

9-27-2002

## New Writing Series - Fall 2002

English Department

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# LECTURE SERIES COMMITTEE GRANT APPLICATION

PROVIDE 10 (TEN) COPIES, INCLUDING THE ORIGINAL.  
PLEASE PLACE A COPY OF THIS COVER SHEET ON TOP OF EACH COPY

I. Applicant/Organization: ENGLISH DEPARTMENT / NATIONAL POETRY FOUNDATION	
II. a. Responsible Organization Officer: STEVEN R. EVANS	
b. Title: ASST. PROFESSOR, COORDINATOR OF <u>NEW WRITING SERIES</u>	
c. Campus Address (include EMail and Telephone): 215 NEVILLE	
III. Summary of project: NEW WRITING SERIES • FALL 2002	Speaker(s); scheduled date (s):
12 Sep	Benjamin Hollander
19 Sep	Two New York School Films
26 Sep	Clayton Eshleman
03 Oct	Chinyere Grace Okafor
10 Oct	Chris Stroffolino
17 Oct	John Tranter + Brian Kim Stefans
24 Oct	Robin Blaser
29 Oct	Robert Creeley
14 Nov	Roberto Tejada + Alan Gilbert
19 Nov	Heather Fuller + Mark McMorris
Expand in fuller detail, a supporting statement with <u>detailed, itemized budget</u> . Funding for current application is contingent upon submission of detailed budget and attendance report for any previous years' grants.	
IV. a. Total funding required for program: .....	> 12,250
b. Amount committed by applicant organization: .....	> 7,250
c. Amount committed by/requested of (please indicate which) other funding sources: .....	> 5,000
d. Amount requested of Cultural Affairs/DLS Committee: .....	> 5,000
Signature of responsible organization officer/date: _____	<div style="text-align: center;">             SIGNATURE         </div> <div style="text-align: right;">           9-27-02            DATE         </div>

SPACE BELOW FOR COMMITTEE USE:

\$ 5,000

SEND COMPLETED APPLICATION TO: CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
C/O PRESIDENT'S OFFICE  
200 ALUMNI HALL

To: Cultural Affairs/Distinguished Lecture Series Committee  
From: Steven Evans, Asst. Professor of English  
Re: UMaine New Writing Series

I am writing on behalf of the English Department and the National Poetry Foundation to request the Committee's assistance in continuing the New Writing Series established in the spring of 2000. The \$5000 I am requesting for the fall semester of 2002 represents less than one half of the Series's operating budget (approximately \$12,250, not including social events); the remainder of the required funding will be provided by the English Department's Lloyd H. Elliott fund and by several small contributions made by other departments.

The primary objectives of the New Writing Series are (i) to make contemporary poetry a regular and valued part of the cultural life at the University of Maine, (ii) to broaden the University's local, national, and international reputation as a site of vibrant cultural exchange and creativity, and (iii) to cultivate links within the University as well as between the University and area secondary schools that foster imaginative approaches to thinking about contemporary poetry.

The programming for the fall semester began in mid-September (with capacity audiences of 70 people) and will consist of ten events by semester's end. The Series is fortunate to be hosting a diverse array of emergent and established writers, with poets from Nigeria (Chinyere Grace Okafor), Jamaica (Mark McMorris), Australia (John Tranter), Canada (Robin Blaser) and Israel (Benjamin Hollander) joining multicultural American writers like Brian Kim Stefans (Korean American) and Mexican American (Roberto Tejada).

Students of sexuality will be interested in the way gay identity is explored in writing by Robin Blaser and Roberto Tejada, and Heather Fuller and Chinyere Okafor each manifest a feminist consciousness in their otherwise quite distinct poetic projects. I am especially pleased by the concentration of younger writers in this season's schedule: Chris Stroffolino, Mark McMorris, Heather Fuller, Alan Gilbert, and Roberto Tejada all began their careers in the 1990s and they bring a distinctive generational perspective to the questions (social and political as well as aesthetic) that face them as writers. We'll also be exploring the nexus between poetry and the new media` this semester, especially in the week when two poets who also have become significant web-editors—John Tranter and Brian Kim Stefans—come to visit.

As I have argued in the past, our institution's reputation as a place for diverse and vital cultural voices depends on our ability to provide, in a consistent and insistently investigative manner, spaces where a democratic panoply of voices can be heard. I believe this season's schedule advances that goal, and I hope the committee will find it of sufficient interest to lend its support—so decisive and much appreciated in the past—to the project.

In the following pages I have included a full schedule of events, detailed expense estimates, and thumbnail bio-bibliographical descriptions of Series participants. If I can

provide any further information to the Committee, I hope you will not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Steve Evans  
Assistant Professor, English

p.s. I should note that steep increases for travel and accommodations have gone into effect recently and are reflected in my estimated budget.

