



Millersville University

COLLEGE OF ARTS, HUMANITIES
& SOCIAL SCIENCES

Department of English & World Languages

SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER



A WELCOME FROM OUR CHAIR

Welcome to the English & World Languages newsletter for the academic year 2023-2024! This has been a full year of education, events, accolades, and memories made that we will hold for many years to come. We have done a lot this year! Much of that is thanks to our Assistant Chair, Dr. Baldys, and our Student Leadership Council, who have met regularly and charted a course for our department that aims for more engagement and opportunity to connect with one another. We are fortunate to have had Dr. Josh Rea join our department as a specialist in professional writing and rhetoric. We restarted our Iota Phi chapter of the Sigma Tau Delta English Honors Society, and we welcomed guests who shared their knowledge with our students like Polish poet Julia Fiedorczuk and local poet Michael Garrigan. Dr. Farkas and colleagues hosted our first ever Engage for Change Community Forum that focused on equity in education that builds a meaningful connection to peers in secondary education. Our students came together for game nights, Doodles Book Club, and meetings of English Club, Spanish Club, Film Club, Creative Writers Guild, and George Street Press. I especially enjoyed the research presentations, our "Tiny Office Series," in our new Student Lounge. Our faculty were not the only ones presenting as many of our students shared their scholarly works throughout the year at conferences around our region, as you can read about in this newsletter.

We bid farewell to Dr. Timothy Miller who is retiring this year after 39 years as a professor at our university. He has made a lasting impact on all his students and colleagues through his love of literature. Dr. Miller embodies the life of a scholar and has set such an important example for our students to see "the life beyond the life." We will honor him, in part, by creating the Dr. Timothy C. Miller English Award that gives preference to English majors who are also veterans. We wish Dr. Miller the best in his retirement.

As a department, we all deserve each other's gratitude as we work together to teach and to learn, and to support each other in the process. I owe a special thank you to Dena McEwan, our department's secretary, who has really kept things running behind the scenes and who has been a huge help in my first year as Department Chairperson. I also thank Becca Betty and Heather Verani, our GA's, who have been done a remarkable job in their roles. We have a lot to look forward to in the coming year, and I would love to hear from you with any suggestions. Please do not hesitate to reach out at jmando@millersville.edu.

Justin Mando, Ph.D.
Chair and Associate Professor
Department of English & World Languages

NEWSLETTER STAFF

Graduate Assistant Editors:
Becca Betty: MA English Class of 2024
Heather Verani: MA English Class of 2024, MU '22
BA English

Contributing Faculty Editors:
Dr. Nicole Pfannenstiel, Graduate Coordinator
Dr. Justin Mando, Department Chair

STAY CONNECTED

English & World Languages Department Homepage
<https://www.millersville.edu/enwl/english/index.php>

English & World Languages Department blog
<https://blogs.millersville.edu/englishnewsletter/English>

English Graduate Studies blog
<https://blogs.millersville.edu/englishgrad/>

Facebook: Millersville University, Department of English

Instagram @ville.englishworldlanguage

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ENGLISH & WORLD LANGUAGES 2024 GRADUATES

Graduate Studies

Mary Miller, MA in English
Heather Verani, MA in English
Kate Collins, MEd in English
Isaac Kulp, MA English
Megan Tyson, MA English

Undergraduate Studies

Elisabeth Aparicio, BSE English
Madicyn R Barnes, BA Biology,
Spanish Minor
Emily Beichler, BA English
Natalie Brown, BA English
Giancarlo Cooper, BA English
Katlyn Dougherty, BA English
Jenna Dumbrowsky, BA English

Undergraduate Studies Continued

Marissa Farmer, BA English
Kaitlyn Farrelly, BA English
Casandra Foresman, BSE English
Alyssa Hassler, BA English
Andrew Henrichon, BSE in English
Ashlyn Hickey, BSE in English
Jonathan Kraynak, BSE in
English Nicole Kudia, BSE in English
Isaac Latshaw, BSE in English
David Lattanzi, BA in English
Katherine McDonald, BA in English
Daniel Moser, BSE in English
Liana Ockenhouse, BA in English
Mikayla Ridge, BSE in English
Irving Rojo-Rodriguez, BSE in English
Eden Swartzentruber, BA in English

