

Kelly Writers House



2023-24 Annual





Dear Friends of the Writers House,

In gathering photos and stories for this year's *Annual*, we've run into a delightful dilemma: we simply don't have enough space to showcase everything the Kelly Writers House community brought to life in the 2023–2024 school year!

It's the best sort of problem, of course. The people of the Writers House were eager to come together for conversations, creative projects, and deep, ongoing engagement with writing in every form. We had something going on in the Arts Café almost every night of the year. Add in all the activities of the Wexler Studio, seminar rooms, and digital meeting spaces where people convene to exchange ideas — and you'll see just how difficult it is to capture it all in one document! It's hard enough to convey the full spectrum of what happens here in any given week, let alone in a full academic year.

But we're thrilled nevertheless to offer a glimpse into some of these activities. Flip to page 8 to learn about the innovative projects powered by **Creative Ventures**, an incubator for creativity at the KWH since 2011. On page 9, meet the two dozen **Povich Journalism Program** visitors, including Penn alumni, who came to the KWH to engage with our community. Page 11 highlights the **Kelly Writers House Fellows Program**, a unique undergraduate seminar that brings eminent writers to the KWH for intensive two-day visits. On pages 14 and 15

you'll find updates about **RealArts@Penn**, an initiative that offers students invaluable real-world experience in arts and culture through internships, apprenticeships, and mentorships.

As you read through, we hope you'll see that people are at the heart of everything we do here. We've made this explicit in the design of this booklet, highlighting names in bold and filling every space with photos, scrapbook-style. We've devoted the centerfold of this *Annual* to a community collage created by **Zach Carduner** (C'13), who has designed the KWH *Annual* every year since 2010. In the last half of the *Annual*, the largest section by far, we name each and every one of the Friends of the Writers House. These are the people who make everything we do here possible.

We're deeply grateful to the Friends of the Writers House for their passionate support — and to the many generous individuals and organizations that contribute to our community, including the Office of the Provost, alumni, students, faculty, ModPo participants, Penn parents, Philadelphians, and Friends from all over the world. Thank you, Friends, for everything you bring to this community!

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Al Filreis
Faculty Director
Kelly Professor of English

Jessica Lowenthal
Director



Program and Event Highlights

Writing in community

This year's **Caroline Rothstein Oral Poetry Program**, sponsored by **Nancy Rothstein** (CW'75), featured thrilling performances by **Imani Davis** (C'20), **e.jin** (C'21), and **Wes Matthews** (C'23), alumni of the Excelano Project, Penn's award-winning spoken word poetry group. Excelano president **Sophie Huang** (W'24) curated the event and led a discussion with the returning poets. The group spoke lovingly about their time as members of Excelano and noted the importance of writing in community. Adoptee writer e.jin elaborated on the process of writing poetry as a means toward developing "solidarity and kinship," especially meaningful to them in a world with a sometimes narrow understanding of kinship in relation to adoption. Davis described the importance of returning to familiar poetic practices — such as the "attentiveness to sound" learned through slam poetry — even while growing in new directions. Matthews emphasized the importance of writing in diverse communities, noting that other people's strengths can "empower you to write towards new modes in your writing." At the conclusion of the event, Excelano members past and present gathered in the Arts Café for a group hug and spontaneous photoshoot.

Evie Day

"It's Evie Day at the Writers House!" declared KWH Faculty Director **Al Filreis** in his laudatory introduction to this year's **Sussman Poetry Program**, an annual KWH event held in memory of **Eva and Leo Sussman**, beloved grandparents of **Dan Morse**. The Evie in question was of course **Evie Shockley**, the award-winning poet and literary scholar whose work explores innovative poetic forms and draws upon a Black feminist tradition. Shockley joined us for an electrifying day of discussion, reading, and poetic convening about her work, along with poets **Aldon Lynn Nielsen**, **William J. Harris**, and, in his final visit to the Writers House, the late and beloved **Tyrone Williams**. The day's festivities included a landmark zooth episode of the *PoemTalk* podcast, taped before a live audience in the Arts Café. Evie Day culminated with a celebratory double-header poetry reading, featuring **Simone White**, Associate Faculty Director of the Kelly Writers House, who read from her own spectacular work, and Shockley herself, who read a career-spanning selection of poetry, including pieces from her pandemic-era publication *Suddenly We*.

The part that drives you forward

The gifted novelist and essayist **Alexander Chee** joined us for our third annual **Friedman Program for Eminent Fiction Writers**. Through a riveting conversation with KWH Faculty Director **Al Filreis**, Chee touched on many themes and approaches in his dazzling and complex body of work, including the role of autobiography in fiction. In some ways, he explained, the relationship between autobiography and fiction is straightforward: the coming-of-age novel, *Edinburgh*, for example, draws upon Chee's own experiences as a Korean American soprano in a boys' choir in Maine. But fiction, he offered, also allows writers a forum for self-discovery, a place to work through challenging concepts. "A novel is a way of thinking about things," he said. "It is a way of analyzing things, it is a way of putting things to a test. The part that drives you forward is something that is hard to articulate . . . and the articulation of it is the novel."



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

European Jewish poets past and present

Kevin M. F. Platt, who is a professor of Russian and East European Studies at Penn, moderated a multilingual reading and discussion of poetry by European Jewish poets and translators, sponsored by our Wexler Family Endowed Fund for Programs in Jewish Life and Culture. French poet **Mireille Gansel**, joined by her translator **Joan Sidney**, read from her book *Soul House*, a collection of poetry that explores concepts of exile and home, and draws upon her own history as the daughter of Jewish refugees. Poet-translator **Alex Braslavsky** introduced the work of the Polish Jewish modernist **Zuzanna Ginczanka**, who was executed by the Nazis in the final months of World War II. The powerful event, which touched upon the challenges of translation as well as the role of poetry in Holocaust witnessing and memory, brought together two important European Jewish poets whose biographies have been shaped, in different ways, by Holocaust history and remembrance.

Staging lived experience

Melanye Finister, the actor who played the character "Lorene Cary" in the world premiere Arden Theatre production of *Ladysitting*, joined us at the KWH for a conversation with the real **Lorene Cary** (C'78, G'78), a phenomenal writer who teaches right here at Penn. **Terrence Nolen**, co-founder of the Arden Theatre Company, joined the surreal pairing for a discussion sponsored by our Creative Ventures Fund about the process of transforming memoir into a staged theater production. *Ladysitting*, which had its first life as a published memoir, chronicles Cary's experience caring for her grandmother at the end of her life. To transform this highly personal material into a character-based play, Cary engaged in a collaborative process with the people of Arden Theatre, allowing the actors' interpretive work to guide some of her choices. "Early in the writing," Cary said to Finister, "once I saw you interpreting a character, then it stopped being me — whew, that's a relief! — now I could think about the play." After the conversation, people crowded into the living room to purchase copies of *Ladysitting* provided by Harriett's Bookshop, a local, independent bookstore.



STUDENT ACTIVITIES AT THE KWH

- Bent Button**: film production club
- The Body Electric**: poetry workshop
- Circle**: interdisciplinary art collective
- Curiouser**: speculative fiction workshop
- DoubleSpeak**: literary translation magazine
- Equilibria**: visual and literary art magazine
- The Excelano Project**: spoken word performance
- F-Word**: feminist magazine
- The Fiber Arts Circle**: knitters and threadsmiths
- The Freelance Writers Collective**: aspiring journalists
- Lotus Reads Baldwin**: James Baldwin reading group
- Penn Appétit**: culinary arts magazine
- The Penn Moviegoer**: film criticism and commentary
- Penn Review**: literary magazine
- Quake**: sexuality magazine
- The Woodlands**: nonfiction magazine

► A number of student-led writing groups, magazines, and clubs convene in our upstairs seminar rooms. To find out more email wh@writing.upenn.edu.

Alumni Visitors

- We celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the **Nora Magid Mentorship Prize** with a series of events featuring **Luis Ferré-Sadurní** (C'17), **Matt Flegenheimer** (C'11), **Stephen Fried** (C'79), **Jessica Goodman** (C'12), **Madeleine Ngo** (C'20), **Ashley Parker** (C'05), **Jason Schwartz** (C'07), **Isabella Simonetti** (C'21), and members of the Nora Magid Advisory Board.
- **Julia Bloch** (GR'11), **Julie Levitan** (C'18), and **Emily Rush** (C'19) were among the writers, friends, and family members who gathered for a memorial reading in honor of poet **Bernadette Mayer**.

- **Jeffrey Barg** (C'02, GCP'10) shared songs and scenes from his musical *The Angry Grammarian* for a special episode of *LIVE at the Writers House*.
- **Catherine Ricketts** (C'09) organized an Alumni Day discussion about the intersections of parenting and creative practice, with **Nate Chinen** (C'97), **Lauren Francis-Sharma** (C'94), **Natalie Eve Garrett** (MFA'04), **Aimee Koran** (MFA'17), and **Joseph Earl Thomas** (GR'24).
- **Julia Bloch** (GR'11) led a conversation with **Amy Paeth** (GR'15) about the US Poet Laureateship and the role of poetry in the cultural front of the Cold War.

- We welcomed **Wes Matthews** (C'23), **e.jin** (C'21), and **Imani Davis** (C'20) for a reunion of Excelano Project poets.
- Writer **Jennifer Egan** (C'85) and Penn professor **Dennis Culhane** led an open discussion about the kinds of stories we tell about homelessness in the US today.
- **Paul Hendrickson** convened a conversation with **Maureen Dowd** of the *New York Times* and **Ashley Parker** (C'05) of the *Washington Post*.

- Beltran Teaching Award-winner **Max Apple** organized a showcase of alumni fiction writers: **Ariel Djanikian** (C'03), **Dan Finkel** (C'19, G'20), **Sanaë Lemoine** (C'11), and **Alicia Oltuski** (C'06).
- **Lorene Cary** (C'78, G'78) hosted a conversation with her former student **Elizabeth Silver** (C'01), whose most recent novel is based on the life of Ruth Bader Ginsburg.



