



KELLY WRITERS HOUSE  
ANNUAL 2015







## DEAR FRIENDS OF THE WRITERS HOUSE,

### contents

PEOPLE OF THE WRITERS HOUSE	4
YEAR IN REVIEW	6
RECRUITMENT & OUTREACH	10
CREATIVE VENTURES	12
REALARTS@PENN	14
KELLY WRITERS HOUSE FELLOWS	16
WEXLER STUDIO	18
FRIENDS OF THE WRITERS HOUSE	20

THE WRITERS HOUSE WAS FOUNDED AS an independent haven for writers, artists, and supporters of the writing arts. People gather here to share ideas and learn from one another. A communal, conversational mode has defined the Writers House from the start.

We are eager to guide students as they discover the possibilities and pleasures of a creative life (and to offer what program coordinator Alli Katz calls the “Writers House lifestyle”). Alumni working in creative fields volunteer their time as mentors. Faculty offer guidance about writing and art practice, civic engagement, and careers in the arts. Writers visiting to discuss craft with students often settle in for long, spirited conversations about pop culture, politics, and favorite books (typically in our dining room over delicious homemade food). Students, in turn, happily share what they’ve learned with one another (and with younger writers, too).

So many of the projects and programs you will read about in this annual — Kelly Writers House Fellows, Creative Ventures, Write On and Mentor for Philly, the Wexler Studio, Writers Without Borders, to name only a handful — are founded in our idea that the Writers House should be a learning community, a place and mode for people to come together.

This year we’re proud to say that we have expanded our learning community

by growing our Alumni Mentors Program. Thanks to the work of staffers R.J. Bernocco, Mingo Reynolds, and Lily Applebaum (C’12), and KWH board member Cheryl Family (C’91), our network of alumni mentors has become more active than ever before. Mentors visit KWH frequently to share their stories and experiences, and they make themselves available to students for ongoing guidance and advice.

We have also tripled the size of our RealArts@Penn Internship program. This year the RealArts program connected undergraduates to the business of art and culture beyond the university through 28 paid summer internships. Overwhelmingly, RealArts Interns reported that the program gave them confidence in post-graduation arts opportunities as well as faith in their own capabilities.

Penn parents, alumni, faculty, staff and so many others enable this work through their generous participation in our community.

On behalf of the Writers House Planning Committee, we thank you for everything you do! Without all of you, none of this would be possible.

**Al Filreis**  
Faculty Director  
Kelly Professor of English

**Jessica Lowenthal**  
Director

**Text:** Lily Applebaum, R.J. Bernocco, Arielle Brousse, Zach Carduner, Jamie-Lee Josselyn, Alli Katz, Jessica Lowenthal, Kenna O’Rourke, Mingo Reynolds, Madeleine Wattenbarger, Connie Yu

**Photography:** Arielle Brousse, Jamie-Lee Josselyn, Lawrence Schwartzwald, Maura Reilly-Ulmanek, KWH Staff

**Design:** Zach Carduner



# PEOPLE OF THE WRITERS HOUSE



IT TAKES A COUPLE OF STYROFOAM FIRE ANTS, a wedding cake, one hundred or so yellow paper flowers, and a whole roast pig (not to mention about thirteen-and-a-half hours) to read aloud all 417 pages of Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. At least that's what we discovered during this year's marathon reading, when we decorated the house to evoke the fictional village of Macondo and read the book from start to finish, with a menu by **Santi Cortes** (W'16), cake by resident pâtissier **Tyler Burke** (C'17), plantains by **Gabriel Ojeda-Sague** (C'16), folded fish by **Meg Pendoley** (C'16), and readings by dozens of Hub members who each took a ten-minute turn at the podium.

This is what Writers House is all about: people coming together through innovative, student-led programming to honor great writing,

create exciting new work, and have fun while doing it.

We celebrated writing in all of its forms this year through the inspiring work of our Planning Committee. **Julia Schwartz** (C'15) gathered eight writers and critics to consider how "girls" are portrayed on TV (and her own talk on the series *Girls* nearly stole the show). **Gina DeCagna** (C'16) invited us to compose introductory self-portraits on a gigantic artist book that accorded out of the Arts Café and through the living room. For the annual Sensible Nonsense Project reading, **Arielle Brousse** (C'07, SPP'12) asked members of our community to describe the lasting impact of children's books on their lives.

Several undergrad-led groups convened at KWH this year to explore specialized writing interests. **Devon O'Connor** (W'17) hosted weekly jam sessions for aspiring

songwriters. **Kristen Pearson** (C'18) organized write-a-thons on Sundays in November for National Novel Writing Month, while **Alex Travis** (C'15) and **Georgio Legerme** (C'15) worked with novel-writing students all year. **Lauren Shapiro** (C'16) and **Alex Stern** (C'15) welcomed students to KWH through The Body Electric, an open poetry workshop that offered collaboratively-made snacks each meeting. Nonfiction writers convened at KWH through *Filament*, a longform nonfiction magazine led by **Jack Nessman** (C'15), **Kenna O'Rourke** (C'15), and **Andie Davidson** (C'15). Gamers, puzzlers, and card players found a home here, too, thanks to **Maura Reilly-Ulmanek** (C'17), who curated a selection of classic board games to fill an underused closet upstairs.







## student projects space

THE OVERSIZED BEANBAG CHAIR in the Student Projects Space has been occupied almost continuously since we opened the newly built Kelly Family Annex. It's the ideal spot for reading, lounging, or daydreaming. **Nadia Laher** (C'15), in her moving commencement speech about developing confidence and finding your way, even praised the beanbag as a place to feel utterly safe and at home.

The Student Projects Space was also designed to encourage and support student creativity. The logo on the door, designed by **Jack Nessman** (C'15), bears the three-chair colophon of our printing press — reminding everyone that good (and sometimes messy) work takes place within.

A large table in the middle of the room is perfect for collaboration. *Daily Pennsylvanian* staffers **Lauren Feiner** (C'17) and **Dan Spinelli** (C'18) met at the table to edit Dan's work for the newspaper. Editors of campus magazines circled up to discuss story-lists and layouts.



**Ashley Stinnett** (C'17) and **Amanda Silberling** (C'18) took a series of tongue-in-cheek glamour shots with the table as prop.

Beautiful wooden closets lining nearly every wall in the Student Projects Space provide ample storage. **Arielle Port** (C'16) claimed shelves for a light kit, a wind muffler, camera rigs, and mics — all the equipment needed to produce the raucous TV show *Classless*.

**Mariah Macias** (C'17) squirreled away stacks of poetry books for review in *Jacket2*. **Write On** coordinators stored marble notebooks for kids from Lea Elementary School to fill with writing projects.

The room's computers are ideal for print projects, copy editing, HTML wrangling, and design work. **Destiny Bingham** (C'18) used

the scanner to digitize her final design for our stunning new KWH t-shirt (selected by popular vote!), while **Juan Cabrera** (C'17) and **Kristie Gadson** (C'15) produced comics composed in honor of their friends **Ayla Fudala** (C'16) and **Diamond Irwin** (C'15).



## INNOVATIVE TEACHING

Faculty are crucial to the life of the Writers House. By extending coursework beyond the classroom, those who teach here help establish and maintain the learning opportunities that define KWH.

Food is definitely part of it. **Max**

**Apple** holds his workshop breaks in the kitchen (we know of at least one marriage that originated here over Earl Grey and chocolate-chip cookies). The snack break is a tradition in **Jamie-Lee Josselyn's** classes, too. Legendary Philly food writer **Rick Nichols** has even introduced his students to local chefs, such as restaurateur **Marc Vetri**, who chatted with star-struck students around our big dining room table.

Many faculty encourage their students to participate in the life of the Writers House outside of class time. Critical Writing instructor **Michelle Taransky** brings her students to several of our poetry readings every year. **Lorene Cary's** epic end-of-year class readings typically involve students from partner schools and organizations.

Members of the journalism faculty call upon friends, colleagues, and former students to visit KWH and share their expertise with our aspiring journalists. *Rolling Stone* editor **Anthony DeCurtis** uses his industry contacts to bring in pop culture writers and producers. Students of **Dick Polman** get an insider's look at how reporters cover local and national issues, through the astounding roster of Pulitzer Prize winners, commentators, and best-selling writers that Dick invites for lunchtime interviews. **Paul Hendrickson** shares his own expansive network, inviting eminent nonfiction writers to connect with our students and community.

And for many of our students, it's **Al Filreis'** Modern and Contemporary Poetry class that draws them here for the first time. As they sit in the Arts Café declaring themselves Dickinsonians or Whitmanians, they form the friendships that keep them coming back here day after day, year after year.



# HIGHLIGHTS



Whether you're into Dickinson's dashes or post-apocalyptic clashes, Kelly Writers House has something for everybody. Be sure to check out our full selection of programming online at [writing.upenn.edu/wh/calendar](http://writing.upenn.edu/wh/calendar) or dial **215-746-POEM** — anytime day or night — for an instant Kelly Writers House fix.

## the end of the world

HOW WILL THE WORLD END? Some say fire, some say ice. Others say zombie outbreak. To sort it all out, **Alli Katz**, **Julia Schwartz** (C'15), and **Maya Arthur** (C'18) organized this year's **Bernheimer Symposium** as an exploration of the apocalypse, inviting a team of doomsday experts to help. **Paul Callomon**, who manages the third largest shell collection on earth at the Academy of Natural Sciences, spoke about the sixth extinction. Artificial Intelligence researcher **Mitch Marcus** explained how the demise of privacy may destroy life as we know it. **Danny Snelson** (GAS'15) explored eschatology in the LDS faith. And **Maya Arthur** (C'18) described an online community of "mommy-preppers," everyday people who stockpile supplies in readiness for the ultimate emergency. After these deeply unsettling talks, we reconvened in the dining room to eat foods grown within 100 miles of KWH (since eating locally will be a requirement when the grid fails). We also marveled over the *End of the*

*World* zine, a collection of imagined futures, commissioned for the occasion, exploring our modern (and not-so-modern) anxieties, with work by **Katie Antonsson** (C'15), **Katherine Cañeba** (N'14), **Kristie Gadson** (C'15), **Diamond Irwin** (C'15), **Gabriel Ojeda-Sague** (C'16), and others.

## we need new names

WE KNEW SOMETHING SPECIAL was about to happen when professor **Tsitsi Jaji** invited the audience to ululate in joyful welcome of Zimbabwean novelist **NoViolet Bulawayo**, who visited us thanks to the **Provost's Interdisciplinary Arts Fund**, with help from **Writers Without Borders**. And, indeed, after Jaji's stirring welcome, Bulawayo's reading from her debut novel *We Need New Names* left us enthralled. The novel tells the story of a young Zimbabwean girl who leaves her village, Paradise, for a confusing new life in Detroit. After the reading, people praised Bulawayo for her lucid, resonant depictions

of culture shock, loss, and leaving home — and we stayed well into the night to talk about our own histories, the English language, and issues of identity.

## saint mazie & bananagrams

THIS YEAR'S CHERYL J. FAMILY FICTION PROGRAM featured **Jami Attenberg**, just weeks before the publication of her fifth novel, *Saint Mazie*. Composed from a collection of historical documents and sources, *Saint Mazie* is the fictional memoir of Mazie Gordon, an obscure but real New York figure. Attenberg explained to us how she researched Gordon's life, an investigative process inspired by a character portrait in Joseph Mitchell's "Up in the Old Hotel." She also shared tales of her own fluctuating literary fame (a Tumblr post about her bike theft got more attention than some of her novels, she reported). After the program, with her puggle Sid by her side, Attenberg joined staffers in the dining room for a vigorous game of Bananagrams.

## alumni visitors series

Our Nora Magid Careers in Journalism panel, moderated by **Stephen Fried** (C'79), encouraged students to publish wherever possible (newspapers, blogs, etc.) and to read, read, read.

**Cecilia Corrigan** (C'10) put on a delightfully campy performance (accompanied by dandies **Leopold** and **Haierie Brant**) in honor of her debut poetry collection *Titanic*.

**Al Filreis** and **Roopika Risam** (C'03) led a conversation about the digital humanities: the basics, the backlash, feminist hacking, and postcolonialism.

**Gabe Oppenheim** (C'09) read from *Boxing in Philadelphia*, a book that originated with a freshman-year DP column idea.