APPLAUSE AND CONGRATULATIONS

Alice A Fox Memorial Award: Natalie Brown
Class of 1910 Endowment: Eden Swartzentruber
Class of 1917 Endowment: Sarah Hunter
Class of 1922: Olivia Hess
Dilworth-McCollough English Endowment: Allison Mengel
Eileen Carew Promising Writers Scholarship: Toby Good

Frank R. Heavner Memorial Award: Jayden Burnside
Deisley English Educator Award: Yaneris Perez
Lina Ruiz y Ruiz Memorial Award: Maya Yesko
Steven A. Walker Endowment: Angeliz Diaz
EAPSU: Elliot Simcoe

CLUB COME-BACKS! REVIVED AND NEW STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Like many college campuses, Millersville's student organizations took a hit during the unsure times of the COVID pandemic and it has been difficult to reestablish many of the once flourishing clubs on campus. However, this year the post COVID recovery of social and academic clubs is well underway with many student organizations reforming or starting new this year. George Street Press reformed at the beginning of this school year, which allowed students to once again have an outlet to publish their creative works. President David Lattanzi states that "The experiences gained in reestablishing our club have been both terrifying and exciting. We have gained new friends and deepened old friendships. It is great to see likeminded English Majors be passionate about their creative writing." Other clubs that have successfully returned include English Club and The International English Honor Society Sigma Tau Delta.

Mary Miller Receives Gold Keystone Award

English graduate student Mary Miller (class of 2024) was recognized at the 2023 Keystone Awards Luncheon in Harrisburg and awarded a Gold Keystone award for her news release titled "Rats on Campus." This story, which covered Dr. Kelly Banna's work with rats in psychology, was picked up by several local media outlets. Mary states "I felt really honored to be able to receive the award on behalf of University Communications. While I did write the news release it was definitely a team effort, so I want to make sure that Janet Kacksos and Kelsey Madas get credit as well, but it was just so incredibly heartwarming that they let me accept the award at the Keystone Award ceremony. Plus, they let me keep the award too, so it feels great to have a tangible example of how much experience I gained and how much I learned during my time at MU. "

Heather Verani



Mary Miller poses with her Gold Keystone Award

NOTES FROM OUR GRADUATES

What advice would you give to students who are considering majoring in English?

"DO. It is a great foundation on which to build ANY career."--William Artz '23 MEd

"There are so many opportunities and good experiences. It is a closely knit community with faculty that really care deeply about their students." —Amelia Cusanno '24 BA English

CONFERENCE CORNER

This past academic year, many undergraduate and graduate students participated and presented at a variety of ENWL-centric conferences including English Associate of Pennsylvania State University (EAPSU), Mid-Atlantic Pop Culture Association (MAPACA), Lancaster Learns, and Made in Millersville (MIM)

EAPSU 2023

The English Association of Pennsylvania State Universities (EAPSU) conference was held this year in October at Kutztown University. This versatile conference features a broad range of topics related to the study and teaching of English. Millersville was well represented with both undergraduate and graduate panels discussing literary and experiential knowledge gained in their time at Millersville.



Above from left to right: Dr. Pfannenstiel, Heather Verani, Mary Miller, and Becca Betty, members of the panel: "Graduate Sense of Belonging : Necessary shifts to foster belongingness."



Right from left to right: Elliot Simcoe, Jake Long, Julia Fallows, Liana Ockenhouse, and advisor Dr. Baldys members of the session: "#LoveBooks: Theorizing the Romance from Austen to Bridgerton, Millersville."

MAPACA 2023

The Mid-Atlantic Pop Culture Association (MAPACA) conference was held this year in November in Philadelphia, PA. MAPACA is a great conference with a broad range of subjects from movies and tv shows to Punk music and even Philly's beloved mascot, Gritty. Millersville students, faculty, and alumni shared panel and slideshow presentations on a range of topics from belongingness in Grad School and the concept of Play to the tv shows *The Idol* and *The Last of Us*.



