

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2006**

**The International Writing Program  
at  
The University of Iowa**

Greetings,

I am pleased to send you the annual report of the International Writing Program (IWP), which for nearly forty years has offered a unique residency for professional writers from around the world. The literary community created by the IWP, a community of poets, fiction writers, essayists, playwrights and screenwriters from more than 120 countries, stands as a testament to the myriad ways in which service to the word, in every language, can help to bridge differences between peoples and nations divided. *Only connect*—the governing idea of the program—means that we devote the fall to connecting writers to readers, translators, students and people from every background. And this report offers a glimpse into some of the connections that last year's writers made.

I am also pleased to tell you that the IWP is evolving in a dynamic fashion. In 2006 we hosted our first symposium on the Greek island of Paros, bringing together writers from every corner of the earth to discuss what we hold in common. A Greek film maker made a documentary about the symposium and an e-book of the essays written for the occasion is in the works. As I write these lines we are preparing not only for another symposium, on the subject of justice, but also for a tour of the Middle East designed to introduce some of America's most prominent writers to their counterparts in Syria, Jordan, Israel and the West Bank. In the spring of 2008, in partnership with the University of Iowa's Young Writers Studio, we will launch a project called Between the Lines, bringing a dozen high school students from six Arabic-speaking countries to take part in a summer writing workshop, which we expect to deepen our connection to this strategic part of the world, creating new networks of writers and readers.

Thank you for your interest and support of the IWP. And we hope to see you at some of the many events that will fill our fall residency.

With all good wishes,

Christopher Merrill  
Director

*Among writing residencies that gather participants from around the world, the International Writing Program (IWP) is the oldest and largest. It tracks trends and countertrends in letters even as it helps to initiate them. Like all vital forums for cultural exchange, the IWP aims to offer a gift of fresh sight, whether that sight is used to return home and know the place as though for the first time, or whether it leads writers further into foreign lands and realms of thought. Unbound from ties of nationality, each year's resident writers are knit together by their common craft and the discipline it demands.*

## PROFILES OF THE WRITERS

**T**he 2006 IWP class was full of standouts and stars. Among this year's writers awards are *Tempo* magazine's Best Literary Work of the Year, two Lu Xun prizes, France's Favorite Chinese Writer, the Russian Booker Prize, South Korea's Kimdaljin Literary Prize and Isu Literary Prize, Discovery of the Year in Literature by Denmark's Carlsbergfonden, a major grant from the Danish Art Foundation, the Albanian Minister of Culture's Best Poetry Book of the Year, Uruguay's National Prize in Narrative and their National Prize in Poetry, the United Kingdom's Arts Council Writers' Award, the Gratiaen Prize, the FIPRESCI, Mexico's International Poetry Grant from the Loewe Foundation, two writing fellowships from Mexico's Fund for Culture and Arts, a Young Poetry Award of Monterrey, Philips Annual Literary Award for the Best Novel, the Bangla Academy Literary award for overall achievement in literature and the Grand Prix Littéraire d'Afrique Noire.

Since 1967, the IWP has welcomed over a thousand writers from more than 120 countries. Seven of this year's participants were Muslim and the program welcomed its first Kyrgyz writer. All wrote either fiction or poetry and some wrote both. The class of eighteen men and eleven women included three screenwriters and nine editors.

They came to Iowa and to the IWP, which marked its 39<sup>th</sup> year. This "United Nation of Writers" couldn't have a better home: the University of Iowa, long the home of the famous Writers' Workshop, stood midwife to creative writing as an academic discipline. *Esquire* Magazine once named Iowa City, Boston and New York City the literary capitals of the United States. This distinction is evident in Iowa City where it's common to have a novel-in-progress aging in a desk drawer; where you can overhear ardent debates about typeface; join a Proust reading group; or answer, when asked what you do for a living, that you're a poet, without seeming odd. The IWP writers came to Iowa City, where book collections carry greater status than cars. They came as so many strangers, soon to make likely and unlikely alliances and to call each other friends.

In the case of **Jamby Džusubalieva** and **Bi Feiyu** the name for friend was "comrade." Džusubalieva, from Kyrgyzstan and China's Feiyu, know the word well. Having come of age under communism, both were late to meet the latest technologies and the bustle of global commerce. But, as Džusubalieva told Alphonse Muhare, an Iowa undergraduate who interviewed her for his Media Workshop class, "We [all] have the same kind of spiritual problems that humanity had two thousand years ago—treason, jealousy, wars, greediness." Both address these problems in their work. Feiyu, who became dear friends with IWP co-founder and matriarch, Hualing Nieh Engle, wrote more of his current novel, which will be published in 2008 in Beijing. Even as he posed like Rodin's *Thinker*—his

hand to his chin—for photographer Tom Langdon (whose portraits are featured throughout this report), Feiyu’s grin suggested that he was often more tickled than perplexed. Feiyu was amused by the strange sounds of English, a language he trusted most when spoken by his Kyrgyz comrade. Though he did not speak as often as his peers, he sang more—and he sang well, with the voice of a classically-trained opera singer. When asked to give his impressions of the United States during the “Images of America” panel at the Iowa City Public Library, Feiyu simply stood and belted, in Chinese:

Don’t ask me where I’m from  
My hometown is far away  
I come here for a small bird in the sky  
Forest in the dream, a blooming tree...  
My hometown is far away.



Each day, after rising early to run, Djusubalieva worked on essays and journalism and on editing and translating her father’s novel. An easy conversationalist, Djusubalieva was invited to be the dinner guest and presenter for “Scribblers,” a book club in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. Feiyu visited a Chinese-language class at the University of Iowa where he discussed his writing and his work and a class of Chinese-speaking students at Central Academy, a magnet high school in Des Moines

**F**our Russian writers, **Mikhail Butov**, **Kseniya Golubovich**, **Lev Usyskin** and **Polina Kopylova**, were short-term guests of the IWP from August 25<sup>th</sup> to September 8<sup>th</sup> as part of the Open World Program, an exchange co-sponsored by the Council for International Visitors to Iowa Cities (CIVIC), the University of Iowa’s Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies and Northwestern University’s Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. IWP Program Assistant Jordan Stempleman was their principal host, taking them to the opening party at IWP Director Christopher Merrill’s house; a local farm; a poetry slam; a tour of the University of Iowa’s Main Library; to Kalona, Iowa, the largest Amish settlement west of the Mississippi; and to Chicago, where they visited Northwestern. During their brief stay, they participated fully in the life of the program, giving the first weekly library panel. In his talk, “The Russian Scene,” Butov spoke of what he perceives as Russia’s present identity crisis, saying, “It doesn’t even know what it wants to look like. A modern, open country? A communist state with labor camps? An archaic monarchy with a tsar and nobility? Or a bit of everything at the same time?” Butov argued that this confusion is complicated for many Russians by recollections of times when everyone was afraid of them. Golubovich said that vital politics have been shut down in Russia and “shoveled away.” What remains, she argued, “is a blank space of silence, simply decorated by a few ornaments on the left and on the right of what once used to be a promising political spectrum.”

None of **Gentian Çoçoli**’s life work—as a writer, a literary translator, an editor and a

publisher—would have been possible under communism, which fell in Albania when he was eighteen. “Albania was the most isolated culture in Europe, maybe in the world, so the first thing [after Communism] was to open the doors,” Çoçoli said in an interview with Sandy Van Scoy, one of several Media Workshop students in a class taught by Iowa Public Radio’s Senior Producer, Ben Kiefer. Çoçoli recalled growing up with an ideology that can “pollute the language,” though he managed to feed on other words. When he was eighteen he discovered Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass* in an Albanian translation “by accident.” The head of the public library where he found the book offered to lock him in his office for two hours a day so that he could discreetly read Whitman’s masterpiece and copy it by hand. He discovered the names of other poets, entering into a sort of love affair with American and English-speaking poets of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, some of whose work he subsequently translated. And he began to write. The turning of time is a motif in his work, as in his poem “In Memoriam: I. S. Ç (1908—1991),”

Morning was splashing on the white walls.  
My mother, knitting needles working against each other,  
Knit into my shirt what disappeared with my sleep.

High above the garden  
a long hushed line of birds  
pleated in on itself like a celestial scissors.

It was the turning inside-out of our space.

Çoçoli’s work is part of a movement central to the rebirth of Albanian literature after the Cold War. At first, he recalls, “We wrote for no audience,” but people began reading again. Now Çoçoli heads the Culture and Art Department in Albania’s Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, while running a small poetry publishing house. During his residency, Çoçoli continued researching contemporary American verse for the series he is presently editing, *30 American Poets in Translation* and finished a new translation of T.S. Eliot’s *Four Quartets*, which he arranged for former U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Hass (whom he met in Iowa City) to introduce.

**Thomas Pletzinger**, the youngest writer in this year’s residency, was known to challenge Çoçoli, the national snooker champion of Albania, to pool. Like his friend, he has a particular interest in American poets; Pletzinger’s PhD dissertation at the University of Hamburg deals with the work of Iowa’s former-faculty member, poet Gerald Stern. As adept in criticism as he is in creative work, Pletzinger knows how to move between genres; during his residency, his short-story-turned play delighted audiences at the University of Iowa’s Global Express theater festival and at the New York Theater Workshop—where, he said, he was able to see different actors give a fresh interpretation of his play and earned the right to report that “[his] story was staged off-Broadway in New York.” After toasting the United States for its large crickets and large squirrels at the “Images of America” panel at the Iowa City Public Library, Pletzinger made light of the leveling that is globalism when he said that, “watching German TV is like being in America.” He has thought much of this blurring of screens with reality. On September 11, 2001 he was working in New York City, close to Union Square. His officemates sealed the windows, sure they were going to

die. Pletzinger recalls how his first perceptions and those of others, were quickly subsumed by and replaced with the consensus of various media, beginning with the language used to describe the event. This surreality has influenced the themes of his nascent novel.

**Laksmi Pamuntjak** grew up in Jakarta, Indonesia—a city, she notes, that is modeled after Los Angeles. As a child, she watched *Little House on the Prairie*; for the last twelve years she has read *The New Yorker*. For all of her ease with American culture, Pamuntjak feels estranged by recent US foreign policy. She argued at the ICPL “Images of America” panel that the search for unfound weapons of mass destruction and the presence of U.S. detention centers abroad had only served to strengthen groups such as Hezbollah. Pamuntjak is equally critical of her own country, recalling that it wasn’t until the fall of the Suharto regime that taboo topics like religion and sex could be honestly discussed in public. The Indonesian language of her youth, she recalled, was a “standardized, bureaucratic language,” mashed from various Malay tongues and enforced on a place of 450 local languages. She had an elementary school teacher, though, who “really celebrated language,” and its “color, desire and smell.” This teacher led her to her life’s work.

**“César Vallejo once called it  
‘Funereal oil.’  
But coffee is part of the night,  
the most alert part, the one  
that steals away from sleep,  
the sinister part.  
Black milk, coffee, shadow's  
milk, food for monsters,  
absurd wine of autumn,  
water of hatred.”  
—Rafael Courtoisie, “El Café”**

Like many of this year’s IWP participants, **Véronique Tadjó** loved walking along the Iowa River, which runs by the Iowa House Hotel, where the writers lived. She recalled seeing “a flaming tree, caught by the light” along its banks, as well as another sort of wonder: “a mature woman” passing her on rollerblades. Though Tadjó reports that she is “addicted to CNN,” the South African writer finds American coverage of African news to be paltry and monotonous. She watched the news coverage of Hurricane Katrina while abroad and it reminded her of the fall of Kinshasa. North Americans, she thinks, are less able to find such similarities. Too often, “Darfur is the only African news,” accompanied by stock images of hungry babies at hungry breasts. Again and again, Tadjó emphasized the life and liveliness across the vast continent that is her home.

