racing. That is, a lot of people will tell you that there are innumerable ways to increase your odds—by studying the horses, the jockeys, etc—and I suppose it's true to an extent. My only insights are pretty obvious ones: if you're writing hyper-innovative poetry, a judge like Billy Collins is probably not going to select your MS. If you're writing hyper-narrative work, Leslie Scalapino is probably not going to select your MS. I don't mean to polarize—these are just examples. On the other hand, I am sometimes very surprised by the MS's that some judges pick. For my second collection, there was no contest involved. Omnidawn press has a one-month reading period. The first time I sent to them, I was a finalist, but was not accepted—and I'm glad because I think I was a bit premature in sending the MS (entitled *In the archives*) to them. So, I revised it—substantially—and sent it again and this time they took it. It'll be out next month in time for AWP.

MM: You each have had a number of poems published in various journals. How often have you been able to send out submissions for publication? Have you created any kind of goals or deadlines?

CA: I used to be near-religious about sending work out—at any one time I would have 30 or so submissions floating in various slush piles. Now, I am significantly more strategic, instead of taking the shotgun approach—I use a sniper rifle now. Of course, this comes with time, familiarizing oneself with various journals, etc. One nice thing about getting established as a poet, is that people start to ask you for poems! Five years ago, this was a dream, something far out of reach!

JL: This has varied so much over the years—when I look at my records, my submissions drop off during years I was studying for doctoral qualifying exams and applying for jobs, and during the first year of a new teaching position. Before all that, though, I tried to send out about three times a year, working up from a handful of submissions at a time to 10 or 15 each time. Since I'm married to a poet, we often plan to prepare a set of submissions together, which makes it more fun and we also confer with each other about which places we think might be best for which poems.

MM: Do you think it is more important to try to establish a kind of rapport with the editors of journals/magazines whose work most intrigues you (i.e. follow through on suggestions or requests to see other work) or to simply try to get work out to as many different venues as possible?

CA: I'd say both: my experience has been that when editors (or screeners) write a comment, it's usually because they mean it. And of course familiarity with various journals' aesthetics, etc. will save a lot of time and money—it's much like what I said above: I doubt Poetry would publish John Yau. But you never know. I also think there is something to the shotgun approach, but within reason. I still suggest choosing journals in your aesthetic sphere.

JL: It's nice to communicate with editors for lots of reasons, only one of them being possible publication, and sometimes, all other things being equal, and/or considering that editors look at so much writing, having name recognition might get your work the best possible consideration. I would also say that sending work out widely is one way to establish connections, and when I consider my own publications and awards, the major ones have all come out of situations in which I had no prior connection with editors/publishers—they just liked my poems.

MM: Chris, the format of your book, *Lit Interim*, is atypical of poetry collections in terms of both its trim size and the formatting of many of the poems in the book. Was it difficult to find a press willing to work with this kind of formatting and what recommendations would you make to poets who are trying to publish poems or collections that are similarly trying to push the boundaries of the page or how we “see” a book of poems?

CA: I was very lucky—I suggested the trim size during the same phone call when David Baratier (the editor of Pavement Saw Press) called to tell me David Bromige had picked my MS. He was fine with it, because it turns out that Pavement Saw Press had a history of such books. I see the issue from both sides: as an editor and a poet, so I can understand both perspectives. As an editor, odd trim sizes equals more production money. In fact, I suspect it's this awareness that has helped shape my relationship with the “book.” I wish I could publish my poems on some kind of spherical page—that would be great. My best advice would be to communicate with editors—see what kind of compromises can be reached—most likely, you will have to compromise if the design is too far out. But, you may be surprised—if you make a good enough argument for an odd trim size....

MM: What is each of you currently working on? Any forthcoming publications – full manuscripts, poems/excerpts, or otherwise?

JL: I'm working on new poetry manuscript as well as some nonfiction. A group of my poems appear in an anthology newly out this month entitled *Oh One Arrow* from the new press Flim Forum (www.flimforum.com). My most recent essays appear in the current issue of *Interim* and in *AGNI* on-line, and I have a couple of poems forthcoming in the summer issue of *Colorado Review*.