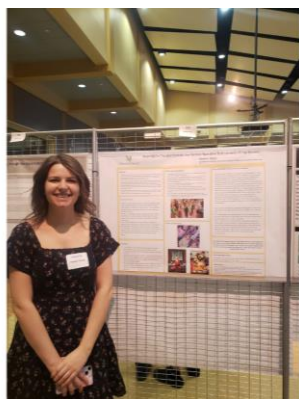
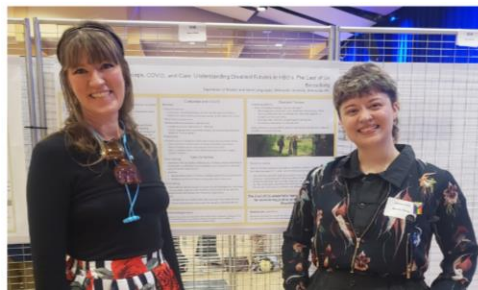
Above from left to right: Megan Tyson, Heather Verani, Becca Betty, alumni Marissa Koulen, Mary Miller, and Dr. Pfannenstiel at MAPACA 2023

CONFERENCE CORNER

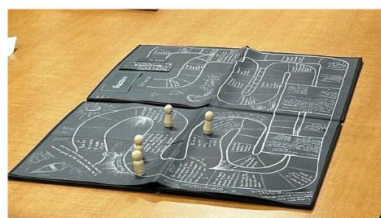
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Lancaster Learns 2024

The Lancaster Learns conference was chaired by Dr. Pfannenstiel and included graduate assistants Becca Betty and Heather Verani on the event committee. The theme of this year's conference was Teaching and Learning, which showcased how the faculty of the various Universities and Colleges in Lancaster are constantly expanding and transforming their knowledge for their field.



Various students and faculty participate in LL2024 and MiM2024 conferences



MILLERSVILLE JOURNALS

Millersville has a variety of journals for students seeking publication including the Made in Millersville (MiM) Journal, Engage for Change Journal, and MUsings—Millersville's graduate journal.

MiM Journal

The Made in Millersville (MiM) Journal is an opportunity for students presenting at the MiM Conference to get their works published and share their research with a wider audience. The journal pairs writers with student editors to work with them and get their papers journal ready. This provides insightful experience in working through the editing process, a key skill for many researchers. Creating concise but meaningful writing to capture the essence of a complex project is a unique challenge, but one that the MiM journal staff are ready and willing to help students work through. You can check out this year's issue on their site: <https://www.mimjournal.com/>.

MUsings

Millersville University has a graduate journal! You can check it out at:

<https://blogs.millersville.edu/musings/>

Editorial Insights from Amelia Cusanno

Graduating senior Amelia Cusanno, worked for the MiM journal this past year as an editor as well as a marketing and outreach specialist. In this role, they create social media, interview authors, and network to build engagement and resources for the journal.

Reflecting on how they have grown through this experience, Amelia stated that "it is a challenge to reconcile that an article will need to be greatly shortened. I ask myself questions to determine what can be cut without ruining the integrity of the paper and how can I prompt an author to add more detail without adding paragraphs?" Asking these questions has also impacted their own writing as they are "figuring out how can I better my own grammar and style without taking away my authentic voice" and asking, "how do I do the same for the writers I am editing."

They encourage students to keep an eye out for next year's applications on social media (Instagram @mim_journal), noting the many benefits of submitting to this peer-reviewed journal. Not only will you be able to work with a fantastic team of editors to improve your writing, but through this publication you'll have the opportunity to share your work with a wide variety of people both inside and outside of Millersville.

Engage for Change

The Engage for Change Journal a community-based journal that focuses on social issues in Lancaster and the surrounding area. The previous themes of the journal include environmental justice and gender justice, with this year's theme of equity and justice in education. Run by English professor Dr. Farkas, she states that this year's theme was chosen "based on issues the community is facing." She further states "education is going through so much right now with censorship/book banning, teacher burnout, lack of diversity in teaching, student mental health, and more." Dr. Farkas would like to shoutout the interns for the journal Eden Swartzentruber and Emily Beichler, as they helped to edit the submissions and to market the call for papers through a public event series and writing workshops. Anyone at the University or in the community can write articles for the journal, as they accept several different types of articles, from research-based to reviews to creative pieces. The deadline for submissions is 9/9/24.

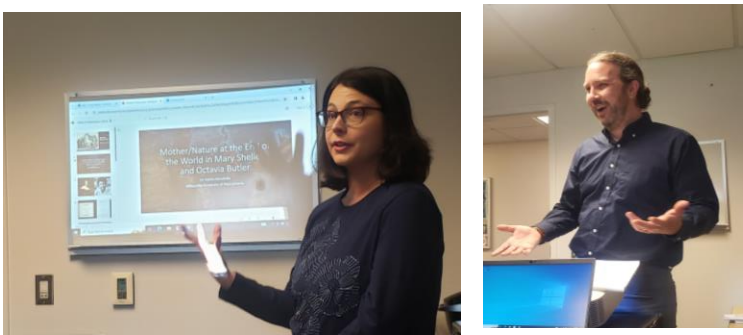
FACULTY UPDATES

Dr. Josh Rea has joined the Department of ENWL as the new **Assistant Professor of Writing Studies**. When asked what it means to be an ENWL scholar, Dr. Rea shared "I see my job as a scholar of language as interrogating the ways that language is used to construct our lived world and to perpetuate inequities, as well as the ways that language can be used to work against those inequalities and better the world."

