

Wordsworth

The Newsletter of Lewis & Clark's English Department



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We want to hear from you!

Drop us a line to let us know what
you've been up to, where you're living,
and what plans you're making. You can

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MARY SZYBIST HONORED WITH NATIONAL BOOK AWARD

by Rosemary Lambert

It has been quite the year for poet and professor Mary Szybist. In November, she won the highly prestigious National Book Award for her book of poems, *Incarnadine*, in March received the 2014 Oregon Book Award's Stafford/Hall Award for Poetry, and in April was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship.

The National Book Award is bestowed by the National Book Foundation, and the Poetry Award, one of four categories, typically has around 150 submissions according to nationalbook.org. From this pool of outstanding poets, and from the award's "long list" to its "short list," Mary Szybist was chosen to receive the Award for Poetry, and in a year that just happened to land 50 years after William Stafford accepted the same award for *Traveling Through the Dark*.

The inspiration for Szybist's book came while she was in Florence, pondering the many Renaissance-era paintings. Amid that flood of inspiring images, she found herself continually drawn to a few depictions of the Annunciation: paintings by Fra Angelico, Simone Martini, Sandro Botticelli, and Leonardo da Vinci. She was entranced both by the encounter between a human and a divine being and, as Szybist explains, the "enforced space between the figures."

Incarnadine is an exploration of faith and religion, often where these may least be expected to be found. The unexpected is constantly being discovered in this collection, from the innovative forms of the poems—one written in a diagrammed sentence, another like the rays of the sun—to the raw and unflinching picture of the Cathars' blind march. Her poems

present the reader with a brief moment in time, framed and illuminated like a window of colored glass.

Although her work is entitled *Incarnadine*, which refers to a pinkish-red or crimson hue, and to a line from *Macbeth* — “this my hand will rather / The multitudinous seas incarnadine, / Making the green one red” — the color that dominates the poems in *Incarnadine* is blue. Szybist explains this as an exploration of the two main colors associated with the Virgin Mary, blue and red, and provocatively enlists Carl Sagan's words about the color of the earth from space: “The blue comes partly from the sea, partly from the sky... it absorbs slightly more red than blue... and what is reflected back to space is mainly blue.” Szybist has explained that she wanted “blue to dominate the poems as the color that is reflected back and therefore visible—but that doesn't mean red, with all the passions associated with that color, is not there.”

With barely a pause to catch her breath, Szybist has begun writing a new collection of poems, this one inspired by Teresa of Avila's famous sixteenth-century work *Interior Castle*. This book will focus on the motif of the spiritual journey rather than on *Incarnadine*'s examination of a single moment through different lenses, and will take up the challenge of a journey inward. Szybist received a Guggenheim Fellowship to assist her in the writing of this work.



Mary Szybist

“YOU MUST REVISE YOUR SYMPOSIUM”

by Sara Balsom

On Saturday March 15, the William Stafford Centennial took up where it left off on February 7th's tribute to William Stafford at the Newmark Theatre. Despite a blitz of inclement weather that fell over Portland on the weekend of the 7th, the Newmark event was still attended by about 300 guests, and the rest of the symposium, rescheduled to March, survived mostly intact.

Scholar Fred Marchant was one of those speakers missed at the symposium but who was able to attend the Newmark celebration.

Downtown, most bus lines were closed, and roads choked with snow. Still, several hundred people made it to the reading downtown. As Professor Jerry Harp later remarked, “There was a feeling that we were the intrepid few who couldn't be stopped from coming to the reading... It was a convivial evening created by that sense that we had... come out in defiance of the conditions [to join] in something together.” Matthew Dickman introduced the poets Mary Szybist, Tony Hogland, and Li-Young Lee; and Kim Stafford moderated a dialogue between

Continued on page 3

"So 'OCCUPY' BECAME THE WORD OF THE YEAR IN 2011"

by Erica Terpening-Romeo

That's how Harvard English Professor Marjorie Garber began her lecture on William Shakespeare's shifting position in popular culture. The event, which was so well attended that the seating in the Gregg Pavilion had to be doubled to accommodate the audience, was humorously titled "Occupy Shakespeare: Shakespeare and/in the Humanities."