## innovative poetry collection

POET AND CRITICAL WRITING INSTRUCTOR **Michelle Taransky** has a knack for bringing people together through poetry. As the 2014 winner of the **Beltran Family Award for Innovative Teaching and Mentoring**, Taransky invited fourteen community members, including many of her former students, to select poems for four “mixtape” poetry collections: classic plastic cassette tape cases filled with tiny broadsides designed by **Madeleine Wattenbarger** (C’16), with special “album” covers hand-drawn by **Alli Katz**. At an event celebrating the completion of the mixtapes, each participant read the pieces they’d chosen, including poems by many Writers House favorites such as Rae Armantrout, CAConrad, and our own Hub members.



## a conversation with john leguizamo

BELOVED PENN SCREENWRITING INSTRUCTOR **Kathy DeMarco Van Cleve** (C’88, W’88) didn’t pursue a traditional MFA in screenwriting. She credits her film education to **John Leguizamo**, the famed actor, playwright, and screenwriter, who visited us in October for the inaugural program in our **Hartman Screenwriting Series**. In Van Cleve’s introduction to the event, she praised Leguizamo for his creativity and energy, saying that their writing partnership has given her “a front-row seat to a creative supernova.” The hourlong conversation between Van Cleve and Leguizamo — a standing-room-only affair — featured an illuminating back-and-forth on collaboration (Van Cleve and Leguizamo cowrote the 2014 film *Fugly!*) and the writing process. Afterwards, Leguizamo joined screenwriting students for dinner and a discussion of craft.



## writing as activism

“I DON’T LIKE THE PHRASE ‘social media activism,’” said **Feminista Jones** (C’02), a journalist, social worker, and Twitter personality. “I was an activist long before social media existed.” Though her tweets about race and gender reach millions of readers each day, Jones doesn’t see her online presence as essentially different from what she’s always done. Jones wrote her first story when she was seven years old about an HIV-positive princess, who refused to marry the prince and instead decided to dedicate her life to curing HIV. During her talk, which was sponsored by our Feminism/s series and introduced by **Virginia Seymour** (C’16), Jones explored sex positivity, black feminism, and protest in the new media age. “Writing is a form of activism for women of color,” Jones said. The conversation continued through the reception, where we chatted more informally with Jones about activism and writing and the ways students can make a difference.



## tender buttons at 100

“I CAN’T BELIEVE IT’S BEEN 100 YEARS since this book was published,” said **Julia Bloch**, remarking on the continuing relevance of Gertrude Stein’s *Tender Buttons*, a book that still inspires lively poetic response a century after its first publication. To celebrate this notoriously difficult and delightful work properly, we invited eight poets to give short talks, including experimental poetry editor **Lee Ann Brown**, who expounded on the book’s sensuality, feminist icon **Rachel Blau DuPlessis**, who analyzed the androgyny of the text, and local favorite **Juliette Lee**, who considered its spatial poetics. Julia Bloch expanded this historic celebration by curating a selection of twenty-two “micro-reviews” for publication in *Jacket2*.



*New York Times* metro reporter **Matt Flegenheimer** (C’11) recounted his career trajectory from University City to New York’s most iconic city beat.

**Neil Plakcy** (C’79) gave tips to genre writers about e-books, fan fiction, and how online publishing has freed writers to explore niche markets like “extraterrestrial alien sex romance.”

For our Leonard Cohen Song Symposium, singer-songwriter **Cat Ricketts** (C’09) performed an intimate, acoustic version of “Suzanne.”

As one of seven presenters for “7 Up on Rush,” **Ryan Godfrey** (C’93) screened a harrowing 7-minute documentary of his daily hour-long rush-hour commute up I-95 North.





## cornering the market

WHEN WE ANNOUNCED to the Hub that we'd invited **Mallory Ortberg** to KWH for an interview with Penn alumna **Jess Bergman** (C'14), the celebration started almost immediately. As cofounder and editor of feminist blog *The Toast*, Ortberg has cornered what Bergman called the "fun librarians market" with her irreverent, bookish wit. Diehard Ortberg fans lined up an hour before the scheduled event, and by the time Ortberg started reading satirical listicles from *The Toast* — "Every Type of Email That College Students Send Their Professors," "A Series of Knock-Knock Jokes about Male Novelists" — the crowd had swelled to over 100. Eager audience members helped read excerpts from Ortberg's *Texts from Jane Eyre*, a compilation of imagined (and hilarious) texted conversations between literary characters such as Circe and Odysseus, William Blake and Mrs. William Blake, and Hamlet and Gertrude. Bergman's charming interview with Ortberg touched upon all kinds of subjects — the significance of classic kids' literature, weird Twitter, and Ayn Rand, among other things, literary and otherwise.

## retracing his roots

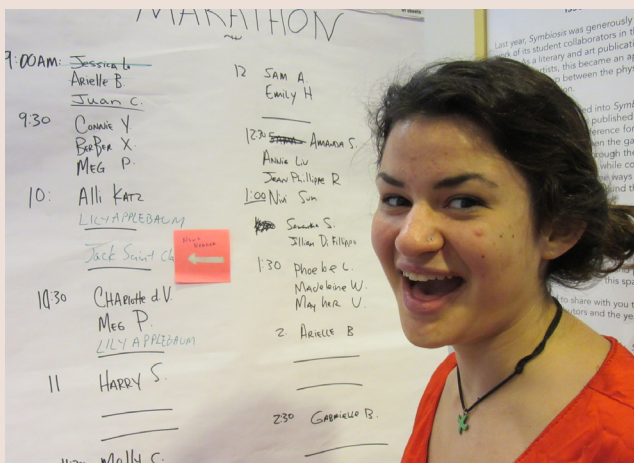
LEGENDARY DRUMMER **Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson**, who grew up less than two miles from KWH, returned home to Philadelphia for this year's Blutt Singer-Songwriter Symposium. Our own local legend, Creative Writing lecturer **Anthony DeCurtis**, interviewed Questlove in an hour-long conversation centered on his 2013 memoir *Mo Meta' Blues*, which the *New York Times* described as a "busy thicket of musical geekery." Questlove discussed the doo-wop and soul of his childhood, and also the inner workings of his Grammy-winning, iconic hip-hop/neo-soul band The Roots. The Roots have a strong aversion to rehearsal time, Questlove explained. "For all my praise of Gladwell's 1000-hour theory," he said, "I can probably count the times The Roots have rehearsed on one hand." At the close of the evening, **Alli Katz** presented Questlove with an Etch-a-Sketch rendering of the cover of *Mo Meta' Blues*.

## how to fail well

THIS YEAR'S **Weber Symposium** guest, writer **Megan McArdle** (C'92), challenged us to consider failure as a key to success. A former editor at *The Atlantic* and a current columnist for *Bloomberg View*, McArdle talked about her recent book, *The Up Side of Down*, which considers, through an economic lens, what it means to fail. McArdle recounted her own series of meanderings and mis-steps, including a circuitous career path that took her from fiction writing to business school. Talking about professional disasters, she noted, is as taboo as talking about breakups, but ultimately, those discussions can turn failures into great successes. McArdle went on to discuss economic decision-making through examples as diverse as *Little House on the Prairie*, her time at Penn, and sitting through bad movies.

## talk of the tv

THE FOURTH INSTALLMENT in our popular Writing About TV series featured TV critic **Emily Nussbaum**, a Writers House favorite, whose incisive *New Yorker* essays we frequently discuss over leftovers in the kitchen. **Julia Schwartz** (C'15) expressed her own deep admiration for Nussbaum in her laudatory introduction to the event: "Emily Nussbaum gives voice to my most inaccessible feelings in ways that would make my therapist downright jealous," she gushed. Nussbaum satisfied our cravings for smart TV talk by reading a piece about the sex politics of the TV show *Girls*, then answered questions on all kinds of topics, such as TV's social impact, *New York Magazine's* Approval Matrix, and what it means to be a "bad fan." During the reception, Nussbaum's enthusiasm for all things TV remained unwaning as we analyzed episodes of *Breaking Bad* over mozzarella skewers.





## writing about mental health

WE ARE COMMITTED to making KWH a safe space for talking openly and honestly about all kinds of topics, mental health included. Our 2014–15 Junior Fellow **Hannah White** (C'14) helped us to formalize this commitment by developing a programming series called Writing About Mental Health that allowed students, faculty, and other community members to come together and discuss this sometimes sensitive subject. Program presentations included scientific, historical, critical, and personal perspectives on mental health, all inspired by literary figures and tropes. Literary sources varied widely: Professor **Ilya Vintsky** presented on Alexander Pushkin ("God Grant That I Not Lose My Mind"), undergraduate songwriter **Devon O'Connor** (W'17) spoke about "Round Here" by Counting Crows, and senior English major **Katie Antonsson** (C'15) mused on *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky.



## modpo

KWH FACULTY DIRECTOR **Al Filreis** once again offered Modern and Contemporary American Poetry (ModPo) as a free, massive open online course, welcoming over 38,000 students to the ever-expanding community of learners and poetry readers. The core group of TAs returned for another round of collaborative close readings and weekly webcasts at KWH, but for those wanting to "make it new!" the course expanded its poetic and pedagogical offerings. ModPoers around the world submitted videos of their own meet-ups and discussions of the poems, more poems and videos were added to ModPoPLUS, and **Julia Bloch** and **Erica Kaufman** unveiled the Teacher Resource Center, a curated collection of teaching materials for all grade levels. ModPo continues to transcend the limits of what an online community of learners can achieve. As Jan Farr, a ModPo regular, put it when she re-enrolled for the fourth go-round in 2015, "I tried to stop myself from re-enrolling again but I failed...You people just get better every year!" To enroll in ModPo, go here: [www.coursera.org/course/modernpoetry](http://www.coursera.org/course/modernpoetry).



## POVICH JOURNALISM PROGRAM VISITORS

<b>Blake Bailey</b>	biographer
<b>John Baer</b>	political journalist
<b>Ada Calhoun</b>	investigative reporter
<b>Sabrina Rubin Erdely</b> (C'94)	investigative journalist
<b>Tom Fitzgerald</b>	<i>Philadelphia Inquirer</i> national politics writer
<b>Matt Flegenheimer</b> (C'11)	<i>New York Times</i> journalist
<b>Stephen Fried</b> (C'79)	investigative journalist
<b>Caryn Ganz</b>	<i>Rolling Stone</i> music critic
<b>Elysa Gardner</b>	<i>USA Today</i> theatre & music reporter
<b>Jessica Goldstein</b>	<i>ThinkProgress</i> culture editor
<b>Tish Hamilton</b>	<i>Runner's World</i> executive editor
<b>John Harris</b>	rock critic
<b>Christian Hoard</b>	<i>Rolling Stone</i> editor & music critic
<b>Sasha Issenberg</b>	political & business journalist
<b>Melody Joy Kramer</b> (C'06)	digital strategist & editor
<b>Barbara Laker</b>	<i>Philadelphia Daily News</i> journalist
<b>Damon Linker</b>	senior correspondent at <i>TheWeek.com</i>
<b>Marty Moss-Coane</b>	public radio host
<b>Emily Nussbaum</b>	<i>New Yorker</i> TV critic
<b>Mallory Ortberg</b>	editor of <i>The Toast</i>
<b>Molly Petrilla</b> (C'06)	freelance journalist
<b>Maria Popova</b> (C'07)	<i>Brain Pickings</i> founder
<b>Hillary Reinsberg</b> (C'11)	editorial director at <i>The Infatuation</i>
<b>Amy Rosenberg</b>	<i>Philadelphia Inquirer</i> staff writer
<b>Julia Rubin</b> (C'10)	head of features at <i>Racked</i>
<b>Wendy Ruderman</b>	<i>Philadelphia Daily News</i> journalist
<b>Rob Sheffield</b>	<i>Rolling Stone</i> columnist
<b>Emily Spivack</b>	fashion historian and editor
<b>Ken Tucker</b>	<i>Entertainment Weekly</i> editor-at-large
<b>Michael Vitez</b>	<i>Philadelphia Inquirer</i> human interest writer
<b>Steve Volk</b>	investigative journalist
<b>Caity Weaver</b> (C'11)	<i>Gawker</i> senior editor
<b>Signe Wilson</b>	editorial cartoonist





# RECRUITMENT & OUTREACH



The Writers House supports the development of young writers from Philadelphia and beyond through intensive recruitment and outreach efforts.



Our Associate Director for Recruitment **Jamie-Lee Josselyn** (C'05) leads our recruitment efforts by visiting schools and organizations across the country in search of promising young writers, meeting with prospective Penn students and their families, and coordinating the efforts of eager alumni volunteers who help us expand our network. Jamie-Lee also supports prospective students throughout the application process and advocates on their behalf with the Office of Undergraduate Admissions.

