





THE UNIVERSITY
OF IOWA

CONTENTS

Fall Residency Group Photograph	4
Letter from the Director	5
The Fall Residency	6
Calendar of Events	7
Participants List & Writers' Activities	12
The Life of Discovery	18
Writers in Motion	22
Between the Lines	26
Overseas Reading Tours	28
Distance Learning	32
Virtual Writing University	38
Publications	39
Website Redesign	40
Program Support	41
Contributing Organizations	47
"The Last Piano"	48



GREETINGS FROM IOWA CITY

A letter from Director Christopher Merrill



Photo: Ram Devineni

When Paul and Hualing Nieh Engle founded the International Writing Program in 1967, the idea of bringing writers from around the globe to the American Heartland was a revolutionary one. As with all bold ideas and new endeavors, their desire to create a residency program for international writers—a place where writers from around the globe could find the time and support to write—was not without its detractors. Iowa was too remote, some said, and the Engles' vision of writers coming to Iowa City to write, collaborate, and learn from one another too optimistic, perhaps naïve.

A lot has changed in 45 years. Iowa City has nearly doubled in population, the University of Iowa has firmly established a reputation as a center for innovation in the arts and sciences, and UNESCO has designated Iowa City as a City of Literature—the only American municipality to hold that designation, and only one of five cities of literature in the world. Even with all of the changes inevitably brought by the passage of

time, it's clear that the Engles' vision for the IWP was not just a revolutionary idea but a necessary one. In a world in which we—all seven billion of us—grow ever more connected through technology and travel, our founders' wish that the IWP would exist as a space for cross-cultural exchange, dialogue, and camaraderie is more essential than ever.

Our 2011 annual report is a window through which we hope you'll see that the Engles' founding sense of purpose and generosity is very much still alive, even as the IWP engages in a bolder and more diverse range of programming than ever before. From distance learning initiatives that digitally connected American writers and educators to students from Sierra Leone, Dubai, and Mexico, to reading tours that sent American authors to Nepal, Pakistan, Afghanistan, the United Arab Emirates, Bolivia, and Uruguay, 2011 was a year in which the IWP strived—through new and established avenues alike—to foster the generous creative exchange that has long been critical to the program's success.

Of course, our Fall Residency remains our flagship program. If Hannah Arendt was correct when she wrote that "Storytelling reveals meaning without committing the error of defining it," then the story of the IWP can perhaps best be told by pointing to the indelible friendships that over 1,400 writers from nearly 140 different countries have formed while in residence at the IWP. This year, we welcomed 37 writers from 32 countries who gave readings, performances, and lectures; who engaged with students, community members, and one another; who travelled to San Francisco, Chicago, Santa Fe, New Orleans, Washing-

ton D.C., New York City (among other cities); and who produced new creative work—an impressive 1,600 pages of prose, poems, essays, articles, and plays.

Meantime, we designed a beautiful new website, which makes our deep cache of archived content available to the world. From original book publications and the program's literary journal, 91st Meridian, to our archive of photos, interviews, and author biographies, the new site gives visitors access to the writing and writers that have defined the program for nearly half a century. I invite you to explore our new website, and—if you're in Iowa City or one of the locations we visit during the fall—to attend one of the many readings, discussions, or classes we hold each year.

Without the generous support of the University, the people of Iowa City, our friends and associates, and the agencies that support our programming, notably the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, we wouldn't be here, carrying on the critical mission that was set before us so long ago.

And so let me close by thanking you for helping us to carry on the tradition of connecting the writers of the world, which brings us all a little closer.

Warm regards,

Christopher Merrill
Director

THE FALL RESIDENCY

The IWP Celebrates 45 Years of Bringing International Writers to Iowa



IWP residents attend an information-packed orientation meeting at Shambaugh House during the first day of the 2011 Fall Residency.

2011 marked the 45th Fall Residency at the IWP, a program started in 1967 as a place where writers of all nations could come together to learn of one another's home countries and creative approaches, all while providing the time and space for the production of new work. Over the years, more than 1,400 writers from nearly 140 countries have taken part in the proceedings. And while the IWP has expanded its reach with programming across the world in recent years, the IWP continues to provide the

opportunity for writers from countries such as Burma, Iraq, Pakistan, Venezuela, Tibet, Vietnam, Colombia, Nigeria, South Africa, Nepal, China, and Haiti to come together in Iowa City, as they did this past fall.

As always, this year's group of writers—in all, 37 from 32 countries—pursued writing and research projects, read and lectured at a number of public events, engaged in collaborations, staged theatrical productions, screened films, interacted with members of the local and

University of Iowa communities, visited universities and institutions across the country, and traveled to other locales to deepen their understanding of America and the American literary scene. Ultimately, the writers participated in more than 160 events over the course of their 81-day stay in the U.S., engaging literary communities in more than 36 cities across 17 states, including Chicago, San Francisco, Santa Fe, New Orleans, Washington D.C., and New York City. As part of these travels, they toured historical literary sites such as the birthplace of Ernest Hemingway, Faulkner House Books, and City Lights Books; met with literary agents, book publishers, and theatre companies; participated in online creative writing programs; held language forums in Spanish, French, and Arabic; and engaged audiences of all ages.

On top of their activities and travels, IWP participants also wrote more than 1,600 pages of prose, poetry, and film scripts during their time at the Residency. They also translated over 50 pages of work across English, Vietnamese, Arabic, Mandarin, and Korean languages, and had more than 150 pages of their own work translated into English. In their own words, "the immersion in transglobal literature of my colleagues and friends... made me learn about my place in the world as a writer."

MORE INFO:

<http://iwp.uiowa.edu/residency>

FIELD TRIPS, RECEPTIONS, & CULTURAL EVENTS

8.27

Residency Begins

8.28

Nature Hike at Redbird Farms

8.29

IWP course International Literature Today commences

8.30

Opening Reception

8.31

Dean Young Benefit Reading

Wednesday evening Cinemathequé film screenings commences

9.2

Friday evening Shambaugh House Reading Series commences

9.3

MFA Programs Reception at the Hotel Vetro

9.4

Sunday afternoon Prairie Lights Reading Series commences

9.5

Trip to Lake Macbride

9.6

Granta Magazine Issue #116 release event at Prairie Lights Bookstore

9.7

Robert Reich Lecture at the University of Iowa

9.8 – 9.11

Pittsburgh Jazz/Poetry events



IWP Residents Fabienne Kanor, Francisco Suniaga, Jeremy Tiang, and Ajit Baral visit Upper Iowa University where they read from their work and engaged students.

9.8

Trip to Tri-State Rodeo

9.9

Friday Iowa City Public Library Panel Lecture Series commences

9.18-9.22

Events with Ida Cordelia Beam Distinguished Visiting Professor Ilya Kaminsky

9.19

Performance by musician Steve Earle at the Englert Theatre

9.20

Reading at Prairie Lights Bookstore by IWP Director Christopher Merrill

9.22

CIVIC Dinner

9.23

Anthology Reading Series

9.24

Iowa Hawkeyes home football game
Trip to Amish community in Kalona, Iowa
Barn Dance

9.27 – 10.1

Mid-Residency Travel Period: IWP resident trips to San Francisco, New Orleans,
& Santa Fe

10.3

Zuhdi Jasser Lecture at the University of Iowa

10.4

Text and Context : Publishing in the U.S.

10.4 – 10.6

Events at Creighton University and University of Nebraska-Wesleyan

10.6

Reading by Chinese poet Zhou Zan & IWP Alumnus Xi Chuan (China, '02)

10.6 – 10.8

Comics, Creativity, & Culture Conference at the University of Iowa

10.7

Anthology Reading Series

10.8

Trip to Effigy Mounds

10.11 – 10.16

Life of Discovery

10.12

Text and Context: Teaching Creative Writing

10.12

Paul Engle Memorial Award Ceremony with recipient James Alan McPherson

10.13

Figge Art Museum Visit

10.15

Global Express: A Staged Reading of IWP Residents' Work

10.16

Harvest Festival Dinner at Dane Farm

10.17

Shadow Tibet: A Special Presentation by Jamyang Norbu & Tenzig Rigdol

10.20

Reading by poet Marvin Bell



IWP Resident Marvin Victor reads to a full audience at Prairie Lights Books in Iowa City as part of the IWP's weekly Prairie Lights Reading Series.

10.21 – 10.23

IWP Resident trip to Chicago

10.21

Tour of Poetry Foundation

10.25

U.S. Bank Reception

10.26

Text and Context : On the MFA

10.28

Reading by Colson Whitehead

11.3

Arabic Language Forum

11.5

Private Q&A with Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka

11.6

Closing Party at Englert Theatre

Public reading by Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka

11.6 – 11.9

Portland Stage Company events in Portland, Maine

11.8 – 11.11

Trip to Washington D.C.

11.9

Visit to School Without Walls

11.10

Visit to Arena Stage

11.10

Presentation at The U.S. Department of State: "The 11th Hour: Armistice, Reconciliation, Remembrance"

11.11 – 11.15

Trip to New York City

11.12

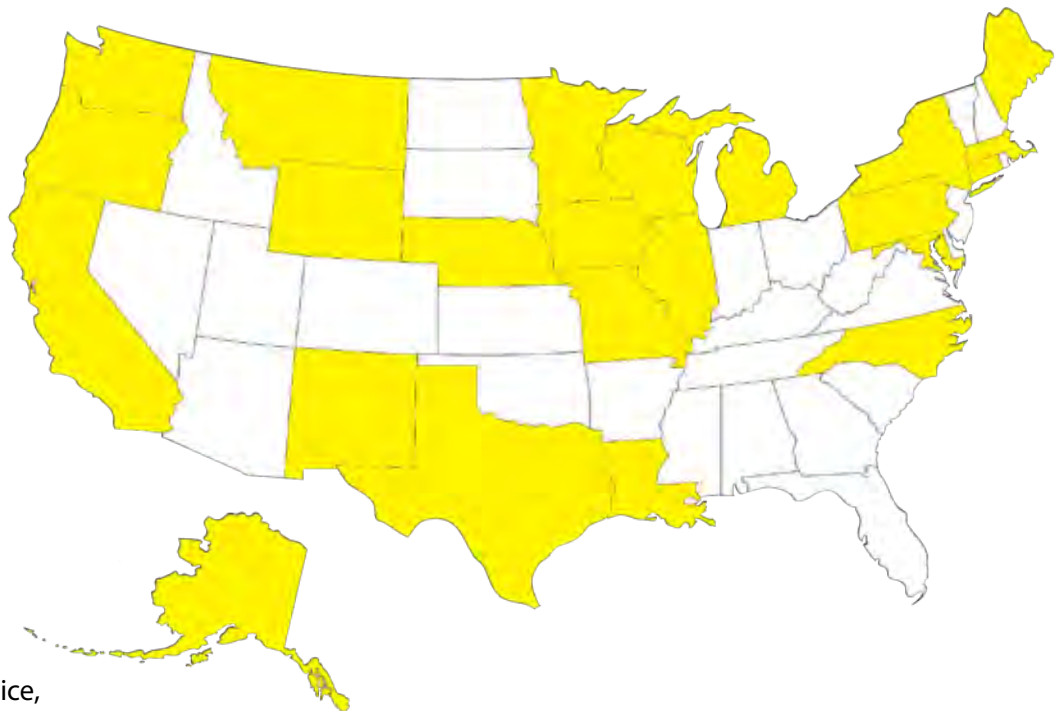
Tour of Poets House

11.14

Meetings with literary agency

11.15

Departure/End of Residency





Clockwise from upper-left: IWP writers tour the Poetry Foundation in Chicago, IL; take a walk at Redbird Farms during orientation week; visit Pacific Beach during mid-residency travel to San Francisco; Fabienne Kanor delivers a panel paper at the Iowa City Public Library; IWP residents with Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka; Park Chan-soon & Usha K.R. at the Tri-State Rodeo; writers pose for a picture during mid-residency travel to New Orleans; and Cho Tu Zaw presents his panel paper at the Iowa City Public Library.





