

2015 Annual Report



iwp9

International
Writing Program

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Program Support



Group photograph of the 2015 Fall Residency (photo Miranda Meyer).



Letter from the Director

Every four years, Iowa takes pride of place in the nominating process for the next president of the United States—a fact that makes the fall residency of the International Writing Program (IWP) all the richer for the poets and writers visiting from around the world. But after the conclusions of the Iowa caucuses, when all the candidates and their teams have departed, along with media from all corners of the globe, we at the IWP remember that what endures is the written word. “Literature is news that stays news,” Ezra Pound wrote, an insight that governs our thinking in the design of the many programs described in the following pages. Writers from around the world look to the IWP not only for inspiration and ideas but also for a community committed to producing “the news that stays news.” In every setting, from the campus of the University of Iowa to the countries we visit on cultural diplomacy missions to the virtual world, we establish spaces suitable for fruitful interchange, dialogue, and the creation of new work, in a range of literary genres, media, settings, and platforms. Our mission—to connect the writers of the world in an ever expanding literary network—is on abundant display in this report—2015 was a banner year for the IWP—and we invite you to explore with us some of the many ways that we try to tell the real story of our time.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'C Merrill'.

Christopher Merrill

Birgül Oğuz (Turkey) reads at the Library of Congress (photo Shawn Miller).



“ The program deepened my understanding of America, which will help me as a translator of American poetry.”
—Aki Salmela (Finland)

Fall Residency

Started in 1967, the Fall Residency has hosted 1,400 writers from more than 140 countries. [This year's writers](#) arrived from cities as distant as Havana and São Paulo, Abuja and Cairo, Helsinki and Istanbul, Kabul and Ulaanbatar, Seoul and Manawatu, Manila and Phnom Penh, and many more. To travel to each of these destinations would take months, perhaps years, or perhaps yet would never be possible in the average person's lifetime. For nearly three months, writers take time away from their families and their professions to come to Iowa to write and to talk about writing, to share their work and to learn about the literary traditions the world around. For some, they also learn how their work fits into the literary landscape. Birgül Oğuz (Turkey) said, “I gained a kind of insight about my own writing and its possible place in world literature in a very short time and in a very intense way. That would take me years to arrive at that point without IWP.” And for others, the opportunity for cultural exchange was the pinnacle. Antônio Xerxenesky (Brazil) said, “The greatest part was the cultural exchange, I believe. I learned so much about Togo, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Finland—almost as much as I learned about the U.S. This may not have a direct impact on my writing, but it certainly shapes who I am, and therefore has a creative impact.”

The Fall Residency wrapped up its 48th year, offering yet another successful literary and cultural exchange program often described as life-changing by its participants. This year, 34 writers from 33 countries joined the IWP for eighty days, from late August to early November. The Residency provides participants ample time and space for work amid a lively calendar of events, including readings at the Shambaugh House and the Prairie Lights Bookstore, class visits, panel discussions, and interdisciplinary art projects with other University of Iowa departments. Beyond Iowa City, collaborations with community arts organizations across the U.S., cultural field trips, visits to regional events, and travel to places such as Chicago, Seattle, New Orleans, Washington, D.C., and New

York are designed to give the visiting writers a richer, more textured sense of America's fabric. In 2015 that roster of places included national literary institutions like the Library of Congress, the Poetry Foundation, the PEN/Faulkner Foundation and the Hugo House in Seattle, with IWP writers featured in live readings, teaching workshops, and recording readings for institutional archives.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- 8/22**
Writers arrive in Iowa City
- 8/24**
IWP orientation and opening party
- 8/28**
MFA mixer party
- 8/28**
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series: Nael Eltoukhy and Harris Khalique
- 8/30**
Dinner, KCKK Jazz Radio's Development Director Lisa Baum: Nisah Haron
- 8/31**
Presentation, International Literature Today: Mookie Katigbak-Lacuesta, Teresa Präauer Antônio Xerxenesky, and Matthew Cheng
- 08/31**
Join the Residency: Sara Baume and Margarita Mateo Palmer
- 9/01**
Class Visit, Prof. Espinosa: Margarita Mateo Palmer
- 9/01**
Presentation, IWP Cinematheque: Byambaa Sakhiya introduces *Passion*
- 9/02**
Meeting, musician John Michael Parker: El Jones, Polen Ly and Homeira Qaderi
- 9/03**
Meeting, Asian American Writers Workshop (New York City)
- 9/04**
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series: Yu-Mei Balasingamchow and Chung Wenjin
- 9/04**
Panel, Iowa City Public Library: "Writing in a Culture in Conflict" with Harris Khalique, Samuel Kolawole, and Yael Neeman
- 9/06**
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series: Mookie Katigbak-Lacuesta and Marie Silkeberg
- 9/06**
Dinner, Prof. Lutgendorf's home
- 9/07**
Labor Day picnic
- 9/07**
Global Express rehearsal
- 9/08**
Text and Context: "The U.S. Political Landscape" with Professor and former member of the U.S. House of Congress James Leach
- 9/08**
Presentation, IWP Cinematheque: Teresa Präauer introduces *Revanche*
- 9/10**
Visit, Tri-State Rodeo (IA)
- 9/10**
Class Visit, Cornell College (IA): El Jones and Polen Ly
- 9/10 – 10/14**
Visit, Pittsburgh City of Asylum: Harris Khalique
- 10/12**
Rehearsal and Interview, Jazz Poetry Concert
- 10/13**
Reading, Jazz Poetry Concert
- 9/11**
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series: Anas Atakora and Samuel Kolawole
- 9/11**
Presentation, International Translation Workshop: Anas Atakora
- 9/11**
Panel, Iowa City Public Library: "The Don Dreams On" with Kirill Azernyi, Guzal Begim, Teresa Präauer, Antônio Xerxenesky, and Yao Feng
- 9/12**
Barn Party
- 9/12**
Reception, UI's English Department
- 9/13**
Reading, Anthology Reading Series: Sara Baume, Rochelle Potkar, and Antônio Xerxenesky
- 9/13**
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series: Margarita Mateo Palmer and Aki Salmela
- 9/14**
Presentation, International Literature Today: Nael Eltoukhy, Margarita Mateo Palmer, and Marie Silkeberg
- 9/15**
Presentation, IWP Cinematheque: Ida Beam visitor Shahriar Mandanipour introduces *The House is Black* and *Women's Prison*
- 9/16**
Meeting, Pulitzer Prize-winning composer David Lang
- 9/17**
Performance, Global Express
- 9/17**
Visit, UI's Center for the Book

- 9/18**
Panel, Iowa City Public Library: “Feminism with a Small f” with Johanna Aitchison, Yu-Mei Balasingamchow, Chung Wenyin, Margarita Mateo Palmer, and Rochelle Potkar
- 9/18**
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series: Matthew Cheng and Yao Feng
- 9/18**
Presentation, International Translation Workshop: Matthew Cheng, Maung Yu Py, and Armen of Armenia
- 9/19**
Presentation, Ul’s Center for Asian and Pacific Studies
- 9/20**
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series: El Jones and Michael Mendis
- 9/21**
Presentation, International Literature Today: Samuel Kolawole, Nisah Haron, Birgül Oğuz, and Yao Feng
- 9/22**
Class Visit, Prof. Kruger: Nael Eltoukhy, Birgül Oğuz, and Marie Silkeberg
- 9/22**
Presentation, IWP Cinematheque: Samuel Kolawole introduces *October*
- 9/22**
Presentation, Iowa City Foreign Relations Council: Rochelle Potkar
- 9/23 – 9/25**
Trip to Chicago
- 9/24**
Meeting, Prof. Vu Tran, University of Chicago: Yu-Mei Balasingamchow and Sara Baume
- 9/24**
Interview, *Via Times*: Mookie Katigbak-Lacuesta
- 9/24**
Interview, Poetry Foundation: Harris Khalique
- 9/25**
Reading, Poetry Foundation: Mookie Katigbak-Lacuesta and Karen Villeda
- 9/25**
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series: Polen Ly and Byambaa Sakhiya
- 9/25**
Presentation, International Translation Workshop: Aki Salmela, Polen Ly, and Byambaa Sakhiya
- 9/27 – 10/01**
Mid-Residency Travel Period: residents travel to either Seattle or New Orleans
- 9/28**
Reading, New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (New Orleans): Yu-Mei Balasingamchow, Samuel Kolawole, Armen of Armenia, and Karen Villeda
- 9/28**
Screening, Baskerville (New Orleans): Polen Ly, Marie Silkeberg
- 9/30**
Class Visit, Bard Early College (New Orleans)
- 9/30**
Reading, Hugo House (Seattle): Sara Baume, Margarita Mateo Palmer, Teresa Präauer, and Antônio Xerxenesky
- 9/30**
Reading, South East Asia Center, University of Washington-Seattle: Maung Yu Py
- 10/02**
Panel, Iowa City Public Library: “The Calling: Writing with Responsibility” with Nael Eltoukhy, El Jones, Michael Mendis, Homeira Qaderi, and Marie Silkeberg
- 10/02**
Presentation, International Translation Workshop: Margarita Mateo Palmer, Teresa Präauer, and Antônio Xerxenesky
- 10/03**
Panels, Iowa City Book Festival: “Technology Makeover,” “Witnessing the Road,” “Writing for a Younger Self,” “Self Portrait,” “The Hum of Translation,” “A Sense of Place,” and “Politics”
- 10/03**
Dinner, the home of Drs. Lim: Matthew Cheng, Chung Wenyin, and Yao Feng
- 10/05**
Presentation, International Literature Today: Sara Baume, Chung Wenyin, Harris Khalique, and Rachel Rose
- 10/06**
Interview, “News from Home”: Raed Al-Jishi, Kirill Azernyi, Matthew Cheng, El Jones, and Nisah Haron
- 10/06**
Presentation, IWP Cinematheque: Yael Neeman introduces *Children of the Sun*, and Marie Silkeberg introduces *Stockholm-Gaza: The City; Your Memory is my Freedom; The Celebration; Snow*
- 10/06 – 10/10**
Festival Reading, Montreal: Rachel Rose
- 10/07**
Class Visit, Grinnell College (IA): Teresa Präauer and Karen Villeda
- 10/07 – 10/10**
Reading, University of California-Berkeley: Harris Khalique
- 10/07**
Class Visit, Prof. Merino: Antônio Xerxenesky
- 10/08**
Class Visit, Senior College: Johanna Aitchison and Teresa Präauer
- 10/08**
Anete Kruusmägi arrives in Iowa City
- 10/09**
Panel, Iowa City Public Library: “Ekphrasis” with Raed Al-Jishi, Anas Atakora, Matthew Cheng, Mookie Katigbak-Lacuesta, Kim EuGene, and Anete Kruusmägi
- 10/09**
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series: Raed Al-Jishi and Nisah Haron
- 10/09**
Presentation, International Translation Workshop: Nael Eltoukhy and Byambaa Sakhiya

