

THE RAINIER WRITING WORKSHOP
MFA @ PLU
Faculty Biographies

Rick Barot has published three books of poetry with Sarabande Books: *The Darker Fall* (2002), which received the Kathryn A. Morton Prize; *Want* (2008), which was a finalist for the Lambda Literary Award and won the 2009 Grub Street Book Prize; and *Chord* (2015), which received the UNT Rilke Prize, the PEN Open Book Award, the Publishing Triangle's Thom Gunn Award, and was a finalist for the *LA Times* Book Prize. He has received fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Artist Trust of Washington, the Civitella Ranieri Foundation, and Stanford University, where he was a Wallace E. Stegner Fellow and a Jones Lecturer in Poetry. He lives in Tacoma, WA and is an associate professor of English at Pacific Lutheran University and is the director of The Rainier Writing Workshop. He is the poetry editor of *New England Review*. For many years he was on the faculty of the MFA Program for Writers at Warren Wilson College. In 2017 he will be on the faculty of the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference.

Suzanne Berne is the author of four novels: *The Dogs of Littlefield*, *The Ghost at the Table*, *A Perfect Arrangement*, and *A Crime in the Neighborhood*, which won Great Britain's Orange Prize in 1999, as well as a book of nonfiction. She has written frequently for *The New York Times*, and her short stories, reviews and essays have also appeared in *Ploughshares*, *Agni*, *Vogue*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, and *The London Sunday Times* among other publications. She is the fiction editor for *The Harvard Review* and teaches creative writing at Boston College. [On Leave 2017-18.]

Linda Bierds' ninth book of poetry, *Roget's Illusion*, was published in 2014 by Putnam's. Her prizes include the PEN/West Poetry Award, two grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, four Pushcart Prizes, the Consuelo Ford Award from the Poetry Society of America, the *Virginia Quarterly Review's* Emily Clark Balch Poetry Prize, and fellowships from the Ingram Merrill Foundation and the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. In 1998 she was named a Fellow of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Bierds's poems have appeared in numerous publications, including *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *The Smithsonian*, and *Poetry*. She teaches at the University of Washington and lives on Bainbridge Island. [On Leave 2017-18.]

David Biespiel is a contributing writer at *The Rumpus*, *Partisan*, *American Poetry Review*, *Politico*, *New Republic*, *Slate*, *Poetry*, and *The New York Times*, among other publications. He is the author of numerous books of poetry, most recently *Charming Gardeners* and *The Book of Men and Women*, which was chosen one of the Best Books of the

Year by the Poetry Foundation and received the Stafford/Hall Award for Poetry. His books of essays include *A Long High Whistle: Selected Columns on Poetry* and a book on creativity, *Every Writer Has a Thousand Faces*. He is a member of the board of directors of the National Book Critics Circle. Recipient of Lannan, National Endowment for the Arts, and Stegner fellowships, he has taught at Stanford University, University of Maryland, George Washington University, Portland State University, and Wake Forest University, in addition to other colleges and universities. He is a longtime faculty member in the School of Writing, Literature, and Film at Oregon State University and is the founder of the Attic Institute of Arts and Letters in Portland.

Barrie Jean Borich's latest title is *Apocalypse, Darling*, a lyric narrative forthcoming in February 2018 from Ohio State University Press, the kickoff book in Machete: The Ohio State Series in Literary Nonfiction. She is the author of *Body Geographic* (University of Nebraska Press/American Lives Series), winner of a Lambda Literary Award in Memoir, an IPPY (Independent Publisher Book Award) Gold Medal in Essay/Creative Nonfiction and a 2013 IndieFab Bronze Award for Essays. In a starred review *Kirkus* called *Body Geographic* "an elegant literary map that celebrates shifting topographies as well as human bodies in motion, not only across water and land, but also through life." Borich's previous book, *My Lesbian Husband* (Graywolf), won the American Library Association Stonewall Book Award. Her work has been anthologized in *Waveform: Twenty-First Century Essays by Women* and in *After Montaigne: Contemporary Essayists Cover the Essays*, and has been cited in *Best American Essays* and *Best American Non-Required Reading*. She is the recipient of *The Florida Review* Editor's Prize in the Essay and the *Crab Orchard Review* Literary Nonfiction Prize, and her work has appeared in *Ecotone*, *The Seneca Review*, *Indiana Review*, *Hotel Amerika*, *TriQuarterly*, *Passages North*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Rumpus*. Borich is an associate professor in the English Department and MA in Writing and Publishing Program at DePaul University in Chicago. She leads writing workshops for graduate and undergraduate students at DePaul, teaches courses in LGBTQ memoir and the history and practice of the American literary magazine, and she edits *Slag Glass City*, a digital journal of the urban essay arts. A Chicago native, Borich lives with her spouse Linnea in the city's historic Bryn Mawr District of the Edgewater Beach neighborhood, one of the most culturally and internationally diverse community areas of the city and few blocks south of the condo where the fictional characters Bob and Emily Hartley of the Bob Newhart show resided.

