

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTORS

"Love expresses tide / Linked like chain to change"

Imani Elizabeth Jackson read these words during her recent visit with Claire Crews, but that evening in our gallery was not the first time we heard them. We initially fell into Imani's work during our 2022 Poetry Marathon as part of a segment curated by Joshua Edwards and Lynn Xu for *The Canary*, a literary journal we've long admired.

In 2024, the linking continues, line to stream: Our 30th Anniversary Poetry Marathon commences on Saturday, January 27th, and your voices and presences will carry us all through until we reach the ocean late in the evening on the 28th. Recently, we were looking back at the virtual Poetry Marathons we've put on together over the past several years, and we have to tell you—they constitute a remarkable history, both of the Woodland Pattern community itself and also of independent poetry and the arts. Needless to say, we hope to see you in the audience for this year's event!

Beyond the Marathon, more beloved poets return to us this winter, bringing with them poets who will enter our doors for the first time: Ching-In Chen, a former board member and endlessly innovative writer, will serve as curator, moderator, and host for the next iteration of our NEA-sponsored First Function of Poetry series on March 14th, which will focus on trans and nonbinary poetics and feature George Abraham and Chrysanthemum. Then, on March 16th, Diana Khoi Nguyen and Cindy Juyoung Ok will arrive with longtime Woodland Pattern friend Nikki Wallschlaeger-with each poet celebrating new and lauded collections. Please keep the middle of March open and join us to welcome these poets, whether in the spirit of homecoming or in honor of their inaugural visit. (Lynn Xu, mentioned above, will also return later in the spring; stay tuned for news about that!)

As this year turns to the next, we are also welcoming two Milwaukee Emerging Poet Fellows in our Project and Practice categories: In Practice, Tasneem Jassar will work with mentoring poet Ae Hee Lee to hone her own verse, while Ben Binversie will collaborate with our staff in the Project category to create a series of workshops and

gatherings that invite poetry in connection with our local watersheds, in search of "watershed moments."

Speaking again of watershed moments, and tides turning once again to lines that arrive home, we remain immensely pleased to share that the poet Lewis Freedman will be joining us in February as Woodland Pattern's next Book Center Manager. The announcement of Lewis's imminent arrival rippled joyfully through the poetry airwaves, bringing in many comments of support. Among them was this note from UW–Madison Professor Emeritus Len Kaplan, who wrote: "Congratulations, you have picked a brilliant guy. My hopes for a continuation of the quality you have demonstrated in the past in these 'dark times."

This continuation, we promise, is our every intention. We look forward to sharing more with you, and collaborating alongside you, as we move into this coming year.

In love, in tide,

A+2

Jenny & Laura

Special Event

30TH ANNUAL POETRY MARATHON & BENEFIT

ONLINE Sat. & Sun., Jan. 27 & 28

10 am-10 pm CST (\$Give What You Can)

In honor and in memory of Janine Arseneau

Presented by the General Federation of Women's Clubs—Wisconsin with support from DeWitt LLP and Juneau Park Friends, Woodland Pattern's 30th Annual Poetry Marathon will feature performances from nearly 300 poets, musicians, and moving image artists from Milwaukee and across the globe. In addition to more than 100 poets from Wisconsin, this year's event will include participants from 35 states and more than a dozen countries outside the U.S! Once again, all 24 hours of the Poetry Marathon will be livestreamed via Crowdcast.

As you might imagine, we've got an amazing line-up. In addition to several community hours, this year's Marathon will also offer special segments curated by partner organizations such as the African Poetry Book Fund; Indigenous Nations Poets; Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets; Wisconsin Poet Laureate Commission; and Veterans for Peace. Milwaukee-based presses and journals-including Genre: Urban Arts, Moody the Zine, pitymilk press, and Wyrd—will join in with small-press poetry publishers from around the country, including Bloof Books, City Point Press, Oxeye Press, and Sarka. And there is still so much more—not only additional curated hours, but also improvisational musical performances, short films curated by aCinema, and contributions from Milwaukee Kitchen (which has been described as "the only surrealist cooking show" in the world). Please be sure to check out our full schedule online!

As this is our 30th consecutive Marathon, we could not resist commemorating this anniversary with a couple of special keepsakes. Artist Nomka Enkhee has designed a special, limited-run T-shirt, along with a beautiful RISO-printed program, both of which are available to pre-order online.

In addition to being an extraordinary event and a beloved tradition for poets of all ages, the Poetry Marathon serves as a community-driven fundraiser. You can support the Marathon this year by helping poets meet their \$50 pledge goal, or by signing up to sponsor an hour or more. Thanks to our community, funds raised through the Marathon each January have kept Woodland Pattern going strong for decades, providing fuel for all our programmatic activities in the year ahead.

