

A collage of 24 photographs showing various people at a community event. The photos depict individuals smiling, posing for group shots, and participating in activities. One photo shows a sign that reads "HOW AM I SAYING YES TO THE UNKNOWN?". Another photo shows a person holding a sign that says "P t". The overall atmosphere is warm and social.

2023 ANNUAL



Dear Friends of the Writers House,

Contents

4 PROGRAM AND EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

11 FELLOWS

12 REALARTS@PENN

14 DIGITAL PROJECTS

16 YOUTH WRITING PROJECTS

18 TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF KWH

20 SUPPORTING KWH

34 OUR STAFF



As we reflected on the most recent programming year, September 2022–May 2023, collecting materials and memories for this *Annual*, we marveled at the extraordinary community of people who help make the Writers House a home. We hope that our (occasionally exuberant!) writing in these pages will convey some of the joy and gratitude the two of us have felt to be in your company as we’ve led this innovative project for a combined forty-five years (Jessica for seventeen, Al for twenty-eight).

Thanks to everyone who helped celebrate our 25th anniversary! If you turn to the centerfold of this *Annual*, you’ll find photos from the celebration, a glorious two-day extravaganza during Homecoming Weekend 2022. The first group of Writers House people gathered in November of 1995, so calling it a “25th anniversary” was a bit of a misnomer. But no one worried too much about the fuzzy math of our pandemic-era planning, and a large group of people came from near and far to *celebrate* — and to talk about the past, present, and future of this special place.

No matter how you figure it, the Kelly Writers House has grown immensely through the years. Even the building has expanded in a couple directions (including upwards, with the addition of the second floor Student Projects Space). But the core mission of the Writers House remains as the founders envisioned it: we are a home for writers and writing. We deeply value conversation and discussion. We commit to a learner-centered approach in everything we do.

Walk into 3805 Locust Walk any time and witness the productive conversations about art and human expression happening in nearly every room of the old cottage.

As always, we’ve not captured everything that our writing community enacted here during the 2022–2023 school year, but we hope this *Annual* will give you a good sense of the scope and range of those activities. We’re especially proud to note that ModPo — our beloved free and open online course about modern and contemporary poetry — celebrated its tenth anniversary this year, another major milestone in KWH history. (As of this writing, the ModPo enrollment is 77,000!)

We are grateful for the many, many generous people who have helped build and sustain the Writers House community through the years, including alumni, students, faculty, ModPo participants, Penn parents, Philadelphians, and Friends of the Writers House from all over the world. We’ve been amazed by the outpouring of support for our newly established Possibility Fund, which will help ensure that the Writers House will remain a home for writers for generations to come.

Thank you, Friends. On behalf of the Writers House Planning Committee, thank you for everything you bring to this community, for challenging us to stay committed to open literary conversation, and for all the ways you sustain us.

Al Filreis
Faculty Director
Kelly Professor of English

Jessica Lowenthal
Director



Program and Event Highlights

Other intelligences

Daniel Snelson (GR'15) kicked off an interactive multimedia presentation about video games, Artificial Intelligence, and “speculative poetics” with a demonstration of gameplay in Elden Ring, a role-playing game in which players control a customizable questing character. After showing off a game character charmingly modeled after event host **Al Filreis**, Snelson read a series of poems from *Elden Poem*, a uniquely constraint-based collection composed using only the limited vocabulary and syntax provided by Elden Ring’s in-game message system. Co-presenter **Mashinka Firunts Hakopian** (GR'18) followed with a reading from her new work, *The Institute for Other Intelligences*, a fictive transcript from a conference of machine intelligences who have convened to discuss algorithmic equity. Conversation with Snelson and Hakopian about these and other exciting topics — such as collaborative QR-enabled soundscapes, human biases encoded in machine data, and the intersections of poetic invention and AI — continued well after the conclusion of the event, generating fresh ideas for future programming at the KWH (including a ChatGPT joust for fall 2023).

If any of this calls to you

Multigenre artist **Michael Imperioli** started writing his novel *The Perfume Burned His Eyes* as an attempt to understand his sixteen-year-old son. “It didn’t work,” he joked to **Anthony DeCurtis**, who asked the *White Lotus* actor about his turn to fiction during a standing-room-only event in our Arts Café. The book truly came into focus, Imperioli said, after the death of Lou Reed, a “complicated” and “difficult” man, who was also a warm, sensitive, and affectionate friend. After trading rich stories about Reed, including about his 2012 visit to the KWH, DeCurtis and Imperioli talked about all kinds of things — writing and acting for *The Sopranos*, working with Spike Lee, songwriting, Shakespeare, *White Lotus*, and more. Students asked for advice about working in arts and entertainment despite the potential for career instability and financial risk. “It’s always been hard and precarious to do something creative,” Imperioli said. “If any of this calls to you, it has to call you *enough* that you have to do it.”

Narrative is terribly boring

Novelist **Amit Chaudhuri**, who is also a critically acclaimed singer in the North Indian classical tradition, visited for a discussion of his spectacular new book *Sojourn*, a strange and haunting novel about a visiting academic’s experiences in post-Cold War Berlin. Our own Abrams Artist-in-Residence **Piyali Bhattacharya** led a revelatory conversation with Chaudhuri about the influence of Indian classical music on his writing, the potential for an “exquisite” approach to the mundane details of everyday South Asian experience, and the pleasures of opening paragraphs, introductions, and other “first encounters” in novels and music. “Opening pages are the most alive,” he said, describing his long interest in the way books begin. But once the unresolved beginning of a novel gets streamlined into narrative, plot, or story, it becomes “terribly boring.” In *Sojourn*, Chaudhuri avoided the problem of boring narrative by leaving things entirely unresolved. He drew inspiration for this approach from his interest in the alap, the often improvisatory introductory section of raga that includes all the moods and notes to come.



Find video recordings of these and other KWH events on our web calendar (writing.upenn.edu/wh/calendar) and YouTube channel (youtube.com/kellywritershouse).

Mentoring young writers

When nine-year-old **Ashling McAtamney** reached the end of her story — “[w]ith a black tongue and small yellow eyes, IT comes lumbering toward your bed” — the KWH audience burst into applause, surprised and delighted by the terrifying turn. McAtamney performed her imaginative and chilling tale as a featured reader for **LIVE at the Writers House**, a monthly WXP radio show produced at the Writers House by **Alli Katz** and edited by **Zach Carduner** (C'13). All the readers for this special episode of LIVE were participants in the mentorship program at Mighty Writers, a Philly-based writing and literacy non-profit organization that aims to teach kids to “think clearly and write with clarity.” To prep for the show, youth writers **Imani Ayala**, **Marely de la Cruz Castro**, **Anushka Dhar**, **Michai Smith**, **Kevin Leonard**, **Ashling McAtamney**, **Alexander Moragne**, and **Ta’Hajjiah Williams** met with their grown-up Mighty Writers mentors, who helped them draft and refine their work. Then, with guidance from Mentorship Program Director **Selekha Ramos**, they carefully edited their pieces and practiced reading them aloud for radio. You can listen to the fantastic results at our website (writing.upenn.edu/wh/involved/series/live), where you’ll also hear songs by **Grace Bernicker**, the Director of Partnership Programs at Mighty Writers, who joined the show as the featured musician.

Writing as archaeology

Award-winning novelist and short story writer **Ling Ma** joined us for this year’s **Bob Lucid Memorial Program in Fiction**, an annual KWH event made possible by **Susan Small Savitsky** (CW’75), **Ed Kane** (C’71, Trustee 1996–2000), and a community of Writers House friends. Ma read from her short story collection *Bliss Montage*, a *New York Times* Best Book of the Year, before sitting down with **Jonathan Dick** (GR’29) for a conversation about the writing process, Asian American identity, and differences between novels and short fiction. Ma likened her writing process to an archaeological dig: “I wanted to be an archeologist at some point when I was in undergrad,” she said. “And I think of this process of writing a short story as every day you’re in the dirt trying to pick out these shards and put it back together.” An audience member asked Ma for her thoughts about *Severance*, her award-winning novel set during a pandemic, and about what it’s been like to think about the book after experiencing life during Covid. “I’m still thinking about it. I’m still processing,” she said. “My therapist has heard a lot.”



The Brodsky Gallery

The Brodsky Gallery, an installation space at the Kelly Writers House endowed by **Michael Brodsky** (W’88) and **Heidi Hookman Brodsky** (C’89), presented four group shows this year, including artwork created at the KWH by students.

Farah Sayed (C’23) and the students of the **Art and Wellness** club hosted a collaborative painting session to produce exuberant large-scale communal canvases.

KWH Program Coordinator **Alli Katz** invited artists of all experience levels to experiment with pens, pencils, pastels, and charcoal for “Make Your Mark,” a show about visual storytelling.

Students from the **“I Am” Collective** curated a multimedia showcase of poetry, photography, and drawing that explored notions of identity, individuality, and belonging.

Cecilia González Godino (GR’30) curated the final show of the year, a stunning collection of works by Caribbean artists, including an interactive fabric installation in the living room.

ALUMNI VISITORS

Hundreds of alumni visited this year, including for a two-day 25th anniversary celebration of the KWH (pages 18–19) and for mentor meetings about careers for creatives (pages 12–13).

► Former students of **Anthony DeCurtis** organized a big bash (with talks and toasts and food and drink) to celebrate Anthony’s twenty years of teaching pop culture writing at Penn. Emcees **Ali Jaffe Ramis** (C’14) and **Hillary Reinsberg** (C’11) introduced the fantastic line-up: **Grace Ambrose** (C’11), **Cecilia Corrigan** (C’11), **Jessica Goodman** (C’12), **Alex Koppelman** (C’05), **Gwen Lewis** (C’14), **Greg Maughan** (C’05), **Joe Pinsker** (C’13), and **Julia Rubin** (C’10).

► People packed the house to chat with Friedman Fiction Program visitor **Jennifer Egan** (C’85) about her wildly inventive novel *The Candy House*.

► **Matt Flegenheimer** (C’11) wowed us with his *New York Times Magazine* cover story about Florida Governor Ron DeSantis.

► Over bagels and nosh from Kismet Bagels we chatted with **Becky Chalsen** (C’15) about her novel *Kismet* and her career in film development.



POVICH JOURNALISM PROGRAM VISITORS

Reporters, memoirists, pundits, radio hosts, podcasters, essayists, commentators, critics, and educators: year after year the Povich Journalism Program Fund, endowed in 2011 by **Maury Povich** (C'62) and **Connie Chung**, allows us to invite a stunning range of journalists and nonfiction writers to meet with students. Visitors this year included:

Leslie Absher
Buzz Bissinger (C'76)
Matt Flegenheimer (C'11)
Stephen Fried (C'79)
Jessica Goldstein (C'11)
Jessica Goodman (C'12)
John Hendrickson
Eric Kim
Alex Koppelman
Kelly Lawler (C'13)
Alan Light
Ali Jaffe Ramis (C'14)
Julia Rubin (C'10)
Mayukh Sen
Joel Siegel (C'79)
Isabella Simonetti (C'21)
Rebecca Soffer
Alexandra Sternlicht (C'16)
Rachel Tashjian (C'11)
Steve Volk

Love is abundant

José Olivarez stretches the idea of the love poem in his newest book *Promises of Gold*, a collection of love poems in Spanish and English. “How many bad lovers have gotten poems?” Olivarez asks. “No disrespect to romantic love — but what about our friends? Those homies who are there all along — cheering for us and reminding us that love is abundant.” For this year’s **Caroline Rothstein Oral Poetry Program**, we celebrated Olivarez and his work with a reading and conversation hosted by **Andrés González-Bonillas** (C'23), a poet involved in Penn’s Excelano Project. The fantastic discussion touched upon many topics, including the “abundant” capacity of poetry to address all kinds of love, concepts of “Mexican Heaven,” and the music of everyday language. Olivarez described the way listening to his family taught him about writing: “Part of how I learned about the music of writing is by listening to both of my parents talk. Even if my parents don’t consider themselves writers, they were always telling stories.”