CA: As I mentioned, my second collection will be out the end of February. In fact, I just finished looking at proofs yesterday. I have mostly finished a third collection *Myths and miscellany* and have started a fourth called *Dear/land* which is essentially a book-length epistolary poem/rant/lamentation to various bioregions in the U.S. I am also doing the English translations of the Italian poet Dome Bulfaro for a bilingual edition of his poems (published in Italy) that will be out sometime next year or so. He's a great person and a great poet. I am also in the early stages of putting together an *Ecopoetics* anthology of theory and practice—sort of in the spirit of Rothenberg's anthologies. Other than that, I'm finishing my last semester of coursework at UNLV and putting out the last issue of *Interim* with me as Managing Editor and looking forward to a year off from teaching.

STEPHANIE G'SCHWIND AND MFA ALUMS OFFER ADVICE ABOUT PUBLISHING

By Dana Masden, Mia Heavener, and Shiela Bushanam

We asked Stephanie G'Schwind, director of the Center for Literary Publishing, and a few alumni questions regarding their experiences with publishing. They each offered some constructive and practical advice to the following questions:

1. How often have you been able to send out submissions for publication? Have you created any kinds of goals or deadlines?
2. What have been your experiences, both positive and negative, with publishing before and after graduating?
3. What kind of advice do you have for students who feel discouraged about sending out submissions?
4. What tends to influence your decision to submit to a particular journal or press?
5. Have you done any crossing over in genres since graduating? Any publication successes?

Stephanie G'Schwind writes: I like to see manuscripts that demonstrate a mastery of craft, pay careful attention to voice and language, and have a compelling story to tell.

Write a simple cover letter. Get the current editor's name right. Be sure to follow the magazine's guidelines; it's very irritating, for instance, to receive work outside our reading period. That just tells me the writer doesn't even respect us enough to even look at the guidelines on the website. Make sure you've read at least one or two of the issues of the journal you're submitting to so you're not sending inappropriate work. If possible, have someone else proofread the manuscript before you send it out. I won't quit reading or reject a story just because there's a mistake in the first line, but I'm not terribly impressed.


I have no problem with simultaneous submissions. Like most journals, I just expect a writer to notify me immediately—by the next day—if a manuscript is accepted elsewhere.

I would advise MFA students to listen to their workshop professors, to their workshop peers, and to themselves. If those people are telling you to send a story or a poem out, you should seriously consider doing so. I love publishing unpublished writers. The very best part of my job—and I wish I could do this everyday—is calling a writer to say I want to publish her story/poem/essay.

Don't fret about not getting published yet. But send your work out when you're ready. Having a magazine decline your manuscript isn't the worst thing in the world. It will happen, but you'll live through it.

Brenna Yovanoff-Graham writes: I've sent a few things out, mostly on whim. I haven't really been focused on short fiction lately, except as a possible way to build writing credits. I heard somewhere that if you are trying to get an agent, they are more inclined to notice you if someone other than your mother officially likes your work.

So far, I've always had very positive experiences with publishing. I've been paid when they said I would be paid, and gotten my contributors' copies, and understood and agreed with the editorial changes. I like editors. They are often very strange, very funny people.



All I can really say is keep sending things out anyway. Publishing is so subjective and you never know what's going to excite one editor, while another might pass. If an editor takes the time to comment on your submission, apply the comments when you revise. See if that opens up new possibilities for the piece. Make your work stronger. Keep sending it out.

I ask myself two questions, the first being: is this publication going to look good on a query letter? If the answer to that is no, I ask the second question: well, passing over respectability, how much do they pay?

For me, crossing genres is an interesting question, because the answer is actually yes to both, although not precisely in the way I think the question is meant to be taken. I think what this question means is, for instance, having a concentration in fiction, and then getting a poem published, or something like that. I don't have that, so I am just going to tell you about my happy genre-crossing experience.

I've been devising strategies to strengthen my writing credits in ways that will specifically support the novel I'm working on, and while I was searching for speculative fiction markets, I came across a "dark fiction" contest. I had (have) no idea what constitutes dark fiction, but the contest judges included Ellen Datlow and Neil Gaiman, who are both Hugo Award winners and hugely famous in the speculative fiction industry (read: Not Literary). So I wrote a story and submitted it and got third place, which is admittedly not as good as first or second, but it comes with publication and free books, and the pay is as good as or better than most of the mid-tier literary magazines. Anyway, editor and reviewer response has been enthusiastic enough that I'm kind of thinking that I could keep doing this whole "dark fiction" thing and have a pretty good time. (Credit where credit is due: Sylvia DeLeon was a huge help. I had to put the story together on a tight deadline and she was very diligent, reading drafts and writing comments and offering suggestions over and over until it was to a point where it was publishable.)