Professor Garber, one of the most well-respected Shakespeare scholars in the United States, visited the Lewis & Clark campus in late September, as part of the Phi Beta Kappa visiting-scholars program.

In addition to teaching at Harvard, she has published seventeen books and edited seven collections of essays on a wide variety of topics – from Shakespeare to sexuality to real estate, from a biography of quotation marks to an exploration of the relationships between humans and their dogs. She has also been interviewed on the Charlie Rose show, and was recently featured on the BBC/PBS television series "Shakespeare Uncovered."

The English Department wanted to make the most of Garber's visit at Lewis & Clark. She began her day guest-lecturing on *Coriolanus* in Professor Lyell Asher's Shakespeare course,

shared a casual lunch with a small group of students, then met with English faculty before whisking off to the Pavilion to address an audience of students and faculty, most from the English, Theatre and History departments, as well as administrators, staff, and a few members of the community.

Garber's talk focused on Shakespeare's reception throughout the centuries, both when he was on the inside (a member of the "1%") and when he was on the outside (a member of the "99%") of mainstream literary culture. In recent decades, she argues, Shakespeare has come to re-occupy his original position among the 99%. Whereas during the first half of the 20th century, references to Shakespeare were used as a kind of code for the intellectual elite, a password used to separate the "in" crowd from the "out," today Shakespeare has become common property, to the point that pop culture icons like Taylor Swift can name-drop from *Romeo and Juliet* and fans of every age and from nearly every social or cultural background will catch the reference. This "Shakespeare tagging," as Garber calls it, requires almost no familiarity with the language of the plays and only a passing familiarity with their plots: "Shakespeare's very name is a brand unto itself."

Though her talk was anchored in a serious inquiry about culture, appropriation, and access, Garber was not above poking gentle fun at herself and the humanities in general. She sent up the field of digital humanities, for instance, with a slide on Shakespeare's own preoccupation with occupation through a series of Venn diagrams, each representing a line or phrase of Shakespeare's in which one thing occupies another.

As an academic community committed to remaining vitally connected to the larger world, Lewis & Clark has a special stake in Garber's message of inclusion and bridge-building. Her main point – that any coverage of Shakespeare is good coverage, from the highest brow to the lowest, from the most traditional to the most radically modern – resonated with her audience in the Pavilion that evening. The final question of the evening came from a professor who expressed concern that such a universalist spirit in the academic world would lead to the "dumbing down" of Shakespeare in the service of holding on to a popular audience. "The only way to teach anything is to meet people where they are," Garber responded, "I'm not about defending the humanities; I'm about living them."

ALUMNA REVISITS FOR A READING

by Kaiya Gordon

Corey Van Landingham ('08), a current Stegner fellow at Stanford University, captured the ears of students, professors, and friends at the Frank Manor House on February 11th. She read from her debut book, *Antidote*, winner of the Ohio State University Press/The Journal Award in Poetry. Described as "unflinching, urgent, luminous work," by Associate Professor of English Mary Szybist, the book grapples with Van Landingham's grief over the death of her father and a failed engagement.

Jerry Harp, Assistant Professor of English and Director of Academic Advising, introduced the poet by mentioning that they had arrived at Lewis & Clark together: Van Landingham took a history of the lyric class in her first semester, which was the first class Harp taught at the college. That sense of history pervaded the reading on Tuesday night, as Van Landingham discussed influences and literary traditions.

One overarching influence at Lewis & Clark is the late William Stafford, former professor at the college and United States Poet Laureate. Van Landingham—in preparation for Stafford's centennial celebration—worked in the Stafford archives, viewing his correspondence with creative greats like Martin Bell and Ted Kooser. "It was nice to see what history I was coming from," said Van Landingham of Stafford. "As

a contemporary poet, what I've learned from Stafford—and what I mourn in some way—is his understatement." She continued, "I don't always want to be told what I need from a poem."

