

MFA AT EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Creative Writing Program

Newsletter - March - 2019



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Get Lit! News

March Fundraising Event



We are so excited to announce that Get Lit! Programs and Spark Central will be hosting a free reading on March 22nd with poets Erika Meitner, Geoffrey Davis, and Keetje Kuipers. The following morning, all three poets will lead a two-hour ticketed craft class. Proceeds will be split between Get Lit! and Spark Central, enabling them to put on the week-long Get Lit! Festival in April and continue providing support to those interested in the arts and education.

All three poets have solidified themselves as talented truth-tellers and masters of the poetic form. **Erika Meitner** is the author of five collections of poetry and the recipient of numerous awards and honors including the Fullbright Scholarship for Poetry, and her most recent collection *Holy Moly Carry Me* is a finalist for the National Book Critics Award and won the National Jewish Book Award. She is well-known for her autobiographical poetry that explores her experience as a first-generation American and the child of a refugee. **Geoffrey Davis** won the James A. Laughlin Award for his forthcoming book of poetry, *Night Angler*, and his 2014 collection *Revising the Storm* received the 2013 A. Poulin, Jr. Poetry along with many other honors—including a 2019 NEA Literature Fellowship. **Keetje Kuipers**, known for crafting lines that devastate with their angst and passion, is a recipient of the Pushcart Prize and has received numerous awards for her collections including *Beautiful in the Mouth* in 2010, *The Keys to the Jail* in 2014, and her upcoming book *All its Charms* due out this April. We are so lucky to have these three writers participate in this event, and they are sure to make it one you won't want to miss.

The free reading is March 22nd at 7:30 pm at Spark Central. The craft class is the 23rd at 10 am. Tickets for the class on the 23rd are \$30 or \$20 for students.

See the craft class description on page 2.



Get Lit! Craft Workshop Fundraiser Description:

“Reinventing the Poem of the American Family.”

We all know that families can be messy. But while poets have long put words to the page in an attempt to explore those complications, we have sometimes been more reluctant to set fire to the traditional models of parental devotion or childhood trauma that writers often make use of when engaging with the topic. How do we breath new life into such old stories? Whether caring for elderly parents or raising adopted children, these narratives remain utterly familiar while their settings, voices, and structures have never been so varied or new. In this craft class, we'll take dynamite to the traditional models of how we write about family, employing such techniques as irreverence and mysticism as we attempt to not only explore but also explode our notions of how to write a poem about family. You'll walk away with several new drafts of poems, as well as exercises that can be used again and again in order to re-engage your own writing about family.

**The craft class is March 23rd at 10 am.
Tickets are \$30 or \$20 for students.**



Kudos & Cheers

Amy (McCann) Munson

Congratulations Amy, Class of 2004! Amy received an NEA Fellowship for \$25,000, which will enable her to complete her second collection, *Infancy Gospel*. After graduation, Amy moved back to the Midwest where she's originally from and taught at the University of Northwestern - St. Paul for twelve years. She published her first collection of poetry, *Yes Thorn* (Tupelo Press), in 2016. It was a finalist for the Minnesota Book Award in Poetry. Her work has also received grants and support from the McKnight Foundation and the Minnesota State Arts Board. Amy lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota, with her family--her husband Scott, and their two kids, William (3) and Louisa (1).

Ashley Wurzbacher

Congratulations Ashley, class of 2010! Ashley's debut short story collection, *Happy Like This*, won Iowa's John Simmons Short Fiction Award, chosen by Carmen Maria Machado. The collection is forthcoming this October from the University of Iowa Press. The stories explore women's relationships with their bodies and with one another, and the many diverse ways that contemporary women pursue happiness. Individual stories in the collection are forthcoming in the Colorado Review, The Kenyon Review, and Michigan Quarterly Review. ashleywurzbacher.com

Polly Buckingham

Congratulations Polly, EWU Professor of creative writing and Editor of Willow Springs Magazine! Polly has a story, *Gathering the Dead*, coming out in Alaska Quarterly Review, and two poems, *Hymn* and *March First* coming out in Confrontation.

Lauren Hohle

Congratulations Lauren, Class of 2017! Lauren will be the new managing editor of the Gettysburg Review. She and Matt Greene will be moving soon to Gettysburg, PA.

Lareign Ward

Congratulations Lareign, Class of 2015! Lareign had a personal essay, *How Romance Novels Could Save Straight Sex*, appear recently in Electric Literature.

Jennifer Pullen

Congratulations Jennifer, Class of 2012! Jennifer's short story, *The Way to the Tower* is out in F(r)iction #12.

Brandon Getz

Congratulations Brandon, Class of 2010! Brandon's story, *Our Hero*, is in the recent Flapperhouse issue XX & his first novel, *Lars Breaxface, Werewolf in Space* is coming out this fall in SpaceBoy Books.

Tom C. Hunley

Congratulations Tom, Class of 1996! Tom recently had a poem in Michigan Quarterly Review and has others forthcoming in Crazyhorse and Chiron Review.