Fleda Brown has published nine collections of poems. *The Woods Are On Fire: New & Selected Poems* was published in 2017 by the University of Nebraska Press. The book is in the Ted Kooser Contemporary Poetry Series. Her work has twice appeared in *The Best American Poetry* and has won a Pushcart Prize, the Felix Pollak Prize, the Philip Levine Prize, and the Great Lakes Colleges New Writer's Award, and has twice been a finalist for the National Poetry Series. Her memoir, *Driving With Dvorak*, was published in 2010 by the University of Nebraska Press. She is professor emerita at the University of Delaware, where she taught for 27 years and directed the Poets in the Schools program.

She was poet laureate of Delaware from 2001-07. She now lives with her husband, Jerry Beasley, in Traverse City, Michigan.

David Allan Cates is the author of five novels, most recently *Tom Connor's Gift*, a gold medalist in the 2015 Independent Book Publishers Book awards. His first collection of poetry, *The Mysterious Location of Kyrgyzstan*, was released in the spring, 2016. His other novels include: *Hunger in America*, a New York Times Notable Book, *X Out of Wonderland*, and *Freeman Walker*, both Montana Book Award Honor Books, and *Ben Armstrong's Strange Trip Home*, a gold medalist in the 2013 Independent Book Publishers Book Awards. The winner of the Montana Arts Council's Artist Innovation Award in 2010, his stories and poems have appeared in numerous literary magazines, and his travel articles in *Outside Magazine* and the *New York Times Sophisticated Traveler*. Cates is the executive director of Missoula Medical Aid, which leads groups of medical professionals to provide public health and surgery services in Honduras. In Missoula he has worked with the Missoula Writing Collaborative, teaching classes on short story writing in high schools, and the 406 writing workshop. For many years he worked as a fishing guide on the Smith River and raised cattle on his family farm in Wisconsin.

Kevin Clark's *Self-Portrait with Expletives* won the 2009 Pleiades Press book contest and is distributed by LSU Press. His first full-length collection of poetry, *In the Evening of No Warning*, was published by New Issues Press. His poems have appeared in numerous magazines and collections, including *The Antioch Review*, *The Georgia Review*, *Gulf Coast*, *Ploughshares*, *Crazyhorse*, and *The Iowa Review*. He also won the Angoff Award from *The Literary Review* for best contribution in a volume year. Kevin's textbook, *The Mind's Eye: A Guide to Writing Poetry*, is published by Pearson Longman. Having recently co-written a play with his son, he's presently working on a verse novel. Kevin has published essays about numerous contemporary American poets. His critical articles and reviews have appeared in many journals and collections, among them *The Iowa Review*, *Papers on Language and Literature*, *The Southern Review*, *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, *The Georgia Review*, and *Poetry International*. He was awarded the Distinguished Teaching Award at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, CA, where he teaches poetry writing and modern and contemporary American literature. Still attempting slow pitch softball and fast pitch baseball, he lives in San Luis Obispo with his family.

Oliver de la Paz is the author of four collections of poetry: *Names Above Houses*, *Furious Lullaby*, *Requiem for the Orchard*, and *Post Subject: A Fable*. He co-edited *A Face to Meet the Faces: An Anthology of Contemporary Persona Poetry*, and serves as the co-chair of the Kundiman advisory board. His work has been published or is forthcoming in journals such as *American Poetry Review*, *Tin House*, *The Southern Review*, and *Poetry Northwest*. He teaches at the College of the Holy Cross and in the Low-Res MFA Program at PLU.

Greg Glazner's books of poetry are *From the Iron Chair* and *Singularity*, both published by W.W. Norton. His awards include The Walt Whitman Award, The Bess Hokin Award from *Poetry*, and an NEA Fellowship. He has published recent poetry, fiction,

and non-fiction in magazines including *Poetry*, *Fifth Wednesday*, and the *Los Angeles Review of Books*. An electric guitarist as well as a writer, he has collaborated with the composer Garrett Shatzer on a blues-influenced piece in the art song tradition, *At the Blinds*, for which Greg wrote the text. Sung by the tenor David Saul Lee and accompanied by CityWater New Music Ensemble, with Greg on guitar, the piece premiered in November of 2014 at the Center for New Music in San Francisco and was recorded live. When he's not teaching at PLU or at UC Davis, he lives in Creede, Colorado with his partner, the writer Pam Houston.

