

“ Each leaf,  
each blade of grass  
vies for attention.  
Even weeds  
carry tiny blossoms  
to astonish us.”

- Marianne Poloskey, Sunday in Spring



## BORDERLINES CONFERENCE

The GEO conference was a great success, drawing folks from the University of Maryland, Georgetown University, George Washington University, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, the City University of New York, American University, and prospective students from several other universities. We hosted individuals from Film Studies, and the Masters of Fine Arts program and MA/PhD programs in the Department of English during our Friday event. Saturday brought students studying art, art history, culture, and literature for 8 sessions throughout the day. Our sessions were nearly packed at times, and the height of the conference saw nearly 70 people! Sarah Sillin from the University of Maryland won the Best Paper Award for her paper “Cosmopolitan Marriage and Maria Amparo de Ruiz Burton,” and she’ll be receiving a certificate to recognize her achievement.



David Shumway’s keynote talk, “Crossing Social and Generic Borders ‘Up in the Air’” explored the way in which the titular film uses but revises the traditional archetype of the lone hero. Shumway argued that Alex, the love interest of Ryan (played by George Clooney), actually remains the film’s lone hero at the end, returning happily and seemingly without regret to her home and family in the suburbs. Meanwhile, the old-western-esque figure of Ryan is left to roam the skies with a clear articulation of loneliness. Shumway also argued for the film’s

distinction between class and status, as we find our main character’s enticed far more by one another’s frequent flier miles than actual economic class. In fact, the liminal space of air travel (and travel in general, as Shumway’s clips from classic film showed) provides a unique opportunity for individuals to substitute status for class.

We are so pleased with the turn out and energy surrounding the conference, and we thank Graduate Student Government and the Department of English for their support!



*(Written by conference co-organizer, Maggie Ray)*

[www.english.umd.edu/bywords](http://www.english.umd.edu/bywords)

**Please submit your syllabi using the new system!**

**Faculty, Lecturers, and TAs teaching ENGL and/or CMLT courses at the 200-level or above:**

**If you are teaching, please submit a copy of your syllabus for SPRING 2011 as soon as possible. As you know the English Department has a new website, and we’re hoping to reduce the number of tasks for everyone. We would like you to submit your syllabus using the following webpage:**

<http://www.english.umd.edu/administration/faculty/syllabi>

**This will allow everyone access who needs this information (including Isabella). We use these copies to answer inquiries from current students who need to finalize their class schedules, and former students needing transfer credits. Also, your syllabi on file have been a big help to new T.A.s when they’re in the process of developing their own syllabi.**

**Also, if you’re faculty or a lecturer through the MEO, please submit office hours for SPRING 2011 on the above section of the department website, before your scheduled session starts.**

**Your cooperation is very much appreciated.  
Isabella**

**For updating or placing new book orders:  
The University Book Center:  
<http://www.umcp.bkstore.com>  
click on “Faculty,” than on “Register”  
(if it’s your first time)**

**Maryland Book Exchange:  
<http://www.marylandbook.com>  
click on “Faculty Information,” then on  
“Faculty Adoptions Form”**

## FROM THE CENTER FOR LITERARY AND COMPARATIVE STUDIES

Wednesday, March 30, 2011, 2-3:30 pm, 2115 Tawes Hall: Alumni Book Launch: Joelle Beile, *Elizabeth Bishop & THE NEWYORKER: The Complete Correspondence*

Wednesday, March 30, 2011, 3:30-5:00 pm, 1107 Tawes Hall: Local Americansits: Eric Lott, "Back Door Man: Howlin' Wolf and the Sound of Jim Crow"

Wednesday, March 30, 2011, 7:00-8:30 pm, Ulrich Recital Hall, Tawes: Writers Here & Now: Jennifer Grotz & Chang-rae Lee

Thursday, March 31, 2011, 2:00 pm-3:15 pm, 2115 Tawes Hall: Work in Progress: Christina Walter, "Adapting an Incomplete Vision: Optics and Impersonality in Pater's Aesthetic"

Friday, April 1, 2011, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, 2110 Taliaferro Hall: Racial Consciousness in the Medieval & Early Modern Worlds. For complete program details, contact Courtney Connolly (cconnoll@umd.edu)