In addition to recruiting students to Penn, we also support the growth of writers already close to home. Several projects help local high school students navigate the college application process. Other outreach work aims to foster a love of writing in elementary-aged children. Every step of the way, bright Penn students volunteer their time and effort to connect to the next generation of writers.

A special thanks to those who helped in our outreach efforts:

Our Levin Outreach Coordinator **Victoria Ford** (C'15) visited her alma mater, the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts & Humanities, to speak about writing at Penn.

**Kristen Martin** (C'11) and **Sarah Arkebauer** (C'11) represented KWH at a Girls Write Now college fair in NYC.

The good folks in Penn Admissions — **Amy Smith** (C'11) and **Dean Eric Furda** (C'87), particularly — helped us advocate for high school writers who dream of coming to Penn.

**Jamie-Lee Josselyn** braved a January blizzard to visit Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan, thanks to the efforts of **Kate Levin** (GR'95), who connected us with her creative-hotbed alma mater.

**Meg Hutcheson** (C'91) hosted Jamie-Lee at Wilbraham and Monson Academy, where she presented to students, teachers, and counselors eager to learn about Penn's writing opportunities.

KWH alumna **Kiley Bense** (C'13) and her colleagues hosted us for a session at New York's chapter of Minds Matter, a rigorous and renowned college prep program.

Sharing our vision for finding and nurturing diverse talent, **Mark Maas** (C'73) connected us to extraordinary schools and programs in the New York metropolitan area.

Recruitment assistant **Peter LaBerge** (C'17) served as a stellar student ambassador, giving tours and writing emails to prospective undergrads.

**Steph Barron** (C'18) visited newspaper staffers and peer writing tutors in the Humphrey Family Writing Center at the Hill School in Pottstown, PA.

Expertly guided by Professor **Karen Beckman**, with assistance from **Brooke Sietinsons**, the Penn Art and Culture initiative helped introduce prospective students to the arts at Penn.

Eighth-grade social studies teacher **Allyson Even** (C'13) brought a group of kids from Brownsville, TX, to visit KWH and Penn's campus.

KWH Board members **Kate Levin** (GR'95) and **Bonnie Eisler** (C'79) sent emails throughout the year to the teachers and counselors of nationally-recognized high school writers to introduce Penn, KWH, and our recruitment opportunities.



## WRITE ON

On Fridays throughout the school year, grade-school students from Lea Elementary School visit Writers House to meet with the Penn student coaches of Write On, our longstanding literacy project sponsored by **Jerilyn Perman** (C'91) and **Brian Perman** (W'90). This year's lead coaches **Alina Grabowski** (C'16), **Royce Reeves-Darby** (C'15), **Alex Travis** (C'15), **Angela Vertucci** (C'15), and **Max Wang** (W'15) designed thoughtful activities to inspire the kids, including a field trip to Penn's Institute of Contemporary Art, and a whimsical Halloween-themed dance party. To help fuel everyone's creativity, KWH staffers had fun in the kitchen making favorite after-school snacks, like s'mores and mini pizzas. At the end of the year, we celebrated the program's achievements with a printed anthology and a reading featuring work by all of the students.



“ I have learned more from the students and coaches that participate in Write On than from any teacher at Penn. It is a special student, whether from Lea or from Penn, who chooses to come to Write On. ”

—Alina Grabowski (C'16)

## mentor for philly

THROUGH MENTOR FOR PHILLY, a multi-campus start-up project now in its second year, Penn students helped Philadelphia high schoolers develop some of the skills necessary to succeed in the college application process. Penn mentors brought their perspectives and expertise to high schoolers learning how to network, engage in independent research, and understand financial aid. Supported generously by the Black Heart Foundation, the Penn chapter of Mentor for Philly was led by **Donald Antenen** (C'15) and **Lauren Shapiro** (C'16), who recruited and trained Penn student mentors, coordinated required background checks, communicated with project founder **Oscar Wang**, and dispatched mentors to Philly schools.

## college readiness

WE ARE ALWAYS THRILLED to give students from all backgrounds a glimpse of life at Penn, and we love to welcome students to the house for special campus visits. This year we were delighted to host general college information sessions for groups from two middle schools, Leadership Prep (Brooklyn, NY) and IDEA Public School (Brownsville, TX).

We also offered a variety of workshops and information sessions (some in collaboration with the Penn Early Exploration Program and the African-American Resource Center) to assist high school students with the college application process. **Jamie-Lee Josselyn** led these workshops with the help of star alumni and students, including **Lily Applebaum** (C'12), **Dani Blum** (C'18), **Juan Cabrera** (C'17), **Daniel Chung** (C'18), **Victoria Ford** (C'15), **Diana Goniman** (C'15), **Alina Grabowski** (C'16), **Alex Kimmel** (C'17), **Clare Lombardo** (C'17), **David Marchino** (C'16), **Danie Moore** (C'18), **Dorothy Newman** (C'18), and **Sydney Schneider** (C'16).





# CREATIVE VENTURES

People convene at Writers House to collaborate on projects that cross disciplinary boundaries, to explore sideways thinking and crooked paths, and to learn from one another. Our **Creative Ventures** project, funded with extraordinary generosity by **Marc Wolpow** (W'80) and **Robin Wolpow**, has allowed us to encourage and support inventive students and faculty as they explore various modes and means of creative expression.



## 12





## visual arts & design

VISUAL ARTISTS FOUND THEIR WAY TO KWH this year through the various art and design projects sponsored by Creative Ventures. Cartoonist **Emi Gennis** joined us for a weeklong **ArtsEdge Residency**, during which she gave a short talk about her process, joined an artists-and-illustrators episode of our radio show **LIVE at the Writers House**, and led a workshop for aspiring cartoonists and zine-makers. Our **Brodsky Gallery** featured work from Emi's macabre series "From the Beyond" (and Emi's mom came to the opening to help cheer her on). Other artists and art critics gathered here for the third installment of **Writing About Art**, organized by **Isaac Kaplan** (C'15). This year's topic: artworks with unknown, unnamed, or uncertain creators. Professor **Lothar Haselberger** spoke about the Parthenon, **Jess Bergman** (C'14) discussed bees and honeycomb, and **Kimberly Schreiber** (C'15) explored digital memories.

Students made multidisciplinary and collaborative artwork through **Symbiosis**, an undergrad-led project that pairs visual artists with writers. In addition to supporting regular collaborative work and publishing an end-of-year magazine, Symbiosis hosted weekly presentations, discussions, and experiential exercises to expand opportunities for writing and art-making. The project also teamed up with the Brodsky Gallery to produce a special show of student work. Among the pieces featured in the show was "Light Exposure," a conceptual mixed-media work by **Connie Yu** (C'17) and **Maura Reilly-Ulmanek** (C'17), whose earlier collaboration "cradleblue, fog," won a campus-wide 2015 PubCo award for best visual art in a Penn publication.



## music & soundmaking

CREATIVE VENTURES SPONSORED world-class performances and brilliant conversations about musical craft, giving students and others access to innovative work in the music world. Penn's resident ensemble, the **Daedalus Quartet**, performed works by Bartok during a lunch program, pausing the performance every few minutes to isolate specific chords and measures to help us hear and understand nuances in the music. **Jake Marmer** and his avant-garde klezmer jazz-poetry group (with the legendary **Frank London** on trumpet) put on "Hermeneutic Stomp," an interdisciplinary performance experience unmatched by anything we've ever seen (or heard).

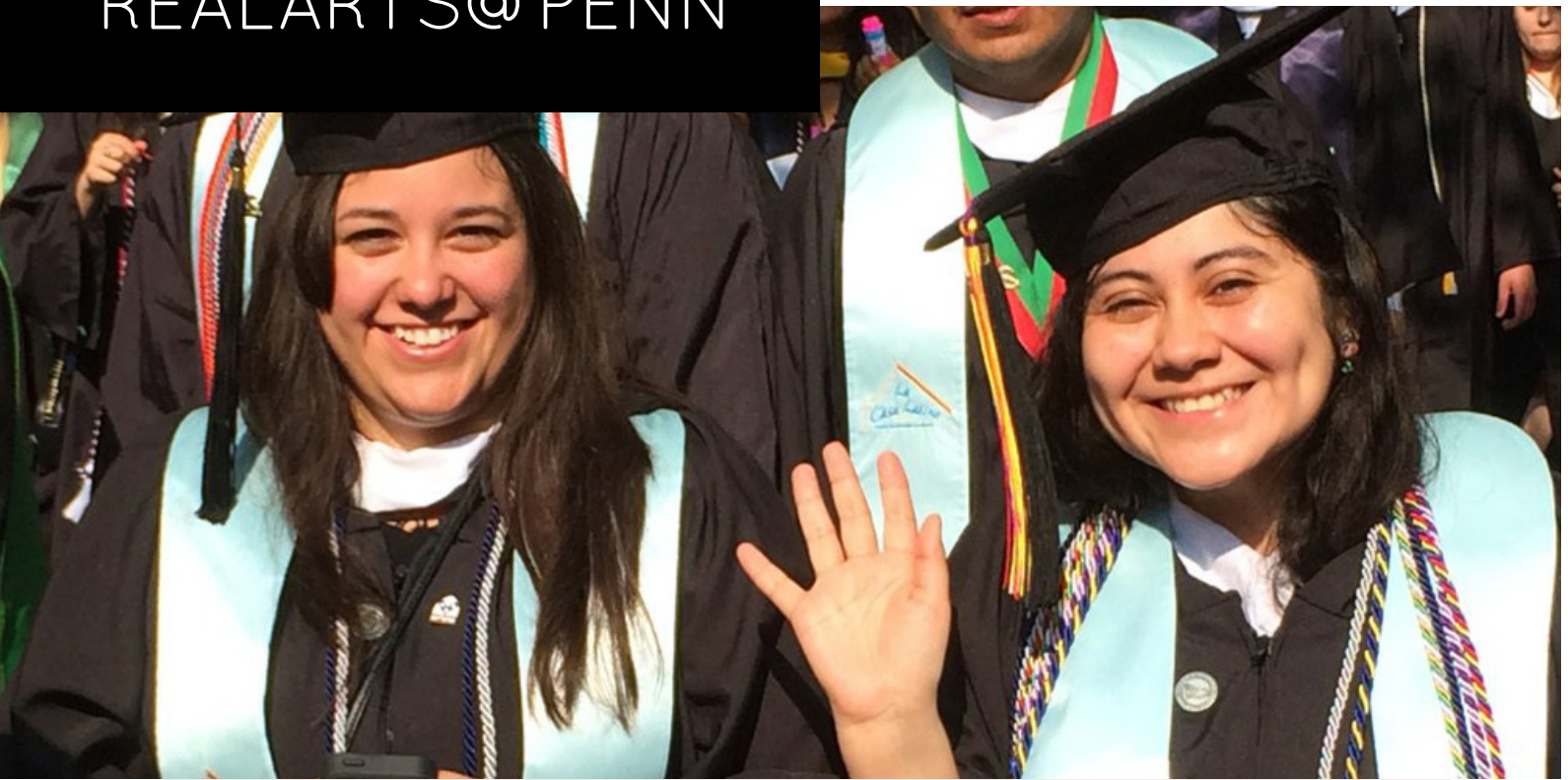
Through two free workshops hosted with help from the Provost's Interdisciplinary Arts fund, students discovered ways in which music and writing intersect. *City Paper's* **Pat Rapa** led a six-session workshop on music criticism and reporting, in which participants ventured into the city to cover live shows. Singer-songwriter **Birdie Busch** focused her workshop on the craft of songwriting.

## culinary arts

CREATIVE VENTURES ENCOURAGED STUDENTS to approach food with whimsical ambition. Puns returned in full force during our annual edible books party as students cooked up tasty texts. **Maya Arthur** (C'18) made "Their Eyes Were Watching Cod" from fried fish patties, with olives for eyes. **Zoe Stoller** (C'18) presented her "Madame Bova'brie" as a classic cheese plate. There were a number of tarts ("Tart of Darkness," "The Telltale Artichoke Tart," "The Goldfinch by Donna Tartt"), but "Wuthering Pieghts" by **Montana Buss** (C'16) really took the cake. For "7 Up on Rush," we opted for a "sugar rush" theme for our reception and filled the dining room with candy, syrup, and sugary treats requested by our readers. **Juan Cabrera** (C'17) and **Cindia Huang** (C'17) brought Tasty Thursdays to our summer schedule, soliciting recommendations from our staff for inventive treats, including enchiladas, lemon bars, sea-salt ice cream, and chocolate almond macaroons.







