

Wordsworth

The Newsletter of Lewis & Clark's English
Department: Fall 2023-Spring 2024

Hello, students, faculty, staff, and alumni!

For the last few years, Wordsworth has begun with a “springy” poem, acknowledging our whimsical, blooming campus. This year, the editors of the Palatine Hill Review (formerly “Literary Review”) are switching it up, treating us to a Fall-inspired poem featured in BINDINGS, the fifty-first edition of the storied LC journal. Perhaps Wordsworth has been neglecting the equally precious autumn we experience here on campus. “Being Frank,” by law student Christian Larson, speaks to the honesty that comes with fall, as the days begin to shrink and we begin to “feel like a bundle of flowers, overturned...bound...drying” before the rain comes. We are grateful to the PHR editors for selecting it to share here.

Being Frank

Christian Larson

it is 9:10 PM on a Tuesday and
I brew a cup of coffee
to watch the last moments of the sunset

I wish I could watch life pass by
through an automobile window.
framed by cheap textured plastic
and black rubber

I think I could learn to enjoy the sights
as they go by

in this ancient September
I am feeling like a bundle of flowers
overturned
bound in twine
drying until I'm a pale yellow.
I hope the rain comes soon

o heart, are you in my feet?
it is 9:10 PM on a Tuesday and
I am wearing cotton socks

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Edited by Kit Graf & Amy Baskin
Designed by Arianna Fiore & Kit Graf

Pauls Toutonghi On His Latest Novel, *The Refugee Ocean*

By Sofia Farmarco

Wordsworth: Tell us about *The Refugee Ocean*. What inspired you to write this book? What is the basic premise?

PT: The book is about two refugees and their lives. They are separated by 70 years, but united by music. It follows their stories.

My grandfather was born in Aleppo, Syria and I'd planned to go to the city in 2012. But then the war broke out, and I was unable to cross the border. I was in touch with my cousins in Aleppo as the Syrian Civil War escalated. Aleppo was under siege for four years. This was widely reported in the news, at the time, but I'm not sure that people really understood extent of the human suffering over four years of artillery bombardment into an urban core. 30,000 civilians died. Mostly, they died doing everyday things – trying to buy groceries, going to the mosque, sleeping in their beds. The cruelty of this motivated me to write the initial scenes with Naïm, my first character.

Then, I published a short essay in *The New Yorker* called “Leaving Aleppo.” A cousin of mine wrote me an email, asking if I knew anything about our cousin, Marguerite Toutoungi, who went from Beirut, Lebanon to Havana, Cuba in 1948. I didn't. But I started to do research, and she ended up as the second character in my novel.

Wordsworth: In what ways does your personal life affect your writing and where do you get your inspiration?

PT: A big part of my personal life is my job teaching at LC. In most ways, teaching has massively improved my writing. It has kept me in touch with great short stories and has helped me crystalize so many numerous ideas about writing – about how stories work, and how sentences work.

I've learned more about writing over the last 17 years than I ever did before that point. But, and this is a huge caveat, it takes massive amounts of time to teach. Every page of every story takes me at least 10 minutes, probably, to read. So, a 14 page story takes 2 ½ hours to read. Then there are the editorial letters. Some semesters I have 70 students. It's really tough to find the time to write.

Wordsworth: What was the experience of releasing this book like? Are there any particular experiences from the release that stood out to you? How did it compare to the release of your previous books?

PT: Publishing is a process of collaboration, more than anything else. You have to be willing to totally change your approach and be very very flexible. You want to impress everyone who you're working with: they hold all of the power over you. Without my agent, without my editor, without the army of people at the publishing house – I literally have nothing. So they are important, more important than me, if I want to get the book out into the world. Every book is its own set of massive compromises.

Visiting Writers Series

By Sofia Farmarco

Fall

Last Fall, the LC English department had the pleasure of hosting Lisa Wells and Charif Shanahan for the Visiting Writers Series. Poet and nonfiction writer Lisa Wells opened with readings from her book *Believers: Making a Life at the End of the World* (Macmillan, 2021). *Believers* was a finalist for the 2022 PEN/E.O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award. Wells' work has appeared in several magazines including *Granta*, *Harper's Magazine*, *The New York Times*, and *The Best American Science & Nature Writing*. She currently writes for the "Abundant Noise" column in *Orion Magazine*.