Speakeasy: poetry, prose, and anything goes

Founded in the fall of 1997 by **Courtney Zoffness** (C'00), **Emily Cohen** (C'00), and **Adam Kaufman** (ENG'00, W'00), our student-led open mic **Speakeasy** encourages performances of all kinds in a supportive and welcoming setting. Speakeasy's 2023–2024 host **Lex Bartee** (C'25) introduced each monthly gathering with a couple of light-hearted jokes to set the stage for anything-goes performances by writers from all backgrounds and experience levels. "I hope to create a secure and open space," Bartee said, "where people have the ability to share themselves through their most cherished art form." This year, thanks to Bartee's open and encouraging mode, Speakeasy welcomed poetry recitations, stand-up comedy acts, musical numbers, close-up magic and sleight-of-hand, and personal stories about families, roommates, dear friends, and love lost and found. Special themed events and collaborations included a Valentine's-themed evening for stories about love (and betrayal), our annual Halloween "Spookeasy," and a "Night of Empowerment" held in partnership with Penn Violence Prevention for survivors of interpersonal violence.

The pain of friendship

Our annual **Bernheimer Symposium** featured a presentation by **Jillian Tamaki** and **Mariko Tamaki**, cousin-collaborators whose newest award-winning graphic novel, *Roaming*, follows a trio of college-aged friends visiting New York City in 2009. The Tamakis illustrated their talk with large-scale slides featuring panels from the book, preliminary sketches, and some of the many reference images that served as inspiration for the book's beautifully detailed backgrounds. After the presentation, event host **Julia Alekseyeva**, who is an assistant professor of English and Cinema and Media Studies at Penn and a graphic novelist herself, led a lively conversation with the Tamakis about some of the book's themes, including nostalgia, friendship, interpersonal dynamics gone awry, queer discovery, and identity ("technically, all books are about identity," Mariko joked). The group agreed that, though lighthearted and fun, the novel offers a serious exploration of young adult relationships, where "the pain of friendship is a training ground for the pain of adulthood relationships."

An interview about the interview

KWH Faculty Director **Al Filreis** led a forthright "interview about the interview" with legendary interviewer **Victor Bockris** (C'71), the foremost chronicler of the New York Underground, who got his start as an interviewer right here at Penn. As an undergraduate in the late sixties, Bockris learned that he "enjoyed talking to poets more than reading their poems," he said. "Talking to them was more interesting." Bockris regaled us with incredible behind-the-scenes stories from those early years of discovery and described some of his more infamous encounters with cultural icons, such as the time he hosted a poorly planned dinner party for William Burroughs, Mick Jagger, and Andy Warhol. "It was a disaster," he confessed, with only "one loaf of French bread, two pieces of pâté, a little container of cold string beans, and two bottles of cheap red wine." From such seeming misadventures, Bockris developed his trademark style, an informal interviewing technique that helps him draw out the best material from his subjects. "Just let them talk," he said. "Because what they choose to talk about, and how they talk, will show you who they are."

Mentorship in journalism

In a rare public appearance, **Maureen Dowd** of the *New York Times* joined **Ashley Parker** (C'05) of the *Washington Post* for a standing-room-only conversation about their careers, sponsored by our Povich Journalism Fund. Hosted by nonfiction powerhouse **Paul Hendrickson**, the special event started off with a fun surprise: a large-scale photo of Dowd taken by Parker in the early aughts while they were on assignment in Saudi Arabia for *Vanity Fair*. From there, the group launched into a revelatory discussion about their work. Dowd described some of the difficulties she faced early in her career when breaking into what was at the time a male-dominated field. Parker suggested a double standard may still exist, citing the "higher penalties women pay" when they make missteps. But the panelists also discussed the importance of mentorship, with Parker describing her time at Penn (where Hendrickson was her teacher) and her formative years working as Dowd's assistant. The warm conversation continued over a delicious reception in the dining room, where fans and friends of Dowd, Parker, and Hendrickson, including some of Parker's former teachers in Penn's Creative Writing Program, gathered to toast the remarkable trio.



James Baldwin at 100

We joined city-wide celebrations of James Baldwin's 100th birthday with two initiatives at the KWH.

The Lotus Collective met in room 202 on Monday evenings throughout the year for discussions of Baldwin's writing. Their weekly meetings brought together undergrads, graduate students, alumni, and community members for in-depth conversations about Baldwin's work and legacy, with a special focus on the role of students and youth in civil rights movements.

The Writers House Planning Committee selected Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room* for this year's marathon reading. Forty people signed up to help read the book aloud from start to finish, and dozens more helped prep for the six-hour extravaganza. To bring the book's Parisian setting to life, **Lyn Donnell** (C'24) installed a "French café" in the Arts Café with a centerpiece of eclectic paper bottles hand-painted by Hub members. **Lillian Liu** (C'24) led a small team of translators to create French-to-English cue cards for digital projection during the event. And the KWH staff served up a delicious farmers market spread, with croissants, baguettes, cheese, jam, fresh fruits, and other goodies.

Alumni Visitors

► **Michelle Taransky's** "But Company" reading series, named in memory of **Jamie Albrecht** (C'22), featured **Sophia DuRose** (C'21), **Maria Abigail Effendi** (C'24), **Samantha Hsiung** (C'27), **Enne Kim** (C'26), **Charles Shen** (C'27), **Amanda Silberling** (C'18), and **Zoe Stoller** (C'18).

► Junior Fellows winner **Alan Jinich** (C'22) organized a panel discussion of podcasting and audio storytelling with **Sam Yellowhorse Kesler** (C'20) of *Planet Money*, **Yowei Shaw** (C'10) of *Proxy*, and **Alex Stern** (C'15) of *The Daily*.

► Celebrated poet **Joshua Bennett** (C'10) presented an interdisciplinary talk, co-sponsored by the Center for Africana Studies, about nature poetry, abolitionist design, and Black environmental thought.

► **Paige Menton** (GED'93), **Knar Gavin** (GR'23), and **Carlos Price-Sanchez** (C'19, GED'20) read from their poetry for an eco-poetry themed episode of **LIVE at the Writers House**.

► Biologist **Alison Dell** (GR'13) brought microscopes and art supplies for "Art in the Lab," a hands-on art-making workshop.

► **Kathy DeMarco Van Cleve** (C'88, W'88) hosted four alumni screenwriters for this year's **Hartman Screenwriting Symposium**: **Jay Elias** (C'14), **Benjamin Finkel** (C'16, G'17), **Isabelle Mecattaf** (C'17), and **Nihaa Sinha** (W'14).

► We celebrated the second anniversary of Cosmic Writers, a community writing program founded by **Rowana Miller** (C'22), with a showcase of young writers.

► **Jess Bergman** (C'14) convened a panel of editors from *The Baffler*, *n+1*, and *Lux* to discuss the role of the "little magazine" as a mainstay of indie journalism.

► **Dahlia Li** (GR'23) organized "Dance and the Poetics of Home," an interactive and interdisciplinary event that capped off her multi-year exploration of movement, dance, and writing.

► **Grace Ambrose** (C'11) visited for a discussion about punk rock, DIY publishing, and her book *Kleenex/LiLiPUT*, a lavishly illustrated English-language edition of Marlene Marder's diary-memoir.

► A get-out-the-vote episode of **LIVE at the Writers House** featured **Lorene Cary** (C'78, G'78), **Hannah Chang** (C'22), and the late and much missed **Erinda Sheno** (C'22).



Supported with extraordinary generosity since 2011 by **Robin Wolpow** and **Marc Wolpow** (W'80), **Nina Rosborough** (C'14), and the **Arbour Way Foundation**, the **Creative Ventures Project** encourages Writers House community members to pursue adventurous projects and ideas, especially those that emphasize discovery, imagination, creativity, and interdisciplinary exploration. Thanks to Creative Ventures, which offers grants, prizes, targeted funding, and other support for ambitious ideas, our community took on many projects this year, exploring culinary arts, gaming, Swiss punk rockers, film, environmentalism, print culture, digital humanities, dance, large language models, and more.

► **Natalia Reyes** (GR'26) and **Natalia Ramos Bellido** (C'26) led a conversation with legendary cartoonist **Jaime Hernandez**, co-creator of the groundbreaking series *Love and Rockets*.

► **Zach Carduner** (C'13) and **Jajwalya Karajgikar** hosted a ChatGPT prompt workshop to test the capacity of AI and large language models.

► The people of the **Common Press**, our collaborative letterpress project, organized book arts workshops, letterpress demos, and a series of KWH broadsides, including a working *cyanometer* in honor of KWH Fellow **Maggie Nelson**.

► **Laurel Caruso** (C'27), **Shan Shan Liang** (W'24), and other students of *Penn Appétit* hosted a food summit, featuring cookbook writer **Drew Lazor**, dining consultant **Alex Delaney**, and chef **Chutatip "Nok" Suntaranon** of Kalaya in Philadelphia. KWH staffers sourced a delicious spread of Philly flavors from Reading Terminal Market.

► Penn Creative Writing instructor **Anthony DeCurtis** interviewed famed folk-punk musician **Alejandro Escovedo** about his storied career in the music industry.

► **Carolyn Chernoff** (GED'03, GR'13) guided students in the creation of DIY one-sheet mini-zines.

► **Zach Carduner** (C'13) and **Zelda Godsey-Kellogg** (C'25) launched our first ever Five-Minute Film Fest, awarding trophies (and popcorn makers!) to the top student-made films in several categories.

► Punk rock editor **Grace Ambrose** (C'11) presented material about LiLiPUT, Zurich's first all-women punk band.

► **Adam Weiner**, frontman of the rock band Low Cut Connie, joined us for a knockout performance, followed by an interview with **Anthony DeCurtis**.

► Arden Theater founder **Terrence Nolen** led a conversation with memoirist **Lorene Cary** (C'78, G'78) and actor **Melanye Finister** about the process of turning memoir into theater.

► **DJ Falconer** (aka Jake Falconer, C'25) spun some tunes for an afternoon of community-led book swapping.

► Dancers **Emilio Martinez Poppe**, **MR Stine**, and **Dahlia Li** (GR'23) led a session investigating the intersection of dance practice and ideas of home.

► **Karen Rile** (C'80) introduced StorySeek, a virtual reality project co-created with Drexel's Entrepreneurial Game Studio that produces neighborhood-specific writing.