Paid summer internships at premier partner organizations such as *Rolling Stone*, Viacom, McSweeney's, and Disney Television Animation. A vast network of alumni mentors with successful careers in the arts. Meetings, workshops, classes, and public interviews with culture-makers and arts professionals, including Penn faculty members. The RealArts@Penn project enables hands-on and face-to-face interactions between students and the people who make arts and culture their business.



This was a banner year for the RealArts@Penn project:

- We sponsored **eighteen new paid internships**, for a total of twenty-eight — nearly tripling the size of the program. This included gigs at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 20th Century Fox, Penguin Random House, and 1812 Productions, our first internship with a theater company.
- We expanded our **network of alumni mentors** so that more students could benefit from the expertise of Penn alumni working in creative fields.
- We hired an Associate Director for the RealArts@Penn program, the intrepid **R.J. Bernocco**, to support the project's central mission: to help Penn's most creative students connect to the world beyond the university.

We owe special thanks this year to **Armyan Bernstein** and **Christine Meleo Bernstein** for helping to fund these dramatic expansions, and to **Marc Wolpov** (W'80) and **Robin Wolpov**, who have committed to sustaining the project's broadened scope over the next five years.



## alumni mentors program

We are committed to helping our students and young alumni discover exciting post-graduation opportunities, especially in creative career paths. Penn alumni who work in publishing, editing, filmmaking, journalism, public relations, art curating, and other arts-related fields offer guidance and support to our community through informal meetings over coffee, small gatherings in the Writers House dining room, or email correspondence. Without a doubt, the success of our mentorship program relies on alumni engagement. We are grateful to all the alumni who served as mentors, particularly **David Borgenicht** (C'90), **Cheryl Family** (C'91), **Brian Greene** (C'01), **Julie Merberg** (C'88), **Tim Michals** (C'93), **Christine Nangle** (C'02), **Paul Perez** (C'05), **Mark Rizzo** (C'92), **Jordan Rosenblum** (C'09), **David Seltzer** (WG'91), **Zach Sergi** (C'10), and **John Vilanova** (C'09).

## how do we do it?

### A DEDICATED TEAM

It takes a dedicated team to sustain a meaningful internship project. Alumni and faculty who believe in the centrality of the arts — including **David Stern** (C'89, ENG'89), **Stuart Gibbs** (C'91), **Cheryl Family** (C'91), **Jon Avnet** (C'71), **Anthony DeCurtis**, **Dick Polman**, **Stacey Snider** (C'82), **Alison Greenspan** (C'94), **Mark Rizzo** (C'92), **Freddy Wexler** (C'10), **Maury Povich** (C'62), **Julie Merberg** (C'88), and **David Seltzer** (WG'91) — lent us their expertise and connections at various arts and culture organizations to make the RealArts@Penn project possible. Other alumni joined our mentor network, offering their time and guidance to Penn students seeking career advice. RealArts@Penn staff members **R.J. Bernocco** and **Mingo Reynolds** developed strong relationships with host institutions to help ensure unique, handcrafted internship experiences.

Funding from generous Penn alumni and parents makes it possible to pay stipends for all RealArts@Penn summer internships and to support the infrastructure of the RealArts project. Project supporters include **Armyan Bernstein** and **Christine Meleo Bernstein**, **Paul and Ossi Burger**, the **Cape Branch Foundation**, **Maury Povich** (C'62) and **Connie Chung**, **Dirk** (C'72) and **Kirsten Wittenborn**, and **Marc** (W'80) and **Robin Wolpow**.

### STAFF SPOTLIGHT: R.J. BERNOCOCCO

We were thrilled when longtime CPCW staffer **R.J. Bernocco** was named as the new Associate Director of RealArts@Penn. R.J.'s knowledge of the writing communities at Penn and his background in media arts have made him the ideal person to help expand the RealArts project, while keeping it relationship-based and homegrown.

To develop and strengthen our Alumni Mentors program, R.J. has cultivated new relationships with Penn alumni working in creative fields so that we can offer one-on-one guidance for Penn students seeking career advice. He has also helped build a robust database of our alumni contacts, making it easy to find just the right person to talk to each student. When an aspiring young editor wants to meet New York alumni working in publishing, now we can help make almost instant connections.

R.J. has been central, too, in the expansion of the RealArts@Penn Internship project. With R.J.'s energetic focus on seeking out and vetting prospective RealArts partners, we now boast twenty-eight paid summer internships, including new opportunities in theater, film, and journalistic writing.

## REALARTS@PENN INTERNSHIPS

We establish RealArts@Penn internships with help from faculty and alumni. This relationship-based model helps to create deeply meaningful internship experiences for our students; our interns are guaranteed substantive work, access to professional development opportunities, and the potential for long-term connections.

RealArts was important to me because it enabled me to be able to have an internship that I otherwise wouldn't have access to or been able to pay for. Having a stipend was really important.

—Katie Behrman, *Rolling Stone* intern, 2014

### TELEVISION & FILM

20th Century Fox	<b>Jordan Rodnizki</b> (C'16)
Brooklyn Films	<b>Cat Peirce</b> (C'16)
David Stern and Stuart Gibbs, writers	<b>Emma Soren</b> (C'16)
Di Novi Pictures	<b>Daniel Lipsman</b> (C'15, W'15)
Disney Television Animation	<b>Boyu Zhang</b> (C'16)
Tremolo Productions	<b>Virginia Walcott</b> (C'16)
Viacom Creative Services	<b>Rachel Bass</b> (C'16)

### PRINT, JOURNALISM, & WRITING

Flathead Beacon	<b>Clare Menzel</b> (C'15)
Double Take Comics	<b>Allison Gadsden</b> (C'16)
Downtown Bookworks Inc	<b>Laura Petro</b> (C'16)
McSweeney's & The Believer	<b>Gabriel Ojeda-Sague</b> (C'16)
	<b>Julia Schwartz</b> (C'15)
Penguin Random House	<b>Meg Pendoley</b> (C'16)
Philadelphia Inquirer	<b>Clare Lombardo</b> (C'17)
Philadelphia Magazine	<b>Byrne Fahey</b> (C'17)
Pitchfork Media	<b>Marley Coyne</b> (C'16)
Ron Silliman, poet	<b>Paul Cotler</b> (C'15)

### PUBLIC RELATIONS & TALENT MANAGEMENT

Grandview	<b>Jennifer Yu</b> (C'16)
Management 360	<b>Arielle Port</b> (C'16)
	<b>Alexa Fecca</b> (C'16)
Shore Fire Media	<b>Amanda Shur</b> (C'16)

### MUSEUMS

The Jewish Museum	<b>Amalia Lund</b> (C'16)
Philadelphia Museum of Art	<b>Erich Kessel</b> (C'16)
The Morgan Library & Museum	<b>Gina DeCagna</b> (C'16)
	<b>Nick DeFina</b> (C'16)
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art	<b>Riya Chandiramani</b> (C'16)

### MUSIC & THEATER

The Brain Music	<b>Bethany Christy</b> (C'16)
1812 Productions	<b>Taiwo Sokan</b> (C'16)





# KELLY WRITERS HOUSE FELLOWS



Now in its seventeenth year, the Kelly Writers House Fellows Program invites three eminent writers for intensive two-day visits in the spring semester. Each visit includes a public reading, an interview and conversation, and a no-holds-barred session with the small group of students in the associated Fellows Seminar.

This unusual project, supported generously by Paul Kelly (C'62, WG'64), enables Penn students to interact with influential writers in modes and settings ideal for meaningful intellectual exchange, including casual conversations over home-cooked meals in our dining room. The experience is transformative for students and Fellows alike.

Writers House Fellows 2015 boasted a jaw-dropping feminist triumvirate: poet **Anne Waldman**, novelist and essayist **Dorothy Allison**, and dramatist and novelist **Jessica Hagedorn**.

## the fellows seminar

**JULIA BLOCH** (GAS'11), INCOMING Director of the Creative Writing Program, taught the 2015 Fellows Seminar with assistance from **Lily Applebaum** (C'12). Julia's expertise in feminist history and theory proved valuable for guiding students through a semester of intensive close readings.

The class worked collaboratively to discover as much as possible about Waldman, Hagedorn, and Allison. Each student completed an individual research project to help the group understand the historical, literary, and personal contexts of the assigned course readings. **Kathy Vinogradoff**

(LPS'16) researched how Buddhism relates to Anne Waldman's poetic practice. **Connie Yu** (C'17) and **Paul Cotler** (C'15) helped describe Waldman's career trajectory by reading and reporting on extra books. **David Marchino** (C'16) researched the so-called "lesbian sex wars" of the 1970s to contextualize Dorothy Allison's early writing. **Julia Schwartz** (C'15) presented on Allison's work as an editor of a feminist gay and lesbian journal. **Brennan Cusack** (C'15) even drove out to Princeton to study an archive of Jessica Hagedorn's earliest and most ephemeral writing.





## ANNE WALDMAN



ANNE WALDMAN IS WELL-KNOWN for her ability to challenge our perceptions with her meditative linguistic play. Her voice, which is simultaneously urgent, unrelenting, and welcoming, lends extra depth to the already complex registers of her writing. Her newest poetry, some of which she shared with a rapt audience on the first day of her visit, borrows from the words and worlds of biology, mathematics, the military, and catastrophe. This astounding work, with its many layers of language drawn from divergent sources, was both satisfying and unsettling. Waldman read from older, more familiar poetry, too, which was especially gratifying to the seminar students who had dedicated a month (and over 2000 pages of reading) to studying her work. During a candid conversation on the second day of her visit, Waldman described her composition process and some of the ritual-based methods that have informed her writing practice, including the ayahuasca-based ceremony that inspired her new book *Jaguar Harmonics*. Ritual and chant, Waldman explained, can transport both poet and reader into altered states of consciousness.



## JESSICA HAGEDORN



PEOPLE ARE AT THE CENTER of Jessica Hagedorn's work. Disparate settings and social contexts — an international film festival, a “Young Miss Philippines” beauty pageant, a rebel camp — come together and come alive through her sharply rendered characters. With a layered, multivocal approach, Hagedorn creates full and exuberant portraits of the cultures she writes about. Students in the Fellows seminar were excited to research the people and places brought to life through Hagedorn's work — and they honored some of their discoveries by cooking Filipino foods for a special in-class meal. Students visited local restaurants to get ideas, going so far as to design labels to recreate some of Hagedorn's fictional products. Everyone was moved by the way Hagedorn's capacious approach to writing seemed to carry over into her interactions with the people of KWH: she stayed long after the formal end of each event, listening to people's stories over leftover coffee and muffins.

## DOROTHY ALLISON



DOROTHY ALLISON'S BEAUTIFUL PROSE expertly explores the powerful and sometimes devastating relationships that shape the lives of her characters. Her characters are unique and fully imagined individuals, often imperfect. They seem familiar, as if drawn from an interconnected, familial universe that crosses from one book to another, and from Allison's own life into fiction. Seminar students were thrilled to speak with Allison about all of this and to discuss how writing fiction might offer a way to process true-to-life stories and relationships. Allison's visit to Writers House matched her writing; in two short days we experienced an intense range of emotion and strong feelings of connectivity. When the visit came to an end, many of us resolved to tell our own stories just as they are — inextricably connected with the stories of others.





# WEXLER STUDIO



After months of planning and construction, our new Freddy Wexler Recording Studio in the Kelly Family Annex opened in January. Made possible by a gift from KWH Advisory Board members Gary and Nina Wexler, the Wexler Studio is more than just a recording space.

Furnished with industry-standard equipment in a user-friendly setting, the Wexler Studio is a lab for students to explore making and producing audio and video projects. Our studio coordinator **Zach Carduner** (C'13) hired four academic-year staffers and a summer intern to form our in-house production crew, who manage all the details. **Ari Lewis** (C'18) helped test the new equipment with her coworkers. "We made numerous tracks about awkward teenage experiences," she said. **Tyler Burke** (C'17) and **Zach Walters** (C'18) became experts at engineering live recordings, and put their skills to work in and out of the studio, even helping to produce LIVE at the Writers House, our longstanding partnership with XPN. CURF summer intern **Kaitlin Moore** (C'18) had her hand in everything: mixing live poetry recording sessions, camerawork for our Senior Capstone program, and editing a handful of new content for the 2015 edition of ModPo. All the students loved the work. Says Wexler staffer **Ivana Kohut** (C'18), "Working in the Wexler Studio has been a highlight of my freshman year at Penn."

We talked with **Zach Carduner** (C'13), our Wexler Studio Coordinator, for his take on the new space, on what the first semester was like, and what we can look forward to in semesters to come.

