Carl Philips: 53rd Wallace Stevens Poetry Program

Carl Phillips read his poetry on Tuesday, March 22nd, at the Konover Auditorium of the Dodd Center as part of the 53rd Annual Wallace Stevens Poetry Program.

Referred to as “one of America’s most original, influential, and productive of lyric poets,” Phillips is the author of a dozen books of poetry (including his debut collection, In the Blood, which won the Samuel French Morse Poetry Prize in 1992) and two books of criticism. Phillips’ more recent books of poetry include Silverchest (2013, nominated for the Griffin Prize), Double Shadow (2011, winner of the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Poetry and finalist for the National Book Award), and Speak Low (2009, finalist for the National Book Award). His most recent collection, Reconnaissance, was published in September, 2015. Phillips is Professor of English at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, where he teaches creative writing. He was elected a chancellor of the Academy of American Poets in 2006, and since 2011 he has served as the judge for the Yale Series of Younger Poets.

To open the evening, winners of the Wallace Stevens poetry contest—Eleanor Reeds, Emily Kraus, and Erick Piller, along with the Early College Experience (ECE) Wallace Stevens Poetry Prize high school winner, Joyce Hida—read selections of their work. These readings were followed by Ph.D. student Kerry Carnahan’s introduction of Phillips.

Phillips’ poems talked a great deal about confusion surrounding love and heartbreak. In his poem “So the Mind Like a Gate Swings Open,” Phillips read, “I know longing is a lot like despair. Both can equal everything you’ve ever hoped for, if that’s how you want it.”

Phillips paused between poems to provide context and commonly made lighthearted comments that revealed his somewhat dry, yet refreshing sense of humor. After he read the last line of his poem “Surrounded as We Are, Unlit, Unshadowed”—“Why do we love, at all?”—he stated, “The answer to that question is because it’s rewarding and fun. But at the time it seemed a significant question.”

Phillips joins a long line of Wallace Stevens Poetry Program poets that includes Susan Stewart, Paul Muldoon, Susan Howe, Kay Ryan, August Kleinzahler, Charles Simic, and Heather McHugh. On March 23rd, he gave a reading at this year’s partner high school, the Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts.

—Jamol Lettman, Creative Writing Program Intern
Poet Bruce Cohen Kicks Off 2015-2016 Reading Series

UConn's Creative Writing Program kicked off the Fall 2015 semester with its first reading from UConn's Instructor in Residence Bruce Cohen. On September 30th, Bruce Cohen read selected poems from his newest publication, \textit{No Soap, Radio!} Cohen was greeted by an audience overflowing with admirers, many of whom were past and present students.

Cohen, author of three volumes of poetry including \textit{Swerve} (2010), \textit{Placebo Junkies Conspiring with the Half-Asleep} (2012), and \textit{Disloyal Yo-Yo} (2009), has received multiple awards and recognitions for his work. His writing has been featured in literary journals including \textit{Ploughshares}, \textit{The Harvard Review}, \textit{AGNI}, \textit{The Georgia Review}, \textit{Prairie Schooner}, \textit{The Southern Review}, \textit{The New Yorker}, and \textit{Poetry}.

The reading began with a sneak peek into Cohen's upcoming 2016 publication \textit{Imminent Disappearances, Impossible Numbers & Panoramic X-Rays}, from which he read three poems. He began the reading on a serious note with a poem titled "Bedtime Stories." The work delved into Cohen's past, touching on his relationship with his father and the conflict he faced with the possibility of being called to serve his country during the Vietnam War.

Cohen also read what he claimed was one of his only love poems: "The Unclaimed Third Pillow," dedicated to his wife, Leslie. Additionally, in another poem, he paid tribute to the incredible relationship he has with his students about a conversation Cohen once had with a class.

Most of the poems in the reading were from \textit{No Soap, Radio!} The writing from this volume was equally personal, shedding light on Cohen's family life through humor and autobiographical anecdotes.

What made Cohen's reading so unique was his willingness to outline the backstory of many of his poems, permitting a glimpse into his personal life. Quite critical of himself at times, the introductions and comments on his own poetry made each line, anecdote, and memory all the more accessible to his audience. \textit{No Soap, Radio!} allowed no boundaries between author and audience.

A quote from his reading of "The Outcome" defines Cohen's writing in a profound and unexpected manner: "It's rare for people / To have real conversations."

As a former student of Cohen's, I was honored to attend and cover the event. During our conversation, Cohen mentioned the stresses of his next publication. When I asked him if he still found himself excited and eager to see his name in writing, he answered with a shrug. "I'm not in it for that," he sighed. His writing is real, raw, and vulnerable, forcing both author and reader to face uncomfortable realities through his poetic medium.

—Carla Calandra, Creative Writing Program Intern
At Poetry Reading, Martha Collins Addresses Brutality of American Racism

The University of Connecticut gave warm welcome to award-winning poet Martha Collins for the second reading of the semester. Collins, an author and a translator, read from three of her collections: *Blue Front*, *Day unto Day*, and *White Papers*.

Collins began her reading with *Blue Front*, a work that explores the concepts of race and being white in a racist society. Her inspiration for this collection comes from a story that her father often told when she was a child. Her father spoke of a hanging that he witnessed as a young boy while selling fruit on the street corner in front of an old restaurant, called “Blue Front.” A small boy trapped within a tumultuous crowd, her father was making change for customers one day, when he witnessed a public hanging of a black man in the streets.

As an adult, Martha Collins and a friend visited an exhibit about lynching in New York. There Collins encountered disturbing pictures, stories, and postcards memorializing these horrific events. These postcards, she realized, were sold as souvenirs to onlookers. The exhibit brought her back to her father and the story he so often told when she finally realized that what her father had witnessed was a lynching.

Collins’ epiphany inspired the collection of poems so cleverly named after the restaurant in front of which her father’s story takes place. The collection moves between her father’s experience and the historical issues revolving around the incident.

She read a few poems from this collection, extending into a series of poems that take place throughout a month’s time. Her language, symbolic and profound, demonstrates the emotion and passion she has for the topic.

After the reading, Collins was asked what writing about her father and this lynching did for her, and whether or not she enjoyed it. Collins told me that she felt it was fulfilling, and that she just felt the story needed to be told.

She also attacks and untangles the social issues related to the lynching and racism in the city and in the United States. Later, she read a poem of which her father was the speaker: “May I help you make change? / Please, make change.” These last lines are incredibly profound; they connect her father, the society, and the symbolic position her father held in her life. Her work comes full circle.

