



2019 ANNUAL REPORT



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Mission Statement

The mission of the International Writing Program (IWP) is to promote mutual understanding by providing writers from every part of the world the necessary space, physical or imaginative, for creative work and collaboration in an intercultural setting.

Our mission is anchored in the values of freedom of expression and inclusiveness, and in the belief that creativity has the power to shape the world.

We execute this mission by building enduring creative communities, encouraging cross-cultural dialogue, and supporting writers at all stages of their careers.

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Cover photo: 2019 IWP Fall Residents Batsirai Chigama (Zimbabwe), third from left, Takako Arai (Japan), fourth from right, and Efe Duyan (Turkey), far right, perform with the Oliver Lake OGJB Quartet at the City of Asylum Jazz Poetry Festival in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Annual Report

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From left: Longtime IWP supporter Dr. Victoria Lim, IWP Co-Founder Hualing Nih Engle, and Mary Nazareth, the IWP Fall Residency’s Housing Coordinator for many decades, together at the International Writing Program (IWP) 2019 Fall Residency opening celebration.

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Christopher Merrill takes interviews at the Abuja Literary Festival in Abuja, Nigeria, part of a 2019 IWP Lines & Spaces tour.

Greetings, friends,

As we go to press with this Annual Report of the International Writing Program (IWP), we find ourselves in uncharted terrain. In 2019, our staff shared office space and bumped into one another in the kitchen in our beloved Shambaugh House on The University of Iowa campus, and now we are working remotely, in isolation, determined not only to shore up everything that still binds us together, but to extend our literary connections to all corners of the globe. The novel coronavirus, which has infected millions of people with COVID-19, killing hundreds of thousands, has changed everything, and while this report details a range of successes in 2019, our hearts are heavy with the scale of the tragedy that has spared no one. No doubt our report for 2020 will look dramatically different as we adapt to our new circumstances, developing and deploying virtual tools with which to connect the writers of the world—a mission that seems more crucial now than ever.

The following pages detail some of the innovative ways in which the IWP connected writers from around the world last year. From the Fall Residency, which brought distinguished writers from twenty-seven countries to The University of Iowa, to the thousands of writers who participated in our Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), we shared some of the magic of living, studying, and writing in Iowa City, a UNESCO City of Literature. We developed a Women's Creative Mentorship Project for writers from Africa and South America, which culminated in a gathering in Bogotá, Colombia; hosted the inaugural IWP

Summer Institute for college-aged writers from the U.S., India, and Pakistan; and expanded *Between the Lines*, supported by a Building Bridges Islamic Arts grant from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Countless new poems, plays, short stories, novels, essays, and film scripts made their way onto the page, thanks in part to the IWP; the conversations sparked in what we like to call “the United Nations of Writers” will surely inform discourses on all manner of literary matters in this time of the pandemic.

We are profoundly grateful for the support that makes possible this wide variety of programs, which in their different ways not only bring us into closer contact with writers and readers around the world but help us to better understand our place in the scheme of things. The IWP is known as “the world’s narrative nursery,” and our initiatives, the majority of which are supported jointly by The University of Iowa and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, inspire stories that endure. What co-founder Paul Engle described as the craziest idea he had ever heard—a writing program for writers from every land, suggested by IWP co-founder Hualing Nieh Engle—has transformed the literary lives of writers and readers everywhere. After more than five decades of connecting writers, our journey has only just begun. And we hope that you and your loved ones stay well.

With gratitude,

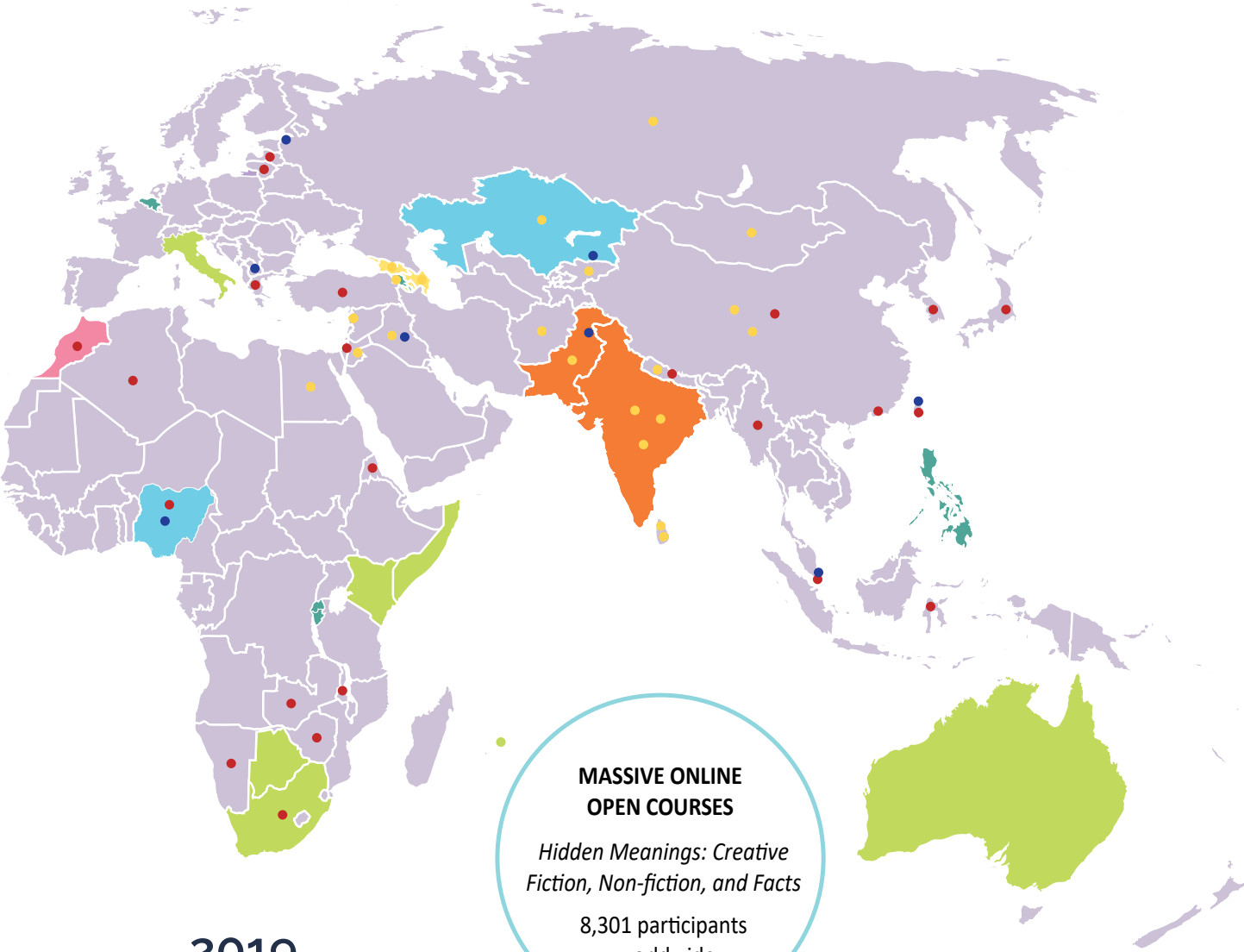
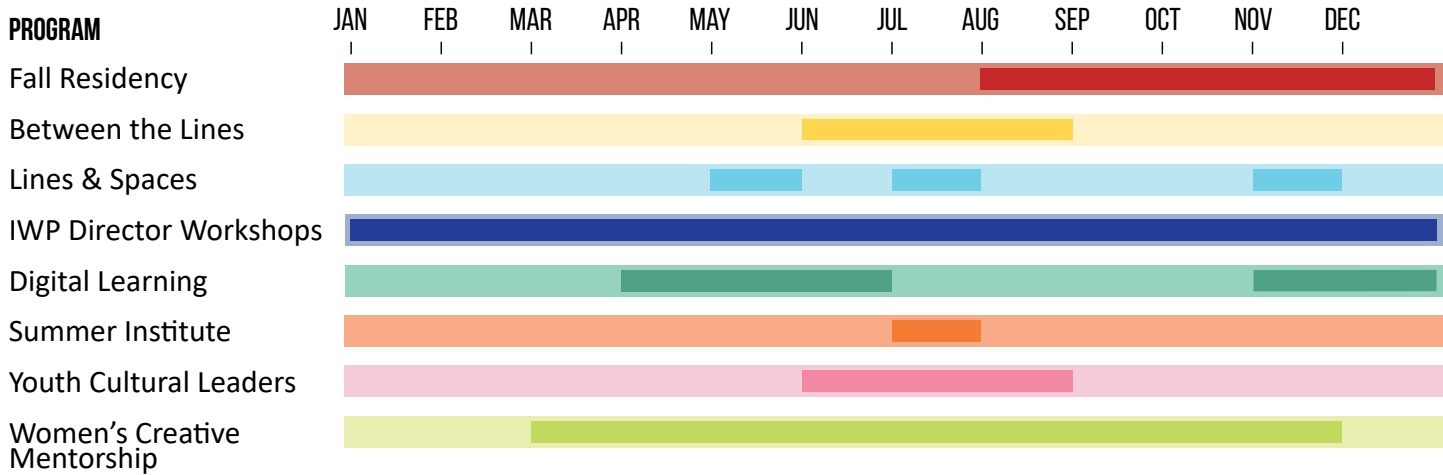
Christopher Merrill
IWP Director