Before Tadjó arrived **Mariétou Mbaye** made a similar point. At the opening party, standing in front of various faculty, noted writers and editors, students, staff, community members, the University President and Iowa politicians, she greeted the crowd in three languages and went on to say that Africa was as various—as tragic and comic—as any other place. Mbaye’s pen name is Ken Bugul, meaning “She who is not wanted.” This name illustrates the easy mingling of life with art that is indicative of her aesthetic. Ken Bugul was the name of a woman in her home village, which Mbaye borrowed to give to the main character in her first novel; when that novel proved too controversial to publish under her real name, Mbaye took Ken Bugul as her *nom de plume*. Bugul, of course, is very much

wanted, having worked in the non-profit and business sectors and having been variously recognized, as when her 1999 novel *Riwan ou le chemin de sable* (*Riwan or the Sandy Track*) was awarded the Grand Prix Littéraire de l'Afrique Noire. Her work began when she was asked by her village to be a "public writer"—helping others when they needed a letter drafted—and has not stopped since. During her residency, she continued to write her autobiographical novel-in-progress, *The Two Men of My Life*, setting down the stories of her father and brother and addressing the archetypes of father and brother in the life of a character unlucky in love. A natural storyteller and entertainer, Bugul charmed the classes she visited at Colorado State University, the University of Colorado at Boulder, the University of Missouri-Columbia, Grinnell College and several local Iowa schools.

Both Mbaye and **Doris Kareva** were noted for their regal bearing. Kareva is a prominent figure in Estonia's cultural politics and its UNESCO representative. As a poet, she imagines herself as a sort of medium and her art as a matter being acted upon; she describes being "an antenna" while writing, pulling down the music of the spheres. In her October 22 reading at Prairie Lights Bookstore and elsewhere, Kareva featured the music of her mother tongue. She read a poem that was composed entirely of Estonian place names and set to the meter of the Estonian national anthem. Audience members were rapt. Kareva's writing is shaped by pure intentions. As a child the Soviet literature that was licit in her hometown was full of "false optimism, [and] everybody [in the stories] was always happy," Kareva recalls. So she set out to write the books she'd like to read, hoping to describe experiences of loneliness and nightmares as much as those of loveliness and dreams. She finds American poets' complaints of writing for a small audience amusing, as she writes in Estonian, a language that has only one million speakers. During her residency, Kareva translated some of the Russian poetry of Polina Kopylova into Estonian and wrote a series of collaborative poems based on Estonian mythology with a poetry student in the Iowa Writers' Workshop. She continues to publish her own work in *Looming*, an Estonian literary journal and to find an admiring audience here and at home. One of her several translators, Tiina Aleman, an editor at New York's *Commonweal* Magazine came to Iowa City to work shoulder to shoulder with her; their collaborations are in the current issue of *Dragonfire* and will soon appear elsewhere.

"I was supposed to be a singer," **Srijato Bandyopadhyay** said in an interview for the Media Workshop Class, recalling his mother's musical career. Like Kareva, Bandyopadhyay sings in his poetry and verse is in his blood. "There is no Bengali who hasn't written a poem in his life," he said. Though Bandyopadhyay is most inspired by urban life, he found the "silence" of Iowa freed him to write in new ways. During the residency, he wrote 38 pages of poetry, usually at night, his best "thinking time," and in his readings he reminded listeners that in the best poetry there is often a close connection between song and thought.

**U Moe Hein**, from Myanmar, is more of a morning person, keeping a daily fast that begins at noon. Wearing a traditional dhoti, he introduced himself to his peers with a deep bow. They, in turn, took to calling him "Mr. Moe." Hein's writing is marked by an utter lack of irony, which sounds foreign to American readers' ears. He is satisfied to lovingly and mindfully attend to the seasons and the shifting light, though he comes from a country of sorrow. "[The U.S.] is a great thing, a huge space," he said. He was particularly fed by

his visit to the vast skies of the Southwestern United States, where he was able to see the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, tour Santa Fe and visit the Taos Pueblo, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that has been continuously inhabited for over 1,000 years.

Neither Hein nor **Jagath Kumarasinghe**, from Sri Lanka, had left their countries before traveling to participate in the IWP. In Langdon's portraits of him, white-haired Kumarasinghe shows a boyish smile. He took childlike pleasure in joining Iowa undergraduates to carve jack-o-lanterns at the Church St. House and viewing the Christmas display windows at Macy's Department Store in New York. This curiosity is evident in his writing, even as he avoids the childishness of being clever or arch. Both as an educator and a teacher, Kumarsinghe has long been interested in the intersections between Native and Anglo-American culture. He joined Hein and others in their trip to New Mexico, where these meetings between Spanish settlers, Pueblo Indians and Anglos animate the place. While traveling, Kumarsinghe took notes for his young-adult book, *The White Man's Flying Workers*. The title comes from a Native-American name for bees, a novelty brought by European settlers that Kumarsinghe imagines as exemplary of the new economy and civilization to follow.

As a child in New Zealand, **James Norcliffe** was saturated with American pop culture: Rand McNally, the Little Golden Books, *Life*, *Time*, *Downbeat* and *The Saturday Evening Post*. "America has been revealing herself [to the rest of the world] for years, in an increasingly wanton display," Norcliffe said at the "Images of America" panel. That said, Norcliffe reported enjoying trading "celluloid, vinyl and paper" for the real thing. Like Hein and Kumarasinghe, this fall marked his first trip to the States. Norcliffe writes both poetry and children's literature and notes that fantasy connects both genres. To continue his work after the residency was over, Norcliffe received grants through the Nebraska Art Council and Rotary to participate in a writers' residency at the Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts in Nebraska City, Nebraska. One of this year's few native English speakers, Norcliffe still reported that he enjoyed "being exotic" while traveling throughout the U.S.

**M**anju Sarkar tired of being "exotic" and far from home, so he made friends with the staff at Iowa City's India Café, going so far as to take his lunch there every day. He ordered in Bengali while entertaining new English-speaking friends. A quiet man, Sarkar is emphatic in his fiction. In "The Ghost of the Razakar," he writes of a dead freedom fighter whose unjust trial had been held under a banyan tree. The dead fighter haunts and soon inhabits, a character named Kutubuddi. "Whenever [Kutubuddi] had a chance he ran to the banyan tree, muttered to himself, abused people in filthy language without the slightest provocation and even made his cane into a rifle and tried to shoot...But Kutubuddi used the butt and rod of his 'rifle' to beat up people mercilessly." In this passage and throughout his story, Sarkar revisits themes associated with the 1970s civil wars in West Bengal, including those that map the clashes between rural and urban communities. While at Iowa, Sarkar made a study of ways in which the abstraction of globalization is lived and concrete; this will be the basis for his next novel.



Claiming both Iran and England as home, **Mimi Khalvati** seems to feel at ease almost everywhere she goes. She can articulate the experience of both the Occident and the East and did so often throughout the residency, serving as a great cultural ambassador for the IWP. Khalvati, who trained as an actress, won many fans with her polished and elegant readings; accomplished as a teacher, having founded the Poetry School in London, Khalvati took to requests to lead lectures and salons, as she did at the Church St. House, when she discussed her theory of poetics. At a September 7<sup>th</sup> panel at Drake



University in Des Moines titled “Writing With (and Against) National Identity,” she argued against claiming any national identity, objected to being coddled or congratulated as a “woman-of-color writer,” and supported a strictly poetic genealogy. Like her peers, she was always making mental and written notes for her own work; while hiking in Iowa’s Effigy Mounds National Monument, she stopped regularly to collect names of local plants for a series of Midwestern poems. Khalvati loved Iowa. During a visit to Pella, a small Dutch town that is home to Central College, where she read, she imagined moving there and resting in the landscape she described as “ordered, quilted and embroidered.”

Before coming to Iowa, **Choi Jeong Rye** had heard it was “a writer’s paradise.” Rye found the landscape to be both beautiful and unbelievable. “Why all this corn?” she asked Program Assistant Mia Nussbaum on their August drive from the Des Moines airport to Iowa City. Choi wanted to know if the corn was being sent to communities plagued by hunger, noting that Korea was not much larger than the cornfields around her. Though most contemporary Korean poets call mega-city Seoul home, Choi says that they mostly continue to write sentimental, anachronistic nature poetry. While benefiting from the adulation of her peers and her government’s support (she won their prestigious 2006 Modern Literature Prize), she sets herself in opposition to this tradition. Her own writing is decidedly unsentimental and often surreal. Choi translated Khalvati and Khalvati translated Choi. Writers’ Workshop poet Melissa Dickey worked with her to translate twenty-five of her poems into English. The two friends became adept at using Choi’s electronic Korean-English thesaurus and learned to make quick, expressive drawings when their shared words were few. Sometimes this led to intriguing, if not entirely accurate, results. Dickey adopted one of Choi’s expressions, a word she heard as “Wah!” and which Choi translated as an all-purpose sound for wonder or awe. The two sometimes made the sound when a line was perfected, as in these lines from Dickey’s translation of Choi’s poem, “A Thief Arrested at Sunset”:

In those days  
A polished brass washbasin  
And a pair of Father's black shoes was all we owned.

...

Now that a few decades have passed,  
The dark, like his thick eyebrows,  
All of a sudden swarms  
And presses me for an answer  
At my sundown door.

I let all the bright day flow.  
For the darkness is a blind alley  
And I'm at a loss what to do.  
Just, yes, yes,  
I nod my head.

Truly, can I  
Take something out to him  
-To the sunset wearing a black army jacket-  
Like a polished washbasin or a pair of black shoes?

Writers' Workshop poet Dan Rosenberg enjoyed collaborating with Indonesian **Nukila Amal**. "When working with [Amal] on the Javanese translations of my poems," Rosenberg said, "I looked through them to note any word usage that deviated from the first dictionary definition, so I could make sure she understood my meaning and motivation for using that word." From this exercise Rosenberg learned that he rarely uses the first denotation of a word and depends upon the meaning formed by a word's trade and life. While working with Amal on her novel (*The Land's Spell*), he charted similar nuances in the work of capturing a character's voice. Amal, in turn, helped to get Rosenberg's poetry published in the December 10 issue of Indonesia's *Koran Tempo*. She asked Rosenberg to read from her novel at Prairie Lights' Bookstore, on October 8<sup>th</sup>, saying that he read her prose like poetry. This led to a discussion of scansion and rhythm in language. After the reading, Rosenberg said that "friends in the audience told us that the respect and affection we felt for each other was palpable. It should have been; it was abundant." While continuing to write new scenes of "gastrophers" for her food-loving current novel, Amal finished research on the works of Charles Fourier, a 17<sup>th</sup> century French utopian. She also edited a 95-page research paper on performance art, continued revising her third book and wrote an essay for a project sponsored by UN AIDS. Amal, who left the hospitality industry to become a writer, says she can "write about everything from politics to aphrodisiacs." Becoming a writer is not a matter of having the right material, she said, but of having the right eyes—which she does.

**José Eugenio Sánchez** and **Mathilde Walter Clark** were both adept at using the latest extension of the writer's eye: the camera. The two filmed conversations, the grounds of Frank Lloyd Wright's Wisconsin home (which they visited as part of the mid-residency retreat) and separately, the streets of Manhattan and the rim of the Grand Canyon. Sánchez is equally comfortable in front of the camera. In Langdon's photographs



of him, he is in character—as a bandit, a flirt, a rapper and a clown. A leading Mexican poet of his generation, Sánchez works between media. He likes to script poems for dancers, who translate his words into movements. “I would like to be a dancer, or a painter, because they don’t need translators,” he said. Sánchez wins American audiences with or without English translations. At the

Cornelia Street Café in New York’s Greenwich Village, Sánchez and other IWP writers read as part of the Literary Translation Festival. Sánchez seemed to particularly charm the audience with his lively reading of a poem that he did not translate, but which was so full of American place and celebrity names that its narrative could be discerned by all. Sánchez says he would like to write for people who think they don’t have time to read, crafting funny poems that can be read “in the bathroom, or on the bus.” Sánchez lectured students at Iowa City’s Washington High School and he wrote a series of Jack Kerouac haiku during his residency, which will finish one of his two current book-length manuscripts.

