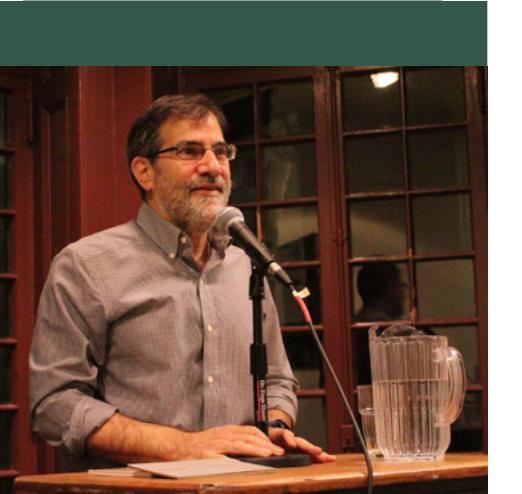


KELLY WRITERS HOUSE



2018 ANNUAL

Dear Friends of the Writers House



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The Arts Café, our main events space at Writers House, was originally a parlor for receiving guests, a nineteenth-century room with little need for any frills beyond furniture and windows. In the house-wide renovation of 1997, we left the room nearly as bare as we had found it. With a microphone, a podium, and an assortment of mismatched chairs, we were able to welcome small audiences for simple events in the intimate space.

We've come a long way in twenty years. The Arts Café is now home to 150 public events each year. Many of our public programs fill the room beyond capacity, requiring overflow seating in the living room. Sometimes one microphone at the podium is enough, but it's often the case that we'll set up several mics, a few laptops, and a digital interface to allow for real-time conversations with participants around the world. The lovely old parlor is still a gathering place, but it's also a complex performance venue, a broadcasting studio, and an innovative classroom. Our old-style lighting, retro acoustics, and internet 1.0 wiring hasn't kept pace.

Thanks to the generosity of **Christine and David Gross-Loh** (W'92), who have made a transformative gift to Writers House, we have been able to reimagine our beloved Arts Café. Taking absolutely everything we've learned in two decades of innovative programming, we've undertaken an ambitious renovation project to enlarge the room and retrofit the historic parlor with integrated, flexible technology. The renovation plan calls for increased seating in a newly-enclosed porch, multiple cameras for live streaming, webcasting, and recording, theater-quality lighting, sophisticated acoustical treatment, and new (and silent!) air handling for heating and cooling — all while scrupulously maintaining the historic look and feel of the space.

Of course in renovating the Arts Café we would never sacrifice the warm, homey environment that differentiates Writers House from other art venues, and

so we sought out an architect who would understand and maintain the ambiance of comfort and the sense of home that are so important to our history. In **DIGSAU**, a local up-and-coming architecture firm, we found design partners sensitive enough to bring the Arts Café into the twenty-first century without compromising the throwback intimacy and personal face-to-face intensity that is its hallmark. Their careful work has ensured a good balance of old and new.

And in true Writers House style, this project has required many hands. In addition to the Gross-Loh family, who made everything possible, we have several other friends to thank for their contributions. **Howie Lipson** (W'86) helped fund the technology package and encouraged us to focus on the possibilities of a state-of-the-art performance venue.

Andrew Beal, our jack-of-all-trades Associate Director of Development and Finance, pored over every plan and drawing, making sure we'd considered all angles and options, including electrical conduits no one knew we'd need. Our colleagues at **Penn's Facilities and Real Estate Services** pitched in to help with building-wide upgrades to our air-handling infrastructure. Our partners in the **Office of the Provost** helped keep the project running smoothly.

And, as always, we are grateful to all of the generous organizations and people who helped out this year with ideas, financial support, and cheerleading, including alumni, students, faculty, ModPo participants, Penn parents, Philadelphians, and Friends of the Writers House from all over the world.

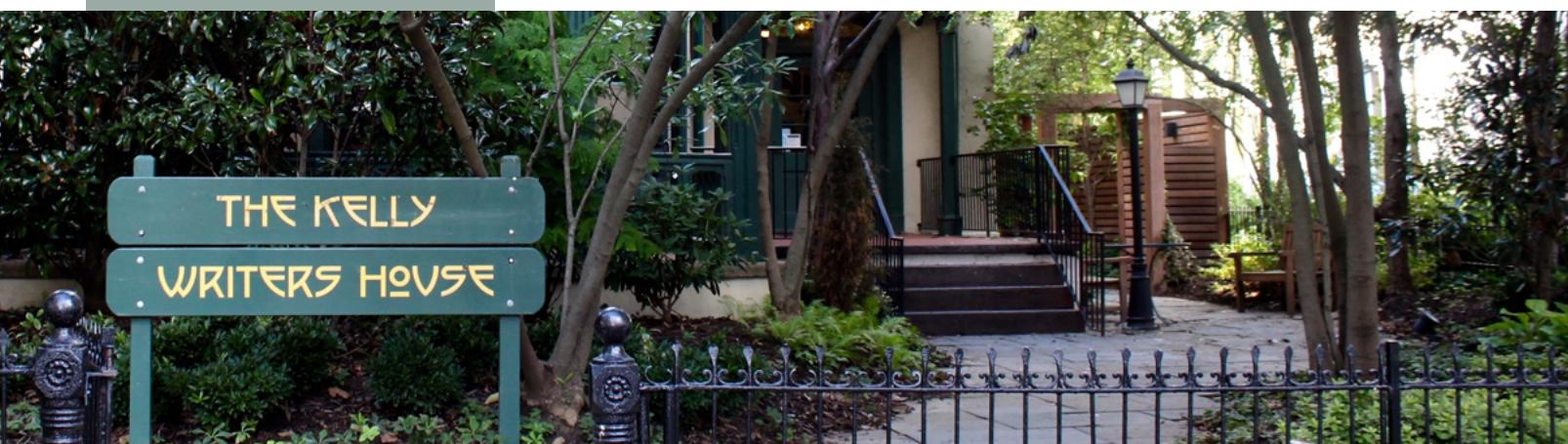
On behalf of the Writers House Planning Committee, thank you for everything you bring to this community!

Al

Al Filreis
Faculty Director
Kelly Professor of English

Jessica

Jessica Lowenthal
Director



HIGHLIGHTS



Kelly Writers House hosted 141 public events this year. We opened the fall semester with a Poetry and Music Festival in our garden, organized by Jake Marmer and featuring otherworldly performances by Julie Patton, Frank London, and Papa Susso. We closed the spring semester with a Fellows Program reading and brunch with *New York Times* Op-Ed columnist Charles M. Blow.

► RACE AND FORM: A DIALOGUE

In October, an interdisciplinary panel sponsored by the Creative Writing Program asked audience members to consider a complex question: how does race embed itself in literary form? Three panelists — ranked by moderator **David Eng** as “among the most compelling thinkers today on race and form” — were here to help break that question down. ICA curator **Meg Onli** opened the conversation with a look at images from *Speech/Acts*, an ICA exhibit that explored the ways “Blackness is constituted in language.” **Dorothy Wang**, whose research focuses on Asian American poetics, followed with a call to scholars to rethink poetic terms — to include race as a more fundamental category. Poet **John Keene** responded to Onli and Wang by recalling a period in the late eighties and early nineties when Black literary history and lineage seemed “rhizomatic” — or drawn from multiple sources and possible trajectories. Throughout the program, the panelists referred repeatedly to the work of seminal science-fiction writer and critic **Samuel R. Delany** — who happened to be in attendance, ready to chime in.

► WRITE YOUR OWN ODYSSEY

When Penn Classical Studies professor **Emily Wilson** came to KWH to read from her extraordinary new translation of Homer’s *Odyssey*, classics fans crammed into the Arts Café, with overflow seating all the way back to the kitchen. And with good reason. Wilson’s translation distances itself notably from earlier versions by updating anachronistic language and metaphor. “There’s a sort of similarity in prejudices and preconceptions about what the *Odyssey* is like as a poem, which don’t necessarily match the Greek,” Wilson explained with a laugh. “There was quite a lot of cultural baggage which I didn’t want to import.” Wilson encouraged readers and future translators to approach canonical texts with a critical lens: “The translator’s job,” she said, “is not to shield the reader from the truth about how disturbing the original text might be.”

► THE DREAM OF THE STYLE GUIDE

A lively yet technical hour-long discussion with **Brooke Borel** fulfilled one of **Julia Bloch**’s dreams: to host a public conversation at Writers House about an editorial style handbook. Borel’s *The Chicago Guide to Fact-Checking* offered Bloch and students from her Art of Editing class, including panelists **Caroline Curran** (C’20) and **Joost Vanderborgh** (C’21), an opportunity to think about the best practices of fact-checking and the importance of accuracy and accountability in reporting. Panelists explored the difference between “fact” and “truth,” why fact checkers don’t write articles themselves, and the “many tentacles of the problem that make fake news possible.” Borel charmed the assembled group of editors and style-guide wonks with an embarrassing story about the time she retweeted a picture of a baby polar bear that turned out to be a picture of a stuffed animal. Her “polar bear test” now helps caution journalists against the thrill of the retweet.

ALUMNI VISITORS

► “Poetic Research on the Body” featured a conversation with poets **Katie L. Price** (GR’14) and **Adam Dickinson**, who use biological concepts — bodies, life processes, scientific theory — as source materials in their poetry.

► YA novelist **Jennifer Yu** (C’16) — just two years out of Penn — visited KWH to share excerpts from her debut novel *Four Weeks, Five People*, about a wilderness therapy camp for teens.

► An Excelano Project doubleheader featured Project member **Imani Davis** (C’20) and alumnus **Cortney Lamar Charleston** (C’12, W’12). Introducer **Kassidi Jones** (C’18) commended Charleston for his capacity to convey a “vast and nuanced” picture of Black experience.



Check out videos, photos, and more from this year's Kelly Writers House programming at: writing.upenn.edu/wh/calendar.



► BERNHEIMER SYMPOSIUM

Everyone’s favorite Twitter poet **Patricia Lockwood** returned to KWH for this year’s **Bernheimer Symposium** to read from *Priestdaddy*, her award-winning memoir about growing up with a Catholic priest for a father. (Yes, her dad’s a priest. It’s complicated!). The reading was highly interactive right from the start: as **Alli Katz** delivered her introduction, Lockwood jumped in with hilarious commentary on Alli’s name, koalas, Twitter’s new word limit, mushrooms, and chlamydia, among other things. Lockwood then invited the audience to choose what she’d read — and we ended up with a raunchy and gut-burstingly funny excerpt from *Priestdaddy* about Lockwood’s experience traveling with her mother to a hotel with a less-than-pristine bedspread, and her mother’s subsequent exchange with hotel management. Twitter fans were especially delighted when, partway through the event, Lockwood paused to tweet at Colson Whitehead, who was just then lecturing at the Penn Museum: “We’re in Philly on the same night!”

► STAND-UPS SIT DOWN

“All you can speak to is what you think is funny,” said comedian **Aparna Nancherla**, responding to a question about minority representation in stand-up. Nancherla visited KWH in April, along with comedian **Billy Wayne Davis**, for **Stand-Ups Sit Down**, an annual event hosted by Penn funnyman **Lew Schneider** (C’83) that gives comedians an opportunity to share stories and jokes and reflect on their experiences — positive and negative — in the entertainment industry. Stories this year included pointed critiques of ventriloquism and magic (“magic’s just lying,” said Davis) and an earnest yet upbeat discussion of depression and anxiety among comedians.