2019 IWP Program Participants

Map Key

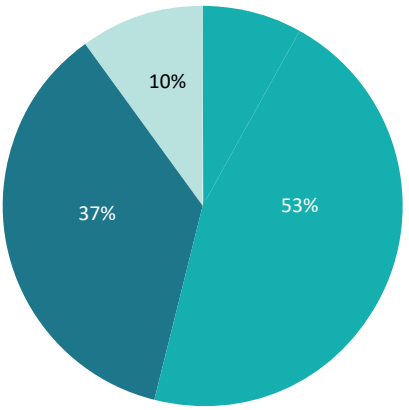
- Digital Learning Outreach
- Summer Institute
- Women's Creative Mentorship
- Fall Residents
- Between the Lines Participants
- Lines and Spaces American Authors Abroad Tours
- IWP Director Writing Workshops and Presentations
- Youth Cultural Leaders

2019 IWP PROGRAM TIMELINES



2019 IWP SUPPORT

- The University of Iowa
- Grants from the U.S. State Dept.
- Gifts to IWP, Grants (non-U.S. Government), and Program Fees



@UIIWP ON SOCIAL MEDIA



BETWEEN THE LINES



In 2019, Between the Lines (BTL) expanded its global and U.S. reach, offering not one but two, two-week long summer sessions for young writers ages 15-18.

Between the Lines: Peace and the Writing Experience, in its 11th year, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, brought together 39 participants from 17 countries along the historic Silk Road and the U.S. to Iowa City for creative and cultural work that many reported to have changed their lives.

In 2019, for the first time, a full session of ***BTL: Identity and Belonging*** launched, building upon the success of an earlier short pilot program. Supported by the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art's Building Bridges Program, the new session was designed to advance relationships and increase understanding between young Muslim American and non-Muslim American writers for mutual well-being. U.S. students from diverse backgrounds and faiths engaged in writing and activities that encouraged maximum intercultural exchange and



provided opportunities for open dialogue, nuanced introspection, and creative production under the guidance and care of trusted counselors, instructors, and BTL staff.

A few thoughts from BTL 2019 participants:

- “After BTL, I feel like a writer. I am a writer. My instructor and the workshops have shown me that when I put pen to paper, I create art.”
- “You built up a super warm community for me. I feel I have found another home.”
- “I have more confidence in my abilities now. Writing used to just be for me, but I have begun to see that it really needs to be shared.”
- “[BTL] showed me that I have to continue writing because nobody else has my voice.”

From living together in UI dorms and sharing meals, to writing in multiple genres, discussing global literature, and exchanging feedback in workshops with esteemed faculty and peers, participants honed

their craft, developed close-knit friendships, and deepened their exposure, knowledge, and cultural understanding of the lived experiences of teenagers around the world. Through performing at open-mic nights streamed live on Facebook, BTL voices were amplified, and along with the online publication of camp anthologies, their words together journeyed home.

The *Peace and the Writing Experience* BTL session was taught by four core instructors including Armen of Armenia (Armenia, Fall Resident '15), Yuriy Serebriansky (Kazakhstan, Fall Resident '17), Asli Perker (Turkey, instructor at BTL-inspired Write in Armenia '18), and Dora Malech (U.S., IWP Life of Discovery Tour '12, IWP Book Wings Russia '12) who shared a public reading of their own work at Prairie Lights Books. Participants' evenings were also filled with one and two-part special seminars such as “Cultural Curiosity” with Brittany Means, and “DIY Zine” with alea adigweme.

The *BTL: Identity and Belonging* session included daily creative writing workshops and literature



seminars led by writers Poupeh Missaghi and José Olivarez, and evenings spent exploring topical themes. A “Religion and Narrative” conversation between an Imam and a Christian author was particularly well-received by participants. The participant-driven open-mic night bore witness to brave literary expression that inspired dialogue around identity, politics, how to tell your stories, and what it means to belong.

“We empowered each other’s differences, and the mixing of all the different perspectives came together to create a beautiful image that motivates me to live every day.

I used to think that the only way I can dream was with my eyes closed; BTL showed me that I can dream with my eyes wide open.”

– BTL '19 participant

2019 BTL PARTICIPANTS:

Abdullah ABDOUHASHIM, U.S.	Alexis ANIKE, U.S.	Liaa FERNANDEZ, U.S.
Zeina ABOUSHAAR, U.S.	Sita CONDE, U.S.	Sehen Kilkush GAMHEWA, Sri Lanka
Rakan ABUTAYEH, Jordan	Calvin DEWITTE, U.S.	Jocelyn GAO, U.S.
Helan AHMED, Iraq	Jesse DICKERSIN, U.S.	Ulvi GITALIYEV, Georgia
Ruba AHMED-ABDELMUTALAB, U.S.	Ruishan DING, China	Kendyl GREEN, U.S.
Prabigyan ARYAL, Nepal	Haroon EHSAN, Afghanistan	Ana GRIGALASHVILI, Georgia
Camille ALEXANDRE, U.S.	Khulan ERDENECHIMEG, Mongolia	Quan HARRIS-HOLLEY, U.S.



A BTL student talks with 2019 BTL instructor Dora Malech (U.S., BTL instructor ’16, IWP Life of Discovery Tour ’12, IWP Book Wings Russia ’12) after the public BTL faculty reading at Prairie Lights Books.

Ella HEDER, U.S.	Elise MONSANTO, U.S.	Lia SCHARNAU, U.S.
Daria Aleksandraovna IANCHIK, Russia	Madeline MULLER, U.S.	Aren SEDRAKYAN, Armenia
Isabella JIANG, U.S.	Sankalpita MULLICK, India	Ayesha SHAIKH, Pakistan
Banupriya KADIRGAMASAMY, Sri Lanka	Ayah MUSTAFA, U.S.	Sabine SHEHAB, Lebanon
Dana Daniyarovna KANAFINA, Kazakhstan	Bella NOUMBA, U.S.	Jasmine SHRESTHA, Nepal
Imaan PATEL, U.S., India	Vitoria PEREZ, U.S.	Fiona SIEVERT, U.S.
Emma KAPLON, U.S.	Paridhi PURI, India	Aidan SPURGETIS, U.S.
Anastasiya KAVERINA, Russia	Diana QING, U.S.	Asparukh Nurzhanuly SULTAN-MURAT, Kazakhstan
Jana Mahmoud KHALED, Lebanon	A’ssia RAI, U.S.	Nane VARDANYAN, Armenia
Sierra LINDSEY-BISCHELLO, U.S.	Saffiyah SACKOR, U.S.	Mary-Kate WILSON, U.S.
Qianhui MA, China	Naghm SAFWAT, Egypt	Gracie ZHANG, U.S.
Maryam MIRILI, Azerbaijan	Yonus SAHADAT, Afghanistan	Abdumalik Akmatovich ZHUSUPOV, Kyrgyzstan
Nadine MOHAMED, Egypt	Mariam SAMKHARADZE, Georgia	