Clockwise from upper-left: Phan Hon Nien during IWP orientation; Maria Cristoff presents a panel paper at the Iowa City Public Library; the IWP visits the School Without Walls in Washington, D.C.; Associate Director Hugh Ferrer leads a discussion with Life of Discovery delegates; Ida Cordelia Beam Distinguished Visiting Professor Ilya Kaminsky reads at the Iowa Writers' Workshop; Tommi Parkko reads at Priarie Lights; and IWP Director Christopher Merrill leads a Q&A session with Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka.

2011 IWP ACTIVITIES

ORGANIZED BY WRITER

Ajit Baral, Nepal

(Fiction Writer, Nonfiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

- September 16 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Translation: Writing Across Languages"
- September 23 Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series
- October 10 Presentation, International Literature Today
- October 21 Tour of Ernest Hemingway Museum, Chicago
- October 25 Reading and discussion, Upper Iowa University

Kevin Bloom, South Africa

(Nonfiction Writer; Journalist)

Participated courtesy of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

- September 6 Reading, Granta 116 launch
- September 21 Reading and discussion, Immersion Journalism class
- September 23 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Writer Rules: Share What You Go By"
- September 28 Reception, Faulkner House Books, New Orleans
- September 29 Reception, Press Street Room 220, New Orleans
- September 30 Roundtable Discussion, The Community Book Center, New Orleans
- October 20 Reading and discussion, West High School
- October 30 Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- November 7 Presentation, International Literature Today
- November 10 Presentation, Department of State: "The 11th Hour: Armistice, Reconciliation, Remembrance"

Maria Sonia Cristoff, Argentina

(Novelist, Nonfiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of the U.S. Embassy, Buenos Aires

- September 11 Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- September 28 Reading and discussion, 826 Valencia, San Francisco
- October 7 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Genre Lit: Bodice Rippers, Aliens and High Form?"
- October 18 Presentation, Spanish Writers Roundtable
- October 20 Reading and discussion, Senior College, Johnson County Senior Center
- October 24 Presentation, International Literature Today
- October 29 IWP Cinemathèque Screening of "Historias Extraordinarias"
- November 7 Reading and discussion, Coe College

- November 9 Presentation, School Without Walls
- November 10 Presentation, Department of State: "The 11th Hour: Armistice, Reconciliation, Remembrance"

Naseer Hassan, Iraq

(Poet, Translator)

Participated courtesy of the U.S. Embassy, Baghdad

Program Activities:

- October 13 Reading and discussion, Senior College, Johnson County Senior Center
- October 17 Appearance on "The Exchange," WSUI-AM
- October 18 Reading and discussion, Kirkwood Community College-Cedar Rapids
- October 18 Reading and discussion, Cornell College
- October 21 Tour & Reception, Poetry Foundation
- October 28 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Why I Write What I Write, and How I Write It"
- October 31 Presentation, International Literature Today
- November 1 Appearance on KRUI's "The Lit Show"
- November 3 Presentation, Arabic Writers' Forum
- November 4 Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series
- November 10 Presentation, Department of State: "The 11th Hour: Armistice, Reconciliation, Remembrance"
- November 12 Tour & Reception, Poets House

Lynley Hood, New Zealand

(Nonfiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of Creative New Zealand

Program Activities:

- October 3 Presentation, International Literature Today
- October 13 Reading and discussion, Senior College, Johnson County Senior Center
- October 14 Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series
- October 15 Play staged at Global Express

Iman Humaydan, Lebanon

(Novelist, Fiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of the William B. Quarton Foundation

Program Activities:

- October 17 Presentation, International Literature Today
- October 21 Tour of Ernest Hemingway Museum, Chicago
- October 23-27 Appearances, University of Texas-Austin
- October 28 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Why I Write What I Write, and How I Write It"
- October 28 Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

November 3 Appearance on KRUI's "The Lit Show"
 November 3 Presentation, Arabic Writers' Forum

Fabienne Kanor, France

(Novelist, Filmmaker)

Participated courtesy of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Program Activities:

September 4 Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
 September 19 Presentation, International Literature Today
 September 23 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Writer Rules: Share What You Go By"
 September 29 Reading, Adobe Books, San Francisco
 October 3-24 Visiting Lecturer, Atelier d'écriture/Creative Writing class
 October 19 IWP Cinemathèque Screening of "Husbands of the Night"
 October 25 Reading and discussion, Upper Iowa University
 November 1 Appearance on KRUI's "The Lit Show"
 November 9 Presentation, School Without Walls

Oonya Kempadoo, Grenada

(Fiction Writer, Nonfiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Program Activities:

September 12 Presentation, International Literature Today
 September 23 Presentation, University of Warwick
 October 3 Reading and discussion, Writers' Workshop seminar
 October 4 Reading and lecture, Caribbean Cinema seminar
 October 7 Reading, Anthology series
 October 21 Tour, Frank Lloyd Wright Houses, Chicago
 October 24 Reading and lecture, St. Xavier University
 October 28 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Why I Write What I Write, and How I Write It"
 November 1 Appearance, Costume Design class
 November 3 Reading and lecture, The College of the Bahamas
 November 6 Reading, Prairie Lights Books

Lee Hye-kyung, South Korea

(Fiction Writer, Novelist)

Participated courtesy of the Korea Literature Translation Institute (KLTi)

Program Activities:

September 16 Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series
 October 4-6 Readings & lectures, Nebraska Wesleyan and Creighton Universities
 October 21 Tour of Ernest Hemingway Museum, Chicago
 October 24 Presentation, International Literature Today

Dory Manor, Israel

(Poet, Editor)

Participated courtesy of private funding

Program Activities:

October 7 Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series
 October 12 Presentation, French Writers Roundtable

Kgebetli Moele, South Africa

(Novelist, Fiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of the U.S. Embassy, Cape Town

Program Activities:

September 9 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "9/11: Ten Years Later"
 September 11 Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
 September 14 Presentation, American Lives class
 September 23 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Writer Rules: Share What You Go By"
 September 28 Reception, Faulkner House Books, New Orleans
 September 29 Reception, Press Street Room 220, New Orleans
 September 30 Roundtable Discussion, The Community Book Center, New Orleans
 October 10 Presentation, International Literature Today
 October 20 Reading and discussion, West High School
 October 21 Tour & Reception, Poetry Foundation
 October 25 Presentation, Topics in Culture and Identity class

Jamyang Norbu, Tibet

(Novelist, Nonfiction Writer, Playwright)

Participated courtesy of the Shelly and Donald Rubin Foundation

Program Activities:

October 14 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Freedom's Limits? Core Values in a Changing World"
 October 17 Presentation, International Literature Today
 October 17 Reading and lecture, "Shadow Tibet"

Milena Oda, Germany

(Fiction Writer, Playwright, Translator)

Participated courtesy of the Max Kade Foundation

Program Activities:

September 2 Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series
 September 29 Reading, Adobe Books, San Francisco
 October 14 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Freedom's Limits? Core Values in a Changing World"
 October 16 Reading and discussion, German-American Heritage Center, Davenport, IA
 October 17 Presentation, International Literature Today
 October 21 Tour & Reception, Poetry Foundation

October 22 Reception, Handshake Magazine Issue Release
 October 24 Reading and discussion, Goethe Institute, Chicago, IL
 November 1 Appearance on KRUI's "The Lit Show"
 November 10 Tour & Reception, Arena Stage, Washington D.C.

Park Chan Soon, South Korea

(Fiction Writer, Translator)

Participated courtesy of Arts Council Korea

Program Activities:

September 12 Presentation, International Literature Today
 September 14 IWP Cinemathèque Screening of "The Old Potter"
 September 16 Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series
 October 7 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Genre Lit: Bodice Rippers, Aliens and High Form?"
 October 21 Tour, Frank Lloyd Wright Houses, Chicago
 November 1 Appearance on KRUI's "The Lit Show"
 November 3 Reading and discussion, Senior College, Johnson County Senior Center
 November 9 Presentation, School Without Walls
 November 10 Tour & Reception, Arena Stage, Washington D.C.
 November 12 Tour & Reception, Poets House

Tommi Parkko, Finland

(Poet, Nonfiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Program Activities:

September 4 Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
 September 11 Participation in Pittsburgh Jazz Poetry Festival
 October 21 Tour & Reception, Poetry Foundation
 November 9 Presentation, School Without Walls

Alexandra Petrova, Russia/Italy

(Poet, Fiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Program Activities:

September 11 Participation in Pittsburgh Jazz Poetry Festival
 September 16 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Translation: Writing Across Languages"
 October 3 Presentation, International Literature Today
 October 26 IWP Cinemathèque Screening of shorts by Arvid Peleshian
 November 1 Appearance on KRUI's "The Lit Show"
 November 6 Reading, Prairie Lights Books

Phan Hon Nhlen, Vietnam

(Novelist, Fiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Program Activities:

September 25 Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
 September 26 Presentation, International Literature Today
 October 7 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Genre Lit: Bodice Rippers, Aliens and High Form?"
 October 21 Tour of Ernest Hemingway Museum, Chicago

Ogochukwu Promise, Nigeria

(Fiction Writer, Poet, Essayist, Playwright)

Participated courtesy of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Program Activities:

September 14 Presentation, American Lives class
 September 25 Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
 September 26 Presentation, International Literature Today
 September 29 Reading, Adobe Books, San Francisco
 October 7 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Genre Lit: Bodice Rippers, Aliens and High Form?"
 October 15 Play staged at Global Express
 October 18 Reading and discussion, Kirkwood Community College-Cedar Rapids
 October 21 Tour & Reception, Poetry Foundation
 October 28 Reading and discussion, West High School
 November 1 Appearance on KRUI's "The Lit Show"
 November 3 Reading and discussion, Senior College, Johnson County Senior Center
 November 9 Presentation, School Without Walls
 November 10 Presentation, Department of State: "The 11th Hour: Armistice, Reconciliation, Remembrance"

Pilar Quintana, Colombia

(Novelist, Fiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of the U.S. Embassy, Bogotá

Program Activities:

September 9 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "9/11: Ten Years Later"
 September 28 Reception, Faulkner House Books, New Orleans
 September 29 Presentation, Bard Early College, New Orleans
 September 29 Reception, Press Street Room 220, New Orleans
 September 30 Roundtable Discussion, The Community Book Center, New Orleans
 October 3 Presentation, International Literature Today
 October 18 Presentation, Spanish Writers Roundtable
 October 19 IWP Cinemathèque Screening of "The Colors of the Mountain"
 October 26 Reading and discussion, Grinnell College