► TAKE NOTHING FOR GRANTED

For this year’s **Weber Symposium**, we invited *Wall Street Journal* personal finance columnist **Jason Zweig** to talk money with KWH Faculty Director **Al Filreis**. It turned into a fascinating conversation about the language — and jargon — of Wall Street. “A large part of my job,” Zweig said, “is to look at language and to pick it apart until I find

► We partnered with the student-led literary society Alpha Delta Phi to bring DreamWorks artist **Faryn Pearl** (C’14) for a workshop on storyboarding for people considering careers in TV, film, and animation.

► Toy Story writer **Alec Sokolow** (C’85) and Penn writing instructor **Kathleen DeMarco Van Cleve** (C’88, W’88) discussed the art and business of screenwriting during this year’s **Hartman Screenwriting Symposium**.

► Multimedia artist **Aimee Gilmore** (GFA’17) joined **Owen Ahearn-Browning** and **M Slater** (C’16) for *Things Fixed and Stuck*, a Brodsky Gallery show curated by **Connie Yu** (C’17) featuring art made from everyday objects, including Gilmore’s rubber-encased sculptural treatments of baby clothes.

► Fashion editor **Rachel Tashjian** (C’12), invited to KWH by Creative Writing faculty member **Anthony DeCurtis**, talked with student writers about how to navigate the challenges of arts journalism in the current media landscape.



Our Creative Ventures project, funded with extraordinary generosity by **Marc Wolpow** (W'80) and **Robin Wolpow**, permits us to seek out and encourage innovative modes of teaching, learning, and making.

- ▶ The waterways of Philadelphia inspired **Carlos Price-Sanchez** (C'19) to develop a geographic poetry project that explored, in part, how at-risk hidden streams affect the lower-income communities in the Wissinoming neighborhood of Northeast Philadelphia.
- ▶ Creative Writing instructor **Sam Apple** invited media-tech entrepreneur **Ben Lerer** (C'03) to chat about his experience growing some of the biggest digital media companies around, including Thrillist, NowThis, The Dodo, and Seeker.
- ▶ Friends from **The Woodlands Cemetery**, **Asian Arts Initiative**, **ICA**, and elsewhere visited over a series of informal lunches to talk with KWH summer interns about the pleasures and challenges of nonprofit work in Philadelphia.
- ▶ **Davy Knittle** (GR'20) staged two conversations in his ongoing City Planning Poetics series. Historic Preservation professor **Randall Mason** joined poet **Simone White** for a discussion about “urban memory.” Urban cultural geographer **Jen Jack Giesecking** and poet **erica kaufman** came together to discuss “the queer ordinary.”
- ▶ The intrepid writers of the student-run **Moviegoer** magazine attended a number of film festivals, including the Tribeca Film Festival, Toronto Film Festival, and the Unnamed Film Festival right here in Philadelphia.
- ▶ **Amanda Silberling** (C'18) completed her documentary film *We're Here, We're Present: Women in Punk*, “an inspiring, badass documentary that should be required viewing for all of us,” according to *GirlTalkHQ*.
- ▶ Our annual Mind of Winter event featured soups made in-house by KWH staff and readings by community members including **Syd Baloue** (C'11, GR'27), who wore a kilt for the occasion, and **Jacob Kind** (C'20), whose original piece about *Game of Thrones* involved an interactive call-and-response. **Rabbi Josh Bolton** closed the night with “Ole & Trufa,” a short story by Isaac Bashevis Singer about finding hope in dark times.
- ▶ **Maya Arthur** (C'18) — a Creative Ventures staff assistant — expanded the work of her 2016–17 Kerry Prize by adding to the KWH Zine Library collection and hosting a number of zine-making workshops.
- ▶ Visual artist **Erica Baum** joined KWH Faculty Director **Al Filreis**, graduate student **Davy Knittle** (GR'20), and Morgan Library archivist **Christine Nelson** for a discussion of Baum's *Dog Ear*, a book of photograph-poems, in which each poem is a meticulous reproduction of a dog-eared page of a mass-market paperback.
- ▶ **Julia Levitan** (C'18) received a Creative Ventures Capital Prize to create a series of poems etched onto scraps of glass.
- ▶ **Kaitlin Moore** (C'18) looked toward the skies for an astral photography project in New Zealand that culminated in a Brodsky Gallery show called *We Are Here*. For the show's opening event, Moore moderated a discussion about art and science with a UFO expert, a neurologist-in-training, and a Virginia Woolf–aficionado.
- ▶ This year's 7-Up program, 7-Up on Blue, featured seven people speaking for seven minutes each about blue things, including **Ryan Briggs** on law enforcement, **Ashley Codner** (C'21) on the blues, **Gabriel Ojeda-Sagué** (C'16) on blue jeans, **Amber Rose Johnson** (GR'21) on *The Bluest Eye*, **Zoe Stoller** on depression, and Penn Museum curator **Jennifer Houser Wegner** on Egyptian dyes. **Kayla Bernstein** (C'20) capped the evening with an original tune.
- ▶ **Amber Rose Johnson** (GR'21) and **Davy Knittle** (GR'20) designed a multifaceted visit for poet **Tonya Foster** that included a “poetics lab” about alternative forms of academic writing, held at the Institute of Contemporary Art.

ALUMNI VISITORS

- ▶ Penn English professor **Whitney Trettien** invited **Nick Montfort** (GR'07), along with **Allison Parish**, and **Rafael Pérez y Pérez** to speak to her History of the Book students about Using Electricity, a series of computer-generated poetry books.
- ▶ Novelist **Rebecca Entel** (C'99) shared excerpts from her book *Fingerprints of Previous Owners* and reminisced about Kelly Writers House as the first place she ever read her work.
- ▶ **Karen Rile** described her former student **Chris Ludovici** (LPS'16), who visited KWH to read from his debut novel *The Minors*, as a kind and generous critic, whose characters are unlikable yet totally relatable.
- ▶ We partnered with the Jewish Studies program to welcome **Beth Kissileff** (G'93, GR'98) for a discussion about her novel *Questioning Return*, which considers the lives of American Jews who return to traditional religious practice in Israel.
- ▶ Singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist **Rob'n Delaine** (C'16) was the musical guest for a **LIVE at the Writers House** showcase of experimental fiction writers.
- ▶ **Arielle Brousse** (C'07, SPP'12) hosted another round of the **Sensible Nonsense Project**, a celebration of children's books. **Sarah Arkebauer** (C'11) shared an essay about the atypical metanarrative of *A Series of Unfortunate Events*.
- ▶ **Alex Koppelman** (C'05) of CNN joined Dick Polman for a lunchtime discussion about the business of media and the ways in which media and politics intersect.



OUR BELOVED ARTS CAFE
(pictured on this page) is undergoing a complete renovation! An extraordinary gift from **Christine** and **David Gross-Loh** (W'92) and a creative, sensitive design by **DIGSAU** has enabled us to upgrade all the tech, improve the air handling, and enlarge the space. Of course we've decided to keep our famed creaky old chairs, each one lovingly picked out by a Hub member. You'll feel right at home.

MUSIC HIGHLIGHTS

Backed by her blues band The Afroeaters, **Yolanda Wisher**, 2016–17 poet laureate of Philadelphia, kicked off a year of music-driven programming at KWH with *Maple Street Rag*, a multimedia piece that explores her family's roots — with **Jim Dragoni** on guitar, **Sirlance Gamble** on drums, and **Mark Palacio** on double bass.

The **Daedalus Quartet**, Penn's quartet-in-residence since 2006, visited KWH for a collaborative performance of *Quartet no. 1 in F major, Op 18 no. 1* and *Quartet no. 15 in A minor, Op 132*. We commissioned four poets — **Yolanda Wisher**, **Thomas Devaney**, **Davy Knittle** (GR'20), and **Mary Osunlana** (C'20) — to write poetic responses for the occasion.

Thanks to a grant from the **Office of the Provost**, we welcomed three poet-musician pairings for a Poetry and Music Festival in the KWH garden: poet **Jake Marmer** with musician **Frank London** on trumpet, poet **Julie Patton** with musician **Paul Van Curen** on guitar, and poet **Bob Holman** with musician **Papa Susso** on kora. Patton's performance marked a highpoint in the show, when midway through an improvisational riff she slowly ingested pieces of the Saturday morning newspaper. "Mind-blowing!" London exclaimed.

Anthony DeCurtis hosted two Beatles-focused events this year. **Rolling Stone** contributor **Rob Sheffield** fired up the crowd one night with a call-and-response rendition of "It Won't Be Long Now" and described the band's enduring appeal. Another night, Philadelphia-based singer-songwriter **Jeffrey Gaines** offered a musician's perspective on the band's legacy by describing their influence on his own work (and playing some tunes).

DeCurtis hosted conversations with other music greats as well. **Lucinda Williams**, this year's **Blutt Singer-Songwriter**, shared stories about her early music education and Southern roots, and wowed us with a breathtaking performance of "Ghosts of Highway 20." Drive-By Truckers frontman **Patterson Hood** also visited for a performance/conversation combo. His politically-charged set offered the perfect complement to a discussion of his 2015 *New York Times* op ed, "The South's Heritage Is So Much More Than a Flag."



> A CELEBRATION OF SHORT STORIES AND MEATLOAF

This year's **Cheryl J. Family Fiction Program** fell on Halloween — a fitting day for a celebration of short-story writer and Penn Artist in Residence **Carmen Maria Machado** and her genre-straddling debut book *Her Body and Other Parties*. Joining Machado was **Jenny Zhang**, author of the award-winning collection *Sour Heart*, featuring short stories about Chinese American girls growing up in and around New York City. Zhang, wearing a green ribbon around her neck (a reference to Machado's hit story "The Husband Stitch") read a part of "The Empty, The Empty, The Empty," (the only story in the collection featuring a costume, Zhang told us), while Machado, resplendent in a *Star Trek* uniform,

read a brand new piece of erotic fiction centered on the return of celestial body Solo 9. Program Coordinator **Alli Katz**, who wore a bright pink *Sesame Street* Martian costume for the occasion, invited everyone to join the readers for "an extremely body-themed reception," featuring a lot of meatloaf and a brain made out of SpaghettiOs.

> POETIC FOOT

Poet **Tonya Foster** kicked off her spring reading by showing off her foot — her poem-foot, that is, shaped from words and printed on a sheet of plain white office paper. Despite its poetic nature, Foster's editor had refused to include this podiatric calligram in her book (apparently, "you can't just have a random foot!"). But the KWH audience was much more receptive. Foster's reading of the foot poem, followed by readings of several other unpublished works that visited the slavery-era South, present-day New Orleans, and 21st-century Harlem, left the packed room wanting more. After the performance, listeners swarmed to grab a copy of Foster's *A Swarm of Bees in High Court*.

> FOOD MATTERS

According to food writer **Irina Dumitrescu**, who visited KWH for a conversation about food and food writing hosted by Penn English professor **Emily Steiner**, it's not always the "best" food that matters. Sometimes "bad food" — snack food from our childhood, secret pleasure food, food weighted with personal and emotional history — is a better tool for telling our stories. And through her experiences as an immigrant, scholar, and serious traveler and eater, Dumitrescu has also come to understand that food plays a complex role in cultural relations. "Food divides just as much as it brings together," she mused. Ultimately, though, Dumitrescu feels uncomfortable around people who have little interest in food beyond its most basic nutritional function. Luckily, KWH is her kind of place. "You're among friends!" shouted a man from the back of the Arts Café.