Stafford, hailed for his sharp and simple language, is not the only poet from whom Van Landingham has taken cues. Van Landingham opened her reading with Sylvia Plath's "Epithaph for Fire and Flower" to honor the anniversary of the great poet's death. Other influences discussed were Adrienne Rich, Sappho, Shakespeare, and Chris Issak: her poem, "This World Is Only Going to Break Your Heart," steals its title from a line of Isaak's song "Wicked Game," a song Van Landingham called a "jukebox favorite."

After graduating from Lewis & Clark, she took a year off before completing an MFA at Purdue University. It was at Purdue University that much of *Antidote* was written. Van Landingham stressed how important the MFA program was for her, saying that "it was the most important thing to do... it was time to write."

In fact, time to write was incredibly fruitful for Van Landingham, as *Antidote* was written in only one year. "The poems did come fairly quickly," she revealed. "There was a rush to them."

The poems themselves are otherworldly. Van Landingham herself describes the book as "surreal," but also divulged that the writing process "ended up being a method in which I

could approach grief. [In *Antidote*] there had to be some sort of continuous world... there had to be a layer of grief under each poem."

Her reading was steeped in that layer of grief. Written in a variety of poetic structures, *Antidote* wouldn't seem to lend itself to being read aloud, but Van Landingham's obvious comfort in front of the audience and concentration on the characters that infiltrate her poems made for an intimate reading.

The poet seemed most settled while sharing personal anecdotes and stories. One striking moment among these was the way she ushered in her poem "Confessional" by recalling a time that her father lit their garage on fire with a discarded cigarette.

And Van Landingham is not yet done with sharing her work. She closed the reading with three new poems, which all ruminated on the contemporary subject of drone aircraft. The new poems—at once frightening and comforting, human and surreal—indicate a new focus for Van Landingham without sacrificing the strangeness of her debut.

But Van Landingham is not interested in being explicitly traditional: "I say love so much and I have so many birds and trees," she said. "I'm interested in writing about things you aren't supposed to."

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"YOU MUST REVISE YOUR SYMPOSIUM" CONT'D.

Hogland and Lee about Stafford's poetry. In between these speakers, film and photographs of Stafford made the event a multimedia experience. One reel of footage showed Stafford speaking on a panel of poets including Richard Eberhart and Anthony Hecht, among others, instance, with a slide on Shakespeare's own preoccupation with occupation through a series of Venn diagrams, each representing a line or phrase of Shakespeare's in which one thing occupies another.

The rescheduled symposium, "You Must Revise Your Life": Stafford at 100, A Celebration and Reassessment, took place on Saturday, March 15th, and gathered together people who knew Stafford firsthand, archivists who knew him through his writing, and others who were introduced to him perhaps for the first time on Saturday. The day-long event was composed of several panels and a self-guided tour of the Stafford Exhibits in the Library and the Hoffman Gallery. Someone who had never encountered Stafford before Saturday could glean a sense of his person, ethics, writing habits, and character. This portrait of Stafford is one of a humble, talented, and hardworking teacher, poet and family man – someone dedicated to the craft of writing, to "concentric peace," and to human connection.

Kimberly King ('75), a former student of Stafford's, recalled the deep respect he showed to all his students, citing a comment he had left on one of her assignments: "I'm copying into my notes your comments on the first page." King remarked, "he wanted to be able to go back to what I had written and reflect on it at length; what a deep level of respect that shows."



"You Must Revise Your Life":
The William Stafford Centennial

Stafford practiced teaching with an egalitarian approach and unassuming consideration of his students' ideas. He asked students to "master language by using it [and] not write just to please the teacher." Primus St. John, another former student, recalled the nature of Stafford's responses to students: "When he was critical [of a student's thought] – it was rare – he would say, 'I'd never thought about that before. Maybe if you looked at it again another way you might see it a little differently, but I like your idea a lot.'" From their recollections it seems that Stafford didn't push writing and literature on his students, that he instead helped them "draw on [their] inner reserves," to find the writing and the love for literature that they already possessed.

