

UNL ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER AND CALENDAR

Friday, November 16, 2007

Editor: Gerry Shapiro

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"Speaking Truth to people in varying states of powerlessness"

Recent Publications and Other Achievements

During the past few months, **Ted Kooser** has spoken and/or done readings at Meredith Corporation in Des Moines; South Arkansas Community College; Loveland, Colorado; Hastings College; Alma College in Michigan; the American College of Physicians meeting in Omaha; the Literature festival at St Peter's School, Lincoln; the Omaha Czech club; a high school in Ashland, Oregon and The Nature of Words Conference in Bend, Oregon.

Amelia M.L. Montes was one of the presenters at an all day symposium for the launching of The Society for the Study of Gloria Anzaldúa, Saturday November 3 at The University of Texas, San Antonio (UTSA). Amelia's paper, "Tortilleras and Gloria Anzaldúa," focused on Anzaldúa's impact upon U.S. Latina writers, Queer Studies and the Academy. French, Mexican, Venezuelan as well as U.S. Latina scholars presented at this transnational symposium. The Society is planning a three-day international and interdisciplinary conference for 2009, also at UTSA. For those interested in joining the Society, please contact Amelia Montes. The Gloria Anzaldúa Archives are now available to scholars at the Benson Library, University of Texas at Austin.

Wheeler Winston Dixon published two reviews in the October issue of *Choice*: "Electric Edwardians: The Story of the Mitchell and Kenyon Collection by Vanessa Toulmin," and "Masterpieces of Modernist Cinema, edited by Ted Perry." Wheeler also recently published essays on Chantal Akerman, Dorothy Arzner, Philippe De Broca, Yilmaz Guney, Stanley Kramer, Mervyn LeRoy, Albert and David Maysles, Lukas Moodysson, Philip Noyce, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Tony Richardson, Harry Smith, Jean-Marie Straub, Roger Vadim, W.S. Van Dyke, and Agnes Varda in *501 Movie Directors*, Steven J. Schneider, ed., 2007, Barron's / Cassell Illustrated.

Hilda Raz has read this semester from *What Becomes You* and other work at the Nonfiction Now conference at the Univ. of Iowa, in Seattle at the GenderQueer conference, in New York at the School of Visual Arts and the Lambda Literary Foundation. Her new book *All Odd and Splendid* will be published in the Wesleyan Univ. Press's poetry series early next fall and Bison Books will publish her first two books as

What Happens early next year. *What Becomes You* will be out in paperback, with Readers' Guidelines, in spring '08. She'll be teaching in the low residency MFA at Pacific University over winter break, at the Taos Writers' Conference on memoir and our own NE Summer Writers' Conference, the master class on poetry book manuscripts. Recent work has been published in *Paterson Literary Review*, *SALT*, *Pleiades*, *Blue Mesa Review*, *Cincinnati Review*, and in *Risk, Courage, and Women*, an anthology from the Univ. of North Texas P., and other places she can't remember right now.

Brenda Friedman and **Gerry Shapiro** both led recent book discussions at South Street Temple as part of the celebration of National Jewish Book Month. Brenda led a discussion of Samuel G. Freedman's memoir, *Who She Was: My Search For My Mother's Life*, and Gerry led a discussion of Tova Mirvis's novel, *The Outside World*.

Joy Castro read at the Miami Book Fair International on November 10th. Her poem "How We Are Made" appeared in *White Ink: Poems on Mothers and Motherhood*, edited by Rishma Dunlop for York University's Demeter Press, www.yorku.ca/arm/whiteink.html.

Maureen Honey has given two papers this fall, both on women poets of the Harlem Renaissance. The first was on Gwendolyn Bennett at the American Studies Assn. in Philadelphia October 11-14 on a panel Maureen co-organized with Cherene Sherrard-Johnson, who visited us last fall from the University of Wisconsin. The panel was on "Radical Politics and New Negro Women Writers." The second was on anthologizing women poets and was given at Purdue University's 23rd Symposium on African American Studies, organized by **Venetria Patton**, Ph.D. student **Shane Hunter** was also on the panel, presenting his work on lesbian blues lyrics and the poetry of Mae Cowdery. Arnold Rampersad of Stanford University was the keynote speaker. He has written biographies of Langston Hughes, W.E.B. DuBois and Ralph Ellison. Venetria sends a warm hello to her former colleagues here at UNL. Her son Hollis is now 10 and growing very tall. Maureen also visited with former colleague **Alpana Sharma**, who is now at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. She also asked Maureen to convey her warmest regards to everyone. Alpana's daughter Anna is now 11 and has a sister Lucy, who is 5. The Purdue conference was

a great success--how could it not be with Venetria Patton at the helm?

Susan Belasco has accepted an invitation to serve on the editorial advisory board of *American Periodicals, A Journal of History, Criticism, and Bibliography*.

Laura Madeline Wiseman has recently published two short stories: "How to Measure Your Breast Size" appears in the current issue of *Blackbird* and "To Fish Like a Girl" is in the recent issue of *Fifth Wednesday Journal*. She also has four entries in the *Encyclopedia of American Indian Literature* (Facts on File, 2007).

Cody Lumpkin's poem "Squirrel Metaphysics 1#" was accepted by *South Dakota Review*, and his poem "In Support of Corporate Farms" got accepted by the *New Orleans Review*. He also presented some of his poetic work at the John R. Milton Writers' Conference at the University of South Dakota in late October. Cody also turns 30 on Friday, November 16th. (Editor's note: Congrats, Cody!)

