

# BYWORDS

Department of English Newsletter

How like a winter hath my absence been  
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!  
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!  
What old December's bareness every where!

-- William Shakespeare

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

## HIGHLIGHTS

Pheh, Bywords expects that you need a breather, so we'll make this a short edition. Over the course of Fall 2009, sixteen visiting scholars delivered lectures, eleven readings of creative work were enjoyed, three books were launched, nine seminars and reading group discussions were held, one Stanley Plumly was feted, a symposium on second language writing was convened, and one Center of Literary and Comparative Studies enlivened the department with great joy and merriment. And we moved into Tawes! So do enjoy your break -- you've earned it!

### Kirschenbaum Wins MLA First Book Prize



Since its publication in January 2008, **Matthew Kirschenbaum's** *Mechanisms: New Media and the Forensic Imagination* has been the darling of scholars in the fields of digital humanities, media studies, and textual studies, winning awards from the Society for Textual Scholarship and the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing. And now Kirschenbaum's work is being recognized by the Modern Language Association as the Best First Book published in 2008.

The press release announcing Kirschenbaum's award hails *Mechanisms* as being "genuinely original" and "field defining ... promising to have a

major impact on the fields of literary studies, book history, and digital culture." Kirschenbaum's work has received media coverage from Wired, Boing Boing, Slashdot, and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

The MLA Prize for a First Book is awarded annually to the book-length literary or linguistic study, critical edition, or critical biography that makes the most outstanding contribution to the field. The award will be presented later this month at the MLA convention in Philadelphia.

Kirschenbaum is Associate Professor English, Associate Director of the Maryland Institute for Technologies in the Humanities (MITH), and Director of Digital Culture and Creativity, a new living-learning program in the Honors College at the University of Maryland.

More on the award can be found in the MLA press release available [here](#).

## UPCOMING DEADLINES and DEPARTMENT MEETINGS

**Reminder! Textbook orders** for Winter and Spring 2010 courses were due **December 1st** to the [University Book Center](#). Click on "faculty" and then "adoptions form." Please send a copy of your order to **Isabella Moulton** at [imoulton@umd.edu](mailto:imoulton@umd.edu). The students and the book stores will very much appreciate your prompt attention to this matter!

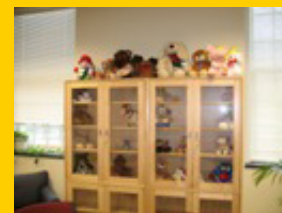
## COMMENCEMENT ON SUNDAY!

**December Commencement** will be held on Sunday, December 20th at 4:00 PM in the



Elise & Marvin Dekelboum Concert Hall in the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center. [Click here](#) for more info. Hope to see you there!

## THIRTY BEARS COLLECTED FOR CHARITY



The Main English Office collected thirty stuffed animals for the 18th Annual Bonnie Johns Children's Fund Bear Drive.

Thanks to everyone who donated!

## SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The next edition of *Bywords* will be released on Monday, January 25. Please send us any and all updates on new publications and accomplished accomplishments by

**Thursday, January 21.**

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

## Comings and Goings

**Nicole Stevens'** last day was Friday, December 11. Nicole and her husband, Chris, will be moving to the Cleveland area so Chris can pursue his PhD in Engineering at Case Western Reserve University.

"Nicole has been a superb staff director," says Department Chair Kent Cartwright. "Nicole has been responsible for the smooth running, day in and day out of the department."

**Kevin Rimmell**, Assistant Director of Administrative Services and the world's coolest boss, has assumed Nicole's responsibilities in the interim.

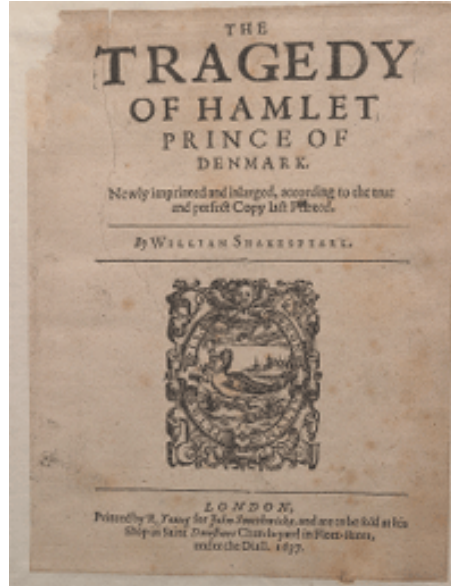
Elsewhere around MEO, **Abby Mulhollen**, currently a Program Management Specialist, will be moving a few doors down to take over as the Department's new Business Services Specialist.