SUMMER INSTITUTE



In 2019, 29 students from Pakistan, India, and the U.S. came together in Iowa City, for the inaugural session of the Summer Institute (SI), the IWP’s cultural exchange and creative writing program for college-age individuals 18-22 years old. For two weeks, these students engaged in a rigorous curriculum of master class sessions, creative writing workshops, and community-building events including an open-mic night, a karaoke event, and swimming at nearby Coralville Lake. The students lived as roommates in a UI residence hall, shared meals, and—with a noted author from each country as their mentors, and resident assistants trained in creative writing at the Iowa Writers’ Workshop living with and supporting them—embarked on an exciting exploration of creative writing, South Asian culture and literary traditions, and intercultural exchange. Writing mentors

included Rochelle Potkar (India, IWP Fall Resident '15), Anjali Sachdeva (U.S.), and Harris Khaliq (Pakistan, IWP Fall Resident '15). Master class instructors were Afabwaje Kurian (U.S.), Aracely Mondragon (U.S.), Dini Parayitam (U.S.), Lisa Schlesinger (U.S.), Fariha Tayyab (U.S.), and Anam Zakaria (Pakistan). Resident assistants included Ellen Boyette (U.S.) and Ben Bush (U.S.).

The 2019 session was the first of three iterations made possible by the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan. The curriculum included challenging content, such as Anam Zakaria’s two-part master class on the historical and contemporary Pakistan-India conflict. Her sessions “Partition: A People’s Narrative” and “Humanizing the Other” gave students new voices and perspectives as well as a safe space to talk about The Partition, difference, generational grief, and empathy.



Co-Head of the UI Playwrights Workshop Lisa Schlesinger teaches a Summer Institute class at UI's Dey House.

2019 SUMMER INSTITUTE PARTICIPANTS:

Sandip BAIDYA, India	Gurmehar KAUR, India	Hafsa NOUMAN, Pakistan
Jishnu BANDYOPADHYAY, India	Mariya KHAN, U.S.	Cherene PUTHETHU, India
Nyeree BOYADJIAN, U.S.	KayLee KUEHL, U.S.	Tejas S, India
Tanvi CHOWDHARY, India	Martina LITTY, U.S.	Mahnoor SAYYED, Pakistan
Omar CHOWDRI, Pakistan	John LYONS, U.S.	Saqib SHEIKH, India
Darius CHRISTIANSEN, U.S.	Anna MAGANA, U.S.	Anna SHEPPARD, U.S.
Medha FAUST-NAGAR, U.S.	Sadia MAQSOOD, Pakistan	Amna SHOAIB, Pakistan
Hafsa GHANI, Pakistan	Sarim MEHMOOD, Pakistan	Suyashi SMRIDHI, India
Ashley HAJIMIRSADEGHI, U.S.	Payal NAGPAL, India	Azhar WANI, Pakistan
	Fazila NAWAZ, Pakistan	Aalia WAQAS, Pakistan

DIGITAL LEARNING



The IWP's Digital Learning (DL) program, funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. State Department and The University of Iowa, conducts groundbreaking virtual exchanges. DL's many projects and creative writing courses in 2019 ranged widely in scope, from a two-day in-person, site-specific literature symposium in Manila; to a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), which brought together over 8,000 participants; to a MOOC translation project from English into Arabic that will create greater access to some of the IWP's most popular resources.

April: A two-day 'On the Spot' symposium was timed to celebrate Filipino National Literature Month and the U.S.'s National Poetry Month. Held in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy in Manila, the session reunited writers from around the Philippines who had participated in one of the IWP's previous MOOCs. Fall Residency alum Kristian Sendon Cordero ('17) led the symposium, which used translation exercises to examine the language and craft of two canonical American poets, Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson.

May-June: An Outreach Course on trauma narrative engaged Rwandan and Burundian writers, ages 15-25. The effort coincided with memorial events surrounding the 25th anniversary of the Rwandan Genocide, which included an extended period of national mourning.

November-December: The IWP conducted one of its most ambitious and innovative DL projects ever, a MOOC titled *Hidden Meanings: Creative Fiction, Non-fiction, and Facts*. The course took a creative writing approach to understanding and recognizing information, disinformation, and misinformation.

8,301
Participants in
IWP's 2019
MOOC

In conjunction with the *Hidden Meanings* MOOC, an Outreach Course brought together Belgian participants, ages 18-25, for a six-week creative writing course also focused on countering disinformation. These intensive additional sessions, part of a collaboration with U.S. diplomatic posts in the region, were designed to work hand-in-

hand with the MOOC and to amplify its impact.

Special Project: In order to create broad reach and accessibility for one of the IWP's most popular large-scale courses, DL created an Arabic-language version of its *Storied Women* course. Translations of the teaching materials were commissioned, and the process also involved extensive localization: the selection and curation of short stories and poetry originally written in Arabic, which would then match and reflect the original English text choices in terms of content/theme/craft. This localization included canonical texts and current/contemporary texts written by some of the Arab world's most prominent female writers.

Featured Writers: A few of the writers whose IWP-exclusive talks on craft and other specifics of their writing practice were included as content and instruction in 2019 DL courses:

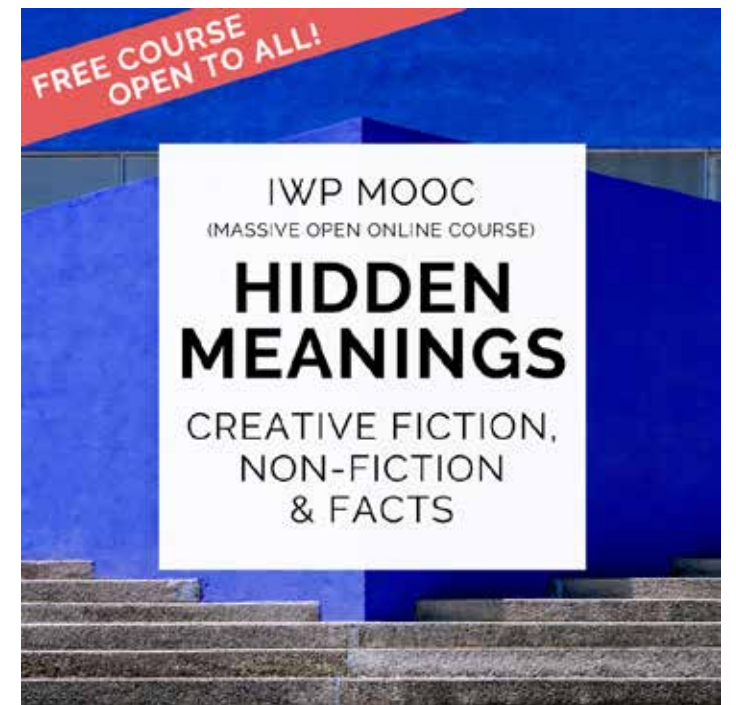
Vivian Gornick, an American critic, journalist, essayist, and memoirist, who served as the Bedell Distinguished Visiting Professor in The University of Iowa's Nonfiction Writing Program in 2015.

Alice Yousef (Fall Resident '16), a poet and translator from the Palestinian Territories, who writes on the Middle East, the Palestinian experience, and the emotions of daily life.

Carol Spindel, teacher of nonfiction writing at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and workshops at The University of Iowa Summer Writing Festival. Her essays and articles have appeared in many publications and been aired on NPR.

Mariano Tenconi Blanco (Fall Resident '16), an Argentinian playwright, has written nine plays and directed several plays and operas; his work have been performed in many countries.

Rob Spillman, an editor at *Broadcast from Pioneer Works*, and co-founder and editor of the seminal literary magazine *Tin House*, which published from 1999-2019.