Welcome Dr. Rea!

Faculty Focus: Research Talks

This year our department hosted a series of Faculty Focus: Research Talks. Dubbed the "tiny office" talks by Dr. Mando, these mini-presentations are an opportunity to informally discuss some of the awesome projects our faculty are working on outside of (and sometimes inside of) the classroom. Beyond the fantastic insights offered by professors on their respective topics, these talks are also a chance to hear about the realities of working through the research process. This year's presentations included, Dr. Rea discussing rhetorical violence within a local Florida community titled "Striking Out in Ybor City: Baseball, Housing, and Rhetorical Violence," Dr. Baldy's presenting her research "Disability and Victorian Feminism: Narratives of Resistance in the Novels of Mona Caird," Dr. Mando sharing his research "Risk-taking for Writers," and Dr. Mondello discussing "Mother/Nature at the End of the World in Mary Shelley and Octavia Butler."



Dr. Mondello (Left) and Dr. Mando (right) present at the Faculty Focus: Research Talks

Faculty Conferences

In addition to faculty who attended EAPSU and MAPACA, some professors have presented elsewhere including Dr. Mondello who presented her work "Mother/Nature at the End of the World in Mary Shelley and Octavia Butler" at the 2024 Northeast Modern Language Association conference.

Faculty Publications

Congratulations to our faculty who have published or forthcoming works this year!

New OER Textbook - *Inclusive Practices: Ideas for Classroom Integration from Millersville Classrooms to Yours*

In February of 2024, the Vilas A. Prabhu Center for Academic Excellence published *Inclusive Practices: Ideas for Classroom Integration from Millersville Classrooms to Yours*. This peer-reviewed open educational resource (OER) invites educators to adapt inclusive learning practices and activities into their own college classroom spaces and provides detailed suggestions on how to do so.

This collection is edited by: A Nicole Pfannenstiel, Emily Baldys, Jessica M.F. Hughes, Ann Marie Licata, Scott R. Anderson, Greg Szczyrbak, Karen Rice, and Brianne Hurst. You can read the full text online for free here: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/378520787_Inclusive_Practices_Ideas_for_Classroom_Integration_From_Millersville_Classrooms_to_Yours_Creative_Commons_Information

New Article "(Re)Locating the Rhetorical Commonplaces of Failure and Risk-Taking"

Dr. Mando's article, "(Re)Locating the Rhetorical Commonplaces of Failure and Risk-Taking," was published this spring in *Rhetoric Review* available here: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/07350198.2023.2286143>

He shared insights about his new work with students and faculty at one of our Faculty Focus: Research Talks where he challenged those present to reconsider how we think about academic risk and failure in the classroom. Dr. Mando emphasized that through his work he wants to build safeguards to encourage students to take bigger risks and receive greater benefits from their education.

Afterword and Interview on Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time*

Dr. Jakubiak recently published the "Afterword" to a new Polish translation of James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time* that she also co-edited. Additionally, she gave a long interview about James Baldwin and *The Fire Next Time* in Off-Radio Krakow. You can check it out here: <https://off.radiokrakow.pl/podcasty/obcy-to-fantazmat-rozmowa-z-katarzyna-jakubiak-o-ksiazce-nastepnym-razem-pozar-jamesa-baldwina>

DR. MILLER RETIREMENT

Dr. Timothy Miller

By: Heather Verani

The Department of English and World Languages bids a heartfelt farewell to Dr. Timothy Miller. Dr. Miller has been an English professor with the department of English and World Languages for 39 years. He summarizes his time here through his favorite author John Milton with the quote "a life beyond life."