10/10

Visit, Effigy Mounds (IA)

10/10

Class Visit, Iowa State University and Drake University (IA): Nisah Haron

10/10

Reception, Prof. Aji's home: Birgül Oğuz

10/11

Community Event: Dane Farm Party

10/11

Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series: Anete Kruusmäggi and Teresa Präauer

10/11

Reading, Anthology Reading Series: Maung Yu Py, Yael Neeman, and Nisah Haron

10/12

Presentation, International Literature Today: Johanna Aitchison, Kirill Azernyi, El Jones, and Karen Villeda

10/13

Middle East Writers Reading: Raed Al-Jishi, Birgül Oğuz, Nael Eltoukhy, and Yael Neeman

10/13

Presentation, IWP Cinematheque: Yu-Mei Balasingamchow introduces *To Singapore with Love*, and Polen Ly introduces *Colorful Knots and Red Ink*

10/13

Class Visit, Des Moines Central Academy: Polen Ly and Birgül Oğuz

10/14

Presentation, Iowa City Foreign Relations Council: Rachel Rose

10/14

Class Visit, Kirkwood Community College-Cedar Rapids (IA): Karen Villeda

10/14

Class Visit, Prof. Merino: Antônio Xerxenesky

10/14

Dinner, the home of Sondra and David Leshtz: Rachel Rose

10/15

Class Visit, Senior College: Mookie Katigbak-Lacuesta

10/15

Class Visit, West High School, Iowa City: Samuel Kolawole

10/15

Class Visit, UI's Division of World Languages and Cultures: Samuel Kolawole

10/15

Class Visit, Senior College: Samuel Kolawole

10/15 – 10/21

Professional Travel, Boston: Yao Feng

10/16

Presentation, International Translation Workshop: Raed Al-Jishi, Kirill Azernyi, and Antônio Xerxenesky

10/16

Panel, Iowa City Public Library: "The Art of Mourning" with Nisah Haron, Birgül Oğuz, Rachel Rose, Aki Salmela, and Karen Villeda

10/16

Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series: Kim EuGene and Maung Yu Py

10/16

Interview, World Canvass: El Jones, Harris Khalique, and Homeira Qaderi

10/17 – 10/20

Professional Travel, Ireland: Sara Baume

10/18

Reading, Prairie Lights Reading: Kirill Azernyi and Rochelle Potkar

10/19

Presentation, International Literature Today: Anas Atakora, Maung Yu Py, Yael Neeman, and Armen of Armenia

10/20

Distance Learning Class: Samuel Kolawole and Antônio Xerxenesky

10/20

Reading, UI's Spanish Creative Writing MFA: Margarita Mateo Palmer and Antônio Xerxenesky

10/20

Presentation, IWP Cinematheque: Rochelle Potkar introduces *Trikal*

10/21

Reading, UI's African Studies Program: Anas Atakora and Samuel Kolawole

10/21

Lecture, Russian Poetry: Kirill Azernyi

10/21

Distance Learning Class: Samuel Kolawole and Antônio Xerxenesky

10/21 – 10/25

Reading, University of Wisconsin-Madison: Harris Khalique

10/22

Distance Learning Class ("A Room of One's Own"): Johanna Aitchison, Margarita Mateo Palmer, Rochelle Potkar and Karen Villeda

10/22

Class Visit, Kirkwood Community College-Cedar Rapids (IA): Anas Atakora, Matthew Cheng and Nisah Haron

10/22 – 10/25

Visit and Reading, University of Washington-Seattle: Nael Eltoukhy

10/22 – 10/27

Professional Travel, Saskatoon: El Jones

10/22

Lecture, UI's King Sejong Institute: Kim EuGene

10/22

Dinner, visting writer Etgar Keret (Israel): Yael Neeman

10/22

Class Visit, Senior College: Anete Kruusmäggi and Byambaa Sakhiya

10/23

Class Visit, UI's Department of French & Italian: Anas Atakora

10/23

Reading, Washington Public Library (IA): Kirill Azernyi

10/23

Panel, Iowa City Public Library: "Writers on Film" with Sara Baume, Polen Ly, Maung Yu Py, and Byambaa Sakhiya

10/23

Presentation, International Translation Workshop: Chung Wenyin, Nisah Haron, and Marie Silkeberg

10/24

IWP Potluck

10/25

Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series: Sara Baume and Yael Neeman

10/26

Presentation, International Literature Today: Guzal Begim, Michael Mendis, Rochelle Potkar, and Homeira Qaderi

10/26

Presentation, UI's Latino-Native American Cultural Center: Margarita Mateo Palmer, Karen Villeda, and Antônio Xerxenesky

10/26

Presentation, International Translation Workshop: Harris Khalique and Rachel Rose

10/27

Reading, Des Moines Social Club: Yu-Mei Balasingamchow, Teresa Präauer, and Antônio Xerxenesky

10/27

Panel, FilmScene: Yael Neeman

10/27

Presentation, IWP Cinematheque: Birgül Oğuz introduces *Once Upon a Time in Anatolia*

10/27 – 10/28

Reading, University of Texas-Austin: Harris Khalique

10/28

Reading, Iowa Writers' House: Johanna Aitchison, Rochelle Potkar, and Rachel Rose

10/28

Reception, US Bank: Mookie Katigbak-Lacuesta and Teresa Präauer

10/28

Visit, Figge Art Museum, Davenport (IA): Anas Atakora, Sara Baume, and Yael Neeman

10/29

Class Visit, Senior College: Raed Al-Jishi

10/29

Class Visit, Prof. McMullen: Yu-Mei Balasingamchow

10/29

Presentation, South East Junior High School: El Jones, Samuel Kolawole, and Karen Villeda

10/29 – 10/30

Professional Travel, Atlanta: Harris Khalique

10/30

Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series: Johanna Aitchison and Armen of Armenia

10/30

Performance, UI's Department of Dance: Kim EuGene, Anete Kruusmägi, Rochelle Potkar, Teresa Präauer, and Yao Feng

10/31

IWP Special Screening: Polen Ly and Marie Silkeberg

11/01 – 11/03

Visit, University of Massachusetts-Amherst: El Jones, Rochelle Potkar, Byambaa Sakhiya, and Homeira Qaderi

11/01 – 11/02

Performance, Portland Stage Company (ME): Rochelle Potkar, Homeira Qaderi, and Byambaa Sakhiya

11/01

Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series: Rachel Rose and Antônio Xerxenesky

11/02

Farewell Party, The Mill

11/02

Presentation, International Literature Today: Raed Al-Jishi, Yu-Mei Balasingamchow, Kim EuGene, and Anete Kruusmägi

11/02 – 11/06

Professional Travel, Los Angeles: Polen Ly

11/03

Interview, World Canvass: Yu-Mei Balasingamchow, Margarita Mateo Palmer, and Michael Mendis

9/27 – 10/01

End of Residency Travel: residents visit Washington, D.C. and New York City

11/04

Performance, Company E Dance (D.C.)

11/04

Workshop, Split This Rock (D.C.): El Jones

11/05

Reading, Writers in the School, PEN/Faulkner Foundation (D.C.): Yu-Mei Balasingamchow

11/05

Reading, Library of Congress (D.C.): Nael Eltoukhy, Harris Khalique, Margarita Mateo Palmer and Birgül Oğuz

11/06

Reading, Library of Congress (D.C.): Anas Atakora, Karen Villeda and Antônio Xerxenesky

11/06

Reading, Writers in the School, PEN/Faulkner Foundation (D.C.): El Jones, Samuel Kolawole and Armen of Armenia

11/09

Reading, Poets House (New York City): Johanna Aitchison, Anas Atakora, Matthew Cheng, Marie Silkeberg and Yao Feng

Right: Homeira Qaderi (Afghanistan) was featured in the [Iowa Now](#) article “Finding her voice.” Below: Iowa Public Radio’s [River to River](#) covered the opening party (photo Britt Fowler).