October 30 Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
 November 3 Appearance on KRUI's "The Lit Show"
 November 6 Portland Stage Company, Portland, ME
 November 9 Presentation, School Without Walls

Usha K.R., India

(Novelist, Fiction Writer, Editor)

Participated courtesy of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Program Activities:

August 29 Presentation, International Literature Today
 September 23 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Writer Rules: Share What You Go By"
 October 2 Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
 October 15 Play staged at Global Express
 October 20 Reading and discussion, Senior College, Johnson County Senior Center
 October 21 Tour, Frank Lloyd Wright Houses, Chicago
 November 1 Appearance on KRUI's "The Lit Show"
 November 7 Presentation, India Now: Bollywood to Global Terror class
 November 9 Presentation, School Without Walls
 November 10 Presentation, Department of State: "The 11th Hour: Armistice, Reconciliation, Remembrance"
 November 12 Tour & Reception, Poets House

Nell Regan, Ireland

(Poet)

Participated courtesy of The Arts Council/ An Chomhairle Ealaíon and the Irish Fulbright Commission

Program Activities:

September 12 Reading and lecture, Iowa State University
 September 13 Reading and lecture, Grinnell College
 September 16 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Translation: Writing Across Languages"
 October 10 Reading and lecture, Grand View University
 October 13 Reading and lecture, Simpson College
 October 24 Presentation, International Literature Today
 October 25 Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
 November 3 Appearance on KRUI's "The Lit Show"
 November 7 Presentation, International Literature Today
 November 9 Presentation, School Without Walls
 November 12 Tour & Reception, Poets House

Eugenia Rico, Spain

(Novelist)

Participated courtesy of private funding

Program Activities:

September 28 Reading and discussion, 826 Valencia, San Francisco
 September 29 Reading, Adobe Books, San Francisco
 October 3 Telemundo appearance, Los Angeles
 October 7 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Genre Lit: Bodice Rippers, Aliens and High Form?"
 October 12 Presentation, French Writers Roundtable
 October 14 Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series
 October 18 Presentation, Spanish Writers Roundtable
 October 21 Reading, Cervantes Institute, Chicago, IL
 October 26 Reading, Salón del Libro Iberoamericano
 November 3 Lecture, Spanish MFA Workshop
 November 10 Tour & Reception, Arena Stage, Washington D.C.

Josephine Rowe, Australia

(Fiction Writer, Poet)

Participated courtesy of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Program Activities:

September 18 Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
 September 28 Reception, Faulkner House Books, New Orleans
 September 29 Presentation, Bard Early College, New Orleans
 September 29 Reception, Press Street Room 220, New Orleans
 September 30 Roundtable Discussion, The Community Book Center, New Orleans
 October 5 Appearance on KRUI's "The Lit Show"
 October 7 Reading, Anthology series
 October 10 Presentation, International Literature Today
 October 15 Play staged at Global Express
 October 22 Reception, Handshake Magazine Issue Release
 November 2 IWP Cinemathèque Screening of "Romulus, My Father"
 November 6 Portland Stage Company, Portland, ME

Moshe Sakal, Israel

(Novelist, Fiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of the U.S.-Israel Education Foundation

Program Activities:

October 7 Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series
 October 12 Presentation, French Writers Roundtable
 October 17 Reading and lecture, Stanford University
 November 7 Presentation, International Literature Today

Bina Shah, Pakistan

(Novelist, Fiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of the U.S. Consulate General, Karachi

Program Activities:

- September 6 Reading, Granta 116 launch
- September 9 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "9/11: Ten Years Later"
- September 23 Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series
- September 29 Reading, Adobe Books, San Francisco
- October 4 Lecture, Problems in Comparative Politics class
- October 10 Presentation, International Literature Today
- October 21 Tour of Ernest Hemingway Museum, Chicago
- October 27 Reading and discussion, Senior College, Johnson County Senior Center
- November 3 Appearance on KRUI's "The Lit Show"
- November 9 Presentation, School Without Walls
- November 12 Tour & Reception, Poets House

Hind Shoufani, Jordan

(Poet, Filmmaker)

Participated courtesy of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Program Activities:

- September 11 Participation in Pittsburgh Jazz Poetry Festival
- September 12 Presentation, International Literature Today
- September 28 Presentation, New Orleans Center for Creative Arts
- September 28 Reception, Faulkner House Books, New Orleans
- September 29 Reception, Press Street Room 220, New Orleans
- September 30 Roundtable Discussion, The Community Book Center, New Orleans
- October 6 Reading, Senior College, Johnson County Senior Center
- October 13 Frankfurt Book Fair, Frankfurt, Germany
- October 26 IWP Cinemathèque Screening of "The Time That Remains"
- October 28 Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series
- November 2 Reading, Poetry Against Occupation, Iowa City Public Library
- November 12 Tour & Reception, Poets House

Zoë Strachan, Scotland

(Novelist, Playwright)

Participated courtesy of the British Council

Program Activities:

- September 7 IWP Cinemathèque Screening of "The Wicker Man"
- September 19 Presentation, International Literature Today
- October 6 Reading, Senior College, Johnson County Senior Center
- October 9 Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- October 14 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Freedom's Limits? Core Values in a Changing World"
- October 15 Play staged at Global Express

Su Wei-chen, Taiwan

(Fiction Writer, Nonfiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of the Council for Cultural Affairs in Taiwan

Program Activities:

- September 9 Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

Francisco Suniaga, Venezuela

(Novelist, Fiction Writer, Nonfiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Program Activities:

- September 15 Presentation, Spanish MFA Workshop
- September 18 Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- September 26 Presentation, International Literature Today
- September 28 Reading and discussion, 826 Valencia, San Francisco
- October 14 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Freedom's Limits? Core Values in a Changing World"
- October 18 Presentation, Spanish Writers Roundtable
- October 25 Reading and discussion, Upper Iowa University

Jeremy Tiang, Singapore

(Fiction Writer, Playwright, Translator)

Participated courtesy of the Singapore National Arts Council

Program Activities:

- August 29 Presentation, International Literature Today
- October 2 Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
- October 12 IWP Cinemathèque Screening of "The Last Communist"
- October 14 Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Freedom's Limits? Core Values in a Changing World"
- October 15 Play staged at Global Express
- October 18 Reading and discussion, Kirkwood Community College-Cedar Rapids
- October 21 Tour, Frank Lloyd Wright Houses, Chicago
- October 21 Meeting with theatre directors, Chicago
- October 22 Reception, Handshake Magazine Issue Release
- October 25 Reading and discussion, Upper Iowa University
- November 3 Appearance on KRUI's "The Lit Show"
- November 6 Portland Stage Company, Portland, ME
- November 10 Tour & Reception, Arena Stage, Washington D.C.

Joel Toledo, Philippines

(Poet, Fiction Writer, Nonfiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Program Activities:

September 2	Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series
September 12	Presentation, International Literature Today
September 21	IWP Cinemathèque Screening of "Todo Todo Teros"
September 29	Reading, Adobe Books, San Francisco
October 15	Play staged at Global Express
October 21	Tour & Reception, Poetry Foundation
October 28	Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Why I Write What I Write, and How I Write It"
November 3	Appearance on KRUI's "The Lit Show"
November 7	Reading and discussion, Coe College
November 9	Presentation, School Without Walls
November 12	Tour & Reception, Poets House

Dorothy Tse, Hong Kong

(Fiction Writer)

Participated courtesy of the Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation in Hong Kong

Program Activities:

September 9	Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series
September 16	Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Translation: Writing Across Languages"
September 28	Reception, Faulkner House Books, New Orleans
September 29	Reception, Press Street Room 220, New Orleans
September 30	Roundtable Discussion, The Community Book Center, New Orleans
October 4-6	Readings & lectures, Nebraska Wesleyan and Creighton Universities
October 21	Tour, Frank Lloyd Wright Houses, Chicago

Marvin Victor, Haiti

(Fiction Writer, Filmmaker)

Participated courtesy of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Program Activities:

September 23	Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Writer Rules: Share What You Go By"
September 28	Reception, Faulkner House Books, New Orleans
September 29	Presentation, Bard Early College, New Orleans
September 29	Reception, Press Street Room 220, New Orleans
September 30	Roundtable Discussion, The Community Book Center, New Orleans
October 3	Presentation, International Literature Today
October 5	IWP Cinemathèque Screening of "The Last Poem"
October 16	Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
October 18	Reading and discussion, Cornell College

Louise Welch, Scotland

(Novelist, Playwright, Essayist)

Participated courtesy of private funding

Program Activities:

October 6	Reading and discussion, Senior College, Johnson County Senior Center
October 9	Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore

Cho Tu Zaw, Myanmar

(Novelist, Filmmaker, Poet, Essayist, Activist)

Participated courtesy of independent funding

Program Activities:

October 5	IWP Cinemathèque Screening of "Let's Talk About Love"
October 21	Tour of Ernest Hemingway Museum, Chicago
October 24	Presentation, International Literature Today
October 24	Reading and discussion, Scott Community College, Davenport, IA
October 27	Reading and discussion, Senior College, Johnson County Senior Center
October 28	Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Why I Write What I Write, and How I Write It"
November 4	Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series
November 12	Tour & Reception, Poets House

Zhang Yueran, China

(Novelist, Editor)

Participated courtesy of private funding

Program Activities:

September 23	Presentation, Iowa City Public Library: "Writer Rules: Share What You Go By"
September 28	Reception, Faulkner House Books, New Orleans
September 29	Reception, Press Street Room 220, New Orleans
September 30	Roundtable Discussion, The Community Book Center, New Orleans
October 4-6	Readings and lectures, Nebraska Wesleyan University and Creighton University
October 8-10	Presentation, Atlanta Chinese Writing Association
October 16	Reading, Prairie Lights Bookstore
October 21	Tour, Frank Lloyd Wright Houses, Chicago

LIFE OF DISCOVERY

A Two-Way Exchange Program Between Writers in the U.S. and China



The Chinese and American delegations of the Life of Discovery exchange program gather for a group photo in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region in June 2011.

The reciprocal Life of Discovery program—a project supported by the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the Chinese Writers Association (CWA)—was renewed for a third year, once again bringing together delegations of American and Chinese writers for discussions, literary collaboration, joint writing, and cultural exchange spanning both countries. The 2011 installment featured women writers on both sides. The Americans visited China from June 24 to July 4, and the Chinese visited the U.S. October 9 to October 17.

In China, in a program arranged and hosted by CWA, cultural tours and meetings with local writers alternated with work and discussion sessions. During the creative session, the Chinese and American participants met in private, to read to each other from their works and discuss their

aesthetic projects in great detail. They also finalized a work schedule for the period in between the two exchanges. More than half of the time in China was spent in the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, a predominately Muslim region, and the only region whose ethnic minority plays a significant role in regional governance. Poet, publisher, and 2009 LOD participant Guo Wenbin led the welcoming dinner in Yinchuan and co-hosted a large question-and-answer session with local students and the writers union on the final day.