Charif Shanahan, poet and professor at Northwestern University, read from his two collections, *Trace Evidence: Poems* (Tin House, 2023) and *Into Each Room We Enter without Knowing* (Crab Orchard Series in Poetry/SIU Press, 2017). *Into Each Room* was a finalist for the Lambda Literary Award for Gay Poetry as well as the Publishing Triangle's Thom Gunn Award.



Spring

This spring, the department brought Ama Codjoe and Claire Vaye Watkins for the Visiting Writers Series. Poet Ama Codjoe read from her debut collection *Bluest Nude* (Milkweed, 2022) which is concerned with the body, perception, and the color blue. Codjoe served as the 2023 Poet-in-Residence at the Guggenheim Museum and is the winner of the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize.

Claire Vaye Watkins teaches at UC Irvine and authored the short story collection *Battleborn* (Riverhead Books, 2012), the novel *Gold Fame Citrus* (Riverhead Books, 2016), and her work of autofiction, *I Love You But I've Chosen Darkness* (Riverhead Books, 2021). Watkins read from a current work in progress concerned with environmentalism, life in the desert, and motherhood.

Photos from the Visiting Writers Series



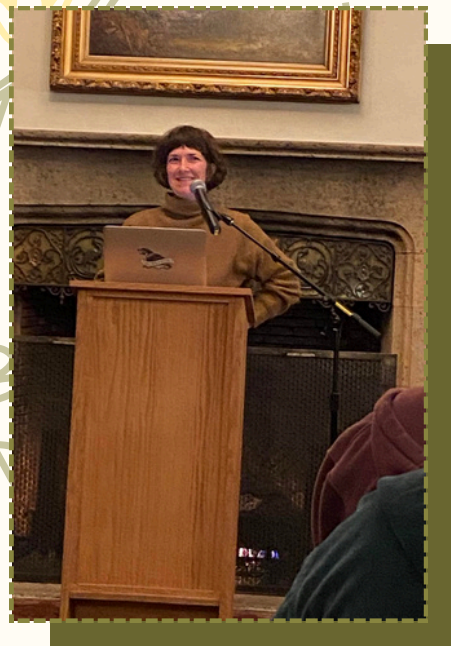
Lisa Wells



Charif Shanahan



Ama Codjoe



Claire Vaye Watkins

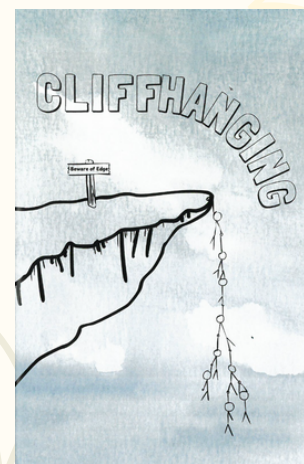
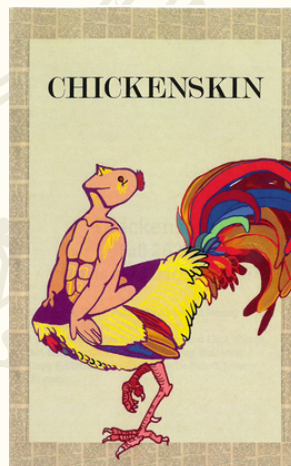
Senior Poetry & Fiction Capstone Readings



Mary Szybist's poetry students prepared broadsides of their work with the help of Crystal Willer in Watzek Library Special Collections. Capstone readings were featured in Armstrong Lounge.



Don Waters' SP24 ENG 400 fiction students (above). Capstone students produced collective zines, "Chickenskin" (Fall) and "Cliffhanging" (Spring). Both are available for purchase at Powell's Books.



Celebrations

Meet Your Major Pizza Palooza



Winter Senior Celebration



Wordsworth

Senior Night at Buffalo Gap



The Dickens Book Club

For the third full academic calendar year since the start of the pandemic, Will Pritchard continued his popular remote, extracurricular offering, The Dickens Book Club. Through weekly installments, The Dickens Book Club, a congregation of LC students, faculty, alumni, family, and friends, enjoyed *Our Mutual Friend* and *Nicholas Nickleby*. They will finish *Dombey and Son* this summer. The Dickens Book Club always welcomes new participants. Interested parties may email wjp@lclark.edu for details.

We want to hear from you!