The great American comic book

"Sometimes, drawing my comics in my room, I think, 'there's nobody out there,'" said cartoonist **Jaime Hernandez**, the co-creator of *Love and Rockets*, a groundbreaking series launched in 1981 that has helped redefine American comics. At the Writers House, we proved his fears entirely unfounded: people spilled out the doors of the Arts Café and all the way back to the dining room for a chance to chat with Hernandez about his work. Hernandez came to the KWH thanks to **Natalia Ramos Bellido** (C'26), who studied his work in "Love and Rockets: The Great American Comic Book," a course taught by **Natalia Reyes** (GR'26) that situates the series within its historical and cultural contexts: underground comics, punk rock, and Chicano culture. Hernandez joked that the academic context for the discussion made him nervous: "I get kind of scared," he said, "like I'm going to be graded on my work." But the discussion at the KWH lived up to everyone's expectations. Bellido asked Hernandez what it has been like to work on such a long-running series, with characters growing and changing over the decades. Hernandez expressed sentimental affection for the effects of time, appreciating, for example, how a once-twenty-year-old punk is now a sixty-year-old-woman who is "boring now."



POVICH JOURNALISM PROGRAM

Thanks to our Povich Journalism Program Fund, endowed in 2010 by **Maury Povich** (C'62) and **Connie Chung**, more than two dozen journalists joined us at the KWH for conversations about their work, including writers from *Fortune*, *The Infatuation*, *The National Memo*, the *New York Times*, *Philadelphia Magazine*, *Planet Money*, *Rolling Stone*, *The Today Show*, *Vox*, the *Washington Post*, and elsewhere.

Chloe Bower (C'15)

Joe Conason

Maureen Dowd

Matt Flegenheimer (C'11)

Samuel Freedman

Jessica Goldstein (C'11)

Jess Goodman (C'12)

Brian Hiatt

Ali Jaffe Ramis (C'14)

Alan Jinich (C'22)

Caroline Kee (C'15)

Sam Yellowhorse Kesler (C'20)

Madeleine Ngo (C'20)

Ashley Parker (C'05)

Hillary Reinsberg (C'11)

Julia Rubin (C'10)

Luis Ferré-Sadurní (C'17)

Jason Schwartz (C'07)

Yowei Shaw (C'10)

Isabella Simonetti (C'21)

Alex Stern (C'15)

Alexandra Sternlicht (C'16)

Rachel Tashjian (C'11)

Rebecca Traister

Steve Volk

Alumni Visitors

► Creative Writing instructor **Karen Rile** (C'80) hosted **Gemini Wahhaj** (MtE'93), author of *The Children of This Madness*, for this year's **Cheryl J. Family Fiction Program**.

► **Carolyn Chernoff** (GED'03, GR'13) taught us how to make one-sheet mini-zines in a special workshop co-sponsored by The Soapbox, a West Philly DIY print shop.

► KWH Faculty Director **Al Filreis** led an "interview about the interview" with famed biographer **Victor Bockris** (C'71), whose own interview subjects include William Burroughs, Mick Jagger, and Andy Warhol.



The Brodsky Gallery

The Brodsky Gallery is an installation space at the KWH endowed by **Michael Brodsky** (W'88) and **Heidi Hookman Brodsky** (C'89). We featured four Brodsky Gallery shows this year.

Alli Katz organized a showcase of spreads from *Roaming*, a graphic novel by cousin-collaborators **Jillian Tamaki** and **Mariko Tamaki**.

Writers House community members made art with **Alison Dell** (GR'13) for "Art in the Lab," a hands-on workshop that encouraged close-up exploration of natural objects.

Lila Shermeta (C'25) curated "Outside Images," an exhibition of photography by Philadelphia-area undergrads.

Kayla Romberger and **Lila Shermeta** (C'25) teamed up to produce "Pixel to Print," a show of risograph prints and a live risograph demo.

Who I am and where I come from

Departments and programs from all across campus — including the Asian American Studies Program, the Center for the Advanced Study of India, the Center for Experimental Ethnography, the Creative Writing Program, the Department of Fine Arts, and our own Creative Ventures Program — joined together to welcome **Mira Jacob** to the Writers House for a conversation with **Piyali Bhattacharya**, the Abrams Artist-in-Residence in Penn's Creative Writing Program. The pair's deep, writerly friendship (they often write together), led to a rich dialogue about Jacob's multifaceted and multimodal work, including her recent book, *Good Talk*, a painful yet funny graphic memoir about interracial families set against the backdrop of the divisive 2016 presidential election. Love, Jacob implied, is not a cure-all: "There is a pervasive idea in America that love is the opposite of racism," Jacob said. "Love is not the opposite of racism, that's not true. You can love someone and be perfectly racist to them." Jacob also reflected on her experience as an Indian-American author and some of the ways she "translates" South Asian experiences for her audience. "I found that the specificity has been my friend, meaning when I get really specific about who I am and where I come from and what that's like, that's when I can dial in."

Art therapies

With support from the Faculty Director's Discretionary Fund, **Sophie Young** (C'25) spent the summer of 2023 in South Carolina researching art therapy in brain injury rehabilitation at the Roger C. Peace Outpatient Brain Injury and Young Stroke Program. Young studied concrete uses of art-making in therapy as well as more conceptual uses of creativity in therapeutic practice, such as the creative ways therapists adapt treatments for individual patient needs. Over the course of her research, Young spoke directly with patients, neuropsychologists, occupational therapists, and speech pathologists. When she returned to campus in September, Young shared some of what she learned at a public lunchtime conversation hosted by KWH Faculty Director **Al Filreis**. Engaging in creative self-expression can assist both patients and therapists alike, Young said: "Doing therapy is inherently an intellectual process, but if you do an arts activity, you're not filtering your emotions, you're letting things happen."



Kelly Writers House Fellows Program

There is nothing quite like the **Kelly Writers House Fellows Program**. Through collaborative learning, interactive programming, and the best dinner parties around, the Fellows Program exemplifies what the Writers House is all about.

Now in its 25th year, the Fellows Program invites three eminent contemporary writers to join the Kelly Writers House community for a series of public readings and conversations, informal gatherings, and delicious home-cooked meals served in the KWH dining room — all lovingly hosted by students in the associated **Kelly Writers House Fellows Seminar**, a unique undergraduate class.

KWH Associate Faculty Director **Simone White** led this year's Fellows Program, with assistance from Fellows Coordinator **Sophia DuRose** (C'21) and a cohort of spectacular students. The intrepid group worked together to welcome our 2024 Fellows: formidable novelist, essayist, and avid gardener **Jamaica Kincaid**, who is lauded for her evocative writing about familial relationships, racial identity, and the legacies of colonialism; celebrated poet and literary scholar **Harryette Mullen**, who is known for innovative sound play and linguistic experiment; and genre-defying writer and scholar **Maggie Nelson**, who works within and across many fields including autobiography, art criticism, feminism, aesthetic theory, philosophy, and poetry.

Students in the Fellows Seminar took on several special research projects to prep for intensive discussions with our visiting Fellows. **Sophia Hall** (C'27) and **DuBois Stewart** (C'24) traveled to Harvard's Houghton Library to explore Jamaica Kincaid's literary archive, while **Clara Papenfuss** (C'24) reviewed Kincaid's time at *The New Yorker*, where she was a staff writer and columnist for twenty years. **Celine Choi** (C'25) examined textual resonances in the writings of Harryette Mullen and modernist icon Gertrude Stein to situate Mullen within an experimental literary history. **Katie Hindle** (C'27) researched the concept of "autotheory" in relation to Maggie Nelson's body of work, and **Delaney Parks** (C'24) studied the work of **Harry Dodge**, a sculptor, writer, and filmmaker, who voices a significant portion of Nelson's book *The Argonauts*. By the time each of our three Fellows arrived for their two-day residencies, our Fellows students were ready to engage them with deeply considered interpretations, analysis, and questions about their work.

KWH community members also pitched in to help make each visit special. **Erin Gautsche**, who served for many years as the Kelly Writers House Program Coordinator, returned to the KWH to cook fabulous dinners for each of our three Fellows, with a team of student sous chefs. The people of the **Common Press**, Penn's collaborative letterpress studio, designed beautiful letterpress broadsides to commemorate each visit, including a cyanometer for measuring the blueness of a blue

sky, made by **Erica Honson** in honor of Maggie Nelson. And the amazing **Simone White**, who led the Fellows Program as if she'd been doing it for years, hosted a series of brilliant interview-conversations, inviting eager audience members to ask questions, to share their insights and thoughts, and to join the collaborative learning community established through the Fellows Program.

When summing up his experience as a student in the Fellows Seminar, **DuBois Stewart** (C'24) put it this way: "Fellows is a unique space where we get to explore multiple and different styles of writing and to interact with the authors in an intimate setting. I've never felt more comfortable sharing my thoughts on genres out of my comfort zone in any other classroom setting. Fellows is an opportunity for students to be both vulnerable and brave in their expression of self."

The 2024 Fellows Program was made possible thanks to the **Kelly Writers House Fellows Endowed Fund**, a newly endowed fund established by an anonymous donor that will sustain this special project forever, and by the **1997 Kelly Writers House Fellows Fund**, an anonymous term fund that has offered crucial term support. We are also grateful to acknowledge the late **Paul Kelly** (C'62, WG'64) who, along with Faculty Director **Al Filreis**, conceived of the Fellows Program as a major component of the KWH programming. Paul Kelly supported the Fellows Program each year from 1999 to 2021.



"The most enjoyable part of cooking for Fellows is turning students on to all kinds of new cuisines, flavors, and textures. As I'm cooking the food and we're serving, the students are also trying things and asking questions, and smelling and chopping and generally viscerally experiencing food in a new way, which I love."

— Erin Gautsche



RealArts@Penn

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

Alumni Mentorship Program

RealArts@Penn hosted a series of informal Friday lunches for students interested in learning more about arts-related careers. Visiting alumni mentors shared advice and stories about first jobs, tough decisions, networking, career paths, and more.

In the fall semester, mentor lunches focused primarily on careers in publishing, editing, and journalism. Participating alumni mentors included **David Borgenicht** (C'90), **Jess Goodman** (C'12), **Kristen Martin** (C'11), **Joe Pinsker** (C'13), **Susanna Porter** (CW'75), **Caryn Karmatz Rudy** (C'92), and **Isabella Simonetti** (C'21).

In spring, the series turned to the entertainment industry (screenwriting, filmmaking, production, talent management, and more), with visits by **Tim Bloom** (C'17), **Erin Brennan** (C'23), **Ariana Jackson** (C'03), **Randi Michel** (C'91), **Faryn Pearl** (C'14), **Jordan Rodnizki** (C'16), **Nihaar Sinha** (W'14), **Emma Soren** (C'16), **Hughes Ransom** (C'19), and **David Stern** (C'89, ENG'89).