Rigoberto González is the author of four books of poetry, most recently *Unpeopled Eden*, which won the Lambda Literary Award and the Lenore Marshall Prize from the Academy of American Poets, and eleven books of prose, including *Butterfly Boy: Memories of a Chicano Mariposa*, which received the American Book Award from the Before Columbus Foundation. The recipient of Guggenheim, NEA and USA Rolón fellowships, a NYFA grant in poetry, the Shelley Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America, The Poetry Center Book Award, and the Barnes & Noble Writer for Writers Award, he is contributing editor for *Poets & Writers Magazine* and writes a monthly column for NBC-Latino online. Currently, he is professor of English at Rutgers-Newark, the State University of New Jersey, and the inaugural Stan Rubin Distinguished Writer-in-Residence at the Rainier Writing Workshop. In 2015, he received The Bill Whitehead Award for Lifetime Achievement from the Publishing Triangle. As of 2016, he serves as critic-at-large with the *L.A. Times* and sits on the Board of Trustees of the Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP).

Kevin Goodan was born in Montana and raised on the Flathead Indian Reservation where his stepfather and brothers are tribal members. Goodan earned his BA from the University of Montana and worked as a firefighter for ten years with the U.S. Forest Service before receiving his MFA from University of Massachusetts-Amherst in 2004. Goodan's first collection of poetry, *In the Ghost-House Acquainted* (2004), won The L.L. Winship/ PEN New England Award in 2005. His other books include *Winter Tenor* (2009), and *Upper Level Disturbances* (2012), the forthcoming *Forward Observer: Prophecies* (2015), and *Let The Voices* (2015). Goodan has taught at the University of Connecticut, and has served as Visiting Writer at Wesleyan University. He is currently Associate Professor at Lewis-Clark State College and resides in Joel, Idaho.

Adrienne Harun is the author of a collection of stories, *The King of Limbo and Other Stories* (Houghton Mifflin 2002), a Sewanee Writers' Series selection and a Washington State Book Award finalist, and a novel, *A Man Came Out of a Door in the Mountain* (Penguin 2014), winner of the 2015 Pinckley Award for Debut Crime Fiction. In addition, for over twenty years, she has worked on the editorial side of publishing. Adrienne is also on the faculty of the Sewanee School of Letters at the University of the South. [On Leave 2017-18.]

Jim Heynen, best known for his short-short stories about “the boys,” has also published poems, novels, and nonfiction. His stories about the boys have been featured often on National Public Radio’s *All Things Considered*, as well as on radio in both Sweden and Denmark. The most recent collection of these stories, *The Boys’ House*, was named Editors’ Choice for Best Books of 2001 by *The Bloomsbury Review*, *Newsday*, and *Booklist*. Heynen lived for many years in the Northwest and received a Northwest Booksellers Award for one of his story collections, *You Know What Is Right*. He has received National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships in both poetry and fiction and in 1978 was selected as a US/UK Bicentennial Exchange Fellowship to England. He has published two YA novels with Henry Holt, and his novel, *The Fall of Alice K*, was published by Milkweed Editions in 2013. A new book of short-shorts, *Ordinary Sins: After Theophrastus*, was published by Milkweed Editions in 2014. Heynen lives in St. Paul, Minnesota. [On Leave 2017-18]

David Huddle holds degrees from the University of Virginia, Hollins College, and Columbia University. Originally from Ivanhoe, Virginia, he taught for 38 years at the University of Vermont, then served three years as Distinguished Visiting Professor of Creative Writing at Hollins University. He also held the 2012-2013 Roy Acuff Chair of Excellence in the Creative Arts at Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee. Huddle has continued to teach at the Bread Loaf School of English in Ripton, Vermont, and the Rainier Writing Workshop in Tacoma, Washington. In 2014 he will join the faculty of the Sewanee School of Letters. Huddle’s work has appeared in *The American Scholar*, *Esquire*, *Appalachian Heritage*, *The New Yorker*, *Harper’s*, *Shenandoah*, *Agni*, *River and Sound Review*, *The New York Times*, *Field*, *Poetry*, *The Harvard Review*, *The Kenyon Review*, *TriQuarterly*, and *The Georgia Review*. His novel, *The Story of a Million Years* (Houghton Mifflin, 1999) was named a Distinguished Book of the Year by *Esquire* and a Best Book of the Year by the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*. His novel, *Nothing Can Make Me Do This*, won the 2012 Library of Virginia Award for Fiction and his collection, *Black Snake at the Family Reunion*, was a finalist for the 2013 Library of Virginia Award for Poetry and won the 2013 Pen New England Award for Poetry.

