

UNL ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER AND CALENDAR

Wednesday, April 29, 2009
Special "Night of the Living Dead Week" Edition

Editors: Gerry Shapiro and Judy Slater

Publisher: Joy Ritchie

"Speaking Truth to people in varying states of powerlessness"

Recent Publications and Other Achievements

Nicole de Fee (Ph.D., August 2008) has accepted a full time, tenure track faculty position as an Assistant Professor of English at St. Thomas Aquinas College in Sparkill, NY (about 30 minutes outside of Manhattan). She will be teaching mostly American literature, and in January she will also take over the Director of the Writing Program position.

In March, **Farrah Lehman** presented a paper entitled "Speak The Speech": Blank Verse as New Medium on the Early Modern English Stage" at the Renaissance Society of America Conference in Los Angeles, CA.

Marco Abel published "A Cinema of Solidarity: An Interview with Andreas Dresen" in *Senses of Cinema* 50 (April-June 2009). Dresen is one of contemporary German cinema's most respected and prolific directors. This is the first major introduction to his work in English. You can access the interview here: <http://archive.sensesofcinema.com/contents/09/50/andreas-dresen-interview.html>

Josh Call will be beginning the fall semester as a tenure-track, assistant professor at Grand View University in Des Moines.

Joshua Ware's poems are in the newest issues of the *Packintown Review* and *Hayden's Ferry Review*. He is a featured writer on *Hayden's Ferry*'s website, where a brief excerpt from his critical work, "Stein's Poetics of Imperceptibility," also appears. The essay explores Deleuze's concept of sensation as it applies to Gertrude Stein's writing.

Two of **Judy Slater**'s short stories are forthcoming: "Fortune" in *Eclipse*; and "The Psychic Fair At The End Of The Season," in *Pearl*.

John Chavez's poem "Nielson Ratings," has recently appeared in *Grist: The Journal for Writers*, Issue 2, 2009, and his poems "On Subjectivation," "Winter w/ Empty Scene," and two others, are forthcoming soon in *Puerto del Sol*

Jonis Agee won this year's \$5,000 Master Achievement Award in Fiction from the Nebraska Arts Council. **Judy Slater** won a \$2,000 Merit Award in Fiction in the same competition. And **Brent Spencer**, a friend of this department and a former member of the faculty of the Nebraska Summer Writers' Conference, won the \$5,000 Master Achievement Award in Nonfiction. Both Jonis's and Brent's Master Achievement Awards include the publication of a book manuscript by Backwaters Press. In short, we did rather well in this year's Nebraska Arts Council competition. Congratulations to all the winners!

In March, **Jonis Agee** was visiting writer at Stephen A. Austin University in Nacadoches, Texas, and got a chance to catch up with recent graduate Daryl Farmer who teaches there--he loves the place and they love him! They even hired a poet to be department chair, so creative writing is thriving there. Also, Jonis recently traveled to State University of New York at Binghamton (Binghamton University) to receive the John Gardner Fiction Book Award for 2008, for her novel *The River Wife*. Jonis gave a reading and taught a class. Last Saturday she was the keynote speaker for the Omaha Public Library's Book Club Blowout to celebrate the many bookclubs affiliated with public libraries in the city.

Chris Gallagher and **Shari Stenberg**'s chapter (co-authored with Peter Gray) "Making Trouble Elsewhere: Second-Generation Con/fusion" appears in the collection *Transforming English Studies: New Voices in an Emerging Genre* from Parlor Press.

Shari Stenberg would like to encourage department members to celebrate the work of their English colleagues who have participated in a Faculty Leadership for Writing Initiative (FLWI) Writing Inquiry Group this academic year. The group--**June Griffin, Tom Lynch, Julia Schleck, Sonam Singh, and Ariana Vigil**--will present their work to develop new writing components for English 180 at a poster session during the NeWP/FLWI Spring Gathering, Saturday, May 2nd in the City Campus Union.

Amber Harris Leichner has been named a recipient for the Karen Dunning Women's and Gender Studies Award for her poetry chapbook *Shadow in the Sun*. This project was inspired by and grounded in her research on Queen

Elizabeth I and her court. She will be presented her award on May 1 at the Women's and Gender Studies Graduation Reception and Awards Ceremony.

Melissa Homestead has been named a Susan J. Rosowski Professor. The University created the Rosowski Professorship this year "to recognize faculty at the associate professor level who have achieved distinguished records of scholarship or creative activity and who show exceptional promise for future excellence." Although the competition was university-wide, Melissa is particularly pleased that the professorship carries the name of the late **Sue Rosowski**, a long-time UNL English Department faculty member and distinguished Cather scholar.

Benjamin Vogt's poem "Coneflowers, August" was third honorable mention for *Heartland Review's* Joy Bale Boone Award, and another poem, "Weatherford, OK—1983," was a finalist. Benjamin is graduating with a double dissertation: a poetry collection, *Afterimage*, and a hybrid memoir, *Morning Glory: A Story of Family and Culture in the Garden*. Benjamin would like to thank his perennially hardy committee (Grace Bauer, Hilda Raz, Ted Kooser, John Janovy) for their encouragement, faith, and friendship over the past six years.

The winner of the Department of English Tag-Line Competitor is **Sonam Singh**, for his line, "From Words to Worlds." Congratulations, Sonam!