In Kim Stafford's opening speech, he quoted Basho, saying "Don't seek the old masters, seek what they sought." The Stafford Symposium was a day dedicated to seeking what William Stafford sought and a reminder that when we try to urgently seek somebody we can lose ourselves in a world of perceptions.

A well-known anecdote was told during the first Q&A session of when someone at a reading had called out to Stafford, "I could have written that!" Stafford's response was recounted by two audience members: "Yes, but you didn't," is what he said," the woman telling the story laughed. A man piped up from the front row, "Well, I heard it a little differently, what he said was, 'But you could write your own.'" They quickly agreed he had said both things. It became clear from that moment that we had gathered together not just to sift through a life,

asking who was he? But to draw on our inner reserves, to remember how he did what he did, the people with whom he made connections, and what he saw in others.

"I remember..." was said to be one of Stafford's favorite writing prompts. He told students to think of something they had done but to write what they might have done. "You must revise your life," he is famously quoted as saying. Revision and reimaging were both part of Saturday's symposium, an event revised in its own way due to weather conditions and dedicated to imagining and reimaging Stafford.

The Stafford Symposium was a time to remember someone and also to ask what it means to remember. At the end of the day, I wanted to know the man described by his son as "Strewing beauty, curiosity and connection," the poet who relied on "concentric peace" and the professor who asked his students to draw on their inner reserves. And I realized the best way to know Stafford would be to seek these things for myself.

"When we don't know something, we are given the best chance to understand poetry. When we think we know everything, we are blind," Kim Stafford quoted his father as saying. I held this thought in my head as I left the symposium. I considered what I now knew of this man I had never met — the photographs, video clips, his voice resonating through the chapel from a recording. I can't pretend to know him now. But I was given the chance, that day, to imagine who he might have been.

IN MEMORIAM: VERN RUTSALA



Vern Rutsala, past English department faculty member, poet, and co-founder of the department's creative-writing program, died April 2, 2014, at the age of 80.

Born February 5, 1934 in McCall Idaho, Vern Rutsala first came to Portland in the early 1940's, where he attended Milwaukie High School.

He earned his B.A. at Reed College in 1956, the same year that he began his two-year military service in the U.S. Army. 1958 saw his return to academia at the Iowa Writer's Workshop, where he earned his M.F.A. in 1960. He eventually returned to Portland, settling here at Lewis & Clark College where he taught English and creative writing for 40 years.

As a poet, Rutsala published sixteen books and over 700 poems, including in various an-

thologies, poetry journals, and magazines, including *The New Yorker*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Chicago Review*, and *American Poetry Review*. After retiring from Lewis & Clark in 2004, he published three further books of poems, two in 2004 and one in 2006.

For his work Rutsala received numerous awards, among which are the Juniper Prize, the Oregon Book Award, the Stafford/Hall Award for poetry, and a finalist selection for the National Book Award. His Fellowships included an Oregon Masters fellowship, two fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts fellowships, and a Guggenheim.

Rutsala once said of writing poetry, "I like to throw the blob of words on the page, then come back, maybe days later, to see what is still possible in the poem. Then I'm able to shape it. Most language is trying to sell us something or deceive us. Poetry doesn't try to deceive."

A celebration of life for Vern Rutsala was held in the campus's Smith Hall on May 17th.

INCARNADINE: AN INTERVIEW WITH MARY SZYBIST

by Sara Balsom

SARA BALSOM: I know you spent time looking at Annunciation scenes as research for your book and I'm curious, what drew you to the Annunciation, and also, during your research, were there certain elements of the Annunciation that were more essential than others?