As always, it's the mix of voices that makes Woodland Pattern's Poetry Marathon an authentic celebration of our shared humanity and the possibilities of language. We thank you in advance for honoring the many individual creative practices that compose and enrich our vast community.

Sponsor a Poet: Visit our website or give us a call to sponsor a Marathon participant. You can make your donation on the behalf of a particular poet, or if you're unsure who to sponsor, consider a "Pledge a Reader" donation. Money received through these donations will go towards helping a poet who is unable to meet the \$50 pledge goal.

Sponsor an Hour: Each hour of the Marathon is matched by a sponsor for that hour, and we still have a few hours in need of sponsorship! To underwrite an hour of the Poetry Marathon, contact Executive Assistant Molly Hassler at mollyh@woodlandpattern.org or call the center's main line.

Major Sponsorships: In addition to hour sponsorships, the Poetry Marathon is supported by major sponsors at the presenting, premier, and supporting levels. To learn more, visit our website or give us a call and ask for Executive Directors Jenny Gropp and Laura Solomon.



MILWAUKEE YOUTH POET LAUREATE PROGRAM

Woodland Pattern and its partners are excited to announce the continuation of the Milwaukee Youth Poet Laureate program! Details are outlined below; visit our website for more information.

Submissions for the Laureateship are currently open and will close on **March 24, 2024**. Finalists will be selected in April and receive performance coaching to help them prepare for a citywide juried event in May at the Milwaukee Public Library's central branch.



The Milwaukee Youth Poet Laureate will receive:

- A \$500 book allowance
- A paid summer internship with Woodland Pattern (including a Poetry Camp counselor position)
- Ongoing mentorship and support from Woodland Pattern throughout the Laureateship
- A full-ride scholarship to participate in UW–
 Madison's Pass the Mic Festival hosted by First Wave
- Opportunities to:
 - o Perform around the city
 - o Compete for regional and national titles
 - o Lead writing workshops for fellow youth poets
 - Connect with local organizations to spotlight social causes

Eligibility

Applicants must be high school sophomores or juniors and Milwaukee County residents.

Application Process

- Submit 5 poems + a CV outlining extracurricular activities, volunteer work, and/or academic honors by March 24, 2024.
- Finalists will be selected in April to compete at a juried event in May at Milwaukee Public Library's Central Branch.

Free upcoming Youth Workshops

In partnership with Milwaukee Public Library, Woodland Pattern will offer two free workshops open to youth poets ages 12–19. Each workshop will also include an info session for students to learn more about the MYPL program. Dates TBA.

Want help with your poems or CV?

Youth poets seeking guidance can contact us for advice on generating new work, editing existing poems, preparing a dynamic CV, and submitting the application. Contact us at **youth@woodlandpattern.org** for more details.

The Milwaukee Youth Poet Laureate program is made possible with support from the Academy of American Poets, Milwaukee Public Library, Amazon Literary Partnership, and through individual contributions.

READINGS & CONVERSATIONS

International Mother Language Day Reading Wed. Feb. 21 | 7-8:30 pm CST *ONLINE*

More information on how to view this event is forthcoming, as is a list of readers. Please visit our website to learn more.

Group Poetry Reading in celebration of International Mother Language Day presented by Write On, Door County in partnership with Chippewa Valley Writers Guild, Driftless Writing Center, Lake Superior Writers, Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets, Wisconsin Poet Laureate Commission, and Woodland Pattern.

Participating readers are people based here in Wisconsin whose first language is not English, and who will present poems in their mother tongue. International Mother

Language Day promotes awareness of cultural and linguistic diversity, and this reading extends that awareness to the poets and writers based here in Wisconsin. This event also invites people to discover a deeper appreciation for poetry through relying first on the rhythm and music of poems as the devices that move you, rather than on the words themselves.

About International Mother Language Day:

The idea to celebrate International Mother Language Day was the initiative of Bangladesh. It was approved at the 1999 UNESCO General Conference and has been observed throughout the world since 2000.



Sat. Mar. 9 | 7 pm CST (\$Give What You Can)

HYBRID In person at Woodland Pattern and livestreaming via Crowdcast

Poetry Reading celebrating **AE HEE LEE**'s *ASTERISM* (Tupelo Press, 2024), selected by John Murillo for the 2022 Dorset Prize, and **OLATUNDE OSINAIKE**'s *Tender Headed* (Akashic Books, 2023), selected by Camille Rankine as winner of the 2022 National Poetry Series.