*White Papers*, equally profound in content, revolves around a more personal concept for Collins. The theme is that of “race and whiteness from a different perspective.” Collins explores what it means to be white in a racist society. The work, she told the audience, is completely about where she lived in New England. Collins read two short yet incredibly moving pieces from *White Papers*.

The last third of the reading was devoted to her most recent publication, *Day unto Day*. For the work, she wrote seven lines per day for a month. She only wrote in this manner for one month a year, changing the months at random. Thrilled to finish her work, she announced that the entire twelve-part poem would conclude this year in November. *Day unto Day* features the first six months of
Danielle Chapman Reads for Creative Sustenance

Yale lecturer and renowned poet Danielle Chapman read for a crowd of students and admirers on Tuesday, October 27, 2015. Her first book, *Delinquent Palaces*, featured numerous poems from her past to those written in her adult life.

The reading was also a benefit for the Covenant Soup Kitchen, located in Willimantic, Connecticut. Thanks to the audience’s generosity, the benefit raised $450. Chapman thanked all of those who came not only to hear her work but to donate to the non-profit. She expressed her gratitude for being a part of the benefit for the evening.

Penelope Pelizzon, an English professor at the University of Connecticut, praised Chapman at the start of the reading. Professor Pelizzon touched on Chapman’s “unexpected language” in her poetry. Chapman later discussed this concept when she spoke about her writing methods: “getting the material to release the sound is key,” she told her eager audience. Pelizzon mentioned that she is using some of Chapman’s work in a few of her classes this semester, poems she described as “profoundly deep” and which her classes found “particularly moving.”

Chapman began her reading with a poem written by Russian poet Osip Mandelstam, widely known for his poem which ultimately poked fun at Joseph Stalin’s mustache. Alluding to his humor, Chapman told the audience that she hopes her poetry is a “mode to transform or transfigure suffering.”

Chapman read quite a few poems from the book, starting with one titled “Meet Me in Hollywood.” She followed with “Chicago Purgatorio,” which she prefaced with some background knowledge. Her theme for this work revolved around the idea that “when you go to purgatory, you’re actually getting somewhere.” The poem itself was about Chicago in the winter, where Chapman lived for some time.

She also read a work titled “Rituxan Spring.” Rituxan, she explained, is a chemotherapy agent—a “miracle drug” for cancer and other diseases, made in particularly unusual ways. The last line of this poem touches on this more literal component of the drug: “let me kiss the rodent who died for this.”

The audience was privileged to a more personal reading as well. Chapman read “I’d Rather Go with You,” which she wrote for her twin daughters.

Many of the poems in *Delinquent Palaces* are about her time in New York City. A few, which she read aloud, included “Lower East Side Inventory” and “Grand Street.”

Chapman revealed a bit of her poetic insight during the reading. She claimed that writing the long poem was very...
difficult for her. “I probably wrote it fifty times,” she laughed, until she finally found her “voice within the poem.”

One poem that stood out in particular, titled “Afterword,” is “apocalyptic” in its desire and desperation, to use Pelizzi’s word. The speaker of the poem assumes that she is falling in love with a stranger she sees. Through her erotic diction, Chapman creates a disembodied tone which parallels the speaker’s imagery of the end of everything. Rejected and alone, the speaker imagines a world where love may not exist. This poem seemed to capture the audience in its accessible emotion and original thought.

Chapman also read a poem titled “Epicurean,” in which she says Pelizzi “stars.” Their friendship was clear not only through Professor Pelizzi’s heartfelt introduction, but Chapman’s reading of this poem in particular. Chapman’s connection to the audience and the preface with which she read many of her poems brought the reading to another level.

The last poem Chapman read, titled “Believer,” is also the last in her book. Chapman explained that her goal in writing is not to point out the “bright side” or “silver lining” of a situation. She claimed that such clichés are useless, and that “sugar coating” issues doesn’t help anyone. Instead, she believes “it’s possible to see something else” even in the darkest of times.

—Carla Calandra, Creative Writing Program Intern

Aetna Writer-in-Residence

Laura van den Berg

Aetna Writer-in-Residence Laura van den Berg read for UConn students on Wednesday, November 4, 2015. Ellen Litman, Associate Director of the Creative Writing Program, introduced the Program’s fourth author to read this semester. Professor Litman praised van den Berg’s talent, creativity, and student instruction before handing the microphone over to van den Berg.

She began the reading with excerpts from her newest work, Find Me. van den Berg described the dystopian novel as one set in near-future America, where an epidemic is destroying people. The passage she chose to read was the narrator’s, Joy’s, backstory, presented early on in the work. Living in the Boston area, the anecdote Joy conveys revolves around a very bad, minimum-wage job where she works in the novel. The reading presented the narrator’s gray and gloomy spirit, strewn with weighty and thoughtful remarks. One quote that was particularly telling of the novel’s essence was Joy’s thought, “There is no enemy like time.”

Laura van den Berg also read from a new story called “The Dog.” The story revolves around a woman whose husband has left her to travel around the world. Depressed and upset, she claims her dog is dying, and seems to live solely for the dog’s survival. The work presented humor despite its dark imagery and aesthetic. van den Berg utilizes supermassive black holes, the infinite depths of the sea, time, and space, to express what incredible emotion the narrator is feeling. This work was equally as captivating as her first; her audience listened intently.

Both a writer and an educator, van den Berg spent much of her reading answering questions from her eager
audience. She reminisced about how and why she began writing. Unsure of what she wanted to do with her education, she found a fiction workshop in one course catalog and decided to take it. Such were the humble beginnings to what incredible stories she has since written. van den Berg recounted her attempts at poetry, before she finally realized that fiction was her true talent. She also delved into her editing process for the writers in the audience. She described her editing as a long process: “an excavation.” van den Berg stated that “revision is as much an act of discovery as it is in the drafting stage.” She claimed that her characters, hazy and vague at first, are often “filled in and discovered through revision.”

van den Berg advised students and writers to “push through” writer’s block and to “stay in the practice” of writing. She told her audience of writers and admirers that “nothing is permanent; the only way out is through.”

When asked about the emotion in her writing, van den Berg stated that “great writing depends on the measure of subjectivity.” She told her listeners that she focuses on the “range of emotion” in her writing, because she believes that “reading is very personal in a beautiful way.”

In addition to her reading, van den Berg conducted tutorials with six talented UConn students. One can only imagine how insightful and helpful working with van den Berg must have been after listening to her reading and Q&A. Carleton Whaley, a senior here at UConn, said that “Working with Laura van den Berg was a real privilege. She responded easily to any questions I had, articulated what I had accomplished in the piece, and even gave insight into where the piece, and my writing in general, was going.”

