

The University of Michigan

Department of English

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IN THIS ISSUE:

PERFORMANCE STUDIES

Five voices on the state of Performance Studies

+ The Arthur Miller Theatre

ALSO

Note from the Chair

Around the Department

Faculty Update

New faculty and recent faculty publications

Bear River Writers

A conversation featuring Marie Howe and Thomas Lynch

Works in Progress

Three PhD students introduce their dissertations

DURING THE ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY'S MOST RECENT RESIDENCY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN,

PATRICK STEWART & HARRIET WALTER

LED A STELLAR CAST IN PRODUCTIONS OF *JULIUS CAESAR*, *ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA*, AND *THE TEMPEST*



2007 Alumni Newsletter

NOTE FROM THE CHAIR



Sidonie Smith,
Department Chair



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Dear Friends of the Department,

It's that time of year again! I write to let you know about all the good things happening here in the Department of English.

This year has been the culmination of four years of strategic planning, hiring, and curriculum revision. The nine people who joined the department last year have settled in. And this fall we welcomed two new people: Doug Trevor in Early Modern Studies comes to us from the University of Iowa; and Daniel Hack in Victorian Studies comes to us from the University of Buffalo. This year we also completed the total revision of our undergraduate concentration in English, adding the opportunity for concentrators to gain depth in at least one area of literary and cultural studies through an array of

sub-concentrations.

Faculty members continue to earn awards and honors. Alan Wald has been awarded our newest Collegiate Professorship. Anne Curzan has been named an Arthur F. Thurnau Professor in recognition of her outstanding contributions to undergraduate education. Faculty also have been earning kudos for their publications. Peter Ho Davies's novel *The Welsh Girl* has recently appeared, gaining much critical attention from reviewers here in the U.S. and in England, which provides its setting. It has just been named on the long list for the Booker Commonwealth Prize. Linda Gregerson was a finalist for the National Book Award for her collection of poetry, *Magnetic North*. Keith Taylor's book, *Guilty at the Rapture*, has been selected for a place on the 2007 Michigan Notable Books list. And Eileen Pollack's novella *The Bris* just won a Best American Short Stories award and a place in this year's anthology, edited by Stephen King. After twelve years, Richard Bailey has finally completed his edition of a sixteenth-century London merchant's chronicle. It includes images of the manuscript, a transcript, and a modernized version describing the tumult of executions and parades that took place between the reigns of Edward VI and Elizabeth I. You can link to it from your home at www.hti.umich.edu/ml/machyn/. Richard's project will give you a glimpse of the ways in which the web is changing the kinds of archives literary and cultural scholars are making available to colleagues and lay people throughout the country and the world.

A good many of you will remember taking courses with George Bornstein. Well, George retired this year after more than thirty years here at Michigan. We celebrated his many years of graduate mentoring, undergraduate teaching, and prolific scholarship with a conference on "Modernism Unbound" in mid-April. A good number of his former students, all modernists and some chairs of departments, returned to Ann Arbor for two days of conversation. Richard Bailey is also about to retire. Unfortunately, Richard suffered life-threatening injuries in an automobile accident in March; but we are pleased to report that he is now out of the hospital and entering into a strict regimen of physical rehab. He'll soon be back in front of the computer, he assures us, working on his next book in the history of the English language.

And now for the grim news from Michigan. As you may know, the State of Michigan remains mired in an economic crisis due in large part to the current state of the U.S. automobile industry. In June the University had to return 3% of its state-funded budget to the State, and so the English Department was hit with a very large budget rescission. The Department has already seen a cut in teaching lines; and I anticipate another cut to our base budget this coming year. The generosity of alums has always made the critical difference in the Department's ability to maintain its excellence in teaching, research, and service to the wider community as it weathers budget storms. We continue to need your help to support graduate fellowships, to ensure retention and recruitment of stellar faculty, and to support our innovative curricular initiatives such as The New England Literature Program.

My colleagues and I appreciate your commitment to this department and your continued passion for the pleasures of literature, language, and the history in which they are embedded.

THE BEN PRIZE

The Ben Prize was established in the Department of English Language and Literature to recognize two exceptional Lecturers who work with students to improve their writing skills. This annual award, which carries an honorarium of \$2500, was made possible through the generosity of Bradley Meltzer and a group of donors who established the award honor of English Advisory Board member Laurence Kirshbaum. The Ben Prize is named after Kirshbaum's first grandchild.

Lecturers Eric Knuth and Lisa Makman were selected as the first recipients of the Ben Prize, and in a small ceremony earlier this year, Kirshbaum was on hand to present certificates to Knuth and Makman recognizing their achievement.

THE BEN PRIZE

L-R Eric Knuth, Laurence Kirshbaum and Lisa Makman



Zell Fellow Dave Karczynski (at right) moderates "Writing to Create a Larger Arts Community" panel

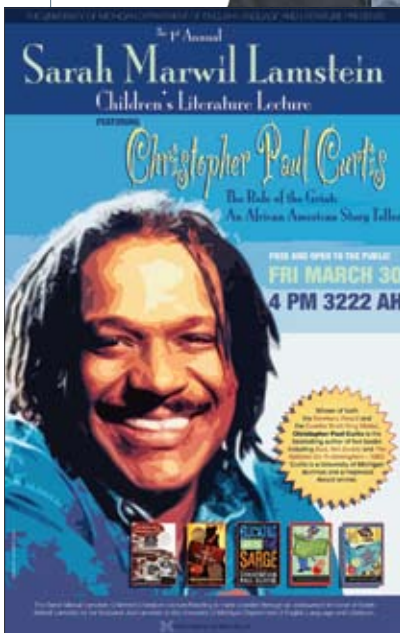
THE ZELLOWS

The MFA in Creative Writing Program was happy to announce this year, thanks to the continued generosity of Helen Zell, five \$20,000 Zell Fellowships for graduating MFA students. The fellowships, which are for the academic year following graduation, require recipients to be in residence and to contribute to the life of the Ann Arbor writing community. The Zell Fellows have come to be known in the Department as the "Zellows." This fall our five Zellows moderated a day of panel discussions at our symposium, "The Business of Writing," held on September 20th at Palmer Commons.

EVENTS

The Department hosted two major events this past year. The first was the Sarah Marwil Lamstein Children's Literature Lecture. This year's lecture, featuring award-winning author Christopher Paul Curtis, was the first of what will be an annual event that aims to foster interest in quality Children's Literature at the University of Michigan. The funding for the lecture series was established by Joel H. Lamstein in honor of his wife and English Advisory Board member Sarah Marwil Lamstein.

The second event was the "Modernism Unbound" conference. The conference celebrated, after thirty years of teaching, mentoring and scholarship at the University, the retirement of George Bornstein and featured prominent modernist scholars from across the country, many of whom were former students of Professor Bornstein.



ABOVE: Event posters
RIGHT: Christopher Paul Curtis and Sarah Marwil Lamstein

MISS THIS YEAR'S LAMSTEIN LECTURE?
Download an MP3 of the lecture and view a video sample at:
www.lsa.umich.edu/english/media/



PERFORMANCE STUDIES

Patrick Stewart leads a stellar cast in the Royal Shakespeare Company's staging of *The Tempest* at the University of Michigan

WHAT IS PERFORMANCE STUDIES?

W. B. Worthen

Over the past three decades Performance Studies has brought the study of “performance” more centrally into the discourse of the humanities and social sciences, galvanizing the formal study of dramatic and theatrical performance as well. Characterized as an “antidiscipline” trained on an “essentially contested concept,” as a “nomadic” practice gathering a heterogeneous field of objects into its “caravan,” as a fertile crossroads between the practices of research and those of artistic creation, in institutional terms Performance

Studies dates from the 1980s, as the graduate program in Drama at New York University was redirected to the study of “performance” more broadly. Taking its initial direction from the collaboration between the critic and director Richard Schechner and anthropologist Victor Turner, Performance Studies was initially preoccupied with the “ritual processes” and “restored behaviors” of the liminal (threshold-crossing) genres of artistic and social performance. At Northwestern University, under the inspiration of Dwight Conquergood, the Department of Interpretation was also renamed, bringing to the emerging ethnographic focus of Performance Studies its tradition of literary adaptation for the stage. In both cases, the founding gesture of the field figured a decisive broadening

of the concept of “performance.” Rather than assuming the model of Western drama as its paradigm, Performance Studies would place the inherent multiplicity and mobility of performance at its center, opening to the theoretical forms and processes of the humanities and social sciences, engaging an urgently global understanding of performance cultures, and seizing artistic practice as both the object and the means of inquiry. Performance Studies departments and programs have been opened in universities throughout the world.