A rigorous curiosity

Jennifer Egan (C'85) returned for her fifth visit to the Kelly Writers House, this time as the featured visitor for our second annual **Friedman Program for Eminent Fiction Writers**. Few writers of Egan’s stature are as warm, open, and generous with their time, and her conversation with KWH Faculty Director **Al Filreis** was full of humility, humor, and detailed insider information about her astonishing new book *The Candy House*. We learned, for example, that Egan is an obsessive list maker and that one chapter of *The Candy House* emerged from among the eight hundred lists she keeps on her cell phone. She’s also deeply curious about people. The main organizing principle of *The Candy House* was “curiosity,” she explained — curiosity about the interior lives of her characters and a desire to enter into their perspectives. “The wish to do that is so profound,” she said. “The wish to cross that barrier from one consciousness to another. We desire it. We want to be connected. We want to know each other and be known. It’s a deep human wish.”



ALUMNI VISITORS

► **Daniel Snelson** (GR'15) and **Mashinka Firunts Hakopian** (GR'18) led an innovative session about experimental applications of Artificial Intelligence, video game poetics, and the art of bots.

► Our annual Cheryl J. Family Fiction Program featured **Alyssa Songsiridej** (C'10) and **Liza St. James** (C'10), former students of **Max Apple**, winner of the 2024 Beltran Award for Teaching and Mentoring.

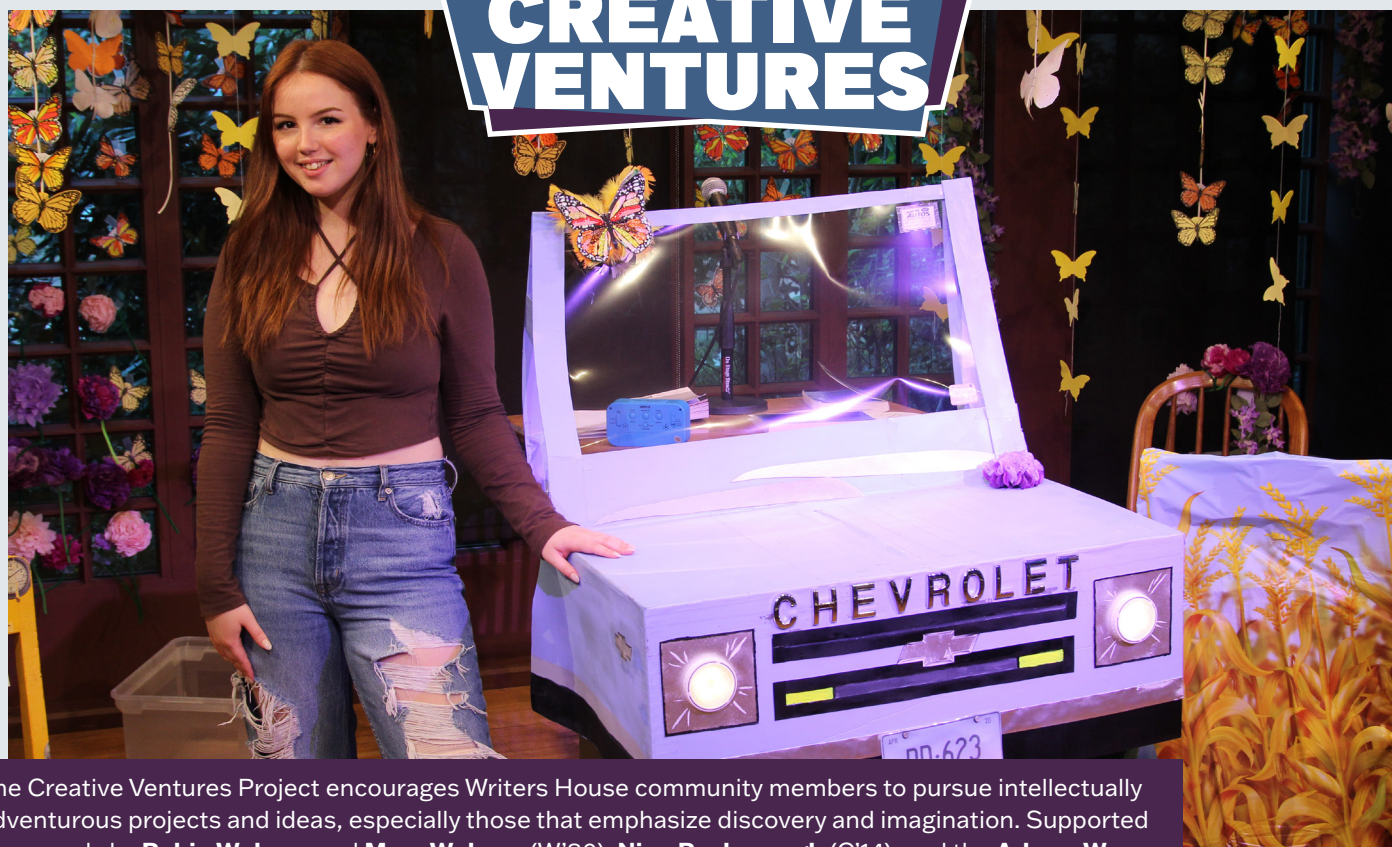
► **Stephen Fried** (C'79) and the Nora Magid Mentorship Prize committee organized a conversation about careers in journalism with **Matt Flegenheimer** (C'11), **Jessica Goodman** (C'12), **Isabella Simonetti** (C'21), and **Joel Siegel** (C'79).

► We marked the 10th anniversary of ModPo with a series of events, including a celebratory reading from *The Difference is Spreading: Fifty Contemporary Poets on Fifty Poems*, co-edited by **Anna Strong Safford** (C'13) and KWH Faculty Director **Al Filreis**.

► Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist **Buzz Bissinger** (C'76) spoke about *The Mosquito Bowl*, his blockbuster book about football, World War II, and the bravado of youth.

► **Alexandra Sternlicht** (C'16) shared tips for establishing a nuanced multimedia presence early in your career.

CREATIVE VENTURES



The Creative Ventures Project encourages Writers House community members to pursue intellectually adventurous projects and ideas, especially those that emphasize discovery and imagination. Supported generously by **Robin Wolpov** and **Marc Wolpov** (W'80), **Nina Rosborough** (C'14), and the **Arbours Way Foundation**, Creative Ventures enabled explorations of sound, jazz, letterpress, fiber arts, print culture, digital humanities, climate storytelling, design, dance, technology, Artificial Intelligence, and more.

► The knitters and threadsmiths of the **Fiber Arts Circle** convened every Sunday to work on their projects, including an ongoing communal blanket.

► **Mary Tasillo** organized book arts workshops, letterpress demos, and broadside production sessions at the Common Press, a collaborative letterpress project.

► **Ali Jaffe Ramis** (C'14), **Hillary Reinsberg** (C'11), and **Nina Rosborough** (C'14) organized a celebration of **Anthony DeCurtis** and his twenty years of teaching pop culture writing at Penn.

► Blue Stoop Director **Joseph Earl Thomas** (GR'25) emceed a capstone reading for students of **Ariel Delgado Dixon**, **Gabriel Ramirez**, and **Rebecca Spiegel**. Workshops were offered free of charge to West Philly residents thanks to a partnership between Creative Ventures, Blue Stoop, and the Sachs Program for Arts Innovation.

► Faculty member **Herman Beavers** led a conversation about newly discovered

recordings of poets and jazz musicians, with **Ken Druker** of the Verve Label Group and **Chris Mustazza** of PennSound.

► **Lisa Nakamura**, an expert in Asian American studies and digital humanities, shared her research on how race and identity impact the way we interact in digital spaces.

► With the **Penn Program in Environmental Humanities**, we hosted a gathering focused on climate storytelling to bring together the Penn community with Philadelphia School District teachers and students who participated in a year-long climate story project.

► Writers House Zine Librarian **Victoria Garcia** (C'23) collected zines and other microprint DIY books for display in the KWH Student Project Space, including zines made by Penn Students.

► Students in **Kayla Romberger's** Pixel to Print course hosted their year-end Zine Fest at the Writers House.

► For our seven-hour marathon reading of *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*, **Lyn Donnell** (C'24) transformed our podium into a pick-up truck (with working lights!), Hub members crafted hundreds of bejeweled monarch butterflies, **Alli Katz** designed a commemorative T-shirt, and forty-six volunteers helped read the novel aloud from start to finish, including **Dylan Fritz** (C'25), who stayed for the whole event.

► **Dahlia Li** (GR'23) staged two more participatory workshop labs in an ongoing series that explores intersections of dance and language.

► The third issue of the student-led **t-art magazine** included pieces about AI-generated art, Modigliani, textiles, and notes on a Whitney exhibition of Puerto Rican art in the wake of Hurricane Maria.

► **Farah Sayed** (C'23) and the students of *Equilibria*, printed their fourth issue, a collection of works produced collaboratively by artist-writer pairings.

Writing Food in Asian America

"Food writing" is having a moment. On film and TV, Instagram and TikTok, what we eat and how we eat it is in. But, as Abrams Artist-in-Residence **Piyali Bhattacharya** notes, the way people write about food is sometimes dated, especially in relation to immigrant cultures and cuisines. To think about these issues, Bhattacharya assembled an extraordinary line-up of people who think and write about food, all first-generation Asian Americans with immigrant parents: *New York Times* food writer **Eric Kim**, novelist **Lillian Li**, and James Beard Award-winning food critic **Mayukh Sen**. The resulting panel discussion, "Writing Food in Asian America," sponsored by our **Beltran Family Award for Teaching and Mentoring**, offered a fantastic exploration of food writing and identity, including the idea of "authenticity" in relation to food and the pitfalls of writing for a "mainstream" audience. The panelists drew with great generosity and honesty from their own experiences — including painful ones — to evoke the many ways that food embodies culture and community. As Kim explained, "What's most important is for us to acknowledge that there's a multiplicity of experience, especially in the diaspora." The audience, including a number of students from Bhattacharya's Writing Asian American Lives course, lingered after the conversation, eating samosas from Rice and Spice and chatting about their own experiences with food and food culture.



MODPO TEN YEARS & BEYOND



More than 415,000 people worldwide have joined ModPo, our hugely successful online course about modern and contemporary American poetry, founded by KWH Faculty Director **Al Filreis** in 2012. But to call ModPo an "online course" does not quite capture the essence of the project. ModPo is a community — an intergenerational, cross-cultural, open and generous community of learners engaged in ongoing conversation.

In September, we marked the tenth anniversary of the ModPo community with a full day of webcasts, meals, readings, and festivities (yes, there was cake!). Legions of loyal ModPo fans from near and far flocked to the Writers House to join us, including **Ali Castleman** (C'13), who came from Brooklyn, **Matt Lutwen** from Pittsburgh, **Anthony Watkins** from Florida, and **Irene Mohedano**, who traveled all the way from Spain (to name only a few).