Born in South Korea and raised in Peru, **AE HEE LEE** currently lives in Wisconsin. In addition to *ASTERISM*, she is the author of the poetry chapbooks *Bedtime* || *Riverbed* (Compound Press, 2017), *Dear bear*, (Platypus Press, 2021), and *Connotary* (Frost Place Chapbook Competition Winner—Bull City Press, 2021). Ae Hee is a Just Buffalo Literary Center Fellow, an *Adroit Journal* Gregory Djanikian Scholar, a recipient of the James Olney Award by the *Southern Review*, and a Ruth Lilly and Dorothy Sargent Rosenberg Poetry Fellowship finalist. She has also received

OLATUNDE OSINAIKE

Ars Poetica

Does soft it make the shins of a child

when thick skin is not a question of

susceptibility or blistering? That during their brief

time in this hemisphere, they are thankful that

they haven't been jumped. That they can

flaunt their wingspan at all is something to be

admired and not frantic about. Look out the window

and please tell me where you don't see the after-

math of heliotherapy.

Where is it exactly that

you enjoy being judged as stiff as the larynx

of a tight chest. This life of first impressions,

of shakes ranked by their unyielding grip.

All the muscles I'm aware of restore best while at rest.

scholarships and honors from the Academy of American Poets, AWP, Bread Loaf, Sewanee Writers' Conference, and the Palm Beach Poetry Festival, among others.

Originally from the West Side of Chicago, OLATUNDE
OSINAIKE is a Nigerian—American poet, essayist, and
software developer. He is the author of *Tender Headed*(Akashic Books, 2023), selected by Camille Rankine as
winner of the 2022 National Poetry Series. His collection
was also runner-up for the Cave Canem Poetry Prize and
finalist for the Alice James Award and CAAPP Book Prize.
Other honors include winner of the Lucille Clifton Poetry
Prize and a Frontier Industry Prize, semifinalist for the
92Y Discovery Poetry Prize, and honorable mention for
the Ploughshares Emerging Writer's Award in Poetry. His
work has received fellowships and support from Poets &
Writers, Hurston/Wright Foundation, Kenyon Review Writers
Workshop, and the Institute for the Study of Global Racial
Justice at Rutgers University.



Thurs. Mar. 14 | 7 pm CDT (\$Give What You Can)

HYBRID In person at Woodland Pattern and livestreaming via Crowdcast

Join us for a **reading and conversation** focused on trans and nonbinary poetics featuring **GEORGE ABRAHAM** and **CHRYSANTHEMUM**, and guest curated, hosted, and moderated by **CHING-IN CHEN**.

Presented as part of *The First Function of Poetry (Is to Tell the Truth): A Social Justice Series* with support from the NEA.

GEORGE ABRAHAM (they/he) is a Palestinian American poet. Their debut poetry collection *Birthright* (Button Poetry, 2020) won the Arab American Book Award and was a Lambda Literary Award finalist. They are currently executive editor for Mizna, and are a recipient of fellowships from Kundiman, the Arab American National Museum, Sewanee Writers' Conference, National Performance Network, and more. They are currently co-editing a Palestinian global anglophone poetry anthology with Noor Hindi (Haymarket Books, 2024) and are a Litowitz MFA+MA candidate at Northwestern University.

CHRYSANTHEMUM is a poet, performance artist, and public historian who serves as co-director of the Providence Poetry Slam. She is the winner of a 2023 Ruth Lilly and Dorothy Sargent Rosenberg Fellowship from the Poetry Foundation, a Kundiman Fellow, and the recipient of a 2023 Justin Chin Memorial Scholarship from Lambda Literary. Chrysanthemum first broke ground as a finalist in the 2016 Women of the World Poetry Slam. Her teams were champions of the Rustbelt Poetry Slam and the first-ever FEM Slam. Featured on PBS and Button Poetry, she appears on nationwide stages and in *The Nation*, *Them*, and *The Offing*, among others.

CHING-IN CHEN is a genderqueer Chinese American writer, community organizer, and teacher. They are the author of The Heart's Traffic: a novel in poems and recombinant (2018 Lambda Literary Award for Transgender Poetry) as well as chapbooks to make black paper sing and Kundiman for Kin :: Information Retrieval for Monsters. Chen is co-editor of The Revolution Starts at Home: Confronting Intimate Violence Within Activist Communities, a Massage Parlor Outreach Project core member, and a Kelsey Street Press collective member. They have received fellowships from Kundiman, Lambda, Watering Hole, Can Serrat, Imagining America, Jack Straw Cultural Center and the Intercultural Leadership Institute as well as the Judith A. Markowitz Award for Exceptional New LGBTQ Writers. They collaborate with Cassie Mira on Breathing in a Time of Disaster, a performance, installation, and writing project exploring breath through meditation, health, and environmental justice.