Drop us a line to let us know what you've been up to, where you're living, and what plans you're making. You can email the department at english@lclark.edu or write to:

Lewis & Clark English Department
MSC 58
615 S Palatine Hill Road
Portland, OR 97219

Wordsworth

Student Spotlight: Alina Cruz '25 Interns at the Portland Art Museum

Alina Cruz, a third-year Art History major with an English minor, is immersing herself in the Portland art community. In the fall of 2023, she became one of five “Learning Guide” interns for the Learning Department at the Portland Art Museum. Her role involves programming for K-12 visitors, with a primary focus on conducting 45-minute tours for children. Planning each tour meticulously, Cruz and the other interns tailor the tours of the artworks based on the age group of the participants. “It takes a lot of planning,” Cruz explains, “choosing which art pieces to visit heavily depends on what grade the kids are in.” Each tour, regardless of age, consists of stopping at two to three art pieces. For younger grades, Cruz structures her tours around color and shape while the older grades are usually challenged to have more critical discussions.

“Right now, we have the ‘Black Artists of Oregon’ exhibit up and with older kids, I’ll ask them, ‘How do you see famous paintings or other works of famous art reinterpreted through this lens? How do you see blackness depicted in this painting?’ And we might discuss skin tone,” Cruz explained. However, with younger students focusing on color, Cruz will have them “wander the exhibit, looking for pieces with the colors of the Pan African flag (black, red, and green) and later talk about how the artists used those colors.” Cruz enjoys having the younger grades engage in drawing activities, mimicking the style of the pieces they visited while the older students are asked to write poems using words that popped in their heads during their tour. Additionally, Cruz wishes to offer a space for students from all backgrounds to have more agency in the discussion, especially while having her students discuss and explore the “Black Artists of Oregon.” Her role, she believes, is to “take a step back and let them talk about what they want to talk about. I like asking guiding questions, but mostly, I like to listen and reflect back what they say.”



Alina Cruz (right) standing beside her fellow interns with Isaka Shamsud-Din's "Rock of Ages" (1976) in the "Black Artists of Oregon" exhibit at the Portland Art Museum.



Student Spotlight: Talking Archives with McKenna Jones '24

McKenna Jones' journey into the archives began during her sophomore year with a practicum with Hannah Crummé, the Head of Watzek Library Special Collections and College Archivist. McKenna's main job was digitizing past and current collections for the Special Collections website, but McKenna was able to curate a collection themed "Fantasy," around the Gender Studies Symposium. Only able to draw from the collections, McKenna enjoyed the challenge that came with working only with archival materials, noting, "We don't always have access to everything we want, so we work with what we have." This resourcefulness led McKenna to collaborate with artists, both current students and alumni, to bring the exhibit to life as Assistant Archivist in the Special Collections.

For McKenna, working with archives isn't just about preserving the past, it's about bridging a connection with the present. "I've always thought that preserving history aligns with the English major," McKenna posits. "We look at previous literature and see how it still applies today." By looking up close at the past with the archives, McKenna notes, "we are all still the same humans. Shakespeare was making dirty jokes too." But McKenna's main goal as Archives Assistant is making the archives more accessible to the public. "We have so many cool things that weren't accessible until the archives turned digital, like Martin Luther King gave a talk on our campus in 1961." Citing a disconnect between current students and past students, McKenna feels obligated to show how the student bodies aren't that different: "We have made our own history on this campus, one that is countercultural and nonconformist." Going through the archives, McKenna

cites a history of past students pushing against LC's administration, the same kind of actions students worldwide are taking part in today. McKenna recommends checking out former student newspaper, "Sacajawea's Voice," which was an alternative to the main Lewis & Clark College student newspaper the "Pioneer Log" (now, the "Mossy Log") for a look into past student's qualms with LC's administration. McKenna's passion project as the Archives Assistant was digitizing the Gender Studies magazine, *Synergia*, which was resurrected this year after falling out of print back in 2019. Now, every page of every past issue of *Synergia* dating back to 1991 is available online on the special collections websites. McKenna also recommends keeping up with the Watzek Archive's Instagram (@watzekarchives) to stay in the know about new exhibits and what's going on in the archives.



McKenna Jones holds this year's Synergia magazine.

Student Updates

Grace Billings '24 has been admitted to the MAT Program at Lewis & Clark Graduate School for Elementary Education.

Dahlia Callistein '23 has been admitted to the MAT Program at Lewis & Clark Graduate School for Education.