Immediately after the session in China, the writers wrote short pieces, capturing their impressions. These texts, and two mutually assigned classic stories (Eileen Chang's "The Golden Cangue" and Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man is Hard to Find") formed part of the opening discussions in the U.S. The writers after three months reunited in Chicago and delved immediately into the long history of literary exchange between the two countries, and Iowa's unique place in that history, courtesy of a brown-bag lecture from University of Chicago Professor Richard So. The topic provided the perfect transition to Iowa City several days later, when the exchange's theme shifted to "the Writing Life." The schedule introduced the writers to the IWP Fall Residency's other writers, to American publishing, and to new ways of thinking about creative writing, interspersed with community events such as a field trip to the Figge Museum in Davenport and an annual Harvest Dinner, hosted by John and Allie Dane.

The 2011 installment of the Life of

Discovery exchange was an electrifying meeting of minds and cultures and becomes an inspiration to future LOD exchanges to discover new collaborative spaces and explore productive ways for the delegations to 'meet on the page.'

Chinese Participants:

Baoerjin Na - born in 1984, received a degree in Fashion Design from the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology, and earned a Diploma of Advanced Literary Arts from the Lu Xun Institute of Literature. An award-winning essayist, she published her first collection, *Cheng Ren Bu Yi*, in 1999, and her next, *Beiling Street 13*, in 2002. Her novel *Zi Ming Hong Ling*, published in 2007, was selected for the national library's "Reading China: 500 Novels for 60 Years of Modern China" project.

Chun Sue (birth name: Zou Nan) - born in Shandong Province in 1983, lives in Beijing and is a frequent contributor to the magazine *Xin Zhoukan*. Her novels include *Beijing Wawa* (published in the U.S. as *Beijing Doll*), *Changda Bantian de Huanle* [Fun and Games], *2 Tiao Ming* [The Hard Task of Living], *Hong Haizi* [Red Children], and *Guangnian zhi Meiguo Meng* [Light Year's American Dreams]. She has published two collections of essays, *Tai Tou Wangjian Beidouxing* [The Vain Above] and *Ta Jiao Chunshu* [Her Name is Chun Sue], and her poetry has been anthologized. In 2010 she was named one of *Cosmopolitan's* "Women Beyond the Dream."

Ou Xiaou - born in 1984, received a degree in Chinese Language and Literature from Sichuan University, and an MA in Women's Studies from the University of Limerick in Ireland. She does research work in gender and development at the Institute of Sociology, Yunnan Province Academy. Her first collection of essays was published in 2002 when she was 17. In 2007, she published her second collection of essays, many of which have been reprinted by leading magazines.

Yuan Ping - an Associate Professor at Nanchang University, began writing fiction in 2002. Since then she has published a plethora of short fiction, including "The Nagato Fu," for which she won the 2004 Shanghai Literary Prize and the 2004 Jiangxi's Grain Rain Award. Both of her novellas, *Zheng Xiu's Opera* and *The Dagger*, were honored by the Chinese Society of Fiction.

U.S. Participants:

Patricia Foster - the author of the memoir *All the Lost Girls*, the essay collection *Just beneath My Skin* and editor of *Minding the Body: Women Writers on Body and Soul* (also published in Germany, Holland and Brazil) and *Sister-to-Sister*, is a professor in the MFA Program in Nonfiction at the University of Iowa; she has also taught in Montpelier, Prague, Barcelona, and Florence. Her 2011 novel, *Girl from Soldier Creek*, won the Fred Bonnie Award; A co-edited anthology, *Understanding the Essay*, will appear in 2012. Foster won the PEN/Jerard Prize in nonfiction for *All the Lost Girls* as well as the Mary Roberts Rinehart Prize for Women's Nonfiction. She has received fellowships from The University of Iowa, Yaddo, and the Virginia Center for the Arts.

Joyelle McSweeney - teaches in the Creative Writing Program at the University of Notre Dame, and is co-founder of Action Books and Action, Yes, a press and web-quarterly for international writing and hybrid forms, as well as of the collective culture blog Montevidayo. She is the author of five books, including *The Necropastoral* (2011), essays and poems; the lyric novels *Flet* (2008) and *Nylund the Sarcographer* (2007), and the poetry collections *The Commandrine* (2004) and *The Red Bird* (2001). She writes regular reviews for the American Book Review and Boston Review. A new volume of poems and plays, *Percussion Grenade*, and a new prose volume, *Salamandrine, 8 Gothics*, are forthcoming in 2012.

Nami Mun - an assistant professor of creative writing at Columbia College in Chicago, grew up in Seoul, South Korea and Bronx, New York. For her first novel, *Miles from Nowhere*, she received a Whiting Award and a Pushcart Prize, and was shortlisted for the Asian American Literary Award as well as the UK's Orange Award. *Miles From Nowhere* was also named as Editors' Choice and Top Ten First Novels by Booklist; Best Fiction of 2009 So Far by Amazon; and as an Indie Next Pick. Chicago Magazine named her Best New Novelist of 2009. Her stories have been published in numerous journals, including *Granta*, *Tin House*, *The Iowa Review*, and *The Pushcart Prize Anthology*.

Jen Silverman - born in the U.S., was raised in America, Europe, and Asia. She received her BA from Brown University and her MFA from the Iowa Playwrights Workshop. Her plays have been developed with New Georges in NYC, The Lark Playwrights Week, The Seven Devils Play-

wrights Conference/ id Theater, the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, the New York Stage & Film/ Powerhouse Theatre Company, the hotINK International Festival (NYC), and The Playwrights Realm (NYC). Her work has been produced in the NYC International Fringe Festival, in Albuquerque, Seattle, Washington D.C., and LA. A short play of hers won the 2009 Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Play Festival and was published by Samuel French. This fall, her play "Crane Story" will premiere off-Broadway with The Playwrights Realm.



The Chinese authors who had hosted the Americans during the summer visited Chicago and Iowa City in the fall of 2011, completing the two-way exchange.

LOD FILMS

More information about the Life of Discovery exchange program and documentary features about the 2009 and 2010 LOD exchanges can be found online at the IWP's website, under the Programs Tab:

<http://iwp.uiowa.edu/programs>



Clockwise from upper-left: the writers travel through the desert at Shapotou, near Zhongwei, in China's northwest; the Chinese and American writers have a laugh on the dunes at Shapotou; members of the Ningxia Hui chapter of the Chinese Writers Association and local students engage the visiting American writers in a question-and-answer session; coordinators Hugh Ferrer and Tony Zhang pose with the desert transport; the American writers field questions from their counterparts in Ningxia Hui.



Clockwise from upper-left: the writers hear from University of Chicago professor Richard So about the abundant historical literary connections between China and the U.S.; the writers discuss seminal works of short fiction by Flannery O'Connor and Eileen Chang at Columbia College in Chicago; poet and University of Chicago professor Srikanth Reddy (center left) joins the discussion at Columbia College; the writers discuss their own essays with each other while taking in some sun at the University of Chicago; the writers meet and pose for a photo with IWP co-founder Hualing Nieh Engle at the Shambaugh House in Iowa City.

WRITERS IN MOTION: FALL & RECOVERY

A Study Tour of the Mid-Atlantic & The American South



*Writers in Motion participants meet with journalist, screenwriter, producer, and director David Simon in New Orleans. Simon, who created HBO's *The Wire* and *Treme*, discussed the challenges of writing disaster narratives.*

"Fall and Recovery" represented a new turn in IWP's programming: rather than take writers abroad, as in all our previous tours, we invited eight international writers instead for a study tour of the Mid-Atlantic and the American South. Made possible with grant funds from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, the journey coincided with the 150th anniversary of the outbreak of the Civil War. The tour examined specific responses of American culture and history through a number of foundational crises—and all through the lens of eight authors with personal experience with unrest and natural disasters.

From April 3rd to April 16th, the writers traveled to Gettysburg, New Orleans, the Gulf Coast, Birmingham, Baltimore, and Washington,

D.C. to examine the different challenges presented by historical crises and upheavals, both natural and social. The tour delved into such crucial historical events as the Civil War, Hurricane Katrina, the BP oil spill, and the Civil Rights movement, through all of which the writers engaged issues of race, class, and federal (versus local) governance. The visiting writers met with prominent local writers, scientists, historians, and citizens, visited creative writing departments, and toured local landmarks, museums and civic gathering places in an effort to deepen their understanding of both the complexity of United States history and the challenges of writing cohesively and comprehensively about disaster worldwide.

The tour concluded with a public panel at American University, where participants discussed their immediate reactions to the tour, reflecting on what they had experienced and touching upon their impressions of the diplomatic potential for such a domestic tour.

The trip's collective conversation began months before departure. An extensive e-book shelf of fiction, non-fiction, plays, and essays contextualized each location's historical significance and gave the writers fundamental knowledge and language to assist in formulating their own perspectives. During the trip, writers used a daily blog as a forum for their reflections. And an e-volume of the writers' longer essays is forthcoming.

Filmmaker Sahar Sarshar accompanied the delegation, and her documentary film is available on the IWP's new website.

Tour Dates and Destinations:

April 3 - 6, Baltimore, MD & Gettysburg, PA

- Tour of Gettysburg with Peter Carmichael, Director of Civil War Institute, and discussion with Kent Gramm, author of *November: Lincoln's Elegy at Gettysburg*.
- Visit to Professor Kathryn Rhett's senior seminar in literary nonfiction at Gettysburg College.
- Urban renewal tour of Baltimore with Charles Duff of the Baltimore Architecture Foundation.

April 7 - 8, New Orleans, LA

- Tour of post-Katrina New Orleans, followed by a meeting about "writing disaster" with John Biguenet, Loyola University professor and author.
- On-set visit with MacArthur Grant-winning writer and producer David Simon, creator of HBO's series *Treme*.

April 9 - 11, Morgan City, LA & Atchafalaya Basin, LA

- Tour of the International Petroleum Museum.
- Meeting and boat tour with Atchafalaya Basin author and photographer Greg Guirard.
- Programming with Greg Guirard at Breaux Bridge Town Hall: presentations on human impact on ecology of the basin, including the BP oil spill.

April 12 -13, Birmingham, AL

- Walking tour of Birmingham with University of Alabama-Birmingham Professor Pamela Sterne King.
- Alice Pung and Kei Miller Read at UA-Birmingham.
- Visit with UA-Birmingham Professor Jim Brazier's creative nonfiction writing class.
- Tour of 16th Street Baptist Church and visit to the Civil Rights Institute.

April 14 - 16, Washington, D.C.

- Kei Miller, Adisa Basic, & Khet Mar visit the School Without Walls.
- Writers-in-Motion: Reading the Fall, Writing the Recovery panel and discussion at American University.

Participants:

Adisa Basić - was born in 1979, studied Comparative Literature, German and Librarianship at the University of Sarajevo, earned an M.A. in Human Rights and Democracy, and published a first poetry collection at the age of nineteen. Her second poetry volume, *Trauma-Market*, appeared in 2004 and the award-winning collection "A Promo Clip for my Homeland" in 2010. She has participated in many regional and European poetry events, and is widely published in regional literary magazines. She writes on cultural affairs for the independent weekly *Slobodna Bosna*.