Performance Studies arose at a decisive moment of interdisciplinary cross-pollination. In literary studies, the New Criticism of the 1950s and 1960s had a difficult time with performance: granted, Shakespeare’s plays are replete with richly ambiguous poetic language, but they are also traced by an apparatus—speech prefixes, stage directions, exits and entrances, actors’ names—that point to the works’ life elsewhere, on the stage. Eschewing “contextual” approaches as eccentric to the perception of the poem’s essential verbal identity, New Criticism barred performance from the field of critique, and despite a long tradition of research into Shakespeare’s material theater, “literary” engagements with the performative structure of Shakespeare’s drama (with a few key exceptions) developed only in the late 1960s and 1970s, in studies by Bernard Beckerman, John Russell Brown, Michael Goldman, and J. L. Styan among others. In a nearly reciprocal move, the emerging paradigm of “theater history”—based on a longer tradition of German *Theaterwissenschaft*—tended to sidestep the study of drama, in order to focus a salutary attention on the materiality of the theater: the organization of theater companies, studies of the audience, theater design and architecture, the history of costume, theater sociology. And yet, throughout the 1960s and burgeoning in the 1970s these disciplinary paradigms began to be reshaped, through the varieties of “performance-oriented” critique of playwrights from Shakespeare to Beckett; attention to the impact of Brecht, Artaud, Grotowski, and Boal on the work of the stage; and a general engagement with the ways embodiment remakes the design of drama. This emerging sense of “performance” caught the tail of the theory comet of the 1980s: the Derridean critique of “presence” informed a searching interrogation of theatrical performance and of stage practice; Clifford Geertz’s notion of culture-as-text enabled literary scholars to “read” the cultural practices with which literature, drama, and theater were produced and consumed; Judith Butler’s application of J. L. Austin’s “performative” to social identity jibed with a range of performances in the theatrical avant-garde, and brought performativity and performance—albeit sometimes in an etiolated fashion—centrally into the discourse of the humanities. Performance Studies’ emergence on the critical scene articulated readily with a theoretical culture looking for ways to locate and interpret the political consequences of art, and more specifically with a turn from “the text itself” to the forms and moods of its practice and effects on identity, in the body, as culture. Indeed, Performance Studies—sometimes

understood as opposed to literary or theater studies—is largely responsible for bringing “performance” back into the notably “antitheatrical” precincts of the humanities.

Performance Studies today ranges across the genres of artistic performance—music and dance, drama and popular theater, opera—as well as across any kind of performance in which artistry and activism might be analyzed: parades and protests, community performance, memorials, theme parks,

Shakespeare’s plays are replete with richly ambiguous poetic language, but they are also traced by an apparatus—speech prefixes, stage directions, exits and entrances, actors’ names—that point to the works’ life elsewhere, on the stage

museums, and more. At Michigan, Performance Studies is fittingly delocalized: you can find it across the campus, in the Department of Theatre & Drama, in the Center for World Performance Studies, in the School of Art and Design, and in the Department of English. Our Department contributes its own distinctive complexity to this critical stew. Performance Studies animates the critical discussion of dramatic performance in a number of ways, not only informing (as Enoch Brater remarks below) a richly pedagogical sense of the uses of performance now enshrined in the new Arthur Miller Theatre and in the ongoing series of Royal Shakespeare Company Residencies (richly historicized by Ralph Williams), but also (as Barbara Hodgdon suggests) providing a multiplex critical instrument for assessing the ways stage and film performances “use, use up, adapt, appropriate, translate, and transcode” dramatic writing, and “reconfigure and reshape critical practices as well as critical re-performances.” Professors Brater, Hodgdon, and Williams are known for their scholarship on drama and dramatic performance; my own work falls on the critical and disciplinary interface of writing and performance, how writing can afford (and sometimes prevent) its embodiment in the disciplines of theater and the practices of criticism. But Performance Studies is hardly confined to dramatic performance, and the English Department’s version of PS extends well beyond Miller and Shakespeare. Amy Carroll’s synthesis of the fertile variety of Latin American and Latina/o cultural production depends in part on the fluid boundaries between genres, as well as on the kind of fruitful dialogue “between the critic and the artist” that she has pursued—*performed*—throughout her career. Indeed, from its inception Performance Studies has been preoccupied with undoing the boundary between study and action, contemplation and creation, and with finding ways to use performance to bring about an efficacious conversation across the liminal threshold of the university. Petra Kupper’s work, as artist, scholar, teacher, and activist witnesses the ways performance “can generate complex forms of knowledge and

experience,” and how “performing disability is a path to a more accessible world.” Although Performance Studies will remain a “contested” field for some time, it has become one of the ways the English department performs itself to the world beyond its walls.

BOUNDARY ISSUES

Amy Carroll

One might approach Performance Studies through the leitmotif of the life-story. In what follows, I offer no aerial perspectives on the field’s formation, presenting instead an idiosyncratic portrait of the assistant professor as a once and future student-nomad.

My intellectual development happened to coincide with the rise of the interdiscipline—Performance Studies—in which I’m now engaged. I found refuge in anthropology’s mid-to-late ‘80s crisis regarding the limits of representation. At Princeton University, I wrote a senior thesis comprised of two parts—a collection of poetry and a critical essay on anthropology’s “literary turn.” The magic didn’t last. I began graduate school in anthropology at the University of Chicago with the express purpose of considering cultural production in Mexico and on the U.S.-Mexico border. Post-prelims, I took an unusual leave-of-absence—I entered Cornell University’s Program in Creative Writing to pursue an MFA in poetry. After completing that degree and teaching creative writing for two years, I came clean—to myself: I wasn’t going to finish my graduate training in anthropology.

Eventually I completed my Ph.D. at Duke University in the Literature Program, where I wrote a dissertation on the performative uses of the allegorical in cultural production that addresses post-NAFTA U.S. and Mexican relations. My project’s “archive” spans turn-of-the-millennium performance, cabaret, theater, cinema, digital and alternative art from Mexico and the United States. Linking arguments about the performativity of allegory to debates concerning the modern/postmodern in Latin America and beyond, my conceptualization of “the allegorical performative” emerges out of my close readings of cultural production that theorizes the effects of globalization and neoliberalism on the contemporary Mexican and Mexican-U.S. borderlands citizen-subject. Thus, my project places an installation by Teresa Margolles that vaporizes water used to wash unclaimed corpses in Mexico City’s central morgue in conversation with Alex Rivera’s video triptych that documents the flows and stoppages of goods and people in the San Diego/Tijuana corridor, “Container City,” New Jersey, and along the Mexico-Guatemala border, to address the works’ formal and thematic points of convergence. Specifically, I contend that Margolles and Rivera’s representational tactics share an allegorical and performative practice of reading, which exhibits a simultaneous awareness

of geographic centers/peripheries and those cast onto the peripheries of Mexican and U.S. cultural nationalisms—women, the working class, racial and ethnic others, queers, and migrants.

Revelatory of my abiding commitment to a “critical Latin American and Latina/o Studies,” my dissertation-becoming-a-first-book betrays the ways in which Performance Studies has afforded me the luxury of synthesis, serving to suture what in a prior historical moment might have been dismissed as incommensurable lines of interest. I count my lucky stars that I’ve stumbled into an interdiscipline attentive to the politics and aesthetics of location to such an extent that its various incarnations regularly beg, borrow, and steal from anthropology, art history, literary criticism, theater and drama studies, cultural studies, gender and sexuality studies, ethnic studies, phenomenology (to name only a few of the field’s influences and accomplices).