Her writing, her reading, and her manner in addressing her eager audience allowed for an incredible experience for readers and writers alike. van den Berg’s advice and experience in writing made her reading a unique experience among this semester’s events.

—Carla Calandra, Creative Writing Program Intern

Jacqueline Osherow Takes On Religion, Art, Form

Poet Jacqueline Osherow read on Wednesday, November 11, at the UConn Co-op in Storrs Center. Penelope Pelizzon introduced Osherow to an audience of students, professors, and writers. She noted Osherow’s most prominent talent: her ability to embrace traditional form in poetry, and to bend it in her own fashion.

Osherow read from three of her published collections: Ultimatum from Paradise, Whitehorn, and The Hoopoe’s Crown. From Ultimatum from Paradise, some of the poems she read included “White on White,” “Dusk in January, Salt Lake City,” and “At Peter Behrens’ House.” “White on White,” the first poem in the collection, consisted of rhyming couplets, consistent with Pelizzon’s claim to Osherow’s tendency to engage with traditional forms.

Throughout the reading, Osherow made many references to Judaism. Her poems incorporated many biblical stories into a modern context, shedding new light on old issues. Much of Osherow’s poetry also utilizes paintings, photographs, and architecture as a mode of imagery.
and setting. Through such realistic imagery and a deft use of allusion, Osherow’s poetry was both fascinating and refreshing to hear as she animatedly recited various parts of her work. Her goal, she claimed, was to create a “back and forth visual dialogue as a sort of meditation for the reader.”

One poem from The Hoopoe’s Crown used Yiddish, and began with a Jewish joke, just one of Osherow’s many religious references. “Autobiography with Joseph” presented the nuanced religious connection from old to new. Osherow paired biblical allusion with present-day attractions and art, specifically from the Museum of Modern Art. She shared a personal anecdote with the audience regarding this poem. The first section of the poem was actually written during her undergraduate career. She disliked it, but when someone advised her to use the original draft’s opening in her more recent writing, she decided to try. With that, the poem itself is a bridge from old to new in her work and in its content.

“Villanelle: Tikkun Olam” relied heavily on religious themes as well. The speaker seemed to question God at times, viewing the world through his perspective. Of course, the work itself is labeled under traditional poetic structure despite the fact that Osherow warped it to her liking, making her piece original in content as well as form.

Architecture shone through in quite a few of the poems Osherow selected to read. One which most prominently revolved around a visual source was “Art Nouveau: Brussels to Nancy.” After reading the poem, Osherow described it as “over the top.” She explained that she often “cheats wildly” with her poetic structure, and with this poem in particular.

When questioned about her prominent use of form, Osherow explained her writing process: “I write pages of blank form and figure out what form will work from there.” While writing, Osherow claimed she finds “a sense of direction” in her content, and advised interested writers to “find a sound or a word” to direct oneself through the poem. One word or sound, she said, could “catapult” a writer—and a reader—through the piece.

Jacqueline Osherow was incredibly passionate about what she read and what her audience had to say. She advised eager listeners to “write about what you’re obsessed by.” She went on to say that “there are things that will possess you, and those are the things you’ve got to take on.” She captured her audience with her humor and wit, passion in what she wrote, and her eagerness to inspire her audience.

—Carla Calandra, Creative Writing Program Intern

Panel on Pursuing an MFA in Creative Writing

This year’s Panel on Pursuing an MFA in Creative Writing was held on October 29, 2015 in the Stern Lounge of the Philip E. Austin Building. The panel, organized by Creative Writing Program Assistant Director Erick Piller and moderated by Professors Ellen Litman and Penelope Pelizzon, featured students of creative writing from a variety of graduate programs: Matthew Shelton, Christiana Salah, Erick Piller, and Brian Sneeden.

Matthew Shelton pursued his graduate studies in creative writing abroad, receiving an MA from Queen’s University Belfast in Northern Ireland. He specializes in poetry.

Christiana Salah received an MFA in fiction from Emerson College, located in Boston, Massachusetts.

Erick Piller attended Warren Wilson College, a low-residency program in Asheville, North Carolina, where he completed an MFA in poetry.

Brian Sneeden received an MFA in poetry from the University of Virginia.
Panel on Writing and Publishing Children’s and Young Adult Literature

The Creative Writing Program held a panel on writing and publishing children’s and young adult literature on Friday, November 13, 2015.

The panel participants included writers Sandra Horning, Caragh O’Brien, Dana Meachen Rau, and Pegi Deitz Shea, as well as Alexander Slater, an agent for Trident Media. Erick Piller moderated.

Sandra Horning’s picture book *The Giant Hug* won an IRA Children’s Choice Award and was a Junior Library Guild selection. In 2014, Sandra was awarded a James Marshall Fellowship to conduct research in the Northeast Children’s Literature Collection. Her other books include *The Biggest Pumpkin* and *Chicks*. She lives in Chaplin, Connecticut.

Originally from St. Paul, Minnesota, Caragh M. O’Brien earned her BA in physics from Williams College and her MA in the Writing Seminars at Johns Hopkins. After publishing half a dozen romance novels, she turned to teaching high school English and later to writing for young adults. She is the author of the *Birthmarked* trilogy, which has won numerous awards, and *The Vault of Dreamers*, the beginning of a new young adult trilogy from Macmillan. Caragh now lives and writes full-time from her home in Connecticut.

Dana Meachen Rau received an MFA in writing for children and young adults from Vermont College of Fine Arts. She has published more than three hundred books in a variety of genres, such as early readers, picture books, biographies, and nonfiction. Some of her awards and recognitions include the Association for Library Services to Children Notable Children’s Books of 2014; Booklist Top 10 Early Literacy Series of 2009; and Science Books and Film Magazine Best Books of 2005 and 2009. In 2011, she received the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism’s Art Fellowship Grant.

Pegi Deitz Shea is the author of more than four hundred articles, essays, and poems for adults and children. She teaches writing to adults and young adults through the Institute of Children’s Literature and children’s literature and creative writing at the University of Connecticut, Storrs. She has presented at more than four hundred schools, libraries, and conferences around the country. She lives in Northeast Connecticut.

Alexander Slater graduated from the University of Connecticut in 2007. He began his career in publishing that year with the Maria Carvainis Agency, first as an intern, and then as an assistant. He has been with Trident Media Group since 2010, where he started as the assistant to agents Kimberly Whalen and Scott Miller. Moving on from there, he spent two years representing the entire agency’s children’s, middle grade, and young adult titles in the foreign market, attending books fairs in Bologna, London, and Frankfurt. He is now building his list domestically at Trident, while keeping his focus on these areas. As a Foreign Rights Agent, he has sold international rights for authors such as R. J. Palacio, Louis Sachar, Jessica Sorensen, L. J. Smith, Rebecca Donovan, and many others.
Acclaimed Writer Speaks Out on Violence in Darfur, Uganda, and United States

Few writers have seen as much of the world or been as acclaimed as Dinaw Mengestu, who presented passages from his works and spoke about his experiences with writing, as well as racism, poverty and violence in countries ranging from Darfur to Uganda and the United States.