Jen Lamb writes: I usually try to send out a big batch of submissions every six months or so. In each batch, I send to several journals that have returned positive feedback on my work as well as to a couple of journals that I haven't submitted to before. I try not to set any "goals" other than to simply get my work out there. Much of my recent focus has been on submitting my manuscript, *ornithomancy*, to small presses and first book contests, and in that regard I try to send it out to one new place each month.

Generally speaking, all of my experiences with publishing have been positive. I've placed around a dozen individual poems, and I feel good about finding a place for my manuscript soon (we'll see if that's just a delusion of grandeur). I did have one journal rather severely mess up the format of two poems, which, since much of my work is very visual on the page, was disappointing.

Oh, by all means, keep trying to publish! There are so many good journals out there — it's often just a question of finding the right "fit" for your work, or having an editor read it on a good day. I never take rejections personally.

I always look at a journal in print or, more often, online first. I look for names of poets I recognize, and read sample poems or entire issues. Sometimes I'll submit to places that have published writers I know, and of course networking with editors is always good. Beyond that . . . well . . . I just pick the ones with names I like.

I'm a disaster as a prose writer — something about having a short attention span — so no crossing genres for me.

Judea Franck writes: I hate sending work out. I hate the taste of envelope glue. I hate the color manila. SASEs are the most depressing of all because seeing your own handwriting in your mailbox is almost like sending a message in a bottle out into the ocean and then actually getting it back. I mean how depressing is it that even some kid on her first Florida vacation in a bright pink swimsuit didn't find your bottle interesting enough to at least go poking around, dumping your yellowing paper out onto the sand. Sure it might not make it into her suitcase to go back to Michigan, but at least it should have made it from the beach into the trashcan at the motel. I mean is that too much to ask?

Yet, it's important to send out, even in your first years as an MFA. It's important to many of us for many different reasons. I used to see sending out as a means to career advancement. Then I saw sending out as creating deadlines, which when I graduated became incredibly important. Now I also see sending out as a means to communicate with more than just myself and the generous members of my writing group. I don't want to over extend my very bad message in a bottle metaphor, but there is something incredibly important about sharing work and not feeling like you are writing in a vacuum. I actually feel content now to get back rejections—I like the hand written ones better than the pathetic half sheets of paper and I like the acceptances even better— but now without the comfort of workshop or peers or the generous MFA faculty at CSU—at least a rejection means that my work made it from my brain to my computer to an actual printed piece of paper and into someone else's hands. That's important. It makes the hours I spend writing feel less indulgent when my family is downstairs living a real life and waiting for me to come down and join in.

The practical advice. I try and have five things out at a time. Most magazines now allow simultaneous submissions so I do that. I like submitting to places that allow online submissions and I don't mind sending my stuff to online only publications. I recently had a piece in *Guernica*. I read the magazine online and I really liked it. When I submitted my essay to them, I didn't know that they were online only. I thought that they did both. When I got the acceptance, I had mixed feelings because I found out my essay wouldn't be in print. Although the more I got thinking about it and the more people I talked with about it, the better I felt. All in all, it was a great choice for the piece. The online format probably has a better circulation than print and I got back fan email, which was really fun. Also because the piece was timely and political, it was really important to have out in the world. Anyway, the editors were great to work with, so I'd recommend sending there.

I always read at least one piece in a magazine before I send out to them. *Best American* still has the best list and Steven Schwartz's ratings are still an influence as to my hopes and aspirations of where to send. Hayden's Ferry has a nice comprehensive list of journal web sites and I use that as a resource for finding places to send also.