Concomitantly, I am the grateful beneficiary of idealized renditions of Performance Studies that resist a split instantiated between the critic and the artist or writer. Viewing both as cultural producers, Performance Studies has promoted interpretations of scholarship as process-oriented exercises in



Poem-print, “Speculation,” 1998

creative writing and concomitant formulations of creative work as multi-mediated, theorizing instantiations. My manuscript of poetry marks my ongoing investments in a performative, visual, and material poetics.

Additionally, I import my gratitude to Performance Studies into the classroom; it informs my teaching philosophy. Close and intense teacher-student contact remains for me the prerequisite and outgrowth of a performative classroom ambience, which promotes the paradigm of process. Yet, when I describe this ambience as “performative,” I do not mean that teaching or classroom conversations are “performances” per se (although, arguably, an element of theatricality can be pleasurable for all involved). Instead, I refer to the performative classroom as one that recognizes knowledge as fluid and contingent, as the quintessential collaborative repeat performance.

Last, but not least, as a kind of reality-check qua postscript, the hidden utilitarian dimensions of Performance Studies recently have been brought to my attention via the performative matrix of motherhood. A year ago (April 21, 2006), I gave birth to my son, Césaire. I bear witness: do not be alarmed if family members or friends are drawn like moths to Performance Studies. The interdiscipline boasts a healthy relationship to the contingencies of the quotidian. These days, I find myself falling into an array of performative modes to coax my son to eat his vegetables or to contemplate the merits of an afternoon nap—yes, there are truths to be had in the seemingly esoteric.

PERFORMING DISABILITY CULTURE

Petra Kuppers

Culture grows in many different ways, and institutional support is vital for work to expand, experiment and explore new aesthetic territory—this belief is at the heart of the University of Michigan’s Disability Culture Series, programmed in collaboration with the University of Michigan Initiative in Disability Studies. As a performance studies scholar, my approach to cultural development is based on the concept that we perform our world, enact it every time we consciously call attention to our differences as opportunities for aesthetic growth. Performance can generate complex forms of knowledge and experience, and for me, performing disability is a path to a more accessible world. In the series I program, we explore the stereotypes, beliefs, boundary experiences, and curiosities about disability, and we share how disabled artists create rich work out of cultural constriction. This series brings performance theory into activism, and activism into the center of art-making.

One of the projects in last year’s Series was a presentation of the Anarcha Project, a Michigan-based collaborative performance project funded by the Global Ethnic Literatures



the anarcha project

april 4-5th, 2007

a performative
research symposium
on black culture/
disability culture

Collaborating artists
address the memory of medical
experimentation on slave women in
Montgomery, Alabama.

We explore how performance can
offer a space for our responses to
public secrets, (women’s) bodies,
the persistence of pain,
racialised medical histories,
health care inequalities,
and survival.

University of Michigan
Duderstadt Video Performance Studio,
North Campus, free, ASL interpreted

Wednesday 4/4: 2.30 The Anarcha Project Performative Lecture
Anita Gonzalez, Aimee Meredith Cox, Carrie Sandahl, Petra Kuppers, Tiye Giraud

8.30 Performance: Lynn Manning, *Quiet As It’s Kept*
Lynn Manning shares his new show in progress, about his experiences in
the foster care system and life as a blind African-American man

Thursday 4/5: 8.00 The Anarcha Project Performance

Conference Director and Contact: Petra Kuppers, petra@umich.edu
Photographer: Lisa Steichmann
Poster Design: Adrienne Vetter and Melissa Squires

Sponsored by the Global Ethnic Literatures Seminar, and the University of
Michigan Initiative on Disability Studies



Seminar. The project focused on memories of three Alabama slave women who in the 1840s persevered through years of medical experimentation at the hands of J. Marion Sims, “the father of gynecology.” We resurrect the memories of Anarcha, Lucy, and Betsy through performance material developed out of two years of archival research and live and on-line workshops with hundreds of writers, artists, performers, activists, academics, and students. The workshop participants’ responded to these women’s stories with remembrances both imagined and personal. With its infusion of dance, spoken-word and written poetry, theater, music, and projected images, The Anarcha Project celebrates folkloric healing practices, explores ethical relationships to history, and interrogates the on-going abuse of marginalized people in health care practices today.

Many of the lived experiences of disabled people in the past are lost to us, or become present only in medical or institutional archives. In The Anarcha Project, black culture and disability culture activists are working together to address these caesuras, not in order to fill them, but to

*The Anarcha Project poster, a
performative research symposium
on black culture/disability culture*

**WATCHING
OURSELVES
WATCHING
SHAKESPEARE**

10-11 November 2006
Rackham Amphitheater
Open to public

Friday, 10 November
9:00 A.M.-12:30 P.M. Paper sessions
2:00 P.M.-5:00 P.M. Paper sessions

Saturday, 11 November
9:00 A.M.-12:30 P.M. Paper sessions
2:00 P.M.-4:00 P.M. Workshop (invitation only)
4:30 P.M.-5:30 P.M. Looking at Shakespeare: An Epilogue

Sponsored by the Office of the Vice President for Research, the Office of the Provost, the College of Learning, Service and the Arts, Henry H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies, the Institute for the Humanities, the Department of English Language and Literature, the Department of Theatre, the Department of Asian Arts and Cultures, the Department of Clinical Studies, the Department of American Culture, the Center for European Studies, the University Medical Society and the University of Texas at Austin.

The 2006 Royal Shakespeare Company Residency is presented by the University Medical Society.

For more information, visit www.english.utsi.edu/watching or contact Theresa Johnson at (714) 938-2272.

Watching Ourselves Watching Shakespeare poster, a conference on performance and spectatorship in conjunction with the Royal Shakespeare Company Residency

move across them, mark their presence in our imagination: Carrie Sandahl, Anita Gonzalez, Tiye Giraud, Aimee Meredith Cox and I were in residence in Ann Arbor in the first week of December 2006 to create new work, and on December 7th, we gave a

collaborative performance lecture. During our residency visit, we held eight different workshops, and worked with nearly two-hundred students and community members in Ann Arbor and beyond. Throughout 2007, we visited other sites: Montgomery, Alabama; UC Berkeley; Davidson College, North Carolina; the University of Seattle, and, finally, Ann Arbor again, for a Performative Research Colloquium in April 2007, where performance artists, health professionals and healers, scholars and activists came together to use performative methods rather than conventional academic practices to explore the issues raised by the Anarcha Project. At the end of the symposium, held at the Duderstadt Center with its extensive performance technological offerings, the participants performed their communally-created responses, and shared knowledge and experience in embodied and affective ways.

Performances such as the Anarcha Project speak with different voices and bodies about the need to unmoor

disability from fixed narratives, to find breath. We find our pride not in easy positive images, but in the celebration of the depth of our culture, as we explore emotional, physical and conceptual reach. Visitors to our campus included Jim Ferris, a performance artist and poet, Anne Finger who read from her new memoir *Elegy for a Disease*, a cultural and personal history of polio, Kaite O'Reilly from the U.K., who discussed "peeling," a multilayered theater show that combines Sign, English and audio description to unpeel layers of pride, pain and personal history of three disabled women who are "making it" in the theater world, Vicki Lewis, who shared her new play anthology, *Beyond Victims and Villains: Contemporary Plays by Disabled Playwrights*, and Lynn Manning who brought his new performance on being a blind and black man in LA.

In all of these artists' work, disability becomes the complex origin of aesthetic labor, not its goal, not its story, not its limitation, but its heart. The Series continues on, and in 2007/8, performance artist Neil Marcus will be one of the guests who will continue to enrich our campus life. His focus on the interplay of verbal and non-verbal communication will enhance not only our diversity of representation, but also our ability to be diverse and open to the forms that the acquisition and exchange of knowledge can take. Performance studies as a disciplinary cradle can facilitate this exploration, and can value many different ways of being in this world.

