

# Fall 2010

## CREATIVE WRITING DEPARTMENT

San Francisco State University

[www.sfsu.edu/~cwriting](http://www.sfsu.edu/~cwriting), [cwriting@sfsu.edu](mailto:cwriting@sfsu.edu)

Dear Students, Faculty, and Alums :

I am writing to welcome you to fall semester 2010. Though the budget crisis still looms, our class offering remains steady. Therefore, I think you will find most of what you need to advance in our programs. With the classes we have, our fine magazines, our Poetry Center, and our playwriting program's offerings in Theater Arts, I hope you will find ways to fulfill yourselves and make yourselves part of our community. Many of you have started reading series of your own, magazines, blogs, and showcases, and I congratulate you on your efforts. I especially want to praise *Transfer*, our undergraduate-run journal, which will be celebrating publication of its 100<sup>th</sup> issue this fall.

If you are a graduate of our program reading this newsletter, I appeal to you for help in these hard times. The department is without a budget for even the simplest supplies, not to mention greater goals such as more scholarships, sending students to conferences, and paying directors to assist with student plays. Let's work to continue to enrich the lives of our B.A., M.A., and M.F.A. writers and to lobby our national and state governments to make education a serious and constant priority.

Congratulations to the many of you who have published and had your work produced, who have edited anthologies and magazines, who have taught workshops and classes for children and adults, and who have enriched the writing community. Two of our alums took top honors in recent years with their Pulitzer Prizes in poetry, Philip Schultz in 2008 and Rae Armantrout in 2010. We are proud of all of you.

Sincerely,  
Maxine Chernoff,  
Chair of Creative Writing

### NEWS \* NEWS \* NEWS

#### Faculty

**Alice LaPlante's** novel, *Turn of Mind*, will be published by Grove/Atlantic in Winter 2011. **Dodie Bellamy** has a piece in the new City Lights anthology, *Life As We Show It*. The ukulele opera that **Michelle Carter** wrote with the Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain is being produced in Holland and Germany in late 2011. She also had a play performed at the Asolo Rep in Florida, Centenary Stage in New Jersey and a workshop production at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles. Her play, *How to Pray* won the 2010 Susan Glaspell Prize. **Nona Caspers** won the Fiction Open Award from *Glimmer Train Quarterly* and her story "Ants" will appear in 2011. Another essay/story was in the Writers' Bulletin, three stories will appear this fall in *Black Warrior Review*, and one in the fall issue of

*Cimarron Review*. **Maxine Chernoff** taught in the Prague Summer Seminars. **Toni Mirosevich** has a new book of poetry, *The Takeaway Bin*, forthcoming from Spuyten Duyvil Press, New York; poems from which appear in *Eleven Eleven*, Volume 9. **Steve Dickison** and **Susan Gevirtz** will be reading their poetry Sunday, October 31, 2010, at Unnameable Books in Brooklyn, New York. **Camille T. Dungy's** second collection of poetry, *Suck on the Marrow* (Red Hen Press), was released January 2010. Her anthology, *Black Nature: Four Centuries of African American Nature Poetry* (UGA) was published in December 2009 and has received several commendations, including the Northern California Book Award's Special Recognition prize. Her third book of poems, *Smith Blue*, won the 2010 Crab Orchard Open Award and will be published by Southern Illinois University Press, July 2011. **Barbara Tomash's** second book of poetry, *The Secret of White* came out earlier this year from Spuyten Duyvil. Her first book of poetry, *Flying In Water*, the winner of the Winnow First Book Award, has been reissued by Spuyten Duyvil. **Peter Orner** has a story in *Granta* this fall, and a new novel coming out next year from Little, Brown. A non-fiction book about Zimbabwe, *Hope Deferred*, that Orner edited with SFSU Creative Writing Department alumna, Annie Holmes, will be out this coming November from McSweeney's/Voice of Witness. **Paul Hoover's** *Beyond the Court Gate: Selected Poems of Nguyen Trai* was published by Counterpath Press, Denver. He won the 2010 Frederick Bock Award from *Poetry Magazine*.