Sat. Mar. 16 | 7 pm CDT (\$Give What You Can)

HYBRID In person at Woodland Pattern and livestreaming via Crowdcast

Reading featuring **DIANA KHOI NGUYEN**, author of *Root Fractures* (Simon & Schuster, 2024), **CINDY JUYOUNG OK**, author of *Ward Toward* (Yale University Press, 2023), and **NIKKI WALLSCHLAEGER**, author of the forthcoming *Hold Your Own* (Copper Canyon, 2024).

A poet and multimedia artist, **DIANA KHOI NGUYEN** is the author of *Root Fractures* (2024), and *Ghost Of* (Omnidawn, 2018) which was a finalist for the National Book Award. A recipient of a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, and winner of the 92Y Discovery Poetry Contest and 2019 Kate Tufts Discovery Award, she currently teaches in the Randolph College Low-Residency MFA and is an Assistant Professor at the University of Pittsburgh.

CINDY JUYOUNG OK is the author of *Ward Toward* (2023), which won the Yale Younger Poets Prize. She is a former high school science teacher and current Kenyon Review fellow teaching poetry at Kenyon College.

NIKKI WALLSCHLAEGER is the author of the full-length poetry collections *Hold Your Own* (2024), *Waterbaby* (Copper Canyon, 2021), *Crawlspace* (Bloof Books, 2017), and *Houses* (Horse Less Press, 2015), as well as the the graphic book *I Hate Telling You How I Really Feel* (Bloof Books, 2019). She is also the author of an artist book called "Operation USA" through the Baltimore-based book arts group Container, a project acquired by Woodland Pattern. Her work has been featured in the *American Poetry Review*, *Kenyon Review*, *The Nation*, *Poetry, Brick*, and *Witness*.



Sat. Mar. 23 | 7 pm CDT (\$Give What You Can)

HYBRID In person at Woodland Pattern and livestreaming via Crowdcast

Poetry Reading featuring **JULIAN TALAMANTEZ BROLASKI**, author of *Of Mongrelitude* (Wave Books, 2017)

JULIAN TALAMANTEZ BROLASKI (it/xe/them) is a poet and country singer, the author of *Of Mongrelitude* (2017), *Advice for Lovers* (City Lights, 2012), and *gowanus atropolis* (Ugly Duckling Presse, 2011). Julian is a 2023 Bagley Wright lecturer, a 2021 Pew Foundation Fellow, and the recipient of the 2020 Cy Twombly Award for Poetry. Its poems were recently included in *When the Light of the World Was Subdued, Our Songs Came Through: A Norton Anthology of Native Nations Poetry* (2020) and *We Want It All: An Anthology of Radical Trans Poetics* (Nightboat, 2020). With its band Juan & the Pines, it released an EP *Glittering Forest* in 2019; Julian's first full-length album *It's Okay Honey* came out in August 2023.

JANUARY 2024

S	М	Т	W	Т	F	S
	1	2	3 Readshop	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13 Workshop w/ Leidner
14	15	16	17 Readshop	18 Forma- tions	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 30th Annual Poetry Marathon
28 30th Annual Poetry Marathon	29	30	31 Readshop			

MARCH

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					1	2 Reception: Everything Has a Story
3 Alternating Currents Live	4	5	6	7	8	9 Lee Osinaike
10	11	12	13 Readshop	14 Abraham Chrysanthemum Chen	15	16 Nguyen Ok Wallsch- laeger
17	18	19	20	21 Formations	22	23 Workshop w/ Brolaski Brolaski
31	25	26	27 Readshop	28	29 resound return	30

FEBRUARY

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4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
11	12	13	14 Readshop	15 Formations	16	17		
18	19	20	21 Intl. Mother Language Day	22	23 resound return	24		
25	26	27	28 Readshop	29				

AE HEE LEE

Would I Rather Soften

The way a cup of black tea is easily changed by milk or light—

The way soybeans are left to soak until they bloat. Blended until they are broken down into paste and pressed into a brittle clump of tofu—The way a drumstick is forgotten at the back of the fridge, and months turn muscle into a fuzzy forest of mold—You can't choose when

grief will knead your heart sore.

But as a child, when I asked my mother why the pill bug rolled into a solitary planet when it was afraid, she suggested we practice softness—listen to what it had to say.

And this too didn't leave us unscathed.

^{*}Originally published in *Mid-American Review*

WORKSHOPS

A limited number of scholarships are available for each workshop we offer. Writers who are low-income and/or of marginalized identities are particularly encouraged to apply.



Sat. Jan. 13 | 1-4 pm CST *ONLINE* on Zoom

List Poems: A workshop with MARK LEIDNER

In this workshop, we will analyze and discuss list poems, examining their unique attributes with an eye toward improving our own forays into this subgenre. We will look at remarkable examples, from poems that are lists explicitly to poems that employ subtler listing within a more conventional mode. We'll discuss the unique challenges and opportunities list poems present: namely, how to end them; how to begin them; the role that the title and opening lines play in creating a context in which the list unfolds; how to harness repetition without succumbing to monotony; and what types of poetic material are ideal for generating list poems.