“When I was first asked to come up with a title, I reverted to a default one, ‘political fictions,’ and I say that because we use those terms together so frequently that we don’t interrogate what we mean,” Mengestu said. “It seems like an even more important time than normal to engage with the politics of our society and determine what that engagement means.”

Mengestu argued that politics and fiction go hand in hand, but they’re not always viewed that way. Rather, Mengestu suggested that having politics in fiction can create a negative reaction toward the work.

“If you sniff around the corners, around [political writers], you’ll find doubts about the quality of their work,” Mengestu said. “When my students say they don’t want politics in their fiction, it is as much to do with the imaginary demands these worlds place on them as it is the belief that the writer is more invested in the politics than in the work.”

The first novel that he ever tried to write, Mengestu told the audience, was ornate and full of beautiful sentences, but it lacked meaningful or creative details.

“I often tell people about the first novel I tried to write. . . . I described how the first novel I tried to write was based on these big ideas and sentences that we so dense no one could understand. When I wrote it, I set it in the most American landscape possible . . . [gave it] a meaningless title . . . and a pair of pretentious protagonists,” Mengestu said. “They had eyes, they had hair, but I never would have told you what color they were. My friends and I called it the flood novel, because the flood was the only thing that happened in it.”

From there, Mengestu described how he sent the novel to publishers and agents, only to be rejected by every single one. From that low point, he eventually found the inspiration to continue his writing career while living in Washington, D.C. The turning point, he said, was an encounter with an Ethiopian grocer.

“So the novel failed, and I was back in D.C., and I turn my head and see an Ethiopian man standing behind the counter of a small, run-down grocery store,” Mengestu said. “I went home that evening and began writing something for the first time in almost a year, and I could tell almost immediately that it was different. . . . It came when I had the narrator’s name. . . . It was the name my grandfather wanted to give me when I was in Ethiopia.”

This change in inspiration, Mengestu said, was the reason that his new works were successful where his first novel failed. Fictions should not exist in a place where race and sex do not exist, he argued, or in a place where racism or poverty are issues that only “other” or “some” people have to deal with.

Mengestu followed this by reading from his articles about conflicts in Africa, then reading from the fictionalized version of events that he wrote some time after returning.
Students and prospective writers in the audience asked Mengestu’s thoughts on modern stories and how they can become successful writers. The most important thing, Mengestu argued, was to tell stories that are inspired by real experiences.

“He taught us that many writers write what they know, but they don’t always realize that the most effective writing in fiction comes from events that happened in their own lives,” Ali Oshinskie, a sixth-semester English major said.

—Edward Pankowski, Daily Campus Correspondent

### Former Inmate Shares His Experiences Through Poetry

When Reginald Dwayne Betts was 16, he and a friend carjacked a man. Betts spent more than eight years in prison for it. After his release, he wrote several books about his experience and what he learned, including stories that he shared with an audience of students, professors and guests Wednesday night.

The material Betts read came from two of his works of poetry, *Bastards of the Reagan Era* and *Shahid Reads His Own Palm*, as well as from his memoir, *A Question of Freedom: A Memoir of Learning, Survival and Coming of Age in Prison*.

“I want to write with vigorous clarity,” Betts said.

His work was easy to consume and clear, with story of his experiences and struggles moving and true. Betts explored the deep capacity of the human condition and our ability to wade through the experiences we have, what to make of them when they happen and how to reflect on them later on.

“I didn’t understand the poems at first, but once he started talking about himself, his poems became so much clearer in meaning,” said Max Reddy, a third-semester finance major.

Betts’ stories mostly came from his memoir, written after he was released from prison.

“I really liked his memoir and poetry. It really struck me, the contrast between the more lyrical natures of the poem versus the structure of the form of the prose,” said Shannon Hearn, an eighth-semester senior majoring in English with focuses in creative writing and journalism.

Betts’ future was bright after he was released, and he went on to win the 2010 NAACP Image Award for nonfiction. He was also named a 2010 Soros Justice Fellow and in 2011 was awarded a fellowship by Harvard University’s Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. Betts didn’t stop there either. He received his MFA in poetry from Warren Wilson College and is currently a law student at Yale Law School.

The Co-op’s Storrs Center branch was packed. Not a single seat was empty. There was silence from the audience after every piece that Betts read. In those moments, people seemed to be in deep modes of reflection. With each piece Betts shared, he cited the experiences that drove him to produce the poem or prose he read. He didn’t hold back any experiences he had in prison, including being in solitary confinement. He explained that his confinement left him yearning to read anything, including trashy romance novels.
Audience members were impressed with Betts’ story and suggested that his telling made the poems and stories he told come to life.

“It’s outside of what I normally read, but I appreciated the intimate sense you can glean from him reading his work. From that and hearing it in tandem with his personal experiences, the work lends itself to being more than just words on a page,” said Matthew Ryan, an eighth-semester senior majoring in English and economics.

—Matthew Gilbert, Daily Campus Correspondent

Matvei Yankelevich: Writers Who Edit, Editors Who Write

The Writers Who Edit, Editors Who Write series, begun in 2008, introduces students to literary editors who are also successful authors. On February 24, 2016, the Creative Writing Program hosted poet and editor Matvei Yankelevich, who in the late 1990s, with a group of friends, co-founded Ugly Duckling Presse. He is a poet and translator. His books include Small Worlds for Dr. Vogt (2015), Alpha Donut (2012), Boris by the Sea (2009), and Today I Wrote Nothing: The Selected Writings of Daniil Kharms (2009). Yankelevich designs and edits many and various books for Ugly Duckling Presse, has curated the Eastern European Poets series since 2002, and co-edits 6x6 magazine. He teaches at Columbia University and Queens College, CUNY, and is a member of the Writing Faculty at the Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts at Bard College.
Acclaimed Poet Inspires Laughter, Sorrow, and Introspection

On International Women's day, students at the University of Connecticut listened to poems about relationships, violence and sexuality by Jericho Brown, a fellow of the National Endowment for the Arts.