Estimated Expenses for the Fall 2002 New Writing Series

	attendance	SS	Honorarium	Travel from	Travel Cost	Accomm.	Meals	Subtotal
Hollander	70	85465437	500	Boston	58	104	107.07	770
Film 1-rent	55		75					130
Film 2-buy			55					
Eshleman	70		1000	Detroit	own expense	208	250	
Okafor			100	Portland ME	25	104	100	
Stroffolino			500	SF	*500	104	100	
Tranter			500	NYC	*500	104	100	
Stefans			250	NYC	*500	104	100	
Blaser			750	NYC or Phila.	*500	156	100	
Tejada			500		*500	104	100	
Gilbert			500	NYC	*500	104	100	
Fuller			500	DC	*350	104	100	
McMorris			500	DC	*350	104	100	
			5730		*3783	1300	n/a	10813
Fixed Expenses:								
Soderberg	450							
Pub Affairs	378							
Poster Design	100							
Printer	286							
AV Services	225							
		1439						12252

*Cultural Affairs Committee*  
*including the*  
*Distinguished Lecture Series*  
*200 Alumni Hall*  
*University of Maine*

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October 7, 2002

To: Steven Evans

From: Kathleen March & François Amar, Co-Chairs

On behalf of the Cultural Affairs Committee, including the Distinguished Lecture Series, it gives me great pleasure to inform you that your proposal, New Writing Series, has been awarded \$5,000.00. **Please contact Wanda Legere at 1-1516 before your event takes place to arrange for disbursement of award funds.** Note: Reception and University of Maine System payroll expenses are not reimbursable through this award.

Please note that acknowledgment of the *Cultural Affairs Committee* is required on all promotional materials. **A budget report must be submitted at the conclusion of your event and will be considered for future funding requests.** It is assumed that projects are completed within 12 months, therefore, any remaining balance will be returned to the Committee account for further distribution unless otherwise notified.

The Committee notes that it does not fund more than 50% of the amount for any given program. It also asks applicants to consider the most reasonable honoraria possible, as there may not be funding for the higher amounts.

We, the members of the Cultural Affairs Committee, congratulate you and wish you much success on this project.

### Series Schedule: Reading & Talks

- 12 Sep Benjamin Hollander Reading  
13 Sep Hollander talk: "Rituals of Truce and the Other Israeli" (room TBA)

*Benjamin Hollander was born in Israel and emigrated to New York City in 1958, at the age of six. He has lived in San Francisco since 1978. His books include *The Book Of Who Are Was, How to Read, and Translating Tradition: Paul Celan in France* (editor). For the New Writing Series, he will be reading *Levinas and the Police*, a long poem from a manuscript entitled *Onome*, a work which has been called "a detective-poem, or poem-noir, a genre unto its own."*

- 19 Sep Poetry on Film: *Something Wonderful May Happen: New York School of Poets and Beyond* (dir. Lars Movin, Niels Plenge, and Thomas Thurah; 57min.) + Frank O'Hara Footage from 1966 NET Series USA: Poetry.

*Two views of the New York School of Poetry, scheduled in part to mark the passing of Kenneth Koch earlier this year. The first is a film that debuted last spring in New York and features interviews with John Ashbery, Charles Bernstein, David Lehman, Koch, and others. We'll also screen Frank O'Hara footage from the archives of the famous NET series on USA: Poetry, showing both the 15-minute segment originally aired in 1966 and the invaluable reel of outtakes.*

- 26 Sep Clayton Eshleman Reading  
27 Sep Eshleman talk: "At the Locks of the Void: Co-Translating Aime Cesaire"  
28 Sep Eshleman talk: "Upper Paleolithic Imagination & the Construction of the Underworld" (11am, English Department Reading Room)

*Clayton Eshleman has published thirteen volumes of poetry to date, all of them with Black Sparrow press. His most recent title is *From Scratch* (1998). He has edited two of the decisive literary magazines of recent times, *Caterpillar* (20 issues between 1967-1973) and *Sulfur* (46 issues between 1981-2000). Eshleman is a renowned translator of Aimé Cesaire and Cesar Vallejo, among others, and an expert on paleolithic art. A volume of essays and interviews, *Companion Spider*, is due this fall from Wesleyan.*

- 3 Oct Chinyere Grace Okafor

*Chinyere Okafor is a Nigerian writer and scholar presently living in Portland, where she is an Associate Professor of Women's Studies program at USM. Her books include *From Earth's Bed Chamber* (poems) and *He Wants To Marry Me and Other Stories*. Okafor's essays on drama, cultural studies, and post-colonial literature have appeared in *World Literature Today*, *Commonwealth: Essays and Studies*, and other journals and edited volumes. Her visit is being co-sponsored by the Women in the Curriculum/Women's Studies program.*

- 10 Oct Chris Stroffolino  
11 Oct Chris Stroffolino in Conversation

*Chris Stroffolino is the author of Stealer's Wheel (Hard Press) and Spin Cycle: Essays on Contemporary American Poetry as well as co-editor of the important Anthology of (New) American Poetry (Talisman).*