## What is the purpose of the Wexler Studio?

Primarily, the Wexler Studio is intended to record conversation-style podcasts, interviews with visiting authors, and readings for PennSound and online distribution. Occasionally we'll do music — we've had some student music projects already, which has been fantastic. The other big thing is our massive open online course ModPo: video discussions, audio updates, that kind of thing. Moving into the future, most of ModPo's core content will be created in the studio.

## What was the building process like?

We wanted to accomplish a lot — to get the studio exactly how we wanted it. We wanted a homey feel without sacrificing too much in the way of sound quality. So, you know, it's airtight, but we also have a window so you don't feel like you're in a soulless cube. To get there, we had series of design and

planning sessions, followed by regular construction meetings. And a lot of people were involved in the process. Architect Mike Schade made sure the new space fit in with the old. Our acoustical consultant, Sooch San Souci, advised on special soundproofing details. From KWH, Andrew Beal served as our project manager, and a bunch of us tossed around ideas. Steve McLaughlin, Chris Martin, and I spent forever imagining every possible use for the studio in order to spec out the equipment we needed. Harris Steinberg, who designed the original renovation of KWH in 1997, was an immense help throughout the whole process; he even helped pick out furniture. Julie Shuttleworth from the Provost's Office kept an eye on the budget and Marc Cooper from Penn's Facilities and Real Estate kept everything else on track. It was an all-around group effort.





### Describe some studio projects.

Well, right now we have a couple serial podcasts in the works. Alli Katz is working on her “Thick Lit” podcast; this first season is geared towards readers who haven’t been able to complete *Moby Dick*. Al Filreis records PoemTalk here, and of course we’ve already recorded a ton of PennSound content. Poets and writers come through Philly all the time, and the studio gives us a way to take advantage of their travel here. Plus, all the authors who are already visiting KWH will have the chance to sit down in the studio for interviews and additional conversations. Basically, we’ll end up with a potpourri of programming, like the KWH Arts Cafe, but without the live audience.

### What have been some of your favorite projects?

I really enjoy doing the ModPo recordings in there, because they’re just so dynamic. It’s so fun to see all the TAs who’ve been working with each other for three or four years bouncing ideas off one another, and you’re sitting there with the camera trying to keep up with them. It can be almost overwhelming, but it’s a fun challenge, trying to convey

all that energy through a single camera shot. It’s so quick and everything they say is so profound, you’re just kind of in awe to the point where you almost forget that you’re still supposed to be engineering a recording.

### Do you have any ideas for future uses that you’d like to see?

It’s not our primary focus but I am really into the music side of it. Writers House has our student songwriting group, FLAM, who have recorded four or five songs so far. It’s great for the students recording to get a sense of what it’s like to be in a studio, and on the flip side it’s great for the students engineering because they get a sense of not only the technical side of things but also what an organizational process it really is, having to keep everything on track (no pun intended) while you’re doing this really cool thing. Hopefully they’ll expand their use of the studio and use it to push themselves further as songwriters and creators. And I think just in general with student programming, there’s such a high ceiling, especially with how creative our students are, the potential’s there for really cool and innovative stuff.

## WEXLER STUDIO HIGHLIGHTS

Visiting Chilean poet **Carlos Soto-Román** joined a conversation with Philadelphia poets laureate **Soledad Alfaro-Allah** and **Frank Sherlock**.

In a prelude to a wild night of klezmer jazz and improv poetry, **Laynie Browne** and **Jake Marmer** met up to discuss composition practices, storytelling, and Marmer’s Ukrainian roots.

College senior **Donald Antenen** (C’15) interviewed **Joshua Cohen** about *Book of Numbers*, Cohen’s tech thriller about novelist Joshua Cohen.

**Al Filreis** hosted several new episodes of his popular *PoemTalk* podcast, including a great session on Nathaniel Mackey’s “Day After Day of the Dead” with **Billy Joe Harris**, **Tsitsi Jaji**, and **Herman Beavers**.

Visiting from Tokyo, poet **Yosuke Tanaka** dropped into the studio to discuss contemporary Japanese poetry with **Ariel Resnikoff** (GAS’19).

**Arielle Brousse** (C’07, SPP’12) led Tumblr’s **Rachel Fershleiser** (C’02) and Kickstarter’s **Maris Kreizman** (C’00) in a conversation about the “Bookternet” and breaking into the publishing industry.

**Daniel Levin Becker**, the second-ever American member of the French constraint-based writing group Oulipo, discussed Oulipean theory and practice with Critical Writing lecturer **Michelle Taransky**.

Former DC Comics president **Paul Levitz** joined **J.C. Cloutier** and **Rob Berry** in a discussion of comics: the “event” comic, the death(s) of Superman, and the appearance of DC heroes in various media.

The **Freddy Wexler Studio** is housed in the newly built **Kelly Family Annex**, which also includes an airy, second-floor **Student Projects Space**. Outside, there’s a porch overlooking the garden, readymade for performances. A visionary group of Penn parents and alumni came together to make this all possible. Thanks are due to **Gary and Nina Wexler**, **Jay and Nancy Zises**, an **anonymous donor**, and **Paul and Nancy Kelly**, who joined forces to fund this major addition to KWH; their generosity will help usher in our next decade of student-led innovation.



# FRIENDS OF THE WRITERS HOUSE



All of our projects and programs are made possible by the loyal support of people like you. The Writers House depends on its community for ideas, energy, involvement, and financial generosity. Thank you, friends, for believing in us — for protecting, nourishing, and sustaining this creative enterprise.

## internships, apprenticeships, & mentorships

**Bassini Apprenticeship Fund** The Bassini Apprenticeship Fund enables us to pair students with professional writers associated with Penn's writing programs. By working alongside their mentors, apprentices gain invaluable firsthand experience in the real work of a writing career. In this ninth year of the program, Jacob Gardenswartz (C'18) researched fast-breaking stories for Dick Polman's daily political blog, *National Interest*. Annika Neklason (C'17) served as an editorial apprentice to Karen Rile, publisher of *Cleaver Magazine*. Leah Davidson's (C'16) work with editor and essayist Avery Rome was multifaceted, including nonfiction book editing, research, and even media outreach. *Endowed by Reina Marin Bassini (C'72, GED'72) and Emilio Bassini (C'71, W'71, WG'73).*

**Eisler Endowed Internship Fund** The Eisler Internship Fund enables us to pay stipends for competitive (but unpaid or modestly paid)

internships at cultural institutions, so that students, regardless of financial circumstance, can pursue career-specific learning opportunities. *Endowed by Bonnie Eisler (C'79) and Cliff Eisler (C'79).*

**Kate Levin Community Outreach Internship Fund** This fund permanently endows our Outreach Coordinator Internship, so that we can hire a student to organize ongoing community service efforts. This year's intern was Victoria Ford (C'15), who assisted Jamie-Lee Josselyn with recruitment efforts, including a trip to Victoria's alma mater, the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts & Humanities. *Endowed by Kate Levin (G'96).*

**RealArts@Penn Internship Funds** RealArts@Penn is a project designed to help some of Penn's most creative students make meaningful connections beyond the university, particularly

through paid summer internships at leading arts and culture institutions. This has been a banner year for RealArts@Penn, with a record twenty-eight internships for the summer of 2015, up from nine last year. These internships are offered thanks to strong partnerships with organizations such as *Rolling Stone*, Disney Television Animation, the Jewish Museum, Penguin Random House, and McSweeney's, as well the hard work of RealArts@Penn staff, R.J. Bernocco and Mingo Reynolds. *Supported by the RealArts Internship Fund with gifts from Maury Povich (C'62) and Connie Chung, Dirk Wittenborn (C'72), Marc (W'80) and Robin Wolpov, and the Cape Branch Foundation; the Paul and Ossi Burger RealArts@Penn Internship Fund, established by Paul (W'76) and Ossi Burger; and the Bernstein Family RealArts Internship Term Fund, established by Arman Bernstein and Christine Meleo Bernstein.*





## awards & prizes

### **Beltran Family Teaching and Award Fund**

The Beltran Family Teaching and Mentorship Award allows us to honor an outstanding teacher at Penn. In addition to a cash prize, the award recipient receives a grant to develop a KWH program aligned with the teacher's innovative work. This year's honoree was poet and Critical Writing lecturer Michelle Taransky, who engaged more than a dozen Penn community members in what she called the Mixtape Poetry Project. Each invited participant selected poems to be included in four limited-edition "mixtape" collections, printed on tiny broadsides and distributed in plastic cassette cases. *Endowed by Penn parents John Paul Beltran and Lina Beltran.*

### **Terry B. Heled Travel and Research Grant**

**Fund** The Heled Travel Grant enables a student to travel for the purpose of conducting research on a significant writing project. Our 2015 grantee Amanda Shulman (C'15) traveled to Italy to study the complicated financial and

cultural economy of black summer truffles, including how to train truffle-sniffing dogs and snuff out sabotage. *Endowed by Mali Heled Kinberg (C'80) in memory of her mother Terry B. Heled.*

### **Michael and Danielle Goldstein Endowed**

**Prize** The Goldstein Prize awards a stipend to an outstanding KWH-affiliated student in need of support. This year's winner was Kristen Pearson (C'18), who partnered with Kelly Writers House to create a club for participants of NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month). Kristen is currently writing a historical/fantasy novel, a retelling of *The Iliad*. *Endowed by Penn parents Michael and Danielle Goldstein.*

### **Parker Prize Endowed Fund for Journalistic**

**Nonfiction** The Parker Prize celebrates excellence in student nonfiction writing, especially longform journalism. The 2015 Parker Prize winner was Dani Blum (C'18),

a *Daily Pennsylvanian* staff writer and columnist who has been writing nonfiction essays since high school. This spring, Dani's longform piece about the financial and cultural challenges of going Greek at Penn was published in *The Daily Beast*. *Endowed by Bret (C'90) and Katharine Parker.*

### **The Kerry Sherin Wright Prize Fund**

The Kerry Prize, established to honor the literary communitarianism of our first director, Kerry Sherin Wright, is awarded annually to a Hub member who proposes a project in line with Kerry's capacious vision. This year's winner, Gina DeCagna (C'16), led the KWH community in the creation of *I YOU ME*, a large-scale, accordion-style handmade book with blank pages for Hub members to fill in with collaborative scribbles, notes, and drawings. *Supported annually by the KWH community, with a special gift this year from Richard Cook and Lucy Oh Cook (C'95).*

**WHAT IS ENDOWMENT?** Endowment works like a savings or investment account. When someone gives an endowment gift, we invest the gift into an interest-bearing account. The interest accrues and may be spent or reinvested — but we never spend the original endowment gift. Structured this way, an endowment gift will support the KWH forever.

**WHAT CAN ENDOWMENT DO?** "Endowment" merely refers to the way in which a gift is structured; the possibilities for what endowment can do are endless. Endowment gifts can be directed toward specific needs, such as annual programs, student internships, staff positions, equipment, classrooms, and more.

**HOW CAN I HELP?** It's not necessary to make a large gift to assist our endowment effort. We have a General Endowment Fund to which anyone can contribute, in any amount. We also have a "wish list" of opportunities — specific projects that need your help, some of which you can also name.

**TELL ME MORE!** Contact Arielle Brousse (C'07, SPP'12), our assistant director for development, at [brousse@writing.upenn.edu](mailto:brousse@writing.upenn.edu) or (215) 573-4844.