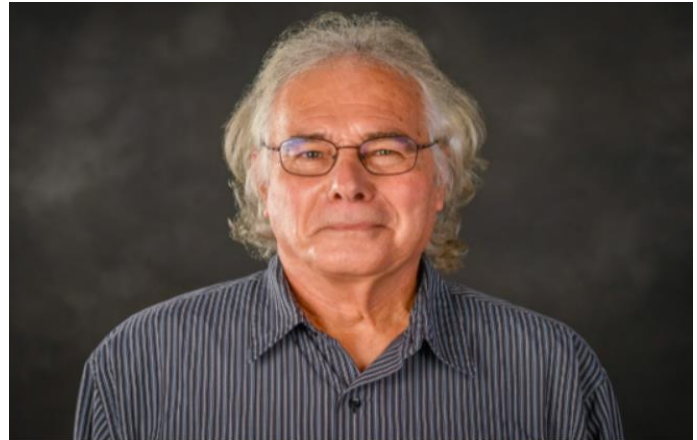
Dr. Miller started his journey in the exploration of English Literature at just three years old. He fondly remembers being taught to read by his mother, an experience which created a love for literature and reading at a young age. He pursued his love for English by receiving his BA, MA, and Ph.D. in the subject from the State University of New York at Binghamton. His main specializations in the field include Milton, Shakespeare, 16th and 17th century British literature, Science Fiction, and Business and Technical writing. Dr. Miller was actively involved with students outside of the classroom, as he was the faculty advisor for the Science Fiction club and Fantasy club up until 2013.

Dr. Miller's academic accomplishments outside of being a professor at Millersville include his various publications, such as "The Critical Response to John Milton's "Paradise Lost" (1997) and "Arthur C. Clarke's Rendezvous with Rama: Agent of Evolution" (1998).

Dr. Miller states that his time at Millersville reminded him of a quote from his time in the Army, which is:

"My time served
was a day beyond that day.
Learning the difficult and
the true, I was blessed in doing
all I could."

It is evident that Dr. Miller loves his profession and his field, and the department of English and World Languages wishes him all the best for his retirement.



Community Responses to Dr. Miller's Retirement

"He was one of my favorite professors ever. I always tell anyone who will listen how brilliant my world literature professor was. I came to his office hours to shyly ask him to sign a scholarship application for me once, and he very kindly signed the application and told me as he handed it back, "keep going beyond the beyond." It has always stuck with me. What a great professor and storyteller. He will surely be missed at Millersville. "

"He was such a cool professor! I enjoyed my classes with him!"

"Dr. Miller was easily one of the most influential professors/people in my entire life. I have talked about how undyingly brilliant he is and how he ignited my love for genres and authors I had never had to so many people. I am a more courageous thinker of thoughts because of him, and I'll always be grateful for that."

"I loved Dr. Miller! I remember having Milton with him: a three-hour class that included feverishly taking notes, annotating the book, and reading through his notes handout. His impassioned lectures always ended with his glasses crooked, one sleeve unrolled, and his shirt half untucked. He was in it full body! I don't think I would have loved Milton the same way had anyone else taught it. Such a brilliant, memorable professor."

DOODLES BOOK CLUB

The department of English and World Languages collaborated with CHEP to organize and create the Doodles Book Club, a group that practices mindfulness through art. The graphic novel "Barely Functioning Adult" by Meichi Ng was the central focus of the book club meetings, as the novel discusses themes that many students can relate to, such as navigating adulthood, relationships, friendships and future career paths. After discussing the book in small groups, participants would then use the drawing materials provided to them, such as notebooks, colored pencils, and pens, to engage in the creative mindfulness activity. These activities were designed by the facilitators of the event, which included Dr. Baldys, Dr. Pfannenstiel, and Millersville Alumni, Blue Guckert. The doodles book club also hosted tabling events, where students outside of the club could participate in and learn more about mindfulness through drawing and coloring. This included offering Taylor Swift coloring pages and crayons, markers, and paper to free draw.



Doodles and coloring pages from our Doodles book club events

Taylor Swift Research

Scan this QR code to take a quiz and find out what your Taylor Swift ENWL era is.

With the announcement of Taylor Swift's latest album titled *The Tortured Poets Department*, the English and World Languages Department created Taylor Swift themed events and fun leading up to a listening party on April 19th when the album dropped. On our department blog and social media, we highlighted unexpected connections Taylor Swift's music has with English and World Languages (ENWL) by writing about media, critical theories, research methods, and faculty interests tied into themes and literary connections in Taylor Swift's lyrics and eras for each album. The graduate assistants had a lot of fun making this content which is also being used to conduct a 6-week study on social media content strategies.