After a day's worth of activities, the festivities culminated with a party and book launch for *The Difference is Spreading: Fifty Contemporary Poets on Fifty Poems*, an anthology of essays co-edited by **Al Filreis** and **Anna Strong Safford** (C'13), who served for many years as ModPo's coordinator. *The Difference is Spreading* is in many ways a companion to the ModPo course: the collected essays engage poems from the ModPo syllabus and tend to emphasize the interpretation of poetry as an open-ended, collaborative activity. Several poet-essayists featured in the volume joined us in person to read from their work in honor of our global community, including **Herman Beavers**, **Julia Bloch** (GR'11), **Mónica de la Torre**, **Tracie Morris**, **Ron Silliman**, and **Elizabeth Willis**.

The difference is, indeed, spreading!

ALUMNI VISITORS

► **Mecca Jamilah Sullivan** (GR'12) read from her novel *Big Girl*, a tender coming-of-age story set in '90s Harlem.

► **Nova Ren Suma** convened a panel of best-selling YA authors, including **Chloe Gong** (C'21), who published her breakout novel *These Violent Delights* while enrolled at Penn.

► Faculty Director **Al Filreis** led a hilarious conversation with the self-deprecating funnyman **Lew Schneider** (C'83), whose writing and directing credits include *The Goldbergs* and *Men of a Certain Age*.

► Former KWH Director **Jennifer Sneed** (C'94) joined members of the English Undergraduate Advisory Board for a special dinner in our Hartman Dining Room.



A pronoun buffet

We welcomed poet **Divya Victor** in November for an in-depth conversation about her new book, *Curb*, an award-winning poetry collection that considers unacknowledged sites of racial and religious conflict — sidewalks, backyards, governmental forms — in cities and suburbs of the United States. Hosted by Creative Writing Director **Julia Bloch**, the dialogue was the second event in the **Liu Program Series**, sponsored by **Betty Liu** (C'95), a series that celebrates writing about immigration, national and cultural border crossings, and topics related to minority experience. Victor and Bloch spent some time with the formal elements of *Curb*, including Victor's use of pronouns. *Curb* takes a capacious approach to counter and reject the more restrictive use of pronouns on governmental immigration forms ("I want it to be a pronoun buffet," Victor joked). The conversation addressed many other complex issues as well, including hate crimes and bias incidents against immigrants in the US, the role of witnessing in poetry, and the collaborative multimedia afterlife of *Curb*. Throughout the rigorous discussion, Victor and Bloch returned again and again to the text of individual poems to tease out multivalent meanings from commonplace words such as "lawn," "form," and, of course, "curb."



All the possibilities

Professor **J.C. Cloutier**, who teaches popular Penn courses on comics and graphic novels, was the ideal host for this year's **Bernheimer Symposium**, an in-depth interview with famed cartoonist and illustrator **Adrian Tomine**. Large-scale projections of panels and illustrations from across Tomine's twenty-five year career gave us a close-up glimpse into the process and development of his darkly funny work, which addresses loss, ambition, failure, illness, family dynamics, and complex issues of identity — all in comics. Tomine identified some of the influences on his drawing style, including newspaper comic strips like *Peanuts* and *Gasoline Alley*. "Everything I do feels like it was absorbed from someone else in some way," he said. We learned that newspapers played a role in his start as a cartoonist too: he confessed to joining his high school newspaper in order to access all the equipment to self-publish the first mini-comics of *Optic Nerve*. In composing his graphic novel *Killing and Dying*, which brilliantly showcases the possibilities of the medium, he challenged himself to use different processes, tools, and materials for each chapter, including one section that used only the pens and paper he could purchase at a local pharmacy. One strong message emerged: Tomine's interest in the history and possibility of the form has given him space to experiment while developing his unmistakable aesthetic.

An improbable game

Pulitzer Prize-winning writer **Buzz Bissinger** (C'76) returned to the Writers House for a conversation with KWH Faculty Director **Al Filreis** about the heartbreaking story at the center of his most recent book, *The Mosquito Bowl: A Game of Life and Death in WWII*. Impeccably researched, *The Mosquito Bowl* chronicles the lives and deaths of some of the men who participated in "a very improbable, wonderful, serendipitous football game," as Bissinger described it, played on Guadalcanal between two Marine Corps regiments on Christmas Eve, 1944. Coconut goalposts, a regulation size field, printed programs, marching bands, and a live broadcast on The Mosquito Network radio station were some of the astounding details Bissinger reported about the improbable game. Tragically, fifteen out of the sixty-five players were later killed during the bloody battle for Okinawa, which Bissinger also describes with harrowing attention to detail. "I wanted the combat to be visceral, grisly, and horrifying and bloody and violent," Bissinger said. "Because, frankly, it's an anti-war book."

KELLY WRITERS HOUSE FELLOWS PROGRAM



Focusing on the work of three eminent contemporary writers who visit the Writers House in the spring semester, the **Kelly Writers House Fellows Program** combines an intensive undergraduate course, the **Kelly Writers House Fellows Seminar**, with a series of public events and meals lovingly hosted by students. Collaborative learning, intergenerational discussion, intellectually rigorous public events, and the best dinner parties in the world: the Kelly Writers House Fellows Program demonstrates what the KWH is all about.

Our **2023 Kelly Writers House Fellows** were poet and multidisciplinary scholar **Joan Retallack**, author of multiple books, including *The Poethical Wager*, a profoundly influential collection of experimental essays; *New York Times* best-selling author **Jason Reynolds**, who has served as the National Ambassador for Young People's Literature in the Library of Congress; and the extraordinary **Wayne Koestenbaum**, an artist, poet, and cultural critic whose playful multigenre work defies easy categorization.

Co-taught by a KWH dream team of **Al Filreis** and **Simone White**, the fourteen students in the 2023 Fellows Seminar met weekly for intensive three-hour conversations.

The complex poems and essays of **Joan Retallack** inspired discussion in the Fellows Seminar about experimental art practice, Steinian word play, and the interactions of poetry and performance. **William Stewart** (C'25) — who had the honor of introducing Retallack's public reading at the Writers House — was particularly interested in understanding Retallack's relationship to experimental composer John Cage.

Seminar students admired **Jason Reynolds** for his deft and honest writing, and for the way his work speaks movingly and directly to young people. **Freeman Diallo Perry Rabb**, a student visiting from Amherst College, described the impact of such attention: "In this past month in our seminar here at Kelly Writers House, spending the time to inspect how Reynolds approaches brotherhood, love, violence, Black patriarchy, stoicism, community, and rampant imagination, I think it took a few of us back down our own paths, showing us the value in our untold stories."

By the time the seminar turned to the work of **Wayne Koestenbaum** in the final month of the semester, everyone was primed for hyper-detailed conversations about language and the pleasures of using it. **Zelda Godsey-Kellogg** (C'25) delighted the class by keeping a ridiculously long list of "fancy words," a catalog of unfamiliar words and references that stretched to six pages, even after only fifty pages of reading.



The 2023 Fellows Program was made possible thanks to a generous, anonymous donor who established the 1997 Kelly Writers House Fellows Fund to support this project. We are also grateful to acknowledge the late **Paul Kelly** (C'62, WG'64) who conceived of the Writers House Fellows program along with Faculty Director **Al Filreis** as a major component of KWH programming. Paul supported the Fellows Program each year from 1999 to 2021.



RealArts@Penn

Paid internships. Special apprenticeship projects for writers. Alumni mentorship. Industry access. Led by **R.J. Bernocco** (G'13) and **Mingo Reynolds** in the Center for Programs in Contemporary Writing, the RealArts@Penn Program offers students unparalleled opportunities to explore arts-related careers.

The Friend Fellows Project, 2022-2023

The Friend Fellows Project supports academic-year internships and apprenticeships in editing, publishing, journalism, teaching, and arts administration. Thanks to the generosity of **Bill Friend**, **Linda Friend**, **Nina Friend** (C'16), and the **Harris Family Foundation**, we named seven Friend Fellows this year.

- Barnes Foundation: **Adrianna Brusie** (C'23)
- Global Philadelphia Association: **Chloe Hunt** (C'25)
- McIntosh & Otis: **Ellie Shuert** (C'24)
- Penn Press: **Zoë Affron** (C'23), **Madison Holler** (C'24), and **Wahid Sarwar** (C'25)
- Teachers Institute of Philadelphia: **Tseion Mebratu** (C'23)

Bassini Apprenticeships

For the nineteenth 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.

Haley Nguyen (C'23) worked with faculty member **J tJohnson** on the literary horror journal *Cul-de-sac of Blood*, where she published an original story called "Plot Hole."

Isabella Schlact (C'23) and **Francesca Davis** (C'23) assisted **Kathy DeMarco Van Cleve** (C'88, W'88) with script development and casting ideas for a feature film.



Do you want to hear more about RealArts@Penn? Are you an alum with a great career story to tell? Are you an undergrad seeking mentorship? Drop us a line at realarts@writing.upenn.edu.



Povich RealArts Internship Prizes

Supported by a special fund established by **Maury Povich** (C'62), Povich Internship Prizes provide supplemental income to students who have secured unpaid or underpaid internships. In summer 2023, the RealArts@Penn program awarded ten Povich Prizes.

- Leo Biehl** (C'25) research assistant to author Stephen Fried (C'79)
- Jenna Boccher** (C'25) Power in Place
- Erin Brennan** (C'23) independent film *Orange Juice*
- Caylen David** (C'23) United Talent Agency
- Tyler Kliem** (C'24) The Jewish Museum
- Henry McDevitt** (C'23) Maestro Filmworks
- Delaney Parks** (C'24) *Pittsburgh Union Progress*
- Larry Shi** (C'26) Ducco
- Mallika Tatavarti** (C'25) Blowback Productions
- Ashtyn Wright** (C'26) Biz3 Publicity Company

RealArts@Penn Alumni Mentorship Program

Through the **Alumni Mentorship Program** undergrads meet with alumni to learn about potential career paths in arts and culture. Informal meetings allow important relationships and networks to develop, including among the participating students who form bonds with one another as they learn about career opportunities for creative people.

In the fall semester, the Alumni Mentorship Program arranged meetings with alumni working in publishing, editing, journalism, and related fields, including **David Borgenicht** (C'90), **Jacob Gardenswartz** (C'18, LPS'18), **Kate Herzlin** (C'14), **Taylor Hosking** (C'17), **Caryn Karmatz Rudy** (C'92), **Susanna Porter** (CW'75), and **Casey Quackenbush** (C'17).

In spring, students met with alumni working in the entertainment industry. Participating mentors included **Kelly Diamond** (C'13), **Allison Friedman** (C'09), **Stuart Gibbs** (C'91), **Ariana Jackson** (C'03), **Mark Kaufman** (C'89), **Randi Michel** (C'91), **Zachary Sergi** (C'10), and **Emma Soren** (C'16).

The Alumni Mentorship Program is supported by a community of Writers House friends, including former RealArts Interns (see our description of the RealArts Program Fund on page 21).



RealArts@Penn Internships

For the summer of 2023, RealArts@Penn arranged twenty-two paid summer internships at arts and culture organizations in California, Montana, New York, Washington, DC, and right here in Philadelphia. Students learned about magazine and print production, literary and talent management, archival work, script development and filmmaking, theater and arts administration, and more. Each intern received a generous stipend from RealArts@Penn — plus real-world experience in the arts.