FALL RESIDENTS IN THE NEWS

“Working to Make a Difference”

Karen Villeda (Mexico) and her Iowa-based outreach projects were featured in [Iowa Now](#).

“When Words Dance”

[The Daily Iowan](#) highlights the annual collaborative performance with the UI Department of Dance.

“International Poets in Conversation”

Christopher Merrill speaks with Harris Khalique (Pakistan) in a podcast from the [Poetry Foundation](#).

“Finding Direction in Film”

Polen Ly (Cambodia) discusses his unique journey to filmmaking with [Iowa Now](#).

“Micro Interview with Marie Silkeberg”

An interview with Marie Silkeberg (Sweden) was featured on the [Writing University’s website](#).

“Writing Rights: On the Freedom to Write Irresponsibly”

Sara Baume (Ireland) reflects on her time in the IWP residency in [The Irish Times](#).

Multimedia



The Writer’s Block: A Video Q&A with Birgül Oğuz (Turkey) and Armen of Armenia



Freedom to Express: Promotional video by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State



News from Home: Raed Anis Al-Jishi (Saudi Arabia), Kirill Azernyi (Russia), Matthew Cheng (Hong Kong), El Jones (Canada), Nisah Haron (Malaysia)

RESIDENCY OUTREACH



Left: IWP Associate Director Hugh Ferrer leads a Chinese-English creative writing workshop (photo Ye Wei).

Below: Matthew Cheng, Hualing Nieh Engle, Chung Wenyin, and Yunxia Chu after the screening of *One Tree Three Lives* (photo Zhang Yan).



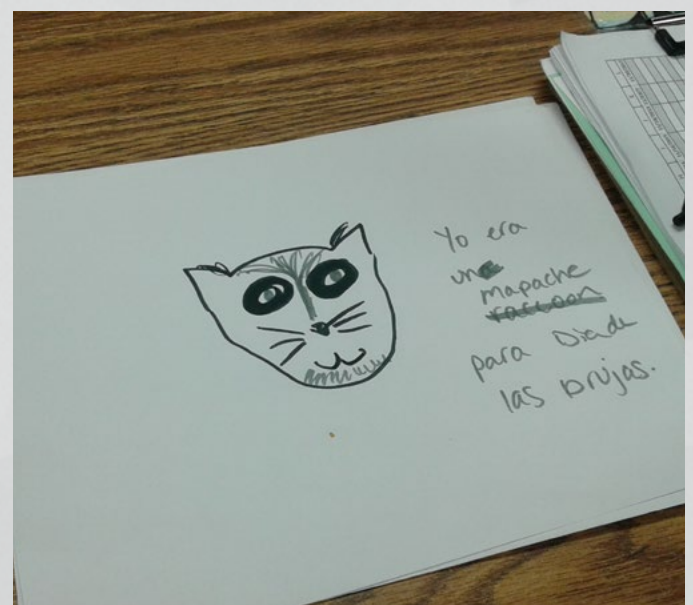
Chinese Student Engagement Projects at the University of Iowa

The largest segment of the University of Iowa's international student population hails from China. In 2015 the IWP began programming to connect this growing student group with the IWP's historical ties to Chinese-language literature.

In October, the IWP screened the film *One Tree Three Lives* in the Iowa Memorial Union. Directed by Angie Chen, this documentary chronicles the life of the IWP's co-founder, the Chinese-Taiwanese-American writer Hualing Nieh Engle. 2015 Fall Residents Chung Wenyin (Taiwan) and Matthew Cheng (Hong Kong) offered introductory comments. Hualing Nieh Engle was in attendance, alongside friends and family, Fall Residents, UI students, and Iowa City community members.

In November, IWP Associate Director Hugh Ferrer and UI PhD candidate Adrienne Rose led a Chinese-English creative writing workshop. Five Chinese international students at UI – both undergraduate and graduate students, studying disciplines ranging from mathematics to English – participated and discussed how narratives operate and how intended audience can affect a work's structure. During the workshop, the students wrote short pieces of prose about Iowa City in both English and Chinese, and some self-translated their own work.

Reaching Iowa's Spanish Speakers



2015 Fall Residency Outreach Fellow led a workshop at the Spanish Immersion program at Lemme Elementary School in Iowa City.

INDIVIDUAL RESIDENT EVENTS

Johanna Aitchison (poet; New Zealand)

Participation courtesy of Creative New Zealand



9/17
Performance, Global Express

9/18
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

9/30
Class Visit, Bard Early College, New Orleans

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/8
Class Visit, Senior College

10/12
Presentation, International Literature Today

10/22
Distance Learning Class ("A Room of One's Own")

10/28
Reading, Iowa Writers' House

10/30
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

11/9
Reading, Poets House, New York City

Raed Anis Al-Jishi (poet, translator; Saudi Arabia)

Participation courtesy of the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh



9/3
Asian American Writers' Workshop, New York City

9/12
Reception, UI's English Department

9/17
Visit, UI's Center for the Book

9/23-9/25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: Seattle

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/9
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

10/9
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

10/13
Middle East Writers Reading

10/16
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

10/29
Class Visit, Senior College

11/2
Presentation, International Literature Today

11/4
Performance, Company E Dance, D.C.

Anas Atakora (fiction and nonfiction writer, poet; Togo/Canada)

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



9/11
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

9/11
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: Seattle

10/9
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

10/19
Presentation, International Literature Today

10/21
Reading, UI's African Studies Program

10/22
Class Visit, Kirkwood Community College-Cedar Rapids

10/23
Class Visit, UI's French & Italian Department

10/28
Reading, Figge Art Museum, Davenport (IA)

11/6
Reading, Library of Congress, D.C.

11/9
Reading, Poets House, New York City

Kirill Timurovich Azernyi (fiction writer; Russia)

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



9/11
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

9/12
Reception, UI's English Department

9/17
Visit, UI's Center for the Book

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: Seattle

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/12
Presentation, International Literature Today

10/16
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

10/18
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

10/21
Lecture, Russian Poetry

10/23
Reading, Washington Public Library (IA)

Yu-Mei Balasingamchow (fiction and nonfiction writer; Singapore)

Participation courtesy of the Singapore National Arts Council



Photo by Thomas Langdon

9/3
Asian American Writers' Workshop, New York City

9/4
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

9/18
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

9/23-9/25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

9/28
Class Visit and Reading, New Orleans Center for Creative Arts

9/30
Class Visit, Bard Early College, New Orleans

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/13
Presentation, IWP Cinematheque

10/27
Reading, Des Moines Social Club

10/29
Class Visit, Prof. McMullen's Class

11/2
Presentation, International Literature Today

11/3
Interview, World Canvass

11/3
Reading, Writers in the School, PEN/Faulkner Foundation, D.C.

Sara Baume (fiction writer; Ireland)

Participation courtesy of the William B. Quarton Fund through the Cedar Rapids Community Foundation



9/13
Reading, Anthology Reading Series

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: Seattle

9/30
Reading, Hugo House, Seattle

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/5
Presentation, International Literature Today

10/16
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

10/17-20
Professional Travel, Ireland

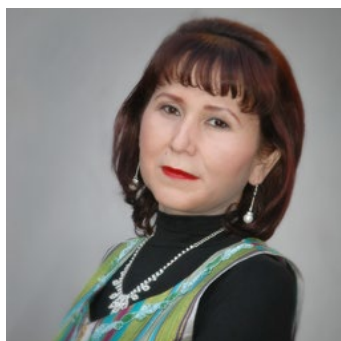
10/23
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

10/25
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

10/28
Reading, Figge Art Museum, Davenport (IA)

Guzal Begim (poet, translator; Uzbekistan)

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



9/11
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: Seattle

10/23
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

10/26
Presentation, International Literature Today

Matthew Cheng (editor, poet; Hong Kong)

Participation courtesy of the Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation, Hong Kong



8/31
Presentation, International Literature Today

9/3
Asian American Writers' Workshop, New York City

9/17
Performance, Global Express

9/18
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

9/18
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

9/19
Presentation, UI's Center for Asian and Pacific Studies

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

9/30
Class Visit, Bard Early College, New Orleans

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/9
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

10/18
Screening, Hualing Engle Documentary *One Tree, Three Lives*

10/22
Class Visit, Kirkwood Community College-Cedar Rapids (IA)

11/9
Reading, Poets House, New York City

Chung Wenyin (fiction writer; Taiwan)

Participation courtesy of the Ministry of Culture, Taiwan



9/4
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

9/18
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

9/19
Presentation, UI's Center for Asian and Pacific Studies

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: Seattle

10/5
Presentation, International Literature Today

10/18
Screening, Hualing Engle Documentary *One Tree, Three Lives*

10/23
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

Nael Eltoukhy (fiction writer, translator; Egypt)

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



Photo by Thomas Langdon

8/28

Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

9/14

Presentation, International Literature Today

9/22

Class Visit, Prof. Kruger

9/23-25

Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1

Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

9/30

Class Visit, Bard Early College, New Orleans

10/2

Panel, Iowa City Public Library

10/9

Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

10/11

Community Event, Dane Farm Party

10/13

Middle East Writers Reading

10/22-24

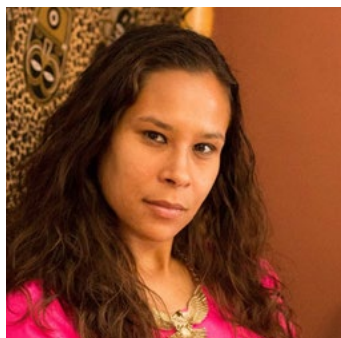
Visit and Reading, University of Washington-Seattle

11/5

Reading, Library of Congress, D.C.