Friday, April 1, 2011, 4:00 pm, Ulrich Recital Hall: International Film Series

Friday, April 1, 2011, 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm, 3132 Tawes Hall: Critical Theory Colloquium "On Life, Death, and Media: Electronic Sounds as Lively and Differentiated Individuals" Tara Rodgers, Women's Studies

### AROUND CAMPUS:

Wednesday, March 30, 2011, 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm, St. Mary's Multipurpose Room: Julie Koser (German) "Armed Ambiguity: The Woman Warrior in 18th- and 19th-Century Germany" and Mehl Penrose (Spanish) "Effeminacy and Same-Sex Male Desire in Enlightenment Spain"

Friday, April 1, 2011, 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm, 2203 Art/Sociology Building: Forty-First Middle Atlantic Symposium in the History of Art Cartelas que enganan: Some Historical and Theoretical Reflections on the Cartellino in Spanish Golden Age Painting Steven Ostrow, Professor and Chair, Department of Art History, University of Minnesota

Please check out the department's calendar for more information on upcoming events:  
<http://www.english.umd.edu/news-events/calendar>

# (NEWS)

## FACULTY NEWS

**Maud Casey's** interview with author Chang-rae Lee appears in *The Asian American Literary Review*, Issue 2.

**Kelly Cresap's** essay on the John Fowles novel *Daniel Martin* is forthcoming from *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*. Kelly expresses his gratitude to those in the department who've offered support and feedback at various stages in this project's development. The essay is titled "The World-Making Capacity of John Fowles's *Daniel Martin*."

**John Fuegi**, Emeritus Clara and Robert Vambery Professor of Comparative Studies, is now serving as a multi-year Visiting Professor at Kingston University in the UK. Fuegi is completing with the aid of Kingston University's International Outreach Center, Stanford University's Clayman Institute for Gender Research, a grant from the Queen Margaretha & Prince Henrik Royal Fund in Denmark, and AVRO Broadcasting--the main cultural television channel in the Netherlands, a 52 minute, multi-lingual documentary film on the German/Dutch scientist, artist and explorer, Maria Sibylla Merian who conducted scientific research in South America 131 years before Darwin. The Merian film, due for release in early 2012, has already been shown as a "work in progress" at the British Museum and the Getty Museum both of which have Merian collections. Other films by John Fuegi and his partner Jo Francis in the Women of Power Series have recently been shown at the Bloomsbury Festival in Krakow, at the Umea Museum in Sweden, and at the Computer History Museum in Silicon Valley. The *War Within*, the Fuegi/Francis film on Virginia Woolf, named one of the five best documentaries in the world in 1996 by the International Documentary Association, has by 2011 been shown in 33 countries in 27 languages. It is planned to release the entire Women of Power Series in 2013 in 13 parts for broadcast in multiple languages, for use as looped tapes in museums, and for global distant learning use in universities, high schools, and women's self help cooperatives.

**Keguro Macharia** presented on his "work in progress." His current work focuses specifically on poetry by South African Dennis Brutus and a prison narrative by Kenyan historian Maina wa Kinyatti. The talk outlined a genealogy for "African homophobia" that takes the transnational circulation of prison writing as its point of departure. Macharia draws from recent scholarship on African prisons and from the emerging sub-field of African Queer studies to offer a new model for theorizing African homosexualities and homophobias within African (trans)nationalisms.

**Howard Norman** was recently selected to serve on the jury for the Scotiabank Giller Literary Prize. The prize is awarded to the best Canadian novel or short story. And it comes along with a huge cash purse, making it "Canada's richest literary award for fiction," according to their website. The prize is in its 18th year, and the committee has chosen what they call "a multi-award winning trio" of judges. Alongside Howard Norman are authors Annabelle Lyon and Andrew O'Hagan. The three authors have varying degrees of connection to Canadian identity; Howard lived in Toronto and has set many of his novels in the Canadian Atlantic, including his most recent novel, *What is Left the Daughter* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010). Howard also present on his "work in progress," *Travels with Ghost and Ghost-to-Be*. Check out this article published in *National Geographic*: <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2008/02/bashos-trail/howard-norman-text.html>

# (NEWS cont.)

## FACULTY NEWS cont.

**Michael Olmert** will be the keynote speaker on April 6th at Anne Arundel Community College's celebration of its Lifelong Learning programs. He will give an illustrated lecture on social history through the lens of the architecture of the 18th Century backyard.