As for watching the mail—my first acceptance was a very disappointing piece of mail—not, of course for what it said inside, but for its actual packaging. It was an SASE returning to me after nine months of navigating the unsolicited mail pile to a magazine in Canada. I held it up to the light and it was a thin, thin piece of paper. Of course, I was thinking—no shit, I waited a lousy stinking nine months just to be told that my manuscript ended up in the trash after all. It was two o'clock in the morning and my husband was living on the East coast, as were my parents and everyone else I knew. I could have waited for the morning, but I tore open the envelope anyhow, knowing I was too tired to be depressed for very long. It was, thankfully, an acceptance. I called and woke up everyone I knew. My father sent me flowers. My husband sent me flowers. Then I waited for another six months while nothing of consequence came in the mail except more rejections. Then, finally, the magazine with a beautiful illustrated cover, with (yes! Thankfully!) my story inside.

FALL 2006 READING SERIES SCHEDULE

Thursday, September 7
Truong Tran (poetry)
Veronica Golos (poetry)
7:30 pm Hatton Gallery

Thursday, September 21
Reg Saner (nonfiction)
7:30 pm Hatton Gallery

Thursday, September 28
John Kinsella (poetry)
Elizabeth Robinson (poetry)
7:30 pm Hatton Gallery



Thursday, October 26
Jen Egan (fiction)
7:30 pm Hatton Gallery



Thursday, November 9
Matthew Cooperman (poetry)
Judy Doenges (fiction)
7:30 pm Hatton Gallery

Thursday, December 7
Zach Boddicker (MFA fiction)
Marty Moran (MFA poetry)
Dave Robinson (MFA fiction)
7:30 pm Hatton Gallery

Thursday, October 12
Kevin Ward (MFA poetry)
Michelle Schmidt (MFA poetry)
7:30 pm Hatton Gallery

SPRING 2007 READING SERIES SCHEDULE

Thursday, February 1
George Kalamaras (poetry)
Mary Ann Cain (fiction)
Crow/Tremblay Alumni Readers
7:30 pm Hatton Gallery

Thursday, February 8
Michael Friedman (fiction)
Sandy Florian (fiction)
Julie Doxsee (poetry)
7:30 pm Hatton Gallery

Thursday, February 22
Charles Baxter (fiction)
7:30 pm University Center for the
Arts, Griffin Concert Hall,
1400 Remington St.



Thursday, March 8
Laura Van Etten (MFA fiction)
Shiela Bushanam (MFA poetry)
Mia Heavener (MFA fiction)
7:30 pm Hatton Gallery

Monday, March 19
Andrew Joron (poetry)
Laynie Brown (poetry)
Brian Henry (poetry)
7:30 pm CSU Bookstore

Thursday, March 22
Jaswinder Bolina (poetry)
Colorado Prize Winner
7:30 pm CSU Bookstore

Thursday, April 5
Tom Conway (MFA fiction)
Aby Kaupang (MFA poetry)
Molly Reid (MFA fiction)
7:30 pm Hatton Gallery

Thursday, April 12
Craig Arnold (poetry)
Roddy Lumsden (poetry)
7:30 pm Hatton Gallery

Thursday, April 26
Alexandra Fuller (nonfiction)
7:30 pm Hatton Gallery



TREMBLAY-CROW FELLOWSHIP: A CALL FOR SUPPORT

For the fifth consecutive year, CSU's Creative Writing Program will award two \$2,000 fellowships to incoming graduate students (one fiction writer and one poet) who show exceptional promise or to continuing students who are exemplary members of the MFA program and whose writing has shown exceptional growth. The 2007-2008 recipients are incoming students Jeremy Schnee and Aaron Apps.

The fellowship fund, established by an anonymous MFA alum, is intended to honor the inspiration and tireless efforts of two long-time faculty poets, Professor Emeritus Mary Crow and Professor Emeritus Bill Tremblay. Fellowship recipients are selected by Creative Writing Program faculty and shall not have full graduate teaching assistantships. Fellowship monies will be deposited in recipients' accounts for tuition only. Previous winners include Carol Christ, Janelle Cress, Logan Burns, Stephanie Stickney, Tate Higgins, Dana Madsen, Allison Mackin, and Jessica Baron.