Vicente Garcia Groyon - won the Manila Critics Circle National Book Award both for the novel *The Sky Over Dimas* (2004) and for *On Cursed Ground and Other Stories* (2005). He is the editor of several anthologies and collections of Filipino fiction and has written four film scripts, including *Agaton and Mindy* (2009) and *Namets!* (2008). He teaches creative writing at De La Salle University in Manila.

Eduardo Halfon - was born in Guatemala City in 1971 and holds an engineering degree from North Carolina State University. His novels include *Esto no es una pipa*, *Saturno*, *De cabo roto*, *El ángel literario*, *El boxeador polaco*, and *La pirueta*, which won the José María de Pereda Prize for Short Novel in Santander, Spain. His short fiction has been published in English, French, Italian, Portuguese, Serbian, and Dutch. He has taught literature at Guatemala's Universidad Francisco Marroquín. In 2007, the Bogotá Hay Festival listed him as one of 39 best young Latin American writers.

Billy Karanja Kahora - is the managing editor of the Kenya-based journal *Kwani* and of the Picha

Mtaani/Kwani book project, and has edited the collection *Kenya Burning*. His writings have been published in *Granta*, *Kwani* and *Vanity Fair*; he has a book of creative nonfiction, *The True Story of David Munyakei* (2009) and the script credit for *Soul Boy* (2010, Dir. Tom Tykwer) and *Nairobi Half-Life* (2011).

Khet Mar - is a journalist, novelist, short story writer, poet and essayist born in Burma. Author of the novel *Wild Snowy Night*, three collections of short stories and a volume of essays, she has had work translated into Japanese, Spanish and English, broadcast, and made into a film. In 2009 she was a featured writer at the PEN Word Voices Festival, and is currently writer-in-residence at City of Asylum/Pittsburgh, which provides sanctuary to writers exiled under threat of severe persecution in their native countries.

Kei Miller - is the author of three books of poetry, two novels and a collection of short stories, and the editor of the anthology *New Caribbean Poetry* (Carcanet, 2007). Short-listed for a number of major literary awards, he is the recipient of Jamaica's Silver Musgrave medal and the Una Marson Prize for Literature. He teaches creative writing at the University of Glasgow.

Alice Pung - was born in Melbourne to Cambodian parents. Her memoir *Unpolished Gem* won the 2006 Australian Book Industry Association award for Newcomer of the Year, and other prizes. Her work was included in *Best Australian Short Stories 2007*, and a story collection, *Growing Up Asian* in Australia, appeared in 2008. *My Father's Daughter* will come out in 2011. A

lawyer by trade, she contributes regularly to *The Monthly* and *The Age*.

Madeleine Thien - is the author of *Simple Recipes*, a collection of stories, and *Certainty*, a novel, which was a finalist for the Kiriya Prize and won the Amazon.ca/Books in Canada First Novel Award. Her work has appeared in *Granta*, *The Walrus*, *Five Dials*, *Brick*, and the *Asia Literary Review*, and been translated into sixteen languages. In 2010 she received the Ovid Festival Prize, awarded to an international writer of promise. A novel, *Dogs at the Perimeter*, is forthcoming in 2011.

Sahar Sarshar (Filmmaker) - has a BA from George Mason University and a MA in Film and Video from Emerson College. She has worked on productions for Animal Planet, Voice of America and Win TV, among many others, and on film projects in Norway, France and Tanzania. She is also involved with NGOs addressing pediatric AIDS and promoting women in journalism.

WRITERS IN MOTION EXTRAS:

View Sahar Sarshar's film documenting the 2011 Writers in Motion tour here:

<http://iwp.uiowa.edu/programs/us-study-tours>

Read the participating writers' blog entries from the tour here:

<http://writersinmotion.blogspot.com/>

View interviews with participating writers from the tour at the IWP's YouTube Channel:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/lowaIWP>



Clockwise from upper-left: Writers in Motion participants tour the Gettysburg battlefield with guide Peter Carmichael, Director of the Civil War Institute; an exterior shot of the 16th Street Baptist Church, site of the infamous 1963 bombing that left four African-American children dead in Birmingham, AL; Adisa Basić examines Ku Klux Klan regalia at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute; participants explore the Gettysburg battlefield; participants visit Gettysburg College where they are invited to participate in professor Kathryn Rhett's senior seminar in literary nonfiction; participant Alice Pung gives a reading and participates in a Q&A session at the University of Alabama.





Clockwise from upper-left: Charles Duff of the Baltimore Architecture Foundation discusses urban renewal efforts in Baltimore; the writers pose in front of an enormous crayfish (a traditional but waning staple of the local economy and diet) in the Atchafalaya Basin in Louisiana; Eduardo Halfon, Vicente Groyon, and Madeline Thien listen to tour guide T.R. German, Jr. during a visit to the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham; Khet Mar and Alice Pung enjoy a meal of boiled crayfish in New Orleans; the writers present their thoughts and feelings about the Writers in Motion tour at American University in Washington, D.C.; a house damaged during Hurricane Katrina in the lower ninth ward of New Orleans. Screenshots courtesy of Sahar Sarshar, from her documentary film about the Writers in Motion tour.

BETWEEN THE LINES

A Summer Writing Program for Teens from the Middle East



Between the Lines participants meet with their American counterparts during a literary salon in which they discuss everything from the nature of authorship to particular traditions in Arabic and American letters.

The fourth year of Between the Lines was held in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. Consequently it was never far from the minds of our participants, their American peers, and our staff. Students from several of the most high-profile countries in the news—including Tunisia and Egypt, both participating in BTL for the first time, as well as Bahrain—joined others from Algeria, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, and Syria to form a diverse and dynamic group. Their stay, tinged with the fervor and emotion of recent events, was highlighted by a spirited discussion in which they described their experiences in their home countries to an audience of more than 40 American students attending the Iowa Young Writers' Studio (IYWS) and members from the Iowa City community.

As always, BTL students roomed with and studied creative writing alongside IYWS students. The typical weekday consisted of an Arabic-language writing workshop, an English-language writing workshop, as well as a variety of extracurricular activities that followed the classwork. Public programming included a panel discussion where students representing BTL, IYWS, and the Iowa Youth Writing Project spoke on the subject of "Young Writers and Writing" at the Iowa City Book Festival. Students also conducted a lively evening of "Arabic 101" that concluded with protest chants similar to those used in Cairo's Tahrir Square.

For the second year in a row, BTL came to a close with a two-day trip to Chicago, where the students participated in a children's book workshop at the nonprofit youth writing center 826 Chicago, attended the performance of the improvisational play "Too Much Light Makes The Baby Go Blind," and celebrated with a graduation ceremony at the John Hancock Observatory with Navy Pier fireworks as a backdrop. Since their departure, students have stayed in touch with the IWP and with each other via Facebook, Skype, and a few face-to-face visits. The class of 2011 is a welcome addition to the community of young Arab writers and readers that BTL and the IWP helped create.

MORE INFO:

<http://iwp.uiowa.edu/programs/between-the-lines>

Participants:

Ghada Abdel Aal
Chaperone, **Egypt**

Mohammad Al-Hemaid
Chaperone, **Saudi Arabia**

Hadeel Al-Haddad
Student, **Bahrain**

Lana Najjar
Student, **Israel**

Saria Al-Midani
Student, **Syria**

Hind Rahmoun
Student, **Algeria**

Sally El-Hak
Student, **Egypt**

Roula Seghaier
Student, **Tunisia**

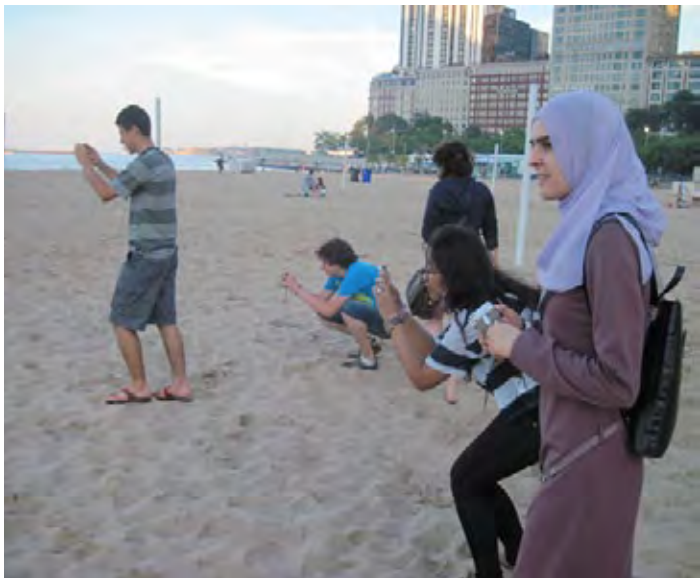
Abdellatif El Yaacoub
Student, **Lebanon**

Johnny Yaacoub
Student, **Lebanon**

Maïsa Farid
Student, **Morocco**

Maha Zidan
Student, **Israel**

Oussama Ghajjou
Student, **Morocco**



Clockwise from upper-left: Between the Lines students write and illustrate children's books at 826 Chicago; pose for a picture in Iowa City; board a riverboat and get a firsthand look at the Mississippi River; visit the Lake Michigan shorefront at the Oak Street Beach in Chicago; and pose while waiting for the train.



READING TOURS

The IWP Takes U.S. Writers Abroad for Cultural, Educational, and Creative Exchange

Nepal, Pakistan, the UAE, and Afghanistan

An April 26-May 11, 2011 Reading Tour took a group of American writers to Nepal, Afghanistan, United Arab Emirates, and Pakistan. For the U.S. participants, this was an opportunity to gain an understanding of each country's unique landscape, acute cultural tensions, and complex environment of its literatures. In return, the writers conducted readings, talks, class visits, workshops with language and literature students and faculty members, meetings with literary groups, and conducting exchanges and mutual interviews with publishers and journalists along the way. Lectures and workshops included an array of topics including performance poetry, endangered languages, filmmaking, fiction and poetry. Among the highlights in Nepal were lectures and workshops at Kathmandu and Tribhuvan universities, and workshops with young writers at public spaces and private schools. In Pakistan, the Americans participated in a number of media roundtables with Karachi-based writers and journalists. They met up with IWP Alumnus H.M. Naqvi for a tour of Karachi and a private party with fellow writers. Unfortunately, their time in Pakistan was cut short due to news of the capture and killing of Osama Bin Laden. In UAE, readings, discussions and lectures took place at Zayed University, NYU Abu Dhabi, several local colleges and at American corners. And in Afghanistan, workshops, lectures and conversations were hosted by the American and the Kabul Educational universities.

The group parted and rejoined throughout the tour, sharing their impressions with one

another of various places they had been. In total they met with hundreds of students, writers, and journalist. A sketch of the events is captured in the half-hour film *Postcards from the Earth's Whisper*, made by the New York-based filmmaker Ram Devineni.

This tour was made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the U.S. Embassies and Consulates in each country.