2019 DIGITAL LEARNING COURSES INVOLVED WELL OVER 8,500 PARTICIPANTS:

MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) – “Hidden Meanings: Creative Fiction, Non-fiction, and Facts”

8,301 participants worldwide

- Now available as free self-directed course content at www.distancelearningiwp.org, along with *Storied Women* in Arabic, and other IWP writing course materials in English and Spanish

Outreach Course – “Write for Your Life: Turning Trauma into Stories”

30 participants in Burundi and Rwanda

Outreach Course – “Countering Disinformation”

30 participants in Belgium

IWP Symposium in Manila, Philippines

30 participants in Manila,
120 audience members regionally

FALL RESIDENCY



2019 Fall Resident Madara Gruntmane (Latvia) plays piano during Words Dance, a performance collaboration with The University of Iowa Dance Department. Fall Residents work with UI graduate student choreographers to create and sometimes participate in dances inspired by and incorporating the Residents' writing.

Founded in 1967 as a “United Nations of Writers,” the Fall Residency remains a one-of-a-kind forum for bringing together literary artists from around the world. This past year brought thirty writers from twenty-six countries to Iowa City, with over 100 public readings, lectures, panels, performances, and classroom visits. In the pages that follow, you’ll get a look at the tremendous range of programming that makes the Fall Residency such a dynamic experience for both the visiting writers and the broader public that turns out in such large numbers for our literary events.

The 2019 Fall Residency brought the writers into new accommodations in a downtown Iowa City hotel and offered a fresh set of American travel experiences in Detroit, New Orleans, and Nashville. Dozens of community partners dedicated time and resources to enrich the writers' twelve weeks in the U.S. (please see the Program Support section on p. 35). The Fall Residency has always striven to be an exemplar of inclusion and diversity, a platform for mutual respect, and—through readings, dialogue, home hosting, field trips, and dynamic academic exchanges—a unique vehicle for community connection.



Top to bottom, left to right: Fall Residents visit Wilson's Apple Orchard, an audience at a weekly multilingual reading at IWP's Shambaugh House, Fall Residents teach a class at Southeast Junior High in Iowa City, ECA Cultural Programs Division Director Nancy Szalwinski speaks during the Fall Residency Opening Party, Thawda Aye Lei (Myanmar) teaches at Benjamin Carson High School in Detroit.



Photo by Shannon Waite

2019 FALL RESIDENCY: CALENDAR OF EVENTS OVERVIEW

September 1 Arrival in Iowa City	September 10 Reading by Xu Xi Writers' Mixer with UI MFA students	September 22 Dinner at the Dane Family Farm (Iowa City, IA)	October 5 Readings at Iowa City Book Festival (UNESCO City of Literature)
September 2 Walking Tour of Iowa City	September 13 IWP Panel Lecture Series at Iowa City Public Library (weekly hereafter) Dinner at IWP Co-Founder Hualing Engle's house	September 24 Visit to UI Center for the Book	October 8 Lecture & Readings at UI's Senior College
September 3 Fall Residency Orientation		September 24 Lecture & Readings at UI's Senior College	October 11 Global Express: A Night of Theater & Writing (Performance collaboration with UI Theatre Department)
September 4 Fall Residency Opening Party Interviews with Iowa Public Radio's River to River program	September 16 Octagonal Barn Party	September 26 Visit & Lecture at Modern Chinese Writers course	October 12-19 Group Travel to Nashville, New Orleans, or Detroit
September 6 Translation Workshop (weekly hereafter) Shambaugh House Reading Series (weekly hereafter)	September 17-19 Writers visit Chicago	September 26 & 27 Lecture & Prairie Lights Reading with Visiting IWP Alum Chandrahas Choudhury	October 13 Readings at Southern Festival of Books (Nashville, TN)
September 7 Visit to the Iowa City Farmers' Market	September 17 Lecture & Readings at UI's Senior College	October 1 Lecture & Readings at UI's Senior College	October 14 Visit, Lectures & Readings at the University of New Orleans Visit & Readings at Benjamin Carson High School (Detroit, MI)
September 8 Prairie Lights Bookstore Reading (weekly hereafter) Cinematheque (Fall Resident-curated film series—weekly hereafter)	September 19 Visit & Lecture at Modern Chinese Writers course	October 3 Reading by IWP Visitor Ida Cordelia Beam Distinguished Visiting Professor Kei Miller	October 15 Visit, Lectures & Readings at New Orleans Center for Creative Arts
September 9 International Literature Today course (weekly hereafter)	September 20 Readings & Music Collaborations at Jazz Poetry Festival (City of Asylum, Pittsburgh, PA)	October 2 Visit, Lecture & Readings at Cornell College	October 16 Group Travel to Washington, D.C.
	September 21 Reading in Support of the Democratic Movement in Hong Kong with the UNESCO City of Literature & UI International Programs Department at RSVP (Iowa City, IA)	October 4 Iowa City Book Festival Reception	

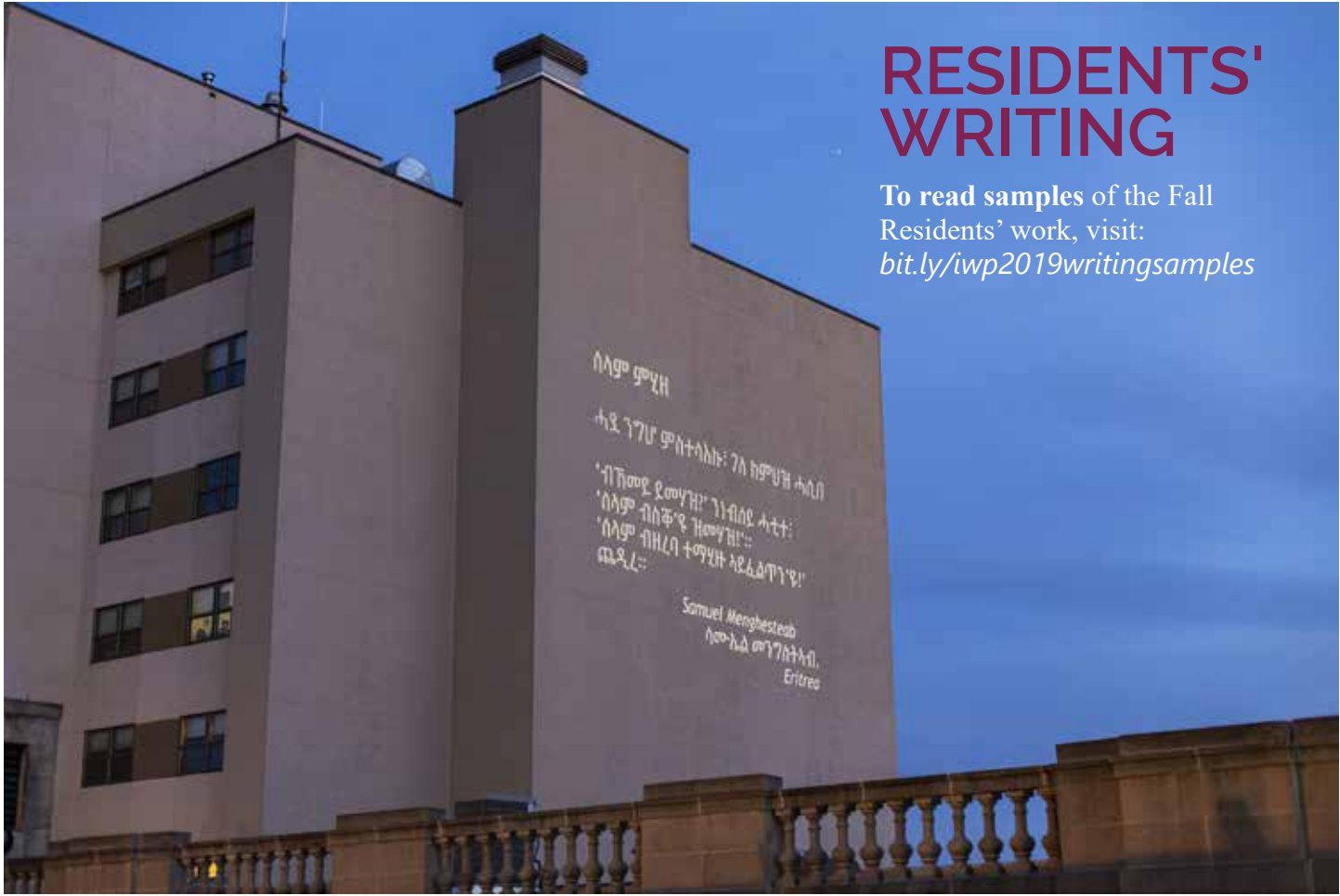


2019 IWP Fall Residents Batsirai Chigama (Zimbabwe), third from left, Arai Takako (Japan), fourth from right, and Efe Duyan (Turkey), far right, perform with the Oliver Lake OGBJ Quartet at the City of Asylum Jazz Poetry Festival in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

