

MFA AT EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Creative Writing Program

Newsletter...October...2018.....



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Visiting Writers Series

Visiting Writers Series Welcomes Steve Almond & Mary Norris



Steve Almond is the author of nine books of fiction and nonfiction, including the New York Times bestsellers *Candyfreak* and *Against Football*. His new book, *Bad Stories*, is an effort to make sense of our historical moment. Using literature as a lens, *Bad Stories* explores entertainment, sports, and political parody, the degeneration of our free press into a for-profit industry, and our enduring pathologies of race, class, immigration, and tribalism. Critics are calling it “the feel bad read of the season!”

Reading, Saturday, October 6th, at 7:30 PM
Spark Central
1214 W. Summit Parkway

“I started reading your book hours ago and I couldn’t stop until I finished and now it’s 1:30am (dammit!). IT IS SO FUCKING GOOD.”
— Cheryl Strayed, author of *Wild*

Mary Norris began working at *The New Yorker* in 1978 and was a query proofreader at the magazine for twenty-four years. She has written for *The Talk of the Town* and for *newyorker.com*, on topics ranging from her cousin, Dennis Kucinich, to mud wrestling in Rockaway. She is best known for her pieces on pencils and punctuation. Her book, *Between You and Me: Confessions of a Comma Queen* (Norton), is available in paperback.

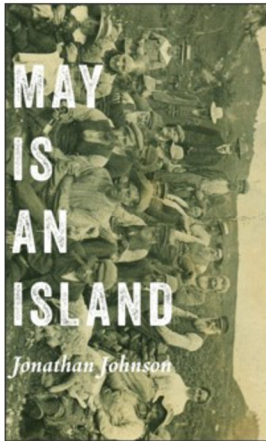
Reading, Friday, Oct. 26th, at 7:30 PM
Spark Central
1214 W. Summit Parkway

“Mary Norris is the verbal diagnostician I would turn to for a first, second, or third opinion on just about anything.”

~John McPhee, in *The New Yorker*



Jonathan Johnson's Poetry Book Release Event
May is an Island
October 27th, 7:30 pm, Spokane Public Library, downtown



Everyone is invited to the reading in celebration of the release of Jonathan Johnson's new book of poems:

May Is an Island

From mournful solitude and wanderings as far as Paris, Greece and Spain, these poems return again and again to Johnson's familiar Scottish coasts, Highlands, and relations; to fatherhood and romantic love; to sensory wonder and the reverence of moments; and now and then to outright grace.

. Dorianne Laux says, "May is an Island should be a guidebook for the living."

The cover of *May is an Island* is a family photo of the MacLure family in the Scottish highlands during sheep-sheering season, Jonathan's great-great-great grandfather is in the middle (lower). He emigrated from Scotland to Vancouver BC shortly after that photo was taken, ran a taxi company there and later moved from BC to California. Jonathan's Mother was a MacLure. The MacLures have been in Glenelg since the 13th century. Glenelg is a town in western Scotland where mountains meet the sea.

Originally, Jonathan went to Glenelg to look for the grave of his great-great grandparents but within two hours he was in a farm kitchen with about a dozen cousins and in-laws he'd never before met or even known about. They speak Gaelic, a Goidelic language brought from Ireland in the 5th and 6th centuries AD and spoken mainly in the highlands and islands of western Scotland. From 2008 to 2009 Jonathan and his wife and daughter spent a full year in Scotland and since then Jonathan goes back for one week each summer to help his relatives shear sheep during the day, and then he retreats to his cousin's Shepard's cottage with no electricity, to write each night.

Jonathan's mother died in 2004, and his grandfather passed that same year in Idaho. Many poems in *May is an Island* are about Scotland, but also other places, and they addresses themes such as grief and loss, finding family, losing family, and learning to live in the moment.

The recovery and discovery of the poet's home place and original people informs these well-wrought poems. Fellow pilgrims will find in Johnson's explorations worthy guidance for their own journeys.

~Thomas Lynch, 2017 Pulitzer Prize in Poetry Judge



Alone and with Others

The forest began outside at the edge of a small, close field and went, I thought, forever. Like those voices in the room around me would, for all I knew. I know better now, of course, here, on the far side of a day gone past dusk in the Scottish Highlands, with family I had yet to find. My cousin Campbell's about the age I was then. He and I take turns running the bale wrapper while his dad backs and swings the tractor's headlights to load each fresh one. Pull this lever and the bale spins, round into the black wrap like a dying star. Cut it with the razor knife and tuck the end in tight. Pull that lever to dump, leaving the smell of hay and emptiness on the turntable, ready for the next. The boy and I take turns, three bales each. His go is long enough for me to leave the diesel growl and gear whir and walk the narrow road alongside the stone wall with the moon rising over ridgeline and turn at the gate and cross the fresh-cut field that's the floor of this deep glen to where the moon sinks away and the voices of the machines are small and far. How can one life be one life? Where is then? When I turn and walk back, I make the moon rise again.

Jonathan Johnson's previous works include the poetry books *Mastodon*, *80% Complete* and *In the Land We Imagined Ourselves*; the memoir *Hannah and the Mountain*, and the play *Ode* about John Keats and Fanny Brawne. His poems have been published widely in magazines, anthologized in Best American Poetry, and read on National Public Radio. He is a professor in the Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing program at Eastern Washington University.



