“American Poetry”
A Symposium Sponsored by the
American Literature Association

February 20-22, 2020
Kimpton Hotel Palomar
2121 P Street NW
Washington, DC 20037

Conference Director: Richard Flynn, Georgia Southern University

Acknowledgments:

The conference director wishes to express his appreciation to a number of people who provided help with planning the program. Executive Assistant Emily Pittman and graduate assistant Lizzy Geddy offered invaluable help with the program and registration; my colleague Olivia Carr Edenfield, Director of the American Literature Association, helped me in numerous ways, offering daily advice and supervising the final program—I appreciate her friendship, trust, and support. The Association and I both thank the Department of Literature at Georgia Southern University, Department Head Beth Howells, and the College of Arts and Humanities for their continued support. The director also thanks the College of Arts and Humanities for its support. Thanks to our keynoter, Aldon Lynn Nielsen, for his address, for forty-one years of friendship, and for introducing me to the American Literature Association by inviting me to participate in his DC Writers panel at the second annual conference in 1991. Of course, I offer special thanks to Alfred Bendixen, the founder, Executive Director, and guiding light of the American Literature Association, who handled all the hotel arrangements and who assisted me with planning the program. Most of all, I would like to thank all the participants in this exciting symposium for your exemplary commitment to poetry and poetry scholarship.
Thursday, February 20, 2020

Name Badge and Program Pick-Up

5:30-7:30 p.m. (Freer, 1st Floor*)

The Conference Director and the American Literature Association invite you to a welcoming reception where you may join us for a drink or two and pick up your name badge and a copy of the program. Please feel free to drop in at your convenience.

*All sessions meet on the second floor of the hotel except for the welcoming and closing receptions, which will be in the Freer Room on the first floor.

Friday, February 21, 2020

Late Registration: 8:15 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.
(National Foyer)

Welcome and Plenary Roundtable: 9:00 – 10:20 a.m. (National Room)

Introduction and Welcome by Richard Flynn, Georgia Southern University

Reflections on American Poets, Poetry, and Poetics

Moderator: Alfred Bendixen, Princeton University
Steve Axelrod, University of California, Riverside
Matthew Hofer, University of New Mexico
Karen Kilcup, University of North Carolina, Greensboro
Kerry Larson, University of Michigan
Brett Millier, Middlebury College
Aldon Nielsen, Pennsylvania State University
Robert von Hallberg, Claremont McKenna College
Session One A: 10:30–11:50 (National)
Amiri Baraka’s Poetry: Radical Musicked Speech
Organized by The Amiri Baraka Society
Session Chair: Jean-Philippe Marcoux

1. “Mobilizing the Lyrical-I and Black Radical Capaciousness: Amiri Baraka’s Poetics,” Jeremy M. Glick, Hunter College, CUNY
3. “‘Disco Turns Revolutionary’: Amiri Baraka and The Advanced Workers,” Grégory Pierrot, University of Connecticut-Stamford

Session One B: 10:30–11:50 (Kreeger)
Longfellow and the Lyric
Organized by the Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Society
Session Chair: Andrew C. Higgins, SUNY New Paltz

2. “The Limited Listening Persona from Voices of the Night to In the Harbor: Singing a Certainty.” Jeffrey Hotz, East Stroudsburg University

Session One C: 10:30–11:50 (Corcoran A)
Queer Poetics
Session Chair: Erin Singer, Louisiana Tech University

1. “Elizabeth Bishop’s Queer Astronomy,” Maggie Greaves, Skidmore College
2. “CAConrad’s Queer Surveillance,” Chad Bennett, University of Texas at Austin
4. “‘Only through Self-Immolation’: Tennessee Williams Revises Hart Crane’s American Lyric,” Brandon Menke, Yale University

Session One D: 4:20-5:40 (Corcoran B)
Jazz, Sounds, and Spectres
Session Chair: Lizzy LeRud, Georgia Institute of Technology

1. “Form is Never More than an Extension of Bird,” Joseph Pizza, Belmont Abbey College
2. “Crossing: Whitman, Creeley, Lerner,” Anton Vander Zee, College of Charleston
Buffet Lunch: 12 noon – 1:15 p.m. (Urbana Restaurant)
Name Badge and Program Pick Up: 1:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. (National Foyer)