MARY SZYBIST: Part of what attracted me to the scene was the sense of encounter and the sense of two very different beings able to perceive and interact with one another and be transformed. But I also love, in the paintings, the enforced space between the figures – the subject of the paintings often is the space between them; rather than the central human subject or the central physical subject, the subject really is distance. So that, in some ways, was the most important aspect for me – not just any space or distance, but a very charged distance that in some ways both separates and connects.

SB: When reading the book I found myself wondering, to what extent is "Mary" in the poems an autobiographical Mary, and to what extent is she a re-imagined archetypal Mary?

MS: Right, and that's part of the play. And sometimes it's very clear which it is. Obviously I can't speak for this mythological Mary but – I do. So it's a kind of an imagined ventriloquism. I'm imagining – so of course I'm projecting myself

Hall

Mary who mattered to me, gone or asleep
among fruits, spilled

in ash, in dust, I did not

leave you. Even now I can't keep from
composing you, limbs and blue cloak

and soft hands. I sleep to the sound

of your name, I say there is no Mary
except the word Mary, no trace

on the dust of my pillowslip. I only

dream of your ankles brushed by dark violets,
of honeybees above you

murmuring into a crown. Antique queen,

in some way. And then there's the poems which are definitely from the point of view of a contemporary woman, but even when I have a poem as direct as "Updates on Mary" which announces itself as an autobiography, I don't think it's as simple as that –

SB: Yeah, I got the sense while reading that poem that it was also a sort of update on [the archetypal] Mary.

MS: That's right. So I'm playing. I don't think any poems are strict autobiography. They're always an imagining.

SB: Following that line of thought, do you like to think of your collection as a re-imaginings of the Annunciation?

MS: Yes, but, many re-imaginings. I mean, it's not like Yeats who does one reimagining of Leda and the Swan, which is an Annunciation scene, and that's his reimagining of that scene. I didn't want to do just one version of the Annunciation, I did many, many, many. And I'm not recasting a mythology, I'm not saying "Here's the Christian mythology, and here is my new mythology that is consistent and a replacement of some kind."

Blake's idea is "I must create a system, or be enslaved by another man's." I thought about that a lot in the book. I'm very sympathetic to that idea – that unless one really re-imagines these inherited ways of thinking, one is going to be in them. But I also don't quite subscribe to the

idea that one has to remake a new mythology to replace it. One can unravel it through different kinds of reimaginings, but none of them is meant to be a replacement, like "I'm kicking out that mythology so here's this new [one] where the woman is on top and Joseph is relegated." It doesn't even have to be an unraveling; it can be a loosening that allows a wider range of possibilities.

SB: Yeah, and it seems like it's also a way to interrogate or to look into trauma and tragedy in a modern world.

MS: Yes.

SB: And – you know – if someone said to me "I'm doing a re-imaging, a modernization of the Annunciation," what would come to mind is maybe somebody sitting in a doctor's office and hearing "Oh, you're pregnant," [both laugh], and that's not what this is, so I was curious, what, to you, makes something an Annunciation? What is the presence that had to be there for it to be in the collection?

MS: There was no essential ingredient. It really could echo it in any number of ways. That's part of the permission I gave myself. It could have a visual correspondence, a thematic correspondence... I really wanted to play fast and loose if I was going to have so many repetitions of something so central. I needed to keep the possibilities wide.

the night dreams on: here are the pears
I have washed for you, here the heavy-winged doves,

asleep by the hyacinths. Here I am,

having bathed carefully in the syllables
of your name, in the air and the sea of them, the sharp scent

of their sea foam. What is the matter with me?

Mary, what word, what dust
can I look behind? I carried you a long way

into my mirror, believing you would carry me

back out. Mary, I am still
for you, I am still a numbness for you.

— Mary Szybist

FACULTY NEWS & UPDATES

KURT FOSSO This year marks the end of Kurt Fosso's happy stint as department chair (Will Pritchard will take over for Fall). In November he presented a paper, "Of Asses and Men: The Animal in Wordsworth's *Peter Bell*," at the Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association conference, in sunny San Diego. With the new year, he participated in a daylong Lewis & Clark Law School conference on animal studies, where he discussed his recent work. The year also saw the publication of his article on human animality, "Feet of Beasts": Tracking the Animal in Blake" (*European Romantic Review*, 2014).