Thomas E. Caraway

Congratulations Thomas, Class of 2004! Thomas' book *What the Sky Lacks* has been released by Korrektiv Press. He's having a launch reading on Monday, March 11, 7 p.m. at the Bartlett. The collection of poems was edited by another MFA alum, Jeffrey Dodd.



More Kudos On Page 3

Cheers Kudos & Events

Caylie Hermann

Congratulations Caylie Class of 2010! Caylie's poems, *Ouroboros* [], *ovoviviparity*, and *Invocation with God Complex*, are going to be in *After the Pause* this month.

Matt Greene

Congratulations Matt, Class of 2018! Matt's essay, *With spring training underway, one Seattle fan reflects on a season lost before it even starts*, was in the February 21st Issue of the *Inlander*. He also has work forthcoming in *Moss* and *Santa Monica Review*.

Kathryn Smith

Congratulations Kathryn, Class of 2004! Kathryn won the 2018 Open Country Press Chapbook Contest for her manuscript *Chosen Companions of the Goblin*. The chapbook will be published later this year. She has poems forthcoming in *Construction Magazine* and *Sugar House Review*.

Elin Hawkinson

Congratulations Elin, Class of 2016! Elin's short story, *Natural Order*, is coming out in *Tin House Flash Fridays* in March.

Kerry Rutherford

Congratulations Kerry, Class of 2019! Kerry will be reading one poem per day starting Monday, March 11th, on KPBX 91.1 FM at 9:00 a.m. for the Poetry Moment. They will also be posted online here:

<http://www.spokanepublicradio.org/programs/poetry-moment>

Remember to send an email with any information about awards, publications or events for the April newsletter to: kerryrutherford6@gmail.com



Aunties Events

Wednesday Mar. 6 - 7:00 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.

YA Survival Guide: Featuring Mary Cronk Farrell

Thursday Mar. 14- 7:00 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.

Amy Dresner: *My Fair Junkie*

Saturday Mar. 16 - 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Delia Owens: *Where the Crawdads Sing*
[Ticketed Event at Downtown Library]

Currently SOLD OUT

Thursday Mar. 21 - 7:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.

Donell Barlow: *Medicine Tracks*

Saturday Mar. 23 - 7:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.

Katrina Carrasco: *The Best Bad Things*

Wednesday Mar. 27 - 7:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.

Stephanie Land: *Maid*

Friday Mar. 29- 7:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.

Stevan Allred: *The Alehouse at the End of the World*



Letter from the Editor

Dear MFA People!

You may or may not be familiar with the law of the universe that says mistakes lead to great things. Or--There is no such thing as a mistake, especially when it's mine! Fortunately a mistake I made in last month's newsletter resulted in a great new essay on page 6: *A Short History of Brents*, by Brett Ortler. In one of last month's Kudos, I misspelled Brett's first name and called him Brent. My excuse was a 70-year-old addled brain and a tiny font. Anyway, when I saw a comment Brett made on Facebook about it I was horrified and ashamed (well not really) so I apologized and during the back and forth exchange I learned he was writing a humorous piece about people calling him Brent, so of course I wanted it. Anyway, the *Voices from Beyond the MFA* column this month now features the real Brett!

So many folks are doing amazing things that our Kudos takes up a full page and a half this month!

Check out the ad, below, for Newsletter Editor. Contact me with any questions.

See you on the second floor!

Kerry

EWU MFA Newsletter Editor Wanted

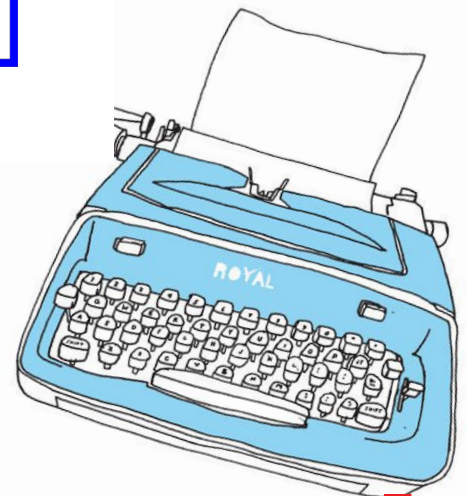
Exciting opportunity to write and edit the monthly MFA Newsletter !
Open to any first year MFA student with a burning desire to have a cross-program involvement with all aspects of our MFA world.

Perks: Communicate, write original copy, inform fellow students, create new features, and get to know everyone in the program.
Plus it looks good on a resume to say: Editor, MFA Newsletter, EWU!

Skills needed: Writing, editing, organization, time management, communication, Internet savvy, desktop publishing

Newsletter is built using InDesign but previous knowledge is not mandatory. Any familiarity with Publisher, or other desktop publishing programs is helpful.

Apply in February, Train in March, Take over in April, 2019.
Need more information or have questions, contact the current editor:
Kerry Rutherford: kerryrutherford6@gmail.com



Voices from Beyond the MFA

A Guest Column from EWU MFA Program Graduate Brett Ortler

A Short History of Brents

One of my first memories was being called Bread. I was four, at an in-home daycare in Circle Pines, Minnesota. I was seated at a tiny table with three of my toddling compatriots, and we were having breakfast. It must have been toast, because the girl across from me said Bread, and I was instantly confused. I was eating bread, and I thought she wanted mine. I noticed she had her own, and I told her so. Then she said Bread again, pointed at the bread, and at me, and laughed. This was the beginning.