Povich RealArts Internship Prizes

Supported by a special fund established by **Maury Povich** (C'62), Povich Prizes provide supplemental funding to students who have secured unpaid or underpaid internships. We awarded eleven prizes in summer 2024:

Kayla Cotter (C'24): ChatterBlast Media

Walden Green (C'24): Dirt Media

Ejun Hong (C'25): PBS Kids

Chloe Hunt (C'25): Our National Conversation

Cameron Ito (W'25): NBC Universal

Claire Kim (C'25): Simon & Schuster

Zoe Lachter (C'27): The Allentown Voice

Crystal Marshall (C'24): *The Tonight Show* Starring Jimmy Fallon

Devdyuti Paul (C'25): The Barnes Foundation

Wahid Sarwar (C'25): Odenkirk Provisiero Entertainment

Jaden Snyder (C'25): Zero-True

Bassini Apprenticeships

By matching Penn students with faculty mentors in the Creative Writing Program, the Bassini Apprenticeship Program gives young writers firsthand experience working on long-term professional writing projects. We named four Bassini Apprentices this year:

Erica Messics (C'24) helped Michelle Taransky design a chatbot to write a novel — for a novel Taransky is writing about a chatbot who writes a novel.

Isabel Engel (C'25), **Charissa Howard** (C'26), and **Rae Norman** (C'24) worked with **Lorene Cary** (C'78, G'78) to plan events for #VoteThatJawn, an outreach initiative devoted to getting out the youth vote.

The Friend Fellows Project

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

Lila Dubois (C'25): The FADER

Jack Nycz (C'24): Firelight Media

Alison Yau (C'26): Advocates for Human Rights

Rachel Patterson (W'24): Teachers Institute of Philadelphia

JS Wu (GR'24): ModPo and Jacket2

RealArts@Penn Internships

For seventeen summers, since 2008, RealArts@Penn has supported paid internships at leading arts and culture institutions throughout the country. For the summer of 2024, RealArts@Penn arranged twenty-three paid summer internships in California, Montana, New York, Washington, DC, and right here in Philadelphia. Students learned about magazine and print production, literary and talent management, archival work, script development and filmmaking, theater and arts administration, and more. Each intern received a generous stipend from RealArts@Penn — plus real-world experience in the arts.

PRINT AND EDITORIAL

BOMB Magazine **Armie Chardiet** (C'25)

The FADER **Hannah Sung** (C'26)

Flathead Beacon **Cathy Li** (C'25)

Library of Congress **Catherine Sorrentino** (C'25), Ginns Intern

Philadelphia Magazine **Adeoluwa Fatukasi** (C'25)

Spiegel & Grau **Jean Paik** (C'24)

MUSEUMS

Morgan Library and Museum **Alex Yim** (C'25), Eisler Intern

Museum of the Moving Image **Chenyao Liu** (C'27), Stallybrass Intern

MUSIC

Verve Music Group **Stella Cha** (C'25)

TELEVISION & FILM

All Ages Productions **Sally Huang** (C'25)

Artists First **Asha Vincent** (C'25)

Brooklyn Films **Isabelle Kauffman** (C'25), Blaze Intern

David Stern and Stuart Gibbs, Writers **Mollie Benn** (C'25)

FilmNation **Dina Zhanybekova** (C'25)

Get Lifted Productions **Ginger Fontenot** (C'24), Nakao-Miller Intern

Grandview **Julia Rotgin** (C'25)

Paramount **Margarita Matta** (C'25)

Tremolo Productions **Olivia Haynie** (C'24), Linn Intern

United Talent Agency **Lucy Gale** (C'25), **Eric Lieberman** (C'25)

THEATER

1812 Productions **Trisha Bheemanathini** (C'26)

Catulo Productions **Oscar Vasquez** (C'24)

Warner Brothers Theatre Ventures **Mame Balde** (C'25)

Support for RealArts@Penn Internships

RealArts@Penn Internships are made possible by a major gift from **Robin Wolpov** and **Marc Wolpov** (W'80), **Nina Rosborough** (C'14), and the **Arbour Way Foundation**; and endowments established by **Gideon Bernstein** and **Jeanne Pepper Bernstein** (in memory of **Blaze Bernstein**), **Bonnie Tannenbaum Eisler** (C'79) and **Clifford R. Eisler** (W'79), **Seth Ginns** (C'00) and **Jane Ginns**, **Missy Linn** (NU'91) and **Eric Linn** (W'92), **Cheryl K. Nakao-Miller** (W'81) and **Jimmy Miller**, and an anonymous donor. Additional support for RealArts@Penn Internships this year came from **Susanna Porter** (CW'75).



Digital Projects



PENNSOUND

With guidance from **Zach Carduner** (C'13) and **Magda Andrews-Hoke**, students developed their digital editing skills by processing materials for PennSound, our vast online archive of recorded poetry. **Leo Cohen** (C'26), **Zelda Kellogg** (C'25), and **Alex Moon** (C'24) segmented a series of recordings, including readings engineered by poet **Chris Funkhouser**, Vox Audio materials recorded in New Mexico by **Bruce Holsapple**, and files from the GIST reading series hosted by Belladonna* Press. **Ezinma Aguya** (C'27) and **Xihluke Marhule** (C'27) began to tackle a massive collection of tapes donated by **Pierre Joris** and **Nicole Peyrafitte**, as well as a host of recordings from the historical archives of **Charles Ruas**. And **Madeleine Song** (C'23) and **Madeline Chun** (C'27) helped process over 200 WAV recordings from the collection of **Eric Mottram** for a centennial celebration page launching in 2025. You can browse these and other audio and video recordings of poets reading their own poems by visiting PennSound at writing.upenn.edu/pennsound.



Since 2011, the KWH has produced *Jacketz* (jacketz.org), an online magazine that publishes essays, reviews, commentary, and podcasts about contemporary poetry. Our newly minted managing editor **Magda Andrews-Hoke** joined **Michael Hennessey**, **Zach Carduner** (C'13), and summer editorial assistant **Madeline Chun** (C'27) to develop a slate of reviews and articles for publication, including a wide-ranging feature honoring **Lyn Hejinian** (1941–2024) that gathered together sixteen reflections from her former students.



KWH community members produced an astonishing array of podcasts, interviews, and sound experiments in our Freddy Wexler Studio, a free and accessible recording studio in operation since 2015.

- **Sophia Hall** (C'27) helped Deaflympics athlete and American Sign Language performer **Justina Miles** record a voiceover accompaniment for her ASL-based TEDx Talk.
- **Leo Cohen** (C'26) engineered a series of roundtable-style podcasts produced by the students of **Chris Mustazza** (GEN'07, LPS'15, GR'19) in his popular podcasting class.
- **Gevorg Ghazaryan** (C'27) launched *Talking Environment*, an eco-conscious podcast that tackled clean air policy, environmental health advocacy, and other important environmental issues.
- Poet **Rachel Blau DuPlessis** recorded seventy-five sections of *Drafts* over the course of the year to complete an ambitious, interactive, audio version of her *Drafts* table, a project she started in the late 1980s.
- Poet **Murat Nemet-Nejat** visited for an extended recording session, reading from his collections *Turkish Voices*, *The Spiritual Life of Replicants*, *Animals at Dawn*, *Io's Song*, and a forthcoming book *Camels and Weasels*.
- English professor **Toni Bowers** contributed to our PennSound Classics collection by reading a large selection of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century poetry.
- **Makena Deveraux** (C'22) and **Magda Andrews-Hoke** helped produce a series of video discussions for ModPo, including a session on Leland Hickman's poem "The Hidden," featuring **Henry Steinberg** (C'13) and **Sophia DuRose** (C'20).
- Penn Classics professor **Emily Wilson** visited for a BBC interview about Odysseus's dog in her translation of *The Odyssey*.



MODPO

Tens of thousands of new and returning students joined us for ModPo, a massive open online course on modern and contemporary poetry, convened each fall by KWH Faculty Director **Al Filreis**, along with the phenomenal poet and teacher **Laynie Browne** and a team of tech wizards and teaching assistants. Integrated seamlessly into an undergraduate seminar held right here at the Writers House, ModPo is the largest ongoing free MOOC anywhere.

Dedicated ModPo participants, including over one hundred community teaching assistants from within our global community, once again flocked to ModPo's online forums, digital gathering spaces, and local in-person meet-ups. They led and joined freewheeling discussions about poetry, created flourishing micro-communities of readers, and participated in a joyous, ongoing, worldwide collaborative learning experience, first launched in 2012.

Weekly interactive webcasts — broadcast live from our Arts Café — allowed the far-flung ModPo community to participate in lively, real-time conversations about the course materials. **Magda Andrews-Hoke**, **Zach Carduner** (C'13), and **Chris Martin**, with assistance from **Sophia DuRose** (C'21) and Poetics Fellow **JS Wu** (GR'24), managed the complex, multiplatform configuration, balancing in-person discussion with contributions from people on social media, Coursera forums, and even by phone.

Special guests joined webcasts as well. The eminent poet and scholar **Rachel Blau DuPlessis** visited for a discussion about Imagism and the rise of Modernist poetry.

Longtime ModPo superstars **Davy Knittle** (GR'21) and **Kate Colby** dropped in for a conversation about the poetry of the New York School. A trio of Penn alumni — **Emily Harnett** (C'13), **Gabi Ojeda-Sagué** (C'16), and **Anna Strong Safford** (C'13) — joined for a session about chance poetry. Visual artist **Erica Baum**, whose stunning work is part of the ModPo curriculum, participated in a discussion about conceptualism in art and poetry. A special sojourn to Scotland allowed the ModPo crew to connect with friends and collaborators across the pond, including **Christie Williamson** at his Glasgow bookshop, and poets **Iain Morrison** and **Anthony Capildeo** at Edinburgh's Fruitmarket.

Sophia DuRose (C'21), who serves as a teaching assistant for the affiliated undergraduate seminar, described the ModPo community this way: "The devoted participants of ModPo have built communities of their own throughout the years, with new study groups blooming across the world every season. The art of conversation brings folks back year after year, with ModPoPLUS constantly expanding to include new and diverse poems from a litany of artists. The ModPo community loves poetry, but what they love most is what happens when they talk about poetry."