With recent budget constraints, rising tuition costs, and a decreased number of graduate teaching assistantships—as well as fierce competition from other creative writing programs, many of which offer financial support to all of their students—our program's chance of attracting qualified poetry and fiction candidates has been severely impaired. In addition, the Tremblay-Crow Fellowships founder will be reducing her contribution to \$1,000 (from \$4,000) for the 2008-2009 academic year. Thus, it is imperative that we, as graduates of CSU's excellent Creative Writing Program, unite in our efforts to contribute to the program's health by offering our monetary support. If you wish to create a new MFA fellowship, in honor of another faculty member, a Creative Writing alum, or someone else, please contact Deanna Kern Ludwin (dludwin@lamar.colostate.edu) to discuss the possibility.

If you would like to contribute, please select one of the following options:

- Write your check to the CSU Foundation, with "MFA Creative Writing Fellowship Fund" on the memo line. Then mail it to CSU Foundation, P.O. Box 1870, Fort Collins, CO 80522.

OR

- Donate online at <http://advancing.colostate.edu/CLA/GIVE>. Click on "Gift Information" and then "Additional Designations" to select the "Tremblay-Crow Creative Writing Fellowship," which will pop up at the end of the list of giving options. If you have difficulty making an online contribution, please contact the CSU Foundation Office at (970) 491-7135.



If you choose to contribute, we'd love to include your name on our newsletter's C.W. Fellowship donors' list. If you wish to remain anonymous, please contact our C.W. newsletter editor, Jeana Burton (Jeana.Burton@ColoState.EDU).

With fond memories of the MFA experience,

John Bradley, MA 1981

Wendy Rawlings, MFA 1996

Deanna Kern Ludwin, MFA 1995 (dludwin@lamar.colostate.edu)

THE CENTER FOR LITERARY PUBLISHING

The Center for Literary Publishing exists to publish and promote quality literature in all its forms. As the umbrella office for Colorado Review and the Colorado Prize for Poetry series, the Center seeks to celebrate writers of literature and introduce their work to the general public. In addition, through its internship, the Center provides graduate students the opportunity to gain valuable skills necessary to pursue a career in publishing. The CLP is in constant need of financial support to help with publishing costs of the projects that the center publishes. If you would like to make a tax deductible donation to help support the CLP, click on <https://advancing.colostate.edu/CLA/GIVE> . Click on "Gift Information" and then "Additional Designations" to select the Colorado Review.

READING SERIES ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Fall 2006 reading series began on September 7 with Poets and Literacy Through Poetry trainers Truong Tran and Veronica Golos in the Hatton Gallery. Truong Tran is the author of four collections of poetry, his latest being *within the margin* (Apogee Press, 2004). Veronica Golos is the author of *A Bell Buried Deep*, co-winner of the Nicholas Roerich Poetry Prize (Story Line Press). The reading was followed by a reception and book signing.

The reading series continued on September 21 with non-fiction writer Reg Saner. Reg Saner read from his most recent non-fiction work, *The Dawn Collector: On My Way to the Natural World*, which was published in spring 2005 by the Center for American Places. Their reading was followed by a reception and book signing.

Poets Elizabeth Robinson and Jake Adam York then gave a performance of their work on September 28 in the Hatton Gallery. Elizabeth Robinson is the author of 6 books of poetry, reading from her most recent collections *Pure Descent*, winner of the National Poetry Series in 2002, and *Apostrophe* (Apogee Press, Berkeley, 2006). Jake Adam York is the author of *Murder Ballads* (Elixir Press, October 31, 2005), winner of the Elixir Press Fifth Annual Poetry Awards.

The series continued on October 12 with poetry MFA Candidates Kevin Ward and Michelle Schmidt in the Hatton Gallery. Each offered an engaging performance of their work.

The reading series also hosted Jennifer Egan, a novelist, short story writer and journalist on October 26. She is the author of *The Invisible Circus*, which was released as a feature film by Fine Line in 2001, *Emerald City and Other Stories* and, most recently, *Look at Me*, which was nominated for the National Book Award in 2001. She read in the Hatton Gallery with a reception and book signing to follow.

On November 9, the series featured Creative Writing faculty, Poet Matthew Cooperman and Fiction writer Judy Doenges. Matthew Cooperman is the author of the collections *Daze*, (Salt, forthcoming 2006) and *A Sacrificial Zinc* (Pleiades/LSU, 2001), which won the Lena-Miles Wever Todd Prize, and was a finalist for the Colorado Book Prize. Judy Doenges is the author of a novel, *The Most Beautiful Girl in the World*, and a short fiction collection, *What She Left Me*, which was a New York Times Notable Book. This dual genre reading was in the Hatton Gallery and a triumphant success.