AWESOME EVENTS

Lancaster Book Crawl

On Saturday, April 20th, the department hosted its first ever Lancaster book crawl. Organized by Dr. Baldys, the graduate assistants, the student leadership council, and English Club this event allowed ENWL students and faculty to explore downtown Lancaster and check out all its wonderful book shops. We would like to thank Read Rose, Pocketbooks, Dog Star Books, Farbo Co, The Lancaster Troll Market, The Lancaster Public Library, and The Heritage Press Museum for participating in our event!



Students and Faculty gather for a picture inside Read Rose Books at the start of the book crawl.



Disability Pride

Disability Pride returned this year to Millersville for the seventh annual event with our Department Associate Chair Dr. Baldys once again playing an instrumental role in organizing and running this awesome event. Disability Pride is an opportunity to celebrate disability culture, envision radical access, and advocate for disability justice featuring activities, panel discussions, speakers, and a disability pride march.

INVITED AUTHOR SETH RING

Full-time fantasy author Seth Ring was able to join us this past week for a Q&A session to meet with students and answer questions about being a writer, building community, and to share insider knowledge about traditional and indie publishing methods. Seth has been publishing since 2018 and in 2021, he became a full-time writer. Now, with 25 books published and more on the way, Seth reflects on what he has learned, the communities he's helped to build, and the sense of hope that is central to his works.

Seth leverages his base in Lit-RPG (Literary role playing game) fantasy to expand into various other genres including traditional fantasy, horror, and western (as well as upcoming forays into Regency romance and utopian thriller) drawing inspiration from stories he read as a child that helped him learn to both escape and navigate the world. Seth balances his ideals of writing between practical considerations and artistic sincerity, describing the reality of writing as a career occurring along a "sliding scale of money to craft" because there comes a time when a writer realizes "I wish I could eat this manuscript, but I can't." Even though writing can be a pain at times, Seth encourages writers sharing that the "worst thing you can do as a writer is to stop writing." Ultimately, Seth says if something sticks with the reader after picking up one of his works, he considers it a success because "people need connection" and he

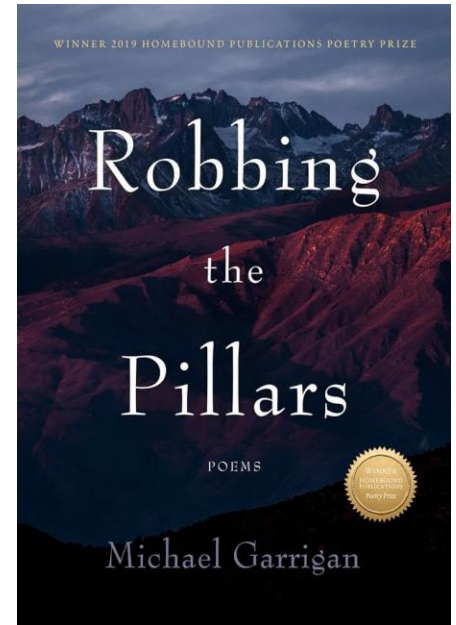


feels "I can provide something at least" to help foster those connections.

It is the hope and courage drawn from connections—between characters, their worlds, or even the divine—that are at the core of Seth's work. Some of Seth's inspiration for writing is drawn from his own experiences with loneliness and isolation in which stories and the characters in them were his "first gateways to connection" and that "stories have tremendous power to reshape the narrative to what we tell ourselves." For Seth, stories and later writing itself were a way out of dark places, offering Seth a means to process the world and find hope and courage to continue moving into the future. His books now carry this purpose forward with the intention that "when we start allowing for connection in our perspective, hope naturally follows."

LOCAL POET MICHAEL GARRIGAN

Local writer and teacher Michael Garrigan shared his poetry with us this Spring, reading from his latest collection *Robbing the Pillars* and even giving the audience a sneak preview of some unpublished works.



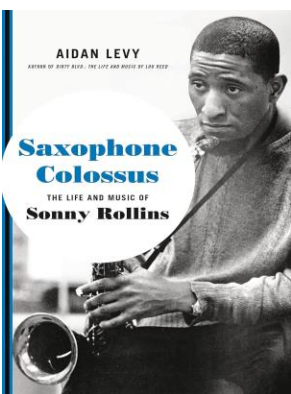
Through his poetry, Garrigan challenges readers to reevaluate their everyday encounters with nature, exploring concepts of post-industrial wilderness and re-wilding.