## Congrats to Intro Journals Project Nominees

The MFA Program in Creative Writing is pleased to announce the nominees for the 2008-2009 Intro Journals Project, a literary competition for the discovery and publication of new work by students currently enrolled in creative writing programs around the country. The nominees in poetry are: **David Danoff** for "Exotic Birds," **Zein El-Amine** for "Bajan Rain," and **Amy Katzel** for "Before Sleep." The Program's nominee in fiction is **Tom Earles** for "Little Pomerania."

## MITH Launches Shakespeare Quartos Archive With Digital Collection of *Hamlet*

Through collaboration between the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities, the Bodleian Library, the Folger Shakespeare Library, and other major libraries, all 32 existing quarto copies of *Hamlet* have been made available in a digital archive. Professor of English and Director of MITH **Neil Fraistat** is Project Co-Director for the United States.



The archive provides public access to the early rare quarto editions of William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, a collection that in its physical form is distributed among six geographically distant institutions. In addition to providing unprecedented access, the archive promotes scholarship by enabling users to perform side-by-side text comparisons and full text searches as well as create and affix annotations and tags to content that can be stored for future reference and shared with other users.

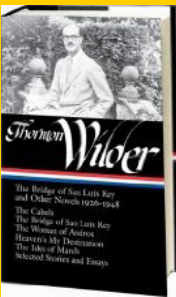
The archive will eventually be expanded to include all 75 pre-

1642 quarto editions of Shakespeare's plays.

More on the debut can be found [here](#). Access the Shakespeare Quartos Archive [here](#).

## Graduate Students Needed for Thornton Wilder Colloquium

A colloquium on the Fiction of Thornton Wilder will be held on Saturday, March 27, 2010 at the University of Maryland, sponsored by the Department of English, the Department of Classics, the Center for Literary and Comparative Studies, and the Thornton Wilder Society. The colloquium organizers are seeking graduate students from English to participate in the event.



The occasion marks the publication by the Library of America of Wilder's first five novels -- *The Cabala* (1926), *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* (1927), *The Woman of Andros* (1930), *Heaven's My Destination* (1935), and *The Ides of March* (1948). Wilder (1897-1975), three time recipient of the Pulitzer Prize -- for *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* and for his plays *Our Town* and *The Skin of Our Teeth* (he is the only person to receive the Pulitzer in both the Fiction and Drama categories) -- has been called "the most underrated writer of his generation" by Malcolm Cowley.

Participants in the Wilder Colloquium will include: **Michael Dirda**, Pulitzer Prize-winning critic and *Washington Post* reviewer; **J.D. McClatchy**, poet, editor of the Library of America volume, and editor of the *Yale Review*; **Tappan Wilder**, Thornton Wilder's nephew and Literary Executor; **Kurt Raflaub**, Professor of Classics at Brown University; **Penelope Niven**, author of a biography of Thornton Wilder to be published in 2011; **Cecelia Tichi**, Professor of English at Vanderbilt University; **Christopher Wheatley**, Professor of English at Catholic University;

**Jeremy McCarter**, journalist and author of a recent *Newsweek* feature article on Thornton Wilder; and **Jackson Bryer**, Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Maryland.

The organizers would like to organize a panel on Wilder's fiction composed of UMCP graduate students in English and Classics. If you are interested in participating or have questions about the event, please contact **Jackson Bryer** at [jbryer@umd.edu](mailto:jbryer@umd.edu).

## (FACULTY NEWS)

**William Cohen** has presented (or will present) "Queer Universality and the French Oscar Wilde" this fall at the University at Buffalo, SUNY; University of Toronto; Birkbeck College (University of London); University of Exeter (England); and UCLA.

**Sandy Mack's** proposal for a course in the new I-Series of courses, "Acting Human: Shakespeare and the Drama of Human Identity" was selected from more than 50 submissions for the first offerings in spring of 2010 of this "signature" feature of the campus' general education program.

**Michael Olmert** was interviewed on Maryland Public Radio about his new 18th-century outbuildings book. You can listen to the interview [here](#).