- 17 Oct John Tranter + Brian Kim Stefans  
18 Oct Tranter and Stefans talk: Poetry on the Web

*Australian poet, anthologist, and web-editor John Tranter published his first book in 1970. His most recent volume, Heart Print appeared from Salt Press in the U.K. last fall. Tranter's Jacket magazine (<http://jacketmagazine.com/index.html>) is the preeminent journal of innovative contemporary poetry on the web. Brian Kim Stefans first read in the New Writing Series in October of 2000. He is the author of Free Space Comix and the editor of arras: new media poetry and poetics (<http://www.arras.net/>). His book Fashionable Noise: On Digital Poetics will appear from Atelos Press in 2003.*

- 24 Oct Robin Blaser Reading  
25 Oct Robin Blaser and Robert Creeley in Conversation

*Robin Blaser was born in Colorado in 1925 and came to poetry in the company of Robert Duncan, Jack Spicer, and other poets of the so-called Berkeley Renaissance in the 1950s. He has lived since 1966 in Vancouver, where he is currently Professor Emeritus at Simon Fraser University. Blaser's life work, The Holy Forest, was published by Coach House in 1993. This fall, the National Poetry Foundation celebrates Blaser's poetic achievement with the publication of Even on Sunday: Essays, Readings, and Archival Materials on the Poetry and Poetics of Robin Blaser, edited by Miriam Nichols.*

- 29 Oct Robert Creeley Reading (note Tuesday event)  
30 Oct Carl Rakosi Audio Webcast (link via UPenn: details to follow)

*Robert Creeley returns to the UMaine English Department for his third year as a Distinguished Visiting Professor of Poetry and Poetics. Creeley was awarded the Lannan Lifetime Achievement Award for Poetry while at the UMaine last October, and he has since edited the 2001 edition of The Best American Poetry. His most recent collections are So There: Poems 1976-1983, Just in Time: Poems 1984-1994, and Life & Death. While on campus this semester, Creeley will teach a seminar on William Carlos Williams with Assistant Professor Carla Billitteri.*

- 14 Nov Roberto Tejada + Alan Gilbert Reading  
15 Nov Tejada and Gilbert talk: "Writing, Art, and Politics after 9/11"

*Roberto Tejada is a poet, essayist, critic, curator, and translator whose most recent book, Gift & Verdict, appeared from Renee Gladman's Leroy Press in San Francisco last year.*



*Throughout the 1990s, Tejada edited the outstanding bi-lingual journal Mandorla: New Writing from the Americas from Mexico City. Alan Gilbert's poetry has appeared in Sulfur, The Baffler, and First Intensity. He was a co-editor of the journal apex of the m in the 1990s and is now the Senior Editor for NYFA's newsletter, FYI.*

19 Nov Heather Fuller + Mark McMorris Reading (Tuesday event)  
20 Nov Heather Fuller and Mark McMorris in Conversation

*Heather Fuller's second book, Dovecote, came out with Edge Books earlier this year. She has been active in the Washington DC poetry scene for about a decade now and reviews frequently for The Washington Review. Her first book, perhaps this is a rescue fantasy, was published in 1997. Jamaican-born poet and scholar Mark McMorris is the author of Moth Wings (1996) and The Black Reeds (1997). He has a new book from U of Georgia forthcoming this spring. McMorris, an Assistant Professor at Georgetown University, has published poetry in Callaloo, New American Writing, Conjunctions, and other magazines. He has published a range of scholarly works, including articles on Louis Zukofsky in XCP and Sagetrieb: Poetry and Poetics after Modernism.*

### **Writers Categorized by Interest/Focus**

Writers who emerged in the 1990s: Heather Fuller, Mark McMorris, Pamela Lu, Chris Stroffolino, Roberto Tejada, Brian Kim Stefans, Alan Gilbert

Web / New Media: John Tranter, Brian Kim Stefans, Carl Rakosi webcast

Feminist / women's studies: Pamela Lu, Chinyere Grace Okafor, Heather Fuller

Magazine editors: Clayton Eshleman, Alan Gilbert, Brian Kim Stefans, John Tranter, Robert Creeley, Roberto Tejada

Multicultural/Postcolonial/International: Chinyere Grace Okafor (Nigeria), Mark McMorris (Jamaica), Pamela Lu (Asian American), Benjamin Hollander (Israel), Roberto Tejada (Mexico), Brian Kim Stefans (Asian American), John Tranter (Australia), Robin Blaser (Canada)

Canadian Literature: Robin Blaser

Gay, Lesbian, Bi, Trans: Robin Blaser, Roberto Tejada

Politics and poetry: Benjamin Hollander, Roberto Tejada, Chinyere Grace Okafor, Alan Gilbert, Heather Fuller, Robin Blaser

Philosophy and poetry: Robin Blaser, Benjamin Hollander

The New American Poetry (anthology): Robert Creeley, Robin Blaser, New York School films