SHAKESPEARE + PERFORMANCE

Barbara Hodgdon

A kind of history. By the late 1970s, the idea that the place to study Shakespeare's plays was the stage—whether in actual performances, classrooms, or theaters of the mind's eye—had become institutionalized as "stage-centered" or "performance criticism," encompassing an eclectic mix of critical practices: reviews; accounts of productions and actors' performances; and, occasionally, theoretically-inflected essays charting the "gap" between text and performance, literature and theater. In ensuing decades, not only did the terms "performance" and "performativity" gain increasing currency within literary studies, but methodologies and vocabularies from adjacent fields—anthropology, sociology, semiotics and film studies—enabled a wider range of theoretical engagements.

In addition, studying Shakespeare's texts within historical contexts as well as exploring their textual histories became increasingly dominant and was inflected by further developments within literary theory: postmodernism, postcolonial theory, feminist theory, queer theory, cultural studies, and film studies. Although these currents contributed toward opening up a conversation between "Shakespeare" and "performance studies," that move also met with resistance,

formalized as a “text vs. performance” debate over reading, hearing, and viewing practices. Whereas one might think that, in comparison to the mute inscriptions on the page, a moment-to-moment engagement with performance could lead to exploring the alternatives offered by any given production, that idea became radically restrained by the sense that the page permits the reader a freedom that the material theater, with its particular bodies and voices, limits and constrains. Put somewhat simplistically, then, Shakespeare performance studies explores the fictions and frictions between page and stage that emerge in conversations “about” and “between” Shakespeare’s texts and performances that use, use up, adapt, appropriate, translate, and transcode those texts; it attempts to reconfigure and reshape critical practices as well as critical re-performances.

Television, videocassette recorders, DVD technology, computers and digital media have broadened considerably the sense of what performance is, what it does, and what it might be made to do. Also figuring in the mix are popular films, especially those which track away from “Shakespeare’s text”—notably, Baz Luhrmann’s *Romeo + Juliet* (1996) and Michael Almereyda’s *Hamlet* (2000)—and move fluently between high and low culture, one moment voicing “Shakespeare,” the next registering resistance. What does it mean to find Shakespeare embedded in a culture of mass-mediation? Or, as in the Wooster Group’s recent *Hamlet*, to watch live actors in conversation with the film of Richard Burton’s 1964 *Hamlet*? Or to come to terms with a Shakespeare that co-exists in relation to a theatrical marketplace dominated by other live performances—musicals, performance art, stand-up comedy—as well as by a panorama of other performative media—advertising, comic books, music, and video games?

The study of performed Shakespeare has traveled from the essentializing orthodoxy of performance criticism to the theoretical heterodoxy of Shakespeare performance studies, a more encompassing, expansive, expressive, and relational arena for re-exploring key issues, for initiating new writing—and for rethinking how we make ourselves, and our culture, by means of performances. Where at one time “Shakespeare” was the privileged term—a pole star governing both performance and critical practice—Shakespeare + performance studies imagines an arena that invites looking at how performance—or theater—can, and often does, trump Shakespeare.

THE RSC RESIDENCIES

Ralph Williams

The three Residencies of the Royal Shakespeare Company in Ann Arbor represent achievements unexampled in the history of three of the world’s great cultural institutions—The University Musical Society (UMS), the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), and the University of

Michigan (U-M). Each Residency (2001, 2003, 2006) drew on and expanded the experience and resources of all three organizations. The horizons of future Residencies, should we be able to continue the project, are boundless.

The beginnings of the Residencies are almost as complex as the reach of the University itself. The story cannot be told here, but the account, when told, will include the names of

From its inception, Performance Studies has been preoccupied with undoing the boundary between study and action, contemplation and creation, and with finding ways to use performance to bring about an efficacious conversation across the liminal threshold of the university

Phillip Power, Terrence Murphy, Lee Bollinger, Ken Fischer, then British Ambassador to the United States, Michael Boyd, and a host of others, quiet talks in England, and meetings in London and New York. High enterprises require courage, fiscal as well as intellectual and artistic: Ken Fischer of the University Musical Society and his Board, and Lee Bollinger, then President of the University, committed the financial support which made it possible for these three institutions to produce as part of the Royal Shakespeare Company’s millennium project (“This England”) Shakespeare’s first history tetralogy (*1, 2, 3 Henry VI* and *Richard III*). None of these institutions alone could have mounted the series, for the three *Henry VI* plays are early Shakespeare and, because they are not well known, are not commonly thought “box office.” The RSC simply hadn’t the financial resources for the audacious artistic attempt to produce all four plays, especially as one grand unit, with one cast, necessarily in rehearsal for months. The U-M contributed not only financial support, but space, and opened its unparalleled intellectual resources for conceiving and executing what a sustained Residency for a theater company at a great scholarly institution might be. The UMS is among the world’s premier presenter organizations, with world-wide recognition and support, and a 125-year tradition of mounting stellar performances; it coordinated the efforts of the troika brilliantly.

The three working together produced what never had been achieved before. Michael Boyd, as director of the plays, and his cast gave Stratford-upon-Avon, Ann Arbor, and then London a spectacle which was hailed by a London critic as “one of the great performances of a century.” Another said simply, “This is the RSC at the top of its game”—a game, be it understood, at which it is the best in the world. The U-M and UMS appeared as co-producers of the play in posters all over England, in the press, on radio and on television. A reviewer for the *New York Times* reported, one gathers with



Rather than finding the plays an archeological enterprise keeping their vision on the past, the students come to see the texts of the plays as the site of very contemporary re-creation

a touch of perplexity, that “some of the hottest tickets in America this Spring” were not for a play on Broadway, but for a performance in “a small college town six hundred miles from Broadway.” One would like to suggest that he get used to the journey.

The second Residency (2003) featured a stage adaptation of Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*, with Salman Rushdie himself co-operating in the shaping of the stage script, and making two trips to Ann Arbor in connection with the production. The Residency focused as well on brilliantly inventive productions of *Coriolanus* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

The third Residency, in the Fall Term of 2006, brought to Ann Arbor *Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and *The Tempest* and, along with the rest of stellar casts, the mega-stars Harriet Walter and Patrick Stewart.

It is pivotal to understand that the Residencies are themselves performances for which all Ann Arbor and the State of Michigan are a stage, with audiences coming (with this last Residency) from 39 states of the U.S. and five foreign countries. In 2006, the audience totaled some 24,000 people. The range of activities reached multiple audiences.

The University’s faculty in a variety of departments from English to Theatre to History to Classics produced new courses or modified ongoing ones to focus on these plays and these particular productions. Dr. Joel Howard of the School of Medicine arranged for residents in Internal Medicine to attend early-morning seminars on the plays, and then to see the productions. Members of the cast gave interviews, attended classes, and discussed their performances; the director Rupert Goold, whose production of *The Tempest* with Patrick Stewart as Prospero, flew in some ways in the face of all previous productions and attained a brilliant and fresh success, came to a class and explored his ideas and their development. Lectures and panels on the plays given by faculty at U-M, MSU, EMU, and Wayne State were open to the public. Busloads of high school students came in from Detroit to dress rehearsals opened especially for them; groups of students came in fact from as far as hundreds of miles away. Students in Ann Arbor participated in a “Sonnet

Slam,” with poems and performances of their own invention, with Patrick Stewart and others as judges. Exhibitions and seminars were presented at the Michigan Theater and the Public Library.

For students at the U-M especially, the performances and the Residencies more widely have made possible two extraordinary experiences. First: they have given our students a vision of “possible excellence.” Students not only see the best in the world; they talk with those who achieve the fresh and remarkable, discuss their careers and ideas, have coffee with them, and share their challenges and doubts as well as their successes. As they appear on the stage, the actors seem born gods of the theater, inimitably brilliant. Sharing ideas with them, and coming to know of their struggles, our students gain the very justifiable sense that if they struggle as hard, and with equal dedication, at whatever they wish to do, if they are willing to undergo sharp challenges and disappointments, they just *might* become the best in the world themselves. A sense of possible excellence: it is among the best gifts of the Residencies.