Clark and Sánchez became each other’s friend and muse. Together they compiled an *Iowan Dictionary*, composed of Danish, Mexican and American idioms. According to Sánchez and Clark, Pluto “is still a planet;” “a penguin-cow-dress” is an “indescribable outfit;” “genti & Çoçoli” are “soldiers of poetry;” all American people are “apples;” and the “American language” is “English or something like this.” Clark also wrote three short stories, one poem and ten newspaper columns. She finished two translations of existing short stories and left with working drafts of two more. She wrote and then deleted and then began again (thus demonstrating her *bona fides*) many pages in her current novel. Clark’s career has benefited from her doggedness and independence. During her residency she undertook an extensive research trip for her current novel, visiting Tucson, Phoenix, Sedona and the south rim of the Grand Canyon. On November 19 she flew from Las Vegas to Miami, Florida and Key West. After deserts, cities, canyons and coasts, Clark finished her stay in Sitka, Alaska, on Baranof Island, where she was given time to write. Clark knows how to arrange for the economic freedom to make art. In an Iowa City Public Library panel titled “Writing and Its Mis/Fortunes,” she described how she launched a campaign to get a patron. Clark figured that, after taxes, she’d made the equivalent of \$900 for two years of work on her first book. She described how, in January of 2005, she ate the last of her oatmeal and wasn’t certain

**“I am the twin of light  
I know the history of the sun**

**Stars  
rise from the blisters on my  
hands”**

**—Partaw Naderi,  
“Star Rise”**

whether she'd be able to afford more. Like Hans Christian Andersen, she decided to find a patron. She gave her presentation wearing a shirt that she designed for her campaign: "PATRON WANTED." Her year-long pursuit ended happily when she received a Three-Year Working Scholarship from the Danish Art Foundation, which cited her publicity (she'd made it onto TV) and her diligence (she'd sent regular correspondence to the Minister of Cultural Affairs) as part of her merit and their decision.

Though he was recently banned from making films in China for two years, director and screenwriter **Lou Ye** should not have trouble finding patrons. Lou has won major awards at film festivals in Rotterdam, Paris and Tokyo, as well as the FIPRESCI prize in Venice. *Purple Butterfly* (2003) and *Summer Palace* (2006), both of which he wrote and directed, were screened at the Cannes Film Festival to broad critical acclaim. His current project, *Restorer*, is that rarest of genres in Chinese cinema, science fiction. IWP Editor Natasa Durovicova accompanied Lou to the Des Moines Art Center for a screening of *Suzhou River*, the 2001 film that had already secured his name in histories of Chinese cinema even while remaining prohibited in China itself. The event drew a crowd of over 300 people—the largest in years. During his residency, Lou was also the guest of the Departments of Comparative Literature and Cinema Studies at the University of Washington, among the most prominent sites for the study of contemporary Chinese cultures. Professor James Tweedie, his host, said "[The faculty and students] had a wonderful time talking to him ... he really is open and unassuming." Next year Lou will teach a course for the University of Washington's summer program in Beijing. Lou demonstrated his principles of filmmaking at the Iowa City Public Library panel "Writing For Two and Three Dimensions" with a short based on the IWP mid-residency retreat in Wisconsin and the poet Ilya Kaminsky's book, *Dancing in Odessa*.

**Mazen Sa'adeh** knows about surviving as an artist under conditions far more severe than those in China. "I had nine years in prison just for reading and writing," he says, speaking without bitterness of his time as a Palestinian political prisoner in Jordan. Sa'adeh reports that he deliberately used the time to tackle works like *Arabian Nights* and the writings of Lenin, Balzac, Whitman and Faulkner—books most people can't find the time to read. He wrote daily and every week he sent out his stories so that the prison guards could not find them. In Iowa, Sa'adeh sculpted and painted in the University of Iowa's art studios, worked with Margaret MacInnis, a student in the Nonfiction Writing Program, on the translation of his novel *The Scent of Sleep* and began a collaboration with Lou Ye on adapting his 2001 play, *The Last Hour*, which has since been entered into the 2008 Hong Kong Film Festival. He prepared his play, *The Kingdom of Chaos*, for performances at Global Express and at the New York Theatre Workshop and began a new novel, *The Secret of X*. While visiting Portland, Maine, Sa'adeh was a guest of the Portland Stage Theater Company, which featured him and three other IWP Writers in their "From Away" Festival. His documentary, *My Friend, My Enemy* was screened in their accompanying cinema festival in Brunswick, Maine as well as at the University of Iowa, where it was paired with *The Olive Harvest*, a feature in which Sa'adeh starred. Presently, Sa'adeh is part of a collaborative effort with the American Consulate in Jerusalem to publish an Arabic volume of American poetry. For the English-language publication of several of his books, he is in contact with an agent and publisher in New York.

**Partaw Naderi** also knows about the life of a political prisoner. Arrested by the Taliban as part of its purge of Afghan artists and intellectuals, Naderi recalls writing his poems in jail on cigarette paper—the only paper available. Prisoners would be “punished terribly” if they were found with writing implements, but he could not *not* write, so he and others “put the pen in very secret places.” At a dinner of thirty people at the Church St. House and at the Global Express theater festival, Naderi read his poems in Dari and Persian.

**“He had suddenly realized why he’d had the urge to get off the bus and walk straight through the main entrance into the zoo and to the caged giraffe. He stood there with his briefcase and eau de cologne and began to laugh out loud, almost relieved, because it was only now, this very moment, that his life had meaning. The world took on colour, sound, smell and everything clicked into place as he repeated the words ‘my giraffe’ inside his head.”**  
**—Mathilde Walter Clark, “The Giraffe”**

While in Washington, D.C., he joined other IWP Writers to read at the Library of Congress. Naderi shared his study of “Literature and the Course of Politics in Afghanistan,” at Coe College and Legion Arts in Cedar Rapids, with his peers and the larger Iowa City community and by lecturing to undergraduates in an International Literature Today class. He discussed how the diction of poetry written after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1978 changed, with words like, “folk, laborer, sickle, struggle, flame, reactionary elements, guerilla, star, sun, despotism, red, fight, chain-breaker, confinement and tomorrow,” appearing more frequently, in order to praise acceptable subjects like “Proletarian Internationalism,” and “Our Internationalist Brotherhood.” He followed this trend all the way to the “cultural catastrophe” of the subsequent Taliban rule, under which the colossal statues of the Bamyān Buddhas were destroyed and not a single book of literature was published.

**Byoung-Yong Kim’s** title story of his last collection, *How Do Dogs Kill*, begins, “Hey, you!....what?.....What did you say?.....How

could you say that? You bastard!.....villain, bad egg, you swindler! Don’t ever, ever go away! I’ll be right back with some change.” Though the writing is, of course, fiction, it’s still a surprising example of how one’s written voice can differ from one’s lived voice. Kim was the quietest member of this year’s residency. Less interested in activities and outings, he used his gift of time to write, working diligently on his novel-in-process and on his presentation for International Literature Today, in which he spoke of his identity as a South Korean coming of age during the split of the Park dictatorship and advocated international solidarity among all third-world peoples.

**Rafael Courtoisie** was one of the most boisterous members of this year’s residency, commanding the microphone as an emcee at the closing party and often holding court on long car or train rides. Courtoisie indeed has much to teach and say. Having traveled to the States before, he posited that there were two Americas, one of “plurality [and] variety...[an] open society” that is “multi-ethnic and free.” But, as he elaborated in various

settings, Courtoisie began to think that the country was more various than this—with at least one America for each citizen. In Iowa, Courtoisie lectured in several local high schools, the University of Iowa's Department of Spanish and Portuguese and the Department of Modern Languages at Washington University in St. Louis, MO where scholars are beginning to reevaluate his body of work as part of the new Latin American canon. He researched new literary forms emerging in Spain, edited his novel, wrote a new one and finished a 40-page poetry manuscript—in English. "After one hundred years of movies, you cannot write like they did in the nineteenth century," he said in an interview with Iowa undergraduate Nikki Schnitzler. Literature cannot compete with the pyrotechnics of current media, so it must "do a different thing"—a noble thing. "Literature gives an opportunity to express the voice of the weak."

**Ashur Etwebi** is a doctor, father, poet, novelist, professor and translator. He is the second Libyan writer to participate in the IWP. Etwebi said he was happy to "see what America is [as opposed to its depiction in the Libyan media]." Writing, he added, like traveling, encourages empathy: by meeting others and dreaming yourself into their point of view they become less foreign. Etwebi describes his own experience of foreignness with humor in a poem about ordering at an Iowa City coffee shop:

I tried not to look so foreign, thinking about the words which do not have the letter *P*.  
 In my native language, we have only one letter *b*, I looked up at the board  
 to see anything without the letter *P*.  
 The girl with the curly hair looked at me and said: *yes*  
 I murmured in a soft, low voice: *cappuccino please*  
 I sweated, knowing that I chose a sentence with three *Ps*

At an Iowa City Public Library panel on fantasy and reality, Etwebi referred to the language that develops between foreigners in Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities*, a book he made a study of in his youth. In Calvino's account of a fantastic conversation between Kublai Khan and Marco Polo the two men learn a language before words (composed of signs and gestures), a language of words (with accompanying complications) and a sublime understanding that is a language beyond words. All of our best language, Etwebi reminded his fellow writers—of words and of that which cannot be put into words—reminds us that the ordinary is extraordinary and the moral is imperative. Even as his own children move away from the stories of the Libyan oral tradition and into those of Harry Potter and Yogi the Bear, Etwebi strives to inhabit worlds and words that are global and local, ancient and new. This project can be seen in his various work. During his residency, Etwebi collaborated with American poet Brenda Hillman on translations of forty-six poems in haiku form; he translated several contemporary American poems into Arabic, finished a collection of 87 poems which will be published in 2007, researched Synesius (a Libyan writer and Bishop of Apollonia who died in 414 A.D.) and Hypatia, Synesius' friend and teacher. He lectured at the Iowa City Foreign Relations Council, an association of citizens interested in U.S. foreign policy and current issues and met with students from the University of Iowa's Senior College, a continuing education program for retirees. He walked often along the Iowa River; for him the river's green banks and pedestrian bridges became a place for "revelation"—that elusive light all thinkers seek.

## A WEEK IN THE LIFE

Unlike other professions which have standard procedures for becoming, say, a pharmacist or an attorney, writers apprentice themselves to texts and teachers in a manner that is both older and more idiosyncratic. As long as they work at their craft, they must not only continue to be educated but they must continue to be fed—on new ideas, experiences, sensations and, of course, writing. All weekday mornings and Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons are kept free for writing and research; beyond that, a typical week in the life of the IWP offers abundant opportunity for the writers-in-residence to teach and be taught, to feed and be fed.

The list of **readings and lectures** held in various venues during this year's residency look like a Who's Who of Contemporary Writers. Pulitzer-prize winning author and University of Iowa faculty member Marilynne Robinson began the year with a September 1<sup>st</sup> lecture "On Beauty." Former U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Hass interviewed British novelist Zadie Smith. As part of the Mississippi River Symposium, Pulitzer-prize winning journalist Ron Powers spoke of water as fact and metaphor. Pulitzer-prize winning columnist Nicholas Kristof read, as did Pulitzer winning novelist Michael Chabon and Pulitzer-prize winning poet James Tate. Denis Johnson, an alumnus staff member of the IWP, gave the Paul Engle Memorial Reading; the writers had received his collected poems, *The Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations Millennium General Assembly* in their bags when they arrived. IWP guest Azriel Bibliowicz, who was visiting from Columbia, lectured on the great Romanian-Jewish poet Paul Celan. Poet Brenda Hillman lectured on drafting and revision. Author Frank McCourt told stories about the teaching life.