Jenny Johnson is the author of *In Full Velvet*, published by Sarabande Books in 2017. Her many honors include a 2015 Whiting Award and a 2016-17 Hodder Fellowship at Princeton University. She has also received awards and scholarships from the Blue Mountain Center, Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference, and Virginia Center for the Creative Arts. She received her MFA from the Program for Writers at Warren Wilson College. Her poems have appeared in *The Best American Poetry 2012*, *New England Review*, *Troubling the Line: Trans and Genderqueer Poetry and Poetics*, and elsewhere. She teaches at the University of Pittsburgh and at the Rainier Writing Workshop, Pacific Lutheran University’s low-residency MFA program.

April Ayers Lawson is the author of *Virgin and Other Stories* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux; and Granta Books), which in addition to being named a best book of the year by *Vice*, *BOMB*, *Southern Living*, and *Refinery29* is also being translated for publication in Italy,

Germany, Norway, and Spain. She has received the George Plimpton Award for Fiction, as well as a writing fellowship from The Corporation of Yaddo. Her fiction has appeared in *Paris Review*, *Granta*, and *Oxford American*, among others, has been cited as notable in *Best American Short Stories*, and was anthologized in *The Unprofessionals: New American Writing from The Paris Review*. She has lectured in the creative writing department at Emory University, and is the 2016-17 Kenan Visiting Writer at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. [Guest Faculty and Mentor, 2017-18.]

Dinah Lenney is the author of *The Object Parade* (Counterpoint Press) and *Bigger Than Life: A Murder, a Memoir* (University of Nebraska Press, American Lives Series), and the editor, with Judith Kitchen, of *Brief Encounters: A Collection of Contemporary Nonfiction* (W.W. Norton, 2015). Her essays and reviews have been published in a wide range of publications and anthologies including *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *AGNI*, *Creative Nonfiction*, *the Kenyon Review*, *TriQuarterly*, and the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, where she is the senior editor of creative nonfiction. Dinah holds degrees from Yale and from the Bennington Writing Seminars, where she also serves as core faculty. [On Leave 2017-18.]

Rebecca McClanahan's most recent books are *The Tribal Knot: A Memoir of Family, Community, and a Century of Change* and a new edition of *Word Painting: The Fine Art of Writing Descriptively*. She has also published five books of poetry, two additional books of writing instruction, and *The Riddle Song and Other Rememberings*, winner of the Glasgow Award in nonfiction. McClanahan's work has appeared in *Best American Essays*, *Best American Poetry*, *The Georgia Review*, *The Kenyon Review*, *The Sun*, and numerous anthologies. McClanahan, who received the Wood Prize from *Poetry*, a Pushcart Prize in Fiction, the Carter Prize for the Essay, and literary fellowships from New York Foundation for the Arts and the North Carolina Arts Council, was the 2015 Writer-in-Residence at Hollins University.

Kent Meyers is the author of a memoir, a book of short fiction, and three novels, most recently *Twisted Tree*, which won a Society of Midland Authors award and a High Plains Book award, and was translated into French. *The River Warren* and *Light In the Crossing* were *New York Times* Notable Books, and *The Work Of Wolves* won the Mountain and Plains Booksellers Association Award and an American Library Association Award. Meyers has published fiction and essays in numerous literary journals. He teaches at Black Hills State University in South Dakota and in Pacific Lutheran University's Rainier Writing Workshop.

Brenda Miller is the author of five essay collections: *An Earlier Life*; *Who You Will Become*; *Listening Against the Stone*; *Blessing of the Animals*; and *Season of the Body*. She also co-authored *Tell It Slant: Creating, Refining and Publishing Creative Nonfiction* and *The Pen and The Bell: Mindful Writing in a Busy World*. Her work has received six Pushcart Prizes. She is a Professor of English at Western Washington University, and on the faculty of the Rainier Writing Workshop. She lives in Bellingham, WA, with her dog Abbe and a

rotating crew of foster dogs who take up temporary residence. Her website is www.brendamillerwriter.com.

Scott Nadelson is the author of three story collections, most recently *Aftermath*; a memoir, *The Next Scott Nadelson: A Life in Progress*; and a novel, *Between You and Me*. His stories and essays have appeared in *Ploughshares*, *Glimmer Train*, *The Southern Review*, *Crazyhorse*, *New England Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, and *Alaska Quarterly Review*, and have been cited as notable in both *Best American Short Stories* and *Best American Essays*. Winner of the Oregon Book Award, the Great Lakes Colleges New Writers Award, and the Reform Judaism Fiction Prize, he teaches at Willamette University and lives in Salem, Oregon.