Participants:

Bob Holman is a poet, multimedia producer, poetry activist and performance poetry professor who lives in New York City. Bob has published eight books, including *A Couple of Ways of Doing Something* (2006), praise poems paired with daguerreotypes of artists by Chuck Close. He's also put poetry on television, radio and the Web, producing *The United States of Poetry* for PBS, appearing on MTV's *Spoken Word Unplugged* and HBO's *Def Poetry Jam*, and serving as poetry commentator on WNYC and NPR. Currently, he teaches "Exploding Text: Poetry in Performance" at Columbia University, and is the founder and proprietor of the Bowery Poetry Club. He recently co-founded the Endangered Language Alliance, with a special interest in the poetry of endangered languages.

Joshua Ferris's debut 2007 novel *Then We Came to the End*, published in 25 languages, was a finalist for the National Book Award, and received the 2007 PEN/Hemingway Award. His short fiction has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Best American Short*

Stories, *Granta*, and *Tin House*, among others. In 2010 *The New Yorker* named him one of twenty best writers under 40. His second novel, *The Unnamed*, was published in January 2010.

Nathalie Handal's books include the landmark anthology, *Language for a New Century: Contemporary Poetry from the Middle East, Asia & Beyond*, and the poetry collection *Love and Strange Horses* (2010). Handal was an Honored Finalist for the 2009 Freedom Award and is a Lannan Foundation Fellow 2011. She writes the column *The City and the Writer* for the on-line journal *Words without Borders*.

Eliza Griswold, a fellow at the New America Foundation and a former Nieman Fellow at Harvard University, reports on religion, conflict and human rights. She is now at work on *The Tenth Parallel, an examination of Christianity and Islam in Africa and Asia*. Her first book of poems, *Wideawake Field*, was published in 2007; she is the recipient of the 2010 Rome Prize from The American Academy in Rome. Her reportage and poetry have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Harpers*, *The New Republic*, among many others.

Ram Devineni is the founder and editor of Rattapallax, Inc., which publishes poetry books and DVDs. He recently directed the web-series "VERSE: A Murder Mystery," and is at work on a documentary about human towers around the world. He is the producer of *O Sonho Bollywoodiano* (dir. Beatriz Seigner), and of *Vegas: Based on a True Story*, directed by Amir Naderi, and selected for competition at the 2008 Venice Film Festival.

Uruguay and Bolivia

In September 2011 the IWP embarked on its first reading tour to South America, with all invited participants being Spanish-speaking writers. Led by poet, non-fiction writer, and IWP Director Christopher Merrill, the writers' first stop was Montevideo, Uruguay. Workshops and lectures, given primarily in Spanish, included a talk about adapting a novel to film for 12 film students at The National School of Film, creative writing workshops at the Catholic University and the University of Montevideo, and a lecture on essay writing at the Bi-National Center.

The writers also attended a luncheon with over 30 local writers and later participated in a standing room only reading at the Nancy Babelo Foundation that included two of the local writers they met earlier that day. One of these writers went on to spend an entire day with the group showing them the Old City and speaking in depth about his experience as a writer in Uruguay.

The next stop was La Paz, Bolivia, where the group explored local museums dedicated to ethnography and the San Francisco Cathedral while getting acclimatized to the high altitude. These outings provided historical and cultural context as the writers met with various populations throughout the trip. Subsequent meetings included El Alto for a workshop with students in the Access program, followed by several days at the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés for discussions with Creative Writing faculty on pedagogy and intense workshops in Spanish with UMSA students.

Both tours were made possible through funding from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, and the U.S. Embassies in Montevideo and La Paz.

Participants:

Eduardo C. Corral is a CantoMundo fellow. He holds degrees from Arizona State University and the Iowa Writers' Workshop. His poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Huizache*, *The Journal*, *New England Review*, *Ploughshares*, *Poetry*, *Poetry Northwest*, and *Quarterly West*. His work has been honored with a "Discovery"/The Nation award and residencies from the MacDowell Colony and Yaddo. He has served as the Olive B. O'Connor Fellow in Creative Writing at Colgate University and as the Philip Roth Resident in Creative Writing at Bucknell University. *Slow Lightning*, his first book of poems, was selected by Carl Phillips as the 2011 winner of the Yale Series of Younger Poets competition. Yale University Press will publish his book in April 2012.

Jennifer Clement studied English Literature and Anthropology at New York University and also studied French literature in Paris, France. She is the author of the memoir *Widow Basquiat* that made the "Booksellers' Choice" list in the United Kingdom and two novels: *A True Story Based on Lies*, which was a finalist in the Orange Prize for Fiction in the United Kingdom, and *The Poison That Fascinates*. She is also the author of several books of poetry: *The Next Stranger* (with an introduction by W.S. Merwin), *Newton's Sailor*, *Lady of the Broom* and *Jennifer Clement: New and Selected Poems*. Clement was awarded Mexico's prestigious "Sistema Nacional de Creadores" grant and was the winner of the UK's Canongate Prize. In 2001 she was also the recipient of a US-Mexico Fund for grant for the San Miguel Poetry Week, which she founded in 1997 with her sister, Barbara Sibley. In 2007 she

received a MacDowell Fellowship. The MacDowell Colony selected her as the Robert and Stephanie Olmsted Fellow for 2007-08. Clement's work has been translated into 10 languages.

Angie Cruz is the author of two novels: *Let It Rain Coffee* (2005) and *Soledad*, (2001) both published by Simon & Schuster. She earned her MFA at NYU in 1999. Her shorter works have been anthologized and featured in numerous journals, including *Callaloo*, *Indiana Review* and the *New York Times*. Her work has earned her awards such as The New York Foundation of The Arts Fellowship, Barbara Deming Award, Yaddo residency and The Camargo Fellowship. She currently teaches creative writing at Texas A&M University and finishing her third novel, *In Search of Caridad*.

Christopher Merrill led the delegations to the UAE, Afghanistan, Nepal and Pakistan and to Uruguay and Bolivia. His books include four collections of poetry, *Brilliant Water*, *Workbook*, *Fevers & Tides*, and *Watch Fire*; translations of Ales Debeljak's *Anxious Moments* and *The City and the Child*; several edited volumes, among them, *The Forgotten Language: Contemporary Poets and Nature* and *From the Faraway Nearby: Georgia O'Keeffe as Icon*; and five books of nonfiction, *Things of the Hidden God: Journey to the Holy Mountain*, *The Grass of Another Country: A Journey Through the World of Soccer*, *The Old Bridge: The Third Balkan War and the Age of the Refugee*, *Only the Nails Remain: Scenes from the Balkan Wars*, and *The Tree of the Doves: Ceremony, Expedition, War*. His work has been translated into twenty-five languages. He directs the International Writing Program at The University of Iowa, and in 2012 President Barack Obama appointed Merrill to the National Council on the Humanities.



Clockwise from upper-left: Novelist Joshua Ferris teaches a fiction workshop in Kathmandu, Nepal; Poet Bob Holman discusses poetry with students in Kathmandu, Nepal; IWP Director Christopher Merrill teaches a writing class alongside Joshua Ferris at Kabul Education University in Afghanistan; poet, essayist, and journalist Eliza Griswold takes notes on the streets of Karachi, Pakistan; and Christopher Merrill, Joshua Ferris, and Nathalie Handal discuss literature and share work at Kabul University in Afghanistan. Screenshots courtesy of Ram Devinevi, from his film Postcards, which documented this reading tour.



Clockwise from upper-left: Students from the Escuela de Cine in Montevideo, Uruguay pose for a photo following a discussion of adapting written narratives for film; Poet and IWP instructor Eduardo C. Corral finds a little piece of home in Montevideo; students capture IWP instructor Angie Cruz's presentation on film; IWP instructors learn about Bolivia's indigenous arts and textiles in La Paz; and Bolivian students studying English participate in a writing workshop. Here, they use White-Out and a source text to create erasure poems.



DISTANCE LEARNING

Bringing Our Literary Resources to Students Around the World

Distance Learning Overview:

2011 saw the rapid expansion of the IWP's Distance Learning (DL) program, a branch of the IWP that uses internet technology to pursue groundbreaking methods of educating writers throughout the world—anytime, anywhere. The courses link international and domestic students and instructors via the most advanced technology available: websites, live video conferences, and Web 2.0 multimedia. This year, the DL Program undertook efforts in the Gaza Strip, Sierra Leone, Jordan, The United Arab Emirates, Spain, Mexico, Egypt, New Zealand, Iraq, Scotland, and Lebanon.

Offerings encompassed readings and short-term writing groups, a number of full semester courses, in-person teaching tours, and follow-on websites. The guiding aims of these programs were threefold: to provide creative writing instruction to regions in need; to model creative writing pedagogy; and to engage participants in cross-cultural discourse through writing.

Full semester courses ranged from writing workshops to investigations of global issues in literature. Topics covered indigenous peoples' writing, young adult fiction, graphic novels, and contemporary literature.

In addition, shorter, five-week courses aided in teaching introductory creative writing skills to students who had little prior instruction in the craft, connecting a domestic instructor with an international group in real-time. Additionally, the DL Program pursued low-tech alternatives in order to extend its influence to less accessible regions of the world.

The Courses:

Spring 2011:

Lebanon Fiction and Poetry Workshop
Native American-Maori Reading Group
International Poetry Writing

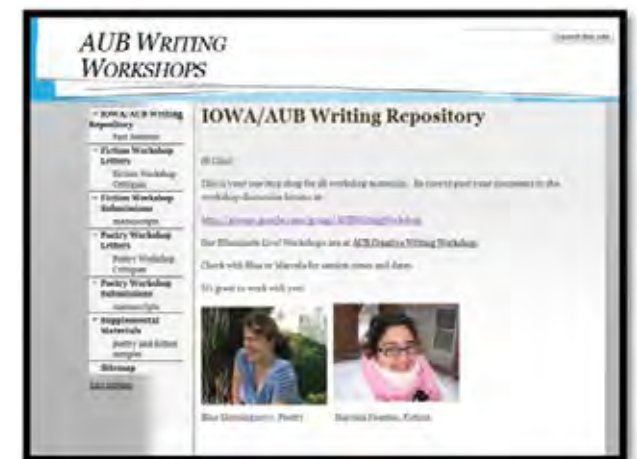
Fall 2011

Young Adult Fiction
Graphic Novels Seminar

Full-semester courses are the core of the program, providing long-term creative development through the study of advanced topics. Using secure websites and extensive multimedia, the sessions model collaborative workshopping through message forums and video chats, and encourage the dynamic interpersonal and intellectual relationships that distinguish in-person workshops.

The "Lebanon Fiction and Poetry Workshop" built upon a teaching tour to American University of Beirut, reuniting the Lebanese participants to further develop their skills. Poets Lauren Haldeman and Kei Miller (IWP, 2007) led "International Poetry Writing," an intermediate level course that linked groups in Iowa and Scotland to discuss new international verse and create their own work in response. Hinemoana Baker (IWP, 2010) facilitated a reading group between the US and New Zealand that discussed indigenous peoples' literature critically and creatively.

Fall-semester courses hybridized critical and artistic approaches to writing, encouraging students to initiate creative projects in response to class readings and academic discussions. Professors Luis Humberto Crossthwaite and Jose Manuel Trabado developed a seminar focused on internationally prescient graphic novels, linking groups in Spain with University of Iowa students. Egyptian and American students came together under Ghada Abdel Aal (IWP, 2010) and DL coordinator James O'Brien led a class focused on international young adult fiction that entailed discussions about representations of youth and environment while workshopping students' fiction.