Corrina Chan '24 has been accepted to the Columbia Journalism School's Publishing Program at Exeter College at Oxford University. Corrina will be attending this September and then moving on to Queen Mary University of London for an MFA in Creative Writing.

Tim Stolp and **Rosalie Zuckerman** will serve as Resident Advisor and Resident Director, respectively, for the Fir Acres Writing Workshop this Summer.

Sam Mosher '24 has been accepted to the JET Program and will be teaching English in Japan next year.

Danielle Pon '25 has been admitted to Lewis & Clark Law School through the 3-3 Accelerated Law Program.

The 2023 Dixon Award Presentation: Kit Graf

Congratulations to Dixon Award Recipient of 2023: Kit Graf! Kit was compelled to research the Irish poet, W.B. Yeats, who has perplexed her since first reading him back in high school, particularly with his poem, "A Prayer for My Daughter." The Dixon award helped Kit travel to Dublin, Galway, and Sligo, three important cities to Yeats. Working primarily with the Yeats Family Papers housed at the National Library of Ireland in Dublin, Kit discovered a fuller picture of Yeats as a father and how his work was shaped by his domestic space and the raising of his two children, Anne and Michael. Kit was able to see artworks by W.B. Yeats' father, John Butler Yeats, as well as his brother, Jack Butler Yeats, and his daughter Anne Yeats. Kit was able to read the 1919 manuscript of "A Prayer for My Daughter," revealing a stanza that was ultimately taken out of the poem wherein Yeats speaks directly to Anne, hoping that she will be a "happy daughter" even when he passes. Kit found Yeats' omission of the stanza fascinating, as it further contributed to the oxymoronic tone of the poem, in which he wishes for his daughter to be beautiful, clever, and creative but not so much so that she would leave him (or turn out like his unrequited love, Maud Gonne). Kit presented the delights of working with archival materials, such as her favorite letter, written from Yeats to his son Michael, beginning "My Dear Michael, I thank you for the salted almonds. I have already eaten so many..."



Amy Baskin (Left), Kristin Fujie (Left Middle), Kit Graf (Middle), with Hillary Dixon (Right).

The Dixon Award was established thanks to Hillary (BA '99) and Adam (BA '01) Dixon and the Dixon Family Foundation, which has annually awarded junior English majors \$2,500 grants to help fund literary research projects since 2002.

Rishona Zimring's Sabbatical (Fall 2023–Spring 2024)

By Alex Chew

Rishona Zimring's sabbatical (Fall 2023–Spring 2024) has been rich with scholarly and personal pursuits, often incorporating exciting combinations of the two. Her current project is called *Olive and Al: A Story of Partnership in Life, Law, and Letters*, a hybrid work of biographical non-fiction that incorporates elements of literary interpretation as well as legal history. The book's focus is on the untold story of Olive Rabe (1887–1968) and Aileen (Al) Fisher (1906–2002), two women whose lives embodied a philosophy of “art and apartness,” refusing to conform to the norms of the day, electing instead to “lead lives of great independence and creativity.” Olive, a lawyer, and Al, a children's book author, lived together in Chicago in the 1920s before relocating to a remote area outside Boulder, Colorado, where they lived in a house constructed by Al. Olive's robust legal career was perhaps most notable for her work on the landmark Supreme Court case of Hungarian activist Rosika Schwimmer.

Rishona's sources have included personal letters between Olive and Rosika, Olive's legal briefs, and the many books of prose and poetry written by Al. While historical materials on Rosika's life and activist career abound, archival sources regarding Olive and her partner Al have proven more difficult but not impossible to track down. Rishona's travels have included visits to historical archives at the University of Colorado Boulder and the New York Public Library, with an upcoming trip to the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. While much of her research up to this point has been archival, Rishona plans to return to Colorado to take a more experiential approach to her subjects, exploring the mountainous landscape where Olive and Al spent much of their later lives — particularly the Flatirons, where on previous hikes Rishona has enjoyed an abundance of wildflowers and encounters with magpies. Apart from her research, Rishona has also been taking advantage of other opportunities for travel, including a conference in France this past October as well as visits to Maine, Boston, and Chicago. Yoga, walks, and hiking have been some of her favorite outlets for unwinding. And of course, she has been making the most of her current availability to read “without an agenda or goal,” which she highlights as “one reason I do what I do.” Rishona has found time for a wide range of leisure reading, from Cormac McCarthy's *The Passenger* and *Stella Maris* to Silvia Moreno-Garcia's *Mexican Gothic* to Gabrielle Zevin's *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow*. She adds that she “thoroughly enjoyed” *Barbie* and *Dune Part 2* and has been a dedicated attendee of Will Pritchard's weekly Dickens Book Club that is currently discussing *Dombey and Son*. Rishona hopes to maximize her travel, leisure, and research time before she returns to campus in the fall to teach three courses: Words, Major Periods in English Literature (ENG 206), and Major Figures: Virginia Woolf (ENG 333).