> ANOTHER MORNING IN LONDON

Finger sandwiches and tea set the scene for **Rodney Dailey** (C'20) to read from his in-progress collection of poems and essays, *Another Morning in London*. As the 2017–18 recipient of the **Heled Travel and Research Grant**, a prize sponsored by **Mali Heled Kinberg** (C'95, G'95), Dailey traveled to London to visit (and be inspired by) the places that inspired Virginia Woolf. "I have a disproportionate fascination with Virginia Woolf," he confessed. "I have to keep reminding myself we're not on a first-name basis." Dailey's resulting project, a remarkable "location-intensive" meditation, is informed by his careful reading of Virginia Woolf and equally careful navigation of place — including his own placement or belonging in the world: "I am sitting / On a stone bench, almost levitating / above the Thames."

> FINDING HAPPINESS

This year's **Bob Lucid Fiction Program** featured Nobel Prize-winner **Orhan Pamuk**, whose visit was made possible through special partnerships with the Middle East Center and the Wolf Humanities Center. KWH Faculty Director **Al Filreis** told the standing-room-only crowd that he'd never been quite so "giddy and nervous and excited" to introduce an author. "Is it easy to be oneself after hearing so much praise?" Pamuk replied, jokingly, after the effusive intro, and then he settled in to a freewheeling reading/lecture hybrid that neatly balanced literary history with dramatic, anecdotal asides. He was, in other words, very much himself, and quite funny. Pamuk's treatment of complex political history and equally complex familial baggage was marked by a personable humor that made everyone feel right at home. Pamuk concluded the reading with an admission about his desire to write, excerpted from his Nobel acceptance speech: "I write because I've never managed to be happy," he confessed. "I write to be happy."

> WE ARE HERE

The opening reception for *We Are Here*, a **Brodsky Gallery** showing of astrophotography by **Kaitlin Moore** (C'18), fell — fittingly — on Pi Day (3/14). Framed against a backdrop of constellations and swirling nebulae, Moore introduced a panel of "speculative souls" from the Penn community who take special interest in the tenuous border between science and the arts: **Esha Khurana** (GR'17, M'18), a neurologist interested in what humanities can teach us about the brain; **Kate Dorsch** (LPS'11, GR'22), a historian who studies UFOs; and **Rodney Dailey** (C'20), a writer whose work incorporates mathematical concepts. Panelists agreed that artists and scientists ultimately aren't so easy to distinguish from each other. Dailey put it most succinctly: "art is science, and science is art." After the discussion, the crowd dispersed to take a closer look at Moore's photographs, which communicate both the scale and distance of astronomical objects — and to sample baked goods from Beiler's (whose bakers know a thing or two about pie).





JOURNALISTS IN THE HOUSE

"If you work on a story that's really touching a nerve, you're probably going to get yelled at, cursed at, threatened, [or] sued," said Philly reporter **David Gambacorta** during a discussion about the importance of local journalism. "The reason you do it is you're drawn to some vaguely noble sense that you're providing a service, you're helping people, you're telling stories that otherwise wouldn't be told."

Hosted by political columnist and Creative Writing faculty member **Dick Polman**, the

conversation with Gambacorta was one of a robust series of events supported by our **Povich Journalism Fund**, funded by **Maury Povich** (C'62) and **Connie Chung**, which every year allows us to bring an astonishing number of journalists and nonfiction writers to KWH for informal conversations with students and others.

Many discussions this year focused, unsurprisingly, on the current political climate. *Politico* reporter **Matt Nussbaum** chronicled the twists and

turns of covering the Trump administration as a member of the White House press corps. Reporter **Alec MacGillis** took us back to the rise of Trump's popularity, which he covered for *ProPublica*. **Ben Yagoda** emphasized the importance of accuracy and credibility in reporting, especially now, when accusations about "fake news" dominate the discourse. And **Jamelle Bouie**, *Slate*'s chief political correspondent, talked about, among other things, confronting trolls on Twitter.

Despite the difficult, and sometimes bleak, nature of contemporary journalism, guests highlighted the thrill of their profession. "Doing this job is about finding your fascination," said professor and writer **Stephen Fried** (C'79) during a roundtable discussion about careers in journalism featuring **Ashley Parker** (C'05) of *The Washington Post*, **Joe Pinsker** (C'13) of *The Atlantic*, and **Jess Goodman** (C'12) of *Cosmopolitan*, who joined Fried in encouraging aspiring writers to pursue their passions.

> HOW TO BE A DOLL: DRAG AND WRITING

Conceived by 2017–18 Junior Fellows Prize–winner **Gabriel Ojeda-Sagué** (C'16), "How to Be a Doll: Drag and Writing" was emceed by drummer/editor **Kenna O'Rourke** (C'15) and a haunted doll named Annabelle. This night of "all things words and wigs" began with a Proustian performance by **Mark McCloughan**, which featured a guest appearance by **Alex Tatarsky** as a polyamorous bouquet of flowers. Local Libra queen **Fyarla** (C'16) performed an alien possession scene in which she interrogated who drag was really for. **Hadeejah Soufflé**, Gabriel's alter ego, lip synced to a buzzing, creepy, and distorted original poem with occasional Bernadette Peters interludes. **Pearl Harbor** capped the evening of voice modulators and costume changes with a jaw-dropping multimedia performance that included family history, a silent film, clips from *Chopped*, a rotisserie chicken, a red onion, and a rendition of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow."

> LIP-THINK: KYOO LEE AND M. NOURBESE PHILIP

Philosopher/writer **Kyoo Lee** and poet/essayist **M. NourbeSe Philip** met at KWH in December for an exploratory public dialogue introduced by Lee as "lip-think." The longtime friends discussed all kinds of things — ideas about counting, documentation, the binary, and the importance of women's friendships. When they read from Philip's essay "Interview with an Empire," they giggled along with the audience at the irony of Philip taking the role of "Q" while Kyoo took "A." Other moments of pleasure emerged throughout the intimate and intricate conversation, amid profound investigations of racism, accountability, and language.

> DEAD PARENTS SOCIETY

The idea for **Dead Parents Society**, a yearlong project organized by **Jamie-Lee Josselyn** (C'05) and supported by the **Beltran Family Award** and the **Bassini Apprenticeship Program**, emerged from conversations she'd had with friends and co-workers at KWH. "I know how lucky I've felt to have friends to talk about what's otherwise a topic that we've learned to avoid in our day-to-day conversations," she said. To share this sense of community, Josselyn launched Dead Parents Society, a forum for people to write, talk, and think about grief. Bassini Writing Apprentices **Maya Arthur** (C'18) and **Sabrina Qiao** (C'19) helped Josselyn develop an ongoing podcast, a biweekly show with a rotating cast of featured guests, including law professor **John Culhane**, novelist **Scott Gould**, and a series of KWH alumni writers: **Gabriel Ojeda-Sagué** (C'16), **Emily Harnett** (C'13), **Kristen Martin** (C'11), **Victoria Ford** (C'15), **Jess Bergman** (C'14), **Catherine Ricketts** (C'09), and **Arielle Brousse** (C'07). A public event at KWH in April featured additional project participants who shared moving personal essays: **Seth Laracy** (C'04), **Mingo Reynolds**, **Catherine Ricketts** (C'09), **Anna Strong Safford** (C'13), and **Isabella Simonetti** (C'21).



KELLY WRITERS HOUSE FELLOWS PROGRAM



SUPPORTED GENEROUSLY since 1999 by Paul Kelly (C'62, WG'64), the **Kelly Writers House Fellows Program**

invites three eminent authors to Writers House for intensive two-day visits. In this nineteenth year of the Fellows program, we welcomed **Paul Auster**, a multi-genre author known for postmodern detective stories and wild experiments with narrative form; **Bernadette Mayer**, a poet/editor/mentor/teacher associated with the New York School writers, whose procedural writing experiments have inspired generations of poets and teachers; and journalist **Charles M. Blow**, whose influential *New York Times* column covers the most pressing topics of the day, including national politics, policing, racial equality, and social justice.

A unique undergraduate seminar is at the core of the Kelly Writers House Fellows project. Students in this for-credit class spend the semester reading and discussing the work of the three Fellows to prep for

their no-holds-barred workshop time with each Fellow.

This year's seminar devoured over one hundred articles and columns, four novels (including *4321*, Auster's nine-hundred-page whopper of a book), four collections of poetry, and a memoir. To supplement this extensive

about her experience. **Jamie Albrecht** (C'21) studied up on the history of the St. Mark's Poetry Project in the early 1980s, when Mayer was director. **Zoe Stoller** (C'18) combed Blow's Twitter feed — over fifty thousand tweets, going back to 2009. And **Charlie Sosnick** (C'18) and **Dan Spinelli** (C'18) researched the

Paul Auster FEBRUARY 14-15
Bernadette Mayer MARCH 26-27
Charles M. Blow APRIL 23-24

reading list, each student also completed independent research and shared their discoveries with classmates. **Lilli Leight** (C'21)

read Auster's memoir *A Life in Words* (2017) to find out more about his life and writing process. **Regina Salmons** (C'18) attempted no fewer than twenty of Mayer's famous writing experiments and reported back to the class

critical reception of Blow's memoir *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* to help the class formulate nuanced questions.

Through this intensive and collaborative approach, Fellows students connected deeply with the work of each author — and their feelings of connectivity carried over to the in-person Fellows visits. Blow was delighted

by a snack tray lovingly prepared by students that recalled his mother's vegetable garden. Mayer felt so moved by her experience that she invited **Julie Levitan** (C'18) and **Emily Rush** (C'19) to join her in upstate New York as summer research assistants.

KWH audiences also had opportunities for meaningful exchange with the visiting Fellows at readings and conversational interviews. To say these public events were well-attended would be a gross understatement. At Auster's Valentine's Day reading, Fellows coordinator **Lily Applebaum** (C'12) gracefully acknowledged the tightly packed seating: "Thanks for being so crammed together," she said. But despite the crowds, the Fellows events remained intimate affairs. One attendee was so moved by Blow's reading that she wrote a poem about her experience and shared it with Blow and the assembled crowd the following morning.



STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

THE FRIEND FELLOWS PROJECT

Supported generously by the [Harris Family Foundation](#), [Katherine P. Harris](#), and [Bill and Linda Friend](#), the Friend Fellows Project enables a mix of internships, research projects, and teaching assistantships during the school year.

► [Sarah Figgatt](#) (C'18) accepted an internship in the Program Development department at CNN, where she worked on shows undergoing development, including a miniseries on the Kennedys.

► [Rebecca Heilweil](#) (C'18) took an internship at *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, where she was assigned to work on news features with Dan Rubin.

► [Becca Lambright](#) (C'19) found an internship at The Glass Entertainment Group to help her learn production skills, including research, filming, and editing for broadcast.

► [Orchid Tierney](#) (GR'23) developed a research project using materials and metadata from PennSound that focused on the relationships between poets and reading venues.

► [Amber Rose Johnson](#) (GR'21) and [Davy Knittle](#) (GR'20) TA'd for ModPo, a massive open online course on modern and contemporary American poetry led by Al Filreis.

► [Julia Dasbach](#) (GR'23) and [Ariel Resnikoff](#) (GR'24) TA'd for Representations of the Holocaust, a course taught by Al Filreis. Of this experience, Ariel said: "I have learned firsthand the power of an egalitarian pedagogy, wherein students are motivated to participate out of a sense of communal and reciprocal responsibility, rather than from fear of the teacher or simply to make a certain grade."