El Jones (poet; Canada)

Participation courtesy of the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa



9/10

Visit, Cornell College, Mount Vernon (IA)

9/20

Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

9/23-25

Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1

Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

10/12

Presentation, International Literature Today

10/16

Interview, World Canvass

10/22-27

Professional Travel, Saskatoon

10/29

Presentation, South East Junior High School, Iowa City

11/1-3

Visit, University of Massachusetts-Amherst

11/4

Workshop, Split This Rock, D.C.

11/6

Reading, Writers in the School, PEN/Faulkner Foundation, D.C.

10/2

Panel, Iowa City Public Library

Mookie Katigbak-Lacuesta (nonfiction writer, poet; Philippines)

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



8/31

Presentation, International Literature Today

9/6

Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

9/17

Performance, Global Express

9/23-25

Visit, Chicago

9/25

Reading, Poetry Foundation, Chicago

9/27-10/1

Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

9/30

Class Visit, Bard Early College, New Orleans

10/3

Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/9

Panel, Iowa City Public Library

10/15

Class Visit, Senior College

10/28

Reading, US Bank Reception

Harris Khalique (nonfiction writer, poet; Pakistan)

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



8/28
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

9/4
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

9/10-14
Visit, City of Asylum, Pittsburgh

9/12
Rehearsal, Jazz Poetry Concert, Pittsburgh

9/13
Reading, Jazz Poetry Concert, Pittsburgh

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/24
Interview, Poetry Foundation, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: Seattle

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/5
Presentation, International Literature Today

10/7-10
Reading, University of California-Berkeley

10/16
Interview, World Canvass

10/17
Interview, On the Map Series

10/21-25
Reading, University of Wisconsin-Madison

10/21
Distance Learning Class

10/26
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

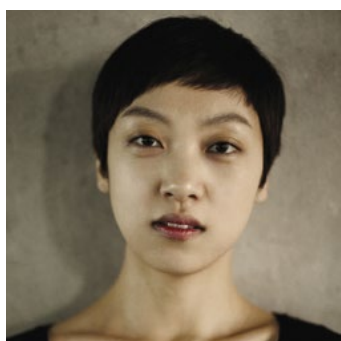
10/27-28
Reading, University of Texas-Austin

11/4
Performance, Company E Dance, D.C.

11/5
Reading, Library of Congress, D.C.

Kim EuGene (fiction writer; South Korea)

Participation courtesy of Arts Council Korea



9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

9/30
Class Visit, Bard Early College, New Orleans

10/7
Lecture, UI's King Sejong Institute

10/9
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

10/16
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

10/22
Lecture and Reading, UI's King Sejong Institute

10/30
Performance, UI's Department of Dance

11/2
Presentation, International Literature Today

11/4
Performance, Company E Dance, D.C.

Samuel Kolawole (fiction and nonfiction writer, poet; Nigeria)

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



9/4
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

9/11
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

9/12
Reception, UI's English Department

9/17
Performance, Global Express

9/17
Visit, UI's Center for the Book

9/21
Presentation, International Literature Today

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

9/28
Class Visit and Reading, New Orleans Center for Creative Arts

9/30
Class Visit, Bard Early College, New Orleans

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/9
Presentation, IWP Cinematheque

10/15
Class Visit, West High School, Iowa City

10/15
Class Visit, UI's Division of World Languages and Cultures

10/15
Class Visit, Senior College

10/20
Distance Learning Class

10/21
Reading, UI's African Studies Program

10/29
Presentation, South East Junior High School, Iowa City

11/6
Reading, PEN/Faulkner Foundation, D.C.

Anete Kruusmägi (fiction writer, poet; Estonia)

Participation courtesy of CEC ArtsLink



10/9
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

11/4
Performance, Company E Dance, D.C.

10/11
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

10/22
Class Visit, Senior College

10/30
Performance, UI's Department of Dance

11/2
Presentation, International Literature Today

Polen Ly (screenwriter; Cambodia)

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



9/10
Visit, Cornell College, Mount Vernon (IA)

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/25
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

9/25
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

9/28
Reading, Baskerville Arts, New Orleans

9/30
Class Visit, Bard Early College, New Orleans

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/13
Presentation, IWP Cinematheque

10/13
Class Visit, Des Moines Central Academy

10/23
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

10/31
Special Film Screening

11/2-6
Professional Travel, Los Angeles

Margarita Mateo Palmer (critic, essayist, novelist; Cuba)

Participation courtesy of the U.S. Embassy in Havana and the Ludwig Foundation



Photo by Thomas Langdon

9/1
Class Visit

9/12
Reception, UI's English Department

9/13
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

9/14
Presentation, International Literature Today

9/18
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: Seattle

9/30
Reading, Hugo House, Seattle

10/2
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/13
Class Visit, Kirkwood Community College-Cedar Rapids (IA)

10/20
Reading, UI's Spanish Creative Writing MFA

10/22
Distance Learning Class ("A Room of One's Own")

10/26
Reading, UI's Latino-Native American Cultural Center

11/3
Interview, World Canvass

11/5
Reading and Interview, Library of Congress, D.C.

11/6-7
Class Visit, Hampshire College-Amherst (MA)

Maung Yu Py (poet; Burma)

Participation courtesy of the *Open Society Institute*



9/3
Asian American Writers' Workshop,
New York City

9/18
Class Visit, International Translation
Workshop

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: Seattle

9/30
Reading, South East Asia Center,
University of Washington-Seattle

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/11
Reading, Anthology Reading Series

10/16
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading
Series

10/19
Presentation, International Literature
Today

Michael Mendis (fiction writer; Sri Lanka)

Participation courtesy of the *Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State*



9/17
Performance, Global Express

9/20
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: New
Orleans

9/30
Class Visit, Bard Early College, New
Orleans

10/2
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

10/26
Presentation, International Literature
Today

11/3
Interview, World Canvass

Yael Neeman (fiction writer; Israel)

Participation courtesy of the *United States-Israeli Education Foundation*



9/4
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: New
Orleans

9/30
Class Visit, Bard Early College, New
Orleans

10/6
Presentation, IWP Cinematheque

10/11
Reading, Anthology Reading Series

10/13
Middle East Writers Reading

10/19
Presentation, International Literature
Today

10/25
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

10/27
Presentation, FilmScene

10/28
Reading, Figge Art Museum, Davenport
(IA)

“I truly felt that we were in a place where writers were cherished and welcomed. It was a unique experience to be welcomed in that way by local writers and people in Iowa City.”
—Rachel Rose (Canada)

Nisah Haron (fiction and nonfiction writer, translator; Malaysia)

Participation courtesy of the *Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka*



9/3

Asian American Writers Workshop meeting, New York City

9/12

Reception, UI's English Department

9/19

Presentation, UI's Center for Asian and Pacific Studies

9/21

Presentation, International Literature Today

9/23-25

Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1

Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

10/3

Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/9

Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

10/10

Class Visit, Iowa State University and Drake University (IA)

10/11

Reading, Anthology Reading Series

10/16

Panel, Iowa City Public Library

10/22

Class Visit, Kirkwood Community College-Cedar Rapids (IA)

10/23

Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

10/26

Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

Armen of Armenia (fiction writer; Armenia)

Participation courtesy of the *Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State*



9/12

Reception, UI's English Department

9/17

Performance, Global Express

9/18

Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

9/23-25

Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1

Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

9/28

Class Visit and Reading, New Orleans Center for Creative Arts

9/30

Class Visit, Bard Early College, New Orleans

10/19

Presentation, International Literature Today

10/29

Class Visit, Senior College

10/30

Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

11/6

Reading, Writers in the School, PEN/Faulkner Foundation, D.C.

Birgül Oğuz (fiction and nonfiction writer; Turkey)

Participation courtesy of the *Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State*



Photo by Sançar Dalman

8/30

Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

9/12

Reception, UI's English Department

9/17

Performance, Global Express

9/21

Presentation, International Literature Today

9/22

Class Visit, Prof. Kruger

9/23-25

Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1

Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

9/30

Class Visit, Bard Early College, New Orleans

10/10

Reception, Prof. Aron Aji's home

10/13

Class Visit, Des Moines Central Academy

10/13

Middle East Writers Reading

10/16

Panel, Iowa City Public Library

10/27

Presentation, IWP Cinematheque

11/5

Reading, Library of Congress, D.C.