"When you're a young writer, you're like, 'What's going to happen? Why am I doing this, and why is my dad mad at me? Maybe I could go to law school,' " Brown said, drawing laughs from the audience. "It is not lost on me that today is International Women's day. The month of March is a very interesting month for gender at UConn, and I'm sure that's why I was asked to come."

Brown presented his poetry not only as literature, but as part of an experience. "Y'all ready?" he asked the audience before he began reading.

Brown read his poems with passion and enthusiasm, emphasizing words and speaking in different voices to convey feelings and images to the audience. The first poem Brown read focused on relationships, including domestic violence and the effect it has on children.

"Listen, and you can hear them, in the next room, planning . . . for the youngest, and then making love, loud enough for the oldest to learn," Brown read.

Poems about relationships and gender were only a fragment of what Brown read from the reading. Some poems, Brown explained, were dedicated to people who had died in a variety of circumstances.

"This next poem is written in honor of and in memory of a list of people that's much too long, a list of people who I wish I could narrow down. It's funny how, when you go searching for something, you find out that things were worse than you even thought they were," Brown said before reading a poem about suicide, death and police brutality.

That poem in particular became a grim reflection of American society, listing the most common ways Americans died.

"When I kill me, I will kill me the way most American do. I promise you, cigarette smoke or a piece of meat on which I choke . . . I promise that if you hear of me dead anywhere near a cop, that cop killed me. He took me from us," Brown read.

Going back to the poets and writer that inspired him to become a poet, Brown explained how he first fell in love with poetry as a small child.

"The poet I always think of as my first poet, and we say that in the same way we say first love or first kiss. When I was a little kid and came across these poems in the library, it felt like I was falling in love," Brown said of Langston Hughes.

Although he drew from a variety of poets for inspiration, Brown admitted that sometimes he wrote poems because writing about that subject would make him a "real" poet.

"The most I can say about this poem is that a poet once told me until you write a Persephone poem, and this is my attempt at dealing with Persephone so I can become a real poet," Brown said.

Despite the use of affected voices and tones to emphasize parts of his poetry, Brown maintained that he attempted to read every poem normally, and any deviation is outside his control.

"I try to read them straight, but maybe
I’m too black for that,” Brown said. “What does it mean to speak straight? That’s completely changed.”

Students were overwhelmingly pleased with the reading, calling it “moving.”

“I thought it was really, really good. I think his poems were moving, and it felt a bit like church,” Ricardo Alvelo, a sixth-semester English major said.

—Edward Pankowski, Daily Campus Correspondent

Sinéad Morrissey Reads in Celebration of Irish Literature

For some, Irish art and poetry is rarely sought out, apart from a copy of James Joyce. For poet and author Sinéad Morrissey, however, Irish poetry is not only her profession, but a source of inspiration, and Morrissey spoke about that inspiration in a lecture Tuesday evening.

“Sinéad’s poetry transfixes us. It instills in us a movement, and it keeps us moving. Sinéad is eminently concerned with the visual world, displaying a striking concreteness, but also the invisible world . . . made possible by memory and imagination,” said Matthew Ryan Shelton, a graduate student who introduced Morrissey.

The first poem Morrissey read focused on her family and her lineage. In the poem, she imagined that her own body, namely her hands, were a representation of the permanent connection between her mother and father.

“My father’s in my fingers, but my mother’s in my palms,” Morrissey read. “They may have been repelled to separate hemispheres, to other lovers, but in me they link. . . . At least I know their marriage by my hands.”

Before reading other poems, Morrissey spoke about using different authors for inspiration, including Vanity Fair by William Thackeray. In the novel, one character writes a passionate letter to the man she loves, though the contents of that letter are never revealed to the reader. One poem, then, Morrissey said, was an imagining of what that letter might contain.

“Dearest William, I could begin by hoping you are well in England, and I do,” Morrissey read. “But this is not a weather talk sort of letter. . . . The whole house sleeps, even Becky and I am kept awake six weeks by your absence.”

Other poems were darker, focusing on real world history. One of these poems, Morrissey said, was inspired by a piece of history she learned about the Soviet Union and Joseph Stalin.

“This is a poem about photographs in the 1930s in the Soviet Union, and a time where it was very difficult to doctor a photograph,” Morrissey said. “Then, it was very difficult to change a photograph, and Stalin set up a ministry to change photographs, very much like ‘1984,’ so that as people fell out of favor with Stalin, but were still there in the public record, this record had the power to remove them from public record. The idea of a photograph as truth and as a moment in time were undermined . . . these photos kept in line with political contingency.”

Morrissey’s love of history became clearer as she read more poems and spoke specifically on how we view the past and our ancestors.
“My son keeps asking me questions that I’ve already written poems about. He’d ask, ‘It is true, mommy, that everything happened in black and white?’ But we do think that, and there’s no greater misconception about history,” Morrissey said.

More poems drew on Morrissey’s personal experiences, including a visit to the circus in the summer.

“If you haven’t experienced a tacky Irish circus on the wet seaside, well, you haven’t lived,” Morrissey said.

In addition to her own personal experiences, Morrissey spoke about how she drew inspiration from the experiences of her family and friends, including her mother, who, Morrissey said, learned about The Beatles just before they gained international popularity.

“This next bit’s true. I keep writing about The Beatles, they’re sort of fascinating. When my mother was fourteen and in school, her friend said that there’s this band . . . they’re about to launch their first single and they’re gonna be big,” Morrissey said, drawing laughs from the audience.

In keeping with the theme of family, Morrissey’s final reading was a poem told from the perspective of her daughter about her life.

“This is a poem, and it’s in the voice of my daughter, and she’s telling me my life. She told me this when she was six. . . . We were driving, and she said, ‘This happened to you and this happened to you,’ and it was so hilarious what she focused on and what she glossed over,” Morrissey said.

—Edward Pankowski, Daily Campus Correspondent

Ginger Strand: Aetna Celebration of Creative Nonfiction

The Aetna Celebration of Creative Nonfiction welcomed a packed crowd Thursday evening at the UConn Co-op Bookstore at Storrs Center.

The event began with a reading from one of the two student winners of this year’s Aetna Nonfiction Writing award, Stephanie Koo. Koo read from her award-winning story “Pieces of Po Po,” about her relationship with her grandmother. Her piece and others are featured in the 2016 issue of The Long River Review, UConn’s literary and art magazine.

Nationally renowned nonfiction author Ginger Strand made the night’s main event. Strand, author of four books and several published short stories and essays, started by reading from her essay, “Vonnegut on the Road,” which was published in the literary magazine Tin House.

The essay takes on copyright in literature and follows Strand as she uncovers an unseen world of the literary legend Kurt Vonnegut.