October 17 State Dept. Meet & Greet Visit & Readings at George Washington University (Washington, D.C.)	October 27 Visit, Lecture & Readings with Visiting IWP Alum Matthias Göritz	November 1 Readings with UI's Department of Spanish & Portuguese Words Dance: Performance Collaboration with UI's Dance Department	November 9 Reading with Feed Me Weird Things (Iowa City)
October 21 Staged Readings & Performance Collaboration with Portland Stage Company (Portland, ME)	October 29 Lunch Seminar: The Impact of the Anti- Extradition Bill Movement on Art & Life in Hong Kong Q & A in Spanish with the MFA in Spanish Creative Writing Department	November 14 Class Visit & Lecture at Kirkwood Community College (Iowa City, IA)	November 15 What We Saw: Images of America – Reflections by Residents at Iowa City Public Library
October 23 Visit, Lectures & Readings at Des Moines Central Academy (Des Moines, IA)	October 30 UI Stanley Art Exhibit Tour Readings with UI's Department of Spanish & Portuguese	November 4 & 5 Readings at Cortado Coffee & Cafe with UI Workshop in Japanese Literary Translation (Iowa City, IA)	Fall 2019-Spring 2020 Projections of Residents' writing on Iowa City buildings (collaboration with Iowa City Downtown District)
October 24 Visit, Lectures & Readings at Southeast Junior High School (Iowa City, IA)	October 31 Tour & Readings at the Figge Museum (Davenport, IA)	November 6 Reading by IWP Visitor Marvin Bell	
		November 8 Filmmaking in Latin America & Europe Lecture with UI Vertical Cinema Closing Party	

PROJECTIONS PROJECT

Writing by the Fall Residents, in both English and their mother languages, was projected on Iowa City buildings late Fall 2019-Spring 2020, the second year of this collaboration with the Iowa City Downtown District.



2019 FALL RESIDENTS

ROY CHICKY ARAD דרא יקי'צ יעור

(poetry, fiction, nonfiction, performance; Israel) is an activist, musician/performer and writer, with eight published volumes of poetry and prose. He edits the poetry magazine *Ma'ayan*, translates, largely poetry, and writes for the daily *Ha'aretz*. The Culture Guerilla group, which he co-founded, takes poetry into Israeli streets.

He participates courtesy of Fulbright Israel.



ARAI TAKAKO

(poetry; Japan) has published three poetry collections, including *Tamashii dansu* [Soul Dance] which won the 2008 Oguma Hideo Prize. Since 1998, she has been an editor for the poetry journal *Mi'Te*; she has also edited a volume of poems about, and is producing a film connected to, the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in northern Japan. The poetry volume *Factory Girls* is forthcoming in English. Arai teaches Japanese and poetry at Saitama University.

She participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

MANUEL BECERRA

(poetry; Mexico) is the author of five books of poetry, including *Instrucciones para matar un caballo* [Instructions for Killing a Horse] (2013). A winner of six national poetry awards, he has had fellowships from the Foundation for Mexican Letters, the Mexico City Institute of Culture, and Art Omi in upstate New York.

He participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.



BUDDHISAGAR

(fiction, poetry, drama; Nepal) authored the bestselling novel [Karnali Blues], which won the 2010 Rastriya Pratibha Puraskar award; an English translation is forthcoming. He has three other novels and one poetry collection; his radio scripts appear on Nepali broadcasts as well as on BBC; a feature film based on his screenplay will be released in 2020.

He participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

CHAN LAI-KUEN

(poetry, essays; Hong Kong), whose blog handle is “Dead Cat,” is a poet, a public speaker, and teacher. Her three books include [There Were Cats Singing], the winner of the Recommendation Prize at the 11th Hong Kong Biennial Awards for Chinese Literature, a prose collection, and a bilingual Chinese-English volume of poetry. Chan’s work has been translated and published internationally. *She participates courtesy of the Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation.*



CHAN PING-CHIU

(drama; Hong Kong) is the founder the experimental theater group Sand & Bricks for young artists, the artistic director of the On & On Theatre Workshop, an educator, and a widely awarded veteran stage director and playwright. In 2013, he was selected by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council as the Year’s Best Artist (Drama). *He participates courtesy of the Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation.*

BATSIRAI CHIGAMA

(poetry, fiction; Zimbabwe) has been a teacher of performance and creative writing workshops for over two decades. Her first poetry collection, *Gather the Children*, won the 2019 Outstanding First Creative Published Work from the National Arts Merits Awards in Zimbabwe. *She participates courtesy the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.*



SHADRECK CHIKOTI

(fiction; Malawi) co-directs Pan African Publishers, and is the founder of The Story Club Malawi. He is also the founder of the Kenyenyeva ministries, which serves vulnerable children, and of the Feminart Arts and Book Festival. Writing in English and Chichewa, he participated in the 2011 Caine Prize Writers’ Workshop. He is the author of nine books of speculative fiction; the novel *Azotus the Kingdom* won the 2013 Peer Gynt Literary Award. *He participates courtesy of the U.S. Embassy in Lilongwe.*

CLARA CHOW

(fiction, nonfiction, drama; Singapore) is a short story writer, editor, columnist, co-founder of the arts and literature magazine WeAreAWebsite.com, and author of two short story collections. Named among Singapore’s Top 12 Writers to Watch, she won the 2018 Jane Geske Award for her story “Siren (Redux).” *Chow participates courtesy of National Arts Council Singapore.*



EFE DUYAN

(poetry, translation; architecture; Turkey) teaches architectural history and theory at Mimar Sinan Arts University. He has authored three poetry collections, most recently *Sıkça sorulan sorular* [Frequently Asked Questions] (2016), and publishes academic work on space in architecture and poetry. His debut novel [Other] is forthcoming. A co-director of the Gaziantep Poetry Festival, he has read at poetry festivals world wide; his work has been translated into 29 languages. *He participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. State Department.*

RÓBERT GÁL

(poetry, fiction; Czech Republic), a literary editor and publisher, works at intersections of genres and media. His six volumes of philosophical prose have been translated from his native Slovak into English and Czech; he has collaborated with composers, dancers, filmmakers, and visual artists in performance and installation work in Europe and the U.S. *His participation was made possible by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.*



CARLOS GAMERRO

(fiction, translation, nonfiction; Argentina) has authored six novels, most recently *Cardenio* (2016), a collection of short stories, and a body of literary criticism, as well as translations of seminal English-language literary works including Shakespeare, W. H. Auden, and Harold Bloom. His own work has been translated into German, English, Turkish, and French. Gamorro’s script for *Tres de corazones* [Three of Hearts] was made into a feature film in 2007. *A 2008 IWP alum, he returns for a teaching residency at Grinnell College.*

MADARA GRUNTMANE

(poetry; Latvia) has a background in cultural management. A recipient of 2015 Latvian Literature Readers' Choice Award for her book *Narkozes* (Narcoses; 2015) and the 2019 Public Broadcasting Award for her second poetry volume *Dzērājmeitiņa* [Drunk Daddy's Girl], she often presents at international literary festivals; she also works with creative collectives to produce cultural arts events throughout Latvia.

