

UNL ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER AND CALENDAR

Friday, January 25, 2008

Editor: Gerry Shapiro

Publisher: Joy Ritchie

"Speaking Truth to people in varying states of powerlessness"

Recent Publications and Other Achievements

Wheeler Winston Dixon has published "Hyperconsumption in Reality Television: The Transformation of the Self Through Televisual Consumerism," in the January, 2008 issue of *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*. He also delivered a paper, "Flickering Images: From the Kinetoscope to YouTube," at MLA. Wheeler has also published his list of the, "Most Influential Cinema Books of the Past Ten Years: The Poll Results," in *Screening the Past 22* (December, 2007), at <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/screeningthepast/22/field-survey.html>. And finally (for now, at least), Wheeler has also published two reviews in *Choice*: "Post-pop Cinema: The Search For Meaning in New American Film by Jesse Fox Mayshark, in the December issue; and *Sexy Thrills: Undressing the Erotic Thriller* by Nina K. Martin, in the January issue.

In support of **Marco Abel's** research on contemporary German cinema, UNL's Research Council awarded him the Charles J. Millard Trust Fund Research Scholarship in the amount of \$6,500. Marco's essay "Judgment is not an Exit: Toward an Affective Criticism of Violence with *American Psycho*," originally appearing in *Angelaki* (2001), was anthologized by the Gale Group's *Contemporary Literary Criticism* series (vol. 229).

Ted Kooser has five poems in the current *Kenyon Review*, two in *Atlanta Review*, and two in *Ocho. Naeturflug*, a selection of 66 of Ted's poems, translated by Hallberg Halmundsson, has been published in Iceland. A short essay on writers workshops appears in the current issue of *The Spoon River Poetry Review*. Ted's collection of annual valentines, entitled *Valentines* has just been published by The University of Nebraska Press in a trade hardcover edition, illustrated in pen and ink by Robert Hanna.

Dan Nowak was awarded a grant from the Center for Great Plains Studies to work on a chapbook of poems. His first book of poetry won the Quercus Review Poetry Series Annual Book Award and will be coming out in fall 2008. If funding permits Dan will be giving a reading in Modesto, California to support the book's release.

Shoshana Sumral's short story "Harold and Dave" appears in the Winter 2007 issue of *Fine Lines*.

Congratulations to the following faculty members in our department who received Parents' Recognition Awards this year. (The number in parentheses after each name indicates the number of years the recipient has received the award.) **Stephen Buhler** (6 years); **John Chavez** (first year); **Steve Edwards** (2 years); **Krista Ferguson** (first year); **June Griffin** (first year); **Anthony Hawley** (first year); **Leslia Ianno** (first year); **Janet Jarvis** (3 years); **Greg Kuzma** (6 years); **Gregory Rutledge** (first year); **Gerald Shapiro** (6 years).

This news from **Fran Kaye**: In January 2006 **Laurie Zum Hofe** and **Ret Pennell** started a writing circle for inmates at the Nebraska State Correctional Center for Women in York. **Sandy Tarabocchia** soon joined the group, and Fran Kaye signed on as a backup. For two years the group has met and worked on writing one Sunday a month. This January Ret and Fran and five of their women writers from York have self-published *Words from Within*, a small chapbook of writings from the group. (Joy Ritchie, Gerry Shapiro, and Fran all have copies, if you want to see them.) In December 2006, Fran Kaye began a reading group with NASCA, the Native American Spiritual and Cultural Awareness club at Nebraska State Penitentiary. With amazing backup from **Tom Gannon**--and also **Jan Jarvis**, **Razia Khan**, and **Richard Hargesheimer**--the reading group has met every other Wednesday night and has read through a formidable list of poetry, short fiction, history, speeches, and essays. Under the leadership of education coordinator **Tony Laravie** and with the help of **John Mark Huscher**, the group is planning a poetry slam for later this winter. Anyone interested in volunteering with either of these established groups or in starting one at another institution--the men's prison at Tecumseh is especially in need of programming--is encouraged to contact Fran Kaye (fkaye1949@yahoo.com). "This is the most important and most rewarding work I have ever done," says Fran.

Julia Lauer-Cheenne's novella, *Souvenirs*, was accepted for publication last year and is now available. For more information please visit www.communitypresshome.com or contact Julia.

Hilda Raz talked about *Prairie Schooner* and taught in the low residency MFA program at Pacific University in Seacoast, Oregon over the break.

Chris Gallagher's article "Democratic Policymaking and the Arts of Engagement" appears in the current issue of *Phi Delta Kappan* and his "Wish You Were Here: Postcard from the State Ranked 51st" (which he describes as a snarky little send-up) appears in the current issue of *Rethinking Schools*.