The RealArts@Penn Internship Program provides professional guidance, networking opportunities, and real-world job experience for students interested in pursuing arts-related careers. With the help of Penn alumni, parents, and faculty — and the extraordinary work of [R.J. Bernocco](#) (G'12) and [Mingo Reynolds](#) in the Center for Programs in Contemporary Writing — RealArts@Penn offered twenty-six paid summer internships in summer 2018:

JOURNALISM, PUBLICATIONS, & PRINT

Downtown Bookworks Inc.

Stephanie Barron (C'18)
Lillian Leight (C'19)

Flathead Beacon

Library of Congress

Philadelphia Media Network

Philadelphia Magazine

Pitchfork Media

McSweeney's and The Believer

Small Press Distribution

MUSEUMS

Morgan Library and Museum

Delaney Keenan (C'20)

MUSIC

Shore Fire Media

Ashley Codner (C'21)

TELEVISION & FILM

20th Century Fox

Brooklyn Films

David Stern and Stuart Gibbs, Writers

Doug Robinson Productions

Genre Films

Grandview

Management 360

Nonfiction Unlimited

Principato-Young Entertainment

Tremolo Productions

Viacom Catalyst: Creative + Strategy

THEATER

1812 Productions

Warner Bros. Theatre Ventures

Nick Seymour (C'19)

Elias Kotsis (C'19)

WRITING APPRENTICESHIPS

For the twelfth consecutive year, the [Bassini Apprenticeship Program](#) matched Penn students with professional writers affiliated with Penn's Creative Writing program, giving students firsthand experience in the day-to-day pleasures and difficulties of working on long-term professional writing projects.

► [Maya Arthur](#) (C'18) and [Sabrina Qiao](#) (C'19) worked with [Jamie-Lee Josselyn](#) on the development of *Dead Parents Society*, a podcast series featuring writers who've written about the death of a parent. The apprentices helped establish the podcast's format, guest lineup, and tone, and served as co-panelists on the first dozen episodes.

► [Tracy Fontil](#) (C'19) apprenticed with fiction writer [Carmen Maria Machado](#), conducting research about same-sex domestic violence for Machado's forthcoming memoir, *House in Indiana*. Fontil opened up several new avenues of inquiry for Machado through her wide-ranging research on trauma, gothic romance, and domestic violence.

► [Aliya Chaudhry](#) (C'18) assisted [Yolanda Wisher](#) with a documentation project: collecting, organizing, and assessing project materials from Wisher's tenure as Philadelphia's poet laureate, including testimonials and impact data. Chaudhry also helped develop materials for a spoken-word festival.

ALUMNI MENTORSHIP

Through our Alumni Mentorship Program, organized by [R.J. Bernocco](#) (G'12) and [Mingo Reynolds](#) and supported with a generous grant from [Ricardo Salmon](#) (W'93) and [Leslie Dezer Salmon](#) (W'92), Penn alumni who work in creative fields help undergraduates discover potential career paths. Important mentoring relationships develop through informal lunches, small gatherings at the Writers House, Skype sessions, and one-on-one conversations.

Following the success of thematic mentorship programming last year, Bernocco and Reynolds once again organized a series of small group gatherings for seniors with career interests in publishing, journalism, and entertainment. The serial approach encouraged a cohort of students to learn together, share ideas, and develop job-seeking strategies within a supportive community.

In the fall semester, participating students met with alumni publishers,

journalists, brand strategists, editors, and literary agents, including *Today Show* nutrition expert [Joy Bauer](#), nonfiction writer [Buzz Bissinger](#) (C'76), brand management expert [Melissa Brecher](#) (C'95), Quirk Books publisher [David Borgenicht](#) (C'90), literary agent [Caryn Karmatz-Rudy](#) (C'92), *Cosmopolitan* senior editor [Jessica Goodman](#) (C'12), and Ballantine Books editor [Susanna Porter](#) (C'75).

In the spring semester, seniors met with alumni working in the entertainment industry as writers, directors, producers, agents, and management professionals, including [Tim Bloom](#) (C'17), [Jay Elias](#) (C'14), [Cheryl Family](#) (C'91), [Allison Friedman](#) (C'09), [Mike Jackman](#) (C'85), [Ariana Jackson](#) (W'03), [Bree Jackson](#) (C'15), [Mark Kaufman](#) (C'89), [Nat McLeod](#) (C'17), [Randi Michel](#) (C'91), [Matt Rosler](#) (C'96), [Lew Schneider](#) (C'83), [David Stern](#) (C'89), [Tori Turner](#), and [Emma Soren](#) (C'16).

SPECIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

With the help of the Faculty Director's Discretionary Fund

— to which anyone can contribute — KWH Faculty Director [Al Filreis](#)

helped several students accept special learning opportunities this year, including [Jane Levy](#) (C'19),

who secured an internship at Silvergate Media,

and [Charlotte Bausch](#) (C'20), who worked with

Edward Epstein at the Teachers Institute of

Philadelphia. [Emily Rush](#) (C'19) and [Julie Levitan](#) (C'18) spent the summer

of 2018 in upstate New York working with poet [Bernadette Mayer](#). Mayer, a 2018 KWH Fellow and a writer who devotes herself full-time to writing and gets by on scant royalties, was thrilled by Rush's creation of the first-ever Mayer website and by Levitan's work in the Mayer archive at UC San Diego, which will lay the groundwork for the publication of a book of previously uncollected poems. Filreis invested in additional large scale student-led poetry initiatives: [Raquel Salas Rivera](#) (GR'22),

the incoming Poet Laureate of Philadelphia, organized a summer poetry festival featuring poets of color. The festival, We (Too) Are Philly, staged readings all over the city — at Thomas Paine Plaza, Norris Square Park in West Kensington, the Lillian Marrero Branch Library in Fairhill, the Friends Free Library at Germantown Friends School, and elsewhere — to create shared community spaces through poetry and discussion.

POVICH INTERNSHIP PRIZES

With a generous donation from [Maury Povich](#) (C'62), RealArts@Penn sponsored an Internship Prize program that enabled students to accept internship opportunities at creative companies, including: [Brianne Alphonso](#) (C'18) at Electric Literature, [Liza Babin](#) (C'20) at ABC's *General Hospital* and Marc Platt Productions, [Derek Cano](#) (C'19) at Untitled Entertainment (Talent Management), [Yujiao \(Cecily\) Chen](#) (C'21) at RE/Search Publications, [Emily Cieslak](#) (C'19) at American Society of Magazine Editors (ASME), [Joshua Kahn](#) (C'19) at William Morris Endeavor, [Colin Lodewick](#) (C'19) at *The Philadelphia Citizen*, [Isabella Lopez](#) (C'19) at WriteBoston's Summer Journalism Institute, [Melissa Maza](#) (C'19) at Sotheby's, Sofie Praestgaard (C'19) at Viacom Creative Catalyst, and [Isabella Simonetti](#) (C'21) at *Philadelphia Magazine*.

DIGITAL PROJECTS



((wexler)) STUDIO

Generously funded by **Gary and Nina Wexler**, the Wexler Studio at Kelly Writers House offers Penn students opportunities to learn audio engineering and production. Our talented team of Wexler Studio assistants produced an astonishing collection of interviews, podcasts, radio plays, mixtapes, and other audio experiments this year, in collaboration with poets, musicians, scholars, audiophiles, and a variety of other partners at Penn and beyond.

► Avant-garde poet **Hélène Gelèns**, who was once featured in a Dutch version of *PoemTalk*, called *VersSpreken*, visited the Wexler Studio on a special trip from the Netherlands to record an interview with Dutch Studies Program Director **Robert Naborn**. Quasi sound poems such as “gedicht voor twee stemmen en een klok” (poem for two voices and a clock) helped close the English-Dutch language gap. Visit PennSound to listen in.



► **Ashley Barrett** (C'19), with co-hosts **Dayz Terry** (C'19) and **Jermaine Francis** (C'19), launched *Unseasoned*, a pop culture podcast with a special focus on the experiences of Black students at Penn. Episodes this year offered thoughts about Beyoncé, racism in the NFL, conscious consumerism, study tips, and more—with alumni guests including **Ernest Owens** (C'14). Find *Unseasoned* on iTunes, Soundcloud, and elsewhere.

► Now in its eleventh year, the *PoemTalk* podcast released its 126th episode in July 2018. Recorded in December 2017, **Tyrone Williams**, **Aldon Nielsen**, and **William J. Harris** joined **Al Filreis** in the KWH Arts Café to talk about Amiri Baraka’s poem “Something in the Way of Things (In Town)” in front of a live audience. Other memorable episodes released this year included #119, a discussion of three poems by Persian poet Fatemeh Shams about “extremities of war, surveillance, and love in a time of authoritarianism.” Find all episodes of *PoemTalk* on sponsoring sites: [Jacket2.org](#) and [Poetryfoundation.org](#).

► Produced by the nonpartisan political group **Committee of Seventy** and hosted by former *Philadelphia Inquirer* columnist **Chris Satullo**, the podcast *20 by Seventy* tackles

the nuts and bolts of local politics. Several of this year’s episodes focused on gerrymandering. Commentators included **David Daley**, author of *Ratf***ked: Why Your Vote Doesn’t Count*, who called in to the show to talk about the Pennsylvania Supreme Court’s decision to have the state’s districts redrawn ahead of the 2018 primaries.

► Poets **Sue Landers** and **Christy Davids** met up in the studio for a discussion of *Franklinstein*, a book of poetry and prose by Landers that draws from archival materials and personal narratives to tell the story of Philadelphia’s Germantown neighborhood. Landers described the arduous but rewarding process of interviewing Germantown residents, including the family now living in her own childhood home. The full conversation is available as a PennSound podcast.

ONLINE BOOK GROUPS

Our Online Book Groups were conceived in 2000 by KWH Faculty Director **Al Filreis**. “We wanted to create a learning community for alumni who wouldn’t be able to be involved otherwise,” he said. Thanks to generous support from **David** (W'84) and **Deborah Roberts**, we’ve hosted well more than one hundred moderator-led online discussions for alumni, Penn parents, and our extended Penn family. Several of our groups this year connected directly with Philadelphia-area literary events, including some right here at Writers House. KWH staffer **Lily Applebaum** (C'12) timed her ten-day discussion of Patricia Lockwood’s memoir *Priestdaddy* to coincide with Lockwood’s visit to Writers House in September. Social worker and educator **Allaire Wohlgemuth** led a discussion of MK Asante’s *Buck*. Asante’s story, which chronicles his childhood in North Philly, served as the centerpiece for a series of events and projects organized by **Lorene Cary** (C'78, G'78) and *Safe Kids Stories*. And **Jamie-Lee Josselyn** (C'05) once again offered her wildly popular book group for high-school students: a ten-day taste of writing by Penn faculty members, including **Lorene Cary**, **Kenneth Goldsmith**, **Paul Hendrickson**, and **Beth Kephart** (C'82).