Her participation has been made possible by a grant from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.



SOUKAINA HABIBALLAH

(poetry, fiction, screenwriting; Morocco) has published four poetry collections and one novel [The Barracks] (2016), with a second novel forthcoming. Habiballah has received many awards including, in 2015, the Buland Al Haidari Prize for Arabic poetry, and the 2019 Nadine Shames Prize for Arab Screenwriters for her short film [Who Left the Door Open?]. Her poetry has been translated into seven languages, including English.

Ms. Habiballah participates courtesy the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

TADE IPADEOLA

(poetry, translation, prose; Nigeria) received the 2013 Nigeria Prize for Literature for his poetry collection *The Sahara Testaments*, which has been translated into four languages; in 2009 he won the Delphic Laurel for his poem "Songbird." A Bellagio Rockefeller Fellow and a juror for the Nigeria Prize for Literature, he also translates poetry into Yoruba.

He participates thanks to a grant from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.



AMIRA-GÉHANNE KHALFALLAH

(fiction, nonfiction, drama; Algeria) is a journalist, novelist, filmmaker, and playwright. Her plays *Les draps* [Sheets] and *Shams et les poissons du désert* [Shams and the Desert Fish] have been published; her debut novel *Le naufrage de la lune* [The Wreck of the Moon] appeared in 2018; her short film *Essebat* [The Shoe] screened at several international festivals; a feature film is in development.

She participates through a grant from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

KIM JAEHOON

(drama; South Korea), the president and artistic director of the theater company TOC, received his BA from the Theater Arts Department at The University of Iowa. His plays [To Heaven; Our Mental Hospital; Again] have been influenced by the Theater of the Absurd.

A translator and lecturer, Kim Jaehoon participates in the IWP Fall Residency courtesy of Arts Council Korea.



SANTIAGO LOZA

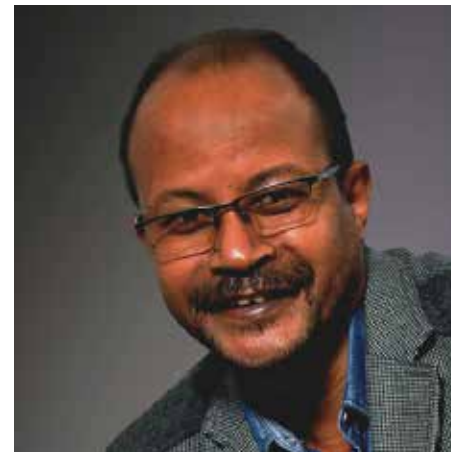
(drama, fiction; Argentina) is author of over 20 plays, collected in three volumes, and of two novels. His first feature, *Extraño* [Stranger], won Best Picture at the 2003 Rotterdam Film Festival, and was followed by seven features and documentaries; most recently, *Breve historia del planeta verde* [Brief Story from the Green Planet] received the Teddy Award at the 2019 Berlin Film Festival.

Loza participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

TAUTVYDA MARCINKEVIČIŪTĖ

(poetry, translation; Lithuania) has published 15 books of poetry, and three books of children's poetry. Among her many national awards is the Poezijos Pavasaris National Poet Laureateship. A prolific translator from the English, she has had her own work translated into more than ten languages; the bilingual Lithuanian-English volume *Terribly in Love* appeared in 2018.

She participates courtesy of the Paul and Hualing Engle Foundation.



SAMUEL MENGHESTEAB

(fiction, nonfiction, drama, poetry; Eritrea) is the author of the Tigrigna story anthology *Seb ziseanet seb*, and a regular contributor to Tigrigna-language magazines. He teaches adult and youth theater and literary programs, and writes pop song lyrics.

His participation is courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the U.S. Department of State.

AMANDA MICHALOPOULOU

(fiction; Greece) is the author of eight novels, three story collections and children's fiction, and a contributing editor to Greek and German dailies. Her debut novel *Yantes* won the 1997 Diavazo Award; *I'd Like* (2005), in Karen Emmerich's translation, received National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) International Literature Prize. Her work has been translated into 20 languages; she has had fellowships and literary residencies in Germany, China, the U.S., and elsewhere. She teaches creative writing in Athens. *She participates courtesy of an anonymous gift to the IWP.*



WALIS NOKAN

(poetry, nonfiction, fiction; Taiwan) founded the *Hunter Culture Magazine*, which developed into the Research Center for Humanities of Taiwan's Aboriginal Peoples. An author of two dozen books, most recently a volume of flash fiction [Path of Dreams], he has received awards that include the *United Daily News* critics' top honors for prose, and Ministry of Education's Award for Literary Creation. *He participates courtesy of the Ministry of Culture, Taiwan.*



GABRIELA ROMÁN

(poetry, fiction, translation, drama; Mexico) is a playwright, stage director, and actor, whose plays have been staged throughout Mexico. In 2018, Román won the Theater Exhibition of Morelos State and was a finalist for the National Young Drama Prize for her play *Iridescentes*; *Cósmica* was a finalist for the 2015 ASSITEJ-Spain Theatre for Young Audiences International Prize. Her work has been translated into English and Portuguese, and anthologized. *Román participates courtesy of an endowed gift from William B. Quarton.*



MARTHA MUKAIWA

(nonfiction, fiction, journalism; Namibia) is an arts and travel journalist, and activist for black Namibians, women, and the LGBTQIA+ community. She has written for *The Namibian*, *Quartz*, *Matador Network*, and *The Africa Report*, among other publications. She has also served as film juror for the Namibian Theatre and Film Awards, on panels providing grants to Namibia's upcoming voices in the arts, and on UNESCO's #JournalistsToo campaign. *She participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.*



BEN SOHIB

(fiction, nonfiction; Indonesia) is known for his popular novels *The Da Peci Code* (2006) and *Rosid dan Delia* [Rosid and Delia] (2008), adapted to film as *Tiga hati, dua dunia, dan satu cinta* [Three Hearts, Two Worlds, and One Love], which garnered Best Film at the 2010 Indonesian Film Festival. Author of five books, including two story collections, he has represented Indonesia at international arts festivals. *He participates courtesy of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the U.S. Department of State.*



THAWDA AYE LEI

(fiction, nonfiction; Myanmar), a graduate of the International Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, is a journalist-turned-advocate. She is also the author of three novels and a story collection [The Borderless Cloud], and the founder of the online magazine *Myat shu*. *Thawda Aye Lei's participation was made possible by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.*



YAMKELA TYWAKADI

(fiction, nonfiction, South Africa) is a novelist, publisher, performer, and the founder of Blank Page Edu, a company that develops mobile apps and board games. Often working in South Africa's native languages, she has published 15 books; her first, *Andingombala Ndingumntu: IsiXhosa novel*, is used in isiXhosa classes throughout the country. Ms. Tywakadi is on *Mail & Guardian's* list of 200 Young South African Leaders for 2019. *She participates courtesy of the U.S. Consulate General in Johannesburg.*



YU NICK RONGJUN

(drama; People's Republic of China), artistic director of the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center, the Shanghai International Comedy Festival, and co-director of the Shanghai Performing Arts Group, has had over 60 plays produced in China and abroad. He also works in film, TV, and radio. His writing has won him the Cao Yu Script Award and an Outstanding Social Achievement Award at the Cairo International Experimental Theater Festival. *His participation is courtesy of the Paul and Hualing Engle Fund.*



WOMEN'S CREATIVE MENTORSHIP

Funded by the U.S. Dept. of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the **Women’s Creative Mentorship Pilot Project (WCM)** engaged female IWP Fall Residency alumni as mentors for emerging female writers from their home countries. Working in trios—two mentees with each mentor—they generated creative works and responded to feedback, writing prompts, and professional development efforts with their mentors. The project kicked off with a four day in-person conference coordinated alongside the Association of Writers & Writing Programs Conference in Portland, Oregon, followed by a six-month distance collaboration.