- 1812 Productions** Eric Lieberman (C'25)
- All Ages Productions** Ejun Hong (C'25)
- Artists First (LA)** Aalia Rasheed (C'23)
- Artists First (NYC)** Matthew Frank (C'24)
- Bomb Magazine** Margarita Matta (C'25)
- Brooklyn Films** Isaac Pollock (C'25), Blaze Bernstein Intern
- The Fader** Walden Green (C'25)
- FilmNation** Heather Shieh (W'24)
- Flathead Beacon** Anusha Mathur (C'25)
- Get Lifted Film Co.** Mame Balde (C'25), Norma Grace Miller Intern
- Grandview** Ashna Yakoob (C'23)
- Library of Congress** Jean Paik (C'24), Linn Intern
- Morgan Library & Museum** Lila Shermeta (C'25), Eisler Intern
- Mountain Path Entertainment** Julia Rotgin (C'25)
- Paramount: Creative + Strategy** Josephine Buccini (C'25)
- Philadelphia Magazine** Riane Lumer (C'24)
- Pitchfork Media** Peyton Toups (C'23)
- Spiegel & Grau** Zoë Affron (C'23)
- Stern & Gibbs, Writers** Ginger Fontenot (C'25)
- Tremolo Productions** Lila DuBois (C'23), Ginns Intern
- United Talent Agency** Paola Camacho (C'24)
- Warner Bros. Theatre Ventures** Anusha Mathur (C'25)

Support for RealArts@Penn Internships

A major gift from **Robin Wolpov** and **Marc Wolpov** (W'80), **Nina Rosborough** (C'14), and the **Arbour Way Foundation** funded seventeen RealArts@Penn internships.

Other generous Friends of the Writers House have established permanent endowments to fund individual internships, including **Gideon Bernstein**, **Jeanne Pepper Bernstein**, and a community of friends in memory of **Blaze Bernstein**; **Bonnie Tannenbaum Eisler** (C'79) and **Clifford R. Eisler** (W'79); **Seth Ginns** (C'00) and **Jane Ginns**; **Missy Linn** (NU'91) and **Eric Linn** (W'92); **Cheryl K. Nakao-Miller** (W'81) and **Jimmy Miller**; and an anonymous donor. Additional support for RealArts@Penn Internships this year came from **Susanna Porter** (CW'75).



Digital Projects

The Freddy Wexler Studio

The Writers House hosts an entire ecosystem of interrelated and interdependent digital projects, including PennSound, PennSound Podcasts, *Jacket2*, *PoemTalk*, ModPo, and ModPoPLUS, all of which have a homebase in the **Freddy Wexler Studio**. Add in a steady stream of podcasts, teaching initiatives, interviews with visiting writers, audiobook recordings, radio plays, jam sessions, and other innovative sound-based experiments, and it’s difficult for any of us at the KWH to imagine a time before we had a dedicated recording studio.

The Wexler Studio opened in January 2015 as part of the Kelly Family Annex after almost two years of planning and construction. Made possible through a gift by KWH Advisory Board members **Gary Wexler** and **Nina Wexler**, and named for their son **Freddy Wexler** (C’10), whose involvement at the KWH helped him get his start as a music producer, the Wexler Studio was conceived as more than just a recording space. It was built to be an incubator for students to explore AV production and also

a collaborative resource for KWH community members to develop digital media projects.

Even a partial list of Wexler Studio projects through the years is astounding: Classics professor **Emily Wilson** spent much of 2018 in the Wexler Studio fielding interview calls from radio outlets around the world about her sensational translation of the *Odyssey*. Faculty member **Lorene Cary** recorded materials to help launch #VoteThatJawn, a multiyear citywide initiative to encourage youth voting. **Ari Elan** (C’18) and **Mary Osunlana** (C’20) made experimental mixtapes in their downtime as Wexler Studio staffers. **Brad Pettigrew** (C’17) and **Nikhil Venkatesa** (C’17) recorded *Penn Moviegoer’s* inaugural podcast. **Sia Linda-Lebbie** (C’21) hosted two seasons of *The Trillest*, focused on issues important to students (the show’s second season featured blind dates recorded live in studio). And **Alima Tuyakayeva** (W’26) and **Katrina Machetta** developed *Wharton Women’s Locust Talks*, a podcast focused on women in leadership.

This year has been no different. We kept our media staffers busy with a full schedule of audio recordings, film shoots, interviews with writers, podcasts, and other media experiments. **Savannah Sparks** (C’23) engineered an extended PennSound recording session for **William Fuller**, who read from seven collections of poetry. Summer intern **Leo Cohen** (C’26) worked on a variety of PennSound projects, including a recording session with **Tom Devaney**. **Paul Burke** and **Andrés Gonzalez-Bonillas** (C’23) helped with filming a series of new ModPoPLUS videos featuring **Mashinka Firunts Hakopian** (GR’18), **Danny Snelson** (GR’15), **Caroline Rothstein** (C’06), **Aldon Nielsen**, **Willard Spiegelman**, and others. And **Wes Matthews** (C’23) and **Daniel Boyko** (C’26) segmented multiple full-length readings into individual poems, including readings by **Dodie Bellamy**, **Steve Benson**, **Charles Borkhuis**, and **John Keane**.



ModPo

KWH Faculty Director **Al Filreis**, ModPo Coordinator **Laynie Browne**, and a brilliant team of teaching assistants once again offered ModPo, a free, open online course about modern and contemporary US poetry. Tens of thousands of ModPo students participated from all around the world, many of them joining (and helping to create) this vibrant online community for the eleventh consecutive year.

Weekly interactive webcasts with frequent special visitors formed the backbone of the course. We welcomed **Jerome Rothenberg** for a discussion about the rise of Modernism. **Kate Colby** joined for a session on chance poetry. **Gabriel Ojeda-Sagué** (C’16) participated in a conversation — live-streamed from Chicago! — about the Beats. And a huge group joined us in person for a special tenth-anniversary webcast, including **Herman Beavers**, **Julia Bloch** (GR’11), **Ali Castleman** (C’13), **Mónica de la Torre**, **Amber Rose Johnson** (GR’23), **Tracie Morris**, **Ron Silliman**, **Anna Strong Safford** (C’13), and **Elizabeth Willis**.

Anyone can sign up for ModPo by visiting **modpo.org**, where you’ll also find a rich collection of webcasts, discussions, interviews, and performances. Thanks to a generous grant from long-time ModPo’er **Christopher Forman**, we’ve been able to catalog and tag thousands of entries to create a searchable, user-oriented database.



PoemTalk

For each episode of the monthly podcast *PoemTalk at the Writers House*, **Al Filreis** invites a group of three friends to “collaborate on a close (but not too close) reading of a poem” from the vast PennSound archive. Edited by **Zach Carduner** (C’13), episodes this year included a conversation with **Abdulhamit Arvas**, **Carlos Decena**, and **Dagmawi Woubshet**, about John Ashbery’s “Some Trees;” a discussion co-curated by **Divya Victor** about poems in Douglas Keaney’s *SHO*; and a session with **Murat Nemet-Nejat**, **Chantaine Akiyama Poh**, and **Henry Steinberg** (C’13), about Dodie Bellamy’s “Vomit Journal.” Find these and other episodes of *PoemTalk* at **jacketz.org**.

Jacket2

Since 2011, the KWH has produced *Jacket2* (**jacketz.org**), an online magazine that publishes essays, reviews, commentary, and podcasts about contemporary poetry. Editors **Julia Bloch** (GR’11), **Michael Hennessey**, and **Kenna O’Rourke** (C’15) — with help from a team of contributing editors and editorial assistants — ushered a series of new materials into print, including a review of Ada Smailbegovic’s *Poetics of Liveliness* by **Kaitlin Moore** (C’18) and a podcast about translation organized by **Teresa Villa-Ignacio**.



Online Book Groups

Our **Online Book Groups** offer digital gathering spaces for members of the KWH community who want to come together to talk about writing. Thanks to ongoing annual support from **David Roberts** (C’84), we’ve hosted more than 140 moderator-led online discussions since the launch of the project in 2000. **Lily Applebaum** (C’11) led a discussion this year about Shirley Jackson’s haunting story, “The Lottery.” **Devorah Fischler** (GR’21) explored digital storytelling with Jennifer Egan’s “The Black Box,” first published on Twitter. **Victoria Ford** (C’15) offered a discussion of letters by Black women writers. **Al Filreis** and **David Roberts** (C’84) teamed up to lead a ten-day session about short stories by Primo Levy. **Jamie-Lee Josselyn** (C’05) convened a group of high school students to talk about writing by Penn faculty members. And **Kevin Varrone** led two sessions about “walking poems” — ten poems about walking by ten contemporary poets. In addition to these book groups, we also offered a special series of spring semester mini-courses on topics in modern and contemporary poetry, including courses led by **Al Filreis** on Joan Retallack, **Kate Colby** on Lorine Niedecker, **Irene Torra Mohedano** on Alejandra Pizarnik, **Jake Marmer** on Hank Lazer, and **Amber Rose Johnson** (GR’23) on Harryette Mullen.



Youth Writing Projects

Summer Workshop for Young Writers

For the seventh consecutive year, we convened a group of high school writers for our Summer Workshop for Young Writers, a ten-day residential program. They came from as close as West Philadelphia and as far as Southern California to undertake an intensive writing journey together. Thanks to generous support from **Maury Povich** (C'62) and **Connie Chung**, who endowed the Summer Workshop in 2021, half of this year's twenty students attended the program entirely free of charge.

The group gathered at KWH every morning for collaborative memoir workshops led by Summer Workshop Director **Jamie-Lee Josselyn** (C'05), a seasoned writing instructor whose peerless enthusiasm for young writers inspired her to dream up our summer program.

In the afternoons, workshopers attended craft sessions led by KWH-affiliated writing teachers and mentors. **Sophia DuRose** (C'21) encouraged students to use chance-based and experimental operations to respond to the city. **Isaac Essex** (C'20) posed questions about embodiment and performance. **Heidi Kalloo** led a primer

on interactive fiction. **Alli Katz** taught people how to draw comics, no drawing experience required. **David Marchino** (C'16) focused on uses of imagery in personal essays. **Kristen Martin** (C'11) explored identity, culture, and memory through food writing. **Kaitlin Moore** (C'18) introduced strategies writers might use to consider urgent environmental concerns. **Karen Rile** (C'80) explored the art of visual storytelling and narrative collage. **Jesse Schwartz** (C'15) applied the rules of close reading to the practice of writing. And **Michelle Taransky** showcased poems of all kinds, including the illegible, the impossible, and the uncomfortable.

The work was intense, but there was time for other kinds of exploration too, including a trip to South Street with stops at the Magic Gardens and Ishkabibbles, an evening stroll to the rooftop garden at the Cira Center, an info session about college admissions led by **Natalie Zamora** of Penn Admissions, a hands-on printmaking session at the Common Press with **Mary Tasillo** and **Erica Honson**, and a special tie-dye adventure in the KWH garden with **Amber Wren**.

Many people pitched in to make the Summer Workshop a success. Our core Workshop staff — **Jake Falconer** (C'25), **David Marchino** (C'16), and **Jesse Schwartz** (C'15) — worked closely with Workshop Director **Jamie-Lee Josselyn** (C'05) to create a generative, open, and communal workshop experience. Resident Advisors **Colin Ly** (C'24) and **Yasmin Abdul Razak** (C'24) planned several special excursions and kept everything running smoothly in the dorm. **Andrew Beal** and **Julia Morales** kept track of key behind-the-scenes details (including travel, lodging, permission slips, and more). **Alli Katz**, **Heidi Kalloo**, and a team of student staffers and summer interns kept everyone well fed.

On the last evening of the program, Summer Workshopers gathered in the Arts Café once more for a final celebratory reading, followed by an impromptu dance party. Their reading (though not the dance party, alas) was live-streamed with help from **Zach Carduner** (C'13) to families, friends, and fans all over the world.



Cosmic Writers partnership

We're proud to say that the non-profit youth writing project **Cosmic Writers** had its origins right here at the KWH. With support from our Kerry Prize in the summer of 2020, **Rowana Miller** (C'22) launched Word Camp, a virtual creative writing camp for a small group of elementary school writers. Now, thanks in part to a transformative 2022 President's Engagement Prize, Word Camp has expanded into Cosmic Writers, a non-profit organization committed to providing high-quality writing workshops to kids, especially in underserved regions of Philadelphia and New York City.