INVITED AUTHOR--AIDAN LEVY

This Spring, the department of ENWL welcomed author Aidan Levy to discuss his new book *Saxophone Colossus: The Life and Music of Sonny Rollins*. Based on over 200 interviews, this quintessential biography follows Levy's primary research into what compelled Rollins to walk away from fame, money, and prestige in the jazz community to play saxophone on a bridge for 16 hours a day. This "sabbatical" which gave rise to the "Legend of the Bridge" is explored as a journey of body, mind, and spirit—highlighting the intricacies of documentation and methodologies in Rollins' search for the "Lost Chord."

Levy offers a masterclass in the power of biographical work, bringing passion to Rollins' story and exploring the depth of humanity that can be found in persistently engaging with unconventional, even radical acts. Both Rollins and Levy show how to engage with and shape the narrative of a legend—and even how to become one. Levy parses the construct of Rollins' "sabbatical"

into components of mind, body, and soul—highlighting the efforts Rollins' made in developing each of these with Levy adding historical and contextual ties, from anecdotes of interactions to pages from Rollins' many journals. This structure allows the breadth and depth of Rollins' actions to shimmer into a web of influences surrounding Rollins. It also allows Levy to showcase his archival and ethnographic research, interweaving them to capture Rollins' experience as a whole—both paying homage to Rollins' legacy with great detail while establishing the lasting impact of his time spent on the bridge. As an extension of honoring Rollins' legacy, Levy and others from the Sonny Rollins Bridge Project have started a petition to rename the iconic bridge that Rollins played on.



CONVERSATIONS WITH JULIA FIEDORCZUK

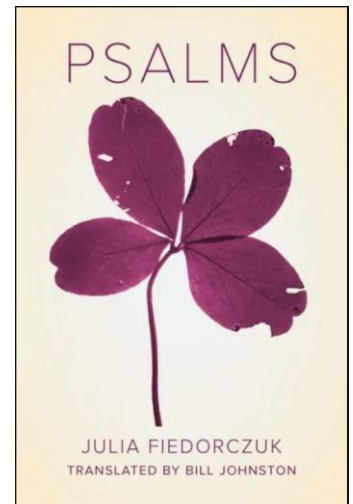
This spring Millersville welcomed renowned Polish writer, poet, translator, and researcher Julia Fiedorczuk on the last stop of her North American tour. She read from her latest collection of poetry, *Psalms*, which was awarded the prestigious Wisława Szymborska Prize in Poland in 2018 as well as selections from her unreleased novel, *The House of Orion*, providing context and insight on her process and conceptual and physical groundings. She sat facing us, a mixed crowd of approximately 40 community members, faculty, and students, in a red armchair in the Ford Atrium. Beside her, Dr. Katarzyna Jakubiak acted as moderator and co-presenter as each poem presented was read twice, first in Polish by Fiedorczuk and then in English by Dr. Jakubiak. Fiedorczuk remarked that she prefers to not read her poems aloud in English stating “I can’t read them not because I dislike them, they’re beautiful, but because Polish is so connected to me,” expressing a gratefulness to Bill Johnston, the translator for both *Psalms* and an earlier work *Oxygen*. The depth of her connection was evident, even to non-Polish listeners. She spoke in a soft breathy voice with conviction and pressing flow, transporting the audience in gentle percussive insistence into her work that interweaves narratives of human trauma and resilience with environmental beauty and catastrophe.

In simultaneously engaging two often juxtaposed topics, she masterfully shapes a dialogue that addresses both the ongoing climate crisis and human crises (most notably the great migration crisis in Europe that began around 2013) challenging divisions of science and humanities, noting that these are the same struggle. The ongoing loss of biodiversity is inextricable from the loss of human life and language and vice versa. As such, Fiedorczuk powerfully argues for “science to be informed by poetry” stating that “literature needs to be precise and science needs to be imaginative.” Poetry specifically offers the ability to tap into human imagination that she describes saying, “imagination is a wonderful thing and imagination is a wild thing,” noting that human imagination is collective and often “more than” human. This ability to place ourselves in collective imaginings is key to understanding *Psalms* that explores the complicated interplay of two primary emotions: despair and joy.