## targeted opportunities & open-ended support

**Kane-Wallace Kitchen Fund** The Kane-Wallace Kitchen Fund honors the centrality of our kitchen — a place for ridiculously good food, late-night conversations fueled by our abundant coffee, and study sessions around the old green table. The kitchen makes possible all of our favorite food-centric annual events, including Hub Thanksgiving (turkey and all the fixings) and Mind of Winter (more homemade soup than you can shake a spoon at). The kitchen also enables students to bond over shared effort and experiment: Cindia Huang (C'17) and Juan Cabrera (C'17) spent their summer trying out new recipes during “Tasty Thursdays,” sharing their spoils with anyone who stopped by. *Endowed by Ed Kane (C'71, Trustee 1996–2000) and Marty Wallace.*

**Ronca-Baird Discretionary Fund** The Ronca-Baird Fund allows us to encourage student creativity and to support special learning opportunities as they emerge. This year the fund allowed us to expand and deepen our commitment to the internships, mentorships, and apprenticeships that are central to an education in writing and the arts. *Funded by Penn parents Jim Ronca and Deborah Baird.*

**Faculty Director's Discretionary Fund** This fund enables Faculty Director Al Filreis to seek out, encourage, and invest in student talents and ideas. This year's fund supported three RealArts-related summer internships: Paul Cotler (C'15) with poet Ron Silliman, Nick DeFina (C'16) at the Morgan Museum and Library, and Alexa Fecca (C'16) at

Management 360. The fund also helped Bree Jackson make a special trip to LA to meet with Penn alumni and enabled Alina Grabowski (C'16) to travel to the Pacific Northwest for a weeklong writing residency sponsored by Buzz Bissinger (C'76) and Lisa Smith. *Supported by Matt (C'08) and Taylor Abess, Jon (C'71) and Barbara Avnet, Reina Marin Bassini (C'72, GED'72) and Emilio Bassini (C'71, W'71, WG'73), Maria Popova (C'07), Marcy Schneider (C'88) and Jeff Schneider (C'88), and Penn parents Larry and Melissa Stoller.*

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

**Nir-Braufman Term Fund at Kelly Writers House** We are committed to making our vast digital resources freely available to anyone, anywhere. The Nir-Braufman Fund provides annual support for the suite of interrelated digital projects that allow us to reach out so expansively. With the installation of the new Wexler

Studio and the expansion of our capacity for digital outreach, these efforts are more central now than ever. Projects include *Jacket2*, our online journal of contemporary poetry and poetics with readers in 190 countries; ModPo, our free massive open online course on Modern & Contemporary Poetry; PennSound, the largest online collection of free, downloadable digital recordings in the world; PennSound Radio, which provides streaming content 24/7; and PoemTalk, a scintillating monthly podcast hosted by Al Filreis in collaboration with the Poetry Foundation. Through these projects, students receive valuable experience in digital editing, proofreading and copyediting, AV production, web design, archival research, and more. *Funded annually by Daniel Nir (C'82, W'82) and Jill Braufman.*

**Gordon Walls '38 Creative Ventures Fund** Through this flexible fund we support fresh initiatives and ideas, especially the creative (and sometimes outlandish) dreams of our Hub members, who constantly revitalize the KWH project with proposals for new publications, outreach programs, literary celebrations, and other community-driven projects.

*Supported annually by Bill Bond, Sandy Bond, and Gordon Lane Bond (C'06).*







## projects

**Kelly Writers House Fellows Fund** The Kelly Writers House Fellows project enables undergraduate writers to interact with eminent writers they greatly admire, through seminar-style discussions in the Arts Café, home-cooked meals in our dining room, and freewheeling public conversations that range across the entirety of each Fellow's career. The experience is transformative for students in the Fellows seminar and for visiting Fellows as well. This year's Fellows were poet Anne Waldman, novelist and essayist Dorothy Allison, and dramatist and novelist Jessica Hagedorn. *Supported annually by Paul Kelly (C'62, WG'64, Trustee 1997–present).*

**The Brodsky Gallery Fund** The Brodsky Gallery Fund supports the work of young art curators, who select, hang, and showcase works by visual artists. Lead curator Lily Applebaum (C'12), with assistance from Connie Yu (C'17), put up four shows this year, including "Uncontested Spaces," a collection of drawings by Keren Katz, who live-skipped presenters and event attendees during the poetry reading that launched the show. *Endowed by Michael Brodsky (W'88) and Heidi Hookman Brodsky (C'89).*

**CPCW/ICA Seminar Fund** Every other year, we have partnered with the Institute of Contemporary Art to offer a year-long undergraduate course, sponsored by the CPCW/ICA Seminar Fund. Led by conceptual artist and poet Kenneth Goldsmith (MoMA's first poet-in-residence), Writing through Culture and Art takes students on museum and gallery tours, leads them through immersive

writing experiences, and challenges their notions of form. Last year, students in the course collaborated to write RE:CREATION MYTH, a book inspired by artist Jason Rhoades' installation piece, The Creation Myth. *Funded annually by Dirk Wittenborn (C'72) and the Cape Branch Foundation.*

**The Clearman Cottage Residency** The Clearman Cottage Residency provides young writers with continuous writing time in an idyllic setting — a waterfront guest cottage in Washington state — in order that they may make substantial progress on a significant writing project. The inaugural weeklong residency was awarded to fiction writer Alina Grabowski (C'15), who used the retreat to write a series of linked stories. *Supported annually by Buzz Bissinger (C'76) and Lisa Smith.*

**Writers House Journal Endowment Fund** The Writers House Journal Endowment Fund supports the infrastructure and maintenance of *Jacket2*, our internationally renowned online journal of modern and contemporary poetry and poetics. Updated daily with reviews, scholarship, commentary, and interviews, *Jacket2* is a premier literary resource for its global audience. *Endowed by Harry Groome (C'63).*

**The Herman and Jeanne Robinson Letterpress Fund** Through the Robinson Press, students discover and explore print culture. Led by alumnus Henry Steinberg (C'13), with regular assistance from Juan

Cabrera (C'17), Gabriel Ojeda-Sague (C'16), Kenna O'Rourke (C'15), Virginia Seymour (C'16), and Connie Yu (C'17), Robinson Press projects include broadsides, postcards, maps, hand-sewn books, and more. *Endowed by Nina Robinson Vitow (CW'70, WG'76) in memory of her parents Herman and Jeanne Robinson.*

**Zarin/Rosenfeld Endowment for Literary Journalism Magazine** The Zarin/Rosenfeld Fund nurtures student journalistic talent by making possible the publication of *Filament*, a magazine that features substantial longform nonfiction pieces by Penn students. This year, the magazine shifted to a fully online format, which can be accessed at pennfilament.com. *Endowed by Judith Zarin and Gerald Rosenfeld.*

**The Creative Ventures Fund** The Creative Ventures project enables Penn's most creative students and faculty to pursue ambitious ideas, especially those emphasizing innovation, discovery, and imagination. The Creative Ventures Fund made possible a range of projects this year, including a concert reading of Percy Bysshe Shelley's lyrical drama *Prometheus Unbound*, a performance by the Daedalus Quartet, and a conversation on postcolonial digital humanities with Roopika Risam (C'03). Creative Ventures also awarded a small number of Creative Capital Grants enabling students to pursue special projects. *Supported annually by Marc Wolpow (W'80) and Robin Wolpow.*



We thank the following Friends  
for their generous support of the  
Writers House:

William Abbott; Daniel Abdal-Hayy Moore; Anne Ades; Frederick Adler; Michael Aiken; Matthew Algeo; Pilar Amaral; John Ashbery; Carol Avins; Madeline and Herman Axelrod; Linda and Robert Badal; Jenni Baker; Maggie Ball; Holly Ballard Gardner; Dennis Barone and Debbie Ducoff-Barone; Nick Barr; Berni Barta; Omprakash Batheja; Erica Baum; Dorothy Beardsley; Herman Beavers and Lisa James-Beavers; Susan and Art Becker-Weidman; Susan Bee and Charles Bernstein; Jay Begun; Craig Behrenfeld; Ken and Mary Behrman; Batsheva Ben Amos; Evelyn Bender; Mary Kay Benz; Stephen Berer and Nancy Micklewright; Barry Berger; Alan Berger and Phyllis Glick; Ed and Jen Bergman; Jackie Berkell Friedman; Simone Blaser; Rachel Blau Duplessis; Allison Blum; David and Vivian Blum; Lawrence Blum; Megan Bly; Scott and Roxanne Bok; Gordon Bond; William and Sandy Bond; David Borgenicht; Merle Born; Robert Boucher; Joanne Bradley Koteles; Neil Braun and Anne Flick; Jay Brecker; Donna Lee Bridgeman; Chris Brokaw and Lina Insana; Ellen Brooks; Isaac Brooks; Jackee and Denis Brousse; Deborah Brown; Ellen Brown; Julie Philips Brown; Marc L. Brown; Marion Brown; Michael Brown; Laynie Browne and Brad Davidson; Ann and David Brownlee; Alexis Brunswick; Robert Brylawski; Mary Ann Burdett; Nathalie Burg; Cordelia Calvert; William Camarda; Fernanda Carapinha Erlanger; Ellen Carlin; Lenny Cassuto; Janine Catalano; MC Catanese; Rachel Cavell; Sandra Chaff; Mandana Chaffa; Udi Chattopadhyay; Elyse Cheney; Stanley Chodorow; Sam Choi; Peter and Leah Cianfrani; Rachel Cline; Margie Clough; Sara Coelho; Charles Cohen; Mary Collins; Charles Colmore; Kerry Cooperman; Pamela Corbett; Deborah Correll; Cecilia Corrigan; Randall Couch; Pam and Mike Crane; Heidi Croft; Susan Croll and Paul Monasevitch; Maureen Crowley; Michael Cullina; Jeffrey and Susan Cutler; Barbara Daniels; Timothy Daniels; Colleen Davis; Laoni Davis; Gwendolyn Dawson; Kristel de Buck; James De Lorenzo; Anthony DeCurtis; Martha Deed; Patricia Denholm; Tom Devaney and Amy Sadao;

## outreach / beyond the campus

### Sayet-Rosenberg Fund for Young Writers

The Sayet-Rosenberg Fund allows us to seek out and engage talented young writers. Half of the gift supports the work of our associate director of recruitment, Jamie-Lee Josselyn (C'05), who recruits promising writers to Penn. The other half funds an internship for a KWH-affiliated student to teach creative writing to children during the summer. 2015 Sayet-Rosenberg Intern Sammy Krouse (C'18) taught boys and girls aged 7 through 15 at Frost Valley YMCA's summer camp. *Endowed by Harry Rosenberg (W'79) and Laurie Sayet.*

### KWH Alumni Online Book Group Term Fund

Since the launch of our Alumni Online Book Groups in 2000, we've hosted more than eighty moderator-led online book discussions for alumni, Penn parents, and our extended Penn family. Group leaders this year organized robust discussions on a diverse range of topics and texts, including food writing, the poetry of Anne Waldman, and a pairing of short stories by Edith Wharton and Rudyard Kipling. Janet Falon also hosted "Fun with Words," which functioned less as a traditional book club and more like a virtual writing group with near-daily writing prompts. *Supported annually by David Roberts (W'84).*

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

**Digital Poetries Fund** Our Digital Poetries Fund allows us to make our vast digital resources — including those we record from our public programs in the Arts Café, and those we create through special interviews and podcasts created in our new Wexler Studio — freely available to anyone, anywhere. The fund pays for staff and equipment to support PennSound, the largest online collection of free digital poetry recordings in the world; PoemTalk, a monthly podcast hosted by Al Filreis and co-sponsored by the Poetry Foundation of Chicago; Jacket2, the premier online resource for critical and scholarly writing about poetry; and ModPo, our free massive open online course on modern and contemporary poetry taught by Al Filreis and a team of TAs. *Supported annually by the KWH community, with special support from Rodger (W'83) and Hillary Miller Krouse (C'88), David Roberts (W'84), Harry Groome (C'63), and Stuart Applebaum, who made his gift in honor of Lily Applebaum (C'12).*

### Student Recruitment and Access Fund

We want to show promising high school writers — especially those who believe Penn is beyond their reach financially, geographically, or otherwise — that a Penn education is possible. Jamie-Lee Josselyn (C'05), the Associate Director for Recruitment at our Center for Programs in Contemporary Writing, works tirelessly to identify such prospective students and recruit them to Penn. Anyone can make a gift to the Access Fund to help make this work possible; if you are interested in improving access for underprivileged or geographically isolated students, please contact Arielle Brousse at brousse@writing.upenn.edu or Jamie-Lee Josselyn at jjossely@writing.upenn.edu. *Supported annually by the KWH community. Special gifts this year from Joan Kim (C'97) and Susan Small Savitsky (CW'75).*

## WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS CIRCLE

Jill Abbott (in memory of Julie Randall); Taylor and Matthew Abess; Greg Barron and Sarah Murphy; Allan and Dale Bell; Eric Brotman; Lucy Cook; Maggie Katz Cordish and Reed Cordish; Bob and Marcia D'Augustine (in honor of Allie Morgan D'Augustine); Lee Spelman Doty and George E. Doty; Cheryl Family and Ken Saji; Ted and Judy Goldsmith; Neil and Monice Grabowski; Adam Groothuis; Halpern Foundation Charitable Trust; Sara Rabold Hinkle and Ryan Hinkle; Thomas Huang; Richard and Wendy Hurst Levine (in honor of Alexandra Sophie Levine C'12); George Johnson; Joan Kim; Jean-Marie and Richard Kneeley; the Lindstedt Family; Susan and Louis Meisel; Frederick and Elizabeth Muller; Marjorie Perloff; Evan Raine; Hadley Davis Rierson and Lee Rierson; Emily Seslowe Rosenfeld and Alan Rosenfeld; Henry and Talia Siegel; David Sussman; Sally and John Van Doren; Stacey Gillis Weber and Jeff Weber (in memory of Harold Zuckerman); Philip and Jane Weingold; and Andy Wolk







## writers house on the road

EVERY NOW AND THEN, we take Writers House talent on the road to show off the accomplishments of our faculty, students, and alumni. Such trips are made possible by generous hosts who welcome us into their homes and event spaces for fantastic KWH-style salons.