Mimi Khalvati and Gentian Çoçoli joined the nationally-touring Wave Poetry Bus readers at Prairie Lights Bookstore and the Sanctuary Pub. Also featured at Prairie Lights were Mary Gaitskill, Nell Freudenberger, Jon Kabat-Zinn, Alice McDermott, Jane Hamilton, Barry Lopez, Francine Prose and *Iowa Review* editor David Hamilton. The weekly

**"I never visited the sea nor ever  
did I travel the hills with my parents,  
not the zoo gardens or the book fair.**

**I only returned home and  
changed in my room and realized  
that every day, my parents  
moved away from each other and  
allowed me to traverse on."**

**—Srijato Bandyopadhyay,  
"Mama, Papa and Me"**

reading series at Prairie Lights Bookstore is broadcast over the eastern Iowa NPR station and on the internet, and draws a large, loyal audience. The IWP holds a Sunday afternoon slot at the bookstore, pairing graduate student writers with visiting internationals. Ken Bugul began this year's series, which also featured Rafael Courtoisie, Gentian Çoçoli, Nukila Amal and Doris Kareva.

In the second week of October, Partaw Naderi read at Shambaugh House, the last writer in a schedule of Friday afternoon readings that included Jagath Kumarsinghe, Srijato Bandyopadhyay, José Eugenio Sánchez and Mazen Sa'adeh. A smaller venue than Prairie Lights and often conducted as a bilingual event emphasizing the art of translation, these readings are an intimate and pleasant way to end the week and guests and writers often stay to mingle over bagels and tea.

To prepare for each week's **International Literature Today** classes, undergraduate students compose a question that responds to the work of each of the weekly visiting IWP writers. The students travel in the way that readers always do and then again they travel geographically—learning of Albania, or Indonesia, or Uruguay through the craft born there and a discussion of it. In addition to the work of current IWP participants, students discuss principles of comparative literature as a discipline and read additional exemplary foreign texts during the two and a half-hour class. This year, one of those books was *Snow*, a novel by Orhan Pamuk (IWP '85), who earned the 2006 Nobel Prize for Literature.



**A**lmost every Sunday evening, the IWP **Cinemathèque** offers participants a chance to show an interesting or little-known film from their region. This year's well-attended series showcased the US premiere of Lou Ye's epic *Summer Palace*, which had opened earlier this year at Cannes, promptly earning its screenwriter and director a five-year working ban in China because of its account of the Tiananmen Square massacre. Rafael Courtoisie showed a film made by his students at the Uruguay Film School. Doris Kareva and David Puderbaugh of the School of Music co-curated an evening of films, recordings and conversation centered around the work of Arvo Pärt, the Estonian star of the contemporary music scene.

**Text and Context** classes expose international writers to the day-to-day workings of the American literary scene. This year's topics included researching grants and residencies in the US, the pedagogy of the Iowa's Writers' Workshop, contemporary American poetry, political writing, copyright and electronic publishing issues. Lecturers included Hugh Ferrer, the IWP's Associate Director and the *Iowa Review's* fiction editor; Russell Valentino, a University of Iowa professor of Russian and Cinema and Comparative Studies; and Kelly Smith, the editor of the Virtual Writing University website. Every Friday in the International **Translation Workshop**, co-taught by Christopher Merrill and Nataša Durovicová, graduate-level students of creative writing, translation and comparative and creative literature work one-on-one with the IWP writers in a classroom setting (a process



described throughout this report).

Participants in the weekly **Iowa City Public Library panels** discussed topics like “Writing With (and Against) National Identity,” where they asked how one could be both a national and a global writer and where one’s “home” is while writing. They described the writer’s life and how they set about living it; they noted how their narratives had to change for production on the stage or screen and how to write in a culture that is more visual than verbal. They told Americans about their impressions of the U.S. They discussed the gifts and difficulties of translation and whether or not it is ever possible to render something truly in a foreign tongue. They discussed justice and what, if anything, the writer can do to bring about a more just world. (Many of these panels can be accessed at [www.uiowa.edu/~iwp/NEWS](http://www.uiowa.edu/~iwp/NEWS); all are available on television through the public-access Iowa City library channel.)

The **Church St. House** is new to the life of the IWP. The house, located in the University’s “Writing Corridor” just one block from the IWP offices, is intended to offer work and living space for four postgraduate writing fellows (two of whom were IWP program assistants this year), classroom space, office space for visiting and permanent faculty writers and, of particular interest to the IWP, it is to be a place of hospitality for all members of the various writing communities in Iowa City, hosting dinners, readings, salons, tutoring, lectures, receptions, art exhibitions, films, parties, collaborations, performances and workshops and thus furthering greater cooperation between writers of different genres and affiliations. The large kitchen and dining space can be used by the visiting international writers, meeting a stated want. IWP Program Assistant Mia Nussbaum described one extravagant potluck that took place on the Saturday before Ramadan.

Byoung-Yong Kim and Lou Ye picked apples from the tree in the front yard to add to my slaw. Doris Kareva chopped radishes. José Eugenio Sánchez spoke lovingly of cilantro. Choi Jeong Rye searched our kitchen for a pot that was worthy of her rice; she made do with what she found ... Mazen Sa’adeh chopped onions for Fricke, a bulgur soup that smells like a campfire and that was soon dubbed ‘Smoky Delight.’ He roasted eggplant for Baba Ghanoush...

When asked, Sa’adeh explained how he’d learned to cook during his nine years as a political prisoner in Jordan:

Early in his incarceration, he and the other political prisoners staged a hunger strike. They succeeded and were allowed to make their own food ... As Mazen was the youngest prisoner, he spent the first two years on cleaning duty, apprenticing himself to various cooks as he did. He tells this story plainly. This is how he learned to make the olive oil meet the parsley and the parsley kiss the mouth...

The meal ended with singing and storytelling.

There is a new emphasis throughout the University of Iowa's writing community to work collaboratively among artists, teachers and readers and to become the world's leader in writing education. The Church St. House is bolstered by the presence of another new institution, the **Virtual Writing University (VWU)**, a collaborative, interdisciplinary initiative sponsored by the IWP, the Graduate College and the Office of the Provost. The VWU launched in the fall of 2006, with the mandate to create a virtual space for the University of Iowa's writing community. Its primary venue is the Writing University website ([www.writinguniversity.org](http://www.writinguniversity.org)), a portal to the programs and events associated with writing at Iowa and a platform for special VWU Projects, such as the Wing, the VWU Archives and the Journals Project. The VWU is a collective site of Iowa faculty, students and administrators who work on various projects that reflect, interpret and extend Iowa's aggregate intelligence about creative writing. In addition to information about programs, projects and events associated with writing at Iowa, the site features relevant news, author interviews and multimedia content.

When the writers weren't working, there was time to socialize at parties and dinners and in the common spaces at the Iowa House Hotel, or through **Open Mics** (led by the IWP's senior advisor, Peter Nazareth, a professor of African Literature) and weekly events like **Talk Art**, a reading series held at a local pub and sponsored by the Writers' Workshop.

## TRAVEL & SPECIAL EVENTS

There was, as always, much on offer for the writers in the cultural sphere—complimentary tickets to the **University of Iowa's Dance Gala**, for example and to Sarah Rothenberg's piano performance. The University of Iowa marked the opening of a branch of the **Confucius Institute**—hoping to further relations with Chinese businessmen, thinkers and artists—with a recital, lectures and a formal reception. Some writers went **salsa dancing** and most traveled to the **Tri-State Rodeo**, buying tooled-leather belts and making both complimentary and critical observations of rural America. There was a tour of the **Amish settlement** in Kalona, Iowa, **barn dancing** at Scattergood Friends School and **pumpkin-picking** at Wilson's Orchard. Many of the writers took an early autumn walk around **Lake McBride**.

The **Des Moines Trip** in early September included a nature walk through the tall-grass prairie at the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge, a trip to an IMAX theater and a guided tour of the Des Moines Art Center. IWP writers visited and guest-taught at Central Academy, a magnet school for gifted students. Doris Kareva, Gentian Çoçoli and Mimi Khalvati participated in a panel discussion on "Writing With (and Against) National Identity" at Drake University.

**Global Express**, a festival of fast-paced literature adapted for the stage, now in its sixth year, featured nine writers from the International Writing Program with twelve actors from the University Theatre Department and the Iowa City Community. In addition to excerpts from two plays written by Mazen A.I. Sa'adeh (*The Shadow* and *Kingdom of Chaos*), Nukila Amal adapted an excerpt of her short story "Read the Ads" into a monologue. Gentian Çoçoli's poem, "In the Author's Hand;" Rafael Courtoisie's poems, "Lady Luck" and "What to do with Poetry?" and Doris Kareva's "Five Poems" were all read dramatically.

Partaw Naderi read one of his poems in Dari. Maggie Conroy, a playwright and longtime IWP supporter, directed the program and two of the pieces. Visiting from Portland, Maine, Lisa DiFranza directed one piece and helped with the technical rehearsal. Two student directors from the Theatre Department also directed pieces. There was a stage manager, lighting designer and a sound-board operator. The show drew an enthusiastic audience of nearly a hundred.

#### The **Mid-Residency Retreat**

took the writers to Spring Green, Wisconsin, where they hiked among the ancient bird- and animal-shaped burial grounds of the Effigy Mounds National Monument. They toured the up-and-coming arts district of downtown Dubuque and visited the Mississippi River Museum there. At the bluffs of Dubuque,



they crossed the Mississippi River into Wisconsin; outside of Spring Green, they toured Frank Lloyd Wright's studio and school, which is still in use today. In Wright's architecture, form and function always met; they were, he famously argued, one, so the triangular chairs in the library and the graduated ceiling in the theater serve to teach one how to sit at study and how to attend to art—lessons all of the residency moved toward.

**Pianist Sarah Rothenberg** held a two-day workshop in conjunction with the Writers' Workshop and the IWP, discussing music in literary terms. "This phrase expresses longing," she might say, before playing a few bars, or "here is the form of Chopin's etudes." Some of this year's residents engaged with the musician's interest in ekphrasis (writing that evokes other forms of art) and composed texts alongside Rothenberg's music. They then attended her performance, *Epitaph for a Condemned Book*, at Hancher Auditorium, in which she brought together works by Baudelaire, Chopin and Delacroix.

At this year's **Chicago Humanities Festival**, Ken Bugul, Gentian Çoçoli, Mazen Sa'adeh and Rafael Courtoisie spoke as part of a panel titled, "Where Is War Hiding?" They asked whether language could transform brutality into something beautiful and what artists might salvage from sites of armed conflict. When not participating in the festival, the writers were able to tour Chicago, drinking *horchata* at Pilsen's El Milagro Restaurant, viewing a Day of the Dead exhibit at the Mexican Fine Arts Museum and taking walking architectural tours of the Loop.

The post-residency **Travel Period** began on Saturday, November 11 and sent three separate groups on trips to Santa Fe, San Francisco and to Boston and Portland, Maine. Those groups met again in Washington, D.C. by the evening of November 15 and left by train for New York City on Saturday, November 18. After receiving a private tour of D.C., with much cheering along Embassy Row and a rainy ascent to Abraham Lincoln's seated likeness, the writers were given a tour of the Library of Congress; each writer was then assigned a staff person from the Library, with whom they were able to discuss their

country and their work and visit the Library's Special Collections. That evening Amal, Bugul, Courtoisie and Naderi gave a reading at the Library of Congress. The next morning, at the State Department, all of the writers discussed their thoughts on cultural diplomacy, their time in the States and their work. Outgoing Iowa Congressman Jim Leach generously gave a Capitol Tour, taking the writers into the chambers of the House of Representatives, his private office, the Committee on Foreign Relations and to lunch.