To explore everything ModPo has to offer, including a rich collection of video discussions, interviews, webcasts, and performances — cataloged, sorted, and tagged, thanks to a generous grant from long-time ModPo'er **Christopher Forman** — please visit modpo.org. We'd love to have you join the conversation!

Online book groups and mini-courses

Thanks to ongoing annual support from **David Roberts** (C'84), we once again hosted a robust series of popular and engaging online book groups and mini-courses, enabling members of the KWH community to come together in digital gathering spaces to talk about books, writing, and ideas. **Al Filreis** and **David Roberts** (C'84) convened a group to discuss Primo Levi's *The Periodic Table*, a memoir of the years before and after Levi's deportation to Auschwitz. **Rachel DuRose** led a conversation about the history of journalism, looking at clips from multiple major news sources. **Kevin Varrone** organized two sessions focused on poetry, one on "walk poems," the other about sea lyrics and coastal odes. **Dylan Leahy** (C'16) led a discussion just in time for Halloween that paired Clive Barker's short story "The Forbidden" with the horror film *Candyman*. **Jesse Schwartz** (C'15) moderated a group about Patricia Highsmith's *The Price of Salt*, billed to participants as "the best American Christmas novel." **Jamie-Lee Josselyn** (C'05) convened a group of high school students to talk about writing by Penn faculty members. And a group of ModPo teaching assistants — including **Kate Colby**, **Mandana Chaffa** (W'87), **Irene Torra Moledano**, and **JS Wu** (GR'24), organized a series of "SloPo" mini-courses on topics in American poetry, extending the work of ModPo into the spring, to encourage and support year-round learning communities.



Youth Writing Projects

Summer Workshop for Young Writers

A remarkable group of high schoolers joined us at the KWH in July to participate in our Summer Workshop for Young Writers, an intensive ten-day residential writing program led by **Jamie-Lee Josselyn** (C'05) assisted by **Jesse Schwartz** (C'15), **David Marchino** (C'16), and **Jules Lingenfelter** (C'26). The 2024 teen cohort came from as near as the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia and as far as California, Alabama, Louisiana, Florida, and Puerto Rico. And thanks to generous support from **Maury Povich** (C'62) and **Connie Chung**, half of the workshopers received full financial assistance to attend, including travel stipends.

The Summer Workshop offered a busy slate of KWH-style activities: craft projects, baking, button-making, an epic water balloon battle, and, of course, writing in a supportive community. Each morning during our jam-packed program, students gathered for a memoir workshop led by the core Summer Workshop team. In the afternoons, Penn faculty, staff, and alumni offered special craft sessions on a variety of topics and literary modes, such as food writing, AI-enabled storytelling, procedural poetry, letterpress printing, comics, narrative collage, and close reading. Workshop leaders included **Sophia DuRose** (C'21), **Isaac Essex** (C'20), **Heidi Kalloo**, **Alli Katz**, **David Marchino** (C'16), **Kristen Martin** (C'11), **Kaitlin Moore** (C'18), **Jessica Peterson**, **Karen Rile** (C'80), and

Jesse Schwartz (C'15), with organizational support from **Laura Blake** in the Center for Programs in Contemporary Writing.

We left plenty of time for other kinds of exploration too. Our top-tier, tireless Resident Assistants **Meg Gladieux** (C'23, GSE'24) and **Lyn Donnell** (C'24) led a Saturday afternoon adventure on South Street, with stops at the Magic Gardens, Ishkabibble's, and Rita's Italian Ice. KWH staffer **A.B. Wren** organized a tie-dye session in the Class of 1942 Garden. And **Micaela Beigel** from Penn Admissions hosted a conversation about the college application process.

On the final night of the program, after hours of writing, revision, and collaborative feedback, our Summer Workshopers presented some of their best writing in the KWH Arts Café to a roomful of collaborators and friends.



Middle school students consider Emily Dickinson

Sophia DuRose (C'21) welcomed a group of middle school students from Penn Alexander for a discussion of Emily Dickinson's poem "The Brain, within its Groove." Small groups of students worked together to puzzle out Dickinson's meaning, line by line. Is it possible to put a flood back in place once unleashed? What kind of splinter might cause a brain to "swerve" — and what does that mean anyway? By the end of the session, the middle schoolers had identified the mighty force at heart of the poem: *creativity*. "It was one of the most energetic close-reading sessions I've ever been a part of," said DuRose.



Cosmic Writers field trips

We partnered with Cosmic Writers, a nonprofit youth writing project founded by **Rowana Miller** (C'22), to offer field trips to the KWH for students at Philadelphia-area public schools. Coordinated by our Levin Outreach Coordinators **Dylan Fritz** (C'25) and **Delaney Parks** (C'24), field trips included writing workshops developed and led by Penn undergraduates **Armie Chardiet** (C'25), **Celine Choi** (C'25), **Mmachi Ezigbo** (C'27), **Dedeepya Guthikonda** (C'26), **Sophia Hall** (C'27), and **Kelly He** (C'26). Our partnership with Cosmic Writers was made possible thanks to the Esther Saxon Fund, funded annually by **Jerilyn Saxon Perman** (C'91) and **Brian Perman** (W'90), and the **Levin Internship Fund**, endowed by **Kate Levin** (G'90, GR'95) and **Robin Shapiro**.



Recruiting high school writers

Through a massive team effort we engaged with a record number of prospective Penn students this year. Penn students, faculty, staff, and alumni pitched in to help us recruit promising high school writers to Penn.

Jamie-Lee Josselyn (C'05), our Associate Director of Recruitment, managed all of our efforts, including visits to high schools and writing programs all over the country. This year's recruitment trips included stops in Alabama, California, Louisiana, Maryland, New York, Ohio, and South Carolina.

At the KWH, a team of people — **Laura Blake**, **Sophia DuRose** (C'21), **Dylan Fritz** (C'25), and **Delaney Parks** (C'24) — met individually with prospective students and their families and helped visitors get a sense of our writing community.

A number of Penn alumni, staff, and friends of the KWH helped out as well by sharing news about the KWH within their networks, including *Adroit* editor **Peter LaBerge** (C'17), Cosmic Writers founder **Rowana Miller** (C'22), and **Crissy Iglesias** (GED'14) and other excellent colleagues in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions.

Are you a high school writer who'd like to learn more about creative writing at Penn? We want to hear from you! Email Jamie-Lee Josselyn at jjossely@writing.upenn.edu.

HOUSE of POSSIBILITY



EVIE SHOCKLEY
SUDDENLY WE
\$9

SIMONE WHITE
OR, ON BEING
THE OTHER WOMAN
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CHECK BOOKS

THIS BOOK IS
BANNED



Supporting the Kelly Writers House

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

Friends of the Writers House

We thank the following Friends for their generous support of the Kelly Writers House in 2023-2024:

- Marci Alboher, in honor of Al Filreis
- Sylvie Anglin
- Alonna Anspach
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- Sheriza Baksh
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- Donald Beetham
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- Camille Bradford, in honor of Al Filreis
- Samuel Brick, in honor of Al Filreis
- Hal Broderon and Laura Sanchez
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- Laynie Browne, in memory of Bernadette Mayer
- Ingrid Bruck, in honor of Al Filreis
- Beth Burrell
- William Burrison
- Marcia Camino, in memory of Michael Mason
- John Carroll and Rachael Paz

Internships, Apprenticeships, and Mentorships

The Anand-Priya Family Apprenticeship Endowed Fund supports summer apprenticeships at the Writers House. Nik Donoughe (C'25) spent the summer of 2024 learning HTML, developing design skills, and helping to prep for fall programming. *Endowed by Anand Balasubrahmanyam (ENG'94, W'94).*

The Bassini Apprenticeship Endowed Fund pairs undergraduates with professional writers for in-depth collaborative work. The Bassini Program supported four apprenticeships this year: Erica Messics (C'24) assisted Michelle Taransky with research into chatbots and AI; and Isabel Engel (C'25), Charissa Howard (C'26), and Rae Norman (C'24) worked with Lorene Cary (C'78, G'78) on #VoteThatJawn, a youth-led civic engagement project. *Endowed by Reina Marin (C'72, GED'72) and Emilio Bassini (C'71, W'71, WG'73).*

The Blaze Bernstein Memorial Endowed Fund was established in loving memory of Blaze Bernstein to fund internships in LA and food-related events at the KWH. This year the fund supported an internship for Isabelle Kauffman (C'25) at Brooklyn Films and fueled a number of foodie events at the KWH, such as the much beloved annual Edible Books party (delicious entries included James and the Giant Peach Cobbler, The Bluest Pie, and Thyme and Bunishment). *Endowed by Gideon Bernstein and Jeanne Pepper, and the Writers House Community, with additional support this year from Jessica Lowenthal and Ryan Godfrey.*

The Caryn Karmatz Rudy and Lee Rudy Endowed Fund for Student Internships

and Opportunities provides funding for student learning opportunities in editing and publishing. We look forward to naming two Karmatz Rudy interns in the 2024-2025 academic year. *Endowed by Caryn Karmatz Rudy (C'92) and Lee Rudy (C'92).*

The Eisler Endowed Internship Fund supports RealArts@Penn Internships in arts organizations, cultural institutions, and creative companies. In summer 2024, Alex Yim (C'25) interned at the Morgan Library and Museum in New York. *Endowed by Bonnie Tannenbaum Eisler (C'79) and Clifford R. Eisler (C'79).*

The Elissa Caterfino Mandel Internship Endowed Fund supports internships in magazine editing. This year Madeline Chun (C'27) served as an editorial assistant for our own *Jacket2* magazine under the guidance of KWH Digital Projects Coordinator Magda Andrews-Hoke. *Endowed by Elissa Caterfino Mandel (C'83).*

The Ginns RealArts Internship Endowed Fund supports RealArts@Penn Internships in arts organizations, cultural institutions, and creative companies. In summer 2024, Catherine Sorrentino (C'25) interned at the Library of Congress. *Endowed by Seth Ginns (C'00) and Jane Ginns.*

The Jean Chatzky Fund for Student Internships in Business Journalism supports semester-time internships in business writing, reporting, and journalism. Victoria Feng (C'26), our inaugural Chatzky Intern, reported on tech business for ABC News. *Endowed by Jean Sherman Chatzky (C'86).*



The Kate Levin Community Outreach Internship Endowed Fund allows students to participate in writing-based community service efforts. We had two Levin Interns this year, Dylan Fritz (C'25) and Delaney Parks (C'24), who coordinated workshops and field trips for Cosmic Writers. *Endowed by Kate Levin (G'90, GR'95) and Robin Shapiro.*