With help from our Esther T. Saxon Fund, we partnered with Cosmic Writers this year to host a series of free writing workshops at the KWH for kids from the **Revolution School**, the **Philadelphia High School for Creative and Performing Arts**, the **Community Academy of Philadelphia**, and **Mastery Charter High School**. Led by undergraduate writing mentors, the fun and engaging Cosmic Writers workshops explored journalism, zine-making, fantasy, and other genres, through interactive writing activities, open-ended discussion, improvisational games, and, of course, snacks.

Prospective Penn students

Are you a prospective Penn student who'd like to learn about our creative writing community? We're eager to meet you! We're happy to be in touch by email and Zoom, or to show you around the Writers House if you're on campus.

There's also a chance that we'll come to you. Thanks to a special fund endowed by **Alan Hartman** (C'87) and **Kim Hartman**, we visit schools and writing programs all over the country to meet with student writers.

Jamie-Lee Josselyn (C'05), who leads our efforts to engage with high school writers, travels all over the country to meet with students, teachers, and guidance counselors. Special trips this year included visits to Horace Mann (NY), Interlochen

Arts Academy (MI), John Burroughs High School (CA), La Canada High School (CA), the Orange County School of the Arts (CA), the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities (SC), the Willow School (LA), Writopia Lab (NY), and Young DFW Writers (TX).

A phenomenal network of high school teachers, guidance counselors, writing mentors, and Penn alumni, students, and staff assists Josselyn in guiding prospective students to our community. Thanks to their collective efforts, we engaged with more than five hundred prospective Penn students this year. **Dylan Fritz** (C'25) and CPCW staffer **John Rufo** met with prospective students and their families right here at the KWH, including students

from the Philadelphia High School for Creative and Performing Arts. **Peter LaBerge** (C'17), founder of *The Adroit Journal* (C'17), served as an at-large KWH alumni ambassador. **Rowana Miller** (C'22), **Ian McCormack** (C'21), and the good people of Cosmic Writers, helped Philadelphia-area high school writers find their way to the KWH. And excellent colleagues in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, especially our longtime liaison **Crissy Iglesias** (GED'14), worked hard to emphasize Penn as a home for writers.

Are you a high school writer thinking about applying to Penn? We'd love to hear from you! Email Jamie-Lee Josselyn at jjossely@writing.upenn.edu.



Student spotlight

Our Levin Outreach Coordinator **Dylan Fritz** (C'25) interned with Cosmic Writers. During the academic year, Fritz designed and taught a series of virtual workshops — about hermit-crab poetry, monster-making, folklore, and YA fiction — for high school students around the world. In summer, he worked with Philadelphia-area partner organizations, including Cobbs Creek Foundation, the Cambodian Association of Greater Philadelphia, and the Bucks County Rainbow Room, to offer in-person Cosmic Writers programs.

“Working with Cosmic Writers has been a life-changing experience for me! A lot of the kids we work for have such an infectious joy for writing that it's enhanced my own love for writing. I learned even more, however, from kids who didn't come into our workshops with this same inherent appreciation. Their persistence to get better at something that didn't come natural for them, their honesty when facing obstacles, and their creativity often surprised me in fulfilling ways. I wouldn't have traded this experience for the world!”

— **Dylan Fritz** (C'25)

25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



We celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Kelly Writers House with a two-day extravaganza. People stopped by all weekend to join the festivities, including **Elaine Wong** (C'07) who made a fantastic balloon arch to welcome people into the Class of 1942 garden, and ten KWH community members who delivered talks and toasts in honor of the occasion: **Herman Beavers**, **Buzz Bissinger** (C'76), **Kristen Gallagher** (C'91, CGS'99), **David Gross-Loh** (W'92), **Kate Levin** (G'90, GR'95), **Gwen Lewis** (C'14), **Trisha Low** (C'11), **Mary Osunlana** (C'20), **Henry Steinberg** (C'13), and **Simone White**.





Supporting the Kelly Writers House

Everything we do at the Kelly Writers House depends on the generosity of our loyal supporters. **Thank you**, Friends of the Writers House, for investing your time, energy, ideas, and resources into this project.

FRIENDS OF THE WRITERS HOUSE

We thank the following Friends for their generous support of the Kelly Writers House in 2022-2023:

Joanne Adams
Maya Afilalo
Eric Albert
Susan Albertine
Marci Alboher, in honor of Al Filreis
Concha Alborg
James W. Albrecht, in memory of Jamie Albrecht
Samantha Alman
Alonna Anspach
Gina Arlen
Ali Arsanjani
Myrna Zeitlin Asher, in memory of Howard Asher
Sarah Auerbach
Susan Avarde
Dexter Bailey
Sylva Baker
Sheriza Baksh
Teresa Barnett
John Barrett, in honor of Al Filreis
Stephanie Barron
Sean Basinski

INTERNSHIPS, APPRENTICESHIPS, AND MENTORSHIPS

The **Anand-Priya Family Apprenticeship Endowed Fund** supports summer apprenticeships at the Writers House. 2023 Anand-Priya Apprentice Madeleine Song (C'24) honed a variety of digital and technical skills working on the KWH website and processing materials for PennSound. *Endowed by Anand Balasubrahmanyam (ENG'94, W'94).*

The **Bassini Apprenticeship Endowed Fund** pairs undergraduates with professional writers for in-depth collaborative work. Haley Nguyen (C'23) worked with J †Johnson on the literary horror journal *Cul-de-sac of Blood*. Francesca Davis (C'23) and Isabella Schlact (C'23) assisted Kathy DeMarco Van Cleve (C'88, W'88) with script development and casting ideas for a feature film. *Endowed by Reina Marin (C'72, GED'72) and Emilio Bassini (C'71, W'71, WG'73).*

The **Blaze Bernstein Memorial Endowed Fund** was established in memory of Blaze Bernstein to support summer internships in Los Angeles and food-related events at the KWH. Thanks to the Blaze Fund, Issac Pollack (C'25) interned at Brooklyn Films, and the KWH hosted our beloved annual Edible Books contest and several other delicious events. *Endowed by Gideon Bernstein and*

Jeanne Pepper Bernstein, and a community of friends, with additional support this year from Dan Cowan and James Newswanger (C'82, GED'90, GR'95).

The **Caryn Karmatz Rudy and Lee Rudy Endowed Fund for Student Internships and Opportunities** provides support for student learning opportunities in editing and journalism. Inaugural Karmatz Rudy Intern Laura Shin (C'25) learned about food writing at *Philadelphia Magazine's* Foobooz. *Endowed by Caryn Karmatz Rudy (C'92) and Lee Rudy (C'92).*

The **Debbie Duenes Kay Student Editor Internship Fund** helps Penn students gain experience with professional editing practices. 2022–2023 Kay Intern Kendall Owens (C'23) served as an editorial assistant for *Jacketz* magazine. *Supported annually by Debbie Duenes Kay (C'95).*

The **Eisler Endowed Internship Fund** supports RealArts@Penn Internships in arts organizations, cultural institutions, and creative companies. In summer 2023, Lila Shermeta (C'25) interned at the Morgan Library & Museum in New York. *Endowed by Bonnie Tannenbaum Eisler (C'79) and Clifford R. Eisler (C'79).*



The **Elissa Caterfino Mandel Internship Endowed Fund** supports student internships in magazine editing. This year Gabriela Portillo Alvarado (C'23) served as an editorial assistant for our own *Jacketz* magazine. *Endowed by Elissa Caterfino Mandel (C'83).*

The **Ginns RealArts Internship Endowed Fund** supports RealArts@Penn Internships at arts organizations, cultural institutions, and creative companies. Jean Paik (C'24) interned at the Library of Congress in the summer of 2023. *Endowed by Seth Ginns (C'00) and Jane Ginns.*

The **Jean Chatzky Fund for Student Internships in Business Journalism** supports semester-time internships in business writing, reporting, and journalism. We are excited to announce our inaugural Chatzky Intern in 2023–2024. *Endowed by Jean Sherman Chatzky (C'86).*

The **Kate Levin Community Outreach Internship Endowed Fund** allows students to participate in writing-based community service efforts. This year, Dylan Fritz (C'25) led online writing workshops for youth through a partnership with Cosmic Writers. *Endowed by Kate Levin (G'90, GR'95) and Robin Shapiro.*

The **Missy and Eric Linn RealArts Internship Endowed Fund** supports RealArts@Penn Internships at arts organizations, cultural institutions, and creative companies. In summer 2023, Ashna Yakoob (C'23) interned at Grandview in Los Angeles. *Endowed by Missy Linn (NU'91) and Eric Linn (W'92).*

The **Lipson Fellows for Studio Production Endowed Fund** helps students develop expertise in AV production and editing by supporting learning opportunities in the Wexler Studio of the Writers House. 2022–2023 Lipson Fellows were Henry McDevitt (C'23), Alex Moon (C'24), and Andrew Qiu (C'26). *Endowed by Howard A. Lipson (W'86).*

The **Maury Povich RealArts Internship Prize Fund** helps make internship opportunities accessible by supporting students who have secured unpaid or modestly paid internships at cultural institutions, arts organizations, or creative companies. The fund supported ten students in the



summer of 2023. *Endowed by Maury Povich (C'62) and Connie Chung.*

The **Norma Grace Miller RealArts Internship Fund** supports RealArts@Penn Internships at arts organizations, cultural institutions, and creative companies. Mame Balde (C'25) interned in summer 2023 at Get Lifted Film Co. *Endowed by Cheryl K. Nakao-Miller (W'81) and Jimmy Miller.*

The **Peter Stallybrass RealArts Internship Fund** supports RealArts@Penn Internships at arts organizations, cultural institutions, and creative companies. We look forward to announcing the inaugural Stallybrass Internship in the summer of 2024. *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*

The **RealArts Internship Fund** helps students make meaningful connections beyond the university, particularly through paid summer internships at arts organizations, cultural institutions, and creative companies. RealArts@Penn awarded nineteen internships in the summer of 2023, fourteen of which were supported through the RealArts Internship Fund. *Supported annually by Robin Wolpov and Marc Wolpov (W'80), Nina Rosborough (C'14), and the Arbour Way Foundation, with additional support this year from Susanna Porter (CW'75).*

The **RealArts Program Fund** supports the core mission of the RealArts@Penn project: mentoring undergraduates. With the help of this fund, we create a series of informal opportunities for undergraduates to meet with alumni working in creative fields. *Supported this year by Stephanie Barron (C'18), Liliana Kim (C'01) and Daniel Lee (C'98, CGS'00, FEL'09), Becca Lieberman (C'20), Lexi Lieberman (C'20), Tyler Lucas and GERALYN Lucas (C'89), Skye Lucas (C'21), and an anonymous donor.*

The **Stacey Gillis Weber (W'85) and Jeffrey A. Weber Apprenticeship Endowed Fund** supports undergraduate apprentices at the Writers House, where they learn specialized skills associated with running a busy arts hub. This year, Favor Idika (C'23) worked with our development and finance team. *Endowed by Stacey Gillis Weber (W'85) and Jeffrey A. Weber.*