#### Former faculty

**Nina Schuyler** (MFA 2003) has a short story coming out in *ZYZZYVA*, "The Cleaning Woman" and won Second Place in the 2010 Ledge Fiction Contest with her short story "The Current;" "The View from over Here", was accepted by *The Battered Suitcase*, and she also ran a flash fiction contest for [www.eratosphere.com](http://www.eratosphere.com). **Laura Walker's** (MFA 2003) poetry chapbook *bird book* (Albion Books, 2010) will be published in book form by Shearsman Books 2011. **Sarah Rosenthal's** collection of interviews, *A Community Writing Itself: Conversations with Vanguard Writers of the Bay Area*, is forthcoming from Dalkey Archive. She has been awarded writing residencies at Vermont Studio Center, Ragdale Foundation, and Soul Mountain.

#### Alumni

**Canyon Sam** (MFA 1998) won the PEN Open Book Award for her 50-year oral history of Tibet, *Sky Train: Tibetan Women on the Edge of History*, heralded by Alice Walker and Maxine Kingston and with a forward by the

Dalai Lama. Canyon traveled the world's highest and most controversial railway route to visit with extraordinary women throughout Tibet. She will be formally honored in New York City on October 13, 2010. **Jaime Robles** (MA 1991, MFA 2003) had a collected of poems, *Anime, Animus, Anima*, published in March 2010 by Shearsman Books, UK; Jaime was also accepted into the PhD program in Creative Writing at the University of Exeter, Dorset, England. **Richard J. Martin** (MA 2010) received an Adult Teaching Credential and is teaching English Composition in the San Francisco County Jail. He has a piece in *Noe Valley Voice*, July 2010. The San Francisco Arts Commission has hired a number of our alumni to be Teaching Artists: **Aracely Gonzalez** (MA 2006), "...raised in Salinas, California where she drew inspiration from the row fields in her horizon. She is co-founder of Fish Soup, an all-women cross genre writing workshop. Her writing has appeared in various journals, including *Suspect Thoughts: A Journal of Subversive Writing*;" **Rick D'Elia** (MFA 2010) "...is co-founder and curator of the Living Room Reading Series. His work has most recently appeared in *We Still Like, The Chiron Review*, and *Switchback*;" **Carrie Leilam Love** (MFA 2009) "...has been published by Drunk N Sailor Press and Intersection for the Arts. She writes about fashion and society at the Ironing Board Collective." **Lucy Day's** (MA 1999, MFA 2004) personal essay "Time-Out!"—which appeared in *Passages North*—made the notables list in *Best American Essays 2010*. Also, her work is included in *New Poets of the American West* (Many Voices Press, 2010), and she has been invited to read on December 7, 2010, in the Poetry at Noon Series at the Library of Congress. Her website is <http://lucillelangday.com>. **Anhvu Buchanan** (MFA 2010) is the recipient of the 2010 James Duval Phelan Award for his poetry manuscript *The Disorder Index*. His poems have also appeared or are forthcoming in *580 Split*, *Cream City Review*, and *word for/ word*. He blogs for the Diasporic Vietnamese Artists Network. **Renato Escudero** (BA 2004, MA 2006, MFA 2009) has had short stories published in the Summer 2010 issue of *SNR* and the January 2010 issue of *The Blotter Magazine*. He also has a story forthcoming in *Saranac Review*, No. 6, Fall 2010. **John High's** (MA 1987) poetry collection, *The Book of Unknowing* was released by Talisman House earlier this year and his new translations of Osip Mandelstam's poetry was published in *NAW 28*. John is preparing for a pilgrimage in China while teaching a poetry workshop in Hang-chou. **Adele Langendorf** (MA 1975) has published a mystery novel, *The Shipyard Murders*, which has been doing very well – Adele has been giving readings all over the Bay Area. **Susan St. Aubin's** (MA 1980, department office manager 1980-2004) short story "Rebecca's Place" will be in the anthology *The Mammoth Book of Threesomes and Moresomes* (Running Press, October 2010) and "Live Action" will be in the anthology *Smooth*, (Cleis Press, October 2010). **Amy Miller** won the 2010 Cultural Center of Cape Cod National Poetry Competition, judged by Tony Hoagland. **Jim Nelson** (MFA 2009) was published in *We Still Like*