The Latin American contingent reconvened in Colombia, dovetailing with IWP’s Lines & Spaces tour (see p. 28). **The project concluded with an IWP-published online anthology, available at: <http://bit.ly/WCMAnth>**

WOMEN'S CREATIVE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM MENTORS:



Ubah Cristina Ali Farah (fiction writer, poet, playwright, translator; Italy) was born in Verona, Italy, grew up in Mogadishu, but fled the civil war at the age of eighteen. She holds a Ph.D. in African Studies from the University of Naples-L'Orientale and remains affiliated with the Center for Somali Studies at Roma Tre University and with The Australasian Centre for Italian Studies. Her prize-winning first novel, *Madre piccola* (2007), has been translated into Dutch and English (2011). She was an IWP Fall Resident in 2017; in 2018 she had a Maison des Écrivains et des Traducteurs residency.

Maxine Case (fiction, journalism; South Africa) is a senior writer for the non-profit Cape Town Partnership. She contributes to a number of newspapers and magazines, including *Real Simple*,



Mentor TJ Dema (Botswana, Fall Resident '12), right, works with her mentee Mandisa Mabuthoe (Botswana) during the WCM kick-off in Portland, Oregon. Photo Mmakgosi Tau (Botswana).

Reader’s Digest, and *O Magazine*. Her short story “Homing Pigeons” was included in *African Compass: New Writing from Southern Africa* 2005. In 2007, her debut novel *All We Have Left Unsaid* won the Commonwealth Writers’ Prize for Best First Book in Africa, and, jointly, the Herman Charles Bosman Award. She was an IWP Fall Resident in 2009.



María Sonia Cristoff (novelist, nonfiction writer; Argentina) is the author of two non-fiction narratives and three novels, and is the editor of three collections that have close links to her own narrative. Her work and criticism have been published

in newspapers and magazines such as *La Nación*, *Clarín*, *Página 12*, *Perfil*, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, *Noticias*, *Siwa*, *Anfibia*, and *Letras Libres*. An alumna of the 2011 IWP Fall Residency, Cristoff teaches creative writing at Universidad Nacional de las Artes (UNA) and Universidad Nacional Tres de Febrero (Untref). Her work has been translated into English, French, German, Italian, Arabic, and Swedish.

Tjawangwa (TJ) Dema (poet, Botswana) is a Motswana



poet, teaching artist, and arts administrator. Her poetry collection *Mandible* was published in 2014 under the auspices of the African Poetry Book Fund; *The Careless Seamstress* won the 2018 Sillerman First Book Prize for African Poets. She has an MA in Creative Writing from Lancaster University (UK), where she mentored the all-female national champions for the British Council’s Power in the Voice initiative. A past chairperson of the Writers Association of Botswana, Dema has coordinated workshops and cultural exchanges and produced recordings of Botswana poets. In 2012 she participated in the IWP Fall Residency.

Yvonne Adhiambo Owuor (novelist, essaysist; Kenya) is an author, lecturer, and arts curator. In 2003, she won the Caine Prize for African Writing for her story “Weight of Whispers,” also the title of a 2003 volume. Her first novel, *Dust*, was published by Knopf in 2014, made the Folio Award shortlist, and won the 2015 TBC Jomo Kenyatta Literature Award; her second novel, *The Dragonfly Sea*, also from Knopf, appeared in 2019. Owuor was an IWP Fall Resident in 2005, and returned in 2017 as the Residency’s first Grinnell Fellow.



Shenaz Patel (fiction writer, playwright; Mauritius) has written many novels, plays, and short stories in both French and Mauritian Créole: best known is her 2005 novel *Le silence des Chagos*, forthcoming in an English

translation in 2019 as *The Silence of the Chagos*. As a working journalist, she writes about social and cultural issues; much of her writing seeks to unearth the unsaid and untold. In 2016, she was an IWP Fall Resident; in 2018, she had a fellowship with the Hutchins Centre-W.E.B du Bois Institute at Harvard University.

Pilar Quintana (novelist, fiction writer, screenplays; Colombia) has published four novels including *La perra* (2017; winner of Premio Biblioteca de Narrativa

Colombiana) and a short story collection. In 2007 she was selected by Hay Festival as one of Latin America’s “39 under 39” young writers. In 2010 she received Spain’s Premio de Novela La Mar de Letras for *Coleccionistas de polvos raros*. Her stories have been published in Latin America, Spain, Italy, Germany, the U.S., and China. She is an alumna of the 2011 IWP Fall Residency and of the International Writers Workshop of the Baptist University of Hong Kong (2012).



Karen Villeda (poet, translator, fiction writer; Mexico) has published two children's books, four collections of poetry, and a book of essays. Among her many awards are the Fine Arts Prize for Literary Essay 2017, "Clemencia Isaura" National Award of



Poetry in 2016, and the Fine Arts Prize for Children's Fiction 2014. Villeda explores poetry and multimedia on her website www.poetronica.net. Her poems have been translated into Arabic, French, English, and Portuguese, and published

widely in the Americas; she has translated English poetry into Spanish. Her next book, *Visegrado*, will be published by the National Institute of Fine Arts.

WOMEN'S CREATIVE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM MENTEES:

Ivania Cox, Argentina
Priya Hein, Mauritius
Firdous Hendricks, South Africa
Mandisa Mabuthoe, Botswana
Ghada E. Martínez, Mexico
Buhle Ngaba, South Africa
Suban Nur Cooley, Somalia/Australia
Sarah Ochwada, Kenya

Djarah Osei, Somalia/Italy
Yijhan Rentería, Colombia
Jimena Repetto, Argentina
Paula Silva, Colombia
Mmakgosi Tau, Botswana
Haddiyyah Tegally, Mauritius
Stephanie Wanga, Kenya
Donají Vega, Mexico

LINEs & SPACES



Audience members at the Abuja Literary Festival, where the L&S delegation lead a four-day creative writing workshop.

In 2019, IWP's **Lines & Spaces (L&S)** program embarked on three tours to Kazakhstan, Nigeria, and Colombia, supported by grants from the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. L&S delegations met with over 600 local participants through exciting interdisciplinary events.

In Kazakhstan, the L&S delegates—a poet, choreographer, and musician—led craft-based workshops for people with and without disabilities to show that emphasizing inclusivity leads to beautiful art.

During the L&S tour **in Nigeria**, the delegates delivered creative writing workshops to young Nigerian writers interested in exploring both the pedagogy and business side of creative writing. The delegation also attended the Abuja Literary Festival, facilitating additional workshops and participating in panel discussions, while reconnecting with IWP alumni.

The final L&S tour of 2019 took place **in Colombia**, where a delegation of two Latina writers from the U.S. led workshops in Spanish for women interested in creative writing. This tour also devoted three days to a summit convening the Latin American contingent of the WCM project (see p. 28), discussing what worked well in the project, and planning next steps for the writers. The WCM participants provided detailed feedback on the programming to help the IWP retool any future iterations of the project for even greater impact. The tour and the summit concluded with a joint reading by the U.S. delegates and WCM mentors, held at a local bookstore.



The L&S Kazakhstan inclusive workshop concluded with a group performance by music, dance, and poetry groups to a standing-room-only crowd.



Damani Phillips works with musicians during an inclusive collaborative workshop during the L&S tour in Kazakhstan.

The Lines & Spaces program continues to connect with and champion new generations of writers while presenting a wide variety of American writers to the world, demonstrating that there is enough room for everyone's voice to resonate with audiences across the world.

WCM COLOMBIA SUMMIT:

Ivania Cox, Argentina

María Sonia Cristoff, Argentina – bio on p. 28

Ghada E. Martínez, Mexico

Pilar Quintana, Colombia – bio on p. 29

Yijhan Rentería, Colombia

Jimena Repetto, Argentina

Paula Silva, Colombia

Karen Villeda, Mexico – bio on p. 29

Donají Vega, Mexico



Left: IWP alum Amara Nicole Okolo ('18, Nigeria) joined the L&S Nigeria delegation for interviews by TV and print journalists and on panels at the Abuja Literary Festival.