The second matter is that the students learn, through the performances and in discussion, that the scripts for the plays are the source for a potentially endless number of differing, though nonetheless brilliant and successful performances. The plays are the thing; the diversity of good ones, they come to understand, is boundless, the audiences to which they speak unbounded by divisions of education, race, religion, and political allegiance. There is fresh greatness to be achieved, they see, greatness drawing on tradition, in productions which

speak to a new audience as no production has ever quite done before. Rather than finding the plays an archeological enterprise keeping their vision on the past, the students come to see the texts of the plays as the site of very contemporary re-creation; most excitingly, in classroom, on the streets, and in the theaters and auditoria, they find themselves part of that process.

It will perhaps be illuminating to give here one very focused example of the way in which the relationship has re-ordered the experience of our students. Two undergraduates, Megan Marod and Taryn Fixel, conceived, with Michael Boyd, Ken Fischer, and others, an idea which developed as “internships” for our students with the Royal Shakespeare Company here and in England. President Mary Sue Coleman has supported these as “The President’s Internships at the Royal Shakespeare Company.” Two or three of our students, then, characteristically go to England for several weeks in the summer and work with the directors of particular productions. The experience opens to them new worlds of imagination and professional experience; the course of their lives and careers is made different: they learn to produce on a world stage.

Of course, the experience of theater re-orders the experience of all in the audience. A brilliant production of a play can make evident, even inescapable, deep patterns of meaning which in reading may pass unnoticed. For example, in certain of the later plays of Shakespeare (as, preeminently, *King Lear*) language of “touch” and “feeling” becomes pervasive. Touch, not sight, not sound, becomes our defining sense: whether or not we “feel” becomes the deepest moral test of our humanity. Lear will speak of those who “cannot see because they do not feel” the needs of the poor. The groping, blinded Gloucester will speak with both literal accuracy and metaphoric truth when, to mad Lear’s comment to him, “you see how the world goes,” he responds, “I see it feelingly.”

This same language of our moral sense is woven into *The Tempest*, and Patrick Stewart, as Prospero, made the point luminously a feature of his role. As Prospero, he touches his much-loved daughter Miranda frequently, stroking her hair, cleaning her cheeks of smudge. But throughout the play he never touches Caliban directly: he spurns him, jerks him with a rope, threatens him with a lash. Early in the play Caliban says to Prospero: “When thou cam’st first, / Thou strok’st me and made much of me, would’st give me / Water with berries in’t... / And then I lov’d thee.” In the last great act, at the point of the reweaving of broken human relationships, Prospero turns to address Caliban: “Go, sirrah, to my cell: / Take with you your companions. As you look / To have my pardon, trim it handsomely.” At the word “pardon,” which Prospero had never used to Caliban earlier, the usually crouching or tensely slouching Caliban in this production straightens up, and leans onto Prospero’s chest. And Prospero slowly strokes his hair. There is nothing in the stage directions to tell an actor to do this. But in that moment and small gesture, something fundamental to Shakespeare appeared in all its clarity.



Above: Mariah Gale as Miranda and Patrick Stewart as Prospero in *The Tempest*. Opposite page: Harriet Walter as Cleopatra and Stewart as Antony in *Antony and Cleopatra*

We have been privileged to witness the kind of clarity the RSC brings to the stage, and to pursue a relationship with the company. Three Presidents of the University now, Lee Bollinger, Acting President Joe White, and Mary Sue Coleman, have seen the enormous value of this relationship, which is poised to develop in ways which enrich the lives of students, faculty, the whole Michigan community, and our alumni who return to Ann Arbor for this intellectual and artistic experience. Is it possible that in future we may think of Ann Arbor as the best in the nation as the site of spectacle? We are that now, in ways we all know, at the Stadium. May we add to that another way of our identifying ourselves with the U-M throughout our lives, this time in the spectacle of the Stage seen as the focus not only of the pleasure and inspiration of the theater, but as the focus of concentrated, sustained study? With the Power Center and the new Walgreen theaters, we are capable of Residencies not only of the Royal Shakespeare Company, but of a major U.S. company which could alternate with the RSC in sustained periods of activity in Ann Arbor. With the superb resources of our own Theatre and Musical Theatre programs, and with the resources of all the schools and Universities in this state, we could produce what no University has achieved before. As the reviewer from the *New York Times* discovered, all the world, including Broadway and Power Center, can be a stage. But with the RSC Residencies, Ann Arbor has conceived something unmatched.



EXPLORING SHAKESPEARE | RSC ON THE WEB

For more information on the RSC, including video samples, interviews, and photographs, please visit the RSC website: www.rsc.org.uk/explore/

THE ARTHUR MILLER THEATRE

The official opening of the new Arthur Miller Theatre in the Walgreen Drama Center on March 29, 2007, offers students at Michigan, many of them English concentrators, the rare opportunity to enrich their understanding of theater and drama in all its many dimensions. Designed for North Campus by the Toronto-based architectural firm Kuwabara Payne McKenna and Blumberg Associates, the space has been purposefully designed as a learning environment to meet the specific needs of student practitioners. It seats 270 in straight proscenium configuration, with the option of a $\frac{3}{4}$ thrust arrangement. No seat is more than 25 feet away from the performance space. “Whoever thought,” wrote Arthur Miller in his 85th year, “that when I was saving \$500 to come to Michigan that it would come to this.”

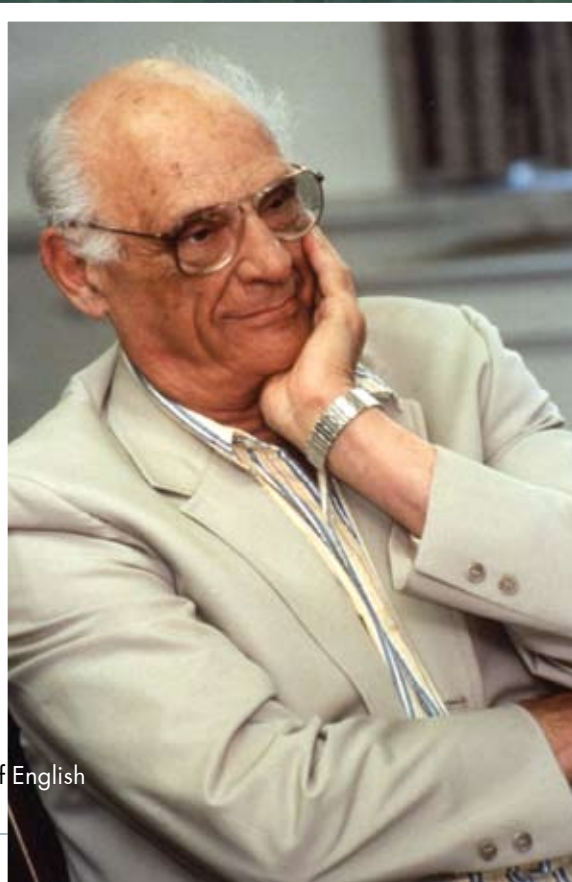
Arthur Miller (’38), who majored in English, had been asked many times by companies around the world if his name might be used for new theater facilities; he always declined. But when Michigan asked him if he would agree to be honored in this way, he felt he could no longer say no. The state-of-the-art facility is the only theater in the world to bear his name, and it does so with his complete approval. Before he died on February 10, 2005, he had a chance to have a careful look at the final plans for the space that now bears his name. He was especially pleased to see that the theater bearing his name would be used primarily by Michigan undergraduates.

Members of the Miller family were on hand to witness the opening night performance, including his son Robert, a producer; his sister, the actress Joan Copeland; his nephew, Ross Miller, another Michigan graduate who is also Professor of English at the University of Connecticut; and his granddaughter Katy,

an undergraduate student at UCLA. The ceremonies began with a lecture called “Drama Matters: Suitcases, Sand and Dry Goods,” which I delivered as the recently appointed Kenneth T. Rowe Collegiate Professor of Dramatic Literature. The named chair honors Miller’s playwriting mentor who, along with the instructors Mueschke and Erich Walter, played a huge part in encouraging the playwright’s burgeoning talent as a two-time Hopwood Award winner.

Produced by the Department of Theatre & Drama, *Playing for Time* was selected as the inaugural production for the Arthur Miller Theatre. The guest director was yet another Michigan graduate, Robert Chapel, currently of the University of Virginia, who involved more than 60 students to bring this work to stage life. Originally written as a compelling television adaptation of Fania Fenelon’s *The Musicians of Auschwitz*, the play was shown on CBS in 1980, starring Vanessa Redgrave and Jane Alexander. Miller subsequently transformed the piece for live stage presentation, though there have been only a few isolated productions of the revised version.