MARK LEIDNER is the author of two books of poetry, Returning the Sword to the Stone (Fonograf, 2021) and Beauty Was the Case that They Gave Me (Factory Hollow, 2011); a book of aphorisms, The Angel in the Dream of Our Hangover (Two Dollar Radio, 2011); and a short story collection, Under the Sea (Tyrant Books, 2018). He also wrote the sci-fi feature Empathy, Inc. (2019). He has taught writing at the University of Iowa, the University of Massachusetts—Amherst, Emory University, and Portland State University.



Sat. Mar. 23 | 1–4 pm CDT
IN PERSON at Woodland Pattern

Poet and country singer **JULIAN TALAMANTEZ BROLASKI** will lead a generative writing workshop. Full details coming soon!

JULIAN TALAMANTEZ BROLASKI (it/xe/them) is a poet and country singer, the author of *Of Mongrelitude* (2017), *Advice for Lovers* (City Lights, 2012), and *gowanus atropolis* (Ugly Duckling Presse, 2011). Julian is a 2023 Bagley Wright lecturer, a 2021 Pew Foundation Fellow, and the recipient of the 2020 Cy Twombly Award for Poetry. Its poems were recently included in *When the Light of the World Was Subdued, Our Songs Came Through: A Norton Anthology of Native Nations Poetry* (2020) and *We Want It All: An Anthology of Radical Trans Poetics* (Nightboat, 2020). With its band Juan & the Pines, it released an EP *Glittering Forest* in 2019; Julian's first full-length album *It's Okay Honey* came out in August 2023.

CONCERTS

Thurs. Jan. 18 | 7 PM CST (\$10)

HYBRID In person at Woodland Pattern and livestreaming via Crowdcast

Formations Series for New and Improvised Music, artists TBA

Thurs. Feb. 15 | 7 PM CST (\$10)

HYBRID In person at Woodland Pattern and livestreaming via Crowdcast

Formations Series for New and Improvised Music, artists TBA



Sun. Mar. 3 | 7 pm CST (\$15)*HYBRID* In person at Woodland Pattern and livestreaming via Crowdcast

Alternating Currents Live presents MICHAEL ZERANG for an evening of solo percussion works. Zerang will be joined by MICHAEL BETTINE for a piece to close the concert.

MICHAEL ZERANG was born in Chicago and is a firstgeneration American of Assyrian descent. He has been a musician, composer, and producer since 1976, focusing on improvised music, free jazz, contemporary composition, puppet theater, experimental theater, and international musical forms. As a percussionist, composer, and collaborator, Zerang has over one hundred and thirty-five titles in his discography and has toured nationally and internationally to 39 countries since 1981, and works with an ever-widening pool of multi-disciplinary collaborators. Zerang founded and was the artistic director of the Links Hall Performance Series in Chicago from 1985-89 where he produced over 300 concerts of jazz, traditional ethnic folk music, electronic music, and other forms of forwardthinking music. He was a Board Member of Links Hall from 1989-2013. He continued to produce concerts at Cafe Urbus Orbis from 1994-96, and at his own space, The Candlestick Maker in Chicago's Albany Park neighborhood, from 2001-05. Zerang has taught as a guest artist at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in performance technique, sound design, and sound/music as it relates to puppetry; rhythmic analysis for dancers at the Dance Center of Columbia College, Northwestern University, and MoMing Dance and Arts Center; courses in Composer/ Choreographer Collaborations at Northwestern University; and music to children at the Jane Adams Hull House. He currently holds workshops in improvisational music.



Since 2002, MICHAEL BETTINE has worked under the name GONGTOPIA, presenting Sound Sessions and workshops, using gongs, singing bowls, bells, and other percussion. He has written various books on percussion, including his new book, The Way of the Gong-Explorations and Observations in Sound. Michael has also released over forty recordings under his name. His longrunning blogs—The Way of the Gong, Art as a Spiritual Practice, and Percussion Deconstruction—have been embraced by both the meditation/sound therapy and percussion communities. As a devoted music educator, he teaches privately, and has presented workshops on gongs at the prestigious Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC) in 2005 and 2012; at the 1st Gong Summit in 2019 and the online Gong Summits in 2020 and 21; at Gong Camp in 2021-23; and at "Focus on sound therapy" in Italy in 2021-23. He also maintains a long running YouTube educational channel.