Utilizing message boards, email, and web-based video-conferencing technologies like Elluminate Live!, IWP instructors are able to meet with students in digital environments to run creative writing classes like the ones shown here, featuring IWP instructors Marcela Fuentes and Blueberry Morningsnow who taught through the American University of Beirut.

Digital Video Classes and Events:

Baghdad, Iraq

Amman, Jordan

Gaza Strip, Palestine

Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

Three live videoconference classes brought domestic authors to international audiences through University of Iowa's IT facilities. A combination of readings, exercises, and conversations engaged and encouraged new writers throughout the Middle East and reconnected the IWP with a number of former residents and Between the Lines participants.

In June, IWP director Christopher Merrill to read and discussed his work with a number of Iraqi students and professors based at University of Baghdad. Later in the summer, the IWP partnered with AmidEast, a regional English language program, and the U.S. Embassy in Amman, Jordan for a five-week course on poetry writing for Jordanian high school students. The final session of the class included a presentation of certificates by Embassy staff and a reading of student work.

Al-Azhar University acted as the IWP's partner institution in Palestine during a five-week seminar in October. The college-aged participants practiced and studied poetry and fiction, completing an anthology of their work as a final project. Similarly, the IWP offered a supplemental seminar to a select number of students enrolled in a creative writing course at Sharjah Higher Colleges of Technology in the United Arab Emirates. Instructors collaborated to assign readings and activities that complemented class topics, and hosted an intimate reading with University of Iowa faculty member and poet Robyn Schiff.

Distance Learning Tours:

Sierra Leone

October 23rd-28th

The IWP's fall tour to Sierra Leone made great strides in establishing artistic, educational, and cultural ties with a nation whose people have worked intently to overcome the immense conflicts that have defined their recent past: a civil war and the trade of "blood diamonds."

In late October, the IWP conducted a series of creative writing seminars with local groups including PEN Sierra Leone, the Institut Francais Film School, the Sentinel English Language Institute, and the Falui Poets Society. Participants represented a variety of cultural, social, educational, and religious backgrounds, and they came from a variety of schools throughout Freetown. There were visits to the American International School and Fourah Bay College, and seminars hosted at the US Embassy in Freetown. In addition, the IWP writers met with local educators to discuss the elements of creative writing pedagogy and how to integrate creative writing in the classroom. The trip concluded with an event hosted by U.S. ambassador Michael S. Owen that included entertainment and readings from the students and the IWP writers.

In response to the illuminating outcomes of the trip, the IWP initiated a distance learning class with PEN Sierra Leone in spring semester 2012. Building upon an in-person teaching tour, the DL Program developed a secure website to maintain contact with its partners in Sierra Leone, including PEN and the Sentinel English Language Institute. The website acts as a repository for creative writing

exercises that former students and instructors can use to practice their writing skills or teach others how to do the same in an effort to establish a continuum of education that participants can access as they develop as writers.

Instructors:

Jenny Browne – Jenny Browne is the author of *The Second Reason* (University of Tampa Press, 2007), *At Once* (Tampa, 2003) and the chapbook, *Glass* (Pecan Grove, 2000). A former James Michener Fellow at the University of Texas at Austin, she has received grants from the Writers Center of Washington D.C., the Texas Writers League, and the San Antonio Artist Foundation. Her poems and essays have appeared in numerous publications including *American Poetry Review*, *Fourth Genre*, and *Tin House*.

James O'Brien – James O'Brien's fiction has appeared in *The Colorado Review*, *Arts and Letters*, *The Portland Review* and elsewhere. He is the distance learning coordinator at the IWP.



The IWP and PEN Sierra Leone co-created a website where instructors could interact with students, post writing prompts, and share ideas.

Kenya:
May 23—June 3, 2011

In late May of 2011, the IWP returned to Kenya to host a new set of workshops in Nairobi and the refugee camps near Dadaab. Partners included Billy Kahora (IWP, 2010), editor of the literary magazine *Kwani*; Moulid Hujale, editor of the local newspaper *The Refugee*; the United Nations High Council on Refugees; and the U.S. Embassy. American poets Major Jackson and Jenny Browne led hands-on workshops in the Kibera neighborhood of Nairobi as well as in Ifo, Dagahaley, and Hagadera refugee camps. The instructors worked with an array of students to generate written pieces that could appear in local publications. Additionally, Jackson and Browne participated in readings and question-and-answer sessions at Oshwal Academy Nairobi Primary School and Makongeni Primary School.

The Dadaab workshops are particularly significant because the young people who have grown up in the camps and who are struggling to attain an education represent one of the least-served and least-visible young populations in the world. Promoting the creative arts among this generation is essential to affirming the value of these young people both individually and collectively and to foster a literary voice that resonates beyond the camps.

Recently, *The Refugee* launched a blog and a Facebook page, through which the organization has been providing original reportage about life in the camps, covering everything from recent flooding to the condition of the camps' markets. At the close of the 2011 poetry workshop, Hujale collected poems and other creative work for inclusion in an upcoming issue highlighting the IWP's efforts in the region.

Instructors:

Jenny Brown – see pg. 29 for bio.

Major Jackson – is the author of three collections of poetry: *Holding Company* (Norton:2010), *Hoops* (Norton: 2006) and *Leaving Saturn* (University of Georgia: 2002), winner of the Cave Canem Poetry Prize and finalist for a National Book Critics Circle Award. *Hoops* was a finalist for an NAACP Image Award in the category of Outstanding Literature - Poetry. He is a recipient of a Whiting Writers' Award and has been honored by the Pew Fellowship in the Arts and the Witter Bynner Foundation in conjunction with the Library of Congress. He is the Richard Dennis Green and Gold Professor at University of Vermont and a core faculty member of the Bennington Writing Seminars.

Lebanon: June 19 -July 7 2010 & Spring 2011

In spring of 2011, the IWP collaborated with several Lebanese institutions to conduct a two-week creative writing workshop at the American University of Beirut (AUB). The IWP's partners, primarily AUB and the English Speaking Union, desired to involve a diverse array of participants. As a result, students represented a number of local universities, including Lebanese American University, Arab University, University of Balamand, and AUB. Co-teachers Tom Sleigh and Claire Messud traveled to Beirut to conduct this intensive program.

Workshops were held for three hours each morning at AUB. The instructors alternated each day between poetry and fiction. Fiction exercises enticed students to scaffold fictional work into complete stories. Poetry sessions

encouraged students to compose individual pieces that meditated on form and language. Additionally, AMIDEAST arranged an introductory workshop with teenagers from Beirut's outlying rural areas. Students collaborated on fictional character-sketches of their classmates, completed synthetic poems, and generated pieces of automatic writing. In the months following the tour, the participants reunited via a distance learning course to continue their workshops. Results of the ongoing collaboration between the IWP and participants were astounding; a student of both the in-person seminars and the distance learning class had a story published in the renowned *Hayden's Ferry Review*, while Claire Messud's essay on the trip was published in *Granta*.

Instructors:

Claire Messud – was educated at Cambridge and Yale. Her first novel, *When the World Was Steady*, and her most recent book, *The Hunters*, were both finalists for the PEN/Faulkner Award; her second novel, *The Last Life*, was a *Publishers Weekly* Best Book of the Year and Editor's Choice at the *Village Voice*. All three of her books were *New York Times* Notable Books of the Year. She lives in Somerville, Massachusetts, with her husband and children.

Tom Sleigh – Tom Sleigh is the author of seven poetry collections, including *Space Walk*, which received the 2008 Kingsley Tufts Award. He has won the Shelley Prize from the PSA, and grants from the Lila Wallace Fund, American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Guggenheim and the NEA, among other awards. He teaches at Hunter College and lives in Brooklyn, New York.

TO DADAAB & BACK

On the IWP's Educational Tours to the Largest Refugee Community in the World

In 2011 the United Nations High Council on Refugees (UNHCR) increased its estimate for the number of refugees living in the Hagadera, Ifo, and Daga-haley refugee camps near Dadaab, Kenya to nearly 440,000 people. The camps comprise the largest refugee community in the world and are located in Kenya's remote and arid northeast, approximately 100 kilometers west of the border with Somalia. Put simply, Dadaab is an unlikely place to find American writers teaching poetry workshops to refugees.

But in June of 2009 and May of 2011, placing American writers in the camps' schools is precisely what the IWP and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State aimed to do. With the assistance of the U.S. Embassy Somalia Desk and the UNHCR, the IWP's 2009 and 2011 excursions to Dadaab put American poets in direct contact with student refugees for multiple days of creative writing workshops. The 2009 delegation included IWP director and writer Christopher Merrill and writers Tom Sleight, Eliot Weinberger, and Terese Svoboda. The 2011 delegation was made up of poets Major Jackson and Jenny Browne.

Built in 1991 in response to the beginning of Somalia's long-running civil war, the camps have been growing each year since. Once intended to provide temporary relief and shelter for approximately 80,000 potential refugees, the camps have today become the de-facto permanent home of an entire generation of young people who have never experienced life outside of a refugee camp.

While the geo-political situation in Dadaab is tenuous and the logistics of arranging a visit complicated, it's that generation of young people who were

on Christopher Merrill's mind even before his 2009 visit. "The first priority in any emergency situation is indeed to provide food, shelter, and medical aid—to save lives," he says, "but once basic needs are met there is an imperative to provide educational opportunities."

While the ethical stakes of such educational outreach are high, the creative writing workshops themselves seemed to offer some levity to the typical Dadaab school day. As Eliot Weinberger wrote following the 2009 trip to Dadaab, the majority of students in the camps "had never been asked to express themselves 'creatively,' had never written anything that wasn't checked for grammar and spelling and then graded. It was obviously the first time that a few hours of school were pure fun."

The sharing of creative work was also fulfilling for the IWP instructors, according to Merrill. "Educators always have a moral imperative to share what they know," he says. "And since we have had the opportunity to work with young people in Dadaab, we have come to recognize what a crucial difference can be made in the lives of individuals."

The results of the 2009 and 2011 delegations also had lasting ramifications for the student populations of the camps. During the 2011 journey, Bedeian also encountered Mould Ifthin Hujale, an Ifo camp-refugee who had taken the 2009 writing workshops and who was eager to share new work with the 2011 delegation. "Before he shared his poem, he told the group about meeting the instructors from two years ago when he was a student," says Bedeian. "He

said those workshops changed his life."

Hujale is now the managing editor *The Refugee*, a print periodical supported by funding from FilmAid International, a New York City-based non-profit that provides a variety of educational and artistic outlets to underserved international communities. At *The Refugee*, Hujale's aim is to disseminate news and stories from within the camps and to tell the stories of those who have been resettled. Recently, the paper launched a blog and a Facebook page, through which the organization has been providing original reportage about life in the camps, covering everything from flooding to the condition of the camps' markets. At the close of the 2011 poetry workshop, Hujale collected poems and other creative work for inclusion in an upcoming issue.

"Seeing such beautiful words come out of such dire circumstances is inspiring and can't help but alter your view on the world and your own life," says Bedeian. "For those in the camps, writing is a creative outlet that takes little more than a pen and paper. It is a way to share their experience with the outside world that often knows little about their situation. It is a chance for them to be something other than a refugee."