Before leaving New York for home, the writers enjoyed some of its many pleasures, with trips to the New York City Public Library, Central Park; the UN; the MOMA, Guggenheim and Met. Several writers read in Greenwich Village's Cornelia St. Café as part of a Literary Translation Festival sponsored by the Romanian Cultural Center, with several IWP alumni in attendance. In the East Village, Thomas Pletzinger, Mazen Sa'adeh and Rafael Courtoisie were part of a rehearsal and reading with professional actors and directors at the New York Theater Workshop, thus joining an off-Broadway institution that saw the first productions of *Rent* and *Dirty Blonde* as well as work by noted playwrights like Caryl Churchill and Tony Kushner.

On the day of their departure many of the writers gathered in the hotel lobby to exchange gifts and inscribe books and see each other off, hoping—with the world so round—to meet again.



Portraits of the writers, in order: Jamby Djusubalieva, Mimi Khalvati, José Eugenio Sánchez, Mathilde Walter Clarke. Photos by Tom Langdon. A guide at the Effigy Mounds leads a group of writers. Photo by Kelly Bedeian. At the final party at Shambaugh House: Lou Ye, Nukila Amal and Laksmi Pamuntjak (L to R) with their cameras; a portrait of Paul Engel hangs behind them. Photo by Tom Langdon.

## PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

**Nukila AMAL (novelist, essayist, translator; b. 1971 Indonesia)**, a widely read young Indonesian prose writer, has had her 2005 short story collection, *Laluba*, named Best Literary Work of the Year by *Tempo* magazine and her novel *Cala Ibi* (2003) shortlisted for the Khatulistiwa Literary Award. She has also edited several anthologies of poetry in translation. At present, she serves on the Committee of Literature at the Jakarta Arts Council. She participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.



**Srijato BANDYOPADHYAY (poet; b. 1975 India)**, among the most prolific of the new generation of Bengali-language poets, has published eight poetry collections, including *Flying Jokers* (2004), which won two literary awards and *The Story of Katiusha* (2006). His poems appear in numerous magazines in West Bengal. He lives in Kolkata, where he edits the literary journal *Jaruri Abastha [State of Emergency]*. He participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

**BI Feiyu (novelist, screenwriter; b. 1964 China)** was raised in the Xinghua province of Jiangsu, China. After early years as a journalist in Nanjing, he went on to publish more than 20 novels and short story collections, several of which have been awarded prizes, including two Lu Xun prizes (1995-6; 2002-2005). In 2004, he was named Most Favorite Chinese Writer in France. Among his film work is the screenplay for *Shanghai Triad* (1995), directed by Zhang Yimou. His novels have been translated and published in France and Germany. He participates courtesy of The Ramon and Victoria Lim Fund, the Freeman Fund, Dr. Shiliang Sun and Hualing Engle.

**Ken BUGUL (pen name of Mariètou Mbaye Biléoma; novelist and fiction writer; b. 1948 Senegal)**, is the Senegalese-born writer whose pen name means “one who is unwanted.” Her first novel, *Le baobab fou [The Abandoned Baobab: The Autobiography of a Senegalese Woman]*, investigated post-colonial identity for a young African woman in Belgium. From 1986 to 1993, Mbaye headed the African region section of the International Planned Parenthood Federation. She has also convened writing workshops in underprivileged areas and widely organized other cultural outreach. In 1999 her novel

*Riwan ou le chemin de sable [Riwan or the Sandy Track]* was awarded the Grand Prix Littéraire de l'Afrique Noire. *La pièce d'or* (2006) is her seventh novel. She participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

**Mikhail BUTOV (fiction writer, novelist, literary critic, editor; b. 1964 Russia)** was the youngest writer ever to receive the Russian Booker Prize in 1999 for his novel *Freedom*. His short stories, literary reviews and other work have appeared in numerous Russian-language journals. In 2004, his short story "Relic" was anthologized in *Five Russian Stories* (USA). For the past ten years, he has served as Assistant to the Editor at Russia's main literary journal, *Novi Mir*. He consults regularly for a number of Russian literary prizes, including the Bolshaia Kniga Award [Big Book], given for the most significant prose book of the year and the Iu Kazakov Award for the year's best story. He participates courtesy of the Open World Program.

**CHOI Jung Lae (pen name CHOI Jeong Rye; poet, essayist, researcher; b. 1955 South Korea)** has published four books of poetry, most notably *Tigers in the Sunlight*, which received the Kimdaljin Literary Prize in 1999 and *Red Dry Field*, which won the Isu Literary Prize in 2003. She holds a PhD in Korean Modern Poetry from Korea University, where she has recently lectured. She has also served as a research professor at Jeonju University, located in Jeollabuk-do. She participates courtesy of the Korean Literature Translation Institute.

**Mathilde Walter CLARK (novelist, fiction writer; b. 1970 Denmark)** has published one novel, *Thorsten Madsen's Ego* (2004) and *Disorder of Things* (2005), a collection of short stories. She was awarded the 2005 Discovery of the Year in Literature by Carlsbergfonden and a major grant in 2006 from the Danish Art Foundation. She lives in Copenhagen, where she is a featured columnist and TV critic. She participates courtesy of the U.S. Embassy in Copenhagen.

**Gentian ÇOÇOLI (poet, translator; b. 1972 Albania)** has published three collections of poetry, most recently *Human Soil* (2006). He has translated several contemporary American poets and won a prize for his translation of Seamus Heaney. In 2001 his *Circumference of Ash* was selected a Best Poetry Book of the Year by the Ministry of Culture. The founder of the literary journal *Aleph Review* and of the publishing house Aleph Publishing, he currently heads the Culture and Art Department in Albania's Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports. He participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

**Rafael COURTOISIE Beyhaut (poet, novelist, essayist; b. 1958 Uruguay)** is one of Uruguay's leading writers, with work published in the U.S., Latin America and Europe. The author of three novels, sixteen volumes of poetry and a prolific essayist, he has won both his country's National Prize in Narrative for his first novel *A Dog's Life* (1997) and the National Prize in Poetry for his 2002 collection *Frontiers of Umbria*. He teaches screenwriting at the Escuela de Cine del Uruguay in Montevideo. He participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

**Jamby DJUSUBALIEVA (translator and journalist; b. 1967 Kyrgyzstan)** is a

correspondent accredited to the United Nations, frequent contributor to the Kyrgyz and European press and the editor-in-chief of the journal *Meerim*. From 2000 to 2003, she served as an official at Kyrgyzstan's Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva. She participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.



**Ashur ETWEBI (poet, translator, novelist; b. 1952 Libya)** is a physician and senior lecturer at Zawia Teaching Hospital. In his literary career, he has translated the poems of W.B. Yeats, as well as collections of American, Lithuanian and Canadian modern poetry. Since 1993, he has published four collections of poems, most recently *A Box of the Old Laughs* (2005). His work is widely anthologized in the Arab-speaking world and Europe, including the *Anthology of Modern Arabic Poetry* (France). In 2001, he ventured into prose with his first novel,

*Dardaneen*. He participates courtesy of the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli.

**Kseniya GOLUBOVICH (novelist, fiction writer, literary critic, editor, translator; b. 1972 Russia)** has published the poetry collection *Persona*, the travelogue *The Serbian Parable* and the novel, *Wishes Granted*. She contributes essays on life in contemporary Russia to several newspapers and journals, including *Logos*, a philosophical magazine. She holds a Master's degree from Moscow University, where she recently taught a special course on poets and power. She participates courtesy of the Open World Program.

**Doris KAREVA (poet, editor, translator; b. 1958 Estonia)** has published thirteen poetry collections, most recently *Shape of Time* (2005). Her poems have been translated into fifteen languages; in 2003 her collection *Mandragora* was staged by Tallinn City Theatre. Kareva has edited anthologies of Estonian poetry and translated the work of Auden, Beckett, Dickinson and Shakespeare. After winning the State Cultural Prize in 1993, she launched Straw Stipend, which provides publication funding for ten young Estonian poets. She currently serves as Secretary General of the Estonian National Commission for UNESCO. She participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

**Mimi KHALVATI (poet, editor; b. 1944 Iran r. England)** was born in Tehran and grew up on the Isle of Wight. Her poetry collections include *Mirrorwork* (1995), which received an Arts Council Writers' Award, *Selected Poems* (2000) and *The Chine* (2002). Active as an actor and director in both the UK and Iran, she has founded Matrix, a women's experimental theatre group and co-founded Theatre in Exile. She is also the founder of the Poetry School in London. She participates courtesy of the William B. Quarton International Writing Program Scholarship.

**Byoung-Yong KIM (novelist, researcher; b. 1966 South Korea)** is the author of the novels *Their Guns* (1993) and *Blooming Flowers* (1997). He has taught literature and creative writing at several South Korean colleges and universities. In 2006 he published his

latest short story collection, *How Do Dogs Laugh?* A prolific coordinator of literary activities and programs, he is at present the chief researcher of the Choi Myung-Hee Literary Museum and an adjunct professor at the Jeonju National University of Education. He participates courtesy of The Arts Council Korea.

**Polina KOPYLOVA (journalist, science-fiction writer, poet, translator; b. 1976 Russia)** is a graduate of Saint-Petersburg State University of Cinema and Television. She works as a freelance journalist, specializing in modern literature and television. She has also participated in translation projects in English and Finnish. From 2000-2003, she was a correspondent for the magazine *Piterbook*. She lives in Helsinki, where she is actively involved in the literary community, having recently participated in a Global Poem seminar and readings in the town of Lahti, Finland. She participates courtesy of the Open World Program.

**Jagath KUMARASINGHE (fiction writer and translator; b. 1945 Sri Lanka)** has worked as a journalist, translator and advertising copywriter, mainly in the Sinhala language. After his retirement from copywriting, he joined the Beach Waadiya Writers Group of Colombo 6 and began writing short stories in English. In 2004 his collection, *Kider Chetty Street*, was awarded the prestigious Gratiaen Prize. He participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

**Emmanuel LAUGIER (poet, editor, essayist; b. 1969 Morocco, r. France)** has published several books of poetry, including *L'oeil bande [Eye Patch]* (1997) and *Suivantes [The Following]* (2004). As an editor for *L'Animal Revue*, he has assembled critical volumes and anthologies on contemporary poetry, most recently *Poésie: Variations [Poetry: Variations]* (2005). He contributes regularly to French literary journals such as *Le Matricule des Anges*. He participates in the International Writing Program courtesy of the Consulate General of France and the Department of French and Italian at the University of Iowa.

**LOU Ye (director, screenwriter; b. 1965 China)** rose to fame with *Suzhou River* (2000) which he wrote and directed and which won major awards at film festivals in Rotterdam, in Paris and in Tokyo, as well as the FIPRESCI prize in Venice and was voted by *Time Magazine* (Asia) as one of the best movies of 2000. In its wake Lou Ye was banned from making films in China for two years. Since then he has written and directed *Purple Butterfly* (2003) and *Summer Palace* (2006), both screened at the Cannes Film Festival to broad critical acclaim. The working title of his current science fiction project is *Restorer*. He participates courtesy of the Asian Cultural Council.

**U MOE Hein (poet, translator, literary critic; b. 1942 Myanmar)** works in Burmese as well as in English. His translations include literary criticism and philosophy and the Burmese poetry collections *Through Life's Perils* (1983) and *Sweet Odour of Padauk and Dokchampa* (2002). In 1998, two of his poems were anthologized by the National Library of Poetry in Maryland. In 1999, Mr. Moe published his first book of poetry in English, *Harmony of Head and Heart* and is currently working on a second volume. He teaches English language, Buddhist Philosophy and Ethics to monks at the State Priyatti Sasana University, Yangon. He participates courtesy of the Open Society Institute.