As the essay goes, Strand found an unpublished manuscript, “The River Boys,” which details Vonnegut’s adventures as a sixteen-year-old boy. As Strand mentions in the essay, “The River
Boys” would set the framework for several of his bestselling novels down the road. Strand believes “The River Boys” will be published one day, and uses her essay to enforce her belief that information should be free, describing on more than one occasion how stressful the seventy-year copyright law can be for a nonfiction writer.

Emily Cantor, a senior who works for The Long River Review, found the event to be very informative.

“I enjoyed it. All the stuff about copyright, I didn’t know anything about that so that was very interesting to learn,” Cantor said.

A Q&A followed Strand’s reading. She described her strategies for writing and her view of herself as an author. Strand described her journey to becoming a nonfiction writer as “very strange.”

“I was a very geeky undergraduate and loved literature, so I went to a Ph.D. program in English literature,” Strand said.

After receiving her Ph.D., and working on her post doctorate, Strand realized academic writing wasn’t for her. Strand eventually took a job as a copywriter in New York City, where she went on to publish her first novel, Flight. After struggling to find a concept for her second novel, Strand found her calling in nonfiction.

“I kept cheating, it was like I was married to fiction, but was having an affair with nonfiction,” Strand said.

“Anything can happen [in nonfiction]. I like stories where everything is all there and I have to figure out how to tell it,” Strand said.

—John Moreno, Daily Campus Correspondent

Writing from a Mediterranean in Crisis

On April 19, 2016, a panel discussion, reading, and film screening titled “Writing from a Mediterranean in Crisis,” featuring Greek poet Jazra Khaleed and Algerian-Italian prose writer Amara Lakhous was held at the UConn Co-op. The event premiered Khaleed’s new short film, “Gone Is Syria, Gone,” based on one of his poems. The panel discussion was moderated by Peter Constantine.

Jazra Khaleed was born in Grozny, Chechnya. Today he lives in Athens, writes and publishes exclusively in Greek, and is known as a poet, editor, and translator. Khaleed’s poetry has been widely translated in Europe, the U.S., and Japan. As a founding co-editor of TEFLO magazine, and particularly through his own translations published there, he has introduced the works of Amiri Baraka, Keston Sutherland, Lionel Fogarty, and many other political and experimental poets to a Greek readership.

Amara Lakhous fled his native Algeria in 1995 during the civil war and has lived in Italy first as a political refugee, then as an immigrant, and, as of 2008, a citizen. He is the author of five novels, three of which he wrote in both Arabic and Italian. His best known works are the much acclaimed Clash of Civilizations over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio (2008), Divorce Islamic Style (2012), and A Dispute over a Very Italian Piglet (2014).
English Ph.D. Student Finds Beauty in “The Ruin”

UConn students and poets Miller Oberman, Anna Ziering, and Shannon Hearn read from their work on April 12th for the final Long River Reading Series event of the academic year. The following article, published in “UConn Today,” celebrates the accomplishments of featured reader Miller Oberman—

The room becomes completely silent as Miller Oberman raises his hands like parentheses, pausing dramatically, staring into a crowd of fellow poets, students, and faculty members at the UConn Co-Op in Storrs Center. Over the hush, he reads “The Ruin,” his words punctuated by pauses that, although seemingly haphazard, keep time with the rhythm of the Old English poem.

“Yet even now the [ ] heaped over with [ ] / remains [ ]/ savagely scraped [ ]/ grimly ground up [ ]/ [ ] shone [ ]/ [ ] skillful working ancient building,” Oberman reads.

The scattered silences echo the words missing from the poem’s only copy, in a book more than 1,000 years old that’s pocked with missing pieces showing the wear of its age. The English Ph.D. student sees beauty in these silences, and as he speaks, he works to keep them alive.

A group of poems from Oberman’s dissertation, which includes translations of Old English poems and his own original work, this year has earned him a 2016 Discovery Prize, given by the Boston Review and the 92nd Street Y. The prize is renowned for launching the careers of major modern poets, and honors Oberman for the poems in his dissertation, also titled “The Ruin,” that connects ancient poems to the modern poetry world.

“This is a way of respecting Old English poems,” Oberman says of his approach. “Let’s hold this empty space here in the poem where there used to be a thing.”

From a very young age, Oberman was immersed in words. He used to go to his local library and check out every book he could carry. He often chose the biggest books he could find, even though he did not always fully understand them.

“I don’t remember not being able to read!” he says. “I read Moby Dick when I was in second grade . . . well, I read the words at least. I remember just wanting to read impressive things. I wanted to casually hang out downtown, reading War and Peace or something, possibly in Russian.”

This love of language quickly developed into a love of poetry. Oberman studied poetry throughout high school and college, before entering the Ph.D. program in English at UConn.

“When I came [to UConn] to get a Ph.D., I realized that I didn’t really know anything about my own language,” says Oberman. “I decided I was going to try to learn Old English.”

Old English is the earliest recorded stage of the English language, which was used for more than 700 years from the 5th century to the late 11th century. Famous works that were originally in Old English include Beowulf and Caedmon’s Hymn.

At UConn, Oberman says he became “obsessed” with the language and its rich history. He found that most of the poems in the language were translated by poets who did not know the language well, or by Medievalists who were not familiar with writing poetry. Oberman
thought he could fix this disconnect as both a poetry and medieval studies scholar.

Translating a poem can be a very complicated and creative process. It’s not just about creating a direct word-for-word account, but also about re-writing in a way that makes sense musically, says Oberman. His notebook, color-coded and with tiny notes in the margins, contains notes he’s taken in his classes, lists, and translation pages.

Oberman takes the original text and writes the word-for-word translation beneath it. Often there is not a direct translation for certain words or phrases in Old English, so the creative part, he says, is deciding what words embody the original meaning best.

Frequently, the poems are missing words or are incomplete. Where the original text is missing, he inserts a set of brackets. Since Old English poems follow strict rules for meter and structure, he is able to determine almost exactly how much of the poem is missing.

In “The Ruin,” the speaker comes across a destroyed and abandoned city, which Oberman explains is the ruins of a city built by Romans, and describes the experience.

“The speaker is looking at the city in ruins, but the city is more advanced than anything the speaker has ever seen before,” he says. “For us to find the ruins of a city more advanced than us, that’s science fiction! Like, if these people were so advanced, how could this have happened?”

The title poem of his dissertation originally comes from an ancient, one-of-a-kind book called the Exeter Book, which contains many Old English poems that we know of today. Someone put a hot poker on the book nearly 1,000 years ago, burning holes through the pages, ruining parts of many poems.

Oberman says that there have been many translations of “The Ruin,” but they almost always try to smooth out the missing sections.