Ann Pancake is the author of two short story collections, *Given Ground* and *Me and My Daddy Listen to Bob Marley*, and a novel, *Strange As This Weather Has Been*, which was one of *Kirkus Review's* Top Ten Fiction Books of the year, won the 2007 Weatherford Prize, and was a finalist for the 2008 Orion Book Award and the 2008 Washington State Book Award. She has also received a Whiting Award, an NEA grant, the Bakeless Prize, and a Pushcart Prize. Fiction and essays have appeared in journals and anthologies like *Orion*, *The Georgia Review*, *Poets and Writers*, and *New Stories from the South, the Year's Best*. In 2016, she was the first recipient of the Barry Lopez Visiting Writer in Ethics and the Community Fellowship. She has a PhD in English literature from the University of Washington and was the Distinguished Writer-in-Residence at the University of Hawaii, Manoa, in Spring 2017.

Lia Purpura is the author of eight collections of essays, poems, and translations, most recently, *Rough Likeness* (essays) and *It Shouldn't Have Been Beautiful* (poems). Her honors include a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship, National Book Critics Circle Award Finalist, National Endowment for the Arts and Fulbright Fellowships, three Pushcart prizes, the Associated Writing Programs Award in Nonfiction, and the Beatrice Hawley, and Ohio State University Press awards in poetry. Recent work appears in *Agni*, *Field*, *The Georgia Review*, *Orion*, *The New Republic*, *The New Yorker*, *The Paris Review*, *Best American Essays*. She is Writer in Residence at The University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and teaches at writing programs around the country, including, most recently, the Breadloaf Writers' Conference. She lives in Baltimore with her family.

Marjorie Sandor is the author of four books of short fiction and creative nonfiction, and the editor of a short-story anthology, *The Uncanny Reader* (St. Martins Press, 2015). Her linked story collection, *Portrait of my Mother, Who Posed Nude in Wartime* (Sarabande Books) won the 2004 National Jewish Book Award. Stories and essays have appeared in such journals as *AGNI*, *The Georgia Review*, *The Harvard Review*, and *Opera News*, as well as in several anthologies, including *The Best American Short Stories* and *The Pushcart Prize*. She lives in Corvallis, Oregon, and teaches in the MFA Program at Oregon State University.

Peggy Shumaker's new and selected volume *Cairn* will be published by Red Hen Press in 2018. She was honored by the Rasmuson Foundation with its Distinguished Artist Award, and by the National Endowment on the Arts with a fellowship in poetry. She served as Alaska State Writer Laureate. Shumaker is the author of eight books of poetry. Her lyrical memoir is *Just Breathe Normally*. Professor emerita from University of Alaska Fairbanks, Shumaker teaches in the Rainier Writing Workshop MFA at PLU. She serves on the Advisory Board for Storyknife and on the board of the Alaska Arts and Culture Foundation. Shumaker is editor of the Boreal Books series (an imprint of Red Hen Press), editor of the Alaska Literary Series at University of Alaska Press, contributing editor for *Alaska Quarterly Review*, and poetry editor for *Persimmon Tree*.

Sherry Simpson is the author of *Dominion of Bears: Living with Wildlife in Alaska*, which received the 2015 John Burroughs Medal for a distinguished book of nature writing, and two collections of essays, *The Accidental Explorer: Wayfinding in Alaska* and *The Way Winter Comes*, which won the inaugural Chinook Literary Prize. She has also written four travel books, most recently *Glacier Bay National Park, Alaska*, which received the Benjamin Franklin Award in the travel essay and photography category. Her work has appeared in numerous journals and magazines, including *Orion*, *Creative Nonfiction*, *Brevity*, *Superstition Review*, *AQR*, and *Bellingham Review*. Her essays have appeared in such anthologies as *On Nature: Great Writers on the Great Outdoors*, *American Nature Writing*, *The Fourth Genre*, *Living Blue in the Red States*, and *In Fact*, the best of *Creative Nonfiction* journal. She has received the Andrés Berger Nonfiction Award and *Sierra* magazine's Nature Writing Award, and she was a finalist for the Katharine Nason Bakeless Nonfiction Literary Publication Prize, sponsored by Bread Loaf Writers' Conference. She is a professor of creative nonfiction writing in the Low-Residency MFA program at the University of Alaska Anchorage and serves on the faculty of the Kachemak Bay Writers' Conference.

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