**Nasurullah Partaw NADERI (poet, journalist; b. 1953 Afghanistan)** has published five poetry collections and several prose books on modern Afghan literature. His work has been translated into five languages, including English. An artist, scholar, journalist and literary critic, Naderi has edited *Zhwandoon Quarterly Magazine*, directed the Art and Cultural Programs section for Radio Afghanistan and has reported on current affairs for BBC World Service. Currently, he is with the Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF) in Kabul. He participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

**James NORCLIFFE (poet, novelist, fiction writer, editor; b. 1946 New Zealand)** has published five collections of poetry, most recently *Along Blueskin Road* (2005), a collection of short stories, *Chinese Interpreter* (1994) and five novels for young adults, most recently *The Assassin of Gleam* (2006). His writing has appeared widely in New Zealand and the U.S.; his literary prizes include the Lilian Ida Smith Award (1990), the Robert Burns Fellowship (2000) and the Christchurch Press Literary Liaisons Honour Award (2003). A member and officer of the NZ Society of Authors, he is currently the president of the New Zealand Poetry Society. He participates courtesy of the Arts Council of New Zealand.

**Laksmi PAMUNTJAK (poet, writer, editor, translator; b. 1971 Indonesia)** has since 1994 written columns and articles on politics, film, food, classical music and literature for *Tempo Magazine* and elsewhere. She translated and edited *Goenawan Mohamad: Selected Poems*, published the bestselling *Jakarta Good Food Guide* and co-founded Aksara, a bilingual bookstore in Jakarta. Her first collection of poetry, *Ellipsis*, appeared on *The Herald UK* 2005 Books of the Year list. A treatise on violence and the *Iliad* entitled *War, Heaven and Two Women* came out in 2006, along with her first collection of short stories, *The Diary of R.S.: Musings on Art*. She participates courtesy of the IWP Writers' Support Fund.



**Thomas PLETZINGER (fiction writer, novelist, translator, editor; b. 1975 Germany)** has worked and studied in Hamburg, Leipzig and New York. His stories and poems have appeared in magazines such as *BELLAtriste*, *EDIT* and *sprachgebunden*. The short story "Bruck on the Floor Sings as Quietly as Monk Plays" won him the 2006 MDR-Literature-Prize. *A Dog's Funeral*, his first novel, is scheduled for publication in 2007. He participates courtesy of the Max Kade Foundation.

**Mazen A.I. SA'ADEH (novelist, playwright, screenwriter, director; b. 1959 Jordan r. Ramallah/Palestinian Authority)** has published two novels, written five plays and worked on several films as writer and director. His most recent project, *My Friend, My Enemy* (2004), is a documentary about friendships between Palestinian and Israeli women. In 2004, he co-founded the Open Workshop for Culture and the Arts in Palestine, an organization that encourages cultural exchange between Palestine and the global community through art. He participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

**José Eugenio SÁNCHEZ Garza (poet; b. 1965 Mexico)** has published three collections of poetry, most recently *Happiness is a Warm Gun* (2004). His second book, *Physical Graffiti* (1997) won him the International Poetry Grant from the Loewe Foundation; he also received two writing fellowships from Mexico's Fund for Culture and Arts (FONCA) and a Young Poetry Award of Monterrey. At present, he is a member of FONCA's National System of Creators of Art. His poems are included in Latin-American anthologies in Spain, Argentina, Cuba, Colombia and the United States. He participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

**Manju SARKAR (novelist, fiction writer and journalist; b.1954 Bangladesh)** has published ten short story collections, most recently *Nirbachita Galpa* (2004). Among his thirty-eight books the novel *Abasvumi* (1994) won the Philips Literary Award as Best Novel in 1995. In 1998, he received the Bangla Academy Literary award for overall achievement in literature. At present he is an assistant editor of *Daily Amar Desh*, a leading newspaper in Bangladesh. His latest novel, *Plaban*, was published in 2006. He lives in Dhaka and participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

**Véronique TADJO (poet, novelist, fiction writer, painter, editor from Ivory Coast; b. 1955 France r. South Africa)** is the author of two poetry collections, five novels and several children's books. She attended Howard University on a Fulbright and has a doctorate in African American Studies from the Sorbonne. For several years, she taught at the University of Abidjan in Ivory Coast. She edited and illustrated *Talking Drums* (2000), an anthology of African poetry. Her work has been awarded by the Agence de Cooperation Culturelle et Technique and the UNICEF, with the novel *Reine Pokou* ['Queen Pokou'] receiving this year's Grand Prix Littéraire d'Afrique Noire. She participates courtesy of a private gift to the IWP.



**Lev USYSKIN (novelist, publicist, poet, essayist; b. 1965 Russia)** contributes regularly to magazines and literary journals in Russia. His short novel *Frunze Narratives* was nominated in 1998 for the Russian Booker Prize. Twice in 2001, he won first place in the "Prose" category of the literary Internet competition "Ulov." He has published one book of poems, *A Road to Uchsumabad* (1995) and a collection of short stories, *Nurse Angela* (2005). He lives in Saint Petersburg and participates courtesy of the Open World Program.

Portraits of the writers: Nukila Amal, Ashur Etwebi, Thomas Pletzing and Véronique Tadjó.  
Photos by Tom Langdon.



U Moe Hein stands in the Shambaugh House library. Photo by Tom Langdon.

# PROGRAM SUPPORT

*The IWP can only carry on its worldwide mission thanks to the overwhelming support of the University of Iowa, federal, state, community and individual sources. We would like to acknowledge our profound debt to the individuals, entities and institutions listed below. We ask the forgiveness of those whom we may have inadvertently overlooked.*

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Student Services: Vice-President Phillip E. Jones and the management and staff of the Iowa House, especially Patricia Kruse and the IMU Catering team

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*eXchanges: a journal of translation*

## **Our colleagues in other departments**

The Writers' Workshop: Director Lan Samantha Chang and Workshop staff and faculty  
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## **Programming Support**

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Valley High School, West Des Moines, IA: Karen Downing and Erin Perry  
Washington Junior High: Corinne Stanley

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Scribblers' Writing Club, Mount Pleasant, IA: Claudia Streeter

## **Foundations and cultural institutions**

The United States Department of State, Washington, D.C.  
The Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation, Cedar Rapids, IA  
The Freeman Foundation, Olney, MD  
The Max Kade Foundation, New York, NY  
The Ramon and Victoria Lim Fund, Iowa City, IA  
The Burma Project of the Open Society Institute, New York, NY  
The University of Iowa Chinese Community, Iowa City, IA  
Jane and Jonathan Wells, New York, NY  
Korean Culture and Arts Foundation, Seoul, Korea  
Korea Literature Translation Institute, Seoul, Korea  
CEC ArtsLink, New York, NY  
Australia Council for the Arts, Surry Hills, New South Wales, Australia  
Keio University, Yokohama, Japan  
US Embassy in Cairo, Egypt  
US Liaison Office in Tripoli, Libya  
US Consulate-General in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia  
Chicago Humanities Festival, Chicago, IL

## **Federal, state and local government institutions**

Cultural Programs Division of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs: Chief Daniel Schuman and Bureau Program Officers Lea Perez, Alina Romanowski, Sandra Rouse and Jill Staggs  
Public Affairs Officers at the United States Embassies of Afghanistan, Albania, Bangladesh, Denmark, Estonia, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Jerusalem, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Mexico, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Uruguay  
U.S. Congressman James A. Leach, 1st district, State of Iowa and his staff  
Iowa City Mayor Ross Wilburn and the City Council of Iowa City  
The Iowa City Public Library: Coordinator of Community and Audio-Visual Services  
Kara Logsden and AV Specialist Beth Fisher

## **Outreach opportunities provided by other institutions**

The Chicago Humanities Festival: Artistic Director Lawrence Weschler and his staff  
The Des Moines School District Talented and Gifted Program: Coordinator Julia Burton  
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The Meskwaki Tribe: Jonathan Buffalo, Historical Preservation Coordinator  
Humanities Iowa: Executive Director Christopher R. Rossi

Consulate General of France, Chicago, IL: Cultural Attaché Yannick Mercoyrol  
The Portland Stage Company of Portland, ME: Affiliate Artist Lisa DiFranza, Artistic  
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The Paul Engle Center, Cedar Rapids, IA  
University of Iowa Hillel Jewish Student Center: Director Gerald Sorokin  
US Bank: Deb Pullin-VanAuken and Vernetta Knapp  
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Santa Fe Council on International Relations  
The Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.: Carolyn Brower and staff  
New York Theater Workshop: Linda Chapman, Associate Artistic Director

## **Writer-support and hospitality provided by the community**

IWP Co-Founder Hualing Nieh Engle  
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Professor Sandra Barkan  
Anna and Jim Barker  
Allegra and John Dane  
Debra Leach  
Jean and Richard Jean Lloyd-Jones  
Arthur Neis  
William Quarton  
Elizabeth Swanson  
David Wilder

**“After having died in this manner, Nizam's ghost took refuge in the banyan tree...In the midst of all kinds of proofs, even a courageous and clear-eyed person like Kutubuddi had now been gripped by a ghost. Whenever he had a chance he ran to the banyan tree, muttered to himself, abused people in filthy language without the slightest provocation, and even made his cane into a rifle and tried to shoot. If he had aimed from a safe distance, no one would be afraid; people might have even laughed. But Kutubuddi used the butt and rod of his ‘rifle’ to beat people mercilessly, especially those who had once been freedom fighters. Then one day Neamat Mondal, a respected villager, bore the brunt of razakar Nizam's rifle through the hands of Kutubuddi and fled crying, ‘O my God!’ Since then Kutubuddi's sons kept him tied like a cow inside his house.”**  
**—Manju Sarkar, “The Ghost of the Razakar”**



## HONOR ROLL OF CONTRIBUTORS TO THE INTERNATIONAL WRITING PROGRAM

*This honor roll gratefully recognizes individuals and organizations who contributed \$100 or more from January 1, 2005, through June 30, 2006, to the International Writing Program through The University of Iowa Foundation, the preferred channel for private support of all areas of the University.*

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**e-mail address: david-triplett@uiowa.edu**

# Panel Discussions at the Iowa City Public Library

**September 1**

**The Russian Scene 2006: Four Perspectives**

Mikhail Butov, Ksenia Golubovich, Polina Kopylova, Lev Ussyskin

**September 8**

**Islam and We**

Manju Sarkar, Jagath Kumarasinghe, Ken Bugul

**September 15**

**In Pursuit of Justice**

Ken Bugul, Jamby Djusubalieva, Mazen Sa'adeh

**September 22**

**Lost and Found in Translation**

Gentian Çoçoli, Doris Kareva, U Moe Hein

**September 29**

**Fantasy and Reality**

James Norcliffe, Ashur Etwebi, Bi Feiyu

**October 6**

**Writing for Two and Three Dimensions**

Lou Ye, Rafael Courtoisie, Mazen Sa'adeh

**October 13**

**Why I Write What I Write and How I Write It**

Nukila Amal, Srijato Bandyopadhyay, Thomas Pletzinger, Choi Jeong Rye

**October 20**

**Writing With (and Against)  
National Identity**

Laksmi Pamuntjak, Gentian Çoçoli,  
Mimi Khalvati

**October 27**

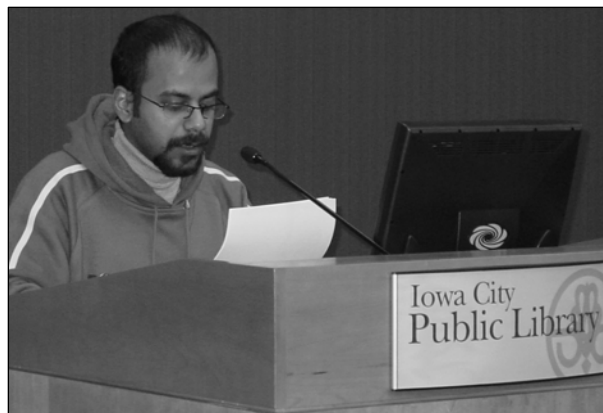
**Literature of Evil**

Mathilde Walter Clark, Véronique  
Tadjo, Partaw Naderi

**November 3**

**Images of America**

All



Srijato Bandyopadhyay speaks on October 13.