MODPO

Al Filreis and a team of teaching assistants offered the sixth installment of ModPo, a free, non-credit “massive open online course” (or MOOC) that welcomed twenty-four thousand new and returning students to the study of modern and contemporary American poetry. Thanks to the involvement of the core group of TAs—most of them involved with ModPo since the beginning back in 2012—and the tech innovations developed over the years by **Zach Carduner** (C'13) and **Chris Martin** (LPS'15), this session of ModPo continued to push the boundaries of what’s possible in online learning. The team hosted weekly webcasts, including one filmed and produced in London, England, thanks in large part to the involvement of poet and teacher **Stephen Willey** at Birkbeck University of London. The ModPo universe continued to expand through two supplemental, parallel courses within the site, ModPoPLUS—for any returning ModPo student who wants a little more out of each week—and the Teacher Resource Center, curated by poet **erica kaufman** and created to support the teaching of poetry for all teachers in all settings. The team also launched ModPoMinute, a YouTube series of five-minute close readings hosted by Al Filreis and ModPo’s course coordinator, **Anna Strong Safford** (C'13). This year ModPo received a great deal of attention within the community of scholars and teachers of literature after it and other innovative aspects of “education populism” at the Writers House were featured in Wai Chee Dimock’s article in the profession’s premier journal, *PMLA*. “Could an experimental humanities flourish at a major research university,” Dimock concludes her essay, “meet a tech company [Coursera] on its own turf, and come away unscathed? The answer so far is a resounding yes. It is up to the rest of us to run further field tests, producing variants at our own institutions as tenacious and vital as this fearless prototype.”

PENNSOUND

PennSound—by far the world’s largest free online collection of recorded poetry—adds new material to its catalogue every year. Many PennSound files are recorded right here at KWH in the Wexler Studio and the Arts Café, where student engineers learn firsthand the art of producing, editing, and publishing audio files.

Poets journeyed to Writers House from all over the world to record their work for PennSound, including Canadian poet **Donato Mancini**, who read from his 2017 collection *Same Diff*; South African poet **Antjie Krog**, whose studio visit included a lengthy, in-depth interview with **Simon Lewis** and **Rita Barnard**; and Chilean poet **Yanko González**, who gave intense performances of Spanish-language poetry from several of his collections, as well as an interview with **Sebastián Figueira** (GR'24) and **Dana Khromov** (GR'25).

Other notable additions to the PennSound collection this year included recordings made at KWH by **Bruce Andrews**, **Herman Beavers**, **Mónica de la Torre**, **Sarah Dowling** (GR'12), **Eduardo Espina**, **Tonya Foster**, **Peter Gizzi**, **William J. Harris**, **Bernadette Mayer**, **Michael Palmer**, **Susan M. Schultz**, **James Sherry**, **Divya Victor**, and **Simone White**—plus **John Richetti**, who read poems by Tennyson and Byron for the PennSound Classics page.

As always, PennSound is made possible by the hard work of project founders **Al Filreis** and **Charles Bernstein**, managing editors **Zach Carduner** (C'13), **Michael Hennessey**, **Steve McLaughlin** (C'08), and **Chris Mustazza** (GEN'07, LPS'15, GR'19), content manager **David Satten-Lopez**, and a team of student and alumni staff, who spend hours and hours segmenting archival recordings, editing and uploading files, and digging through old DAT tapes to unearth hidden gems.

Jacket2

Since 2011, KWH has housed the international online poetics journal, *Jacket2*. Each year, *Jacket2* editors **Kenna O'Rourke** (C'15) and **Julia Bloch** (GR'11) teach students the work of editing an academic journal, including proofreading, copyediting, image design, and managing website content. This year, student assistants **Brianne Alphonso** (C'18), **Meerie Jesuthasan** (C'19), **Kelly Liu** (C'21), and **Amy Stidham** (C'18) had more on their plates than ever with a new edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style* to learn. Not only did the student staff adapt admirably to new proofreading rules, but they helped produce an enormous feature on the 2016 Women’s March, which included over sixty contributors. Somehow they still found time to work on dozens of reviews, essays, commentary posts, and assignments for editorial meetings in the meantime—an impressive feat!



Summer Workshop for Young Writers

Twenty high-school students — from Pennsylvania, South Carolina, New Jersey, Texas, Nanjing, and elsewhere — joined us in July for our second-ever **Summer Workshop for Young Writers**. Made possible by **Maury Povich** (C'62) and **Connie Chung**, the Summer Workshop provided full, need-based funding to half of the participants in the ten-day residential program.

Workshoppers spent their mornings in a nonfiction class led by Summer Workshop Director **Jamie-Lee Josselyn** (C'05) and Assistant Director **David Marchino** (C'16), with support from Van Doren Fellow **Gina DeCagna** (C'16) and CURF intern **Sarah Goldfarb** (C'21). The group engaged in energetic, challenging conversations about the tools and rules of personal narrative, what writers owe and do not owe their readers and those they write about, and how writing can show both what we understand and what we can't or don't know. By the end of the intensive course, each writer had produced three personal essays.

KWH-affiliated faculty and staff led afternoon craft sessions: **Karen Rile** (C'80) taught narrative collage; **Gina DeCagna** (C'16) taught archival collage at the ICA; **Michelle Taransky** taught experimental poetry; **Alli Katz** taught comics with assistance from CURF intern **Alyson Del Pino** (C'21); **Sean Plaskett** (GR'22) taught Writing Philadelphia, complete with walking tours; **Victoria Ford** (C'15)

taught persona poetry; **Mary Tasillo** taught a letterpress workshop; **Zach Carduner** (C'13) and his interns **Leah Baxter** (C'21) and **Elvis Jimenez** (C'20) led an open Wexler Studio session; and **Lily Applebaum** (C'12) and **Emma Max** led a literary-inspired tour of nearby Woodlands Cemetery.

Workshop participants also had a chance to explore Philadelphia. In one jam-packed Saturday they toured Philadelphia's Magic Gardens, ate lunch at Ishkabibble's, and shopped at Philly AIDS Thrift, Repo Records, and the Wooden Shoe bookstore — and still had time to chill out at Spruce Street Harbor Park with ice cream and iced coffee.

Lots of people helped make the high-schoolers feel at home here. Beloved Creative Writing teacher **Beth Kephart** (C'82) joined the Summer Workshop on the last day for a inspirational reading of her recent work. KWH Program Coordinator **Alli Katz** made picnic lunches and daily fruit snacks with a team of interns. Graduate associates

Sarah Yang (D'19) and **Sean Plaskett** (GR'22) lived alongside the students in the dorm. **Andrew Beal**, the Associate Director of Development and Finance at KWH, and **Michelle Ruggia** of Penn's Hospitality Services helped everything run smoothly behind the scenes. We also owe deep thanks to our colleagues at Fisher-Bennett Hall, who generously lent us space for this year's workshop, which took place in the midst of renovations at 3805 Locust Walk.



Community writing projects

Managed by Levin Outreach Coordinator **Imani Davis** (C'20), **Maya Arthur** (C'18), and Community Partnerships Developer **Rachel Zolf**, community writing projects thrived at Writers House this year.

Arthur and Zolf facilitated **FreeWrite**, a weekly writing workshop with a group of women incarcerated at the Federal Detention Center in Center City. Guest visitors to FreeWrite included Philadelphia Poet Laureate 2016–17 **Yolanda Wisher**, faculty members **Carmen Machado** and **Lorene Cary** (C'78, G'78), and local writers **Raquel Salas Rivera** (GR'22), **Kiana Murphy** (GR'25), **Kavi Ade**, **Cynthia Dewi Oka**, and **Cyree Jarelle Johnson**.

On Fridays throughout the spring semester, our undergraduate-led creative writing and tutoring project **Write On!** welcomed two dozen students from Henry C. Lea Elementary School to KWH for writing games, one-on-one mentoring led by **Write On!** Coordinators **Richelle Burke** (C'18), **Andrew Chang** (C'18), **Ariella Davner** (C'18), and **Edmund Hundley** (C'18), and homemade snacks made by a team of KWH staff chefs, including **Eva Lewis** (C'21) and **Ashley Codner** (C'21).

Our writing program for trans and gender-nonconforming youth, **transcribez** (organized in partnership with Penn's School of Social Policy and Practice and the LGBT Center), culminated in the publication of eleven beautiful chapbooks by program participants, with covers printed at the Common Press by **Andrew Beal** and **Gabriel Ojeda-Sagué** (C'16). **Davy Knittle** (GR'20) and **Levi Bentley** received a Leeway Foundation Art and Change Grant to direct the chapbook project. Additional support came from writing mentors **Raquel Salas Rivera** (GR'22), **Otter Jung-Allen**, **CAConrad**, and **Nico Amador**, who offered mentorship and guidance in the writing process.

Writing a Life, a writing group for people with cancer diagnoses organized in partnership with the Abramson Cancer Center, culminated in the publication of *Living Through and After*, a second book of writings by group members, designed by **Lisa Liu** (C'20). Writing group leader and mentor **Deb Burnham** ushered writing from conception through publication.



Recruiting young writers to Penn

Our Associate Director of Recruitment **Jamie-Lee Josselyn** (C'05) visited high schools and youth writing programs in Alabama, California, Louisiana, Michigan, South Carolina, Texas, Vermont, and elsewhere, seeking out talented young writers in far-flung places. Her main goal: to recruit the best creative writers to Penn.

Other KWH cheerleaders including recent grad **Peter LaBerge** (C'17), **Crissy Iglesias** and the team in Penn Admissions, and alumni and friends from all over the country also worked hard to help prospective students find their way to KWH.

A crew of staffers helped Josselyn meet with prospective students and their families on campus. KWH student staffer **Ian McCormack** (C'21), Creative Writing assistant **David Marchino** (C'16), and Van Doren Fellow **Gina DeCagna** (C'16) led tours of KWH, described our vibrant writing culture, and talked up Penn's writing programs whenever possible. Ian practically camped out on the green couch awaiting visitors, often joined by *Jacket2* editorial assistant **Kelly Liu** (C'21).



Are you a prospective student interested in hearing more about writing at Penn? Don't be shy! Email Jamie-Lee Josselyn:

jjossey@writing.upenn.edu

Friends of the Writers House



Everything that goes on here depends on the generosity of loyal supporters like you. Thank you, friends, for investing your time, energy, ideas, and resources into this project.