In November, New York-area friends joined KWH students and staff at the famed Meisel Gallery for “Writers House New York,” which was generously hosted (for the thirteenth year in a row!) by **Susan and Louis Meisel**. After mingling and chatting over delicious hors d’oeuvres, everyone settled in for spectacular presentations by our featured readers, including MoMA Poet Laureate and Penn Creative Writing faculty member **Kenny Goldsmith**; poet and incoming Creative Writing director, **Julia Bloch** (G’11); performer, educator, and body empowerment activist **Caroline Rothstein** (C’06); National Scholastic Art and Writing Award winner **Victoria Ford** (C’15); and screenwriter and KWH staffer **Dylan Leahy** (C’16). **Al Filreis** capped off the event by leading a collective close reading of two short poems by Rae Armantrout. We are thrilled to be able to convene our friends for this annual event. The gathering has a real impact; contributions from attendees this year

amounted to more than \$3,000 in support of our **Student Recruitment Fund**.

We returned to New York in the spring for an intimate gathering in the home of **David and Deborah Roberts**, who went all out and had special KWH drinkware printed for the occasion. Guests, who took up seats on couches, chairs, and benches throughout the living room, were treated to readings by novelist, columnist, editor, and award-winning Penn Creative Writing faculty member **Karen Rile** (C’80); essayist, food writer, and Fulbright scholar **Kristen Martin** (C’11), who read a piece that had recently been published in the *Penn Gazette*; Kerry Prize winner and playwright **Kate Herzlin** (C’14), who used a friend’s help to stage a live reading of a scene from her award-winning play, *Princess*; and LPS Young Scholar and ModPo alumnus **Daniel Bergmann**, who enlisted Kate Herzlin and Al to read aloud poems that he had translated, as well as some of his original verse. Attendees made quick friends as they were randomly paired up to parse lines from Robert Creeley’s poem “I Know a Man,” listening over the room’s speakers to an original recording of the poet reading, and working with each other to contribute to the collective close reading.

Paul Deveney; Jim and Linda Diamond; Franklin Dines and Lynn Arost; Greg and Lysa Djanikian; Andrea Dobrowolski; Paula and Howard Donsky; John Doole; Charles Downey; Philip Drexler (in honor of Jeanne Lucille Drexler, a great poet and mother); Murray Dubin and Libby Rosof; Kendall Dudley; Philip Eager and Mimi Calter; J. B. Eagle; George Economou and Rochelle Owens; Sarah Eisen Nanus; Andrew and Ricki Eisenstein; Melissa Enns; Jane and Len Epstein; Ellen Ervin; Dan Evans; Elizabeth Fader; Linda Falkenstein; Michelle Falkoff; Steven Fama; Jan Farr; Robert Faunce; Margreet Feenstra; Harvey Feldman; Walt Fellman; Billy Fenrich; Al Filreis; Sam and Lois Filreis; Jean Findlay; Joe Finston; Oscar Firschein; Barbara and David Fishback; Elicia Ford; Jenny Ford; Phyllis Fordham; Sallie Foster; Peggy Fox; Peggy Franck; Adam Frank; Alan and Arlene Freedman; Debra and Roger Friedland; Stew Friedman; Paul Frolov; Liza Fuchs; Lise Funderburg; Roy Gainsburg; Ross Gallagher; Richard Geist; Kari Gerber; Steve Gerkin, DDS (in honor of Paul Hendrickson); Nadia Ghent; Seamus and Mary Ann Gilson; Jody Girgenti; Kim and Gareth Glaser; Robert Gleason; Beth Goldberg; Noah Golden-Krasner; Sylvia Goldfarb; Kenneth Goldman; Arthur Goldwyn; Mack Goode; Mark Gordon; Jack and Lauren Gorman; Richard L. Graves; David Green; Victoria and Todd Green; Elisa Greenbaum; Alison Greenberg; Deborah Greenberg; Lisa Greene; Adele Greenspun; Bruce and Karyn Greenwald; Trudy Grienauer; Anglesea Griffin; Lee Griffin; Harry and Lyn Groome;



Jane Gutman; Rekha Hagen; Matthew Hall; Alexandra Halpern; Haim and Jamie Handwerker; Mary Hannahan; Elizabeth Hanrahan; Caroline Harkness Waxler; Susan and William Harris; Matt Hartman; Samuel Hays; Janet Heettner and Peter Silverman; Steven Heller; Dina Hellerstein; Sandy Hemprich; Marlene Herring; Lauren Herrman; Michael Herzlin (in honor of Al Filreis' induction into the Minerva Academy); Steve and Jane Heumann; Donna and John Hoh (in honor of Jonathan and Rachel Hoh); Scott Holderer and Roger McClanahan; Brian and Sara Holland (in memory of Bob Lucid); Peter Holstein; Justin Hoogs; Virgil Huston; Michael Hyde; Jeffrey Ingber; Jillian Ivey; Katie Jackson; Alex Jacobs; Diane Jacobs; Jake Jacobson; Carolyn Jacobson and Erik Simpson; Leigh Jacoby; Janet Jensen; Charles Johnson; Kevin Johnson; Sarah Jones; Alexandra Jordan and Josh Stinchcomb; Debra Josephson; Hanna Kamaric; Karen Kane; Cynthia Kaplan; Sally Kaplan; Megan Karlan; Rick and Phyllis Kaskel; Dick and Kathy Katz; Keren Katz and Eran Hadas; Ed and Susan Katz Hoffman; Adam Kaufman; Ronald Keeperman; Donald Keim; Edna Kelly; Edward Kelly; Morris and Donna Kener; Charles Kenworthy; Jody Ketcham; Andrew Kevorkian; Sanford Keziah; Janice Kimenhour; James Kimmel; Sara Kite Sharpless Auerbach; Clifford Klein; Eric and Jamie Klein; Marcy and Henry Klein; Jody Kowner; Mitch Kohn (in honor of Nora Magid); Anthony Kolasny; Deborah Komins; Dave Kornfeld; Beverly Kottwitz; Debra Kramer; Marilyn Kraut; Christopher Kriesen; Beth Kwon; James La Marre; Deborah, Jon, and Peter LaBerge; Sherman and Pauline Labovitz; Joanna LaCorte; Kitty Leech; Veronica Lemcoff; Sanaë Lemoine; Ruth Lepson; Kerry and Robert Levin; Lynn Levin; Michelle Levister; Ken and Elena Levitan; Joanne Lichtman; Russel Like; Ron Litman; Rachel Loftspring; David Lowenfeld and Sally Mendelson; Jessica Lowenthal and Ryan Godfrey; Jackie Lubeck; Tom and Amy Lubensky (in honor of the wedding of Arielle Brousse and Andreas Gustafsson); Ginny Lucas; Kenneth Lum; Andrew and Elizabeth Lustbader; Bob Ma; Michelle Ma; Mark Maas; Allison MacDonald; Cassie MacDonald; Jennifer Machiaverna; Marc Machiz; Tracy Mack;



## support for events

**Irwyn and Lucy Applebaum Fund** The Irwyn and Lucy Applebaum Fund allows us to host conversations with editors and publishers we admire — the people who curate, refine, and disseminate the writing we read and enjoy. This year, the Applebaum Fund sponsored a conversation with Kickstarter's publishing projects specialist Maris Kreizman (C'00) and Tumblr's publishing outreach specialist Rachel Fershleiser (C'02). *Endowed by Irwyn Applebaum (C'75) and Lucy Applebaum.*

**Blutt Songwriting Symposium Endowed Fund** It's always riveting when *Rolling Stone* editor Anthony DeCurtis interviews a rock legend for an audience of fifty in our Arts Café — and that's just what the Blutt Fund makes possible. This year's symposium featured The Roots drummer and Philadelphia native Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson, who shared stories of from his memoir, *Mo' Meta Blues*. *Endowed by Mitchell Blutt (C'78, M'82, L'84, Trustee 1998-2008) and Margo Blutt.*

**Bok Endowed Visiting Writers Series Fund** The Bok Fund enables us to celebrate the full range of contemporary writing at KWH by allowing us to pay honoraria to a remarkable number of poets, novelists, translators, essayists, and screenwriters year after year. This year's series visitors included, among many others: essayist Leslie Jamison, whose extraordinary writing in *The Empathy Exams* has inspired comparisons to Didion and Sontag; novelist Joshua Cohen, who is also the new books critic for *Harper's*; and the always

astounding Frank Sherlock, current poet laureate of Philadelphia. *Endowed by Roxanne Bok (C'81) and Scott Bok (C'81, W'81, L'84, Trustee 2005-present).*

**Fund for Feminist Projects** Through engaging and sometimes challenging programming, the student-led Feminism/s series explores how writing, art, criticism, and other political acts can effect social change. Events this year included an evening of round robin-responses to the simple but provocative question, "What is Feminism?" *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*

**Hartman Family Screenwriting Series Fund** The Hartman Family Fund allows us to host an annual event with a professional screenwriter so that our aspiring movie-makers can get a taste of the writers' room. Our inaugural event in the series featured actor/playwright John Leguizamo in conversation with his writing partner Kathy DeMarco Van Cleve (who teaches here at Penn). *Endowed by Alan (W'87) and Kim Hartman.*

**Cheryl J. Family Fund for Fiction Programming** The Cheryl J. Family Fund sponsors an annual reading by an up-and-coming novelist. This year, we were delighted to feature Jami Attenberg, who shared passages of her new novel *Saint Mazie*, while her puggle Sid entertained student staffers. Attenberg stayed long after we'd packed up the reception and played Bananagrams with students. *Endowed by Cheryl J. Family (C'91).*







**Sylvia W. Kauders Fund** The Kauders Fund allows us to arrange a series of intimate lunch programs, typically featuring writers of nonfiction. This year's Kauders series included visits by Gabe Oppenheim (C'09), author of *Boxing in Philadelphia*, who chatted with Paul Hendrickson and others about Philadelphia's rich pugilistic history; and Daniel Menaker, longtime *New Yorker* fiction editor, who met with students of Beth Kephart, Lorene Cary, and Avery Rome. *Endowed by Sylvia Kauders (CW'42).*

#### **The Levin Endowed Fund for an Annual Symposium in Memory of Charles Bernheimer**

The Levin Endowed Fund enables our program coordinator to plan a program that engages her creative impulses. For this year's Bernheimer Symposium, program coordinator Alli Katz curated speculative talks about the end of the world — how it will happen, and how we can (or can't) prepare. Program attendees were treated to an end-of-the-world playlist, locally sourced foods, and a zine of writings, musings, and artwork ruminating on endtimes. *Endowed by Kate Levin (GAS'96) in memory of much-beloved Comparative Literature professor Charles Bernheimer.*

#### **The LIVE at the Writers House Endowment**

We partner with WXPB (88.5 FM) to produce a monthly one-hour radio show. Hosted by radio personality Michaela Majoun and produced by KWH program coordinator Alli Katz, LIVE at the Writers House showcases some of Philly's most exciting up-and-comers. Among the shows produced this year: a showcase of

the For Womanhood Collective, a celebration of participants in National Novel Writing Month, and performances by cartoonists and illustrators. *Endowed by BigRoc.*

**The Bob Lucid Memorial Fund** Robert "Bob" Lucid was a visionary Penn teacher and mentor whose pedagogy helped inspire and structure our literary community. Friends of the Writers House (including Bob's former students) established this fund in his memory, so that we may host an annual fiction program that pays tribute to Bob as a continuing inspiration to all of us. This year's program was a reading by Guggenheim Fellow, Pushcart Prize winner, and Fulbright scholar Lance Olsen, who has written more than twenty books of and about experimental fiction. *Endowed by Susan Small Savitsky (CW'75) and Ed Kane (C'71).*

#### **Maury Povich Journalism Program Fund**

The single largest programming gift in Writers House history, the Maury Povich Journalism Program Fund permanently endows our nonfiction programs, a range of events that include readings, craft talks, and mentor meetings with journalists, memoirists, essayists, critics, and other writers of nonfiction. Among the Povich series highlights this year were a panel with political writers Tom Fitzgerald and John Baer, an interview with NPR radio personality Marty Moss-Coane, and a conversation with the *New Yorker's* television critic Emily Nussbaum. *Endowed by Maury Povich (C'62) and Connie Chung.*