Placing these two emotions in confluence creates a needed perspective that shares moments of the “absolute unconditional acceptance of life” and the “possibility of having real authentic joy” in the face of the complex fears of global climate and humanitarian issues. This is partly accomplished by centering the physical experience of language drawing from its oral beginnings and exploring how “little portions of sound” can create meaning.



Above: Julia Fiedorczuk Right: Julia's most recent collection of poems *Psalms*



Describing this work as a “somatic translation,” that is partially a translation and interpretation of the Biblical poems of the same name, Fiedorczuk studied Hebrew and even memorized some of the verses so she could sing them and embody the experience of language. Despite the religious nature of the original material, she emphasized that her poems are not religious at all. They are “prayers” but only in the sense that they address someone who can potentially respond – like a crying child, who uses sound before they can construct meaning, is still calling someone, addressing someone. In this way, her *Psalms* are meant to invite or invoke another presence.

Humble and honest, Fiedorczuk also shared her struggle to find relevance as a writer in the face of such extreme human and natural suffering. After visiting the Białowieża Forest in 2021, a place for her that is rooted in mystical reverence as it is one of the oldest forests in Europe, she found herself questioning her value as a writer while witnessing the struggles of migrants who were displaced in the forest, sold on a false dream that it would offer an easy way to enter Europe. Her doubts about whether or not it was meaningful for her to write anymore had overtaken her until a friend reminded her “but that’s what you do, just do your job.” This experience is reflected in her poem “Cold” that states “Even when bombs are falling you ought to write” that also uses part of a phone call from someone who became trapped in the forest as part of Poland’s response to the migration crisis. She recognizes that her approach to these circumstances is not necessarily a solution, stating that while writing is “not going to solve problems, I’m a writer and that’s my contribution.” She also stated that even in the face of the global epidemic of hopelessness and numbness, “something can always be done” and that there is “always a way to help someone. Always a way to deeply care for someone or something.”

Becca Betty

ENWL STUDENT LOUNGE GRAND OPENING



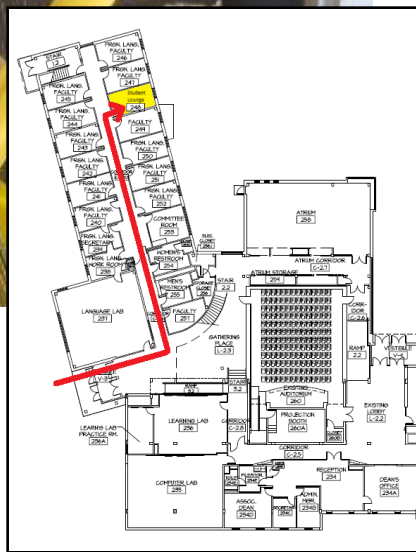
The Department of English and World Languages is pleased to announce the opening of our student lounge! This new space transforms an old office into a place for English and World Languages students to work, study, or hang-out. Located on the first floor in McComsey 248, the student lounge is open to all students on weekdays from 8AM to 9PM.

Students and faculty gathered on Friday January 26th to celebrate at our ribbon cutting ceremony with cupcakes and coffee. Dr. Emily Baldys shared the poem "In the Library" by Charles Simic with those gathered to commemorate this event and envision a future for the space. You can read it here: <https://poets.org/poem/library>

The student lounge is curated by students, for students with members of the Student Leadership Council contributing design ideas to create a functional area to gather with like-minded peers. At the opening celebration, a few SLC members commented on what it was like to be involved in this process, stating that they hope this space will help bring together the ENWL community.

The student lounge features comfy chairs, a mini-fridge, microwave, coffee maker, and charging station as well as fun literature decor from the department's archives and information about student organizations and upcoming department events. Clubs can reserve the room for meetings or events by contacting Dena McEwan: Dena.McEwan@millersville.edu

Shout out to our Student Leadership Committee lead by Assistant Department Chair, Dr. Emily Baldys, for helping us coordinate this project and the Department of English and World Languages for funding this fantastic new space.



Above: SLC members Angie Diaz and Julia Fallows cut the honorary ribbon at the grand opening ceremony. Right: Map showing where the Student Lounge is located in McComsey.

QUOTE

"I think it's really helpful to have the freedom that English and World Languages programs offer. I feel like it's more accommodating to personal growth and writing, because it is such a nebulous subject. English is more free." --Faith Strausbaugh '24



Millersville University

COLLEGE OF ARTS, HUMANITIES
& SOCIAL SCIENCES

Department of English & World Languages