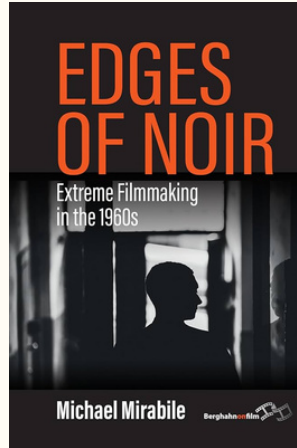


Rishona with Aubrey Roché (BA '23)
at the Chateau in Fontainebleau, after
attending the conference of the
Katherine Mansfield Society.

Michael Mirabile's *Edges of Noir*: Book Talk and Q & A

This Spring, the department celebrated Michael Mirabile and his new book, *Edges of Noir* (Berghahn, 2024), which challenges conventional narratives surrounding film noir history by shedding light on the often-overlooked decade of the 1960s. *Edges of Noir* contends that the '60s yielded some of the most provocative and daring crime films. Films like *Shock Corridor* (1963), *Brainstorm* (1965), *Mirage* (1965), *The 3rd Voice* (1960), and *Point Blank* (1967) expanded the film noir genre with their formal disruptions and experimental narratives.

Mike, in conversation with Jerry Harp, unraveled dynamic influences that shaped these late noir films, drawing from exploitation cinema, American B movies, and the European New Wave movement. From themes of nuclear destruction to mind control and surveillance, *Edges of Noir* vividly portrays the collective fears of the tumultuous 1960s. The event provided insight and exploration into the darker edges of cinema history.



Michael Mirabile (left center) with Jerry Harp (right center) and students from his "Radical Film" course.

Palatine Hill Review (formerly "Literary Review")

The Palatine Hill Review (formerly "Literary Review") has released *BINDINGS*, the 51st edition. This year, PHR changed the editorial process, pushed for better funding for all student media (spearheaded by fearless leader and co-Editor-in-Chief AJ Di Nicola), and marveled at the abundance of creativity on campus. PHR thanks the team and all who submitted. Edition 51 is the most design-oriented edition yet, with a detailed collage interior (featuring over 100 scans of real paper scraps) and a cover specially designed by co-Editor-in-Chief Elizabeth Huntley.

Additionally, "growing pains," last year's edition, has won the Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP) Prize for Undergrad Lit Mags for the second year in a row! Congratulations to all, especially to Editors-in-Chief Jillian Jackson ('23) and A.J. Di Nicola ('24) and Design Editor & Art Director Elizabeth Huntley ('25) who brought this stellar commemorative issue to fruition. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni are encouraged to submit to the 52nd issue this coming academic year.



Cover of *BINDINGS*, the 51st edition of The Palatine Hill Review

Kristin Fujie's New Course: Multi-Ethnic U.S. Literature

By: Alex Chew

Kristin Fujie's new English course, Multi-Ethnic U.S. Literature, offers the chance for English and non-English majors alike to do a comprehensive study of six key texts spanning the 1950s to the 1990s. Through the collaborative, discussion-based structure of the course, we've been able to discover and trace a wide variety of patterns across these texts, including family relationships, in-groups and outsiders, healthcare and environmental crises, and conflicts between the dominant culture and marginalized cultural beliefs and practices. The authors of these texts walk the fine line of writing in a way that is true to themselves, their interests, and their experiences without internalizing the restrictive expectations placed on ethnic writers. What each of them has in common is their brilliant capacity for grappling with the question of what it means to be an American storyteller.

Wordsworth: What made you feel that now was the right time to offer this course?