At the MLA convention **Ken Price** participated in a panel discussion on editing collections of poetry, and in a second session he read a paper on "Constructing Whitman as a Manuscript Poet" Ken also recently traveled to Charlottesville, Virginia to attend a day-long meeting funded by NEH and the Mellon foundation exploring the digital needs of documentary editors.

Steven Moore received his Ph.D. in December and participated in the Hooding Ceremony. Steven's dissertation is "Black Rage in African American Literature Before the Civil Rights Movement." It was supervised by **Maureen Honey**. Steven is an Assistant Professor at Abilene Christian University, and he sends his regards to all of his old friends and professors in the department.

Christine Stewart-Nunez (PhD May 2007) has won the 2008 Folsom Distinguished Dissertation Award by the Office of Graduate Studies. The award letter states, "Internal and external reviewers considered your dissertation to be of very high quality with regard to clarity, scholarship, methodology, and contribution to the field." Her advisors were **Hilda Raz** and **Barbara DiBernard**.

Grace Bauer's short story, "Even In Alliance," just came out in the latest issue of *Chariton Review*.

Lisa Renfro and husband **Doug Chritton** are happy to announce the birth of their son, **Nicholas Renfro Chritton**, on January 5. Nick weighed in at 8 lbs., 15.2 oz. and was 22 inches long. He and his mom are happy and healthy.

Daryl Farmer (Ph.D. from our department in creative writing) has received news that his book, *Bicycling Beyond the Divide: Two Journeys Into the West* (nonfiction, U of Nebraska Press) has been picked for the Barnes and Noble *Discover Great New Writers* program, for the 2008 summer list. Congratulations to Daryl, and to his dissertation director, **Jonis Agee**, and his editor, **Ladette Randolph** (a Ph.D. from our department, and currently Interim Director of the U of Nebraska Press), who offered Daryl a contract for *Bicycling Beyond the Divide* before the book was even written.

Carrie Shippers has work in the latest *Spoon River Poetry Review*.

In addition to visiting family and friends over the holidays, **Amber Harris Leichner** gave an invited reading at the Flatiron Gallery in Billings, MT. The reading was sponsored by the Yellowstone Writers' Collective Reading Series and

featured three poets, all with collections from FootHills Publishing of Kenona, NY.

Zachary Schomburg has poems in new issues of *Bat City Review*, *Fou*, and *Phoebe*. He will be reading his poems during the AWP conference at an off-site event with C.D. Wright, Eleni Sikelianos, Graham Foust and a few others on Thursday, Jan. 31. For more info: <http://www.awpwriter.org/conference/2008offsite.php>. Also, if you attend the AWP bookfair next week, please remember to visit Mathias and Zach to see their new books at the *Octopus Books* table.

Upcoming Events

TODAY! January 25: Parents' Recognition Award Reception, 2:30 p.m., Centennial Ballroom, City Union. See article on p. 1 for the list of English Department faculty who will be honored at this year's reception.

TODAY! January 25: No Name Reading, featuring **emily m. danforth** and **Zach Schomburg**, 4 p.m., Su Tango Bar *et* Café, 12th and P Streets.

Wednesday, January 30: Women's Lit Film Night Series: *Iron Jawed Angels* (2004), 6:30 p.m., Bailey Library; hosted by **Amber Leichner**. This moving story chronicles the efforts of Alice Paul (played by Hilary Swank) and her fellow "second wave" suffragists as they fight for the vote prior to and during WWI. Paul and others face great opposition, both to their cause and to their methods, including violent attacks on the protestors and jail time. Not rated. All films in the Women's Lit Film Night Series are free and open to the public, so bring a friend, a date, or someone you just met walking down the street! Snacks will be provided, but bring your own soda, juice, or water.

Good News from *Prairie Schooner*

The winner of last year's *Prairie Schooner* Book Prize in Poetry, **Paul Guest's** *Notes For My Body Double*, was reviewed in the *New York Times Book Review* last week. Paul has just won a Whiting Award, and now his agent has sold his memoir and his next book of poems to Ecco Press. Paul attributes all good this attention and good news to his prize-winning *Prairie Schooner* book. He'll be coming to campus next year for a reading. Meanwhile, **Andrew Porter**, a *Prairie Schooner* contributor, has just won the 2007 Flannery O'Connor Award in Short Fiction for his collection of stories, *The Theory of Light and Matter*. The title story appeared originally in *Prairie Schooner*.

American Life in Poetry
by Ted Kooser, U.S. Poet Laureate, 2004-2006

Post-traumatic stress disorder is a new name for “shell shock,” a term once applied only to military veterans. Here the poet Marvin Bell describes a group of these emotionally damaged soldiers, gathered together for breakfast. I’d guess that just about everybody who reads this column has known one or two men like these.