Session Two A: 1:20-2:40 (Corcoran A)
“Series of Dreams”: A Roundtable Discussion on the Poetry of Aldon Lynn Nielsen
Session Chair: Jean-Philippe Marcoux, Université Laval

Participants:
Richard Flynn, Georgia Southern University
Joseph T. Thomas, Jr., San Diego State University
Jean-Philippe Marcoux, Université Laval

Session Two B: 1:20-2:40 (Corcoran B)
Mourning and Memory
Session Chair: Miriam Marty Clark, Auburn University

1. “Mourning and Melancholia in Natasha Trethewey’s *Monument.*” Rebecka Rutledge Fisher, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
2. “‘Present in the continuum of time’: History, Memory and Hope in Joy Harjo’s *An American Sunrise.*” Shari M. Evans, University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth
3. “‘sensation unpeeling from his limbs like leaves’: Toward and Eco-critical reading of AIDS Elegies.” Claire Genesy, University of California, Davis

Session Two C: 1:20-2:40 (Kreeger)
Ralph Waldo Emerson and Poetry
Organized by the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society
Session Chair: Joseph Urbas, Université Bordeaux Montaigne

1. “‘If these enclosed pieces are worthy of a place in the new magazine, will you stand as their godfather?’: Emerson as advocate and editor of The Dial.” Michael C. Weisenburg, University of South Carolina
2. “Emerson, Impersonality and Lyric Theory.” Danielle Follett, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle
3. “Grieving for the Poet: Emerson’s ‘Threnody.’” Yves Gardes, Université de Rouen Normandie

Session Two D: 1:20-2:40 (National)
Poetry and Song
Session Chair: Robert von Hallberg, Claremont McKenna College

2. “Song Travels: Whitman - Swinburne – Delius.” Elizabeth Helsinger, University of Chicago
Session Three A: 2:50-4:10 (National)
“Precise the Object’s loss”: Emily Dickinson and the Poetics of Non-Human Nature
Organized by The Emily Dickinson Society
Session Chair: Marianne Noble, American University

1. “Arctic Creatures, Tropic Hints: Geopoetics and Romantic Thought,” Renée Bergland, Simmons University
2. “Nature as the Medium of Mind: Dickinson and Humboldt,” Daniel Manheim, Centre College
3. “Perceiving Perception in Dickinson’s Bird Poems,” Elizabeth Sagaser, Colby College

Session Three B: 2:50-4:10 (Corcoran B)
(Typo)Graphic Poetries
Session Chair: Susan Vanderborg, University of South Carolina


Session Three C: 2:50-4:10 (Kreeger)
Stevens, Moore, Bishop, Berryman
Session Chair: Bill Fogarty, University of Central Florida

1. “Yet the Sea is Not Full’: Spending ‘Sunday Morning’ with Ecclesiastes.” Dustin Faulstick, University of Kentucky
3. “A Deleuze-Guattarian Reading of Elizabeth Bishop’s ‘The Map’: Expanding Rhizome and Contracting Fold.” Amna Umer Cheema, University of the Punjab, Pakistan.
4. “Smiling with John Berryman.” Erin Piemont, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Session Three D: 2:50-4:10 (Corcoran A)
Exhausted yet Inexhaustible: Children’s Poetry, the Fairy Tale, and Experimental Literature
Organized by the Children’s Literature Society
Session Chair: Joseph T. Thomas, Jr, San Diego State University

2. “‘A rose is a rose is a rose’: Gertrude Stein, The World is Round, and the Poetics of Exhaustion,” Katie Strode, Independent Scholar
3. “cinder in the shoe or the mind’s eye’: Three Limericks by Theodore Roethke,” Joseph T. Thomas, Jr, San Diego State University
Session Four A: 4:20-5:40 (Corcoran B)
Lateness, Affect, Trauma, Memoir
Session Chair: Nancy Van Arsdale, East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania

2. “Before the words and beyond them”: W.S. Merwin and the Affective Unknown Zachary Kinsella, Clemson University.
4. “Revisiting the Poet John Engman.” A.M. Brandt, Savannah College of Art and Design

Session Four B: 4:20-5:40 (Kreeger)
Civil War Poetry
Session Chair: Karen L. Kilcup, University of North Carolina, Greensboro

1. “Making the Poetic Personal: How Poetry Mobilized the Public During the Civil War,” Monica Pelaez, St. Cloud State University
2. “Walt Whitman’s Wartime Rhythms,” Jamie Fenton, University of Cambridge

Session Four C: 4:20-5:40 (Corcoran A)
Poetry for and About Children
Session Chair: Joseph T. Thomas, Jr.