Thurs. Mar. 21 | 7 PM CDT (\$10)

HYBRID In person at Woodland Pattern and livestreaming via Crowdcast

Formations Series for New and Improvised Music, artists TBA

EXHIBITION & ARTIST TALKS

Everything Has a Story, work by DARLENE WESENBERG RZEZOTARSKI

On View: February—May, 2024 Reception: Sat. Mar. 2 | 3-6 PM

(Open to the public)

IN PERSON at Woodland Pattern



Everything Has a Story offers a retrospective of Darlene Wesenberg Rzezotarski's work to date. Wesenberg Rzezotarski begins her creative practice by researching and reflecting on historical narratives, myths, or tales. Using this gathered information, she creates sculptures that delve into the lives of Increase Lapham and Lizzie Kander, as well as mythological beings such as Daedalus and Icarus, to name only a few. Rendered as ceramic objects, the main subjects of these stories are situated centrally and represented figuratively, while iconographic images and phrases float around each character building the metaphoric scenery in

which their stories occur. Wesenberg Rzezotarski's gestural approach to shaping the clay animates these characters and makes their presence palpable, as if the represented individuals are themselves sitting within the vignettes. This vitality may be why some sculptures have inspired the creation of subsequent pieces, allowing the stories to unfold in series, furthering their narrative arcs, and creating rich tableaus. Wesenberg Rzezotarski crafts her stories using clay as well as the written word, with published books of prose and poetry. *Everything Has a Story* will comprise selections from both her sculptural and written works.





DARLENE "LOLLY" WESENBERG RZEZOTARSKI is a

storyteller—through word and clay. She arrived in Milwaukee in 1965, thinking she'd teach here one year to repay student loans and move on. But something happened: She fell in love with the place. More than fifty years later, she remains involved in writing, teaching, and creating ceramic art. With a master's degree in comparative literature from UWM, she has taught English for MPS and has shared her love of writing and the creative arts with generations of students. She looks back with gratitude on that day in 1982 when she first put her hands in clay. A coil-pot in the form of a snake emerged. She inscribed the word hiss-story inside. Since then, she has developed her ability to create ceramic sculptures, eventually setting up a home studio and offering hand-building workshops. Her sculptures are described as narrative in nature, anchored in history or myth, often sitespecific. She is the author of three books: *Trick a Witch*, Wed a Hedgehog, Save your Soul: An American Artist Encounters Poland; Memorable Milwaukee: Legendary Tales Depicted in Clay; and Tannenbaum Arms, a novel set in Milwaukee in the Vietnam Era, first appearing in monthly installment form in the Riverwest Currents in 2022.

COMMUNITY

For more details or to join a community group, please contact Programming Director Mike Wendt (michaelw@woodlandpattern.org). All community sessions are free and open to the public.



Open Mic: resound return
Fri. Feb. 23 and Mar. 29 | 7 pm CDT/CST

(\$Give What You Can)

IN PERSON at Woodland Pattern

After a sleepy season, the open mic series emerges from hibernation. Don't hit the snooze button. Be like the bear, revitalized from dormancy—stick to your New Year's resolution and make more room for poetry. resound return is hosted the last Friday of every month. Register upon arrival; reading begins at 7:10 PM.

Reading Group: Readshops

Wed. Jan. 3, 17, & 31; Feb. 14 & 28; Mar. 13 & 27

6-7:15 pm CST (Open to the public)

ONLINE on Zoom

Led by poet and Woodland Pattern co-founder **KARL GARTUNG**, Readshops are community sessions dedicated to exploring poetry texts from the 20th century that are often labeled "difficult." Participants take turns reading the poetry aloud, discussing it as questions arise—on the spot, as deeply as needed. No preparation is needed; the only prerequisite is curiosity.

The group is reading from Robin Blaser's *The Holy Forest*, which, spanning five decades, is Blaser's highly acclaimed lifelong serial poem. "Blaser plays his poems like an instrument. The glorious phrases that come forth ring with the memory of fairy tale, myth, gospel, but hang hard on to the modern world in his variety of measure and stress. Blaser is moving us all forward to a less certain result through a forest that has few resting places where the sun stays for longer than a minute." —Fanny Howe

Reading Group: Ping Pong Book Club *IN PERSON* at Woodland Pattern

2024 dates and times are forthcoming. Please visit our website for updates or contact us for details.

The Ping Pong Book Club invites AAPI people to read together in an environment of solace and nourishment—to connect and share in conversation through literature, especially during times of distress. Our goal is to exchange thoughts, experiences, and feelings among one another, a back–and–forth, like table tennis, or simply ping pong. The reading material will focus on fiction and nonfiction literature specifically by female, BIPOC, and LGBTQIA+ writers, with a focus on art and artists writings. The Ping Pong Book Club is led by artist **NOMKA ENKHEE**, who lives and works in Milwaukee. The group is currently reading *Halal If You Hear Me*, edited by Fatimah Asghar and Safia Elhillo.