KF: I'd been thinking for years about piloting a course that would focus on key texts associated with various "renaissances" (Asian American, Native American, Latina/o American, etc.) that occurred in the second half of the twentieth century when the U.S. literary marketplace opened up to so-called "ethnic" or "multicultural" literature. While I'd been teaching some of these texts in my post-WWII American Literature survey, I wanted to see what would happen if I designed a separate syllabus that would put these texts at the center and allow them to shape the language and questions that would drive the course as a whole. I felt confident that the authors I was considering--namely Ellison, Silko, Kingston, Cisneros, and Morrison--would generate a rich conversation, but I also had reservations about teaching the course. I think the label "ethnic literature" can be reductive or just not all that useful, especially when it has the effect of separating the literature into its own area and focusing only on issues of race and ethnicity.

Wordsworth: What inspired you to construct this particular syllabus?

KF: My goal in structuring the syllabus was to emphasize works that have been foundational to the emergence and development of distinct ethnic traditions within American literature, and to explore how reading those works in close proximity to one another could open up a different conversation about American literature as a whole.

Wordsworth: What were the main factors that influenced the ordering of the syllabus?

KF: I knew I wanted to start with *Invisible Man* because it's chronologically the earliest and also because it speaks so directly and complexly to issues of identity (ethnic, racial, national, individual) that I anticipated being central to the course. I also think *Invisible Man* pairs well with Toni Morrison's *Jazz*, which we read last. Actually, I also tend to think of the other texts on the syllabus in terms of pairs. *White Noise* and *Ceremony* are, to my mind, companion texts for all the reasons we discussed in class; Kingston and Cisneros's texts are both short story cycles that foreground issues of migration and language/translation, so they also form a pair in my mind.

Student Honors and Awards

2024 Departmental Honors

Meghan Blandon

Lauren Caldwell

Rosalie Zuckermann

The Jerry Baum Award

Tim Stolp

Vern Rutsala American Academy of Poets Prize

Ashly Flores (Winner)

Sage Braziel (Honorable mention)

Senior Fiction Award

Corrina Chan

Senior Creative Nonfiction Award

Sam Mosher

The Dixon Award

Arianna Fiore

Alumni News

Alex Cohen ('19) is Director of Government Affairs at Alaska Wilderness League.

Noah Foster-Koth ('19) has accepted a technical writing position at Lexsys Language Consultants in Stuttgart, Germany.

Audrey Gutierrez ('19) will serve as faculty for Fir Acres Writing Workshop this Summer.

Justin Howerton ('21) will serve as a Resident Director for Fir Acres Writing Workshop for the College this summer.

Morgan Mitchell ('16) is a Production Editor for Flatiron Books and Celadon Books at Macmillan Publishers.

Rosalie Moffett ('14) has a forthcoming poetry collection, *Making a Living* (Milkweed Editions, 2025).

Erica Terpening ('14) will be a Visiting Professor in theater at Williams College starting in Fall 2024.

Corey Van Landingham ('08) has a new collection of poems, *Reader, I* (Sarabande Books, 2024).

Marlena Williams ('14) has released *Night Mother: A Personal and Cultural History of 'The Exorcist'* (The Ohio State Press, 2023).

Faculty and Staff Updates

Lyell Asher's essay, "No, Vanderbilt Isn't Governed by Institutional Neutrality" was published by the James Martin Center for Academic Renewal. His essay, "Why Colleges and Universities Won't Get Better Anytime Soon" is forthcoming in a volume of essays on higher education, to be published by *Georgetown University Press*.

Amy Baskin attended the Association of Writers and Writing Programs Annual Conference in Kansas City, serving on the "How Food Invokes Poetry" panel with Kashiana Singh, Jen Karetnick, Zeina Azzam, and Tresha Faye Haefner. Amy will serve as a judge in the Oregon Poetry Association Fall 2024 Contest which opens July 1 and closes July 31.

Kurt Fosso will lead the London Program this fall, which includes a tour to Scotland and the Lake District (among other locales). He'll be teaching a course, suitably titled "Reading Romantics in London." In early January he will present a paper, on "Biodiverse William Blake," at the MLA Convention in New Orleans.

Karen Gross, along with Dr. Hannah Crummé (Head of Special Collections), secured a loan of nine medieval manuscripts through the competitive program, Manuscripts in the Curriculum, sponsored by the international art gallery Les Enluminures. These books will be on campus in spring of 2026, available to the community through both classroom use and a public exhibition. In the meantime, Karen looks forward to attending this summer her second workshop as a M.C. Lang fellow of the Rare Book School at the University of Virginia. She also will be walking with a friend the first 90-some miles of Offa's Dyke, a long distance trail marking the Welsh English border, beginning just south of Tintern Abbey.