**Joshua Weiner** received a Hawthornden International Writers Fellowship; he will be one of five writers living in Hawthornden Castle, Midlothian, Scotland, the ancestral home of William Drummond, for the month of January. In April and May he will be in residence at Yaddo, in Saratoga Springs, and Centrum, in Port Townsend. Last month he was writer-in-residence at the Banff Centre, in Alberta.

## (STUDENT NEWS)

**Lew Gleich** writes to say that he, **Nancy Stewart**, and **Jennifer Williams** will be presenting at the 2010 International Society for the Study of Narrative Conference in Cleveland to be held in April. Lew's paper is entitled "Ontological Indeterminacy in Grossman's *See Under: Love*: Toward a Theory of Narrative Metalepsis in Terms of Trauma."

**Jocelyn Heath's** poem "Postgraduate" was published in *Poet Lore*, Fall/Winter 2009.

**Kim O'Connor's** poem "On Rereading Leaves of Grass" won second place in Two Review's 2009 [poetry contest](#). Her poem "Joint" will be published in *The South Carolina Review*.

**Judy Spence** will be presenting a paper at the Ninth Annual Vagantes Graduate Student Conference to be held in March 2010 at the University of New Mexico. Her paper is entitled "Hrothsvita and the Women of Gandersheim: Modernity in the Tenth Century."

## MARYLAND AT MLA

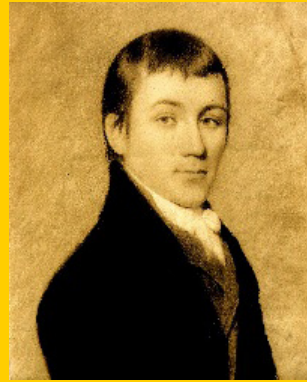


Image: Charles Brockden Brown was making southeastern Pennsylvania creepy long before *M. Night Shyamalan*

Several faculty members and graduate students will be presenting papers or presiding over panels at MLA 2009 in Philadelphia, December 27-30.

Participants include:

**Deborah Bailin**, presenting, "What Will Our Children Be?: Future Natures in Octavia Butler's *Xenogenesis* Trilogy" and "Homo Ethicalis: Evolution as Apocalypse in Bernard Malamud's *God's Grace*;" **Jackson Bryer**, presiding, "Eugene O'Neill: Life and Work;" **Kandice Chuh**, presiding, "Law and/in Asian American Literature;" **William Cohen**, presiding, "Late Victorian Biopolitics" and "Queer Universalism;" **Kathleen D'Angelo**, presenting, "American Modernism as a Study of Objects: Robert Frost and the Self-Projected Thing."

**Maggie Ellen Fromm**, presenting, "Your Soul Gives Essence to Our Wretched Subjects / Whose Matter Is Incorporate in Your Flesh': Reconciling Tamburlaine's Soul and Tamburlaine's Flesh;" **Matthew Kirschenbaum**, accepting MLA Prize for a First Book; **Robert Levine**, panelist, "Teaching American Literature from an Anthology;" **Keguro Macharia**, presenting, "Imperial Nostalgia in Ian Fleming's *Dr. No*;" **Peter Mallios**, presiding, "Transnational Ameritopias" and presenting, "Metafiction of Descent and the Imprint of Darwin in Conrad."

**Zita Nunes**, presiding, "Digital Africana Studies: Creating and Bridging the Gap between Africana Studies and Other Disciplines;" **Gerard Passannante**, panelist, "Spenser's *Mutability Cantos*;" **Jason Payton**, panelist, "Teaching American Literature in the Twenty-first Century;" **Sangeeta Ray**, presenting, "Hospitality, Translation, and an Ethics of Reading;" **Brian Richardson**, presenting, "Modernism, Interpretation, and Duplicity: Reading and Misreading in *Lolita*."

**Laura Rosenthal**, panelist, "Learning from Assessment;" **Marc Ruppel**, presiding, "(Re)Framing Transmedial Narratives;" **Martha Nell Smith**, presenting, "Dickinson's Confederate Relations;" **Christina Walter**, presenting, "An 'Anti-thesis of Self-Expression': Mina Loy's Imagetexts and the Modern Observer;" **Orrin Wang**, presenting, "Shelley, Keats, and the Long Twentieth Century;" and **Joshua Weiner**, presiding, "Thom Gunn."

Visit the [Maryland @ MLA site](#) for times and locations.