The reading series concluded for the fall on December 7 with MFA candidates Zach Boddicker, Marty Moran, and Dave Robinson. This reading drew a large crowd and was another tremendous performance.

The Spring 2007 reading series set in motion with Poet and Alumni George Kalamaras and his wife, fiction writer Mary Ann Cain. This reading's featured sponsor was the Crow/Tremblay Alumni Reader Fund. George Kalamaras is the author of five books of poetry, reading from his most recent collection *Even the Java Sparrows Call Your Hair* (Quale Press, 2004).

Mary Ann Cain's read from her most recent prose which has appeared or is forthcoming in journals such as *North American Review*, *First Intensity*, *Many Mountains Moving*, *Under the Sun*, *Yfiel*, *Porcupine*, *The Sun*, *13th Moon*, *The Little Magazine*, *The Nebraska Review*, *Labyris*, *Flying Island*, and *Artful Dodge*, among others. The reading was followed by a question-and-answer session, book signing, and reception.

The series continued with a multi-genre reading performed by Fiction writer and first-generation American of Colombian and Puerto Rican descent, Sandy Florian, Poet and Fiction writer Michael Friedman, and Poet Julie Doxsee. Sandy Florian's first book, *Telescope*, is published by Action Books, and her first chapbook, an excerpt of a book-length manuscript called *32 Pedals and 47 Stops*, is forthcoming with Tarpaulin Sky Press. Michael Friedman is the author of *Species* (The Figures, 2000), which holds poems included in the anthology *Great American Prose Poems: From Poe to the Present* (Scribner, 2003). Julie Doxsee is the author of a chapbook, *The Knife-Grasses*, published by Octopus Books. Each read from their latest work followed by reception and book signing.

The series also hosted Fiction writer Charles Baxter on February 22 in the Griffin Concert Hall located in the University Center for the Arts at 1400 Remington St. where he read from his work, *Saul and Patsy & The Feast of Love*, as part of the Trimble Lecture Series. There was a book signing and reception to follow.

The series continued on March 8 with MFA candidates Laura Van Etten, Shiela Bushanam, and Mia Heavener who gave a reading of their work. This reading was a huge success.

The series continued on March 12 with poets Craig Arnold and Roddy Lumsden. Craig Arnold's first book of poems, *Shells* (1999), was selected by W.S. Merwin for the Yale Series of Younger Poets. Roddy Lumsden has published several collections of poetry, including his first book *Yeah Yeah Yeah*, his second *The Book of Love* (published in 2000), and his third *Roddy Lumsden is Dead* (2001). Each read from their most recent collection followed by a book signing and reception.

The series continued on March 19 with poets Laynie Brown, Brian Henry, and Andrew Joron. Laynie Brown's most recent books are *Acts of Levitation*, a novel, *from Spuytenduyvil* (2002) and *Pollen Memory from Tender Buttons* (2003). Brian Henry has published three books of poetry—*Astronaut* (2000), *American Incident* (2002), and *Graft* (2003). His fourth book, *Quarantine*, won the 2003 Alice Fay di Castagnola Award from the Poetry Society of America and was published by Ahsakta Press in 2006. Andrew Joron is the author of *The Cry at Zero: Selected Prose* (Counterpath Press, 2007). They each gave a fine reading of their work at the CSU Bookstore followed by a book signing and reception.

The series also hosted poet Jaswinder Bolina, winner of the 2006 Colorado Prize for Poetry on March 22. This reading's featured sponsor was the Center for Literary Publishing, publisher of Jaswinder Bolina's book *carrier wave*. Bolina read from his award-winning collection as well as forthcoming work. He also signed copies of his collection for audience members. More information on Jaswinder Bolina and the Colorado Prize for Poetry is available on the CLP website

(<http://coloradoreview.colostate.edu/>).

The reading series continued on April 5 with MFA Candidates Tom Conway, Aby Kaupang, and Molly Reid. Their reading was a stunning performance.

