**CREATIVE WRITING REPORT FOR AUGUST 2021 FACULTY MEETING**

The Creative Writing Program consists of three core faculty: **PAUL GRINER** (fiction), **IAN STANSEL** (director; fiction), **KRISTI MAXWELL** (poetry).

**AXTON READING SERIES** Last year we hosted four visiting writers for virtual readings and master classes: Kristen Renee Miller, Mitchell L.H. Douglas, Janine Joseph, and Allen Gee, and we celebrated new book publications with readings from Paul Griner and Sarah Strickley.

Aubrie Cox is the outgoing Assistant Director, and Brittany Smart in the incoming AD.

For this year’s Axton Reading Series, we will host three to four guests, including: poet Joyelle McSweeney (Sept. 16), fiction writer Mateo Askaripour (Oct. 7), and poet Ilya Kaminsky (spring 2022).

In addition, we will host the winner of the **CALVINO PRIZE**, a prestigious award for fabulist fiction attracting over 200 entries each year from US and international writers, with the winner receiving a cash prize, publication in Miracle Monocleand an all-expense paid trip to read their story at the University of Louisville. The final judge in 2020 was **Joyce Carol Oates**. Matt Bell will judge this year’s contest.

Last academic year saw the publication of issues 15 and 16 of **MIRACLE MONOCLE**, in the fall and spring, respectively, with virtual launches that included readings from contributors. This year, in addition to putting out two more fabulous issues of the journal, Dr. Strickley and the student staff of MM will print and distribute its second micro-anthology, *MONSTER*, featuring new, original work by a number of poets and prose writers. This year will also include the tenth anniversary digital issue. Miracle Monocle also hosted two virtual (and well attended!) open mics over the academic year.

The 3rd annual **POETRY DERBY** hosted three free generative workshops online, in partnership with Louisville Literary Arts, and culminated in a virtual reading. The 4th annual Poetry Derby, in partnership with CCHS, JCPS, the Louisville Public Library, and the Kentucky Derby Museum, will take place in 2022 through a series of public workshops and culminating readings at the main branch of the public library and Kentucky Derby Museum.

The Creative Writing faculty has an eventful year. Among other accomplishments, Ian Stansel’s third book, *Glossary for the End of Days*, was published in fall 2020. Paul Griner’s latest novel, *The Book of Otto and Liam*, was published in spring 2021, and his stories and creative nonfiction appeared in *Oprah Daily, Lithub*, and *Chicago Review of Books*.

Sarah Strickley has a piece of pandemic flash in *The Rupture* this month and her third book of prose, *Incendiary Devices*, is under contract for a release in 2023. Her recently released novella, *Sister*, is now available as an e-book. Kristi Maxwell published 21 poems and gave a virtual lecture to kickoff International Poetry Month at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia.

**CREATIVE WRITING SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS**

The Creative Writing Committee selected twelve students to be supported in their studies with the tuition reimbursement afforded by scholarship funds, and two graduate students received genre-specific writing awards.

Our students once again represented well in Sarabande’s Flo Gault Poetry Prize, receiving second place (Grace Ann Rogers) and three of four honorable mentions (Bunny Morris, Grace Sutphin, and Vanessa Fuller).

Art Department Prof. Rachel Singel and Kristi Maxwell received a grant from the Sustainability Program’s Green Threads/Green Tapestries for poetry and printmaking students to collaborate on a broadside.