The Lipson Fellows for Studio Production Endowed Fund helps students develop expertise in AV production and editing by supporting learning opportunities in the Wexler Studio of the Writers House. This year's Lipson Fellows were Élan Martin-Prashad (C'27), Alex Moon (C'24), and Andrew Qiu (C'26). *Endowed by Howard A. Lipson (W'86).*

The Maury Povich RealArts Internship Prize Fund helps make internship opportunities accessible by supporting students who have secured unpaid or modestly paid internships at cultural institutions, arts organizations, or creative companies. The Povich Fund supported eleven opportunities in the summer of 2024, including at the Barnes Foundation and The Tonight Show. *Endowed by Maury Povich (C'62) and Connie Chung.*

The Missy and Eric Linn RealArts Internship Endowed Fund supports RealArts@Penn Internships in arts organizations, cultural institutions, and creative companies. Olivia Haynie (C'24) interned at independent publisher Spiegel & Grau in summer 2024. *Endowed by Eric Linn (W'92) and Missy Bechler Linn (NU'91).*

The Norma Grace Miller RealArts Internship Fund supports RealArts@Penn Internships in arts organizations, cultural institutions, and creative companies. Ginger Fontenot (C'24) interned in summer 2024 at Get Lifted Productions. *Endowed by Cheryl K. Nakao-Miller (W'81) and Jimmy Miller.*

The Peter Stallybrass RealArts Internship Fund supports RealArts@Penn Internships in arts organizations, cultural institutions, and creative companies. Chenyao Liu (C'27) served as our inaugural Stallybrass Intern with an internship at the Museum of the Moving Image. *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*

The RealArts Internship Fund helps students make meaningful connections beyond the university, particularly through paid summer internships at arts organizations and cultural institutions. RealArts@Penn awarded twenty-two internships in the summer of 2024, sixteen of which were supported through the RealArts Internship Fund. *Supported annually by Robin Wolpov and Marc Wolpov (W'80), Nina Rosborough (C'14), and the Arbour Way Foundation, with additional support this year from Susanna Porter (CW'75).*

The RealArts Program Fund supports the core mission of the RealArts@Penn project: mentoring undergraduates. With the help of this fund, we create a series of informal opportunities for undergraduates to meet with alumni working in creative fields. *Supported annually by the Friends of the Writers House.*

The Stacey Gillis Weber (W'85) and Jeffrey A. Weber Apprenticeship Endowed Fund supports undergraduate apprentices at the Writers House, where they learn specialized skills associated with running a busy arts hub. This year, Zoe Lachter (C'27) worked with our development and finance team. *Endowed by Stacey Gillis Weber (W'85) and Jeffrey A. Weber.*

Friends of the Writers House

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- Janine Catalano
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- Steven Ivanic
- Charmaine Curtis Jacobs
- Leigh Jacoby
- Jeffrey Jubelirer
- Betti Kahn
- Benita Kape

Awards and Prizes

The Beltran Family Teaching and Mentorship Award Endowed Fund celebrates outstanding teachers of creative writing. 2024 Beltran Award winner Max Apple convened four of his former students to read from their newest work. *Endowed by John Paul Beltran and Lina Beltran.*

The Kerry Sherin Wright Prize Endowed Fund honors the literary communitarianism of Kerry Sherin Wright, the first director of the KWH. 2024–2025 Kerry Prize winner Mmachi Ezigbo (C’27) will develop a series of writing workshops led by authors from marginalized backgrounds. *Endowed by Faculty Director Al Filreis with additional gifts this year from Jo Ann Boyko and David Boyko; Susan Chun; Xuerong Gao and Lingfeng He; Karen Martin and Isvar Prashad; Stephen Metcalf and Koethi Zan; Marc Rovner (C’74) and Laurie Rovner, in honor of Al Filreis and Andrew Beal; Melinda Young and Craig Young; and anonymous friends.*

The Leslie Dezer Salmon and Ricardo Salmon Junior Fellows Prize Endowed Fund encourages young alumni to stay in Philadelphia post-graduation and develop their creative work. Our 2024–2025 Salmon Fellow Meg Gladieux (C’23, GED’24) will research and travel to develop essays about her father’s life. *Endowed by Leslie Dezer Salmon (W’92) and Ricardo Salmon (W’93).*

The Michael Goldstein and Danielle Goldstein Endowed Prize recognizes excellent writing projects proposed by undergraduates. We selected two Goldstein Prize winners this year: Cathy Li (C’25), who will develop a long-form reported feature on the loneliness epidemic, and Katie Hindle (C’26), who will write a series of poems modeled after work by Harryette Mullen. *Endowed by Michael Goldstein and Danielle Goldstein.*

The Parker Prize Endowed Fund for Journalistic Nonfiction celebrates excellence in student journalism. The 2023–2024 Parker Prize went to Hannah Sung (C’26) and Jules Lingenfelter (C’26) for an investigative piece about academic freedom and free speech at Penn. *Endowed by Bret Parker (C’90) and Katharine Parker.*

The Terry B. Heled Travel and Research Grant Endowed Fund enables students to undertake significant travel-based research and writing projects. We awarded two grants this year: Armie Chardiet (C’25) will interview elite distance runners in Colorado and Switzerland; Daniel Gurevitch (C’24) will travel to France to hand deliver a series of thank you letters. *Endowed by Mali Heled Kinberg (C’95, G’95) in memory of her mother Terry B. Heled.*

The Universe in Verse Prize Term Fund encourages projects that explore intersections of poetry and science. 2024 winner Irma Flóra Kiss (C’25) will handcraft a chapbook of poetry that traces the history of the speculum. *Supported annually by Maria Popova (C’07).*



Projects

The Brodsky Gallery Endowed Fund enables the work of the Brodsky Gallery, an art installation space integrated with the first floor of the KWH. Brodsky Gallery curator Lila Shermeta (C’25) organized two exhibits this year, including an ambitious city-wide student photography show. *Endowed by Michael Brodsky (W’88) and Heidi Hookman Brodsky (C’89).*

The Creative Ventures Fund enables KWH community members to pursue their most ambitious creative projects and ideas. Established in 2011, this robust fund once again supported an extraordinary range of activities and happenings, including immersive performances, culinary exploration, DIY publishing projects, interdisciplinary research, explorations of AI and digital media, sustainability work, and more. Creative Ventures practitioners included Lorene Cary (C’78, G’78), whose memoir *Ladysitting* was staged as a play by the Arden Theatre Company; Anthony DeCurtis, who hosted a series of musicians and music critics; and student filmmakers, who produced spectacular work for our first annual Five-Minute Film Festival. See page 8 for a list of some of the innovative projects made possible by Creative Ventures. *Supported annually by Robin Wolpow and Marc Wolpow (W’80), Nina Rosborough (C’14), and the Arbour Way Foundation.*

The Herman and Jeanne Robinson Letterpress Endowed Fund helps students discover and explore print culture at the Common Press studio, with guidance from press director Jessica Peterson. Each year, the press generates dozens of broadsides and postcards for KWH events. *Endowed by Nina Robinson Vitow (CW’70, WG’76) in memory of Herman Robinson and Jeanne Robinson.*

The Kelly Writers House Fellows Endowed Fund makes permanent the Kelly Writers House Fellows Program, a project that allows young writers unparalleled access to eminent writers, through a series of intimate discussions, public events, and a unique undergraduate seminar held in the KWH. Standing-room-only audiences queued up to meet our 2023–2024 KWH Fellows, a truly blockbuster line-up: novelist Jamaica Kincaid, poet Harryette Mullen, and multigenre writer Maggie Nelson. See page 11 for more details. *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*

The Kneelely Digital Ventures Endowed Fund supports a teaching assistant for ModPo, the massive open online course on modern and contemporary poetry led by KWH Faculty Director Al Filreis. Poet and scholar Jason Zuzga (GR’16) served as our 2023–2024 Kneelely TA, delighting the ModPo community with his characteristic “conceptual brilliance.” *Endowed by Jean-Marie Kneelely and Richard J. Kneelely.*

The 1997 Kelly Writers House Fellows Fund provides crucial annual funding for the Kelly Writers House Fellows program, through which students interact with eminent writers in a series of discussions, public events, and a unique undergraduate seminar. Our 2023–2024 KWH Fellows were Jamaica Kincaid, Harryette Mullen, and Maggie Nelson. *Supported annually by an anonymous donor.*

The Online Projects Fund supports ModPo, our massive open online course on modern and contemporary poetry. In 2023–2024, the fund allowed us to hire two teaching assistants to help with the course, Ali Castleman (C’13), who was a founding member of the ModPo team, and Sophia DuRose (C’21), who also assisted with course administration. *Supported annually by an anonymous donor.*

The Richard and Lucy Cook Endowed Fund for Digital Ventures supports ModPo, our massive open online course on modern and contemporary poetry. In 2023–2024, the Cook Fund allowed us to hire the remarkable poet Kate Colby as a teaching assistant. *Endowed by Lucy (Oh) Cook (C’95) and Dr. Richard Cook.*

The Writers House Journal Endowment Fund supports *Jacketz*, a magazine of poetry and poetics housed at the KWH since 2005. *Jacketz* is home to a number of ongoing commentaries and podcasts about poetry, including *PoemTalk*, which recorded its 200th episode this year. *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*

The Zarin/Rosenfeld Endowed Fund for the Literary Journalism Magazine nurtures journalistic talent by making possible the publication of substantial nonfiction writing by Penn students. In 2023–2024, the fund supported the activities of the *Moviegoer*, a student-led film magazine. *Endowed by Judith Zarin and Gerald Rosenfeld.*