Timothy Schaffert wrote the introduction to the special literary journal edition of *Poets and Writers* magazine (May/June). His article on internal book design and illustration will appear in the July/August issue of *Poets and Writers*.

Michelle Menting has two poems forthcoming in *failbetter* and two poems forthcoming in *The Texas Observer*.

Wheeler Winston Dixon has published a review of the film "The Locket, or What Nancy Wanted," on the Noir of the Week website, at <http://www.noir.oftheweek.com>, on April 27, 2009. He's also published several reviews in the April 9 issue of *Choice: Movie Greats: A Critical Study of Classic Cinema*, by Philip Gillett, *European Film Theory, Cinema and Community*, by D.W. McKiernan, and *German Film After Germany: Toward a Transnational Aesthetic* by Randall Halle.

Upcoming Events

TODAY! April 29: Literary Contest Winners Reading, 3:00-5:00 p.m., Bailey Library.

TODAY! April 29: Blacks in Horror/Science Fiction, 6:00 p.m., City Campus Union. Contact Kwakiutl Dreher for further details.

April 30: English Department Awards and Recognition Celebration, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m., Bailey Library.

May 2: NeWP/FLWI Spring Gathering, City Campus Union, featuring **Shari Stenberg, June Griffin, Tom Lynch, Julia Schleck, Sonam Singh**, and **Ariana Vigil** presenting their work at 2:45 p.m.

May 4: Farewell Reception for Chris Gallagher and Ruth Nissé, 2:30-4:00 p.m., Bailey Library.

May 6: Kwakiutl Dreher, signing copies of her book *Dancing on the White Page: Black Women Entertainers Writing Autobiography*, at the UNL Bookstore - City Campus, 12:30 p.m.

June 4-7, 11-14, and 18-21: The Flatwater Shakespeare Company presents Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, directed by Bob Hall. Enjoy the original "Brit Com" under the stars at the open air Swan Theatre at Wyuka, 3600 "O" Street. The cast includes our very own **Steve Buhler** as Master Page and our former colleague **Dick Nielsen** as the hilariously jealous Master Ford. Performances Thursdays through Sundays, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$18 general, \$15 seniors, and \$10 students. Group rates are also available. For information, call 473-2897, visit the company's website at flatwatershakespeare.org, or contact Steve.

June 13-19: The Nebraska Summer Writers' Conference. The full schedule of the conference will be announced soon and made available at <http://nebraskawriters.unl.edu>; events free and open to the public will be held at the Sheldon Museum, the Great Plains Center, and the Ross Media Arts Center. The topics of panel discussions: contemporary literature and the visual arts; publishing and author representation; conducting research for fiction and nonfiction; and writing about family. Contact **Timothy Schaffert** or **Emily Danforth** for details.

Mark Your Calendar For Next Year!

Anyone planning events for the 2009-10 academic year should consult the English Department Calendar of events, and put events there – even for events in other programs that might involve or be of interest to English department faculty and students.

August 21: First Department Meeting (with lunch!),
10:30 a.m., Bailey Library.

October 5-7: Academic Program Review. The review team will be here on campus for those days, so please keep your calendar as free as possible in order to be able to participate in the process.

March 1-12, 2010: Randall Kenan, next year's Writer in Residence, will be in Lincoln. He is the author of *A Visitation of Spirits*, a novel; *Let the Dead Bury Their Dead*, a collection of short stories (a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award); *The Fire This Time*, a memoir and homage to James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time*; and *Walking on Water: Black American Lives at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century*. Randall Kenan is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Whiting Writers Award, and the Rome Prize from the American Academy. During his residency he will teach a graduate workshop in prose and will give a public reading. Anyone interested in using Randall Kenan's work in your classes next year (his work would be especially appropriate for courses in 20th century American fiction, African-American literature, and gay literature) should contact Joy Castro or Jonis Agee.

New Faces in Department Administration

Graduate Chair – **Susan Belasco**
Undergraduate Chair -- **Tom Lynch**
Composition Coordinator -- **Debbie Minter** -- continuing as Vice Chair also through spring, 2010.
Creative Writing Coordinator -- **Jonis Agee**
Vice Chair (May 2010) -- **Laura White**

English Candidates for Degrees With Distinction

May 9, 2009 Graduation

Black, Megan, "Constructing Falstaff: The Quest for the Ideal Father in Teen Film Adaptations of Shakespeare in the 1990s," (supervisors: **Stephen Buhler, Gwendolyn Foster**).

Christensen, April Renee, "The River Styx," (supervisors: **Judith Slater, Stephen Buhler**).

Dragseth, Eric Scott, "The Tales of Kirabo and Other Curiosities," (supervisors: **Judith Slater, Seanna Oakely**).

Johnson, Audrey, "The Reproductive Rights of South African Women: The Ability to Chose Contraceptive Services and How Existing Literature Hinders Empowerment," (supervisors: **Amy Goodburn**, English/Women's & Gender Studies **and Marie-Chantal Kalisa**, Modern Languages & Lit).

Kersch, Jillian J., "Films about Ghosts," (supervisors: **Karen Lyons**, English/University Honors Program, **and Steve Edwards**),

Knight, Sarah A., "Is That An Indian Thing?: Indian Identity in the Works of Richard Wagamese," (supervisors: **Frances W. Kaye, Janet Jarvis**).

Sathiyaseelan, Sinduja, "Coconuts in July," (supervisors: **Gerry Shapiro, Frankie Condon**).