Later, in elementary school, I encountered my first Brent. When I first heard his name, I assumed we shared a designation, and I said, “Your name is Brett too!” imagining we’d be friends forever. That misconception was cleared up quickly by a scoff and a dismissive remark about Bretts, followed by laughter.

When I was six, I played my first game of Monopoly. Until that point, I didn’t have any sense of shame about my first and last initials—B.O.—so when I landed on B&O Railroad, I felt nothing but joy. I immediately bought it and said, “Awesome, it’s Brett Ortler railroad!” The kid across from me guffawed and said, “Yeah, Body Odor!” Since then, when using my initials, I’ve always added in the first letter of my middle name.

According to the Social Security Administration, Brett was the 77th-most popular moniker in the 1980s, but I didn’t know another kid with my name until the fourth or fifth grade. But there was a vital difference. His name was spelled wrong. He was named Bret. There was another problem. By seventh grade, he was already six feet tall, a height I can attain, even now, only after scrambling up a substantial ladder. I was dubbed Little Brett. The world seemed to emphasize this point during a baseball game—we were on the same team—in which a pop-up was hit into the frontier between the edge of the infield dirt and right field proper. It was the championship. I scrambled after the ball, but Bret galloped there more quickly, despite being much farther away, and there was a collision. Big Bret was fine. I wasn’t. The last thing I remember seeing was Big Bret’s knee at eye-level, then I was dreaming that I was home after the game. When I came to, I was surrounded, and my first words, post-concussion, were “Did we win?” The collision had allowed several runs to score, and someone sighed and said, “The game is still going.” We lost.

Only once I traveled abroad did I learn the truth. It took the better part of two summers working at a pharmacy for me to save up enough money to afford the trip, but almost every time I introduced myself, the bemused responses from the Germans gave me an inkling that my name was not what I thought it was. I was a premature baby—three months early in the early ‘80s—so my name was something of an afterthought. My mother said they didn’t have time get past the Bs in the baby book, which said Brett meant “strong.” Once I got to Germany, I learned that was literally true. In German, “Brett” means a board, or a plank. Soon, I couldn’t escape hearing or encountering all of the variations: chopping block (das Hackbrett), the springboard (das Sprungbrett), even idiomatic uses like “to be a blockhead” (ein Brett vor dem Kopf haben). When I stepped off the plane in Frankfurt, I was a young man. When I spoke to my first German, I became a piece of wood.

Brett Ortler, Class of 2007, is an editor in Minnesota.

Lessons of the Dead, Fomite Press 2019, is his first Collection of poetry.



WRITERS IN THE COMMUNITY
PRESENTS:

2019 COVER DESIGN CONTEST

InRoads 22

DETAILS:

- Image must be 9x6"
- Designs can be paintings, drawings, photography, collages, or graphic design
- Artist must sign release form for artwork
- Email questions/submissions to inroads22@gmail.com
- Hard-copy submissions can be turned into a WITC intern, or mailed to:

Writers in the Community
Eastern Washington University
668 N Riverpoint Blvd. 2 RPT - #259
Spokane, WA 99202-1677

**Cover Art Submission
Deadline:**

March 23, 2019

Winner receives an invite to the anthology release party, a copy of the anthology, and their artwork on the cover. Five runner-ups will get their artwork published & an invite to the release party.



Opportunities for Submission

Belmont Story Review

Deadline: March 15

Belmont Story Review seeks to publish new and established writers passionate about their craft, fearlessly encountering difficult ideas, seeking to explore human experience in all its broken blessedness. We feature works of fiction, creative nonfiction, and poetry.

Complete guidelines at: <https://belmontstoryreview.wixsite.com/website/submissions>

Brevity

Fee: \$3 via Submittable

Brevity publishes well-known and emerging writers working in the extremely brief (750 words or less) essay form.

Authors are paid a \$45 honorarium for featured essays.

Guidelines available at: <https://brevitymag.com/submissions/>

The Lascaux Review

Submissions are read year round. Fee: There is no submission fee, but for a \$3 donation you may download the four Lascaux Prize Anthologies to date.

The Lascaux Review accepts fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction of literary quality.

Complete Guidelines at: <http://lascauxreview.com/submissions/>

Prairie Schooner

Deadline: May 1, 2019 Fee: none

Prairie Schooner's intention is to publish the best writing available, both from beginning and established writers.

We publish short stories, poems, interviews, imaginative essays of general interest, and reviews of current books of poetry and fiction.

Guidelines at: <http://prairieschooner.unl.edu/submit.html>

Three Penny Review

Deadline: none Fee: none submit via their online portal

"The Threepenny Review is one of the most original literary magazines not only in the U.S. but also on the entire planet (as far as my experience allows me such a judgment). Why? Because it stands outside the fads of the day; it's not driven by any intellectual group or fashion. What it does is give the readers the taste of many individual writers' voices."—Adam Zagajewski.

Submission guidelines: <https://www.threepennyreview.com/submissions.html>