(June 2010), *North American Review* (January 2010) and *The Erotic Review* (September 2009). He was featured this September on the premiere edition of *Invisible Cities Audio Tour: Heliography*. **Jane Ciabattari** (MA 1981), President of the National Book Critics Circle, will be hosting a fiction reading by NBCC award winners and finalists on February 4, 2011 at the AWP. Jane taught fiction writing workshops at Taos Writers Conference in July, gave a fiction reading and lecture at the University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign writer's week last March, and will be at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts on a fiction fellowship in November.

## Students

**Mario Mendoza** (MFA candidate), **Claire Manoogian** (MFA candidate), **Alex Peri** (MFA candidate), and **Michael Miller** (MFA candidate) collaborated on *The Penny Dreadful Project* under the tutelage of Professor **Roy Conboy**. This original new play, which had a summer staging, explores the nature of expressionist, experimental and politically charged theatre. **Emily Wilson** (MFA candidate) was featured in a summer group art exhibition at Pat Sweetow gallery, *Everyday Mystics*, curated by Kim Annondizio. **Annemarie Munn** (MFA candidate) earned a summer-long internship for Levi's Temporary Letterpress Workshop. **Sara Marinelli's** (MFA candidate) translation into Italian of the novel *Song for Night*, by Chris Abani, was published in September 2010 by Fanucci Press (Rome). **Scott Lambridis** (MFA candidate) had a story, "The Hum of Broken Things", published by *Storyglossia 36: Musical Obsession*, along with a companion interview. **Cary Pepper's** (MFA candidate) one-act play *Small Things* was published in *Regional Best 2011* (Level 4 Press). His full-length play *HOW IT WORKS* received a staged reading as a finalist at Dayton Playhouse's FutureFest 2010 (12 finalists chosen from 392 scripts). He was a nominee for the 2010 David and Lynn Angell Humanitas Comedy Fellowship. **Robert Ricardo Reese** (MFA candidate) was awarded the Graduate Equity Fellowship by San Francisco State University for a second consecutive year. Robert attended Cave Canem's annual writer's retreat Summer 2010, working under established poets Toi Derricotte, Cornelius Eady, Carl Phillips, Ed Roberson, Claudia Rankine, and Colleen McElroy. **Pam Benjamin** (MA 2010, MFA Candidate) continues to host her two weekly shows on Pirate Cat Radio, "Common Threads – the only on-air open mic" with the legendary Diamond Dave, and "Pamtastic's Karaoke on the Radio." Her first episodic novella, *The Pigeon Chronicles or Bike Messenger Assassins*, (Ink Press) sold out its first printing and. **Melanie Reitzel** (MFA Candidate) had a memoir piece, "The Brace God of India" published in the Fall 2010 issue of *Zyzzyva, Volume 83*. **Shideh Etaat** (MFA Candidate) was a semi-finalist for the *Nimrod* Katherine Anne Porter Prize for Fiction; she also taught creative writing to elementary school students over the summer and just completed the VONA (Voices of Our Nation) workshop at USF.

**Rajshree Chauhan (MFA candidate, MA 2006)** is co-founder and co-curator of Quiet Lightning reading series in San Francisco, and co-publisher of the affiliated zine *sParkle and bLink*. She is also teaches composition and creative writing at S.F. Bay Area community colleges.

**Kevin Magruder (MA 2006)** just began work toward his MFA at Columbia University this fall. **Mary Taugher's** (MFA Candidate) *Quake, Memory*, will be published in forthcoming Gettysburg Review; she also had stories published in the spring issues of *Instant City* and *580 Split*.