FRIENDS OF THE WRITERS HOUSE

Ian Bauer and Joy Bauer
Erica Baum
Donald Beetham
Terry Belanger, in honor of Al Filreis
Evelyn Bender
Jose Luis Benitez
Susan Bergman
Marshall Berman, in honor of Al Filreis
Susan Berman
Anne Berry, in honor of Al Filreis
Mary Beshere, in memory of Jamie Albrecht
Constance Billé
Adam Birnbaum, in honor of Al Filreis
Daniel Blas and Ilana Teicher Blas
Julia Bloch and Syd Zolf
Lawrence Blum
Kathleen Matson Blurock
Merle Born
Michael Boshes
Jo Ann Boyko and David Boyko
Barbara R. Bravo
Jay Brecker
Hal Broderon and Laura Sanchez
David Broida
Chevahn Brown
Laynie Browne, in memory of Bernadette Mayer
Bruce Brownstein
Ingrid Bruck, in honor of Al Filreis
Marcia Camino, in memory of Michael Anna Carey
John Carroll and Rachael Paz
Thomas Carroll
Lorene Cary
Andrew Cassel
Nora Castle, in memory of Zeke Reiser
MC Catanese
Earl Caustin
Sandra Chaff
Mandana Chaffa, in memory of Bernadette Mayer
Kristine Chalifoux, in memory of James Hawley
Andrew Michael Chang
Debjani Chatterjee
Ken Chen
Elyse Cheney
Alexia Chororos and Charles Gallagher
Laurie Churchman
Sara Coelho
Dale Kramer Cohen
Harris Cohen
Michael Cohn, in memory of Paul Kelly
Mary Collins
Cynthia Cooke and Beth Spaninger
Matthew Corey
Dan Cowan
David Cowen
John Creedon
Michael Cullina and Pamela Cullina
Jacob Cytryn, in honor of Al Filreis
Zoë Dare-Attanasio
Laura De Bernardi
Mr. and Mrs. Jose M. de Castro, in memory of Jamie Albrecht

James De Lorenzo
Eva Del Soldato
Kim Diamond
Melissa DiRado and Mark DiRado
Lance Donaldson-Evans and Mary Donaldson-Evans
Richard Donze
Jason Dougherty, in honor of Riham’s Mug
Michael Eleey and Jane Eleey
Carol Elias
Russell Endo
Melissa Enns, in honor of Al Filreis
Sabrina Erdely, in honor of Al Filreis
David Espey
Daniel Evans
Peter Fader
Marc Falkoff
Mary Farrell
Robert Faunce
Lisa Feldmann
Jean Findlay, in memory of Mr. Allan Ford (C’51)
Lisa Fishman
Dan Flath
Marni Fogelson-Teel and Joseph Teel
Michelle Foshee
Peggy Fox
Stewart Friedman
Elisabeth Frischauf
Lise Funderburg
John Gallagher
Mark Gallagher
Lisa Geiszler
Kara Gendron
Joseph Glantz
David Goetke
Nili Gold
Alan Golding
Nancy Golding and Robert Hartheimer Golding
Ken Goldman
David Goldwyn and Julie Goldwyn
Doug Gordon
Peyton Gordon, in memory of Jamie Albrecht



AWARDS AND PRIZES

The **Beltran Family Teaching and Mentorship Award Endowed Fund** celebrates outstanding teachers of creative writing. 2023 Beltran Award winner Piyali Bhattacharya teaches writing courses about fictional friendships and Asian American lives. In spring, she organized a standing-room-only panel of Asian American food writers. *Endowed by John Paul Beltran and Lina Beltran.*

The **Kerry Sherin Wright Prize Endowed Fund** honors the literary communitarianism of Kerry Sherin Wright, the first director of the KWH. 2023 Kerry Prize winner Meg Gladieux (C’23) will convene a freelance journalism collective at the KWH, while also working on a memoir. *Endowed by KWH Faculty Director Al Filreis with additional gifts from the Kelly Writers House community.*

The **Leslie Dezer Salmon and Ricardo Salmon Junior Fellows Prize Endowed Fund** encourages young alumni to stay in Philadelphia post-graduation and develop their creative work. Inaugural Salmon Fellow Alan Jinich (C’22) will create a podcast about rideshare drivers in Philadelphia. *Endowed by Leslie Dezer Salmon (W’92) and Ricardo Salmon (W’93).*

The **Michael Goldstein and Danielle Goldstein Endowed Prize** recognizes excellent writing projects proposed by undergraduates. We



selected two Goldstein Prize winners in the spring of 2023: Zelda Godsey-Kellogg (C’25) for a novel-in-progress, and Wahid Sarwar (C’25) for a play about a family food truck business. *Endowed by Michael Goldstein and Danielle Goldstein, with a renewal gift this year from Michael Goldstein.*

The **Parker Prize Endowed Fund for Journalistic Nonfiction** celebrates excellence in student journalism. The 2023 Parker Prize went to Walker Carnathan (C’26) for “Life is a Cabaret,” a profile of an on-campus production of *Cabaret*. *Endowed by Bret Parker (C’90) and Katharine Parker.*

The **Terry B. Heled Travel and Research Grant Endowed Fund** enables students to undertake significant travel-based research and writing projects. We named two winners this year: Miriam Shah (C’23) for research into Mumbai’s dwindling Bene Israel community, and Irma Kiss Barath (C’25), who will document Dakar’s griot tradition. *Endowed by Mali Heled Kinberg (C’95, G’95) in memory of her mother Terry B. Heled.*

The **Universe in Verse Prize Term Fund** encourages projects that explore intersections of poetry and science. 2023 winner Norah Rami (C’26) analyzed recorded poetry using tools and techniques from linguistics. *Supported annually by Maria Popova (C’07).*



PROJECTS

The **Brodsky Gallery Endowed Fund** enables the work of the Brodsky Gallery, an exhibition space integrated with the first floor of the KWH. This season the Brodsky Gallery hosted four shows, including an exhibition of Caribbean art curated by Cecilia González Godino (GR’30). *Endowed by Michael Brodsky (W’88) and Heidi Hookman Brodsky (C’89).*

The **Creative Ventures Fund** enables KWH community members to pursue their most ambitious creative projects and ideas. The fund supported an extraordinary range of activities and happenings this year, including performances, print projects, workshops, interdisciplinary research, and more. Creative Ventures practitioners included Lisa Nakamura, who participated in a discussion about race and gender in online spaces, and Adrianna Brusie (C’23), who launched the third volume of *t-art*, a magazine of art and technology. *Supported annually by Nina Rosborough (C’14), Robin Wolpow and Marc Wolpow (W’80), and the Arbour Way Foundation.*

The **Herman and Jeanne Robinson Letterpress Endowed Fund** supports letterpress production at the Common Press studio. Each year, the press generates dozens of broadsides and postcards for KWH events, many of them designed by students. *Endowed by Nina Robinson Vitow (CW’70, WG’76) in memory of Herman Robinson and Jeanne Robinson.*

The **Kneeley Digital Ventures Endowed Fund** supports a Teaching Assistant for ModPo, the massive open online course on modern and contemporary poetry led by KWH Faculty Director Al Filreis. Camara Brown (C’17) served as the 2022–2023 Kneeley TA, joining webcasts and online forums to discuss poetry with ModPo students from around the world. *Endowed by Jean-Marie Kneeley and Richard J. Kneeley.*

The **1997 Kelly Writers House Fellows Fund** supports the Kelly Writers House Fellows Program, through which students interact with



eminent writers in a series of discussions, public events, and a unique undergraduate seminar taught by KWH Faculty Director Al Filreis. Faculty member Simone White joined Al Filreis in leading this year’s Fellows Project, which featured the eminent writers Joan Retallack, Jason Reynolds, and Wayne Koestenbaum, who visited for two days each. *Supported annually by an anonymous donor.*

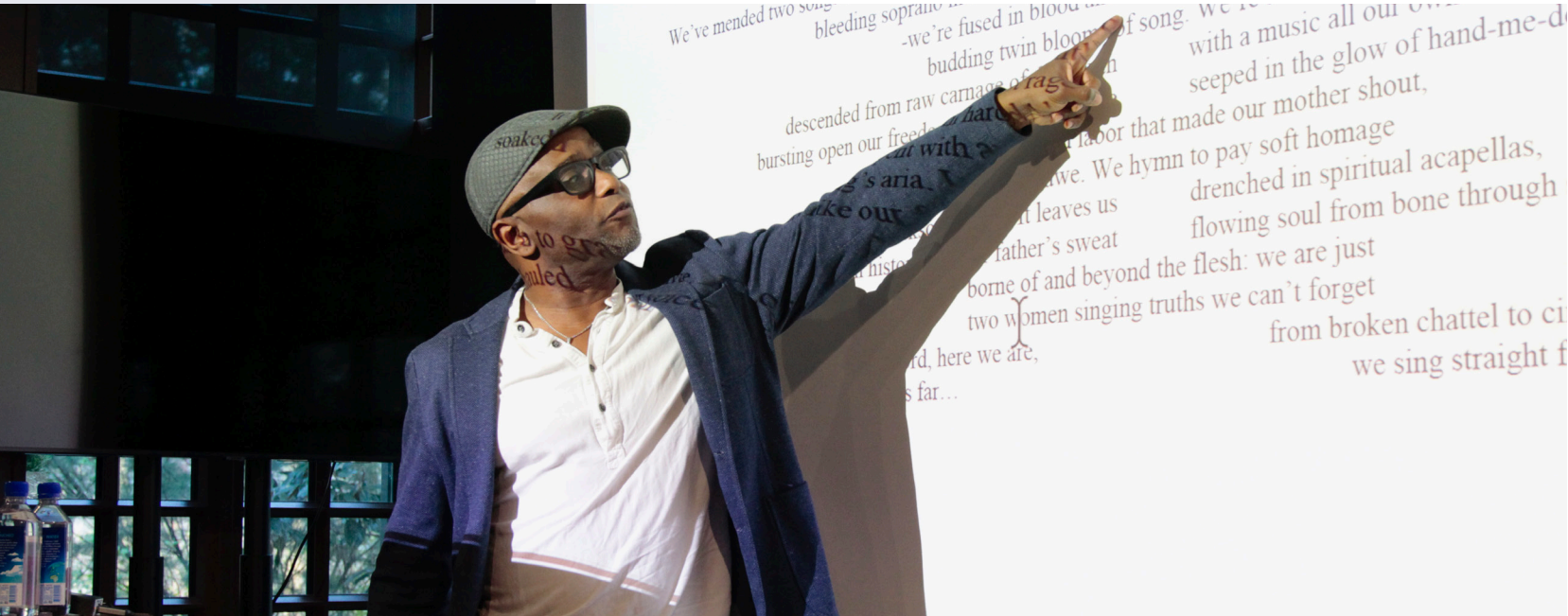
The **Online Projects Fund** supports ModPo, our massive open online course on modern and contemporary poetry. In 2022–2023, the fund allowed us to hire two remarkable teaching assistants: Dave Poplar (LPS’14) and Amber Rose Johnson (GR’23). *Supported annually by an anonymous donor.*

The **Richard and Lucy Cook Endowed Fund for Digital Ventures** supports ModPo, our massive open online course on modern and contemporary poetry. In 2022–2023, the Cook Fund allowed us to hire teaching assistant Gabriel Ojeda-Sagué (C’16), a poet and scholar based in Chicago. *Endowed by Lucy (Oh) Cook (C’95) and Dr. Richard Cook.*

The **Writers House Journal Endowment Fund** supports *Jacket2*, a magazine of poetry and poetics housed at the KWH since 2005. *Jacket2* is home to a number of ongoing commentaries and podcasts about poetry, including *PoemTalk*, which posted its 185th episode in June 2023. *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*

The **Zarin/Rosenfeld Endowed Fund for the Literary Journalism Magazine** nurtures journalistic talent by making possible the publication of substantial nonfiction writing by Penn students. In 2022–2023, the fund supported the activities of *Penn Moviegoer*, a student-led film magazine that also hosts a series of talks by film critics. *Endowed by Judith Zarin and Gerald Rosenfeld.*