- John Keene
- David Kermani
- Susan Kerr
- Carla King
- Leslie King, in honor of Kaitlin Moore
- Clifford Klein and Linda Reisz
- Steven Kleinman, in honor of Al Filreis
- Kathleen Knight
- Deborah Komins
- Jacob Kraft
- Marilyn Kraut and David Kraut, in honor of Al Filreis
- Stephen Krewson
- Stephen Krewson and Stina Krewson, in honor of Stephen and Susannah Krewson
- Sharon Kunz
- Moira Kuo
- Peter Kussell
- Joanna La Corte
- Jeroen Lagendijk
- Scott Lanman
- Sandra Lau and Karl Feng
- Judith Leader, in honor of Al Filreis
- Ilene Leff, in honor of Al Filreis
- Veronica Lemcoff
- Jennifer Levin
- Edward Levitt
- Judd Levy, in honor of Al Filreis
- Christina Lief
- Holly Lingenfelter and Thor Lingenfelter
- Laura Lippman
- Ronald Litman
- Jonah Lowenfeld
- Ken Lum
- Jim Lynch
- John MacDermott
- Alexandra MacDowell and Dale Djerassi, in honor of Francesca DeCurtis
- Anita Maddali
- John Majane
- Alan Margolis
- Nicole Marshall
- Jordan Martin, in memory of Richard Weil
- Karen Martin and Isvar Prashad
- Mehrin Masud-Elias, in memory of Mr. Masud Ahmed
- Barbara Matteucci
- Don Matzkin
- Luke Mazur
- Cecile Mazzucco-Tham
- Rachel Belkin McMenamin
- Paige Menton
- Marcie Merz
- Gerald Miller and Harriet Miller
- Suzanne Miller
- Joann Mitchell
- Wynne Morrison



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Foundational Support

The Possibility Endowed Fund supports all the activities of the Writers House: celebratory gatherings, public events, online projects, student initiatives, outreach projects, and more. The capaciousness of the Possibility Fund reflects a founding principle of the KWH as a “House of Possibility,” a place for intellectually adventurous initiatives, collaborative work, and a learner-centered approach. Anyone can contribute to the Possibility Fund in any amount, with gifts being matched by an anonymous donor. See pages 30–31 for a list of all of our Possibility Fund supporters.

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

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

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

The Faculty Director’s Discretionary Fund enables KWH Faculty Director Al Filreis to seek out, encourage, and invest in talent and ideas. The fund enabled several special projects this year. Sophia Hall (C’27) and Dubois Stewart

(C’24) visited Harvard’s Hutchins Center to view the papers of Jamaica Kincaid. Leo Biehl (C’25) conducted archival research in California to develop a reported story about William Gibbs McAdoo. Lila Shermeta (C’25) convened an “Anti-TED Talk,” a fluid discussion about alternative approaches to teaching and learning. Supported this year by *Jon Avnet (C’71) and Barbara Avnet; David Bender; Leah Cianfrani, in memory of Dr. Peter Cianfrani; Charles Downey (W’86) and Christina Downey; Lois Filreis; Bret Hovell (C’04); Reina Marin (CW’72, GED’72); Sharon Paul (C’90) and Brian Paul (W’90); Matthew Seigel (C’05); Mark Sherman (C’95) and Rachel Sherman (C’95); and David Sinclair*.

The Faculty Director Endowed Fund helps to guarantee the future of the Writers House by providing unrestricted support for *everything we do*. This extraordinary fund allows the Faculty Director of the Writers House to channel support precisely where it is most needed. Endowed by *an anonymous donor*.

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

The Hartman Dining Room Endowed Fund names the dining room of the Writers House, home of memorable meals with visiting writers, writing workshops, late-night study sessions, and gatherings of all kinds, including spontaneous Bananagrams tournaments. Endowed by *Kim Hartman and Alan Hartman (W’87)*.

The Jamie Albrecht Memorial Endowed Fund for Student Initiatives celebrates the life of Jamie Albrecht (C’22), who was a devoted citizen of the Writers House community. The Albrecht Fund supported a wide range of projects this year, including the Body Electric, a welcoming student-led poetry collective; *The Penn Review*, Penn’s longest-running literary magazine; and the Fiber Arts Collective, a group of knitters and threadsmiths who worked together to complete a communal blanket. Supported this year by *Mark Albrecht and Teresa de Castro, Sylvie Anglin, Pablo DeCastro, Lucia Herdelin, and The Albrecht Family*.

The Kane-Wallace Kitchen Endowed Fund names the kitchen of the Writers House, the scene of baking adventures, informal meet-ups and coffee breaks, prep for our famous homemade receptions (over one hundred this year!), and good conversation. Endowed by *Ed Kane (C’71, Trustee 1996–2000) and Marty Wallace*.

The Karlan Family Writers Alcove Fund names the alcove-home of the green couch, where generations of Kelly Writers House students have gathered, talked, worked, and napped. The couch represents all that is the best of our House. Endowed by *the Karlan Family*.

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

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS CIRCLE

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Susan Albertine	Stephen Gerkin, in honor of Paul Hendrickson	Elinor Sharon Nathanson
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Derek Arthur	Marnie Gordon and Adam Frank	Neil Plakcy
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David Bender	Deborah Greenberg, in honor Al Filreis	Maria Rieders
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Megan Bly and Scott Wunsch	Michael Herzlin, in honor of Al Filreis and of Jessica Lowenthal	Stanley Sabre and Resha Sabre, in honor of Al Filreis
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Sara Coelho	Judith Lagana and Anthony Lagana	Barbara Tilley
Rev. Blayne Charles Colmore	Noah Laracy and Susannah Laracy	Alex Tokar
John Conley	Kenneth Levitan and Elena Levitan	Jane Treuhaft, in honor of Alli Katz
Matthew Corey	Jessica Lowenthal and Ryan Godfrey	Ellen Umansky and David Gutman
Colleen Davis	Vijayalaxmi Maddali	Laura Walsh
Murray Dubin and Libby Rosof	Elaine Maimon and Mort Maimon, in memory of Bob Lucid	Tim Waples, in honor of Al Filreis
Andrew Dulberg and Rachel Dulberg, in honor of Paul Hendrickson	Peter Manda	Zarine Weil, in memory of Richard Weil
Robin Cohn Ebenstein	Holly McLaughlin and Kevin McLaughlin	Liliane Weissberg
John Fadely	Stephen Metcalf and Koethi Zan	Anne Wellner de Veer
Michelle Falkoff	Ilana Miller	Eleanor Wilner and Robert Wilner
Ronald Fellman and Nancy Fellman, in honor of Dr. Melissa Fellman and of Al Filreis	Michael Miller	Jerald Winakur and Lee Robinson
Catherine Fisher Field	Jenny Ford	Amanda Wolkin and Seth Furman
Lois Filreis		Anonymous, in honor of Al Filreis
Luellen Fletcher		Anonymous



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 Delores Wright
 Melinda Young and Craig Young
 Michael Zuckerman
 Anonymous, in honor of Al Filreis
 Anonymous, in honor of Bobby and of Mr. Ranabir Mitra
 Anonymous donors

Outreach / Beyond the Campus

The Anonymous Digital Poetries Endowed Fund supports our efforts to produce, archive, and distribute recordings of poetry, interviews and discussions with poets, and other digital materials focused on poetry and poetics. This year, the fund supported the work of ModPo, our open online course on modern and contemporary poetry, and PennSound, our vast digital archive of recorded poetry. *Endowed in 2022 by an anonymous donor.*

The Digital Projects Fund supports several interrelated core projects of the Writers House, including PennSound, the world's largest digital archive of poetry; *Jacket2*, a journal of poetry and poetics; and ModPo, a massive open online course on modern and contemporary poetry. The fund helps to expand the community of the Writers House around the world. *Supported this year by Eric Albert, E.B. Fouts-Palmer, Ken Haas, Jean-Marie Kneelely and Richard Kneelely, Jeroen Lagendijk, Vijayalaxmi Maddali, Jessica Philpott, David Roberts (W'84) and Debbie Roberts, Susan Small Savitsky (CW'75) and Gerald Savitsky, and Susan Scheid.*

The Esther T. Saxon Term Fund supports writing workshops for children and youth, including field trips developed in partnership with Cosmic Writers that bring kids from all over the city to KWH for workshops taught by Penn students. *Supported annually by Jerilyn Saxon Perman (C'91) and Brian Perman (W'90), in honor of Esther T. Saxon.*

The KWH Alumni Online Book Group Term Fund allows people from all over the world to join lively moderator-led online conversations about books and writing. This year's topics included Primo Levi's *The Periodic Table*, Patricia Highsmith's *The Price of Salt*, and a series of poems about the sea. *Supported annually by David Roberts (W'84) and Deborah Roberts.*

The Maury Povich Summer Workshop Endowed Fund provides financial assistance to more than half the participants in our Summer Workshop for Young Writers, a ten-day, immersive experience for high school writers, with daily writing classes, field trips around the city, and a taste of living on a college campus. *Endowed by Maury Povich (C'62) and Connie Chung.*

The Sayet-Rosenberg Endowed Fund for Young Writers supports the teaching and mentoring of young writers. This year, the fund made possible a special semester-long writing group led by Ellen Umansky (C'91) for young alumni in Brooklyn. *Endowed by Harold L. Rosenberg (W'79) and Dr. Laurie A. Sayet.*

The Student Recruitment and Access Endowed Fund supports our outreach efforts to high school writers, a major initiative of the KWH that helps connect high school students to our writing community. Thanks to the Access Fund, Jamie-Lee Josselyn (C'05), our Associate Director of Recruitment, travels all over the country to meet with prospective students. Through this important work, students discover opportunities at the KWH and Penn they might never have imagined. *Endowed by Kim Hartman and Alan Hartman (W'87).*

The Student Recruitment and Access Fund supports our efforts to recruit high school writers to Penn — particularly those who may believe Penn is beyond their reach financially, geographically, or otherwise. *Supported this year by John Carroll (C'05) and Rachael Paz (C'05); Janine Catalano (C'06); Alfred Dalton and Mark Dalton (W'83), in honor of Al Filreis; Alex Halpern (C'04); and Moira Kuo (C'06).*

Readings and Events

The Blatt Songwriting Symposium Endowed Fund allows us to invite legendary musicians for performances and discussions of their work. For this year's Blatt Symposium we welcomed John Mellencamp, one of the most highly respected singer-songwriters of his generation, whose career in music spans more than thirty-five years. *Endowed by Margo Krody Blatt and Mitchell J. Blatt (C'78, M'82, L'84, Trustee 1998–2008).*

The Bob Lucid Memorial Endowment Fund was established by friends of the Writers House in memory of Bob Lucid, a visionary teacher who helped inspire and structure our literary community. The 2023–2024 Lucid Program featured a reading by Alissa Nutting from her novel *Made for Love*. *Endowed by Susan Small Savitsky (CW'75) and Ed Kane (C'71, Trustee 1996–2000), and members of the KWH community.*