Gloria MacKay; Barbara Magie; John Majane; Kate Majd; Yuriy Malikhov; Dea Mallin; Linda Mallon and John Mueller; Lynn Malloy; Alex Marcus; Claire Marcus; Susanne Margono; Maria Markovich; Randi and Scott Marshall; Mary Ellen Martin; Marcia and Sarah Martinez-Helfman; Kathleen S. Matson; Don Matzkin; Greg Maughan; Cecile Mazzucco-Tham; Murray K. McComas; Margaret McDonald; Jesse McKendry; Joseph and Anne McKenna; Max McKenna; Melissa McKindstry; Kevin and Holly McLaughlin; Tammy McLeod; Anne Marie Meehan; Jon Mejia; Loren Mendell; Tedd Mendelsohn; Katherine Meredith; Mary Meyers; Gerald and Harriet Miller; Ilana Miller; Michael Miller; Suzanne Miller; David Millstein; Joe Milutis; Nick Montfort; Joli Brian Morgan; Arlene Moskowitz; Chris and Noell Mustazza; Susan Nalder; Christine Nangle; Dabney Narvaez; Miriam Nelsen; Cory Newman; Deirdre Newman; Dorothy Newman; Alexander Newmark; Phoebe Nir; Jack Noonan; Jim Nooney; John Norton; John L. Nuccio; Jane Nugent; Pat O'Bannon; John O'Connor; Mary Obropta; Andrea and Bob Oley; Alicia Oltuski and Uri Pasternak; Gabe Oppenheim; Susie Orman Schnall; Richard Orodanker; Mark Osele; Lindsey Palmer; Preeti Parikh; Ilana Parker; Randy Parker; Corinne Paroly; Ashlee Paxton-Turner; Mickey Pearlman; Mikaela Pedlow; Katy Perlman; Ruth Perlmutter; Walter Scott Peterson; Warren Petrofsky; Janet Phillips; Elissa and Jeremy Pick; Arthur Pier; Allie Pizarro-Grant; Karen Pitofsky; Linda Pizzi; Neil Plakcy; Sandra Planisek; Irene Plotzker; Dick Polman and Elise Vider; Eleanor Poplar; David Poplar; Elizabeth Porth Polizzi; Wendy and Brett Prager; Beth Brown Preston; Alexis Quinlan; Andrea Rabel (in memory of Erasmo Ciccolella); Michael Rauch; Hillary Reinsberg; Dominique Renda and Hunter Horsley; John Richetti; Nola Ridl; Maria Rieders; Karen Rile and Larry Smith; Peter Riley; Randall and Alexa Ringer; Margaret Roark; Andrew Robinson; Joyce and Steven Robinson; Rick Rofman; Lily Rogath; Peter Rogers; Matt Rosenbaum; Beryl and Jeffrey Rosenstock; Debra Rosenthal; Lindsey Rosin; Carole Roth; Steve and Marsha Roth; Molly Roth; Joy Rothke; Daniel Rottenberg; Peter Rowley; Susan Safford; Harry Saffren; Katie Salisbury; Howard and Joan Sandick; Michael and Ellen Sandler;





Annmarie Sauer; Robert Savage; Cindy Savett; Dan Saxon; James Schaffer; Karin Schaller and John Puckett; Lorraine Schechter; Susan Scheid; Sharon Schlein Weinstein; Dan Schorr; Lawrence Schwartzwald; Andrea Scott; Mary Scott; Liz and Bill Seeley; Annette Seidenglanz and Charles Bowes; Victoria Senn; Karen Senser; Aparnaa Seshadri; Helen Sewell Johnson; Samantha, Karen, and Barry Sharf; Helen Shavin; Mark and Marla Shavin; Lorraine Shea; Pat Sheykholeslami; Carol Shlifer Clapp; Ford and Cindy Shmerler Levy; Genevieve Shore; Alyson Shore Adler; Hedvah Shuchman; Gina Signorella Arlen; Karen Silverman; David and Barbara Simon; Elaine Simon and David Crawford; Harry Simons; Rebecca Singh; David Slarskey; Eleanor Smagarinsky; Talia Smith; Adam Sokoloff and Susan Drossman Sokoloff; Barry and Judith Solar; Sheila Sondik; Massimo Soranzio; Steve, Miriam, and Charlie Sosnick; Bill Speer; Gail Spiegel Cohen (in honor of Jonathan D. Cohen C'09 and Stephanie A. Cohen C'13); Mary Spitzer; Nick Spitzer; Harris and Jane Steinberg; Gene Stelzig; David Stern and Kathryn Hellerstein; Janet and Byron Stier; Sebastian Stockman; Eric and Rebecca Stone; M. C. Streets; Mary Eileen Streight; Ann Strong; Lynn Strother; Parthiban Sundaram; Nancy Tag; Stanimir Takov; Michael Tarnow; Lisa Tauber; Elaine Terranova; Barbara Tilley; Sherefiah Tomlinson; Jane Treuhaft; Eda Tse; Tuesday's Children (in memory of John Brady); Drew Tye; David L. Ulin; Ellen Umansky; Renee Unglo (in memory of Michael Unglo); Georgia Van Cleve Colwell; the Van Der Velde-Kraft Family; Michael Tom Vassallo; Alberto Vitale; Allie Volinsky; John and Lucy Vosmek; Harry Waitzman; Edward Walker; David Wallace; Laura Walsh; Tim Waples; Emily Wasserman; William Watson; Meredith Weber; George and Carol Weinbaum; Carole Weinheim Karsch (in honor of Al Filreis); Carly Weinreb; David Weiss and Maureen Cowie; Liliane Weissberg; Anne Wellner de Veer; Wendy White; Jeyarany Wijeyesinghe; Susan Willard; Michelle Wish; Samantha Wishman; Andrea Wolff; Nina Wolpaw; Elaine Wong; Charles Wright; Anna Yin; Holly York; Henry and Judy Zachs; Judy and Harvey Zalesne; Lydia Zartman; and Michael Zuckerman



**The Caroline Rothstein Fund in Support of Oral Poetry** With the help of the Rothstein Fund we explore the oral tradition of poetry in its many forms — performance poetry, sound poetry, spoken word, and more. This year, the fund sponsored a screening of *Language Matters*, a documentary about what we lose when a language dies. The film's producer and narrator, Bowery Poetry Club founder Bob Holman, hosted the screening and led an open discussion on the importance of language and oral traditions. *Endowed by Penn parents Nancy (CW'75) and Steven Rothstein in honor of their daughter Caroline Rothstein (C'06).*

**Eva and Leo Sussman Poetry Fund** We honor the memory of Eva and Leo Sussman — beloved grandparents of Daniel Morse — with an annual poetry program. Introduced by Greg Djanikian, this year's Sussman Program featured readings by local lyricists Daisy Fried, Teresa Leo, and Kasey Jueds, and a special commemorative broadside produced by the Robinson Press. *Endowed by Penn parents Daniel and Miriam Morse in memory of Eva and Leo Sussman.*

**The Stacey Gillis Weber (W'85) and Jeffrey A. Weber Symposium Fund** The Weber Fund allows us to explore the art of persuasive and clear business writing through an annual symposium that celebrates a financial writer with a knack for lucid prose. Our sixth annual Weber Symposium featured Penn grad Megan McArdle (C'94), whose sharp writing on economics, business, and public policy has appeared in *The Atlantic*, *The Economist*, and *Bloomberg View*. *Endowed by Stacey Gillis Weber (W'85) and Jeffrey A. Weber.*

**The Wexler Fund for Programs at the Kelly Writers House** The Wexler Fund supports all kinds of projects, enabling students and others to think creatively about what can happen in our space. The fund sponsored several student initiatives this year — including The Body Electric, a collectivist poetry group that met weekly to discuss writing and eat pancakes, and Speakeasy Open Mic Night, our longest continually running undergraduate-led series — as well as poetry readings by Maxe Crandall, Sarah Dowling, and John Yau. *Endowed by Penn parents Gary and Nina Wexler.*

**Wexler Family Endowed Fund for Programs in Jewish Life and Culture** Thanks to the Wexler Family Fund, which helps us celebrate Jewish life, art, and culture, we hosted Jake Marmer's "Hermeneutic Stomp," a description-defying performance incorporating klezmer, jazz, improvisational techniques, and diverse poetic traditions. World-class musicians participated in the gig, including the incomparable Frank London on horn. *Endowed by Penn parents Gary and Nina Wexler.*

**Seth Ginns Fund for International Writers** Thanks to the financial support of our Seth Ginns Fund for International Writers, we can offer programming with international scope and appeal. Our Writers Without Borders series this year included readings by Japanese poet Hiromi Itō and Zimbabwean novelist NoViolet Bulawayo, and an intensive two-day translation summit for Russian and North American poets, organized by Kevin Platt and co-sponsored by the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. *Funded annually by Seth Ginns (C'00).*







## EMILY DICKINSON CIRCLE

Irwyn and Lucy Applebaum; Stuart Applebaum (in honor of Lily Alice Applebaum on her 24th birthday); Jon and Barbara Avnet; Reina Marin Bassini and Emilio Bassini; Martin and Barbara Bienenstock; David Biro and Daniella Vitale; Elissa Caterfino Mandel; Jean Chatzky and Eliot Kaplan; Gary and Lois Kohn Claar; David and Laurie Cohen; Bonnie and Cliff Eisler; Robert and Christine Friedman; Marlene and Alan Gilbert; Seth and Jane Ginns; Jon and Mindy Gray; Hank and Carol Herman; Paul and Nancy Kelly; Adam and Mary Beth Kirsch; Andrea Mitchell and Alan Greenspan; John and Jane Nelson; Daniel Nir and Jill Braufman; Bret and Katharine Parker; Arthur and Ilene Dalinka Penn; Brian and Jerilyn Perman; Maria Popova; Shari and Len Potter; Maury Povich and Connie Chung; Bruce Resnikoff and Claudia Berman; David and Deborah Roberts; Caryn Karmatz Rudy and Lee Rudy; Ricardo Salmon and Leslie Dezer Salmon; Margaret Schink; Marcy and Jeff Schneider; Jeffrey and Alexa Schwarz; Patricia and Howard Silverstein; Susan Small Savitsky; Ken Stein; Melissa and Larry Stoller; Nina Robinson Vitow (made in honor of David Slavitt); Bob and Kathy Wenger; Paul Williams; Dirk and Kirsten Wittenborn; Marc and Robin Wolpaw; Jay and Nancy Zises



## Become a Friend

FREE READINGS AND WORKSHOPS by contemporary writers. Coffee percolating in the kitchen. Conversations in the garden. Books for sale by visiting writers at a discounted price at many readings. Online archives of live performances by eminent American authors. All of these things and more are funded through the annual donations of our many Friends.

The Kelly Writers House seeks the support of our friends and potential friends to help us raise what people in the fundraising business call "term support" — small-and middle-sized gifts that will offset the costs of our programs in the immediate and near future.

Will you help us protect and sustain the Writers House project? Please choose a level of support, send a check, and we will immediately list you as among our "Friends." Your gift will be acknowledged in our electronic *Annual*, which is available at all times on our web site: [writing.upenn.edu/wh/support/friends.php](http://writing.upenn.edu/wh/support/friends.php). If you wish to remain anonymous, that's fine; you can also request that we publish your gift in dedication to, or in memory of, others.

To become a friend, please fill out this form and send it with your check to:

The Kelly Writers House  
3805 Locust Walk  
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Philadelphia, PA 19104-6150  
Attention: Arielle Brousse

Please make checks payable to "Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania" and be sure to jot "Kelly Writers House" on the memo line.

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For more information about the specific programs and projects at the Writers House, please visit our website:  
[writing.upenn.edu/wh/support](http://writing.upenn.edu/wh/support).

the center for programs in contemporary writing



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**Lily Applebaum** (C'12), Assistant to the Faculty Director

**Andrew Beal**, Financial Coordinator

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**Julia Bloch** (GAS'11), Associate Director of Digital Projects

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**Michael S. Hennessey**, Editor, PennSound and *Jacket2*

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**Connie Yu** (C'17), Special Projects Assistant

So many people help make the Kelly Writers House possible, including Friends of the Writers House from all over the world. We are especially grateful to the people in the Office of the Provost for everything they do to support us. Thank you, friends!









**3805 Locust Walk  
Philadelphia, PA  
19104-6150**