Rochelle Potkar (fiction writer, poet; India)

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



Photo by Thomas Langdon

9/3
Asian American Writers' Workshop
meeting, New York City

9/13
Reading, Anthology Reading Series

9/17
Performance, Global Express

9/17
Visit, UI's Center for the Book

9/18
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

9/19
Presentation, UI's Center for Asian and
Pacific Studies

9/22
Presentation, IC Foreign Relations Council

9/23-9/25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: Seattle

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/18
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

10/20
Presentation, IWP Cinematheque

10/22
Distance Learning Class ("A Room of
One's Own")

10/26
Presentation, International Literature
Today

10/28
Reading, Iowa Writers' House

10/30
Performance, UI's Department of
Dance

11/1-2
Theater Performance, Portland Stage
Company (ME)

11/3
Visit, University of Massachusetts-
Amherst

Teresa Präauer (fiction writer, poet, visual artist; Austria)

Participation courtesy of the Max Kade Foundation

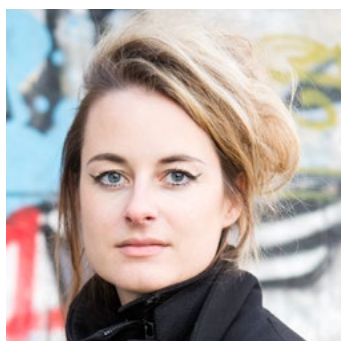


Photo by Katharina Manojlovic

8/31
Presentation, International Literature
Today

9/8
Presentation, IWP Cinematheque

9/11
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

9/17
Visit, UI's Center for the Book

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: Seattle

9/30
Workshop, Hugo House, Seattle

10/2
Class Visit, International Translation
Workshop

10/7
Class Visit, Grinnell College (IA)

10/8
Class Visit, Senior College

10/11
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

10/23
Presentation, IWP Cinematheque

10/27
Reading, Des Moines Social Club

10/28
Reading, US Bank Reception

10/30
Performance, UI's Department of
Dance

Homeira Qaderi (fiction writer; Afghanistan)

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



9/3
Asian American Writers' Workshop
meeting, New York City

9/12
Reception, UI's English Department

9/17
Visit, UI's Center for the Book

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: Seattle

9/30
Reading, Hugo House, Seattle

10/2
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/16
Interview, World Canvass

10/23
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading
Series

10/26
Presentation, International Literature
Today

11/1-2
Theater Performance, Portland Stage
Company (ME)

11/3
Visit, University of Massachusetts-
Amherst

11/4
Performance, Company E Dance, D.C.

Rachel Rose (nonfiction writer, poet; Canada)

Participation courtesy of the British Columbia Arts Council and Canada Council



Photo by Ayelet Tsabari

9/12
Reception, UI's English Department

9/17
Performance, Global Express

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/5
Presentation, International Literature Today

10/6-10
Festival Reading, Montreal

10/14
Presentation, Iowa City Foreign Relations Council

10/16
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

10/26
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

10/28
Reading, Iowa Writers' House

11/1
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

“It just made me stronger to go on the way I do. Do my writing. Share something. Have my eyes open.”
—Teresa Präauer (Austria)

Byambaa Sakhiya (filmmaker, screenwriter; Mongolia)

Participation courtesy of the U.S. Embassy in Ulaanbatar



9/1
Presentation, IWP Cinematheque

9/23-9/25
Visit, Chicago

9/25
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

9/25
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

9/30
Class Visit, Bard Early College, New Orleans

10/9
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

10/22
Class Visit, Senior College

10/23
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

11/1-2
Theater Performance, Portland Stage Company (ME)

11/3
Visit, University of Massachusetts-Amherst

Aki Salmela (fiction writer, poet; Finland)

Participation courtesy of an anonymous donation to the IWP



9/13
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

9/17
Performance, Global Express

9/17
Visit, UI's Center for the Book

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/25
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: Seattle

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/16
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

10/5
Presentation, International Literature Today

Marie Silkeberg (filmmaker, nonfiction writer, poet, translator; Sweden)

Participation courtesy of the Paul and Hualing Engle Fund



Photo by Cato Lein

9/6
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

9/12
Reception, UI's English Department

9/14
Presentation, International Literature Today

9/23
Class Visit, Prof. Kruger

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

9/28
Reading, Baskerville Arts, New Orleans

9/30
Class Visit, Bard Early College, New Orleans

10/2
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

10/6
Presentation, IWP Cinematheque

10/23
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

10/31
Special Film Screening

11/9
Reading, Poets House, New York City

Karen Villeda (fiction writer, poet, translator; Mexico) 2015 IWP Outreach Fellow

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



Photo by Tim Schoon

8/30
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

9/23-9/25
Visit, Chicago

9/25
Reading, Poetry Foundation, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: New Orleans

9/28
Class Visit and Reading, New Orleans Center for Creative Arts

9/30
Class Visit, Bard Early College, New Orleans

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/7
Class Visit, Grinnell College (IA)

10/12
Presentation, International Literature Today

10/14
Class Visit, Kirkwood Community College-Cedar Rapids (IA)

10/16
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

10/16
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

10/20
Reading, UI's Spanish Creative Writing MFA

10/23
Distance Learning Class

10/26
Reading, UI's Latino-Native American Cultural Center

10/29
Presentation, South East Junior High School, Iowa City

11/6
Interview, Library of Congress, D.C.

Antônio Xerxenesky (fiction writer, translator; Brazil)

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



8/31
Presentation, International Literature Today

9/11
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

9/12
Reception, UI's English Department

9/13
Reading, Anthology Reading Series

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: Seattle

9/30
Reading and Workshop, Hugo House, Seattle

10/2
Class Visit, International Translation Workshop

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/7
Class Visit, Prof. Merino

10/14
Class Visit, Prof. Merino

10/20
Reading, UI's Spanish Creative Writing MFA

10/20
Distance Learning Class

10/26
Presentation, UI's Latino-Native American Cultural Center

10/27
Reading, Des Moines Social Club

11/1
Reading, Prairie Lights Reading Series

11/6
Interview, Library of Congress, D.C.

Yao Feng (poet, scholar, translator; Macau)

Participation courtesy of the Paul and Hualing Engle Fund



9/11
Panel, Iowa City Public Library

9/17
Performance, Global Express

9/18
Reading, Shambaugh House Reading Series

9/19
Presentation, UI's Center for Asian and Pacific Studies

9/21
Presentation, International Literature Today

9/23-25
Visit, Chicago

9/27-10/1
Mid-Residency Travel Period: Seattle

10/3
Panel, Iowa City Book Festival

10/15-21
Professional Travel, Boston

10/30
Performance, UI's Department of Dance

11/9
Reading, Poets House, New York City



Clockwise: IWP writers at the University of Washington-Seattle; Antônio Xerxenesky (Brazil) reads at Iowa City's Prairie Lights Bookstore; Sara Baume (Ireland) reads at the Hugo House in Seattle. Karen Villeda (Mexico) and Mookie Katigbak-Lacuesta (Philippines) before their reading at the Poetry Foundation in Chicago (photos Kathleen Maris Paltrineri).



“The greatest part was the cultural exchange, I believe. I learned so much about Togo, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Finland, almost as much as I learned about the US. This may not have a direct impact on my writing, but it certainly shapes who I am, and therefore has a creative impact.”

—Antônio Xerxenesky (Brazil)

Students in the Armenia/Turkey session say goodbye at the conclusion of the program.



Between the Lines

In the summer of 2015, [Between the Lines](#) grew again, to include more countries and more students in two sessions of this unique creative writing and cultural exchange program. The first session brought together 35 students hailing from Russia, Arabic-speaking countries, China, and the U.S. A special second session united 18 students from Armenia, Turkey, and the U.S. Both sessions focused on the theme “Peace and the Writing Experience” as a way to examine the possibilities for literature and writing to foster empathy, cross-cultural understanding, and a shared concern for the human condition.

In both sessions, weekdays started at Shambaugh House, with a morning meeting for all participants. Students then went to their world literature class, taught on rotation by the visiting faculty—poets and writers from the U.S. and abroad—and touching on topics that ranged from Turkish ekphrastic poetry to ancient Arabic epics. In the afternoons, students developed their own creative writing skills in workshops conducted in their native languages. They also explored new genres: BTL Russia/Arabic World featured a digital storytelling workshop by Timothy David Orme, a slam poetry session with Dianna Harris from Chicago’s Louder Than A Bomb program, a playwriting workshop with BTL Undergraduate Research Fellow Alyssa Conkinis, and a collaborative translation project with translator Genevieve Guzman. BTL Armenia/Turkey featured similar opportunities: a digital storytelling workshop with poet and web developer Lauren Haldeman, a two-session translation project with Aron Aji, the director of the University of Iowa’s MFA in Literary Translation, a two-day playwriting and peace workshop with distinguished playwright Catherine Filloux, and a slam poetry workshop and reading at Prairie Lights with Kevin Coval, founder of Louder Than A Bomb. Finally, in collaboration with the Iowa Young Writers Studio and Iowa Youth Writing Project, students from both sessions shared their own work at open mic events at the High Ground Café.