The series concluded for the year on April 26 with Alexandra Fuller's debut book *Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight*, a memoir of when she lived with her family on a farm in Rhodesia, later called Zimbabwe. This reading was largely successful in the Hatton Gallery, and was followed by a book signing and reception.

Video-taped performances of our visiting writers and MFA candidates are now available on our website and can be downloaded for viewing (<http://www.colostate.edu/Depts/English/programs/readings.html>).

Sponsors for the Reading Series include the Department of English at CSU, the Creative Writing Program, the Organization of Graduate Student Writers through ASCSU, the Center for Literary Publishing, Hilton Hotels, the Crow/Tremblay Alumni Reader Fund, KUNC radio, and KRFC 88.9 FM Homegrown Radio. All readings are free and open to the public. For additional information about any Reading Series events, please call Tricia Lincoln at (970) 491-6218 or Patricia.Lincoln@colostate.edu.

[Download](#) our reading series information or [Log on](#) for more information about our upcoming readings...

READING SERIES CALL FOR DONATIONS

The Reading Series continues to be a great success with the help of our generous sponsors. In order to maintain our vigorous efforts that broaden the scope of our literary community to include these nationally and internationally renowned writers, the Reading Series needs your help. Consider becoming a Reading Series sponsor by donating to the CSU foundation and earmarking your funds for the Visiting Writers Reading Series. All donations are tax deductible and the smallest donation can help expand the scope of the Reading Series. Donate now at <https://advancing.colostate.edu/CLA/GIVE> Click on "Gift Information" and then designate gift to English.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Aaron Abeyta (Poetry, Summer, 1997) will have his novel, *Rise, Do Not Be Afraid*, published soon by Ghost Road Press.

Christopher Arigo's (Poetry, 2000) second collection of poetry, *In the archives*, will be published by Omnidawn Press in February 2007. Look for him at its AWP release—there will be a book signing and a reception/reading. He is finishing his second year of a PhD program at UNLV as a Schaeffer Poetry Fellow.

Sophie Moore Beck (Fiction, 2001) just moved to San Francisco. Her daughter Gillian was born in March of 2006. Her creative nonfiction recently appeared in *Kitchen Sink* and *Post Road*, and is forthcoming in *River Teeth* and *Fourth Genre*.

Matthew Cooperman's new book, *DaZE*, appeared from Salt Publishing in 2006. He's been reading in places various around the country. Over the 2006/7 school year he published poems in *Counterpath*, *Conduit*, *Pool*, *Green Mountains Review*, *Diagram*, *Shiny*, *Caketrain* and *New American Writing*, and interviews (w/Anne Waldman, w/Rosmarie Waldrop) in *Denver Quarterly* and *Web Conjunctions* (w/Rosmarie Waldrop). His poem "Apropos," which first appeared in *Green Mountains Review*, has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. A new chapbook, *Still: (to be) Perpetual*, will be published (dove / tail poetry, SUNY Buffalo) in 2007.

Judy Doenges is the author of a novel, *The Most Beautiful Girl in the World*, and a short fiction collection, *What She Left Me*, which was a New York Times Notable Book. She has won a Bakeless Fiction Prize, a Ferro-Grumley Award, a Washington State Governor's Writers Award, and an NEA fellowship.

Bonnie Emerick (Poetry, 2005) had two poems published in *Interim*, and the following poems are forthcoming in these magazines: "inward to blackout" will appear in *Diner*; "An S Alphabet" will appear in the *Tiny*, and "The Story of Any Hunter" is forthcoming in *Quarter After Eight*. She lives in Brooklyn, New York, and teaches at York College and LIM College.

Judea Franck (Fiction, 2005) has an essay "Dancing in America" forthcoming in *Lilith*.

Chris Hoerter (1994) recently accepted a job as a copy editor in the Worldwide Marketing Division at SAS Institute Inc. in Cary, NC.

Lisa Isaacson (Poetry) is the assistant professor of English Language and Literature at Zayed University in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, where she has lived for the past five years with her husband and two daughters. She teaches creative writing and elective literature courses on occasion and directs the first semester composition program all the time. She has poems now in *The Bedazzler*, an online journal published by editors of *Wave Books*. Her poems have also been published somewhat recently in *New American Writing*, *American Letters & Commentary*, *Denver Quarterly* and *Colorado Review*.