Shane Hunter recently presented a paper, "'They Said I Do It, Ain't Nobody Caught Me': Expressions of Queer Sexuality in 1920s Women's Blues and the Poetry of Mae Cowdery," at Purdue University's African American Studies and Research Center's 23rd Annual Symposium: "Harlem Renaissance: Aesthetics, Values, and Identity."

Along with Ed Folsom of the University of Iowa, **Ken Price** and **Susan Belasco** are the co-editors of *Leaves of Grass: The Sesquicentennial Essays*, just published by the University of Nebraska Press. This volume of essays by many of the Whitman scholars who participated in the *Leaves of Grass* 150th Anniversary Conference held at UNL in 2005, includes **Tom Gannon's** "Complaints from the Spotted Hawk: Flights and Feathers in Whitman's 1855 *Leaves of Grass*," Ken's "The Lost Negress of 'Song of Myself' and the Jolly Young Wenches of Civil War Washington," and Susan's "*Leaves of Grass* and the Poetry Marketplace of Antebellum America."

Upcoming Events

TODAY--November 16: No-Name Reading Series, featuring **James Engelhardt** and **Rachel May** reading from their work; 4 p.m., Sur Tango Bar, 12th and P Street.

November 24: Kwakiutl Dreher will be singing for *Good Cookin'*: A Benefit Concert for Matt Talbot Kitchen & Outreach, 7 p.m, Unitarian Church, 6300 A Street. Composer/pianist Richard Carr; vocalist Carole Lunde; jazz/blues/bluegrass fiddler Dave Fowler and pianist Carolyn Johnsen; and award-winning poet Kelly Madigan Erlandson complete the bill. This concert is organized by Christ Unity Church and hosted by the Unitarian Church of Lincoln. \$10 at the door. Don't miss this musical feast!

December 3: Greg Kuzma, reading from his poetry, Bailey Library, 3:30 p.m. Reception to follow.

December 7: Julia Schleck, performing with the UNL Chamber Singers at the Sheldon Gallery's "First Friday's Winter Escape," 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Check for more information at www.sheldonartgallery.org. The Chamber Singers will be performing several pieces by Poulenc and by Stanford, as well as premiering a new piece by composer Kurt Knecht. This piece, "Sero te amavi," is based on a text from Augustine's Confessions. Refreshments will be served and Renaissance madrigals will be sung. This is not a formal concert, but rather an artistic and musical evening in which you are invited to enjoy the winter season.

December 11: EGSA Sponsored Holiday - End of Semester Social, 3 - 4:30 p.m., Bailey Library

December 12: poets **Don Welch, Charles Fort**, and **Allison Adelle Hedge Coke**, reading from their work, Drake Theater, University of Nebraska-Kearney, 7:30 p.m. Reception to follow.

December 13: Very important meeting of the College of Arts and Sciences faculty. 3:30 p.m., City Union.

December 30: The Alan Yates Special No Name, 4 p.m., Sur Tango Bar: Something Old, Something New. The No Name Committee would like to invite anyone and everyone to step in front of the microphone and read some of their earliest work and some of their most recent work (preferably written during the month of November). So have your mother Fed-Ex your old high school writing journals, think of ways to extract that aborted first novel from those obsolete floppy disks hidden under your Health and Wellness notes, and start writing something new. Let the greater Lincoln community know just how much you have developed and progressed as a writer (and also what you still might be obsessing over). To sign-up for a spot on the schedule, please e-mail Cody at blumpkil@bigred.unl.edu. Readers may sign up the day of the reading.

Alumni News

Lee Martin (Ph.D. 1994)'s new novel, *River of Heaven* (following his Pulitzer Prize Finalist novel, *The Bright Forever*), will be published by Shaye Areheart Books and Random House Audio Books in April, 2008. The story of two brothers, a lifetime of estrangement, and the secret that lies buried between them, *River of Heaven* is, according to Kathryn Harrison, "A wise and humane novel, a story of cowardice and courage and the torturous path between them." Lee continues to direct the MFA program in Creative Writing at Ohio State University.

American Life in Poetry
by Ted Kooser, U.S. Poet Laureate, 2004-2006

MLA News

Here's a fine seasonal poem by Todd Davis, who lives and teaches in Pennsylvania. It's about the drowsiness that arrives with the early days of autumn. Can a bear imagine the future? Surely not as a human would, but perhaps it can sense that the world seems to be slowing toward slumber. Who knows?

Sleep

On the ridge above Skelp Road
bears binge on blackberries and apples,
even grapes, knocking down
the Petersens' arbor to satisfy the sweet
hunger that consumes them. Just like us
they know the day must come when
the heart slows, when to take one
more step would mean the end of things
as they should be. Sleep is a drug;
dreams its succor. How better to drift
toward another world but with leaves
falling, their warmth draping us,
our stomachs full and fat with summer?

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Planning to attend MLA? Everyone is invited to the the annual Cash Bar Reception hosted by our department in cooperation with the University of Missouri Department of English. This is a great opportunity to network with our alumni and other friends and colleagues of our department from entire country. **Saturday, December 29, 2007 5:15-6:30 p.m. Water Tower Room, Hyatt Regency (see page 1860 in the MLA program).**