BTL Russia/Arabic World Participants

INTERNATIONAL

Orwa Abu Mukh (Israel)
Hajir Al Zadjali (Oman)
Hussein Al-Mshtawi (Iraq)
Reem Badr (Egypt)
Shunu Baydalakov (Russia)
Julie Chernova (Russia)
Mohammed El Wahabi (Morocco)
Maria Grigoryeva (Russia)
Jenan Hasan (Bahrain)
Daria Ivanova (Russia)
Olga Kadochnikova (Russia)
Anna Kondratyuk (Russia)
Anastasia Krizhanovskaya (Russia)
Nada Makhoul (Tunisia)
Alice Morozova (Russia)
Rana Mourtaja (Gaza, Palestinian Territories)
Elizaveta Shutova (Russia)
Mikhail Sokolov (Russia)
Jana Tabet (Lebanon)
Junnan Tu (China)
Jiayi Wang (China)

AMERICANS

Weston Clark (IL)
Margaret Davey (NE)
Hannah Hall (NJ)
Abby Holmes (MO)
Somi Jun (CA)
Deryn Mierlak (NJ)
Brandon Pahl (IA)
Nicola Preuss (LA)
Sarah Saltzman (CA)
Annika Schlesinger (MO)
Isabella Simonetti (NY)
Jamie Solomon (MD)
Paul Stanton (AZ)
Madeleine Yates (LA)

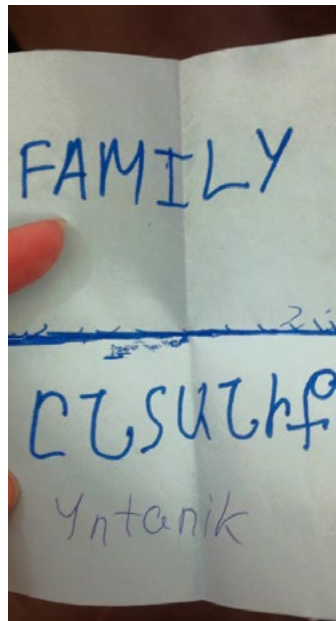
CHAPERONES

Salah Fokra (Israel)
Nesma Gewily (Egypt)
Irina Kuznetsova (Russia)

INSTRUCTORS

Karim Alrawi (Canada)
Alisa Ganieva (Russia)
Kiki Petrosino (US)

BTL is all about making connections. As one participant wrote about the Armenia/Turkey session: “BTL, July 30th [our final day], the borders were destroyed.” Such breakthroughs occur not only because of classes, workshops, and events, but also through the small moments of exchange: a Russian student teaching a student from Israel the Russian alphabet on a bus ride to a Ramadan dinner at the Islamic Center of Cedar Rapids, an Armenian student giving a Turkish student a pomegranate necklace—a symbol of fertility and abundance—at the opening orientation of BTL Armenia Turkey, and of course the many tears shed at the conclusion of both sessions. Mutual understanding was also built into student-led “101” events, which offered new glimpses of literary and cultural traditions; a literary scavenger hunt and Fourth of July celebrations at the Jazz Festival in Iowa City for BTL Russia/Arabic World; day trips to Davenport and Maquoketa Caves State Park; and an afternoon at a community kitchen during the Armenia/Turkey session, with students, faculty, and staff cooking a variety of traditional dishes unique to each culture.



BTL Armenia/Turkey Participants

INTERNATIONAL

Melis Akbaş (Turkey)
Lianna Arakelyan (Armenia)
Nur Başçı (Turkey)
Avetis Harutyunyan (Armenia)
Narine Harutyunyan (Armenia)
Berfin Kazaklı (Turkey)
Büşra Kevran (Turkey)
Onur Öztemir (Turkey)
Meri Sharoyan (Armenia)
Mariam Yeghiazaryan (Armenia)

AMERICANS

Karlyn Boens (IL)
Megan Bott (LA)
Jayde Fernandez (HI)
Gwyneth Forsythe (IA)
Erica Guo (CA)
Naomi Shilyansky (IA)
Annabel Shu (GA)
Sydni Wells (FL)

CHAPERONES

Arevik Ashkharoyan (Armenia)
Birgül Oğuz (Turkey)

INSTRUCTORS

Armen of Armenia (Armenia)
Nazmi Ağıl (Turkey)
Mary Hickman (US)

Clockwise: Participants at the Prairie Lights Bookstore; a translation from the Armenia/Turkey session; Karlyn Boens performs at Prairie Lights Bookstore; students relax on Shambaugh House's porch.



Teams in Cape Town and Iowa City answer audience questions (photo Kathleen Maris Paltrineri).



“What a fantastic evening. Books give you wings, theatre allows you to fly. Thank you @UIIWP @afaiCTN #bookw #ilovetheatre.”
—@curiousgurl via Twitter

Book Wings

Launched in 2012, [Book Wings](#) is a collaborative theater project designed to bring together writers, actors, directors, and new media professionals from the United States and partner countries in a virtual environment. Previous iterations connected with theaters in Russia, China, and Iraq. The 2015 Book Wings featured Cape Town, South Africa.

In celebration of the 25th anniversary of Nelson Mandela’s release from prison, this year’s Book Wings commissioned six original plays—three by South African playwrights, three by U.S. playwrights—on the theme of “release,” reflecting the diversity of the two nations’ respective literary traditions.

Audience members from around the world watched the performance online. With nearly 200 audience members in Iowa City and Cape Town, joined by hundreds watching the performance via livestream, the performance was seen in a total of 32 countries. Official watch parties were held at the University of York (UK) and the University of Ghana at Legon.

Special thanks to our partners, including the University of Cape Town, Artscape Theatre Centre, U.S. Consulate General Cape Town, African Arts Institute, UI Department of Theatre Arts, UI Information Technology Services, UITV, and the UI’s Writing University.

COMMISSIONED PLAYS

The Disappointment

By Keith Josef Adkins

Sicawa Street

By Katori Hall

Invisible Eden

By Mandla Mbothwe

Blood Pastoral

By Wessel Pretorius

Waiting for Marcel

By Peter Ullian

What We Wish For

By Mike van Graan



Clockwise: A University of Iowa alumna watches the livestream via the Writing University; Hosts Christopher Merrill and Mark Fleishman (photo Kathleen Maris Paltrineri); Actress Niki-Charisse Franco in *The Disappointment* (photo Kathleen Maris Paltrineri); Cape Town audience members enjoy a reception after the performance.



“I’m watching people I know acting live on my iPad from halfway across the country. Technology and the arts are an inspiring team! #bookw.”

—@Kbethery via Twitter

Harry Leeds, an English Language Fellow, teaches a course based on *How Writers Write Poetry* 2015 in Pavlodar, Kazakhstan. Read more about Leeds' work on [Iowa Now](#).



Distance Learning

The [Distance Learning \(DL\) Program](#) encourages international access to education, dialogue, and community, especially in underserved regions. Through MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), open-application courses, outreach courses, and web-based exchanges, writers and readers are given forums and frameworks for sustained dialogue, fellowship, and cross-cultural understanding. Continually innovating, the DL Program has developed online classrooms that use live and recorded videos; synchronous and asynchronous text-based teaching discussions; peer feedback community structures; public domain text, audio, and video resources; and engagement via social media.

In 2015, the DL Program offered two creative writing MOOCs on three new online learning platforms on a trial basis and selected a platform for future MOOC delivery. Expanding on the successes of 2014 programming, the DL Program developed the writing-photography exchange Narrative Witness, and two open-application writing seminars; new programming included the creation of a course model to support creative expression and provide international community for aspiring women writers. The concept of asynchronous online workshops, pioneered in 2014, was refined for ongoing use throughout 2015, and a supporting structural element of video master classes and guest lectures was introduced. In order to provide opportunities for ongoing community expansion and cultural exchange, the DL Program's Facebook group "Distance Learning Alumni" was expanded to include alumni of all DL open-application courses, outreach courses, and exchanges. For the second year, the participants in the IWP's 2015 MOOCs continued their community discussions within the DL Program's "How Writers Write Poetry" and "How Writers Write Fiction" Facebook groups. Through the study of users' and instructors' experiences, DL continues to fine-tune programming design to create more accessible, educational, and exciting experiences for writing and literature students, educators, and enthusiasts worldwide.

2015 DISTANCE LEARNING COURSES

Spring

How Writers Write Poetry 2015 (MOOC)

A Room of One's Own: Developing the Female Authorial Voice (Amman, Jordan | Manama, Bahrain)

Summer

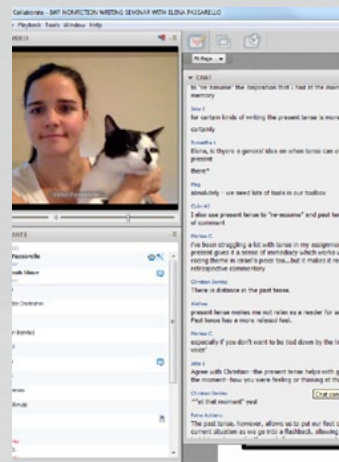
Nonfiction Writing Seminar with Elena Passarello

Nonfiction Writing Seminar with Amy Leach

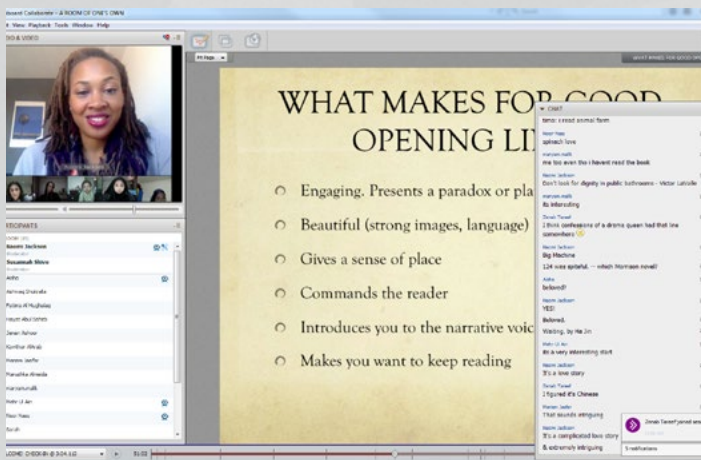
Narrative Witness, Indigenous Peoples: Australia-United States

Fall

How Writers Write Fiction 2015
(MOOC)



Clockwise: Christopher Merrill and Angela Flourney record a video lecture for How Writers Write Fiction 2015; Elena Passarello leads a live class session for a nonfiction creative writing seminar; Jeffrey Laubrey, an undergraduate research fellow, records a craft talk from Naomi Jackson (Photo Lindsay Marshall); and Naomi Jackson leads a class in A Room of One's Own.