Jerry Harp's essay "Pleasant Dreaming with 'Thanatopsis'" is forthcoming in *Art's Visionary Moment*, edited by Sidney Homan. His review of Roger Reeves's poetry collection *Best Barbarian* is forthcoming in *American Book Review*. His poem "Self-Portrait as Solitude" is forthcoming in *Notre Dame Review*. He is currently preparing to teach an Inside-Out course in poetry writing in spring 2025 at the Columbia River Correctional Institution.

Michael Mirabile's book, *Edges of Noir: Extreme Filmmaking in the 1960s* (February 2024), recently appeared, and he is working toward the completion of a forthcoming book, *Murder in Motion*, to be published by Routledge. He will present a paper for the Literature / Film Association Conference in September.

Robin Romm won a 2025 O. Henry Prize, selected by Amor Towles. The story will be included in the yearly O. Henry anthology and also in Romm's forthcoming collection of stories, *Radical Empathy* (Four Way Books, 2024).

A Letter from the Chair, Kristin Fujie

Dear Friends of the English Department,

Greetings from the fourth floor of Miller, where I write to you as the somewhat newly installed chair of the English department. If you are a regular reader of this newsletter, you've enjoyed three years of poignant reflections and delightful prose penned by my dear friend and colleague, Karen Gross. I, for one, will miss reading those letters! I want to express my sincerest gratitude to Karen for her amazing stewardship of our department and for her continuing mentorship as I learn the ropes.

As captured in this issue of *Wordsworth*, it's been a bustling year for the LC English department, full of opportunities to come together for conversation, contemplation, celebration, and just good old-fashioned face-to-face socializing. We rang in the fall semester with a department picnic ("pizza palooza!") and closed out the spring term with a very jolly celebration ("crudités!") for our graduating seniors at The Buffalo Gap. In the months between, we gathered to hear inspired readings by poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers who came to us through our beloved Visiting Writers Series and from our very own creative writing capstones. We also had the pleasure of celebrating not one but two faculty-authored books: Pauls Toutonghi read from his novel *The Refugee Ocean* at Powells in the fall; in the spring, Michael Mirabile spoke about his monograph, *Edges of Noir: Extreme Filmmaking in the 1960s*, in a discussion moderated by Jerry Harp. Whether we convened to hear senior Kit Graf share the fruits of her Dixon



Dr. Kristin Fujie
Photo Credit: Nina Johnson

Award research in Ireland, crammed into crowded classrooms to watch English majors/minors present their scholarship and creative work at the Festival of Scholars, toasted the release of yet another stellar issue of *The Palatine Hill Review*, or jumped on Zoom to discuss Dickens, we enjoyed being in community with one another.

If you frequented the Miller lounge this year, you might have noticed a bit of a hush on the eastward facing side of the loop. Rishona Zimring's door was not propped open as usual as she was on sabbatical; Pauls Toutonghi had the honor of being selected as Distinguished Visiting Writer at Bowling Green University in Ohio for the spring term; and our work study Ari Fiore was overseas for the spring. It wasn't too quiet, however, because Kurt Fosso made a triumphant return from sabbatical with his familiar laugh (and a new hairdo!). We look forward to seeing Rishona, Pauls, and Ari back on campus next fall; *bon voyage!* to Kurt, who will be leading an overseas trip to London next semester, and to Kit, who is graduating this semester.

You can read about everything above, and more, in this beautiful issue of *Wordsworth*. Thank you to all who contributed, and to Kit and to Amy for making it happen and also for being the best onboarding team a new department chair could ask for.

As my first year as chair draws to a close, I feel so grateful for our English department community. That includes those of you who have moved on but continue to stay connected to our department, if only by reading this newsletter. As we always say to our seniors, "You'll all leave, but we'll still be here and our email addresses don't change!" On that note, I'm reminded of a quote that I meant to read as a toast at the senior celebration last week and then promptly forgot. It's from Toni Morrison's novel *Jazz* (shout out to my Multi-Ethnic U.S. Fiction class), and it's ostensibly spoken by the physical pages of the book, itself, directly to its reader: "Talking to you and hearing you answer--that's the kick." I hope that you've experienced that kick--the delight, the pain, always the surprise--in your English classes. May you continue to dialogue with literature and, through literature, with each other and us for many, many years to come. Please reach out, we are here and would love to hear from you.

~Kristin