Also, Olmert's new play, "Moving the Chains: The Darryl Hill Story," appears as a rehearsed staged reading, a co-production of Theatre J and the Lincoln Theatre on Monday, March 21, 2011. Michael's interview about the play is available here: <http://www.newsdesk.umd.edu/universitynews/release.cfm?ArticleID=2360>

**Carla Peterson** has published a new book this month through Yale University Press. The book, entitled *Black Gotham: A Family History of African Americans in Nineteenth-Century New York*, traces Peterson's unfolding of her family history. While discovering her family through the framework of a highly racially charged period in American history, Peterson challenges linear conceptions of nineteenth-century African American culture. While her narrative acknowledges and deals with socio-historical racism, *Black Gotham* demonstrates that "members of this early elite achieved remarkable success in their public activism, trades, and professions," according to the publisher.

**Laura Rosenthal** has co-edited with Donna Heiland the book *Literary Study, Measurement, and the Sublime: Disciplinary Assessment*, just published by the Teagle Foundation. The book is available for viewing or downloading at no charge: <http://www.teagle.org/disciplinaryassessment/>. There will be a hard copy in the Spring. The project's website include links to a recent interview Laura and Donna did for *Inside Higher Education* and an essay they wrote for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Laura also gave the talk "Slightly Less Clueless after Assessment" at the conference "Assessment in the Humanities: A National Symposium" held in honor of the book's release at Miami University of Ohio. She also gave a an invited talk on a similar topic at the Conference of College Board Chairs in New York.

**Martha Nell Smith** has been named an ADVANCE professor for the next year. Smith is a professor of English, a Distinguished Scholar-Teacher for 2010-2011, the founding director of the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities, and the executive editor and coordinator for the Dickinson Electronic Archives. Her term as ADVANCE Professor of the Arts and Humanities will run from Spring 2011 through May 2012. Ruth Zambrana, Department of Women's Studies, serves as the second ADVANCE professor for Arts and Humanities.

**Liora Moriel's** International Art Film class hosted acclaimed Irish playwright/screenwriter Mark O'Rowe on Tuesday, March 15, 2011. The class watched his 2003 film, "Intermission," starring Colin Farrell, before hosting Mr. O'Rowe for a 90-minute Q&A. Students asked questions about both the film and the screenwriting/film-making process. They were rewarded with critical information about the film industry and its quirky intrigues, reminiscent of Robert Altman's *The Player*. Mr. O'Rowe's play, *Terminus*, played at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center (CSPAC) later that week to sell-out audiences; Nicole Paoletti from CSPAC connected the writer and the class. Mr. O'Rowe came to class with *Terminus* actress Olwen Fouere.

## STUDENT NEWS

**Isabella Cooper** will be presenting a paper entitled "Body Language, Biology, and Honesty in Beauty: Interpreting Women in the Novels of Thomas Hardy" at the 2011 'Hardy at Yale' Conference in June, put on by the Thomas Hardy Association.

**Nathan Kelber** presented a paper at the GEO Borderlines conference titled "The Borders of Media: Don Bluth's Dragon's Lair." The paper addresses the preservation of analog computer media and the phenomenology of the virtual. In Montreal at the Renaissance Society of America, he'll present a second paper "Staging the Ludic: How Early Modern Play became Early Modern Work" which addresses the historical and ontological division of early modern dramatic play from the play of game with a focus upon the relationship of play to the work of art in Shakespeare and Jonson.

**Amanda Visconti** presented a talk titled "'Primarily with scholars in mind': Scholars, Readers, and the Digital Text Audience" at the Society for Textual Scholarship 2011 International Conference on March 17th.

**Kym Weed** presented "The Race for Hysteria in Pauline Hopkins' *Of One Blood*" at The Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture since 1900 at the University of Louisville in February. In April, she will present "Cultural Encounters and the Metaphorics of Disease in Aimé Césaire's *Notebook of a Return to the Native Land*" as part of the Separation as Condition and as Solution seminar at NeMLA Convention in New Brunswick, NJ.