“The universe of literary education you have created here has given me the most basic and the most important tools that I need. I don’t know whether I can be taught to write. But I have been taught how to approach writing. I have been taught how to approach - and better understand - writers. I have been shown how else to create, how else to read, to evaluate, to imagine. And I’m no longer alone.”

—Burcu, How Writers Write Fiction 2015 Participant



Program Mentors

Ahmad Amani
Muna Fadhil
Sarhang Hars
Alana Marie Levinson-LaBrosse
Dunya Mikhail
Sadek Mohammed
Soheil Najm

Lanterns of Hope

The youth poetry project [Lanterns of Hope](#) was launched in March of 2015 as a means of encouraging Iraqis ages 16 to 23 to make their voices heard and to creatively communicate their visions for the future of their country. Poetry submissions were solicited from youth living across Iraq, and seven distinguished poets—five Iraqis writing in Arabic and Kurdish, one Iranian writing in Kurdish and English, and one American writing in English and translating from the Kurdish—were engaged to mentor the emerging poets as they addressed the ways in which the world sees their country.

In total, 22 poems in Arabic, Kurdish, and English were chosen for the anthology, and the mentors guided the young authors through revisions. Each poem was then translated into the project's other two languages, so that the final volume could fully highlight the diversity of language and culture within Iraq. The poems have now been anthologized into an e-book, available on the IWP website starting in January 2016, and printed in a limited soft-cover edition. The beginning of 2016 will also see a recognition ceremony in Baghdad honoring all the participants and celebrating the anthology's publication.

Partnering with the IWP to sponsor this project was the Baghdad UNESCO City of Literature Steering Committee, in collaboration with the Iraqi House of Poetry, the Union of Iraqi Writers, the *Iraq Literary Review*, and the US Embassy in Baghdad.

There is no
Different name or place
You're in my heart
That is your geography
—Untitled, by Zanyar Omer Kamal

Translated from the Sorani Kurdish by Alana Marie Levinson-LaBrosse and Darya Najm

Jennifer Croft reads from *Homesick* in Ukraine (photo Kelly Bedeian).



Overseas Reading Tours

The IWP's [Overseas Reading and Lecture Tour program](#) provides a unique opportunity in select countries around the world for American writers to learn from their international counterparts, while sharing their knowledge and experience with students and educators. This year's cultural diplomacy missions included trips to Venezuela, Colombia, and Ukraine. From capital cities to each country's farthest corners, the writers gave lectures, led workshops, spoke on panels, and joined roundtable discussions. In all, the writers were guest lecturers at thirteen universities spread across three countries and seven cities; one group was featured at the Venezuela Festival de la Lectura; the wide range of subjects is reflected in panel topics such as "Literature and War" (Ukraine) and "Do Creative Writing Programs Homogenize Literature?" (Colombia). In each country the Americans were immersed in local culture, and had a chance to explore history and heritage with guided visits to places such as the Botero Museum in Medellín, the Shevchenko Museum in Kyiv, and a literary tour focused on Gabriel García Márquez's Cartagena.

2015 Tours

VENEZUELA

Stephanie Elizondo Griest
(Nonfiction, Memoir)
Jennifer Elise Foerster (Poetry)
Christopher Merrill (Poetry,
Nonfiction)

COLOMBIA

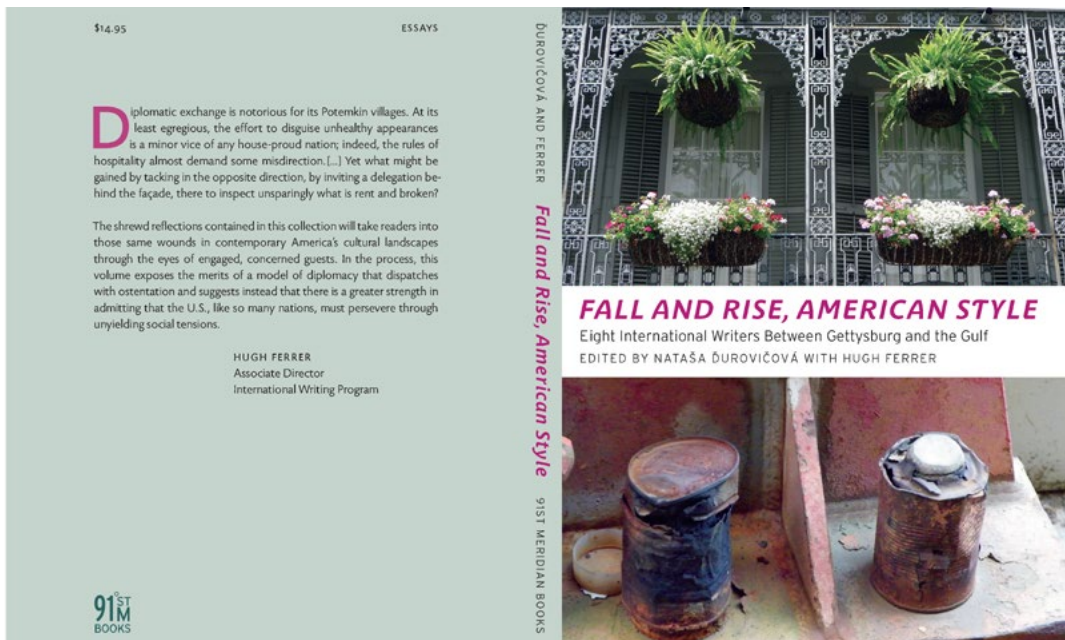
Luis Alberto Urrea (Fiction,
Poetry)
José Skinner (Fiction,
Translation)
Stephanie Elizondo Griest
(Nonfiction, Memoir)
Joan Naviyuk Kane (Poetry)
Christopher Merrill (Poetry, Non-
Fiction)

UKRAINE

Jeffrey Brown (Journalist, Poet)
Jennifer Croft (Fiction,
Translator)
Elliot Ackermann (Fiction)
Joan Naviyuk Kane (Poetry)
Christopher Merrill (Poetry,
Nonfiction)

Below left: Stephanie Griest reads from her book in Cartagena, Colombia.
Below right: Joan Naviyuk Kane leads a poetry workshop in Ukraine (photos Kelly Bedeian).





Publications

The IWP publishes original work in a range of formats: hardbound literary, digital literary, and audio-visual.

The [91st Meridian Books](#) series at [Autumn Hill Books](#) produced *Fall and Rise, American Style: Eight International Writers Between Gettysburg and the Gulf*, a collection of essays on America's persistent capacity for recovery from crisis, written in the wake of the program's [2011 US study tour](#). And we were honored that NSDP Publishers in Yangon (Myanmar) wanted to publish *A Knot Is Where You Tie A Rope*, an anthology of two decades' worth of writing by IWP's Burmese participants.

The program's journal, *91st Meridian*, published [a new issue](#) of poetry and prose from around the world. And translators among the 2015 IWP participants were extensively interviewed for a forthcoming issue of [Exchanges](#), edited by the MFA_LT students at UI.

In addition, the collected work of the 2014 Distance Learning exchange, Narrative Witness: Caracas-Sarajevo, was published on [iwpcollections.org](#).

New video material—all of which can be seen on the [IWP Media Gallery](#)—include

- the “On the Map” series of literary interviews with ten of this year's Fall Residency participants;
- the collage “News from Home,” in which five writers talk about keeping up—or not—with their local scene;
- *The Legend in My Heart*, a feature-length document of IWP's 2014 reading tour in China focused on art-making with disability communities.

IWP Director Christopher Merrill at the Karachi Literature Festival with IWP alumni from both India and Pakistan. From left to right: Bina Shah (Pakistan), H.M. Naqvi (Pakistan), Sridala Swami (India), Christopher Merrill (U.S.), Kavary Nambisan (India), and Shandana Minhas (Pakistan).



Silk Routes: Heritage, Trade, Practice

[Silk Routes: Heritage, Trade, Practice](#) is a three-year program that began with a symposium in the Maldives and will conclude in 2016 with a special installment of the IWP's summer writing camp, *Between the Lines*. 2015 marked the midway point. The focus was on developing the Silk Routes website and on the program of mini-grants that are spurring cultural development at a grassroots level.

MINI-GRANTS

Seven mini-grants have been issued to writers from six countries in order to promote local creative communities and foster stronger cultural networks between countries in Asia and the Middle East—along the historic Silk Routes. Highlights include: in Pakistan, an IWP reunion at the Karachi Literature Festival, of Christopher Merrill, with alumni Shandana Minhas and Bilal Tanweer, that also brought two Indian writers to Karachi for two weeks; in Nepal, several successful translations by *La.Lit Magazine* as part of an ongoing project of transcribing oral stories from remote regions of the country before the stories are lost; and in Sri Lanka, a forthcoming book from writer Ameena Hussein who chronicled the 14th century travels of Ibn Battuta in that country.