2. “To educate is to ‘educare’: Frances Harper’s Educational Poetics and Reception as a Children’s Author.” Tabitha Lowery, Middle Tennessee State University
3. “‘An Orchard for Emily’: Ruth Stone’s Unknown Chapbook for Emily, A Gift from the Groton School Archives.” Kandace Lombart, Independent Scholar
Friday, February 21, 2020

Reception and Keynote Address: 5:45 – 7:30 p.m.

(National Room)

“Lynch Fragments”

Aldon Lynn Nielsen
George and Barbara Kelly Professor of American Literature
Pennsylvania State University
Saturday, February 22, 2020

Name Badge and Program Pick Up (National Foyer)
8:15 a.m.–8:45 a.m.

Session Five A: 9:00 – 10:20 (Corcoran B)
“What Kind of Times Are (Were) These”: Activist Poetics from the 18th to the 21st Century
Session Chair: Alfred Bendixen, Princeton University

1. “Philip Freneau’s Arboreal Poetics,” Joshua Bartlett, Bilkent University
2. “‘Little Lambs and Sagacious Sheep’: Environmental Activism in American Children’s Poetry,” Karen L. Kilcup, University of North Carolina, Greensboro
3. “‘What Kind of Times are These’: Adrienne Rich in the Age of Trump,” Brett Millier, Middlebury College

Session Five B: 9:00 – 10:20 (Kreeger)
Bridging Identities
Session Chair: Emily Pittman, Georgia Southern University

1. “Here and Looking Back: Migration, Split Identities, and Violence in the Poetry of Monica Sok and Javier Zamora,” Mauricio Espinoza, University of Cincinnati
2. “‘Intifada, Vidershtand.’—A View from the Archives,” Yeshua G.B. Tolle, University of Michigan
3. “The Inbreaking Word: Poetizing and Being,” Bill R. Scalia, St Mary’s Seminar and University

Session Five C: 9:00 – 10:20 (Corcoran A)
Past, Present and Future in African-American Poetry
Session Chair: Evie Shockley, Rutgers University

2. “Forging an Ancestry: Kevin Young and Phillis Wheatley,” Melissa Tuckman, Rowan University
4. “‘Out to see the bloody spectacle’: Esther Popel-Shaw and Political Activism during the Lynching Era,” M. Elizabeth Geddy, Georgia Southern University.
Session Six A: 10:30 – 11:50 (Kreeger)
Diviners and Doomsdayers: The Poet as Prophet
Organized by the American Religion and Literature Society
Session Chair: Sara Judy, University of Notre Dame

1. “Visions of The Bridge: Hart Crane's Post-Secular Poetics of Prophesy.” McKay Sheftall, Boston University

Session Six B: 10:30 – 11:50 (Corcoran B)
Elizabeth Bishop: Ways of Knowing and Being
Session Chair: Hilene Flanzbaum, Butler University

1. “Elizabeth Bishop: In Pursuit of Something Transcendent.” George Lensing, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
2. “Elizabeth Bishop: Travel and Para taxis.” Jeffrey Gray, Seton Hall University
3. “Bishop and the Cold War Episteme.” Steven Gould Axelrod, University of California, Riverside

Session Six C: 10:30 – 11:50 (Corcoran A)
Traditions and Innovations in African-American Poetries
Session Chair: M. Elizabeth Geddy, Georgia Southern University

2. “The Other Griggs Brother: Poet and Playwright Allen R. Griggs, Jr.,” John Gruesser, Sam Houston State University
3. “From Damage to Desire: Contemporary Black American Persona Poetry as Counternarratives,” Ryan Sharp, Baylor University
4. “What Was Negro American Poetry?” Nicholas Rinehart, Dartmouth College

Lunch: 12:00- 1:20 (on your own)
**Session Seven A: 1:30 – 2:50 (Corcoran A)**

**American Elegy, Now 1: Memory Matters: Documentary & Intermedial Elegy**

Session Chair: Julie Phillips Brown, Virginia Military Institute

1. “The Poetics of Elegy: Mourning & (Re)Imagining a Diminishing Environment,” Mary Pinard, Babson College
2. “Unraveling Elegy in Anne Carson’s *Nox,*” Olivia Milroy Evans, Cornell University
3. “Redistributing Grief: Reading Muriel Rukeyser’s *The Book of the Dead* with Anna Schuleit Haber’s *Habeas Corpus* and *Bloom,*” Giffen Mare Maupin, Hendrix College