KAREN GROSS has been pondering end times with her research of illustrated manuscripts of the Apocalypse, building on her archival research in England last year while on sabbatical. The latest stage of the project was delivered as a paper at the Modern Language Association's conference in January. In July she'll be presenting on pilgrimage maps and the First Crusade at the New Chaucer Society's biannual congress, held this year in Reykjavik. Afterwards she and a friend plan to hike for two weeks, scouting for puffins, fumaroles, and elves.

ANDREA HIBBARD gave a paper on her current law and literature project at the 2014 INCS conference in March. She also contributed an article on George Egerton to the forthcoming *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Victorian Literature*.

MICHAEL MIRABILE is currently completing a book project on American fiction and mass media, and has recently published articles on Don DeLillo and Nathanael West.

RISHONA ZIRMING will be co-leading both a seminar about Bloomsbury, at the annual conference on Virginia Woolf this June in Chicago, and a seminar about interdisciplinary modernist scholarship at the Modernist Studies Association conference this November in Pittsburgh. In addition, she will be giving a paper about Katherine Mansfield and the sculptor Henri Gaudier-Brzeska at a conference on Mansfield and France, this June in Paris. Her essay about modernism, ballet, and folk dance is forthcoming in the journal *Modernist Cultures*.

JERRY HARP's afterword to Thomas More's *Utopia* appears in the second edition of Clar-

ence Miller's translation (Yale U. Press 2014). This year also saw the publication of two of his articles: "Ong, Hopkins, and the Evolution of Consciousness" in *Explorations in Media Ecology* and "Clearest-Selved Spark": Walter Ong as Evolutionary Thinker" in *Religion and Literature*. His poem "Turning" appeared in *Pleiades*, and his poem "Witness" appeared in *Subtropics*.



KRISTIN FUJIE WINS THE GRAVES AWARD



Kristin Fujie

The third English department faculty member to be so honored, Kristin Fujie has received the Arnold L. and Lois S. Graves Award for Excellence in Teaching. This competitive award recognizes excellence in humanities teaching, and is administered biennially by Pomona College and under the auspices of the American Council of Learned Societies. The purpose of the Graves Awards is to "encourage and to reward

'outstanding accomplishment in actual teaching in the humanities.'

The funding that accompanies this award supports research-related expenses, and Fujie will use the \$12,000 award to complete two articles tentatively titled "Hurt So Bad: The Crisis of Female Embodiment in Faulkner's *Mosquitoes*" and "On Native Soil: The Psychosexual and Southern Origins of Flags in the Dust." These essays will be the foundation for a book that re-imagines Faulkner's career from its beginning through the 1930s. Fujie is interested in reading Faulkner's earlier novels as departures from Faulkner's usual style which nonetheless lay groundwork for themes

important in his later work. For example, Faulkner's treatment of the white female body in *Mosquitoes* can inform a reading of some of Faulkner's later works, where themes of virginity and the feminine ideal are developed in more complexity. Fujie also plans to use the award to attend the American Literature Association Conference, in Washington, D.C and the 130th MLA Annual Convention in Vancouver, Canada. Fujie joins other Lewis & Clark Graves awardees, including, impressively, the English department's own Rachel Cole (2012) and Karen Gross (2008).

STUDENT AND ALUMNI NEWS

JORDAN BUYSSE ('13) will be starting his PhD in the fall at University of Virginia. He is hoping to work with Rita Felski and Jennifer Wicke, who are both modernists, and enters the program with an additional interest in the digital humanities research happening at UVA's Scholar's lab.

KATRIN GIBB ('08) is completing her MFA in Fiction this spring at San Francisco State University. Her first short story is forthcoming in *Hobart* in their March 2014 issue.