In order to highlight the importance of the occasion, a symposium entitled “Global Miller” was held at the Rackham Amphitheater in coordination with the opening production of *Playing for Time*. Benedict Nightingale, a former member of the Michigan faculty who currently serves as the major drama critic for *The Times* of London,



was one of the panelists, as was Christopher Bigsby, director of the Arthur Miller Centre at the University of East Anglia in Norwich. Joining them were Steve Marino, editor of the *Arthur Miller Journal*; David Esbjornson, Artistic Director of the Seattle Repertory Company; John Dillon, former Artistic Director of the Milwaukee Rep who now teaches at Sarah Lawrence; Elizabeth Hope Clancy, costume designer at the Seattle Rep; Robert Chapel, the director; as well as prominent members of the Theatre and English Departments who have either worked closely on Miller projects or taught his plays over many years, including familiar names like Alan Wald, Laurence Goldstein, Peter Bauland, and relative newcomers to the faculty like Barbara Hodgdon and W.B. Worthen. Also participating in the symposium were Vince Mountain and Jessica Hahn, designers for the featured production of *Playing for Time*. Other participants in the two-day event were Leigh Woods, Kate Mendeloff and OyamO, who made an impassioned plea for the need for developing an active and forward-looking program for playwriting at Michigan, something that would be an even more lasting tribute to the memory of Arthur Miller.

The enormous potential of the Walgreen Drama Center as a performing arts center, capable of not only housing the Department of Theatre & Drama, was made abundantly clear by the fact that more than one production could be staged there at the same time. The New York-based experimental company Polybe + Seats was in residence April 6-7 to present *The Charlotte Salomon Project*, an innovative theater piece that parallels Miller's drama in *Playing for Time* in that both works attempt to represent the situation of women artists as they struggle for life in the darkest moments of the Shoah. Each work conveyed with clarity and alarming precision, but in different performance styles, the fate of a young woman artist whose life was interrupted by the tragedy of the Shoah. Under the direction of Jessica S. Brater, *The Charlotte Salomon Project* features a narrative based on more than 1300 paintings completed by the artist before she was murdered at Auschwitz.

Students enrolled this past semester in English 349 on American Drama, a course cross-listed as Theatre 323, took in both productions at the Walgreen Drama Center and also attended the "Global Miller Symposium," using the opening events as the basis for self-generated term projects. Along with our continuing commitment to the Royal Shakespeare Residency, the opening of the Arthur Miller Theatre offers both students and faculty alike the opportunity to experience drama in a true performance environment, off the page and onto the stage. "This is more than bricks and mortar," one first-nighter noted, "it is really a new beginning." Or as one symposium participant suggested, "The limits of this attractive new space are only the limits of our own imagination."

—Enoch Brater

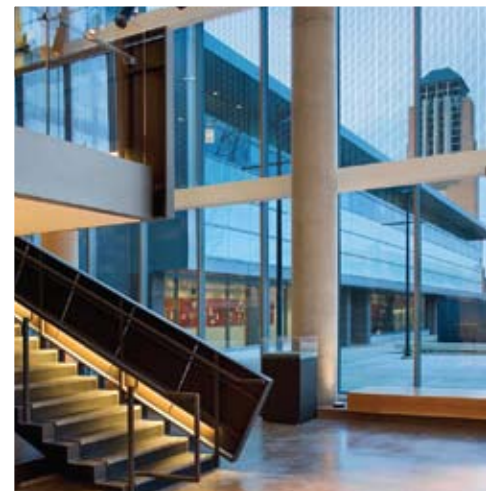


Photo credits: Arthur Miller, UAM Photo Services; background AMT, Anthony Cece; lower right AMT images © Tom Atban Photography



DANIEL HACK

I come to Michigan from SUNY-Buffalo, where I taught for nine years after receiving my PhD from the University of California at Berkeley. My field is nineteenth-century British literature, with an emphasis on the history of the novel and print culture. The issues I am especially interested in include the effects of literary works on their readers; the afterlives of literary works—that is, how works take on new meanings and functions over time and in different places; the role of the past in modern society; the nature of authorship; and the virtues and limitations of such traditional intellectual ideals as reflectiveness, detachment, and subtlety. This all sounds very abstract, but I tend to get at these issues by focusing on concrete and worldly matters, from schemes to support starving writers and the publishing practices of abolitionist newspapers to

spontaneous human combustion and revenge. Both in my writing and in the classroom I seek to test our own assumptions and beliefs against those of the Victorians.

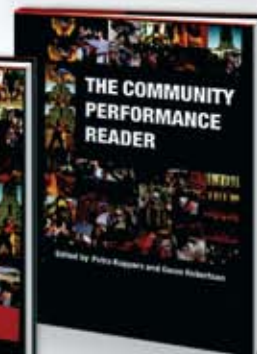
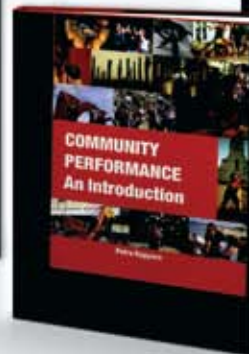
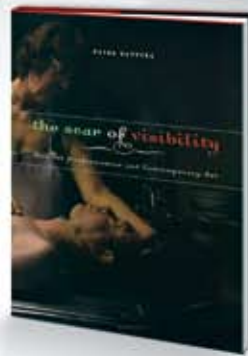
My first book, *The Material Interests of the Victorian Novel* (2005), shows how such writers as Dickens, Eliot, and Thackeray sought to make sense of their novels' simultaneous status as texts, books, and commodities—that is, as not only linguistic, narrative constructs but also physical artifacts bought and sold in the marketplace. Reading novels through such unlikely lenses as the advertisements with which they were published, the typeface in which they were set, and the begging letters to which they were compared, I show how writing's material ingredients and entanglements became sources of literary and cultural authority, rather than impediments to such authority, as is often assumed.

I am currently working on two projects. The first, a study of the historical mobility and malleability of literary works, explores the often unexpected uses to which British literature was put in antebellum African-American and abolitionist writings and publications. The recovery of this history contributes to a new, more transatlantic understanding of the development of British and American literature as well as African-American print culture. My other current project is on the place of revenge in a range of nineteenth-century discourses, from the novel to anthropology to the history of law. I hope to show how ideas about revenge both anchor and trouble efforts to say what it means to be rational, civilized, or modern, and to establish what is permanent and what is changing in human nature. I look forward to exploring these questions with my new students and colleagues.

faculty publications

Michael Awkward, *Soul Covers: Rhythm and Blues Remakes and the Struggle for Artistic Identity* (Aretha Franklin, Al Green, Phoebe Snow); Sara Blair, *Harlem Crossroads: Black Writers and the Photograph in the Twentieth Century*; George Bornstein, *The Collected Works of W. B. Yeats, Volume IV: Early Essays*; Enoch Brater, *Arthur Miller's Global Theater*; Lorna Goodison, *From Harvey River: A Memoir of my Mother and her People*; Linda Gregerson, *Magnetic North*; Jonathan Freedman, *Klezmer America: Jewishness, Ethnicity, Modernity* (not pictured); David M. Halperin, *What Do Gay Men Want? An Essay on Sex, Risk, and Subjectivity*; Peter Ho Davies,

The Welsh Girl; Laura Kasischke, *Be Mine*; Petra Kupperts, *The Scar of Visibility: Medical Performances and Contemporary Art, Community Performance: An Introduction*, and *The Community Performance Reader* (co-edited with Gwen Robertson); Theodora Bosanquet, Edited with notes and introduction by Lyall Powers, *Henry James at Work*; Eric Rabkin, *Masterpieces of the Imaginative Mind: Literature's Most Fantastic Works*; Catherine Sanok, *Her Life Historical: Exemplarity and Female Saints' Lives in Late Medieval England*; Translated by Keith Taylor and William W. Reader, *Kostas Karyotakis, Battered Guitars*; Alan M. Wald, *Trinity of Passion*.