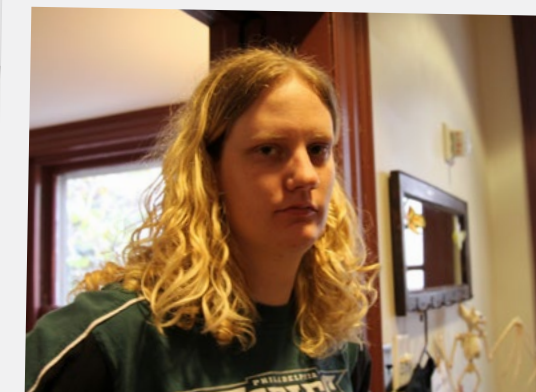
The Bok Endowed Visiting Writers Series Fund is a foundational programming endowment that sponsors public events and programs in all genres, allowing us to celebrate a full range of contemporary writing. Bok visitors this year included Mira Jacob, whose multi-modal and multi-genre work includes graphic novels; Katerina Derysheva, a displaced poet from Kharkiv, Ukraine who spent a semester at Penn; Joseph Earl Thomas, whose debut memoir *Sink* chronicles his coming of age in Philadelphia; and dozens of poets and scholars who joined *PoemTalk*, a lively roundtable discussion about poetry, hosted by Al Filreis. *Endowed by Scott Bok (C'81, W'81, L'84, Trustee 2005–2024) and Roxanne Bok (C'81).*

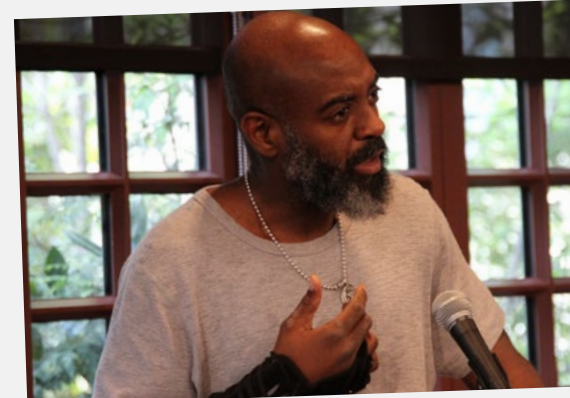
The Caroline Rothstein Endowed Fund in Support of Oral Poetry allows us to showcase performance poetry, spoken word, and other forms of oral poetry. In April we welcomed three alumni poets, Imani Davis (C'20), e.jin (C'21), and Wes Matthews (C'23), for a performance and discussion of their work, hosted by Sophie Huang (W'24). *Endowed by Nancy Rothstein (CW'75) and Steven Rothstein, in honor of their daughter Caroline Rothstein (C'06).*

The Cheryl J. Family Endowed Fund for Fiction Programming sponsors annual readings by young or emerging fiction writers. Our 2023–2024 Family Fiction Program featured a reading by Gemini Wahhaj (MTE'93) from her debut novel, *The Children of This Madness*. *Endowed by Cheryl J. Family (C'91).*

The Endowed Fund for Feminist Projects supports projects that focus on gender, sexuality, and feminist thought. In 2023–2024, the fund sponsored a panel discussion about art and parenting featuring Nate Chinen (C'97), Lauren Francis-Sharma (C'94), Natalie Eve Garrett (MFA'04), Aimee Koran (MFA'17), and Joseph Earl Thomas (G'24), moderated by Catherine Ricketts (C'09). *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*

The Eva and Leo Sussman Poetry Endowed Fund honors the memory of Eva and Leo Sussman, beloved grandparents of Daniel Morse, with an annual poetry program. Our 2023–2024 program featured memorable performances by poets Evie Shockley and Simone White. *Endowed by Daniel Morse and Miriam Morse, in memory of Eva and Leo Sussman.*





The Friedman Program for Eminent Fiction Writers Fund supports visits by renowned fiction writers, who share their stories and expertise with members of the KWH community. Our 2023–2024 Friedman Fiction Writer was author Alexander Chee, who joined KWH Faculty Director Al Filreis for a wide-ranging conversation about his career. *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*

The Hartman Family Screenwriting Series Endowed Fund gives aspiring filmmakers a taste of the writers' room. For this year's event we welcomed a group of young alumni screenwriters, all former students of Kathy DeMarco Van Cleve (C'88, W'88): Jay Elias (C'14), Benjamin Finkel (C'16, G'17), Isabelle Mecattaf (C'17), and Nihaar Sinha (W'14). *Endowed by Kim Hartman and Alan Hartman (W'87).*

The Irwyn and Lucy Applebaum Endowed Fund sponsors conversations with publishers and editors. This year, aspiring editors and publishers attended a discussion about "little magazines" and indie journalism hosted by Jess Bergman (C'14) of *The Baffler*. *Endowed by Irwyn Applebaum (C'75) and Lucy Applebaum.*

The Levin Endowed Fund for an Annual Symposium in Memory of Charles Bernheimer supports a special annual program held in memory of Charles Bernheimer, curated by the KWH Associate Director of Programs. This year's Bernheimer Symposium featured cousins Jillian Tamaki and Mariko Tamaki in conversation about their graphic novel collaborations. *Endowed by Kate Levin (G'90, GR'95) and Robin Shapiro.*

The Liu Endowed Program Fund honors writing that describes immigrant experiences and transnational exchange. This year's Liu visitor, the Russian American poet Eugene Ostashevsky, participated in a series of events, including a translation workshop and an improvisational jam session (with Kevin Platt on bass and Paul Saint-Amour on guitar). *Endowed by Betty Liu (C'95).*

The LIVE at the Writers House Endowment supports the production of *LIVE at the Writers House*, a WXPN radio show produced at the KWH by Alli Katz and Zach Carduner (C'13). Episodes this year included a showcase of Youth Poets Laureate, a collaboration with Lorene Cary's #VoteThatJawn, and an eco-poetics feature for Penn's Climate Week. *Endowed by BigRoc.*

The Lucy F. DeMarco Endowed Fund for Youth Literature allows us to host conversations about literature for children and youth. In November, best-selling children's author Raj Haldar joined us for a presentation and reading from his latest picture book, *This Book is Banned*. *Endowed by Kathy DeMarco Van Cleve (C'88, W'88) in memory of Lucy F. DeMarco.*

The Maury Povich Journalism Program Endowment Fund permanently endows all of our nonfiction programming, a range of events and activities that includes readings, publications, craft talks, and mentor meetings with journalists, essayists, critics, and other writers of nonfiction. Over two dozen journalists and writers shared their expertise this year, including writers from *Fortune*, *The Infatuation*, *the New York Times*, *Philadelphia Magazine*, *Planet Money*, *Rolling Stone*, *The Today Show*,

Vox, the *Washington Post*, and elsewhere. The Povich Fund also supported *The Woodlands*, an ambitious student-led publication that combines journalism and creative writing to tell source-driven narratives. See page 9 for a complete list. *Endowed by Maury Povich (C'62) and Connie Chung.*

The Poetry Endowment Fund supports a wide variety of poetic activity, including readings, student writing projects, and collaborations between poets and other artists. Thanks to this fund we hosted a special memorial gathering in honor of poet Bernadette Mayer, who was a Kelly Writers House Fellow in 2018 and much admired by the KWH community. *Endowed by an anonymous donor.*

The Stacey Gillis Weber (W'85) and Jeffrey A. Weber Symposium Endowed Fund celebrates writing that illuminates the workings of business, finance, and economics. This year's Weber Symposium featured Pulitzer Prize-winner Gretchen Morgenson, who has been called by *The Nation* "the most important financial journalist of her generation." *Endowed by Stacey Gillis Weber (W'85) and Jeffrey A. Weber.*

The Sylvia W. Kauders Endowment Fund allows us to meet writers of nonfiction who visit for memorable conversations about their work. This year the Kauders Fund brought, among others, Fong Lee and Zeke Caligiuri, editors of *American Precariat: Parables of Exclusion*. *Endowed by Sylvia W. Kauders (CW'42).*

The Wexler Endowment Fund for Programs at the Kelly Writers House enables all kinds of readings, workshops, and creative projects. Events supported this year included a conversation with novelist Elizabeth Silver (C'01) about her novel *The Majority*, loosely based on the life of Ruth Bader Ginsburg. *Endowed by Gary Wexler and Nina Wexler.*

The Wexler Family Endowed Fund for Programs in Jewish Life and Culture helps us to celebrate Jewish literature, art, and culture. We were honored to host a multilingual event that brought together the work of Mireille Gansel and Zuzanna Ginczanka, two important European Jewish poets, for a discussion about translation, Holocaust history and remembrance, and poetry as witness. *Endowed by Gary Wexler and Nina Wexler.*





POSSIBILITY FUND CONTRIBUTORS

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

Maya Afilalo
 Susan Albertine
 Marci Alboher
 Irwyn Applebaum and Lucy Applebaum
 Derek Arthur
 Myrna Zeitlin Asher
 Sarah Auerbach
 Bita Bagheri-Dastgheib and Kourosh Dastgheib
 Dennis Barone and Debbie Barone
 Erica Baum
 Donald Beetham
 David Bender
 Carol Clampett Bergere
 Ed Bergman and Jen Bergman
 Charles Bernstein and Susan Bee Laufer
 Cara Bertron
 Adam Birnbaum
 Simone Blaser
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 Michael Boshes
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 Charles Cohen and Rebecca Binder Cohen
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Emily Dickinson's idea of "Possibility" is a founding principle of the Kelly Writers House. This is a House of Possibility: a place for intellectually adventurous initiatives, collaborative work, and a learner-centered approach.

\$10 million endowment campaign

To nurture and sustain the Writers House as a "House of Possibility" forever, we have embarked on a major endowment campaign: **The Power of Possibility**. Our goal: to raise \$10 million by May 2026, when we will celebrate our 30th anniversary.

Give to the Possibility Fund

You can help us sustain the Writers House forever with a gift — in any amount — to the Possibility Endowed Fund. **The Possibility Fund** will support all the activities of the KWH: programs and events, prizes and internships, and collaborative learning. You can join the alumni, parents, community members, students, and friends who have already committed to securing the future of our house by making a gift.

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You can double your impact by giving to the Possibility Fund. Thanks to a generous donor, each and every gift to the Possibility Fund will be matched dollar for dollar, up to one million dollars.

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Find out more

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

Become a Friend of the Kelly Writers House

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

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