Cheers Kudos & Events

Published!! Maura Lammers

Congratulations Maura! Maura's essay, *Love Will Keep Us Together*, was selected to be published in the *New York Times* Modern Love column!

Check it out here:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/21/style/modern-love-pudge-will-keep-us-together.html>

Clare Wilson

Congratulations Clare! Clare's short story, *Argos*, has been published in *New Limestone Review*. You can read it here:

<http://newlimestonereview.as.uky.edu/2018/07/01/argos/>

Lea Vander Molen

Terrain 11. October 5th, Friday, starting at 5:00.

Jensen-Byrd Building, 131 E. Main Ave.

Our very own Leona Vander Molen will be reading that evening.

Awards!! Get Lit! Wins Award

Kate Peterson, executive director for Get Lit! Programs, announced that the organization is one of this year's recipients of the Governor's Arts & Heritage Awards being presented in November in Bremerton.

Check out the article in the Inlander:

<https://www.inlander.com/spokane/get-lit-wins-washington-state-governors-arts-award/Content?oid=13044600>



Aunties Events

Thursday Oct. 4 - 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Elliot Reed: *A Key to Treehouse Living* joined by Alexis Smith

Friday Oct. 5 - 8:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Spokane's favorite First Friday open mic. This is a free speech, uncensored event

Saturday Oct. 6 - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Signing, Jack Castle: *Stranger Tides*

Saturday Oct. 6 - 7:00-8:30

Terry Brooks: *Street Freaks*

Friday Oct. 12 - 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Ransom Riggs: *A Map of Days* [TICKETED EVENT] Downtown Spokane Public Library

Saturday Oct. 20 - 7:00-8:30

Ben Goldfarb: *Eager : The Surprising Secret Life of Beavers and Why They Matter*

Wednesday Oct. 24 - 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Claire Rudolf Murphy: *Martin and Bobby: A Journey Toward Justice*



Letter from the Editor

Dear MFA People!

Starting to get the hang of being in class again, two weeks in, and I'm likin' it! One thing I am looking forward to is that October is a packed month for literary events. Check out page one for information about our Visiting Writers Series events: Steve Almond on Saturday, October 6th, and Mary Norris on Friday, October 26th, both at Spark Central. Also our own Johnathan Johnson will be reading from his newly published book of poetry, *May is an Island*, on Saturday, October 27th at the downtown Library. Instead of our local VoiceOver, October will see the joint MFA student reading in Moscow Idaho on the 13th. If you want to go, or carpool, contact Pam for details.

For new students, in case you don't know, the computer lab on the second floor is open many days and evenings and the added bonus is that all students get \$9.00 in free printing. Save yourself paper and ink by coming in to the lab. All you need is your EWU student ID card and your EWU login. At 5 cents a page, that's 180 pages each quarter! Just remember if you don't use it, you lose it. They also have paper cutters and staplers, etc. for your use. If there are any problems, the main desk is always manned by a student who can help.

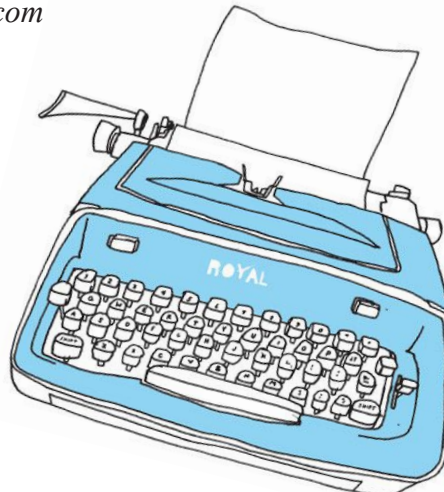
Still Looking for first year MFA students to send in any questions they have and we can get a savvy second year student to answer, thus starting up our Dear Second Year column. Email your questions to me at the email address, below.

See you on the second floor!

Kerry

Kerry Rutherford

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



Opportunities for Submission

True Story

Deadline: None **Fee: free via snail mail, \$3 uploaded via submittable**

True Story, a monthly mini-magazine from the editors of Creative Nonfiction seeks unpublished works of longform narrative nonfiction between 5,000 and 10,000 words long, on any subject and in any style. Complete guidelines at: www.creativenonfiction.org/submissions

Fourth Genre: Explorations in Nonfiction

Deadline: November 30 **Fee: \$4 via submittable**

Accepting submissions for the open reading period: August 30 to November 30. Limit is 8,000 words. “We want an essay that make the common uncommon—that’s not about the thing that it’s actually about.” VERY detailed submission guidelines can be found at:

www.fourthgenre.msu.edu

AMP Hofstra

Deadline: December 1st

Accepting poetry, short prose, innovative text, cross-genre multimedia, video poems, and literary videos, for issue 4 of Hofstra University’s digi-lit magazine. Send us your beautiful, your strange, your well-crafted and heartfelt best!

Submittable guidelines available at:

amp.hofstradrc.org

Hunger Mountain

Deadline: October 15 **Fee: \$3**

We are an annual print journal of the arts, housed at Vermont College of Fine Arts. We publish fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, visual art, young adult and children’s writing, and literary miscellany. Our print issue comes out annually in the spring. Guidelines:

hungermtn.org/submit

Ellipsis

Deadline, October 31st **Fee: none**

Ellipsis, an annual literary magazine edited by students at Westminster college in Salt Lake City, has published poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and art since 1965.

Information and guidelines:

www.westminstercollege.edu/ellipsis

