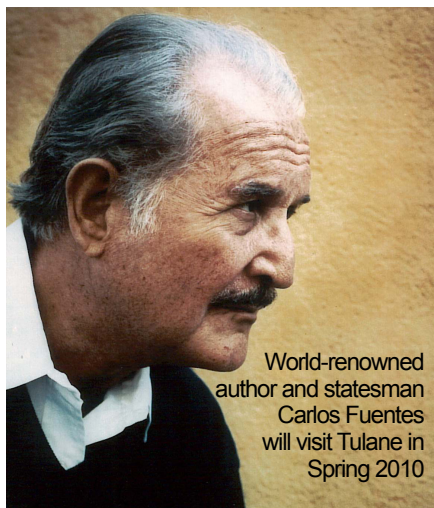


noted



World-renowned author and statesman Carlos Fuentes will visit Tulane in Spring 2010

The New Literary Landscape:

The Creative Writing Fund and New Orleans

Daniel Grossberg, a senior, recently sat down with Creative Writing professors Peter Cooley, Paula Morris, and Thomas Beller to talk about the Creative Writing Fund and its impact on Tulane and New Orleans.

If you haven't been in touch with the Tulane English department in a few years, then there's one thing you need to know:

the Creative Writing fund has utterly transformed the landscape of creative writing at the university and in the city. Made possible by an incredibly generous gift from anonymous benefactors, the Creative Writing Fund brings several of the world's best writers to Tulane's campus each year.

"Right now is certainly one of the unrivaled moments to study English at Tulane and, for anyone interested in literature, to live in New Orleans," said Morris, one of the five faculty members involved in overseeing the Creative Writing Fund. "The opportunities for students today are massive."

As Cooley put it, "for twenty-five years I've been constantly cobbling money together,

and now there is enough to bring anyone to campus." For its inaugural event in 2006, the Creative Writing Fund brought Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison to a packed house. Since then, the department has sponsored Salman Rushdie and Joan Didion, and in 2010 it will host Carlos Fuentes as part of its Great Writers Series. The campus has also been home to the Poet Laureate Series, with Louise Glück and Billy Collins, and, for the 2010 spring semester, Rita Dove. This year, for the first time, Tulane will host a Writer's Writer Series as well, featuring Deborah Eisenberg, a recent MacArthur Genius Grant awardee, in the fall and acclaimed novelist Edmund White in the spring.

This fall, Beller put together a significant non-fiction symposium. The symposium featured Meghan Daum, Phillip Lopate, Chris Rose, and Jonathan Ames. "I'm most interested in creating a conversation among my students, about the work that we're currently reading," said Beller. This year's symposium successfully met that goal. "It brought the students closer to the work, and they were able to pick up some of that electricity that the writers themselves generated," said Beller.

continued on page 3



A South African Journey:

The English Department Abroad

In the summer of 2006, Molly Travis, Associate Professor of English, journeyed to Cape Town, South Africa with two Tulane University students to

"begin the work of establishing a summer program for students to engage in international service internships." It would be Travis's first trip of many as part of her work to bring the two cities closer together.

The trip sprang out of two courses she taught, one in the spring semester of 2005, titled "Beyond Apartheid: Contemporary South African Women's Literature," and the other from the spring of 2006, called "Narrative and Trauma." The "Narrative and Trauma" course explored books by three South African writers and included a service-learning component.

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Chair's Welcome

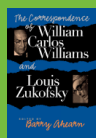


Click here to see a video welcome from our chair, Molly Rothenberg

Professor Molly Anne Rothenberg

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The Correspondence of William Carlos Williams
Louis Zukofsky
Barry Ahearn
[Order Here](#)



English Mercuries
Adam N. McKeown
[Order Here](#)



Reading Cultures
Molly Abel Travis
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Ruined
Paula Morris
[Order Here](#)



Divine Margins
Peter Cooley
[Order Here](#)



The Excessive Subject
Molly Anne Rothenberg
[Order Here](#)

events

feb

Edmund White
 Writer's Writer Series
 1 Feb 2010
 8 pm
 Kendall Cram Room
 Lavin-Bernick Center

Phillip Lopate
 24-28 Feb 2010
 Writer-in-Residence

mar

Rita Dove
 Poet Laureate Series
 8 Mar 2010
 7 pm
 McAlister Auditorium

Prof. Nigel Smith
 Princeton University
 Josephine Gessner
 Ferguson Lecture
 24 Mar 2010
 6 pm
 Freeman Auditorium

apr

Carlos Fuentes
 Great Writers Series
 12 Apr 2010
 7 pm
 McAlister Auditorium

Our thanks to:

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To unsubscribe, email us at
english@tulane.edu



South Africa, cont.

Students expanded on what they learned in class by working with two New Orleans schools. They helped children "write narratives about their Hurricane Katrina experiences," Travis said.

In the summer of 2007, Travis was back in South Africa, this time with five Tulane students, two of whom, Nadja Tilstra and Carrie Behrens, were English majors.

While there, the students assisted adults with computer skills at township community centers and worked with mobile health teams from the University of Cape Town medical school.

Looking back on the trip "what I remember most was the tutoring program, specifically a mural that our students created," Tilstra said. Working in a township with a group of 8- to 12-year-old children, the Tulane students tackled the children's potential problems and past traumas with acting, games, and writing exercises.

The tutoring culminated in a mural, made by the children, of their ideal world.

It was a trip that both solidified relationships between Tulane and South African organizations and left a deep impact on the students involved. As Travis put it, the trip helped to "clarify and define what the students wanted to do after graduation."