“In a poem about ruins, the whole thing is about gaps and fallen, missing things, and now you’re working with a document that has gaps and fallen, missing things in it, and then you’re just faking that? Why would you fight that?” he asks.

Oberman thinks contemporary poets understand that space in a poem is important to its meaning and sonic quality.

“There’s stuff outside of the frame, and sometimes the frame has nothing in it,” he says. “I think [modern poets] really understand that.”

Winning the Discovery Prize is a humbling experience, he says, but he hopes it will give a major leg up to his book project.

“In the world of poetry there isn’t much money, but some things have a lot of prestige,” he says. “So if you’re a poet, then you know that getting this is very cool.”

Back on stage, Oberman closes “The Ruin” with a description of the waters of Rome, using his hands to depict the natural breaks. The broken meter seems to augment the sense of true majesty lost.

“Then they let flow [] / hot streams over old stone /[ ]/ until the ringed pool hotly /[ ]/ where they were. / When is [ ]/[ ] That is a kingly thing / house[ ]/[ ] city [].”

—Sydney Lauro, UConn Today
UConn’s Long River Review Hosts 2016 Launch Party

The editor-in-chief of the University of Connecticut’s Long River Review (LRR) literary magazine encouraged readers to “feel, forget and freeze” at the launch party of its 2016 issue.

This year’s LRR launch party also included the premiere of the 2016 Poetic Journeys, a series of poems that will be featured on posters around campus. The LRR was created in collaboration with UConn’s Creative Writing Program and Design Center in the School of Fine Arts.

The night began with Shannon Hearn’s reading of her letter from the editor, ending with: “so let us whisper softly ‘yes’ and enter into the 2016 edition of The Long River Review.”

Throughout the evening, Therese Masotta, the magazine’s social media coordinator, announced members of the LRR staff, winners of literary contests and authors featured in the edition.

Stephanie Koo, winner of the Aetna Creative Nonfiction Award, gave the first reading of her story “Pieces of Po Po,” recalling family history with an emphasis on her grandmother’s life.

“I’m so happy to be here; I love our team,” Koo said when she had finished reading.

Sten Spinella, the LRR’s interviews editor and member of the creative nonfiction panel, took the stage to explain the magazine’s year of interviews.

One of the highlights of the year was his interview with William Jelani Cobb, a “nationally-known intellect who has written books, essays and anthologies on everything from the history of hip-hop to the Cold War to racism and to current events,” as stated in the LRR.

Cobb was a UConn professor and head of the Africana Studies department.

“I think interviews are important because conversation is why the literary magazine was started in the first place,” said Spinella, who is also a senior staff writer for The Daily Campus.

The review’s poetry editor, Kate Monica, said that the LRR received about 400 poetry submissions this year. She and her team read each submission and selected what they believed to be the best of the best.

“We managed to put together something that’s really special,” Monica said.

The night ended with Hearn thanking the audience for their support.

“I am so grateful for this year’s turnout, it’s been the biggest we’ve had. I’m so happy with the final product of the magazine,” Hearn said.

—Megan Krementowski, Daily Campus Correspondent
Long River Review 2016: Letter from the Editor

To the reader,

Do not exist and do not breathe and do not think. These people, these places, these moments will do that for you. Slide and stutter in feeling. Feel/Forget/Freeze.

Struggle to turn the pages—they are slippery with gross emotions, they are slippery. It is tempting to try to find the authors in these pages. Don’t. Fidget, reader. You will feel your own history pouring through the windows here. That is okay, that is safe.

Open this edition cautiously/bravely/blushing and with the knowledge that your face will reflect back somewhere in these pages. Do not exist and do not breathe and do not think. You are slippery and we do not want to scare you away.

Feel close and frustrated with us in the way that filters through these people and images and demands our chests to pull closer. We want to grab on to your wrists and your forearms as you read and stumble in this beauty as we have/we do/we will.

How grateful I am to have you here, the ability to offer this to you. I do not want to touch this all away. So let us whisper softly yes and enter into the 2016 edition of the Long River Review.

—Shannon Hearn, Editor-in-Chief
Poetic Journeys Unveils Latest Series

Poetic Journeys was developed by the Creative Writing Program at the University of Connecticut and inspired by the New York MTA’s Poetry in Motion series, itself inspired by London’s Poems on the Underground. Poetic Journeys features poems written by UConn students, faculty, staff, and other community members on posters designed by students in the University’s Design Center.

Poetic Journeys began in the fall semester of 2000, and subsequent series have been published annually. Poetic Journeys grants writers and designers a unique collaborative experience. It offers the campus community and visitors a poetic respite from their busy days, and an opportunity, each time they board a bus, to embark on a different kind of journey. Program sponsors include the Creative Writing Program, the Design Center, the Aetna Chair of Writing, and UConn Transportation.

This year’s series features poems by Micah Goodrich, Danilo Machado, Amanda McCarthy, Miller Oberman, Joan Seliger Sidney, and Anna Ziering and designs by Carlos Dominguez, Steve Fugazy, Josh Gluck, Erika Greenblatt, Hunter Kelley, Nikki McDonald, Olivia Narciso, Raeanne Nuzzo, Kellie Pcolar, Brigid Reale, Sydney Roper, Samantha Weiss, and Sarah Williams.

Faculty and Student Updates

Gina Barreca’s latest book, a collection of her essays titled If You Lean In, Will Men Just Look Down Your Blouse? was published in March 2016 by St. Martin’s Press; she’ll be presenting an event based on the book at New York’s prestigious 92nd Street Y in June. Over the past year, Barreca was invited to speak about writing, women, and humor at over twenty campuses, including Dartmouth College, University of Pittsburgh, Holy Names University, St. Norbert’s, West Virginia University, and the University of Dayton (the last two institutions both received grants from the National Endowment of the Humanities to support Barreca’s lectures). Her weekly columns for The Hartford Courant are now internationally distributed by the Tribune Co. and appear regularly in papers around the world—from The Miami Herald to The Chicago Tribune to The Ortago Daily in New Zealand and The Gulf Today in the Arab Emirates. She continues to write regularly for Psychology Today and The Huffington Post while appearing in other publications as well, including Southwest Magazine and The Washington Post with her co-author, Pulitzer Prize winner Gene Weingarten. She is a senior contributor to Faith Middleton’s WNPR radio program, where she discusses a range of topics, averaging one show per six weeks. Many of the public events Barreca gives are fundraisers for charitable causes; she was recognized by the Soroptimists who chose her for the “Women Helping Women” award for 2015.