MORE INFO:

For more on the IWP's reading tours, including additional photo galleries and films, visit:

<http://iwp.uiowa.edu/programs>

For more about the IWP's Distance Learning programs, visit:

<http://iwp.uiowa.edu/iwp-courses>



Clockwise from upper-left: Students living in refugee camps near Dadaab, Kenya, engaged in a series of poetry writing workshops with IWP instructors Major Jackson and Jenny Browne; Major Jackson teaching a poetry class in a science lab in the refugee camps; IWP instructors Jenny Browne and James O'Brien teaching at the Sentinel English Language Institute in Freetown, Sierra Leone; and U.S. Embassy staff, members of PEN-Sierra Leone, members of the PEN writing group, and IWP instructors pose for a shot in front of the Embassy in Freetown.



Clockwise from upper-left: During a tour of the refugee camps near Dadaab, Kenya provided by the United Nations High Council on Refugees, Major Jackson explores the marketplace in Ifo Camp; students taking Jenny Browne's poetry class work on acrostic poems; Major Jackson teaches a class to secondary students in Ifo Camp; and Jenny Brown provides a student individual instruction.

THE VIRTUAL WRITING UNIVERSITY

Utilizing and Sharing the Resources of a UNESCO City of Literature

The Virtual Writing University (VWU) is, primarily, the creative portal for the University of Iowa's writing community. Working closely with the City of Iowa City, the UNESCO City of Literature office, and the numerous creative writing programs at the UI, the VWU is updated daily to reflect the vibrant local literary scene and serves simultaneously as a dynamic repository of locally-inflected writing news, an event hub, and media treasure trove.

In 2011, the VWU completed a Mobile Web version of its iPhone app "City of Lit," which features information on Iowa City's rich literary history, including an interactive map of unique literary locations – where authors wrote and lived, work, read, and haunted. This application contains in-depth author profiles on many of Iowa City's most famous authors, including several highlight IWP alumni. The VWU also streamed and archived more than 150 events during the year, adding to an extensive archive that includes over 600 audio and video recordings of past IWP events. The IWP is proud to work hand-in-hand with VWU on a number of other projects, including live chats and digital video conferences, all projects that serve to expand the virtual space in which writers the world around can meet, share ideas, exchange writings, and spark new connections.



MORE INFO:

Visit the Virtual Writing University at:
<http://www.writinguniversity.org/>

Visit the UNESCO City of Literature Page at:
<http://cityofliteratureusa.org/>

Support for the Virtual Writing University comes from many different areas of the University of Iowa community. We are grateful for the many staff and faculty members who have contributed their creative, technological, and administrative expertise to this initiative.

Virtual Writing University Advisory Panel: Lan Samantha Chang, director of the Iowa Writers' Workshop; James Elmborg, Associate Professor, School of Library and Information Science; Ed Folsom, Professor, Department of English; Robin Hemley, director of the Nonfiction Writing Program; John Keller, dean of the Graduate College; Joan Kjaer, Strategic Communications Officer, International Programs Communications and Relations; Amy Margolis, director of the Iowa Summer Writing Festival; Christopher Merrill, director of the International Writing Program; Paul Soderdahl, director of Library Information Technology, UI Libraries; Russell Valentino, editor of the *Iowa Review*; Jon Winet, director of the School of Art and Art History Intermedia Program.

Virtual Writing University Archive: James Elmborg, Faculty Director; Nicole Saylor, Director, Digital Library Services; Mark Anderson, Digital Initiatives Librarian; Jen Wolfe, Metadata Librarian. **The Wing:** Jon Winet, Faculty Director; Derek Andes, Graduate Researcher; Steven Strait, Technology Consultant.

UNESCO City of Literature iPhone and Mobile Application

Development Team: Jon Winet, Faculty Director; Derek Andes, Graduate Researcher; Zlatko Anguelov, Researcher; Jim Cremer, Consultant, Computer Science Department; Bridget Draxler, Research Consultant; Nicole Dudley, Lead Database Developer; James Elmborg, Project Consultant, School of Library and Information Science; Haowei Hsieh, Database Consultant; Peter Likarish, Database Consultant; Dat Tien Nguyen, Lead iPhone Application Developer; Cristina Sarnelli, Content Developer; Amanda Trevors, Pauline Stacchini, Database Developers; Joe Williams, Application Developer.

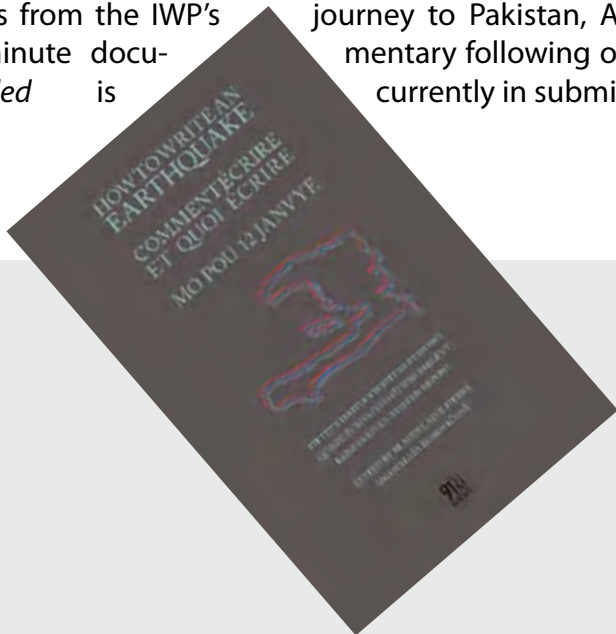
IWP PUBLICATIONS & FILMS

Presenting New Writing, Interviews, and Documentary Films

In addition to continuing staple publications such as the IWP's online literary magazine 91st Meridian, and the YouTube series of "On the Map" interviews with Fall Residency participants, 2011 saw the production of a number of print and film materials in conjunction with IWP programming.

In print, the revised edition of *Between the Lines*, an anthology of work by students in the eponymous summer program for Arabic teenagers during the summers of 2008 and 2009, appeared. December saw the publication of the IWP's first e-book, *How to Write an Earthquake/Comment écrire et quoi écrire/Mou pou 12 janvyè*, a trilingual anthology of post-earthquake writing from Haiti, which was later printed in hard copy as well. *The New Symposium: What We Hold in Common*, a selection of essays from the 2006-8 symposia at Paros (Greece), is forthcoming in print and e-book form in February 2012 from Autumn Hill Press, as part of their 91st Meridian Books series. Finally, a pair of companion e-books building on the two "Writers in Motion" study tours—one overseas to Jerusalem/Essaouira/Fes in 2010, and the other in the south-eastern U.S. in 2011—will also be distributed by the 91st Meridian Books series in the Autumn Hill Books catalogue in March 2012.

Films documenting IWP travels throughout the world have been uploaded and screened on the IWP website, YouTube, LinkTV, the online magazine *Guernica*, *Bomb* magazine, the Poetry Foundation, and at the 2012 Culture: Unplugged film festival. The New York-based filmmaker Ram Devineni produced the 40-minute documentary *Postcards From the Earth's Whisper*, as well as three author-participate interviews from the IWP's journey to Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Nepal. Additionally, Sahar Sarshar's 30-minute documentary following our Writers in Motion tour *Writers in Motion: A Nation Divided* is currently in submission with several documentary festivals in the U.S.



MORE INFO:

See IWP Films & Interviews at our YouTube Channel:
<http://www.youtube.com/user/iowalWP>

Learn More about IWP Publications, Including 91st Meridian and the 91st Meridian Books imprint at:
<http://iwp.uiowa.edu/publications>



A NEW WEBSITE

An Overhaul of the IWP's Website Leverages Improved Looks and Excellent Functionality

On December 20th, the International Writing Program unveiled its new website. One year in the making, the redesign brings a new level of user-friendliness and accessibility to the program's online home, creating a significant tool for wide-ranging reading and research, a gateway to new ways of thinking about creative writing's global potential, and an inspiration for ways of engaging across literary borders.

Navigating for information about the IWP's many programs and initiatives has never been easier. Visitors to the site will find listings for every past IWP resident, organized as a searchable database, as well as information about the Fall Residency and a list of frequently asked questions for potential nominees and nominators. They'll also find a full listing of the IWP's distance learning courses that put American writers and students in direct contact with writers and students from regions worldwide. IWP publications like 91st Meridian, the 91st Meridian book series (published by Autumn Hill books), and IWP-produced e-books have been consolidated under the publications tab, while our updated archives page makes it simple to explore our deep cache of literary work, presentations, interviews, films, news items, photographs, translations, and collaborations accumulated over the IWP's 45-year history. The new IWP homepage also features a dynamic, image-driven slideshow, a handy "Happening Now" sidebar for current news and events, as well as feeds from the Shambaugh House blog, the IWP's Twitter Feed, and from the Virtual Writing University. Learning what we're up to at the IWP has never been easier, and never before has such an abundance of our archives been available digitally. It is our hope that the new site will be equally engaging and useful for visitors from a variety of background and from around the globe.



JUST A FEW OF THE NEW ONLINE FEATURES:

Comprehensive database of IWP writers, searchable by name, year, country, and genre.

Integrated calendar, Twitter Feed, and Blog Content.

Comprehensive FAQ section.

Streamlined contact routing for easy communication with IWP staff.

Easy-to-access video and photographic content.

Easy downloading of IWP e-books.

A "Happening Now" sidebar so that you never miss an IWP function or reading.

Links to our partner organizations and institutions.

Access to information about IWP courses.

VISIT US ONLINE:

<http://iwp.uiowa.edu/>

PROGRAM SUPPORT

Thanks to Our Partners and Co-Sponsoring Individuals and Groups

The IWP can only continue its activities thanks to the continuing support of the University of Iowa, as well as federal, state, community and individual funding sources. We would like to acknowledge our profound debt to the individuals, entities and institutions listed below.

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Shambaugh House, the home of the IWP, as it appeared in the 1950s, courtesy of the Kent Collection of Photographs / Special Collections / U. of Iowa Archives.

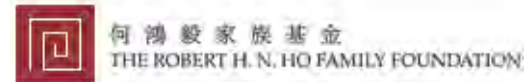
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CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS

*The IWP Gratefully Acknowledges the
Support of the Following Organizations*



Max Kade Foundation, Inc.



The Last Piano

Iowa City 2011

There is only one piano
left in the pedestrian mall.

Now with the cold weather
it is growing slowly tuneless
though people still play
with gloved fingers
discordant triads like
exit music from a student film.

We are closing our accounts.
We are sending home our books.

We are wearing all of our clothes
at once, each evening scraping our plastic
chairs up to the glass-crowded table.

So long, happy-hour commiserations
about the death of narrative poetry
about the death of wonder.

Goodbye, collective dictionary of
untranslatable words, of untranslatable
concepts. Goodbye, blackened windows
of the burnt-out bagel shop.

Goodbye, baleful whalesong
of the power plant whistle, and
Iowa House fire alarm, who sang us
half-dressed into the dark October street.

There is only one piano.

We are closing our accounts.
We are sending our books home.

Josephine Rowe
IWP '11, Australia



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