INTERNSHIPS, APPRENTICESHIPS, AND MENTORSHIPS

Bassini Apprenticeship Fund ▶ Working one-on-one with professional writers associated with Penn's Creative Writing Program, undergraduate apprentices gain firsthand experience in the real work of a writing career. This year, Maya Arthur (C'18) and Sabrina Qiao (C'19) helped essayist Jamie-Lee Josselyn (C'05) develop a podcast series about grief; Tracy Fontil (C'19) conducted research about domestic violence with short-story writer Carmen Maria Machado; and Aliya Chaudhry (C'18) assisted 2016–17 Philadelphia Poet Laureate Yolanda Wisher with project documentation. *Endowed by Reina Marin Bassini (C'72, GED'72) and Emilio Bassini (C'71, W'71, WG'73).*

Eisler Endowed Internship Fund ▶ The Eisler Internship Fund offers financial assistance to students who have accepted unpaid or modestly paid internships at cultural institutions, so that any student, regardless of financial circumstance, can pursue specialized learning opportunities in the arts. In summer 2018, the Eisler Fund made it possible for Delaney Keenan (C'19) to intern at The Morgan Library and Museum in New York. *Endowed by Bonnie Eisler (C'79) and Cliff Eisler (C'79).*

Kate Levin Community Outreach Internship Fund ▶ This fund permanently endows our Outreach Coordinator Internship through which students help organize writing-based community service efforts. This year, Maya Arthur (C'18) and Imani Davis (C'20) worked with Community Partnerships Developer Rachel Zolf to teach writing workshops in a women's correctional facility and a local high school. *Endowed by Kate Levin (G'90, GR'95).*

Maury Povich RealArts Internship Prize Fund ▶ The Povich Prize Fund helps level the playing field by offering a competitively awarded prize to students who have sought out and secured unpaid or modestly paid internships at cultural institutions, arts organizations, or creative companies. Preference for the award goes to students with demonstrated financial need. In summer 2018, the Povich Prize Fund supported Derek Cano (C'19), who interned at Untitled Entertainment. *Endowed by Maury Povich (C'62) and Connie Chung.*

RealArts Internship Fund ▶ RealArts@Penn helps students make meaningful connections beyond the university, particularly through paid summer internships at leading cultural institutions. Thanks to strong partnerships cultivated by Mingo Reynolds and R.J. Bernocco (G'12) with alumni and friends at 20th Century Fox, Pitchfork Media, Viacom, The Morgan Library and Museum, and elsewhere, we supported thirty-nine interns in the summer of 2018. *Funded with a special gift by Marc Wolpow (W'80), Robin Wolpow, and the Marc and Robin Wolpow Family Fund, with additional support from the Cape Branch Foundation, Dirk Wittenborn (C'72), and Kirsten Wittenborn; and Susan Tracy.*

RealArts Program Fund ▶ Anyone can contribute to the RealArts Program Fund, which supports the core mission of the RealArts@ Penn project: mentoring undergraduates. With the help of this fund, the Center for Programs in Contemporary Writing creates a series of opportunities for undergraduates to meet with alumni mentors working at art organizations or in creative fields. Alumni mentors who visited for informal lunches this year included Buzz Bissinger (C'76), David Borgenicht (C'90), Cheryl J. Family (C'91), Caryn Karmatz-Rudy (C'92), Lew Schneider (C'83), and David Stern (C'89). *Funded with a special gift from Ricardo Salmon (W'93) and Leslie Dezer Salmon (W'92).*

Susan and John Steinhardt RealArts Film Internship Fund ▶ The Susan and John Steinhardt RealArts Film Internship Fund provides support for an eight-week summer internship in a film or television production company based in New York. Preference for the internship, through which a student learns about narrative script production, goes to an undergraduate with financial need and a demonstrated interest in film. The 2017–18 Steinhardt RealArts intern was Becca Lambright (C'19), who interned at TruTV. *Endowed by Susan and John Steinhardt, in honor of A. Logan Steinhardt (C'11).*

AWARDS AND PRIZES

Beltran Family Teaching and Mentorship Award Fund ▶ Every year we nominate an outstanding writing teacher for the Beltran Family Teaching and Mentorship Award. In addition to a cash prize, the award recipient receives a grant to develop a KWH program in keeping with the teacher's innovative work. This year's honoree was Jamie-Lee Josselyn (C'05), who created Dead Parents Society, a series of conversations about writing and grief. *Endowed by Penn parents John Paul Beltran and Lina Beltran.*

Terry B. Heled Travel and Research Grant Fund ▶ The Heled Travel Grant enables a student to undertake a significant writing project requiring travel and research. This year's prize recipient, Rodney E. Dailey II (C'20), traveled to London to write a "location-intensive" book of poems inspired by Virginia Woolf. *Endowed by Mali Heled Kinberg (C'95, G'95) in memory of her mother Terry B. Heled.*

Michael and Danielle Goldstein Endowed Prize ▶ This fund awards a prize to an outstanding KWH-affiliated student in need of support for writing-centered projects. In summer 2018, the prize went to Autumn Wynde (C'19), for a multimedia project about identity, home, grief, and growth. *Endowed by Penn parents Michael and Danielle Goldstein.*

Parker Prize Endowed Fund for Journalistic Nonfiction ▶ The Parker Prize acknowledges excellence in student journalism. Stephanie Barron (C'18) won the 2017–18 Parker Prize for a longform piece that contest judge Tasneem Raja described as a "timely, nuanced, well-reported piece" about reproductive rights. *Endowed by Bret Parker (C'90) and Katharine Parker.*

The Kerry Sherin Wright Prize Fund ▶ Established to honor the literary communitarianism of our first director, Kerry Sherin Wright, the Kerry Prize is awarded annually to a Hub member who proposes a project in line with Kerry's spacious vision. Zoe Stoller (C'18) will use the prize in 2018–19 to integrate creative writing into her high-school classroom, and to invite her students to KWH. *Supported annually by the KWH community, with a special gift this year from Lucy Cook (C'95).*



We thank the following Friends for their generous support of the Writers House in our 2017–2018 year:

Anne Ades; Alyson Shore Adler; Marci Alboher; Matt Algeo; Nathalie Anderson; Alonna Anspach; Derek Arthur; Carol Avins; Duff Axsom; Sylva Baker; Kay Barned-Smith and St. John Smith; Dennis and Debbie Barone; Arthur and Susie Becker-Weidman; Susan Bee and Charles Bernstein; Donald Beetham; Leah Begg; Jay Begun; Craig Behrenfeld; Evelyn Bender; Nancy Bentley; Mary Kay Benz; Carol Bergere; Ed and Jen Bergman; Alan Bernheimer; Bernardo Beyer; Sara Bingham; Daniel Blas; Ronna Wineberg Blaser; Larry Blum; Megan Bly; Scott and Roxanne Bok; David Borgenicht; Merle Born; Neil Braun and Anne Flick; Jay Brecker; Marietta Brill; Ellen Brooks and Robert Cohen; Jackee and Denis Brousse; Jacqueline Brown; Deborah Brown; Marc and Betsy Brown; Laynie Browne; Ann and David Brownlee; Alexis Brunswick; Robert Brylawski; Mary Ann Burdett; Nathalie Burg; Lenny Cassuto; Daniel Castleman and Nancy Ruskin; MC Catanese; Sandra Chaff; Mandana Chaffa; Stanley Chodorow; Sam Choi; Leah and Peter Cianfrani; Bruce, Dorcy, Kenzie, and Jordan Clark; Sara Coelho; Cathy Cohen; Harris Cohen; Gail Spiegel Cohen; Charles Cohen; Michael Cohn; Robin Cohn; Blayne Colmore; John Conley; Robert Cort; Randall Couch; David Cowen; Pam and Mike Crane; David Crawford; Susan Croll and Paul Monasevitch; Michael Cullina; Barbara Daniels; John Davidson; Colleen Davis; T. de los Reyes; Gina DeCagna; Anthony DeCurtis; Tom Devaney and Amy Sadao; Denise Devine; Linda Diamond; Greg and Lysa Djanikian; Debra Censis Donnelly; Annette Dorsky; Chuck Downey; Murray Dubin and Libby Rosof; Drew Dulberg; Rachel Blau DuPlessis; Philip Eager and Mimi Calter; Sabrina Eaton; George Economou and Rochelle Owens; Sarah Eisen Nanus; Rebecca Entel; Eliza Erickson; Galina Espinoza; Daniel Evans; Michelle Falkoff; Steven Fama; Robert Faron; Robert Faunce; Harvey Feldman; Andrew Ferris; Catherine Field; Lois Filreis; Al Filreis; Joe Finston; David and Barbara Fishback; Marjorie Fiterman; Luellen Fletcher; Marni Fogelson;



PROJECTS

Kelly Writers House Fellows Fund ▶ The Kelly Writers House Fellows project enables undergraduate writers to interact with eminent writers they greatly admire through seminar-style discussions in the Arts Café, home-cooked meals in our dining room, and public interview-style conversations hosted by KWH Faculty Director Al Filreis. The experience is transformative for students in the Fellows seminar and visiting Fellows alike. This year's Fellows were novelist Paul Auster, poet Bernadette Mayer, and journalist and commentator Charles M. Blow. *Supported annually by Paul Kelly (C'62, WG'64, Trustee 1997–present).*

The Brodsky Gallery Fund ▶ The Brodsky Gallery Fund supports the work of young and emerging art curators, who select, hang, and showcase works by visual artists. Brodsky Gallery curator Connie Yu (C'17) produced an eclectic and intellectually stimulating 2017–18 series, including *A/PUBLIC*, a group show of femme and queer Asian artists; *Things Fixed and Stuck*, featuring artists working with material objects; *Interfaces*, a collection of collage works by poet Rachel Blau DuPlessis; and *We Are Here*, a collection of astrophotography by Kaitlin Moore (C'18). *Endowed by Michael Brodsky (W'88) and Heidi Hookman Brodsky (C'89).*

Writers House Journal Endowment Fund ▶ The Writers House Journal Endowment Fund supports *Jacket2*, our renowned online journal of contemporary poetry and poetics, a continuation of John Tranter's legendary *Jacket*. Updated daily with reviews, commentary, essays, and interviews, *Jacket2* is a go-to resource for its global audience. *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*

Leight Foundation Term Fund ▶ The Leight Foundation Term Fund allows us to produce the podcast *PoemTalk*, a roundtable discussion of poems in the PennSound collection, featuring a rotating set of poets and poet-scholars. A collaboration of Kelly Writers House, *Jacket2*, PennSound, and the Poetry Foundation, *PoemTalk* is produced and hosted by Al Filreis, and engineered and edited by Zach Carduner (C'13). *Supported annually by the Leight Foundation.*



The Herman and Jeanne Robinson Letterpress Fund ▶ Through the Robinson Press, students discover and explore print culture. Led this year by Faith Padgett (C'18) and Alyson Del Pino (C'21), with additional guidance from Andrew Beal and support from Gabriel Ojeda-Sagué (C'16), Robinson Press projects included broadsides, postcards, and special book covers for the transcribez youth writing project. *Endowed by Nina Robinson Vitow (CW'70, WG'76) in memory of her parents Herman and Jeanne Robinson.*

Zarin/Rosenfeld Endowed Fund for the Literary Journalism Magazine ▶ The Zarin/Rosenfeld Fund nurtures journalistic talent by making possible the publication of magazines that feature substantial longform nonfiction pieces by Penn students. *Endowed by Penn parents Judith Zarin and Gerald Rosenfeld.*

The Creative Ventures Fund ▶ The Creative Ventures project enables students and faculty to pursue ambitious projects and ideas, especially those that emphasize innovation, discovery, and imagination. The Creative Ventures Fund made possible a range of projects this year, including zine-making workshops, travel to film festivals, a series of interdisciplinary discussions (about urban space, food, intersections of science and art, entrepreneurial journalism, and more), and playful community engagement projects, such as our annual Edible Books Party. *Supported annually by Marc Wolpow (W'80) and Robin Wolpow.*

CPCW/PMA Seminar Fund ▶ Every other year, we partner with the Philadelphia Museum of Art to offer a unique year-long undergraduate course, sponsored by the CPCW/PMA Seminar Fund. The 2017–18 seminar was taught by Kenny Goldsmith and focused on Marcel Duchamp. *Funded annually by Dirk Wittenborn (C'72) and the Cape Branch Foundation.*

TARGETED OPPORTUNITIES AND OPEN-ENDED SUPPORT

Kane-Wallace Kitchen Fund ▶ A beautiful new countertop shines in the Kane-Wallace Kitchen, thanks to the Kane-Wallace Kitchen Fund, which honors the centrality of our kitchen, a place for ridiculously good food, late-night conversations fueled by abundant coffee and tea, and study sessions around the old green table. It's a true working kitchen, where students experiment with new recipes or remind themselves of home by recreating family favorites. As in most homes, our kitchen is the heart of our house. *Endowed by Ed Kane (C'71, Trustee 1996–2000) and Marty Wallace.*