The Ping Pong Book Club recognizes the term AAPI as a huge umbrella that covers many global diasporic communities including different languages, religions, and cultures. We understand this term designed to encompass such a vast and multifaceted group has its limitations and want to create a community that is diverse and truly representative. Therefore we welcome everyone whose identities are tied in location to South Asia, Southeast Asia, Central Asia, West Asia, the Pacific Islands, and East Asia.

JANINE ARSENEAU

Solstice in the Winter Garden

it is winter now at Hartung Park
the little prairie park in my corner of the world

quiet fills the air settles on tasseled tops of grasses stippled by last week's snow

full-bellied clouds gentle along a sky more grey than blue

the labyrinth is barely visible

soon, the longest night will arrive

geese gather at the outer edge of the frozen lagoon

friends and i gather, too

soon, we'll move closer together to await, to welcome the return of the light

come join us we'll wait right here for you

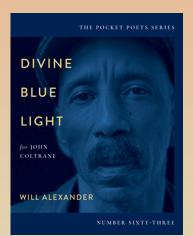


On October 13, 2023, we learned that our beloved friend and board member Janine Arseneau had departed from our physical world. Her abrupt transition from our outer to inner lives has left us bereft—both as individuals who knew and loved her personally and as members of a community she kept nourished with her unmatched kindness, grace, and wisdom.

Janine joined Woodland Pattern's Board of Directors in 2017. As a board member, she was instrumental to both Woodland Pattern's founder transition in 2018 as well as to its survival throughout the pandemic, serving as the chair of the fundraising committee from 2020 though 2022. Even as her health forced her to take an occasional step back, Janine continued to give her heart and soul, championing every effort.

Speaking at Woodland Pattern's Poetry Marathon in 2022, Janine offered these reflections on the art she practiced and devoted herself to nurturing in others: "I believe what Mary Oliver said is true. 'Poetry is a life-cherishing force. For poems are not words after all, but fires for the cold, ropes let down to the lost, something as necessary as bread in the pockets of the hungry."

STAFF



Divine Blue Light by Will
Alexander (City Lights Books,
2022)—Against the ruins of a
contemporary globalist
discourse, which he
denounces as a "lingual
theocracy of super-imposed
rationality," Will Alexander's
poems constitute an
alternative cartography that
draws upon omnivorous
reading—in subjects from
biology to astronomy to

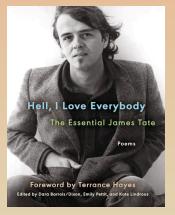
history to philosophy-amalgamating their diverse vocabularies into an impossible instrument only he can play. Divine Blue Light is anchored by three major works: the opening "Condoned to Disappearance," a meditation on the heteronymic exploits of Portuguese modernist Fernando Pessoa; the closing "Imprecation as Mirage," a poem channeling an Indonesian man; and the title poem, an anthemic ode to the jazz saxophonist John Coltrane. Other key pieces include "Accessing Gertrude Bell," a critique of one of the designers of the modern state of Iraq; "Deficits: Chaïm Soutine & Joan Miró," in homage to two Jewish artists forced to flee the Nazi invasion of France; and "According to Stellar Scale," a compact lyric that traveled to space with astronaut Sian Proctor. The newest installment in our Pocket Poets Series, Divine Blue Light confirms Alexander's status among the foremost surrealists writing in English today. [Antonio]



Poem Bitten by a Man by
Brian Teare (Nightboat Books,
2023)—A medical emergency, a
road trip, a breakup, and a
paean to the power of creative
process—Poem Bitten by α
Man is for everyone who has
tried against the odds to make
a life in art, whether they
succeeded or not. Using
somatic language captured
through a notebook practice,

Teare recontextualizes the work of Agnes Martin, Jasper Johns, and others via art criticism, psychoanalysis, biography, queer theory, and historical document to honor writers, artists, and thinkers who sustain us when nothing else does. [Mike]

RECOMMENDATIONS



Hell, I Love Everybody by
James Tate (Harper Collins,
2023)—Celebrating Tate's work
as it transcends convention,
time, and everything that tells us,
"No, you can't do that," Hell, I
Love Everybody gives us the
poet at his best, his most
intimate, hopeful, inventive, and
brilliant. John Ashbery called
Tate the "poet of possibilities,"
and this collection records

forays into possibilities for American poetry's future. With an introduction by Terrance Hayes (and a big recommendation from one of Tate's former students!), this collection is a perfect intro to anyone who's never encountered this poet's unmistakable humor—and yes, love for everybody. [Laura]