Photo by Kecia Lynn.

# International Literature Today Class Presentations

## August 28

Michail Butov, Ksenia Golubovich, Polina Kopylova, Lev Ussyskin

## September 11

Ken Bugul, Mathilde Walter Clark, Srijato Bandyopadhyay

## September 18

Doris Kareva, Rafael Courtoisie, Mazen Sa'adeh

## September 25

José Eugenio Sánchez, Choi Jeong Rye, Nukila Amal

## October 2

James Norcliffe, Mimi Khalvati, Partaw Naderi

## October 9

Gentian Çoçoli, Manju Sarkar, U Moe Hein, Lou Ye

## October 16

Thomas Pletzinger, Ashur Etwebi, Byoung-Yong Kim

## October 23

Véronique Tadjo, Jagath Kumarasinghe, Jamby Djusubalieva

## October 30

Bi Feiyu, Laksmi Pamuntjak, Emmanuel Laugier

**“When, at ten o'clock at night, three hours behind schedule, the bus began its crawl through the snow-covered streets of Kars, Ka couldn't recognize the city at all. He couldn't even see the railroad station, where he'd arrived twenty years earlier by steam engine, nor could he see any sign of the hotel to which his driver had taken him that day...: the Hotel Republic, 'a telephone in every room.' It was as if everything had been erased, lost beneath the snow. He saw a hint of the old days in the horse-drawn carriages here and there, waiting in garages, but the city itself looked much poorer and sadder than he remembered. Through the frozen windows of the bus, Ka saw the same concrete apartments that had sprung up all over Turkey during the past ten years and the same Plexiglas panels; he also saw banners emblazoned with campaign slogans strung above every street.”**  
—from *Snow*, Orhan Pamuk (IWP '85)

# Prairie Lights Bookstore Readings

With students from the Writers' Workshop, the Nonfiction Writing Program  
and postgraduate writing fellows

## 3 September

Kseniya Golubovich  
Ken Bugul  
Heather June Gibbons (WW)

## 10 September

Mathilde Walter Clark  
James Norcliffe  
Kevin Gonzalez (WW)

## 17 September

Rafael Courtoisie  
Thomas Pletzinger  
Mia Nussbaum (Fellow)

## 24 September

Gentian Çoçoli  
Manju Sarkar  
Bern Esposito (NWP)

## 1 October

Brian Goedde (NWP)  
Lauren Shapiro (WW)  
Monica Bergers (WW)

## 8 October

Mimi Khalvati  
Nukila Amal  
Kiki Petrosino (Fellow)

## 15 October

Laksmi Pamuntjak  
Nathalie Stephens  
Nico Alvarado-Greenwood (WW)

## 22 October

Doris Kareva  
Véronique Tadjo  
Mark Leidner (WW)



Prairie Lights Bookstore, 15 S. Dubuque St.

# Shambaugh House Readings



Mazen Sa'adeh reads at Shambaugh House. Photo by Kecia Lynn.

## **1 September**

Mikhail Butov  
Polina Kopylova  
Lev Usyskin

## **8 September**

Srijato Bandyopadhyay  
Jagath Kumarasinghe

## **15 September**

Byoung-Yong Kim  
Choi Jeong Rye

## **22 September**

Jamby Djusubaliev  
José Eugenio Sánchez

## **29 September**

Ashur Etwebi  
Mazen Sa'adeh

## **6 October**

U Moe Hein  
Russell Valentino/Sabit Madaliev's  
verse

## **13 October**

Fadhil Thamir  
Partaw Naderi

## **20 October**

Emmanuel Laugier  
Roman Antopolsky

## **27 October**

Bi Feiyu  
Lou Ye

## Field Trips, Receptions & Cultural Events



Writers tour the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge.  
Photo by Kelly Bedeian.

- 27 August: Nature Walk at Red Bird Farm
- 29 August: CIVIC Dinner at Brown Deer Golf Course
- 30 August: Poetry Slam at The Mill
- 31 August: Main Library Orientation
- 2 September: Trip to Coralville Mall / Welcome Party at the Merrills' Home
- 4 September: Hike at Lake McBride
- 6 September: Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge
- 7 September: Des Moines Art Center and Drake University
- 9 September: Tri-State Rodeo
- 15 September: Barn Dance at Scattergood Quaker Friends School
- 23 September: Pre-Ramadan Feast at Church St. House
- 30 September: Effigy Mounds Tour / Frank Lloyd Wright's Studio, Spring Green, WI
- 1 October: National Mississippi River Museum, Dubuque, IA
- 7 October: Hike with Christopher Merrill / Salsa Dancing
- 11 October: Sarah Rothenberg Concert, "Epitaph for a Condemned Book"
- 15 October: Pumpkin Picking, Wilson's Orchard
- 20 October: American Poetics Discussion at Church St. House
- 21 October: Kalona Amish Tour / Harvest Dinner at Dane's Farm
- 27 October: Halloween Party
- 28 October: Mississippi River Symposium
- 2 November: Kenyan Writing Salon and Dinner at Church St. House
- 3 November: University of Iowa Dance Gala, Hancher Auditorium
- 4-7 November: Chicago Humanities Festival
- 10 November: Closing Party at Shambaugh House

## Funding Agencies for the 2006 IWP Participants

<b>Nukila Amal</b> (Indonesia) Novelist, essayist, translator	U.S. Department of State
<b>Srijato Bandyopadhyay</b> (India) Poet	U.S. Department of State
<b>Bi Feiyu</b> (China) Screenwriter	The Ramon and Victoria Lim Fund, the Freeman Fund, Dr. Shiliang Sun and Hualing Engle
<b>Ken Bugul</b> (Senegal) Novelist	U.S. Department of State
<b>Mikhail Butov</b> (Russia) Novelist, literary critic, editor	Open World Program
<b>Choi Jeong Rye</b> (South Korea) Poet, essayist	Korean Literature Translation Institute
<b>Mathilde Walter Clark</b> (Denmark) Novelist, fiction writer	U.S. Embassy, Copenhagen
<b>Gentian Coçoli</b> (Albania) Poet, translator	U.S. Department of State
<b>Rafael Courtoisie</b> (Uruguay) Poet, novelist, essayist	U.S. Department of State
<b>Jamby Djusubalieva</b> (Kyrgyzstan) Translator and journalist	U.S. Department of State
<b>Ashur Etwebi</b> (Libya) Poet, translator, novelist	U.S. Embassy, Tripoli
<b>Kseniya Golubovich</b> (Russia) Novelist, literary critic, editor, translator	Open World Program
<b>Doris Kareva</b> (Estonia) Poet, editor, translator	U.S. Department of State
<b>Mimi Khalvati</b> (Iran/England) Poet, editor	William B. Quarton IWP Scholarship

<b>Byoung-Yong Kim</b> (South Korea) Novelist, researcher	The Arts Council Korea
<b>Polina Kopylova</b> (Russia) Journalist, science-fiction writer, poet, translator	Open World Program
<b>Jagath Kumarsinghe</b> (Sri Lanka) Fiction writer, translator	U.S. Department of State
<b>Emmanuel Laugier</b> (Morocco/France) Poet, editor, essayist	Consulate General of France French and Italian Departments at the University of Iowa
<b>Lou Ye</b> (China) Director, screenwriter	Asian Cultural Council
<b>U Moe Hein</b> (Myanmar) Poet, translator, literary critic	Open Society Institute
<b>Partaw Naderi</b> (Afghanistan) Poet, translator, literary critic	U.S. Department of State
<b>James Norcliffe</b> (New Zealand) Poet, novelist, fiction writer, editor	Arts Council of New Zealand
<b>Laksmi Pamuntjak</b> (Indonesia) Poet, writer, editor, translator	IWP Writers' Support Fund
<b>Thomas Pletzinger</b> (Germany) Fiction writer, novelist, translator, editor	Max Kade Foundation
<b>Mazen A. I. Sa'adeh</b> (Palestinian Authority) Novelist, playwright, screenwriter, director	U.S. Department of State
<b>José Eugenio Sánchez</b> (Mexico) Poet	U.S. Department of State
<b>Manju Sarkar</b> (Bangladesh) Novelist, fiction writer, journalist	U.S. Department of State
<b>Véronique Tadjó</b> (Ivory Coast/South Africa) Poet, novelist, fiction writer, editor	Private gift to the IWP
<b>Lev Usyskin</b> (Russia) Novelist, poet, essayist	Open World Program



# 2006 RESIDENCY ACTIVITIES BY INDIVIDUAL WRITER



**Nukila AMAL** (novelist, essayist, translator—Indonesia)

- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- Panel, “Why I Write What I Write and How I Write It,” Iowa City Public Library
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**Srijato BANDYOPADHYAY** (poet—India)

- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Panel, “Why I Write What I Write and How I Write It,” Iowa City Public Library
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**BI Feiyu** (novelist, screenwriter—China)

- Discussion of the film *Shanghai Triad*, IWP Cinemathèque
- Panel, “Fantasy and Reality,” Iowa City Public Library
- Visit, Department of Asian Languages and Literatures, University of Iowa
- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**Ken BUGUL** (novelist and fiction writer—Senegal)

- Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- Panel, “Islam and We,” Iowa City Public Library
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Panel, “In Pursuit of Justice,” Iowa City Public Library
- Torino International Book Fair, Torino, Italy
- Presentation, Elizabeth Tate High School
- Presentation, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA
- Presentation, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

- Presentation, University of Colorado-Boulder
- Presentation, “Where Is War Hiding?” Chicago Humanities Festival

**Mikhail BUTOV** (fiction writer, novelist, literary critic, editor—Russia)

- Panel, “The Russian Scene 2006,” Iowa City Public Library
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Literary and cultural tour of Chicago, IL

**CHOI Jung Lae** (poet, essayist, researcher—South Korea)

- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Panel, “Why I Write What I Write and How I Write It,” Iowa City Public Library

**Mathilde Walter CLARK** (novelist, fiction writer—Denmark)

- Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Presentation, Cornell College, Mount Vernon, IA
- Individual Research trip to Arizona, Nevada, Florida, Alaska
- Panel, “Writing and Its Mis/Fortunes,” Iowa City Public Library
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**Gentian ÇOÇOLI** (poet, translator—Albania)

- Presentation, Drake University
- Presentation, Cornell College, Mount Vernon, IA
- Panel, “Lost and Found in Translation,” Iowa City Public Library
- Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Presentation, Senior College
- Presentation, Elizabeth Tate High School
- Presentation, “Writing With (and Against) National Identity,” Iowa City Public Library
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library
- Presentation, “Where Is War Hiding?” Chicago Humanities Festival

**Rafael COURTOISIE Beyhaut** (poet, novelist, essayist—Uruguay)

- Discussion of the film *Whisky*, IWP Cinemathèque
- Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Presentation, Elizabeth Tate High School
- Bi-lingual reading, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of Iowa
- Panel, “Writing for Two and Three Dimensions,” Iowa City Public Library

- Washington University, St. Louis, MO
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library
- Presentation, “Where Is War Hiding?” Chicago Humanities Festival

**Jamby DJUSUBALIEVA** (translator and journalist—Kyrgyzstan)

- Panel, “In Pursuit of Justice,” Iowa City Public Library
- Discussion of the film *Beshkempir*, IWP Cinemathèque
- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Mount Pleasant Reading Group
- Presentation, Senior College
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**Ashur ETWEBI** (poet, translator, novelist—Libya)

- Presentation, Senior College
- Panel, “Fantasy and Reality,” Iowa City Public Library
- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Presentation, Iowa City Foreign Relations Council
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**Kseniya GOLUBOVICH** (novelist, fiction writer, literary critic, editor, translator—Russia)

- Panel, “The Russian Scene 2006,” Iowa City Public Library
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- Literary and cultural tour of Chicago, IL