Jacqueline Lyons' (Poetry, 1999) essays "A Sort of a Map" appeared in *AGNI on-line* (2006) and "World Enough and Time" in the 2006 issue of *Interim*. She has two poems forthcoming in the summer issue of *Colorado Review*, and her poetry also appears in the new anthology *Oh One Arrow* from Flim Forum Press (2007). She is currently an Assistant Professor-in-Residence in the English department at the University of Las Vegas, Nevada.

Jack Martin (Poetry) had poems published in these journals: *Atlanta Review*, *Cimarron Review*, *Colorado Review*, *Georgia Review*, *Gulf Coast*, *Matter*, *Mid-American Review*, and *Willow Springs*. He will have poems forthcoming in *The Journal* and *Rhino*.

Todd Mitchell's (Fiction, 2002) first novel, *The Traitor King*, was released by Scholastic Press on April 1. He was also invited to present two sessions at this spring's Rocky Mountain Society for Children's Books Authors and Illustrators Conference in Denver. The first session was on the first book publishing process, and the second was on revision.

Sandra Meek (Poetry, 1989) is the co-founder of *Ninebark*, a new literary press that just released *Deep Travel: Contemporary American Poets Abroad*, an anthology she edited. In addition, her poem "Road Scatter" was featured on today's Poetry Daily; poems have also recently appeared in or have been recently accepted by *The Southern Review*, *The Kenyon Review*, *Mid-American Review*, *Third Coast*, *Green Mountains Review*, *American Letters & Commentary*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Denver Quarterly*, and *Web Conjunctions*. Her poem "Chronographia" was a finalist for the 2007 Third Coast Poetry Award; her current book manuscript, *Biogeography*, has been a finalist for several publishing contests this past year, including the *University of Wisconsin*, *Tupelo Press*, and others. She was also awarded the 2006 Georgia Author of the Year in Poetry (a second time) for her second book of poems, *Burn*, and she is serving as Co-Director of the 2007 Southern Women Writers Conference.

Samantha Prust (Fiction, 1999) is an editor and writer with Cottonwood Press. Her books are intended for innovative K-12 teachers. Recently, Samantha published her first book with the press: *A Sentence a Day, Short, playful proofreading exercises to help students avoid tripping up when they write.

Wendy Rawlings (Fiction, 1992) is the Director of the Creative Writing Program at the University of Alabama. His essay, "Spectacular Mistakes," is forthcoming in *AGNI*.

Michael Shay (Fiction, 1992) had his book of short stories, "The Weight of a Body," released from *Ghost Road Press* in Denver.

Sasha Steensen attended The Association of Writers & Writing Programs Annual Conference, where she will give two readings and participate in a pedagogy forum. Her paper, "Reading to Write: Pound's ABC of Reading in the Undergraduate Workshop." and was selected to be published online in The Best of the AWP Pedagogy Papers 2007. She will also have two poems, "The Stranger at the Gates" and "I hear America Swimming," published in *Not for Mothers Only: On Child-Getting and Child-Rearing*. The anthology, which will be published by Fence Books.

Bill Tremblay had an essay he wrote about searching for the Sublime on the Poudre River anthologized in *The Pulse of The River*, ed. Laura Pritchett.

Mark Tursi (Poetry) has a chapbook, *Shiftless Days*, being released by Noemi Press; a book of poems by BlazeVOX Books; and, started a small press (Apostrophe Books) and released their first book, *Tonight's the Night by Catherine Meng* at AWP in February.

Thom Ward's (Poetry, 1991/1992) fifth collection of poems, *The Matter of the Casket*, will be published in May, 2007 by CustomWords Press of Cincinnati.

Jenny Wortman (Fiction, 2002) had her story "A Whole New Monkey" published in the *Sun*.

CLOSING

We hope this newsletter will help alumni of our writing program (now over twenty years old) keep in touch with one another, renew old connections, and provide networking to further your writing career. If you have any announcements, accomplishments, or news items you would like included in the newsletter—such as publications, jobs, marriages, births, awards, fellowships, residencies, or just updates on your life since graduate school—please send an e-mail to Jeana.Burton@colostate.edu with that information. We thank you for helping us extend the boundaries of our writing community.