Hartman Dining Room Endowment ▶ The Hartman Dining Room Endowment provides support for the many and various activities of the Writers House dining room: intimate dinners cooked by students, informal receptions with visiting authors, zine-making workshops and bookbinding parties, and late-night Scrabble sessions. *Endowed by Alan Hartman (W'87) and Kim Hartman.*

Faculty Director's Discretionary Fund ▶ This flexible fund enables Faculty Director Al Filreis to seek out and encourage students' innovative ideas and to invest in creative projects proposed by KWH community members. Filreis helped several students undertake special projects in 2018, including Jane Levy (C'19), who interned at Silvergate Media, Charlotte Bausch (C'20), who was a Fellow at the Teachers Institute of Philadelphia, and Emily Rush (C'19) and Julie Levitan (C'18), who completed groundbreaking archival and web development projects for Writers House Fellow Bernadette Mayer. The fund also provided a generous award to incoming Philadelphia Poet Laureate Raquel Salas Rivera (GR'22), who hosted poetry events all over the city in summer 2018. *Supported by Jon (C'71) and Barbara Avnet, Reina Marin Bassini (C'72, GED'72) and Emilio Bassini (C'71, W'71, WG'73), Reuben and Jennifer Daniels (W'91), Ronald Keeperman, Maria Popova (C'07), Caryn Karmatz Rudy and Lee Rudy (C'92), Mark (C'95) and Rachel Sherman (C'95), Marcy (C'88) and Jeff Schneider (C'88), Henry (C'90) and Talia Siegel, and Melissa and Larry Stoller.*

Student Initiatives Fund ▶ The Student Initiatives Fund — a pool of seed money to which anyone can contribute — supports creative projects and enterprises dreamed up and driven by students affiliated with KWH. Sponsored projects this year included RAW, a book about food for adolescents and young adults; a play development workshop organized by Meerie Jesuthasan (C'19) and the students of Intuitons, Penn's student-led experimental theater troupe; and a storyboarding workshop led by Faryn Pearl (C'14) and co-sponsored by the Alpha Delta Phi literary society. *Supported annually by the KWH community, with a special gift from Penn parents Howard and Cami Gordon.*

Alice Cooper Shoulberg Scholarship Fund for the Support of Student Creative Writing ▶ A stellar student who graduated from Penn's College for Women in 1955, Alice Cooper Shoulberg went on to a brilliant career as a Philadelphia public school teacher. Established in her memory, the Cooper Shoulberg Fund supports the technological needs of our Student Projects Space, where undergraduates depend on computers for design projects, magazine production, and more. *Endowed by Overbrook High School classmates of Alice Cooper Shoulberg.*

Gordon Walls '38 Creative Ventures Fund ▶ Through this flexible fund we support fresh initiatives and ideas, especially the creative (and sometimes outlandish) dreams of our Hub members, who constantly revitalize the KWH project with proposals for new publications, outreach programs, literary celebrations, and other community-driven projects. This year the Gordon Walls Fund helped stock our annual Hub Thanksgiving with turkey and all the fixings. *Supported by Gordon Lane Bond (C'06) and Sunny Bond.*

Van Doren Arts Engagement Fellowship ▶ The Van Doren Arts Engagement Fellow — a two-year fellowship open to recent college graduates — helps establish ways for undergraduates to connect with creative opportunities at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), the Center for Programs in Contemporary Writing (CPCW), and beyond. Inaugural Van Doren Fellow Gina DeCagna (C'16) curated a guide to Philly's art scene with the ICA student board, and helped CPCW's RealArts@Penn project match students with paid summer internships in creative fields. *Supported annually by Penn Parents John Van Doren and Sally Van Doren.*



Jenny Ford; Sallie Foster; Ben Fountain; Peggy Fox; Adam Frank and Marnie Gordon; Tovia Freedman; Jacqueline Friedland; Lise Funderburg; Michelle Futornick; Roy and Vicki Gainsburg; Greg Gallagher; Pamela and Mark Gallagher; Lisa Geiszler; Steve Gerkin; Nadia Ghent; Seamus and Mary Ann Gilson; David Glancey; Norm Glickman and Elyse Pivnick; Ryan Godfrey and Jessica Lowenthal; Nancy Golding; Ken Goldman; Danny Goldstein; Mackarness Goode; Mark Gordon and Aldo Buono; Richard Graves; David Green; Patricia Green; Alison Greenberg; Deborah Greenberg and Michael Winnick; Rabbi Lisa Greene; Adele Aron Greenspun; Mary Jane Gruninger; Jane Gutman; Amy Gutmann and Michael Doyle; Jennifer Gwartz; Matthew Hall; Alexandra Halpern; Billy Joe and Susan Harris; Kenneth Hay; Steven and Tom Heller; Kathryn Hellerstein and David Stern; Jackie Henrion; Lauren Herrmann; Michael Herzlin; Stephen and Jane Heumann; Lisa Hoffstein; Sara and Brian Holland; Jeffrey and Cindy Hunt; Michael Hyde; Sharon Ingraham; Hilal Isler; Alexander Jacobs; Diane Jacobs;

EMILY DICKINSON CIRCLE

Irvyn and Lucy Applebaum; Stuart Applebaum; Jon and Barbara Avnet; Reina Marin Bassini and Emilio Bassini; Armyan and Christine Meleo Bernstein; Gideon Bernstein and Jeanne Pepper Bernstein; Martin and Barbara Bienenstock; David Biro and Danielle Vitale; Black Heart Foundation; Jean Chatzky and Eliot Kaplan; Lois and Gary Claar; Lucy Cook; Reuben and Jennifer Daniels; Dirk Wittenborn; Joseph Fidanque; Christopher Forman; Rob Friedman; Bill and Linda Friend and Katherine Harris; Marlene and Alan Gilbert; Seth and Jane Ginns; Howard and Cami Gordon; Jon and Mindy Gray; Alan and Kim Hartman; George Johnson; Janey Kalymnios; Ed Kane and Marty Wallace; Nathan and Elizabeth Leight; Marc Wolpow; Ed and Marian Mulé; Connie Chung and Maury Povich; Hadley Rierson and Lee Rierson; David and Deborah Roberts; Caryn Karmatz Rudy and Lee Rudy; Leslie and Ricardo Salmon; Steven and Miriam Sosnick; Ken Stein; Melissa and Larry Stoller; Paul Williams; Marc and Robin Wolpow.



OUTREACH / BEYOND THE CAMPUS

Digital Poetries Fund ▶ Our Digital Poetries Fund allows us to make our vast digital resources freely available to anyone, anywhere. The fund pays for staff and equipment to support PennSound, the largest online collection of free digital poetry recordings in the world; *PoemTalk*, a monthly podcast hosted by Al Filreis and co-sponsored by the Poetry Foundation; *Jacketz*, an online journal of critical writing about poetry; and ModPo, our MOOC on modern and contemporary poetry taught by Filreis and a team of TAs, which—as it grows and evolves—Involves a number of meetups and special webcasts to engage new audiences, including, this year, a trip to London. *Supported annually by the KWH community, with special support this year from the Stuart S. Applebaum Giving Foundation, MC Catanese, Michael Cohn (C'85), T. de los Reyes, Charles Knittle, Aileen Hester Krassner, David (W'84) and Deborah Roberts, and Susan Small Savitsky (CW'75).*

KWH Alumni Online Book Group Term Fund ▶ Thanks to the KWH Alumni Online Book Group Fund we've hosted more than one hundred moderator-led online book discussions for alumni, Penn parents, and our extended Penn family. Group leaders this year—including Victoria Ford (C'15), erica kaufman, Max McKenna (C'10), and Lauren Yates (C'12)—organized discussions about a diverse range of topics, including the poetry of Bernadette Mayer; essays and stories about whiteness, identity, and responsibility; and the memoir *Priestdaddy* by Patricia Lockwood. *Supported annually by David (W'84) and Deborah Roberts.*

Maury Povich Summer Workshop Fund ▶ For ten days each summer, talented high-school writers come to Writers House for our Summer Workshop for Young Writers. The rigorous residential program, which is directed by Jamie-Lee Josselyn (C'05), emphasizes writing in a community setting, and leaves room for baking tutorials in the KWH kitchen, letterpress experiments at the Common Press, and off-campus explorations. Thanks to the Maury Povich Summer Workshop Fund, half of the workshop participants receive some form of financial assistance. For several students, the program is entirely free of charge. *Funded by Maury Povich (C'62) and Connie Chung.*

Esther T. Saxon Term Fund ▶ The Esther T. Saxon Fund supports our community outreach efforts, particularly programs and projects for children in under-resourced local elementary schools. The cornerstone of these efforts is Write On!, a student-led literacy project that engages students from nearby Lea Elementary in playful creative writing exercises with peers and mentors. *Supported annually by Jerilyn Saxon Perman (C'91) and Brian Perman (W'90), in honor of Esther T. Saxon.*



Anyone can assist in our recruitment efforts by making a gift to the Access Fund. If you are interested in improving access for underprivileged or geographically isolated students, please contact Andrew Beal at abeal@writing.upenn.edu or Jamie-Lee Josselyn at jjosselyn@writing.upenn.edu.

SUPPORT FOR EVENTS

Irwyn and Lucy Applebaum Fund ▶ With help from the Irwyn and Lucy Applebaum Fund we host conversations with editors and publishers we admire—the people who curate, refine, and disseminate the writing we read and enjoy. The Applebaum Fund sponsored two conversations this year: Brooke Borel offered thoughts about the art of fact checking and David Daley spoke about the process of compiling *Ratf***ked*, his exposé on gerrymandering. *Endowed by Irwyn Applebaum (C'75) and Lucy Applebaum.*

Blutt Songwriting Symposium Endowed Fund ▶ It's riveting when *Rolling Stone* editor Anthony DeCurtis interviews a rock legend for an audience of fifty in our Arts Café—and that's just what the Blutt Fund makes possible. This year's symposium featured the incomparable singer-songwriter Lucinda Williams. *Endowed by Margo Krody Blutt and Mitchell J. Blutt (C'78, M'82, L'84, Trustee 1998–2008).*

Bok Endowed Visiting Writers Series Fund ▶ We celebrate the full range of contemporary writing at KWH with support from the Bok fund, which allows us, year after year, to pay honoraria to a remarkable number of visiting writers. Poets who visited this year thanks to the Bok fund included Clark Coolidge, Divya Victor, James Sherry, and Peter Gizzi. The fund also helped us host an Alumni Weekend fiction showcase featuring Ariel Djanikian (C'04), Amina Gautier (GR'04), and Melissa Jensen (C'89, G'93). *Endowed by Roxanne Bok (C'81) and Scott Bok (C'81, W'81, L'84, Trustee 2005–present).*



Lucy F. DeMarco Fund for Youth Literature ▶ Established in memory of Lucy F. DeMarco, a preschool educator and voracious reader, this fund supports programs that engage with children's and young adult literature. We were thrilled to host another year of The Sensible Nonsense Project, curated by Arielle Brousse (C'07, SPP'12), to celebrate the foundational impact of early reading experiences. *Endowed by Kathy DeMarco Van Cleve (C'88, W'88).*



Cheryl J. Family Fund for Fiction Programming ▶ The Cheryl J. Family Fiction Fund sponsors an annual reading by a young or emerging fiction writer. Our special Family Fiction program on Halloween featured short-story writers Carmen Maria Machado and Jenny Zhang and concluded with an over-the-top spooky reception (with edible body parts sculpted in meatloaf). *Endowed by Cheryl J. Family (C'91).*