To further promote creative writing and to monitor the success of each in-country grant, the Silk Routes program organized mentor trips. In addition to Christopher Merrill's trip to Pakistan and the Karachi Book Festival, IWP staff member Lisa Daily traveled with distinguished American writer and mentor Ron Carlson to visit the grant projects in both India and Sri Lanka. Plans for a trip to Nepal and Kyrgyzstan were postponed due to the tragedy of the Nepalese earthquake in April 2015. For

a full description of the mini-grant projects, visit the [IWP website](#).

Humanising Medicine Through Past and Present (India)

Kavery Nambisan and Sridala Swami

Trailing Ibn Battuta: a Journey through Modern Sri Lanka Revisiting Sites Described by Ibn Battuta (Sri Lanka)

Ameena Hussein

La.Lit: The Translation Series (Nepal)

Suvani Singh and Rabi Thapa

Recording Oral Folk Narratives along the Silk Routes (Nepal)

Amma Raj Joshi

Silk Routes Residency (Pakistan)

Shandana Minhas and Bilal Tanweer

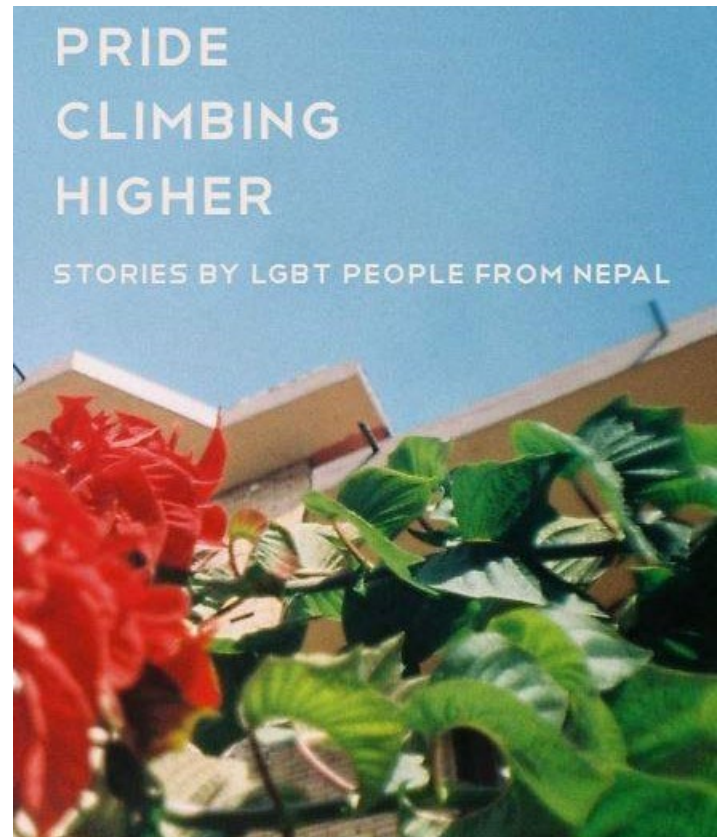
Short Story Competition (Afghanistan)

Farkhonda Rajabe

Djailoo Reading (Kyrgyzstan)

Jamby Djusubalieva

Several translations from the La.Lit mini-grant with Rabi Thapa and Suvani Singh (Nepal) are in the publication of *Pride Climbing Higher: Stories by LGPT People from Nepal*.



VIRTUAL GALLERY

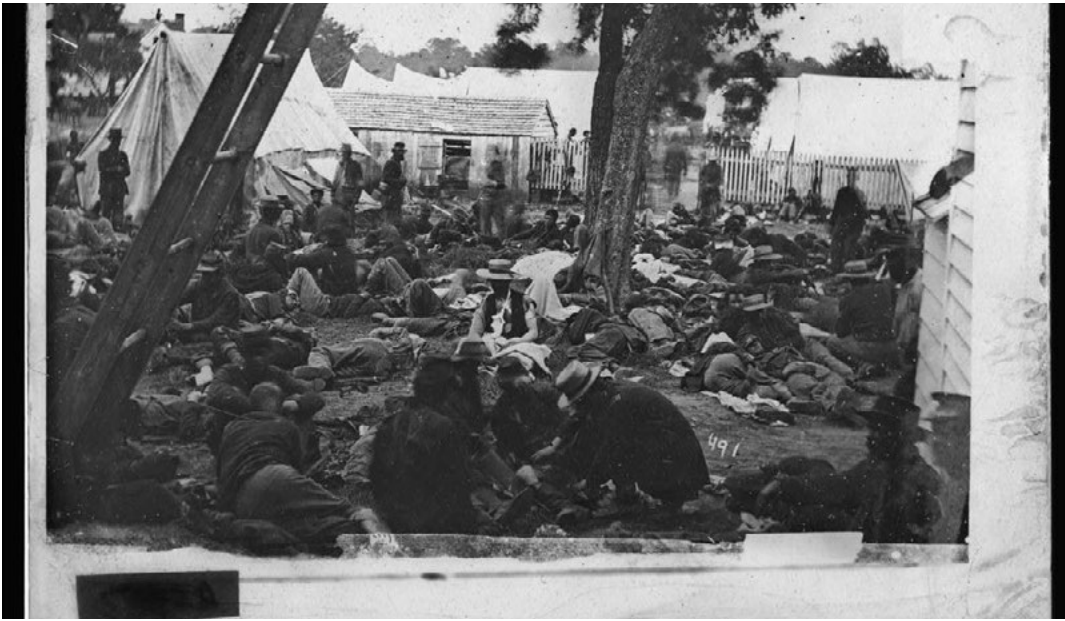
In March 2015, Silk Routes launched its [online gallery](#), featuring the creative work of contributors from (to date) 25 countries. The website maps and documents heritage through original writing and creative reports appealing to a range of senses—images, written texts, sounds and videos, recipes—and strives to strengthen regional creative networks by providing resources for collaborative translation exchanges, literary festivals, and publications.



Above: the Silk Routes website.

Left: IWP mentor Ron Carlson (U.S.) gives an intimate reading with poet Sridala Swami (India) to a room of medical doctors at St. John's Medical College in Bengaluru, India.

A U.S. Army field hospital in Savage Station, Virginia, during the Peninsular Campaign of May–August 1862 (photo James F. Gibson, courtesy of the Library of Congress).



WhitmanWeb

WhitmanWeb has launched its second series, [*Whitman and the Civil War*](#). The 36-week project explores Walt Whitman's literary response—in poetry and prose—to the American Civil War, which remains the deadliest war in American history.

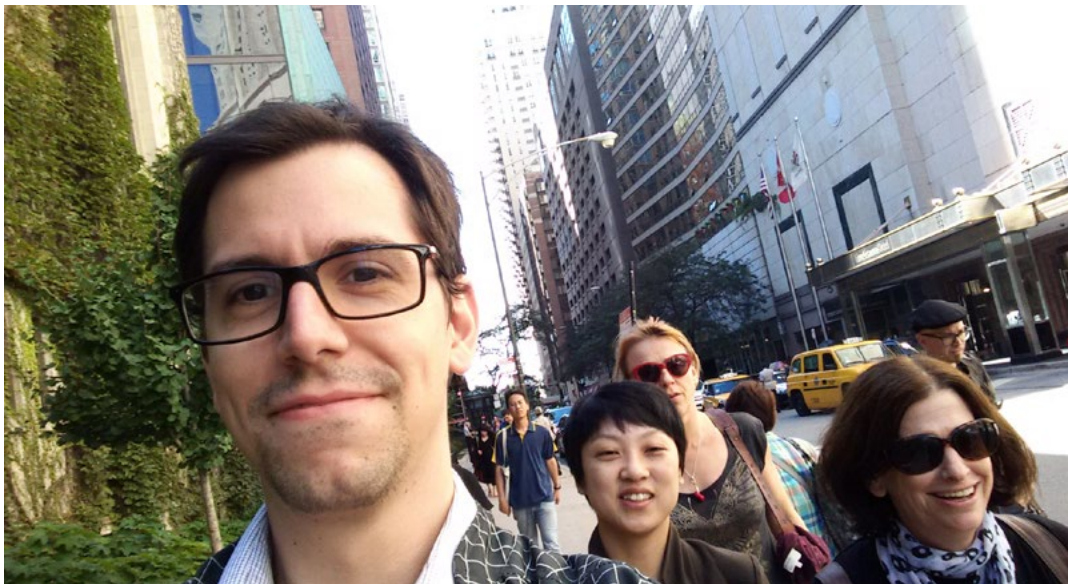
While conflict is the inevitable subject, peace and reconciliation are the themes discussed each week in commentaries by University of Iowa professors Ed Folsom (Co-Director of the Walt Whitman Archive) and Christopher Merrill (Director of the International Writing Program). Once readers have taken in the weekly Whitman text and commentaries, they are invited to contribute to the conversation by responding to a question posted on the WhitmanWeb site and Facebook page. All materials are available in Arabic, French, and English.

WhitmanWeb was created in 2012 and first featured “Song of Myself,” which was delivered in 52 weekly installments. The multilingual gallery is made possible through a partnership with the Walt Whitman Archive.



Visit *Whitman and the Civil War* at iwp.uiowa.edu.

Antônio Xerxenesky (Brazil) takes a selfie during a walking tour in Chicago with Kim EuGene (South Korea), Johanna Aitchison (New Zealand), and Yael Neeman (Israel). During the trip, the writers had the opportunity to visit the Poetry Foundation.



Program Support

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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