MAXWELL FAULK ('15) received the 2014 Emerging Voice Award from the Department of Inclusion and Multicultural Engagement for his work toward social justice at Lewis & Clark.

ERIC LUNDREGEN's ('00) novel *The Façades* was published this past September and has been awarded BEA Editor's Buzz Panel Selection 2013, a Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers Pick Fall 2013, and a Publishers Weekly Best Fiction Book of 2013.

MARGARET ROSE ('13) will be beginning an MA in Humanities at the University of Chicago in the fall.

RACHEL WEBSTER's ('97) new book of poetry, *September*, was published this last April through (Press), and in February this year she gave a reading at Marylhurst College in Lake Oswego. Li-Young Lee calls this book "proof she is on a path of ever-deepening power, insight, and craft."

2014 STUDENT AWARDS & HONORS

DIXON AWARD RECIPIENTS CAITLIN DEGNON AND LILLIAN TUTTLE



Caitlin Degnon

Two junior English majors received a Dixon research-travel award this year, Caitlin Degnon and Lillian Tuttle.

Lillian Tuttle plans to go to France (June 19-21, 2014) and attend the Katherine Mansfield and France conference in Paris, where she will learn about Mansfield's connection to France within the context of the modernist movement in literature. She will also attend the Visual Culture Colloquium at Willamette University (October 3-4, 2014). Lillian is excited to combine this research project with her coursework in Rishona Zimring's Woolf & Joyce class and in her senior seminar on Woolf this fall.

Caitlin Degnon plans to go to the Library of Congress over the summer to conduct research on Zora Neal Hurston's anthropological field work. She is interested in how Hurston's field research in the Caribbean and the Southern United States influenced her fiction writing. Caitlin developed an interest in Hurston while taking "Blackness in Latin America" (SOAN 298-03), and she is excited to be able to study Hurston in order to better understand Hurston's depictions of race in her fiction.

The Dixon Award was established in 2002 by the Dixon Family Foundation, thanks to the generous efforts of alumni Hillary ('99) and Adam ('01) Dixon. Each year a junior English major is awarded a \$2,500 research and travel grant to enrich his or her current studies in preparation for senior year.



Lillian Tuttle

JERRY BAUM AWARD RECIPIENT MARLEY WILLIAMS



Marley Williams

This year's recipient of the Baum Award is Marley Williams for her seminar paper titled "My Solitary Condition: Isolation and the Myth of Reform in *Robinson Crusoe*." In her paper she explores ideas of criminality and imprisonment in *Robinson Crusoe* and other works by Daniel Defoe, within the historical context of the criminal justice system of 18th-century England.

The Jerry Baum Award was established in 2007 by the Department of English, alumni, family, and friends to honor the memory of beloved professor R. Jerold (Jerry) Baum. The recipient is a senior whose senior-seminar paper addresses the relationship between literature and history and is recognized as outstanding by the English faculty. A \$250 prize accompanies the award.

SENIOR FICTION AND POETRY PRIZE AWARDS



Taylor Lannamann

The 2014 Lewis & Clark College Fiction Prize is awarded to Taylor Lannamann for his story entitled "Conversation Sixteen."

This year's co-winners of the Academy of American Poets Prize is Talal Gedeon Achi for "Scrutiny and Resistentialism at a Supermarket in the West Hills of Portland" and to Sara Balsom for "The Ash Tree Brings You a Sister."

Honorable mentions went to Laura Blum for "To My Medication" and to Laura Houlberg for "Thoughts from the Pink Lake in Esperance, Australia."



Sara Balsom



Talal Gedeon Achi

ERICA TERPENING-ROMEO, RENA RATTE WINNER



Erica
Terpening-Romeo

English graduate Erica Terpening-Romeo is this year's recipient of the College's highest academic honor, the Rena Ratte Award. A Pamplin Society member, Erica also received the Senior Woman Recognition Award, given by the American Association of University

Women. Never before has a graduating student received both of these prestigious awards.