Joan of Arkansas by Milo
Wippermann (Ugly Duckling
Presse, 2023)—An electionseason closet drama about
climate catastrophe, divine
gender expression, the
instructions of angels, and
heavenly revelation relayed via
viral video. Fifteen-year-old
Joan has been tasked by God
(They/Them) to ensure that
Charles VII (R-Arkansas) adopts
radical climate policy and wins
his bid as the Lord's candidate

to become the president of the United States. Arkansas is flooding, the West is burning, and borders are closed: "Heaven or / internet—it's / hard to be / good." [Molly]

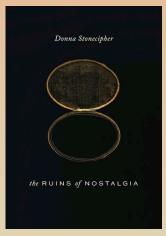
STAFF



What Makes a Lake?:
Tracing Movement
(Another Earth, 2023)—
This limited-edition
printing (run of 150)
brings together the work
of more than 80 artists to
create a portrait of the
Earth's lakes, rivers, and
oceans, including pieces

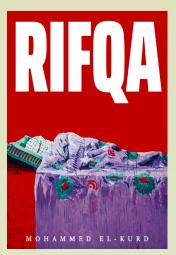
on the Great Lakes. This collection of images and text offers an intimate experience of places that we hope create a new connection to and commitment for caring for our most vulnerable ecosystems. In exploring an expanded scope of lakes around many different communities, we see how all these bodies of water are not isolated but rather flowing in and out of one another, reminding us how much our impact ripples out. What changes can be made with new awareness? To access the list of all participating writers and artists, and to learn more about the project, visit https://another-earth.com/books [Jenny]

RECOMMENDATIONS



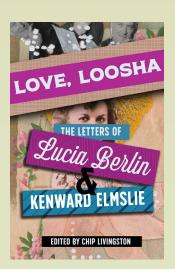
The Ruins of Nostalgia by
Donna Stonecipher (Wesleyan
University Press, 2023)—What is
it to feel nostalgia, to be
skeptical of it yet cleave intently
to the complex truths of feeling
and thought? In a series of 64
gorgeous, ramifying, unsettling
prose poems addressing latetwentieth- and twenty-first
century experience and its
discontents, The Ruins of
Nostalgia offers a strikingly

original exploration of the misunderstood phenomenon of nostalgia as both feeling-state and historical phenomenon. Throughout the series, the poems recognize and celebrate the nostalgias they ironize, which are in turn celebrated and then ironized again. Written often in the fictional persona of the first-person plural, The Ruins of Nostalgia explores the rich territory where individual response meets a collective phenomenon. [Marla]



Rifqa by Mohammed El-Kurd (Haymarket, 2021)—Each day after school, Mohammed El-Kurd's grandmother welcomed him at the door of his home with a bouquet of jasmine. Her name was Rifqa—she was older than Israel itself and an icon of Palestinian resilience. With razor-sharp wit and glistening moral clarity, El-Kurd lays bare the brutality of Israeli settler colonialism. His poems trace Rifqa's exile from Haifa to his

family's current dispossession in Sheikh Jarrah, Jerusalem, exposing the cyclical and relentless horror of the Nakba. El-Kurd's debut collection definitively shows that the Palestinian struggle is a revolution, until victory. [Alexa]



Love, Loosha edited by Chip Livingston (High Road Books, 2022)—An extraordinary collection of letters between the brilliant writer of short stories Lucia Berlin (A Manual for Cleaning Women, etc.) and her dear friend, the poet and librettist Kenward Elmslie. Written between 1994 and 2004, their correspondence reveals the lives, work, and literary obsessions of two great contemporary writers. Lucia and Kenward discuss

publishing and social trends, offending others and being offended. They gossip, dish, and entertain. *Love, Loosha* is an intimate conversation between two friends that will give fans of Lucia Berlin and Kenward Elmslie much delight and fresh insight into their lives and work. [Chuck]

ABOUT WOODLAND PATTERN

THE BOOK CENTER

In addition to visiting us in person, please also visit our online book center at www. woodlandpatternbookcenter.com to browse New Arrivals, Staff Picks, a selection of Rare and Limited Edition items, and more from our catalog. We are also always ouch! Stop by, give us a call, or check in with us at info@woodlandpattern.org to place a special order. Gift certificates are also available. Thank you for your nappy to field special orders. If a small-press title beckons you, please be in ongoing support!

OUR MISSION

audience for poetry through programs that encourage exchange across the visual, performing, and literary arts; and to act as a bridge between local and national and resource center for poets and other artists in our region; to increase the are to promote a lifetime practice of reading and writing; to serve as a forum and presentation of poetry, independent literature, and the arts. Our goals Woodland Pattern Book Center is dedicated to the discovery, cultivation, communities of poets and other artists.

CONTACT US:

www.woodlandpattern.org @woodlandpattern (414) 263 - 5001

CENTER HOURS:

Please consult our website for updates. Tue.-Sun. 12-7 pm

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