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Phil Kim
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Rene Kozloff and Lou Kozloff
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Joli Morgan
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FOUNDATIONAL SUPPORT

The **Possibility Endowed Fund** supports all the activities of the Writers House: celebratory gatherings, public events, online projects, student initiatives, outreach projects, and more. The capaciousness of the Possibility Fund reflects a founding principle of the KWH as a “House of Possibility,” a place for intellectually adventurous initiatives, collaborative work, and a learner-centered approach. Anyone can contribute to the Possibility Fund in any amount. *See pages 30-31 for a list of people who have supported the Possibility Fund.*

The **Alice Cooper Shoulberg Scholarship Endowed Fund for the Support of Student Creative Writing** supports the print and design technology in our Student Projects Space. Alice Cooper Shoulberg (CW’55) had a brilliant career as a Philadelphia public school teacher and we are honored to have a fund in her name established by her classmates and friends. *Endowed by Overbrook High School classmates of Alice Cooper Shoulberg.*

The **Along Endowed Fund**, taking its name from *Report From Part One* by Gwendolyn Brooks, helps meet the ongoing and emerging needs of our community by providing flexible funding to support people, projects, and ideas at the KWH. *Endowed by Irwyn Applebaum (C’75) and Lucy Applebaum.*

The **Anonymous Endowed Fund** provides foundational support for activities and projects of the Writers House and its community, making all kinds of activities possible year after year. *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*

The **Faculty Director’s Discretionary Fund** enables KWH Faculty Director Al Filreis to seek out, encourage, and invest in talent and ideas. The fund enabled several special projects this year. Danny Snelson (GR’15) and Mashinka Firunts Hakopian (GR’18) led an interactive session on poetry, gaming, and Artificial Intelligence. Mahailya Hinsey (C’23) conducted research into the history of LGBTQ events at the KWH. And Sophie Young (C’24) interned at an outpatient clinic, where she explored how creativity factors into the rehabilitation process. *Supported this year by Jon Avnet (C’71) and Barbara Avnet, Charles Downey (W’86) and Christina Downey, Lois Filreis, Jody Rosen Knower (C’88), Linda Kronfeld (C’78), Scott Lanman (C’99), Reina Marin (CW’72, GED’72), Madeline Penn (C’17), Mark Sherman (C’95) and Rachel Sherman (C’95), and Henry Siegel (C’90) and Talia Siegel.*

The **Faculty Director Endowed Fund** helps to guarantee the future of the Writers House by

providing unrestricted support for everything we do. This extraordinary fund encourages the Faculty Director of the Writers House to direct support precisely where it is most needed. *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*

The **Gordon Walls ’38 Creative Ventures Fund**, established in memory of Gordon Walls, supports the activities of the KWH Planning Committee, also known as “the Hub.” The Gordon Walls Fund kept Hub members well fed this year, with dozens of pizzas for monthly meetings and gallons of soup for Mind of Winter, a beloved annual event. *Supported annually by Gordon Lane Bond (C’06) and Sunny Bond, and William Bond and Sandy Bond.*

The **Hartman Dining Room Endowed Fund** names the dining room of the Writers House, home to writing workshops, zine-making sessions, study groups, and memorable meals with visiting writers and artists, including, this year, Britt Daniel and Jennifer Egan (C’85). *Endowed by Kim Hartman and Alan Hartman (W’87).*

The **Kane-Wallace Kitchen Endowed Fund** names the KWH kitchen, the scene of late-night baking adventures, informal meet-ups and study sessions, and prep for more than one hundred receptions each year. *Endowed by Ed Kane (C’71, Trustee 1996–2000) and Marty Wallace.*

The **Karlan Family Writers Alcove Fund** names the alcove-home of the green couch, where generations of Writers House students have studied together, consumed uncountable cups of tea, listened to poetry readings from a comfortable perch, and — yes — napped. *Endowed by the Karlan Family.*

The **Levin Kelly Writers House Endowment** helps protect and guarantee the future of the Writers House by providing unrestricted funding for the activities of the Writers House and its community. *Endowed by Kate Levin (G’90, GR’95) and Robin Shapiro.*

The **Jamie Albrecht Memorial Endowed Fund for Student Initiatives** celebrates the life of Jamie Albrecht (C’22), who was a dear friend and devoted citizen of the Writers House community. The Jamie Albrecht Student Initiatives Fund fueled a wide range of projects and initiatives this year, including *DoubleSpeak*, a journal that publishes literary works in translation; the Body Electric, a welcoming collective of poets and poetry lovers; and *The Swan*, a series of poetry pamphlets published by Joel Newberger (GR’28). *See page 29 for a list of supporters.*



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OUTREACH / BEYOND THE CAMPUS

The **Anonymous Digital Poetries Endowed Fund** supports our efforts to archive, preserve, and make poetry and poetic resources freely available. Digital projects supported by this fund include PennSound, an enormous online archive of poetry recordings, and ModPo, an open online course on modern and contemporary poetry. *Endowed in 2022 by an anonymous donor.*

The **Digital Poetries Fund** supports several interrelated projects focused on poetry and poetics, including PennSound, the world’s largest digital archive of poetry, *Jacket2*, an

international journal of poetry and poetics, and ModPo, an open online course on modern and contemporary poetry. *Supported this year by Eric Brotman (C’94), Christopher Forman and Margaret Forman, Stephen Krewson (C’10), Vijayalaxmi Maddali, Elissa Caterfino Mandel (C’83), Susan Small Savitsky (CW’75) and Gerald Savitsky, Susan Scheid, and the Richard Lounsbury Foundation.*

The **Maury Povich Summer Workshop Endowed Fund** provides financial assistance to more than half the participants in our Summer Workshop for Young Writers, a ten-day,

immersive experience for high school writers, with daily writing classes, field trips around the city, and a taste of living on a college campus. *Endowed by Maury Povich (C’62) and Connie Chung.*

The **Esther T. Saxon Term Fund** supports writing workshops for children and youth, including a monthly writing workshop for trans and nonbinary teens, and a collaboration with Cosmic Writers that brings kids from all over the city to the KWH for workshops taught by Penn students. *Supported annually by Jerilyn Saxon Perman (C’91) and Brian Perman (W’90), in honor of Esther T. Saxon.*

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Anonymous, in honor of Al Filreis
Anonymous donors

The **KWH Alumni Online Book Group Term Fund** allows us to host lively, moderator-led online conversations about books. This year’s offerings included a special series led by Kevin Varrone: ten days, ten poets, ten poems about walking. *Supported annually by David Roberts (W’84) and Deborah Roberts.*

The **Sayet-Rosenberg Endowed Fund for Young Writers** supports the teaching and mentoring of young writers. In summer 2023, Dylan Fritz (C’25) interned with Cosmic Writers where he developed and led writing workshops for kids. *Endowed by Harold L. Rosenberg (W’79) and Dr. Laurie A. Sayet.*

The **Student Recruitment and Access Endowed Fund** supports our outreach efforts

READINGS AND EVENTS

The **Blutt Songwriting Symposium Endowed Fund** allows us to invite legendary musicians for performances and discussions of their work. This year’s Blatt Program featured Britt Daniel, co-founder, lead singer, and guitarist of indie-rock band Spoon. *Endowed by Margo Krody Blatt and Mitchell J. Blatt (C’78, M’82, L’84, Trustee 1998–2008).*

The **Bob Lucid Memorial Endowment Fund** was established by Friends of the Kelly Writers House in memory of Bob Lucid, a visionary teacher who helped dream up the KWH. Students packed the house to meet this year’s Lucid reader Ling Ma, author of *Severance* and *Bliss Montage*. *Endowed by Susan Small Savitsky (CW’75), Ed Kane (C’71, Trustee 1996–2000), and a community of KWH friends.*

The **Bok Endowed Visiting Writers Series Fund** sponsors events and programs in all genres, allowing us to celebrate a full range of contemporary writing. Bok visitors this year included novelist Mecca Sullivan (GR’12), who read from her breakout novel *Big Girl*; writer/educator Chris Martin, whose book *May Tomorrow Be Awake* chronicles his work teaching autistic students; and dozens of poets and scholars who joined *PoemTalk*, a lively roundtable discussion about poetry, hosted by Al Filreis. *Endowed by Scott Bok (C’81, W’81, L’84, Trustee 2005–present) and Roxanne Bok (C’81).*

The **Caroline Rothstein Endowed Fund in Support of Oral Poetry** allows us to showcase poets in the spoken word and oral tradition. Andrés Gonzalez-Bonillas (C’23) moderated a conversation with our 2023 Rothstein visitor, José Olivarez, who performed poems from his new book *Promises of Gold*. *Endowed by Nancy Rothstein (CW’75) and Steven Rothstein, in honor of their daughter Caroline Rothstein (C’06).*

to high school writers, particularly students in regions of the country underrepresented at Penn. Jamie-Lee Josselyn (C’05), our Associate Director of Recruitment and Access, travels throughout the year to meet prospective Penn students and introduce them to opportunities at the KWH and Penn. *Endowed by Kim Hartman and Alan Hartman (W’87).*

The **Student Recruitment and Access Fund** supports our efforts to recruit high school writers to Penn — particularly those who may believe Penn is beyond their reach financially, geographically, or otherwise. *Supported this year by John Carroll (C’05) and Rachael Paz (C’05), Alexandra Halpern (C’04), Phil Kim (C’90, WMP’20), David Sinclair, and Charles Sosnick (C’19).*

The **Cheryl J. Family Endowed Fund for Fiction Programming** sponsors annual readings by young or emerging fiction writers. Our 2022–2023 Family Fiction Program featured a thrilling double-billing of Alyssa Songsiridej (C’10) and Liza St. James (C’10), former students of Creative Writing instructor Max Apple. *Endowed by Cheryl J. Family (C’91).*

The **Endowed Fund for Feminist Projects** supports projects that focus on gender, sexuality, and feminist thought. 2022–2023 Feminist Fund activities included a visit by playwright Jesús I. Valles and support for transcribez, a writing workshop for transgender youth. *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*

The **Eva and Leo Sussman Poetry Endowed Fund** honors the memory of Eva and Leo Sussman, beloved grandparents of Daniel Morse, with an annual poetry program. The 2022–2023 Sussman Program featured a performance by Hoa Nguyen, introduced by Laynie Browne. *Endowed by Daniel Morse and Miriam Morse, in memory of Eva and Leo Sussman.*

The **Friedman Program for Eminent Fiction Writers Fund** supports visits by renowned fiction writers, who share their stories and expertise with members of the KWH community. Our second annual Friedman Fiction Program featured Pulitzer Prize–winning novelist Jennifer Egan (C’85) in a standing-room-only conversation about *The Candy House* led by KWH Faculty Director Al Filreis. *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*

The **Handwerker Stand-Up Comedy Series Fund** has sponsored Stand-Ups Sit Down, a celebration of comedy, comedy writing, and comedians. In the final event in the series,

FRIENDS OF THE WRITERS HOUSE

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- Ellen Varet Bock, in memory of Beryl Rosenstock
- Allyson Volinsky
- John Vosmek and Lucy Vosmek
- Meredith Weber
- Carly Weinreb
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- Daniel Weintraub and Sarah Weintraub
- Anne Wellner de Veer
- Sharon Wells
- Kevin Werbach and Johanna Werbach
- Susan Wheeler
- Beth White and Jeff White, in honor of Hannah White Reitz
- Richard Williams, in memory of C.K. Williams
- Tyrone Williams
- Kim Wilson and Robert Wilson
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- Harvey Zalesne and Judy Zalesne
- Len Zangwill
- Donna Zeide and Morris Kener, in honor of Andrew Kener
- Emily Zimmerman
- Allison MacDonald Zipper
- Michael Zuckerman
- Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office - Cyber Crime Division
- Anonymous, in honor of Al Filreis
- Anonymous, in honor of Bobby
- Anonymous donors

funnyman Lew Schneider (C’83), the longtime series host, sat down for an unscripted interview with Faculty Director Al Filreis. *Funded by Haim Handwerker and Jamie Handwerker (C’83).*