**Doris KAREVA** (poet, editor, translator—Estonia)

- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Panel, “Lost and Found in Translation,” Iowa City Public Library
- Presentation, Senior College
- Presentation, Legion Arts
- Presentation, Iowa City Foreign Relations Council
- Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- An evening of the music of Arvo Pärt, IWP Cinemathèque
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**Mimi KHALVATI** (poet, editor—England)

- Presentation, Drake University
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore

- Presentation, “Writing With (and Against) National Identity,” Iowa City Public Library
- Presentation, Central College, Pella, IA
- Salon on Poetics, Writing Fellows’ Church St. House

**Byoung-Yong KIM** (novelist, researcher—South Korea)

- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**Polina KOPYLOVA** (journalist, science-fiction writer, poet, translator—Russia)

- Panel, “The Russian Scene 2006,” Iowa City Public Library
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Literary and cultural tour of Chicago, IL

**Jagath KUMARASINGHE** (fiction writer and translator—Sri Lanka)

- Panel, “Islam and We,” Iowa City Public Library
- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**Emmanuel LAUGIER** (poet, editor, essayist—France)

- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**LOU Ye** (director, screenwriter—China)

- Panel, “Writing for Two and Three Dimensions,” Iowa City Public Library
- Screening and discussion of his film *Summer Palace*, IWP Cinemathèque
- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**U MOE Hein** (poet, translator, literary critic—Myanmar)

- Panel, “Lost and Found in Translation,” Iowa City Public Library
- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Burmese Writers’ Reunion, San Francisco, CA
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**Partaw NADERI** (poet, journalist—Afghanistan)

- Presentation, Senior College
- Presentation, International Literature Today

- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Presentation, Legion Arts, Cedar Rapids, IA
- Presentation, Elizabeth Tate High School
- Reading, Coe College, Cedar Rapids, IA
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library
- Scott Community College, Bettendorf, IA
- University of Indiana-Bloomington

**James NORCLIFFE** (poet, novelist, fiction writer, editor—New Zealand)

- Reception for New Zealand’s ambassador, Iowa City
- Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- Panel, “Fantasy and Reality,” Iowa City Public Library
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Mount Pleasant Reading Group
- Longfellow Elementary School
- Presentation, Senior College
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**Laksmi PAMUNTJAK** (poet, writer, editor, translator—Indonesia)

- Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- Panel, “Writing With (and Against) National Identity,” Iowa City Public Library
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**Thomas PLETZINGER** (fiction writer, novelist, translator, editor—Germany)

- Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- Frankfurt Book Fair, Frankfurt, Germany
- Panel, “Why I Write What I Write and How I Write It,” Iowa City Public Library
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library
- Presentation, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA

**Mazen SA’ADEH** (novelist, playwright, screenwriter, director—Ramallah/Palestinian Authority)

- Presentation, Elizabeth Tate High School
- Panel, “In Pursuit of Justice,” Iowa City Public Library
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Presentation, Senior College
- Panel, “Writing for Two and Three Dimensions,” Iowa City Public Library
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

- Presentation, “Where Is War Hiding?” Chicago Humanities Festival

**José Eugenio SÁNCHEZ Garza** (poet—Mexico)

- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**Manju SARKAR** (novelist, fiction writer and journalist—Bangladesh)

- Panel, “Islam and We,” Iowa City Public Library
- Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library

**Véronique TADJO** (poet, novelist, fiction writer, painter, editor—South Africa/Ivory Coast)

- Presentation, Elizabeth Tate High School
- Presentation, Legion Arts, Cedar Rapids, IA
- Presentation, Senior College
- Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Presentation, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA
- Panel, “Writing and Its Mis/Fortunes,” Iowa City Public Library
- Panel, “Images of America,” Iowa City Public Library
- Presentation, Iowa City Foreign Relations Council

**Lev USYSKIN** (novelist, publicist, poet, essayist—Russia)

- Panel, “The Russian Scene 2006,” Iowa City Public Library
- Presentation, International Literature Today
- Reading, Shambaugh House
- Literary and cultural tour of Chicago, IL



Mimi Khalvati, Nukila Amal, Choi Jeong Rye, Laksmi Pamuntjak and Jamby Djusubaliev (L to R) at Iowa City's Atlas Restaurant. Photo by their waiter. Mathilde Walter Clarke, Doris Kareva and Gentian Çoçoli. Photos by Tom Langdon.

# PAROS

## The New Symposium

### May 17-23 2006

The New Symposium brought writers, artists and thinkers from the United States, Greece and around the world to Paros, Greece to focus on “The Commons”—what we share as inheritance and must pass on undiminished to our heirs: the sky, water, public lands and public squares, culture, science, customs and laws, rituals and rites, the airwaves and the Internet. The New Symposium was organized by the International Writing Program, funded through a grant from the US Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and co-sponsored by the Fulbright Foundation in Greece, EKEMEL (European Translation Center-Literature & Human Sciences) and the Office of the Mayor of Paros.



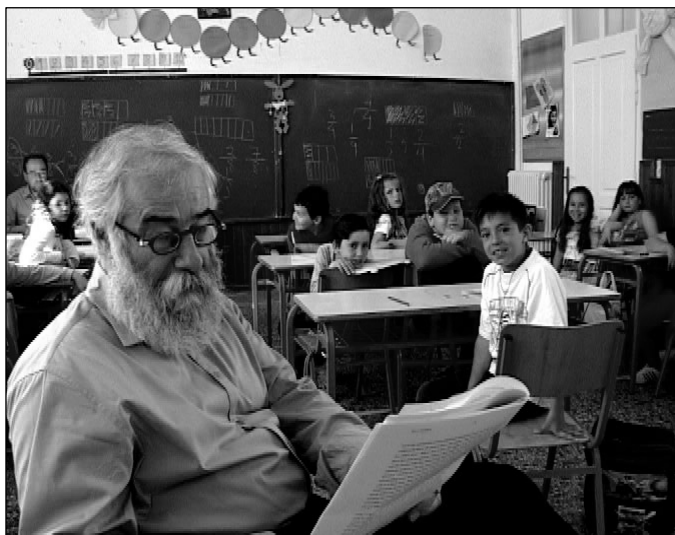
In the spring of 2006, participants prepared essays on the theme, which then formed a common ground for four filmed discussion sessions, captured in filmmaker Lucia Rikaki’s documentary of the event and edited to appear as a published volume.

The week in Paros was a mix of formal and informal activities. The group traveled to spots of historical interest, including ancient marble quarries and the Byzantine Route. The opening and closing ceremonies were hosted by the Office of the Mayor of Paros and attended by many local citizens.

Following in an unbroken tradition of inquiry from Socrates, Greece has seen the birth of robust communal wisdom and was the ideal site for The New Symposium. Since the project’s conception, the Fulbright Foundation in Greece and the Athens-based translation center EKEMEL have been active partners in the symposium’s development. And Paros made an ideal location for the event: for millennia, this large, stately island in the center of the Cyclades has been a hub for the trading of knowledge and culture; a supporter of literature; and a palimpsest of diverse civilizations.

Paros became a maritime power in the 8th century B.C. when it began to trade with the Phoenicians. Seafaring made Paros a crossroads of the Mediterranean, connected by history and commerce to the Balkans, the Near East and North Africa.

Paros is also a birthplace to poets. The most famous, Archilochus, introduced personal elements in lyrical forms previously devoted solely to heroics. That love of literature



continues today: in the village of Lefkes, as part of its mission to foster better translation in literature and across the human sciences, EKEMEL maintains the House of Literature—the site of the New Symposium’s discussions—where translators from around Europe are given residencies.

Paros was conquered and occupied numerous times—first by Crete and later by the

Macedonian, Roman and Byzantine Empires. Before the War of Independence in 1821 and Paros’s inclusion in modern Greece it was ruled by the Venetians, the Franks and the Turks. Each new civilization left its mark; these are often seen in the island’s architecture, which, like a healthy commons is at once various and unified. This “maritime knot” captures the energy latent in the vital exchange of ideas—the very same energy that rose from the dialogues at the New Symposium.

## PARTICIPANTS

### Directors

**Christopher Merrill**, director of the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa, writer  
**Artemis A. Zenetou**, executive director of the Fulbright Foundation in Greece, writer

### Participants

#### *From the United States:*

**Diana Fritz Cates**, professor of Religious Studies at the University of Iowa

**Lewis Hyde**, Richard L. Thomas Professor of Creative Writing at Kenyon College

**Ruth Margraff**, Award-winning playwright and visiting Professor of Playwriting at Brown University

**Barry Sanders**, Professor Emeritus of the History of Ideas at Pitzer College in Claremont, California and currently a Fulbright Senior Fellow

**Scott Russell Sanders**, Professor of English at Indiana University

#### *From Brazil:*

**Giselle Beiguelman**, a new media artist and multimedia essayist and Professor of Digital Culture, Communication and Semiotics at PUC-SP (São Paulo, Brazil)

#### *From England:*

**Gregory Norminton**, novelist and environmentalist





*From Greece:*

**Stratis Haviaras**, creative writing teacher at Harvard University and at the European Center for the Translation of Literature, in Athens

**Alexis Stamatis**, novelist, poet, playwright and columnist

**Anastassis Vistonitis**, poet, essayist, journalist and co-founder of the Greek Collecting Society of Literary Works (OSDEL)

*From India:*

**Rustom Bharucha**, writer, theatre director and cultural critic based in Kolkata

*From Indonesia:*

**Ayu Utami**, novelist and editor, co-founder of the union of freelance journalists

*From Israel:*

**Amir Or**, professor, poet, translator and editor

*From Kenya:*

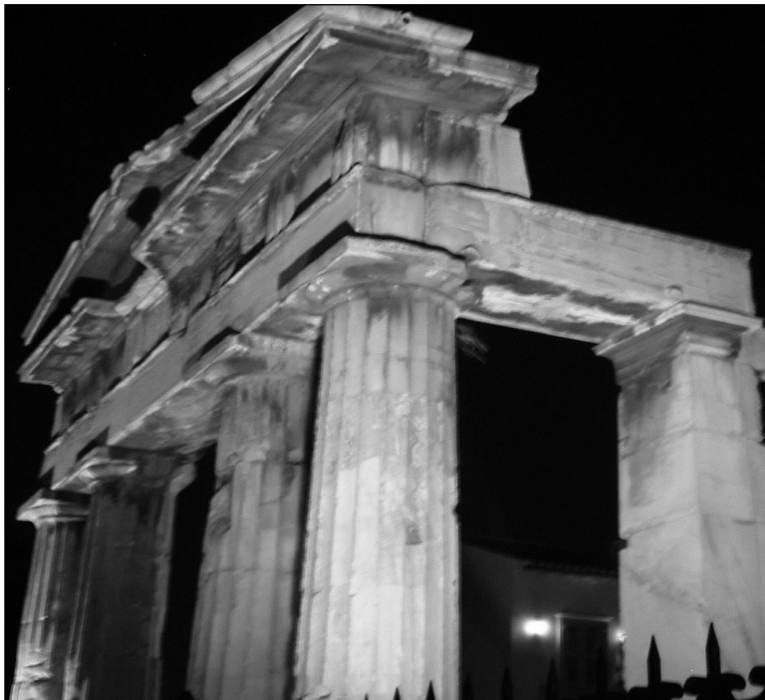
**Yvonne Owour**, fiction writer, conservationist, cultural activist and past Executive director of the Zanzibar International Film Festival

*From Romania:*

**Magda Cârneci**, poet, art writer, essayist

*From Sri Lanka:*

**Ameena Hussein**, sociologist, fiction and non-fiction writer, editor and publisher



In order: a windmill in Paros. Photo by Troy Ziel. Barry Sanders reads to Greek schoolchildren. Photo by Lucia Rikaki. Christopher Merrill greets Maria Dimitriadou, an Athens gallery owner at her home in Lefkes. A Greek Orthodox church in Paros; ruins in Athens. Photos by Kelly Bedeian.