I grew up in Denver, Colorado and—intermittently—Key West, Florida. As a child, Denver seemed boring to me, but I've since realized I should have gotten out more. Key West was much more exotic, filled with lizards and pelicans and a litany of specific neighborhoods and streets that I was not allowed to visit. Unfortunately it's much tamer now.

After studying Comparative Literature and Creative Writing at Princeton University, I did my graduate work at Harvard University. From 1999 to 2007, I taught at the University of Iowa. My teaching and scholarship stem from my interest in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English culture, particularly the early modern understanding of the emotions and literary depictions

of the passions. My first academic book, *The Poetics of Melancholy in Early Modern England* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), explores the self-understanding of writers such as John Donne, Robert Burton, and John Milton, all of whom claimed depressive tendencies. My second book project is entitled *Love and Heresy in Early Modern England*. This work examines the relation between amorous attachment and the rise of radical religious sects—and authors—in seventeenth-century England. I am interested in how love operates in this period both as the cornerstone for orthodox religious belief and—in other circles—an invitation to impiety.

In addition to my academic career, I write fiction. My first collection of short stories, *The*

Thin Tear in the Fabric of Space (University of Iowa Press), won the 2005 Iowa Short Fiction Award and was a finalist for the 2006 Hemingway Foundation/PEN Award. The book is a study of different manifestations of grief, some of which are tied to the loss of loved ones, others to the necessity of having to redefine oneself at a particular juncture in one's life. My creative work has appeared in dozens of journals, including *The Paris Review* and *The New England Review*, and has been anthologized in *The Best American Nonrequired Reading 2005* and *The O. Henry Prize Stories 2006*. I am currently writing a novel set in Boston. My wife Theresa and I have two children: William, who is four, and Cece, who is one.

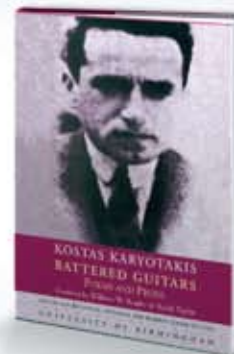
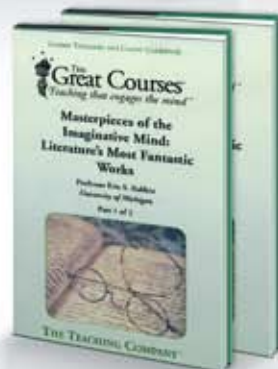
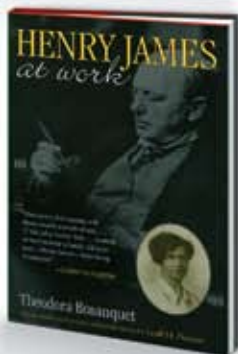
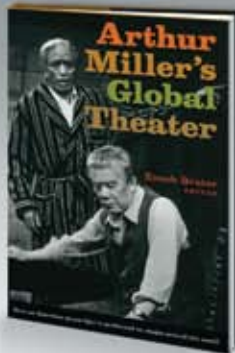
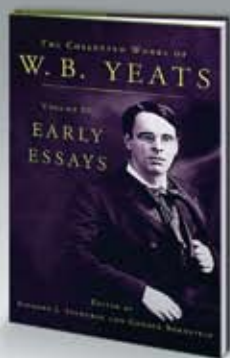


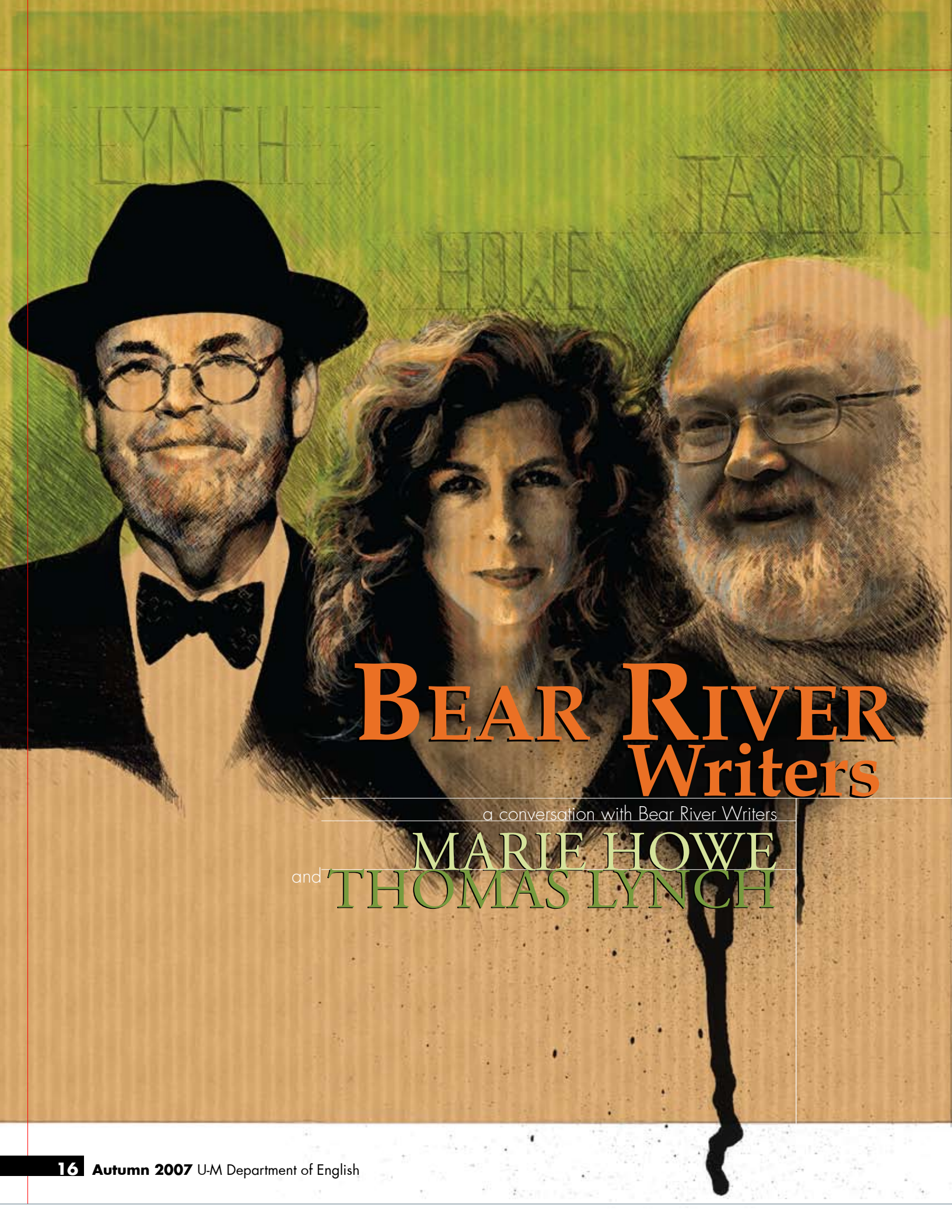
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For more information on all our faculty, including research interests, areas of study, recent publications and even writing samples, please visit the faculty section of our website: www.lsa.umich.edu/english/faculty





BEAR RIVER Writers

a conversation with Bear River Writers

MARIE HOWE
and THOMAS LYNCH

The following conversation with **Marie Howe**, **Thomas Lynch**, **Sarah Sala** (Senior, English major), and **Keith Taylor** (Director) took place at the Bear River Writers' Conference, Camp Michigania, May 31 to June 4, 2007.

TAYLOR:

Why do we do these short summer conferences? What is it that brings us here and what is it that brings people in to be a part of it?