For more student publications, see

[www.sfsu.edu/~cwriting/students.html](http://www.sfsu.edu/~cwriting/students.html) And, if your publication(s) is/are not listed, please email us and the next time the website is updated, it will be included.

#### **ADVISING:**

All tenure/tenure-track faculty are advisors. Pick up a list of advisors at the Creative Writing office, HUM 380. See any of them during their office hours for any questions about your degree program. Undergraduates, Dan Langton is the G.E. Advisor for the department.

#### **DEPARTMENT NEWS**

We are please to announce first presentation of the Tillie Olsen Award for Writers. This \$500 prize will be awarded annually, alternately to an undergraduate student majoring in Creative Writing or Women and Gender Studies, for a piece of socially conscious writing. This year's prize will be given to a Creative Writing undergraduate. This award has been made possible through the daughters and friends of the late Tillie Olsen, social activist and award-winning author of the short-story collection *Tell Me A Riddle*. The deadline is Friday, Oct. 29. Details are available at the Creative Writing Department in HUM 380 or e-mail us at [cwriting@sfsu.edu](mailto:cwriting@sfsu.edu).

The Creative Writing Department, SFSU, wishes to applaud our many students, alumni and faculty who participated in this year's LitQuake Festival.

For those of you wanting to apply to our **graduate programs**, the **application DUE DATE** is **DECEMBER 15<sup>th</sup>**.

Students, past and present: your Creative Writing Department wants to hear from you! Please send us your news for the next Newsletter, to be published Summer 2011.

**BIG THANK YOU'S** to all of you who have been so generous in your giving over the years; without your help, the department would have to do out without the many things that make our lives easier. And this year, we are really in need – as our department received no operating budget, so we are dependent upon your generosity more than ever before, for not only scholarships for our deserving students, our membership fee for AWP, journal subscriptions, the occasional honorary stipend for guest speakers, judges, etc. but also for basic office supplies like paper, whiteout, and post-its.

Your tax deductible contribution to The Creative Writing Department Fund, literary journals and scholarship accounts may be mailed; make the check payable to University Corporation, San Francisco State and be sure to indicate on the memo line and in a brief cover letter the account to which you wish to contribute (a list of our account names following). Please mail your donations to

San Francisco State University  
Office of University Development  
Administration Building 153  
1600 Holloway Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94132

Our **other donation accounts** are: \*14 Hills Literary Journal, \*Ann Fields Poetry Award, \*Bambi Holmes Award, \*Clark-Gross Novel Award, \*Tillie Olsen Award for Socially Conscious Writing, \*Transfer Magazine, \*Wilner Short Fiction Award, \*Wordsmith Guild. Remember to write the appropriate account on the memo line of your check.

**Additional donations** maybe be made to one of our **endowment accounts**, which fund other scholarships and awards. The **mailing address is the same, but make your check payable to San Francisco State Foundation**. On the subject line please indicate one of the following accounts: \*James Milton Highsmith Endowment, \*Miriam Ylvisaker Endowment, \*Manoogian Endowment, \*William Dickey Endowment.

**EVENTS:** Add your voice to the Creative Writing Department by attending events and contributing to the department magazines and contests. Be sure to sign up for the email list and to watch our bulletin boards outside the department office (HUM 380) and by HUM 128 and for news of local events, publications, and contests.

Also, pick up a Poetry Center Schedule at HUM 380 or HUM 512 (The Poetry Center). You may also view their current calendar online: [www.sfsu.edu/~poetry](http://www.sfsu.edu/~poetry).

Students, to start receiving events through the student e-mail list? E-mail [cw-students-request@sfsu.edu](mailto:cw-students-request@sfsu.edu), no subject; in the body of the message, type the word subscribe. (And to get off the email list, do the same thing, except type "unsubscribe" in the message.)

Alumni, do you who want to be on our Alumni e-mail list? Email us, [cwriting@sfsu.edu](mailto:cwriting@sfsu.edu), with your e-mail address, requesting to be added to the list.

Barbara Eaton, Annemarie Munn & Lori Savageau  
Creative Writing Department Staff