Kerry Carnahan received the UConn Aetna Translation Award, the Cohen and Henes Award for Excellence in Hebrew and Judaic Studies, and a predoctoral fellowship from the Center for Judaic Studies. She presented at the annual CUNY critical theory conference “Translation Theory Today,” and three of her poems appeared in translation in the Greek literary journal Teflon.

Susanne Davis’s short story collection “In Pursuit of Happiness” was the runner up for 2015 University of Kentucky Prose Prize. Her short story “Destiny’s Clothes” was published in 4ink7. In October 2015, her essay “A Season of High Skies” was published in the online journal Mothers Always Write in February 2016, and “The Appointed Hour,” a short story, was just accepted for publication in The Notre Dame Review.

Darcie Dennigan’s latest book, Palace of Subatomic Bliss (Canarium Books 2016) contains a play about a woman who dies twice, a treatise on why there are no female absurdists, and several unfortunate references to goldfish. In fact, the book was almost called “The Fish” in the way that Gogol’s story is called “The Nose,” except that unlike the olfactory organ of the Gogol story, neither the woman nor the fish has yet developed a life of her own, and it is perhaps beyond the powers of the author to indicate whether this is a happy or sad undevelopment. Much of the text is simply unattributed lines from Pina Bausch, Virginia Woolf, Daniil Kharms, Albert Camus, Clarice Lispector, and others.


Erin Lynn has work forthcoming in The Grief Diaries and The Long River Review.

Miller Oberman’s poem “Who People Are” was published in Beloit Poetry Journal’s winter 2015/16 issue, and was also featured by Poetry Daily on February 25, 2016. His poems “The Grave,” “The Ruin,” and “Dear Lengthening Day” appeared in bertros, and he has poems and translations forthcoming in Tin House, Boston Review, The Minnesota Review, Southeast Review, Fourteen Hills, and Poetry. Miller’s poem “Morning Pastoral” is forthcoming as an artist collaboration with Broadside Press. Miller’s book chapter “Translation and the Art of Lesbian Failure in Monique Wittig’s Le Corps Lesbiens” will appear in Queer in Translation, Ashgate Publishing Ltd., forthcoming, 2016-17. Miller also published a review of Patricia Spears Jones’ A Lucent Fire: New & Selected Poems in The Poetry Project Newsletter #246, February-March, 2016. Miller was chosen as a winner of the 2016 Discovery/Boston Review Contest, and will read on May 9th at the 92nd St Y along with the other winners. This spring Miller will give a paper and reading on translating Old English fragments at The International Congress of Medieval Studies, in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

V. Penelope Pelizzon read this year at The Hammer Museum as part of UCLA’s reading series. Her poem “Fado” appeared in The Hopkins Review and a short appreciation of Anthony Hecht appeared on Best American Poetry’s blog. For Brooklyn Poets, she led a workshop on “Blessings and Curses,” and another on “Metaphor.”

Matthew Ryan Shelton has poems and translations forthcoming in An Gael, The Quiet Corner Interdisciplinary Journal, and The Long River Review. He had a poem and a translation published in Causeway/Cabhsair in December 2015. He will serve as the Assistant Director of the Creative Writing Program in 2016-2017.

Brian Sneeden had poems published in Southern Humanities Review and Salt Hill and has a poem forthcoming in Denver Quarterly. He was a finalist for the Paumanok Poetry Award, Farmingdale State College (2016), as well as the Brittingham and Pollack Poetry Prizes, University of Wisconsin (2015).

Anna Ziering had a poem accepted to Poetic Journeys as well as two forthcoming pieces in The Skylark Review and another in an anthology with Little Lantern Press.
Congratulations to the Winners of the English Department’s 2015-2016 Creative Writing Awards!

The Edward R. and Frances Schreiber Collins Literary Prizes
Poetry Winner/$2,000: Nicholas DiBenedetto for “From a Mutilated Flower”
   (Honorable Mention, Framig Francisco for “Noise”)

Prose Winner/$2,000: Traci Parker for “Harlem”
   (Honorable Mention, Daniel Arpie for “Invagination”)

The Jennie Hackman Memorial Prize for Fiction
First place/$1000: Rebecca Hill for “Mr. Peter’s Awakening”
Second place/$300: Máiréad Loschi for “Elastic”
Third Place/$200: Sten Spinella for “An Important Distinction”

Wallace Stevens Poetry Contest
First place/$1000: Eleanor Reeds
Second place/$500: Emily Kraus
Third place/$250: Erick Piller

The Aetna Creative Nonfiction Awards
Undergraduate First prize/$250: Stephanie Koo for “Pieces of Po Po”
   Graduate First Prize/$250: Kristina Reardon for “She Still Remembers This”

The Aetna Translation Award
Winner/$250: Kerry Carnahan for “Have a Nice Fucking Day”
   (Honorable Mentions, Matthew Shelton for “On the Denomination Emigrants” and
   “The Hyena”)

The Aetna Children’s Literature Award
Winner/$250: Kathryn Coto for “River Patel and the Book of Blood”
   (Honorable Mention, Traci Parker for “Nzinga, Not Alone”

Long River Graduate Writing Award
Winner/$250: Eleanor Reeds
Special Thanks

The Creative Writing Program is grateful to these friends:

Fall intern Carla Calandra • Spring intern Jamol Lettman • Our administrative expert Lori Corsini-Nelson • Assistant Director of Creative Writing Erick Piller • English Department Staff Melanie Hepburn, Claire Reynolds, and Inda Watrous • Bob Smith and all the staff of the UConn Co-op Bookstore • Aetna Chair of Writing Lynn Z. Bloom • Interim Aetna Chair of Writing Tom Deans • The English Department Speaker’s Fund • English Department Head Bob Hasenfratz • Cathy Schlund-Vials • Ruth Fairbanks • Eduardo C. Corral • Gina Barreca, Lori Carriere, Julie Choffel, Bruce Cohen, Susanne Davis, Pegi Deitz Shea, Darcie Dennigan, Ellen Litman, Miller Oberman, V. Penelope Pelizzon • Jason Courtmanche and the Connecticut Writing Project • Peter Constantine • Staff and faculty of the First-Year Writing Program • Kate Capshaw, Morgne Cramer, Victoria Ford Smith, Serkan Gökemli, Glen MacLeod, Gregory Pierrot, Fred Roden, Fran Shaw, Tom Shea, Davyne Verstandig • The Document Production Center • Edvin Yegir and the students, faculty, and staff of the Design Center • Jared Demick and The Nutmeg Writers Group • The Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc. • The UConn Foundation • The family of David and Emily Collins • The Hackman Family • Ardian Gill and the family of Gloriana Gill •

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