LYNCH:

Speaking as someone who's been participating at Bear River since the beginning, I'm always amazed at what happens when you bring the power and glory of the University of Michigan's Department of English to bear on self-defining writers. I have a student who graduated from high school last week and another one who has been retired for ten years and now wants to see what shape non-fiction will take for him. It's a remarkable opportunity for writers—who otherwise would never have any conversation—to get together. If they come away from a long weekend like this with five new lines or paragraphs or a thousand words or an idea, that's wonderful. A bonus is if they come away—and this almost always happens—with the e-mail address of two or three people who they can always count on to read their work honestly. A few months ago I was coming off a plane in New York when a former student of mine from Bear River came running up and hugged me after having just signed a contract with her publisher in New York. And I thought, wow, isn't that something. Who'd have guessed?

HOWE:

It's a democracy. It's a place where people of all kinds can come together. I love to be in writers' conferences. If I could, I would do just them all year because of the range, from older people to very young people to people who have been educated in the art of writing and people who have not. It's also a sanctuary. It's a place outside of the marketplace. It's a place where we come to do together what we do alone, and it's a place just temporarily created where this is valued. In our culture there's very little value given to poetry but, of course, it's beyond price. It's not given much of a space. Then, in a place like this, we can gather around the old fires and gain strength from each other. I always do. I feel so strengthened by being with everybody here.

LYNCH:

What Marie was saying, about how this type of situation creates an atmosphere in which the work is honored—it's an exceptional experience.

HOWE:

Here, it's not about who you are and where you come from or who you know. None of that matters. It's about what you're doing. I met today these amazing kids who just graduated from high school and also, older people who had been writing

for years. And I get to be with published writers whom I've admired, and we also get to leave our homes and travel to this beautiful place. It feels sacred to me. I don't mean that in a corny way. I mean that in a real way. It feels like a space is made that often isn't—that usually can't sustain itself in the world that's commodified and constantly busy.

SALA:

Do you think Bear River works because it's out in the middle of nowhere, or can you create a sanctuary like this anyplace?

HOWE:

In New York City, sure.

LYNCH:

I think there is something to be said for Walloon Lake and these glorious acres. I mean, yes, it's Michigan! I see Bear River as the University of Michigan protecting Michigan in a lot of ways. It is doing what a University ought to do. Bear River is this sort of jewel at the beginning of summer that says "this is going to work out."

HOWE:

A lot of the conferences take place in wonderful places away from the busyness of cities. I work a lot every year at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown and some places like Napa Valley, and they are all beautiful. You remember your place in the universe. You know, standing out there in the water with my daughter this morning I said, "Okay, I remember my right size here now. I'm tiny in this huge landscape." That's such a relief. But I think you can do it anywhere. You can make a space.



BEAR RIVER ON THE WEB

For more information on Bear River writers and the Bear River Writers' Conference, including writing samples, costs, dates and deadlines, please visit the website: www.lsa.umich.edu/bearriver/

Linda Gregerson
Poetry

Bob Hicok
Poetry

Laura Kaschke
Fiction & Poetry

Elizabeth Kostova
Fiction

Thomas Lynch
Essay & Poetry

Richard McCann
Creative Non-Fiction

Bill Roorbach
Nature Writing

Keith Taylor
Director

Richard Tillinghast
Poet of Poetry

Barry Wallenstein
Performance

Special Guest
MARIE HOWE

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Illustration: Anthony Cece, using photos by Marion Roth (Howe) and Robert Turney (Lynch)

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Three of our Ph.D. students offer dissertation blurbs on their intellectual projects

CAROLINE GIORDANO

I plan on defending my dissertation in April and going on the academic job market in the fall of 2008. I'll hopefully also be teaching as a Lecturer here in the English department for the 2008-09 academic year.



GAVIN HOLLIS

I'm planning on defending my dissertation in the spring and having my degree completed in the summer of 2008. I am currently on the job market.



EMILY LUTENSKI

I am defending my dissertation on January 25, 2008, so my degree will be conferred in April 2008. I am currently on the job market.



AS LONG AS I'VE been reading nineteenth-century novels, I've been struck by the ways in which they continuously refer to "character" as a kind of moral essence that individuals possess: George Eliot tells us, for instance, that Daniel Deronda "had the character of a benefactor," and Jane Austen writes that "dear Emma was of no feeble character." My dissertation, "Developing Character in the Nineteenth-Century Novel," thinks about how novelistic "character" functions on this peculiar moral level, as well as how the nineteenth-century novel's numerous depictions of moral character influence our way of thinking about what a novelistic character "is" as a formal or structural concept within literary analysis (along with story, point-of-view, narration, etc.). I'm specifically looking at both British and French character-development novels (such as Dickens's *David Copperfield* and Flaubert's *Sentimental Education*) to try to understand the moral and formal systems that coalesce in the concept of character. I hope ultimately to illustrate how an increased attention to literary character's multiple meanings can help us understand the often counterintuitive ways that novels theorize human development.

THE "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" BETWEEN Britain and the U.S. has come under much scrutiny in recent years, and, as a British-born student at an American university, I have become fascinated by the history of this relationship. My dissertation on "The Absence of America on the Early Modern Stage" looks at the early phase of this relationship, when Britons commenced transatlantic enterprise and colonization in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to ascertain how they experienced America, its inhabitants, and its settlement in actual and imagined encounters. It examines how various forms of dramatic performance (plays staged in professional theaters, aristocratic masques mounted at court, and civic pageantry performed to crowds of Londoners) represented early English settlement in Virginia and New England, and it compares these forms to propaganda enthusing about the benefits of settling in the Americas. Through this comparison, not only can we gain a more nuanced sense of emerging English imperialism, but we can also reconstruct voices and experiences otherwise lost—those of opponents to colonialism in England, of settlers in America, and of Native Americans.

INSCRIPTION ROCK IN NEW MEXICO is a mesa shading an adjacent pool, a centuries-old crossroads for travelers seeking respite from the high desert. Their traces linger in engravings in the rock, from indigenous petroglyphs to conquistador Juan de Oñate's 1605 "*Paso por aqui*," from the first inscriptions in English (carved in the wake of the Mexican-American war) to the graffiti of early twentieth-century tourists. In 1906 the writing stops when, about 2,000 inscriptions strong, the site became protected by the federal government.

I think of Inscription Rock as a physical representation of the cultural interstices of the southwest. Its multilingual, dated engravings are marks of race and history. Its words etched in the landscape serve as a reminder of a southwestern literary history, albeit one perhaps muted—like its carved signatures—becoming more subtle with wear. It's also a fitting metaphor for my project, "In the Land of Enchantment: Multiethnic Modernism and the American Southwest," where I examine writing of the American southwest and its "politics of location" in the early twentieth century, when the carvings on Inscription Rock cease.



A physical representation of the cultural interstices of the southwest
— **INSCRIPTION ROCK**

ATTENTION

THE HONORS PROGRAM IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THAT IT IS LAUNCHING AN ANNUAL HONORS ALUMNI SPEAKER SERIES.

Our first speaker will be Glenn Adelson. Professor Adelson is on the faculty at Wellesley College, where he teaches Biology and Environmental Sciences.

We are looking for Honors Alumni interested in visiting with and speaking to our current Honors students about the benefits of doing independent research during the undergraduate years. Would any of you be keen to share how your own projects influenced your later career and life?

All expenses and a speaking stipend would be paid by the Honors Program.

If you have stories to offer about the benefits of independent research, please contact the Administrative Assistant for the Honors Program, at:

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Your gifts to the English Department make the "Michigan Difference" as we strive to realize as fully as possible our commitment to the highest standards of excellence in teaching, research and community outreach, especially in light of the economy of the State of Michigan. Your gifts, no matter what the amount, contribute critically to the value of education offered by the English Department. Our alums donated over \$24,000 to the Department's Strategic Fund this past year in gifts ranging from \$25 to \$2,500. These gifts help support graduate students, enhance the undergraduate classroom, recruit and retain our excellent scholar/teachers, continue our non-campus programs, and respond flexibly to opportunities and to budget constraints. The New England Literature Program is close to its goal of fully funding the directorship thanks to the support of hundreds of NELPers since the beginning of the Michigan Difference campaign. Several significant anonymous gifts were donated to ensure the success of the fundraising drive and the future of NELP. Also this year, Helen Zell's gift of \$100,000 allows recent MFA grads to stay in Ann Arbor to complete their first novel or book of stories or poems. We thank you all.

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