**Session Seven B: 1:30 – 2:50 (Corcoran B)**

**Split at the Root: Intersectionality in Mid-Century American Poetry**

Session Chair: Steven Gould Axelrod, University of California, Riverside

1. “From Shingled Hippo to Gay Unicorn: Aesthetic, Identity Desires in Bob Kaufman,” Craig Svonkin, Metropolitan State University of Denver
2. “The Poet's Two Bodies: Jack Spicer and the Corporate University,” Bryce Thornburg, Cornell University
3. “Ginsberg and Rich, Queer and Jewish Poetics,” Hilene Flanzbaum, Butler University

**Session Seven C: 1:30 – 2:50 (Kreeger)**

**Jeffers, Frost, Pound**

Session Chair: Amna Umer Cheema, University of the Punjab, Pakistan

1. “‘Impossible Wind’: The Formative Years of Robinson Jeffers.” Ted Olson, East Tennessee State University
Session Eight A: 3:00-4:20 (Corcoran A)
American Elegy, Now II: Bodies Matter: Race, Social Justice, and Contemporary American Elegy
Chair: Giffen Mare Maupin, Hendrix College

2. “‘Happiness is for Amateurs’: C.D. Wright’s Rising, Falling, Hovering as Global Elegy,” Annie Bolotin, University of Michigan

Session Eight B: 3:00-4:20 (Corcoran B)
Humor and Community in Recent American Poetry
Session Chair: Rachel Trousdale, Framingham State University

1. “Lucie Brock-Broido and the Self-Parodying Lyric,” Calista McRae, New Jersey Institute of Technology
2. “Be the Cowboy: The Ventriloquistic ‘We’ in Contemporary Asian American Poetry,” Christopher Spaide, Harvard University

Session Eight C: 3:00-4:20 (Kreeger)
Hybrids, Replicants, Poetic Entanglement, New Materialism
Session Chair: Ted Olson, East Tennessee State University

2. “‘I Didn’t Know I Wasn’t Human’: Replicant Poetry in Sun Yung Shin’s Unbearable Splendor.” Susan Vanderborg, University of South Carolina
4. “‘I Do Not Know Who I Am When I Read This’: New Materialism and Armand Schwerner’s The Tablets.” Joe Moffett, Kentucky State University.
Session Nine A: 4:30–5:50 (Corcoran A)
**Rhyme and Poetic Voice in Robert Frost**
Organized by The Robert Frost Society
Session Chair: Calista McRae, New Jersey Institute of Technology

2. “‘Thank you for noticing’: Robert Frost and Rhyme,” Mark Richardson, Doshisha University

Session Nine B: 4:30-5:50 (Corcoran B)
**New York School**
Session Chair: Joseph Shafer, University College Cork

1. “Alice Notley’s *Noir* Poetry,” Scarlett Higgins, University of New Mexico
2. “Radical Intermission: Break and/or Breath in Frank O’Hara’s *Lunch Poems*,” Hyunjung Kim, Texas A&M University

Session Nine C: 4:30 – 5:50 (Kreeger)
**Some Directions in Poetic Theory and Practice**
Session Chair: Alfred Bendixen, Princeton University

1. “Translational Poetics?” Piotr Gwiazda, University of Pittsburgh
2. “Editing the Genome as Lyric Theory,” Erin Singer, Louisiana Tech University

**Closing Reception**
6:00 p.m. –7:00 p.m. (Freer)
Please Join Us for Future Events
of the American Literature Association

31st Annual Conference
Manchester Grand Hyatt
One Market Place
San Diego, California
Conference Director: Leslie Petty, Rhodes College
May 21 – 24, 2020

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“The Historical Imagination in American Literature”
Drury Plaza Hotel
Santa Fe, New Mexico
October 29-31, 2020
Conference Director: Olivia Carr Edenfield, Georgia Southern University
Keynote Speaker: Deborah Clarke, Arizona State University

Details on these and other events sponsored by the American Literature Association are available on our website: www.americanliteratureassociation.org