Veterans of the Seventies

His army jacket bore the white rectangle
of one who has torn off his name. He sat mute
at the round table where the trip-wire veterans
ate breakfast. They were foxhole buddies
who went stateside without leaving the war.
They had the look of men who held their breath
and now their tongues. What is to say
beyond that said by the fathers who bent lower
and lower as the war went on, spines curving
toward the ground on which sons sat sandbagged
with ammo belts enough to make fine lace
of enemy flesh and blood. Now these who survived,
who got back in cargo planes emptied at the front,
lived hiddenly in the woods behind fence wires
strung through tin cans. Better an alarm
than the constant nightmare of something moving
on its belly to make your skin crawl
with the sensory memory of foxhole living.

American Life in Poetry is made possible by The Poetry Foundation (www.poetryfoundation.org), publisher of Poetry magazine. It is also supported by the Department of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Poem copyright (c) 2007 by Marvin Bell, and reprinted from *Mars Being Red*, Copper Canyon Press, 2007, by permission of the author and publisher. The poem first appeared in *Gettysburg Review*, Summer, 2007. Introduction copyright (c) 2007 by The Poetry Foundation. The introduction's author, Ted Kooser, served as United States Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress from 2004-2006. We do not accept unsolicited manuscripts.

**Poetry Contest: Nebraska Poets on Sheldon
Paintings – news from Rebecca Bednarz**

Sheldon Memorial Gallery is pleased to announce the “Nebraska Poets on Sheldon Paintings Contest” for Nebraska writers (grade K-adult) in connection with the

upcoming exhibition, “Poets on Painters” (April 26 - June 29). A generous grant from the Nebraska Arts Council has made this contest possible. A cash prize of \$100 will be awarded in each of four categories for the best poem written about a painting or paintings in the Sheldon collection. Both poets and visual artists will collaborate on deciding our finalists. Poetry judges are our own **Hilda Raz, Grace Bauer, Mary K Stillwell**, as well as **Susan Aizenberg** of Creighton University. Confirmed visual artists are ceramicist **Ed Forde** and book artists **Karen Kunc** from UNL's Art & Art History department. Complete contest guidelines can be found at the following address: http://www.sheldonartgallery.org/events_programs/index.html?topic=detail&evnt_id=256. The contest will culminate in an award presentation and reading in late April. The postmark deadline for entries is March 1. The premise of the contest--painting poems based on the Sheldon collection--makes for a great writing activity for classes across our discipline: workshop classes, composition classes, contemporary lit classes, there are so many possibilities.... If teachers are interested in event and lesson plan ideas, we would be happy to pass along further resources. Please direct any questions to **Rebecca Bednarz**, contest coordinator, at the following address: sheldonpoetrycontest@unl.edu. We would appreciate your posting this information and passing it on to classes and all potentially interested parties. Over the next few months, we should have several updates. In the meantime, stay tuned for the upcoming story about the project on NET radio with Jerry Johnston. The piece will feature Grace Bauer talking about the finer points of ekphrasis!

Save The Date!!!
Tim O'Brien Reading in March!

Tuesday, March 27, 7:30 p.m., Union Auditorium: reading by **Tim O'Brien**, this year's Writer in Residence in the Creative Writing Program. Tim O'Brien has been hailed as “the best American writer of his generation” by *The San Francisco Chronicle*. The author of eight books, O'Brien received the National Book Award in Fiction in 1979 for his novel *Going After Cacciato*. In 2005 *The Things They Carried* was named by the *New York Times* as one of the twenty best books of the last quarter century, and was a finalist for both the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award. The title story was selected by John Updike for inclusion in *The Best American Short Stories of the Century*. Tim O'Brien's other works include *In The Lake of the Woods*, *If I Die in a Combat Zone*, *Northern Lights*, *Tomcat in Love* and *July*. His short fiction, which received the National Magazine Award, has appeared in numerous journals, including *The New Yorker*, *Atlantic*, *Esquire*, *Playboy*, and

Harper's. Tim O'Brien holds the Roy F. and Joann Cole Mitte Endowed Chair in Creative Writing at Texas State University.

Other Upcoming Readings This Semester

Thursday, March 13, 7:30 p.m., Bailey Library: Maria Melendez reading from her poetry. Book-signing and reception will follow the reading. Contact **Amelia Montez**, **Tom Lynch**, or **Gerry Shapiro** for more information.

Thursday, April 10, 7:30 p.m., Bailey Library: Carole Oles reading from her poetry. Book-signing and reception will follow the reading. Contact **Hilda Raz** for more information.

Monday, April 14, 3:30 p.m., Great Plains Art Gallery: Franci Washburn reading from her fiction. Book-signing and reception will follow the reading. Contact **Fran Kaye** or **Gerry Shapiro** for more information.

Monday, April 28, 3:30 p.m., Bailey Library: Grace Bauer reading from her poetry. Book-signing and reception will follow the reading. Contact **Gerry Shapiro** for more information.