Fund for Feminist Projects ▶ For the third year running, our Feminism/s series filled the house past fire code for Shifting the Gaze, a panel discussion about women in music, hosted by Amanda Silberling (C'18). Through engaging and sometimes challenging programming, the student-led Feminism/s series—supported by the Fund for Feminist Projects—explores how writing, art, criticism, and other political acts can enact social change. *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*



Edward "Jake" Jacobson; Robert Jaffe; Lynn Jerath; Jamie-Lee Josselyn; Jeffrey David Jubelirer; Daniel Kahana; Betti Kahn; Emily Kaplan; Sally Kaplan; Lucinda Karter; Phyllis and Rick Kaskel; Melissa Kasper; Richard and Kathy Katz; Adam Kaufman; Carol and Jeffrey Kaufman; Ronald Keereman; Donald Keim; Edward Kelly; Susan Kerr; Joan Kim; Janice Kimenhour; John Kingston; Betsy Klausman; Sabrina Kleier-Morgenstern; Cliff Klein; Marcy and Henry Klein; Jean-Marie Kneeley; Charles Knittle; Jody Knowler; Deborah Komins; Ruth Davis Konigsberg; Scott Kraft and Nadine Van Der Velde; Aileen Hester Krassner; Scott Krawczyk; Moira Kuo; Beth Kwon; James and Susan La Marre; Deborah and Jon LaBerge; Jerry Lakoff; Ilene Leff; Ruth Lepson; Lynn Levin; Michelle Levister; Elena and Ken Levitan; Cindy Shmerler Levy; Ford Levy; and Max Levy; Joanne Lichtman; Russel Like; Jennifer Lin; Ron Litman; Betty Liu; Rachel Loftspring and Daniel Pelchovitz; Orli Low; David Lowenfeld and Sally Mendelsohn; Virginia Lucas; Kenneth Lum; Michael and Julie Lynch; Elaine Maimon; John Majane; Dea Mallin; Maria Markovich; Lynn Marsden-Atlass; Robert Martin; Mary Ellen Martin; Marcia and Sarah Martinez-Helfman; Mark Marziale; Iris Mayoral; Cecile Mazzucco-Than; Murray McComas; Kevin and Holly McLaughlin; Tammy McLeod;

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS CIRCLE

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Handwerker Stand-Up Comedy Series Fund ▶ The Handwerker Stand-Up Comedy Series Fund supports Stand-Ups Sit Down, a celebration of comedy, comedy writing, and comedians. Hosted by Penn funnyman Lew Schneider (C'83), this annual event invites a panel of comedians to KWH for an evening of storytelling and laughs, plus some bonus industry tips for aspiring stand-ups. This year's guests were Aparna Nancherla and Billy Wayne Davis. *Supported annually by Penn Parents Haim Handwerker and Jamie Handwerker (C'83).*

Hartman Family Screenwriting Series Fund ▶ Aspiring movie makers get a taste of the writers' room through the annual Hartman Family Screenwriting program. Kathy DeMarco (C'88, W'88), a screenwriting professor at Penn, hosted November's Hartman program, a fantastic conversation with *Toy Story* writer Alec Sokolow (C'85), who offered down-to-earth advice for starry-eyed students and fans. *Endowed by Penn parents Alan Hartman (W'87) and Kim Hartman.*

Sylvia W. Kauders Endowment Fund ▶ The Kauders Fund allows us to arrange a series of intimate lunchtime conversations with writers, including, this year, a discussion with novelist Jennifer Yu (C'16), whose young adult novel *Four Weeks, Five People*, is about a wilderness therapy camp for teens. *Endowed by Sylvia W. Kauders (CW'42).*

The Levin Endowed Fund for an Annual Symposium in Memory of Charles Bernheimer ▶ The Levin Endowed Fund allows the the KWH Program Coordinator to plan a program that engages her most creative impulses. For this year's Bernheimer Symposium, Program Coordinator Alli Katz invited poet and Twitter star Patricia Lockwood to speak about her memoir *Priestdaddy*. *Endowed by Kate Levin (G'90, GR'95) in memory of much-beloved Comp Lit professor Charles Bernheimer.*

The LIVE at the Writers House Endowment ▶ We partner with WXPN (88.5 FM) to produce a monthly one-hour radio show. Hosted and produced by KWH program coordinator Alli Katz, LIVE at the Writers House showcases some of Philly's most exciting up-and-comers. Among the guests featured on shows this year were experimental fiction writers, a stellar group of young poets, and a program in collaboration with One Book, One Philadelphia. *Endowed by BigRoc.*

The Bob Lucid Memorial Fund ▶ Robert "Bob" Lucid was a visionary teacher and mentor whose pedagogy helped inspire and structure our literary community. Friends of the Writers House established this fund in his memory, allowing us to host an annual fiction program that pays tribute to Bob as a continuing inspiration. Thanks to the Lucid Fund, we welcomed Nobel Prize–winner Orhan Pamuk to KWH in October. *Endowed by the KWH community, with lead gifts by Susan Small Savitsky (CW'75) and Ed Kane (C'71, Trustee 1996–2000).*

Maury Povich Journalism Program Fund ▶ The single largest programming gift in Writers House history, the Maury Povich Journalism Program Fund permanently endows our nonfiction programming, a range of events that include readings, craft talks, and mentor meetings with journalists, memoirists, essayists, critics, and other writers of nonfiction. Among the Povich series highlights this year were two programs hosted by *Slate's* Stephen Metcalf, one

with Dwight Garner, the other with Jamelle Bouie; lunches with Alex Koppelman (C'05) of CNN and Matt Nussbaum of *Politico*; and a weeklong visit by dissident Russian journalist Yevgenia Albats, co-sponsored by the Perry World House. *Endowed by Maury Povich (C'62) and Connie Chung.*

The Caroline Rothstein Fund in Support of Oral Poetry ▶ With the help of the Rothstein Fund we explore the oral tradition of poetry in its many forms, including performance poetry, sound poetry, spoken word, and slam. This year featured a performance by Gabriel Ramirez, with Kassidi Jones (C'18) opening the event. *Endowed by Penn parents Nancy (CW'75) and Steven Rothstein in honor of their daughter Caroline Rothstein (C'06).*

Eva and Leo Sussman Poetry Fund ▶ We honor the memory of Eva and Leo Sussman — beloved grandparents of Daniel Morse — with an annual poetry program. This year's Sussman Program featured a reading by Guggenheim Fellowship–winning poet Michael Palmer, whose visit concluded with a special recording of Charles Bernstein's *Close Listening* podcast in front of a live audience in the Arts Café. *Endowed by Penn parents Daniel and Miriam Morse in memory of Eva and Leo Sussman.*

The Stacey Gillis Weber (W'85) and Jeffrey A. Weber Symposium Fund ▶ The Weber Fund allows us to explore the art of clear business writing through an annual symposium that celebrates a financial writer with a knack for lucid prose. This year's featured guest was *Wall Street Journal* columnist Jason Zweig, who helped demystify investment and personal finance for the eager crowd. *Endowed by Stacey Gillis Weber (W'85) and Jeffrey A. Weber.*

The Wexler Endowment Fund for Programs at the Kelly Writers House ▶ The Wexler Fund supports all kinds of projects, allowing students and others to think creatively about what can happen in our space. This year, the fund sponsored a celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Jerome Rothenberg's groundbreaking anthology, *Technicians of the Sacred*, and enabled several student-led initiatives, including the Speakeasy open-mic series. *Endowed by Penn parents Gary and Nina Wexler.*

Wexler Family Endowed Fund for Programs in Jewish Life and Culture ▶ The Wexler Family Fund helps us celebrate Jewish life, art, and culture. Thanks to the Wexler Fund we hosted two special lunches this year focused on Jewish culture: a conversation with scholar Alan Rosen about Elie Wiesel, and an interview with writer Beth Kissileff (G'93, GR'98), whose novel *Question Return* raises questions about faith. *Endowed by Penn parents Gary and Nina Wexler.*

Seth Ginns Fund for International Writers ▶ The Seth Ginns Fund for International Writers supports globally minded programming with international scope and appeal. Our Writers Without Borders series this year included readings by poets Eduardo Espina, Rafael Pérez y Pérez, and Yanko González, journalist Ramita Navai, and a conversation between M. NourbeSe Philip and Kyoo Lee. *Funded annually by Seth (C'00) and Jane Ginns.*



We remember Blaze Bernstein

We were devastated by the death of Blaze Bernstein, a member of Penn's Class of 2020, who was the newly elected managing editor of *Penn Appétit*, a copy associate for *Penn Review*, and a member of our planning committee. It was a staggering loss that continues to affect our community.

Blaze was well known at KWH for his cooking, his wit, and his generosity. He spent many hours happily testing out recipes in the KWH kitchen, often right up until closing time. His potted dirt cake for our annual Edible Books Party (a nod to *The Good Earth* by Pearl S. Buck) looked so realistic no one dared eat it, which Blaze later complained about, since he knew the cake was delicious. He shared his cranberry upside-down cake at Writers House Thanksgiving — and afterward shared the recipe so that we could all make it again. Blaze was generous that way.

A memorial gathering here at KWH in February allowed us to celebrate Blaze's life, and to remember him in a way that felt right: friends and family members brought food for a potluck feast and we came together in the Arts Café to share memories. We remembered Blaze for his kindness and his commitments to his friends. We laughed about his kombucha and his love of LaCroix. We talked about his writing, his compassion and skill as an editor — and about all the ways he'd be remembered and missed.

We will cherish Blaze's memory here forever. And in partnership with his family, we have established a fund to help honor and remember him. The **Blaze Bernstein Memorial Fund at the Kelly Writers House** will, every year, provide

a stipend to a Penn student undertaking an otherwise unpaid summer internship in a creative field. Funds raised in Blaze's memory above and beyond the cost of a summer stipend will be used to support community-oriented programs at the Writers House that center on writing and food, two of Blaze's great loves.

The Blaze fund has been established with a lead gift by Jeanne Pepper Bernstein and Gideon Bernstein. Additional supporters include Maya Afilalo (C'16), Dr. Reina Marin Bassini (C'72, GED'72) and Emilio Bassini (C'71, W'71, WG'73), Erica Baum, Roxanne Bok (C'81) and Scott Bok (C'81, W'81, L'84), Anthony DeCurtis, Monica Donegan (C'16, LPS'17), Dr. Amy Gutmann (HOM'04) and Dr. Michael Doyle, Jennifer Egan (C'85), Andrew Ferris, Brandon Fleischer (C'15), Ken Goldman (C'92), Alex Goldstein (C'11), Jessica Haralson (C'08), Kim Hartman and Alan Hartman (W'87), Jamie-Lee Josselyn (C'05), Deanne Lipsay and Seth Lipsay (WG'86), Jessica Lowenthal (G'07), Emma Morgenstern (C'10), Karen Rile (C'80) and Larry Smith, MD (C'78, M'82), Jerome Schneider (C'95), Bill Speer, Susahn Stowers-Soule, Hilda Beltran Wagner (C'87), Rick Wennerberg, and other anonymous donors.

Anyone may contribute to this fund in memory of Blaze. To find out more, email Andrew Beal at abeal@writing.upenn.edu, or visit writing.upenn.edu/wh/support/funds/blazememorial.



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Thank you, Friends!

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