The **Hartman Family Screenwriting Series Endowed Fund** gives aspiring filmmakers a taste of the writers’ room. Planned events in the Hartman Series include a special panel of emerging alumni screenwriters in honor of Penn’s 2023 Homecoming Weekend. *Endowed by Kim Hartman and Alan Hartman (W’87).*

The **Irwyn and Lucy Applebaum Endowed Fund** enables conversations with publishers and editors, the people who work behind the scenes to curate and shape published works. We welcomed two Applebaum visitors this year: Eric Smith, a literary agent with P.S. Literary, and Matvei Yankelevich, editor of World Poetry Books and co-founder of Ugly Duckling Presse. *Endowed by Irwyn Applebaum (C’75) and Lucy Applebaum.*

The **Levin Endowed Fund for an Annual Symposium in Memory of Charles Bernheimer** supports a special annual program held in memory of Charles Bernheimer and curated by KWH Program Coordinator Alli Katz. This year’s Bernheimer Symposium featured a conversation about comics between *New Yorker* cartoonist Adrian Tomine and Penn faculty member J.C. Cloutier. *Endowed by Kate Levin (G’90, GR’95) and Robin Shapiro.*

The **Liu Endowed Program Fund** honors writing that describes immigrant experiences, transnational exchange, and the challenges of displacement. For this year’s Liu Program, poet Divya Victor spoke about her book *Curb*, which explores immigration, identity, and anti-South-Asian violence. *Endowed by Betty Liu (C’95).*

The **LIVE at the Writers House Endowment** supports the production of “LIVE at the Writers House,” a WXPN (88.5 FM) radio show produced at the KWH by Alli Katz and edited by Zach Carduner (C’13). Episodes this year included a show about walking around Philadelphia, a spotlight on Penn’s Excelano Project, and a collaboration with Mighty Writers. *Endowed by BigRoc.*

The **Lucy F. DeMarco Endowed Fund for Youth Literature** supports conversations about literature for children and youth. In March, faculty member Nova Ren Sum convened a panel discussion with Chloe Gong (C’21), Candice Iloh, and Anica Mrose Rissi, which included a Q&A with questions from young readers themselves. *Endowed by Kathy DeMarco Van Cleve (C’88, W’88) in memory of Lucy F. DeMarco.*

The **Maury Povich Journalism Program Endowment Fund** supports all of our nonfiction programming, a range of events and activities that includes readings, publications, craft talks, and mentor meetings with journalists, essayists, critics, and other writers of nonfiction. Povich visitors this year included media editor Alex Koppelman (C’05), Modern Loss co-founder Rebecca Soffer, fashion critic Rachel Tashjian (C’11), and a stellar lineup of alumni journalists for a panel discussion about careers in journalism. The fund also supported the publication of *Hot Knife*, a new student-led magazine of music criticism. *Endowed by Maury Povich (C’62) and Connie Chung.*

The **Poetry Endowment Fund** supports a wide variety of poetic activities, including readings, student writing projects, and collaborations between poets and other artists. In September, the Poetry Endowment sponsored a week-long visit to the KWH by legendary poet Jerome Rothenberg. *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*

The **Stacey Gillis Weber (W’85) and Jeffrey A. Weber Symposium Endowed Fund** celebrates writing that illuminates the workings of business, finance, and economics. Our 2022–2023 Weber Symposium featured Maria Konnikova, author of the blockbuster *The Biggest Bluff*, about professional poker, game theory, and human behavior. *Endowed by Stacey Gillis Weber (W’85) and Jeffrey A. Weber.*

The **Sylvia W. Kauders Endowment Fund** allows us to meet writers of nonfiction who visit for memorable lunchtime conversations. Kauders lunches this year included a special session about midterm election results with political journalist Dick Polman. *Endowed by Sylvia W. Kauders (CW’42).*

The **Wexler Endowment Fund for Programs at the Kelly Writers House** enables all kinds of readings, workshops, and creative projects. Public events supported this year included a triple-header poetry reading by Aldon Nielsen, William J. Harris, and Tyrone Williams, and a conversation with novelist Amit Chaudhuri, hosted by Piyali Bhattacharya. *Endowed by Gary Wexler and Nina Wexler.*

The **Wexler Family Endowed Fund for Programs in Jewish Life and Culture** helps us to celebrate Jewish literature, art, and culture. The Wexler Fund this year supported a visit by Jerusalem-born novelist Moriel Rothman-Zecher for a conversation about his novel *Before All the World*, set in 1930s Philadelphia. *Endowed by Gary Wexler and Nina Wexler.*



REMEMBERING JAMIE ALBRECHT 1999–2023

The people of the Kelly Writers House deeply mourn the loss of **Jamie Albrecht** (C’22). We knew and loved Jamie as a cherished friend, as an activist citizen and longtime staff member of the KWH, as a poet of enormous potential, and as a bright, creative, and brilliant human whose words and work and passions touched so many of us.

In April, dozens of people gathered here at the Writers House — a space that Jamie loved and where he was loved by so many — to celebrate and remember him. We shared memories, bits of his writing, photos, jokes, text messages, and other material reminders of his presence, including a shared copy of his award-winning Creative Writing honors thesis *What Have You?*.

It was remarkable to be in a room with so many people who saw Jamie so wholly and with so much love. The stories we told that night — about his reluctance to take out the garbage, about late-night hangout invitations, about pieces of writing he would send to friends, about his enthusiasm for poetry and talking about poetry, about his immense charm and warmth and brilliant ability to connect — made him feel present here at the House once again. Al Filreis expressed succinctly a sense that many of us had and continue to have: “missing Jamie is what we all do now.”

To honor Jamie’s deep and lasting impact on this community, we have — along with Jamie’s family — established an endowment fund at the KWH to which anyone may contribute. The **Jamie Albrecht Memorial Endowed Fund for Student Initiatives** will celebrate and honor Jamie’s life by fueling the kinds of projects and ventures Jamie would have loved.

We are honored by the outpouring of support in Jamie’s memory and grateful to the many people who have already contributed to this special fund, including Joanne Adams, Meredith Albrecht and Joyce Albrecht, James W. Albrecht, Mark Albrecht and Teresa de Castro, Susan Berman, Mary Beshere, Ana de Castro, Mr. and Mrs. Jose M. de Castro, Ramon de Castro and Linda Feldmann, Lisa Feldmann, Alison Foster, Peyton Gordon, Patricia Hall and Steven Hall, Jamie-Lee Josselyn and Aaron Marcus, Charles McKinney, Jeannie Miller, Michael Neifach, Gina Satriano, and the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office - Cyber Crime Division.



POSSIBILITY FUND CONTRIBUTORS

The **Possibility Fund** is an endowed fund at the Writers House to which anyone can contribute. The fund supports all the activities of the Writers House: celebratory gatherings, public events, online projects, student initiatives, outreach projects, and more. Thank you, Friends, for your support!

Maya Afilalo
Susan Albertine
Marci Alboher, in honor of Al Filreis
Myrna Zeitlin Asher, in memory of Howard Asher
Sarah Auerbach
Bitá Bagheri-Dastgheib and Kourosh Dastgheib, in honor of Al Filreis
Michael Barrett and LaRhonda Brown-Barrett
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Carol Clampett Bergere
Ed Bergman and Jen Bergman
Charles Bernstein and Susan Bee Laufer
Adam Birnbaum, in honor of Al Filreis
Megan Bly and Scott Wunsch
Julie Bright and Daniel Stewart
Chevahn Brown
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Dale Kramer Cohen
Michael Cohn, in memory of Paul Kelly
Michael Cullina and Pamela Cullina

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Bob D'Augustine and Marcia Morgan
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Zoë Dare-Attanasio
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Dave Deifer
Thomas Devaney
Rachel Blau DuPlessis
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Ronald Fellman and Nancy Fellman, in honor of Dr. Melissa Fellman and of Al Filreis
Dan Flath
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Anne Wellner de Veer
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Jerald Winakur and Lee Robinson
Amanda Wolkin and Seth Furman
Robert Charles Wright
Jessica Yu
Koethi Zan
Allison MacDonald Zipper
Michael Zuckerman
Anonymous, in honor of Al Filreis
Anonymous, in honor of Bobby
Anonymous donors



THE POWER OF POSSIBILITY

At our 25th anniversary celebration of the Kelly Writers House in October 2022, we announced a major KWH endowment campaign: **The Power of Possibility**. Our goal: to raise \$10 million dollars by May 2026, when we will celebrate the 30th anniversary of this community. Named after Emily Dickinson’s idea of “Possibility,” which is also a founding principle of the KWH, the Power of Possibility campaign will nurture and sustain the Writers House forever.

Anyone can make an impact on our campaign. We hope you will want to help by contributing a gift — of any amount — to our newly established **Possibility Endowed Fund**. The Possibility Fund supports all the activities of the Writers House. Its capaciousness reflects the founding principles of the Writers House as a house of possibility: a place for intellectually adventurous initiatives, collaborative work, and a learner-centered approach. Thanks to a generous friend, all gifts to the Possibility Fund will be met with a matching gift — dollar for dollar — up to one million dollars. Will you help us guarantee the future of this home for writers?

Already a Friend of the Kelly Writers House?

If you already give an annual gift to the Writers House: thank you! We depend on Friends of the KWH to help sustain us every year — and we hope you will want to continue to help. If you are able to increase your annual gift, any additional amount will be matched and automatically invested in the Possibility Fund.

Looking to do something special?

The Writers House has funding opportunities for major gifts, including naming opportunities for special programs and projects. Major gifts to the Possibility Fund can be considered for matching credit. If you would like to include us in your gift planning, or have already done so, please let us know!

To learn more about our **Power of Possibility** campaign and our new Possibility Fund, visit writing.upenn.edu/wh/possibility or connect with Andrew Beal, Associate Director of Development and Finance, at abeal@writing.upenn.edu or **215-573-4846**.

Become a Friend of the Kelly Writers House

Join the hundreds of Friends of the Kelly Writers House who, year after year, help sustain the Writers House by donating to our General Gift Fund. Through the end of our endowment campaign in May 2026, any increase to your previous annual gift will be automatically invested in the Possibility Fund and matched by a gift from a generous donor.

- Donate online here: writing.upenn.edu/wh/give
- Call us at **215-573-9748**
- Contact Andrew Beal, Associate Director of Development and Finance at abeal@writing.upenn.edu
- Make a planned gift by including the Writers House in your estate.
- If you would prefer to donate by mail, please complete the credit card form or include your check when you return this card to:

The Kelly Writers House
University of Pennsylvania
3805 Locust Walk
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6150
Attention: Andrew Beal

Please make checks payable to “Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania” with “Kelly Writers House” on the memo line.

Yes! I want to renew or begin my support of the Writers House Annual Gift Fund, making possible the Writers House of today.

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$2500 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 |
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And yes! I want to help guarantee the future of the Writers House with a gift to the Possibility Endowed Fund of: \$ _____



Name: _____

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☐ Yes, I have included the Writers House in my estate planning or I would like to hear more about how to make a planned gift.





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Al Filreis, Faculty Director
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Alli Katz, Program Coordinator
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