## ALUMNI NEWS

**Joelle Biele** recently published her book, *Elizabeth Bishop and the New Yorker*. You can check her work out here: <http://joellebiele.com/EB%20and%20the%20New%20Yorker.html>

**Joshua Easterling** recently defended his dissertation at Ohio State University.

# (NEWS cont.)

## ALUMNI NEWS cont.

**Neil Davison** published his second monograph during the summer of 2010 with Routledge. It is entitled "Jewishness and Masculinity from the Modern to the Postmodern."

**Maryjane Hurst** is very pleased to announce the release of her latest book, *Language, Gender, and Community in Late Twentieth Century Fiction: American Voices and American Identities*, by Palgrave Macmillan (2011). Her book has also been selected for the series *American Literature Readings in the 21st Century* edited by Linda Wagner-Martin. Below is the link to the publisher's website: <http://us.macmillan.com/languageGenderandCommunityinLateTwentiethCenturyFiction>

## CONTEST INFORMATION

**The English Graduate Office is seeking nominations for the following:**

**Carl Bode Prize:** Each year the department awards the Carl Bode Prize for the best PhD dissertation in American literature. Dissertations completed in the preceding calendar year (2010) are eligible; entries should be nominated by the dissertation director and should be of outstanding quality. Letters of nomination are due in the English Graduate Office by Monday April 4.

**Alice L. Geyer Dissertation Prize:** This prize is awarded each year for the best dissertation in English literature. Dissertations completed in the preceding calendar year (2010) are eligible; entries should be nominated by the dissertation director and should be of outstanding quality. Letters of nomination are due in the English Graduate Office by Monday April 4.

**Kinnaird Essay Prize:** The graduate office announces the competition for the 2011 Kinnaird Essay Prize, given for the best essay submitted in a graduate course (M.A. theses and parts of Ph.D. dissertations are not eligible for submission). As in the past, we will award one prize to an M.A. student and another to a Ph.D. student. Please submit essays to the Graduate Office by Monday April 4. Papers submitted should be from courses taken in Spring or Fall, 2010.

## FOR YOUR CALENDAR

**Queering the Archive, Archiving the Queer:** The archives of queer intimacies and subjectivities are everywhere and nowhere. To queer those archives is to tease out those buried truths, but it is also to recognize the vexed nature of "truth" and to acknowledge that one's own desires and fantasies shape and misshape what one sees in any collection of artifacts or records. In this fascinating series of lectures and conversations, scholars and producers of queer archives reflect on what they do, why they do it, and what is at stake in efforts to document queer identities, practices, and performances. Join us as we plumb the depths of a history that is no longer hidden but not yet fully in view. For more information, visit [www.lgbts.umd.edu](http://www.lgbts.umd.edu)

**The Bloodwork Conference** will explore how conceptions of the blood permeate discourses of human difference from 1500 to 1900. "Bloodwork" begins with the assumption that the metaphorical equation of blood with "race" as we understand it today is a distinctly modern, always shifting, and geo-culturally contingent formation. Hence, we believe a conversation among scholars from various periods and fields of inquiry will enhance our understanding of the cultural history of blood. Specifically, we ask how fluid transactions of the body have been used in different eras and different cultures to justify existing social arrangements. Visit: <http://www.terpconnect.umd.edu/~rwakeman/index.html>

**Litfest** is being hosted in Ulrich Recital Hall on April 27, 7:00 pm. The Jimenez-Porter Writer's House be awarding the winners of their annual literary prize. The winners for fiction are: Laura Pavlo, Shira Levenson, and Emily Zido. And the poetry winners are: Lyons George, Brendan Edward Kennedy, Ned Prutzer.

Thank you for reading this jam-packed edition,  
and Happy Spring!  
Catherine

### SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

*The next edition of Bywords will be released April 21st. Please send us any and all updates on new publications and accomplishments by April 18th.*

*Please include dates, locations, and titles of papers/lectures/etc. in your news submissions.  
Bywords e-mail: [englweb@umd.edu](mailto:englweb@umd.edu)*

*Stay tuned to [www.english.umd.edu](http://www.english.umd.edu)  
for more news!*