YOUTH CULTURAL LEADERS



Students participating in The Olive Writers (TOW) in Morocco, founded and directed by Between the Lines (BTL) alum Mohammed El Wahabi (Morocco, '15), modeled on his BTL experience in Iowa.

The Youth Cultural Leaders (YCL) Project provides mentorship to young IWP alumni who, inspired by what they experienced through IWP’s Between the Lines (BTL) programs in Iowa, have started their own regional BTL’s. In July 2019, the IWP worked with two of the most advanced projects—both in Morocco, both led by amazing young entrepreneurs.

The Olive Writers (TOW) was organized by Mohammed El Wahabi (Morocco, BTL '15). TOW has run for multiple years and has received support from the U.S. Mission to Morocco. For the 2019 session, the IWP arranged to send a creative writing teacher and long-time BTL counselor Benjamin Bush. He taught at the camp and spent days before and after working with local teachers.

The Nova Writers Academy (TNWA) brought together thirteen young writers for a three-day camp in the Moroccan city of Oujda. TNWA was founded and is directed by Omar Khattala (Morocco, BTL '16), whose goal was “to bring the ‘Between the Lines’ experience to Moroccan youth in order to inspire them to avoid stereotypes in their writings and to explore new themes, topics and settings. On top of this, we wanted them to inspire other youth around them and share the knowledge and experience they have had with them.” This first session of TNWA was supported by The Olive Writers, the U.S. Embassy in Rabat, and the donation of classroom space from Association Anoual. The IWP arranged for writer-teacher Delaney Nolan to serve as chief faculty member.

Program Support

The IWP can only continue its activities thanks to the ongoing 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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Iowa City Book Festival

Iowa City Downtown District

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Midwest Writing Center (IA)

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Public Space One (IA)

RSVP (IA)

Smith College (MA)

Southeast Junior High (IA)

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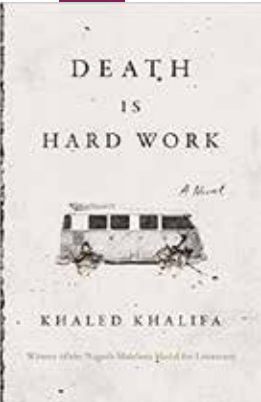
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THIS YEAR'S BOOKSHELF

A SELECTION OF 2018-'19 TITLES BY IWP ALUMNI

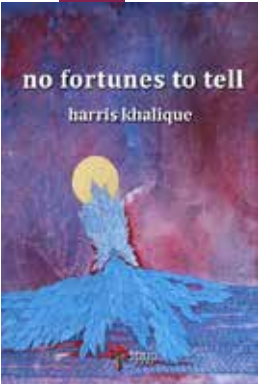


DEATH IS HARD WORK by KHALED KHALIFA

“Khalifa explains that the idea for the book came to him after he suffered a heart-attack in 2013. ‘I had to stay in the hospital emergency room for some days,’ he says. ‘The war was everywhere; the sound of bombs didn’t stop. I asked myself: What if I die now? How will my family take my body to my village, Maryameyn, in northern Syria?’

Hence in the novel, Abdel Latif al-Salim, on his death bed in Damascus, makes his son Bobol promise to bury him in his home village near Aleppo. Bobol and two siblings, Hussein and Fatima, subsequently set off with Abdel Latif’s shrouded body in Hussein’s minibus on a journey that should take a few hours but involves negotiating checkpoints of the regime, pro-regime militia and assorted rebel groups... (yet) events teeter at times on the edge of comedy.”
– Gareth Smyth in *The Arab Weekly*

(Translated from the Arabic by Leri Price. New York, 2019)



NO FORTUNES TO TELL by HARRIS KHALIQUE

“In precise, striking language Harris Khalique’s poems grapple with the great tragedies and moral questions of our time. He reveals Aleppo, Yemen and Waziristan as no reporter can, as only a poet can. A marsiya for our broken world.”
– Basharat Peer

(Lahore, 2018)



THE WHITE BOOK by HAN KANG

“While on a writer’s residency, a nameless narrator wanders the twin white worlds of the blank page and snowy Warsaw. *The White Book* becomes a meditation on the color white, as well as a fictional journey inspired by an older sister who died in her mother’s arms, a few hours old. The narrator grapples with the tragedy that has haunted her family, an event she colors in stark white—breast milk, swaddling bands, the baby’s rice cake-colored skin—and, from here, visits all that glows in her memory: from a white dog to sugar cubes.”
– Random House

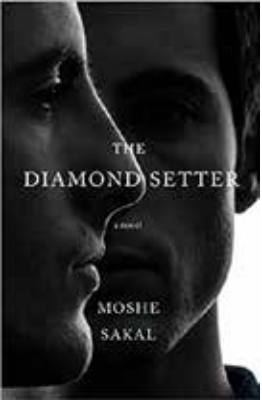
(New York, 2019)



THE DRAGONFLY SEA by YVONNE ADHIAMBO OWUOR

“*The Dragonfly Sea* reads with the kinesis of a tandem bicycle. A large part of the propulsive force is Owuor’s lyricism but there is a part reserved for the reader. When author and reader are in sync, the novel can be that dream every reader seeks in all literature. For Owuor’s magical narration does not always fold neatly into the political ideas she pursues in the book the way it does when she writes the erotic, for example. The scope of Owuor’s work here is so vast, spanning centuries and three continents, as to render any expectations of a stable yin and yang unrealistic. Her writing in this book observes the fundamental tao of Taijito, fluidity as of the sea, movement as of the dragonfly. What matters most is that in assaying the wide canvas before her, she kept her nerve and one would never suspect that what she has accomplished in terms of imagining a workable bridge between Africa and China had never been done before by any African or Chinese writer of literary fiction...” – Tade Ipadeola in IWP’s *91st Meridian*

(New York, 2019)



THE DIAMOND SETTER by MOSHE SAKAL

“I have this yearning for the openness of my grandparents’ Middle East. Even though I can live openly in Israel as a gay person, I am not satisfied with my surroundings. I long for open borders, for a queer Middle East in which you can roam freely in every sense. In Israel, I see too many borders between people, countries, cultures; I don’t see enough diversity. We’re third-generation immigrants and we live our lives as Israelis, but so many stories and languages were forgotten, and sometimes I feel like the price was high. So I do the only thing that I can do: I tell these stories. There’s really no difference between me and someone who goes back to stories from Warsaw, Yemen, or Morocco. The stories are different, but it is the same act of returning.”
– Moshe Sakal interviewed in the *Los Angeles Review of Books*

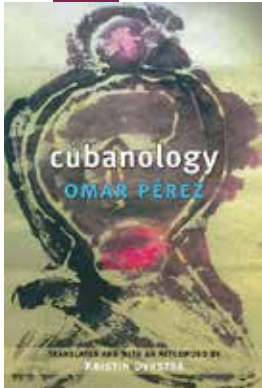
(Translated from the Hebrew by Jessica Cohen. New York, 2018)



GOD’S WIFE by AMANDA MICHALOPOULOU

“This is, indeed, the story of a fairly ordinary young woman (aged seventeen) who marries God, the conventional Christian God, who apparently gets lonely. He insists it is a platonic relationship but, apart from that, they live as man and wife, sharing a bed and living together. Like many men, he is not an easy husband, controlling, often absent and liking bad jokes. However, though there is humour in it, it is also a serious work about the nature of God and human interaction with Him, his inability to fully understand humans and how we (those who believe in God) might imagine Him.”
– *The Modern Novel Blog*

(Translated from the Greek by Patricia Felisa Barbeito. Champaign, IL, 2019)



CUBANOLOGY by OMAR PÉREZ

“A challenge for my translation involved deciding when not to use English. As he readjusts to his homeland, Pérez embraces the uncontainable multilingualism he experienced abroad. Too much translation would domesticate it. So would inserting explanations or using italics more consistently to mark other languages as ‘foreign.’ Pérez often lets go of those boundaries in *Cubanology*.”
– Kristin Dykstra, Translator’s Note in *Asymptote Journal*

(Translated from the Spanish by Kristin Dykstra. Barrytown, NY, 2019)

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