A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear department friends,

This past academic year was surely "The Year of English." As this newsletter's page-2 article describes, Fall brought to campus the Shakespeare scholar and culture critic Marjorie Garber for a (SRO) lecture in Gregg Pavilion, "Occupy Shakespeare: Shakespeare and/in the Humanities," sponsored by our department with help from Phi Beta Kappa. The year also marked the centennial of Lewis & Clark's (and our department's) most famous teacher, the poet William Stafford. We observed the 100th year of his birth with numerous campus and local events, including an October reunion of English alumni, a snowed-in February night of poetry at the Newmark Theater, and a rescheduled, daylong symposium, "*You Must Revise Your Life*: *Stafford at 100, A Celebration and Reassessment*, in Agnes Flanagan Chapel in March. Despite what was dubbed Portland's Snowpocalypse, the Newmark evening and Symposium proved perfectly fitting (albeit logically challenging) tributes.

The biggest English and literary news of the year came this spring, with Mary Szybist winning the National Book Award for Poetry for her book *Incarnadine*. Coincidentally, she did so 50 years after Stafford himself did so for *Traveling Through The Dark*, and becomes third in a direct line of NBA-poetry nominees from our department, the late Vern Rutsala having also been a finalist in 2005 for *The Moment's Equation*. The halls of Miller have echoed with popping champagne corks! And following Mary's National Book Award came news of her receiving the Oregon Book Award and, most recently, a Guggenheim fellowship.

Nor was that our only big news. Aside from publications and conference presentations by many of our faculty, the year also saw the rollout of Rishona Zimring's book, *Social Dance and the Modernist Imagination* (2013, Ashgate). And on the teaching front, our newest department member, Kristin Fujie, received the prestigious Graves Award for Excellence in Teaching, our department's third such award (a 'shout out' to past recipients Rachel Cole and Karen Gross).

And still more news, this time concerning one of our wonderful 2014 graduating class of English majors. At the Honors Convocation we learned that Erica Terpening-Romeo had been chosen for the College's top academic honor, the Rena Ratte Award as well as for the Senior Woman Recognition Award from the American Association of University Women. To win either award is the rarest of accomplishments; to win both awards is historic. (Also a bit historic: Erica's is the second Ratte Award received by a graduating English major in the last few years.)

This past year our acclaimed Writers Series brought to Armstrong Lounge a bevy of inspiring poets and fiction writers. The poets included Brenda Hillman, Alan Shapiro, our own alumna Cori Van Landingham ('08), Marianne Boruch, Karla Kelse, a co-reading by Samiya Bashir and Joy Katz, and, capping it off, our visiting poet Michael McGriff, a Stegner Fellow and the founding editor of Tavern Books. And if that wasn't enough, in conjunction with the Stafford Centennial we hosted a poetry reading by Julian May and Katrina Porteous from the BBC. On the fiction side, we were graced with readings by three wonderful writers: Ismet Prcic, Molly Antopol, and Emily Chenoweth. Plus the yearend Senior Fiction and Senior Poetry readings and the publication of our *Literary Review*!

On the career front, the department and the Career Development Center co-sponsored a meeting with Lewis & Clark Public Affairs and Communications staff members about working in public relations and media. English also hosted a meeting of our majors with literary agent Betsy Amster about careers in writing and publishing.

We closed off the year with an inaugural History and English Office Crawl (!) and with our Commencement-morning Senior Reception for our graduates. And in May several past and current English faculty attended a moving celebration of life—and of poetry—for Vern Rutsala. If you've not read his poem "Living," for one, I heartily recommend it. "No one tells you how it's done— / you are expected to know. . . . And this is expected when some, like you and me, / may find it hard mastering the art of walking up stairs."

Well that's it—quite the list for this year of English. Thanks for reading, and please come visit us, write us, or browse our web page. And of course you can always follow us (and *like us*) on Facebook. It's been a pleasure chairing this great department.

Best wishes to you all, near and far,

Kurt Fosso