

## Academic Program Assessment Report

### M.F.A. Program in Creative Writing & Translation

#### *Assessment Tools*

As outlined in our Academic Program Assessment Plan, the Program in Creative Writing and Translation uses the following assessment tools for student learning outcomes:

- A combined thesis defense and oral examination.
- A yearly review of each student's academic progress toward the M.F.A. degree.
- An indirect review of our graduates' professional success via published works, national program rankings, and anecdotal evidence.

#### *Assessment Results*

Thesis defense/oral exams: As of May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020, all 9 M.F.A. students eligible to graduate this spring had successfully written and defended a thesis manuscript that was deemed publishable by their thesis committees. Through oral examination, the committees were satisfied that graduating candidates were leaving the program with a broad knowledge of literature and technique.

Graduate success: In its latest ranking of M.F.A. programs, *Poets & Writers* placed the University of Arkansas M.F.A. program 8<sup>th</sup> in the nation (out of 150 programs) for job placement and 18<sup>th</sup> for post-graduate fellowships. Among the many accomplishments of our graduates this year,

- Graduating poet Jacob Lindberg has been awarded the \$25,000 McKnight Artists Fellowship from The Loft literary center in Minneapolis, MN.
- Graduating translator Anna Vilner will pursue a PhD in Comparative Literature at the University of Texas at Austin this Fall.
- Poet Chloe Honum's second collection, *THE LANTERN ROOM* was selected for publication by Tupelo Press.
- Poetry alum Brody Parrish Craig ('17) won the Omnidawn Poetry Chapbook Prize for their manuscript, *BOYISH*.
- Kimberly Driggers (Poetry, '15) won the Saluda River Prize for Poetry
- Molly Bess Rector's (Poetry, '17) poem, "Sussurus" was chosen as the winner of the Orison Anthology Award in Poetry. Her "Self-Portrait as Nuclear Fallout" was finalist in the 2019 Best New
- Second-year poet Samuel Binns was named the Buffalo National River's Artist in Residence.
- Adam Clay's (Poetry, '05) fourth collection of poems, *TO MAKE ROOM FOR THE SEA* was published by Milkweed Editions.

- Poet Amy Nawrocki's ('01) collection, *MOUTHBROODERS* was released by Homebound Press.
- For the second year in a row, Artists 360, a program of Mid-America Arts Alliance with the support of the Walton Family Foundation has recognized the excellent creative work of our current students with grant funding. Poetry students Samuel Binns and Peter Mason were awarded student grants, and alumni Keely Brice, Megan Downey, Traci Manos and Rodney Wilhite received individual project grants. Artists 360 is a three-year pilot program providing grant funding and professional development opportunities to individual artists of all disciplines in the Northwest Arkansas region.
- And hundreds of poems, stories, novels, essays, and translations by graduates were published by well-known presses and in journals such as *Jubilat*, *Ploughshares*, *The Southern Review*, *The Indiana Review*, *Tin House*, and *Beloit*, among others.

### *Use of Results*

Almost without exception, students in the M.F.A. program graduate within four years. These students produce publishable manuscripts, and many go on to prestigious post-graduate fellowships and residencies, as well as careers in teaching and writing.

In 2017, the Program in Creative Writing and Translation began teaching ENGL 2023, Creative Writing I, as a core course. Assessment data has consistently revealed that our student instructors are satisfactorily teaching the course according to stated student learning outcomes and are therefore gaining valuable teaching experience for their professional resumes.

Our literary journal, *The Arkansas International*, published its seventh and eighth issues. M.F.A. students comprise the editorial board of *The Arkansas International*, through which they're gaining significant professional experience in editing and publishing.