"My experience in South Africa also gave me a direction for my life after graduation," said Tilstra, who is now working towards a dual-degree, earning her JD from Tulane Law School and a Masters in International

Development from the Payson Center. "Not only did I have a hands-on, face-to-face experience, but I learned a lot about what it means to be a human being," she said.

As part of what grew out of those two visits to South Africa, Tulane is now

participating in the "Talloires Network Twinning Program." This means the university is paired with Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) in Cape Town, South Africa. Travis hopes that the three-year partnership will "expand service-learning opportunities here and at CPUT."

Travis is working closely with Vincent Ilustre, the executive director of the Center for Public Service, and her colleague Nghana Lewis, Associate Professor of English. They hope to have the study abroad program operating by the summer of 2011. Lewis currently teaches a course titled "Hip-Hop, HIV/AIDS, and African and African Diaspora Studies," which includes a service-learning component. Travis and Lewis hope

that this course, which Travis says "analyzes the role of hip-hop culture in South Africa and explores the ways [it] could be used to educate youth on HIV/AIDS," will orient students who plan to study abroad in South Africa.

At the beginning of 2010 Travis will become the half-time Director of Global Studies, where she hopes to develop study abroad programs that are more tightly integrated with the specific education of Tulane. This initiative coincides with a new concentration of "World Literature and Comparative Studies" inside the English Department. "The best study abroad experiences," Travis

said, "are those that are integrated into the students' course of study at Tulane." The Tulane University South Africa program has already opened the door of education and possibility for both Tulane and CPUT students, and, with the work of professors like Travis, will continue to do so for years.



"My experience in South Africa also gave me a direction for my life after graduation"



Landscape, cont.

"These are the kind of reading series that really enhance the intellectual aspect of the event and bring the community into the experience as well," said Morris. The readings each occur once during the year and are a major event for the entire region. They are open to the entire university, the city at large, and even the region.

The Great Writers Series and other events at Tulane have had a widespread impact across disciplines. The department has heard lots of praise from such different populations as fraternity members, science majors, architect students, and athletes. The English department, naturally enough, has felt this impact most strongly. "There is now a sense of ownership," said Morris, "where students feel a part of a lively and active program. They can become involved, be heard, and have a real influence."

More than anything, the Creative Writing Fund has established an environment of creativity and language, centered in the English Department. The large events have led to larger audiences over time, creating, Cooley said, an "interest in living literature" at Tulane and in the city that has not existed for some time. For the English students of Tulane, the benefits of the Creative Writing Fund extend far beyond the major events themselves. Students read the work of visiting writers and then meet them in their courses. The Creative Writing Fund attracts authors and poets as both professors and students, and allows Tulane to offer different and unusual courses.

An important part of the Creative Writing Fund mission is to increase interaction between Tulane and New Orleans. The university "should be a place where all high school students can come and feel welcome," said Morris. Whole classes of high school students, along with their teachers, have shown up more than once to take part in the atmosphere and the reading. At the same time, more and more English students are venturing into the city on internships that spread the word about Tulane literary events. Cooley has been the force behind internships for English students at Lusher Charter School, Lambeth House Continuing Care Community, and for students working to improve adult literacy in the city. He described his experience with helping an elderly man learn to read and compose his first poem as one of his most moving at Tulane.

In the end though, the Creative Writing Fund's impact on the creative spirit of New Orleans may be its most lasting achievement. "For many people in the city," Cooley said, "Katrina showed the importance of valuing life and pursuing the things you're interested in." For the citizens of New Orleans, art has a reinvigorated value and purpose: the Creative Writing Fund is rebuilding the creative infrastructure of the city one word at a time. ♦



faculty in action

Video Interview: Peter Cooley Live - [click here!](#)

New Books: Albrecht, Cooley, Desai, McKeown, Rothenberg

Awards and Appointments: Ahearn, Desai, Travis

Articles: Ahearn, Oldenburg, Rothenberg

Papers and Panels: Albrecht, Johnson

news from our alumni

I graduated as a double major in English and Political Science from Tulane in 1997. After working in New Orleans for a year, I went on to law school and ultimately the practice of tax law.... English has better served me than any other discipline. I now look to formally study English again, this time at the graduate level.
-Seth Hagen

[Alice Johnson](#) became an acting apprentice at the...

[Rachel Stowens](#) (2003) got her first hands-on experience with forensic...

[Katie Wech](#) went from Tulane to pursue an MFA in Screenwriting from...

[Caleb Weiner](#) got his law degree in 2005 from the...

become a friend

Help us develop a network of alumni! You are the windows to possible futures for our majors.

Our goal is 100% participation by our alumni. Please join at the level that is right for you: \$20.00, \$50.00, \$100.00! The amount you give is far less important than your willingness to participate.

To become a friend, all you have to do is send your check to:

FRIENDS
Department of English
122 Norman Mayer
Tulane University
New Orleans, LA 70118

Don't forget to send in something about yourself for our Alumni News! Email us now at english@tulane.edu.

“Saturn Devouring His Children” by Nathan Scott

After Goya

His limbs crafted by wire, jutting
from him, too thin, like those of some degenerate
drifter. Father of Jupiter, as
a mad cannibal, the artist chuckles.

For Goya knows the craziest of our flock
only begin to approach the rampant
self-obsession of these celestial
creatures. Saturn had just a few more

[continue here](#)

“Mississippi River in Late Winter” by Jenny Douglass

This close to the ocean
the water flows
brown and worn
like the bark
of an old oak,
rapids
long ago beaten
into widening ripples
and silent undulations,
relentless prayers
for the rush of salt

[continue here](#)

Graduate Studies in the English Department: Chair’s Update

I know that many of you have heard that we had to suspend admissions to our doctoral program after Katrina in order to help the University recover, but we still have doctoral students “in the pipeline.” As these students have moved toward graduation, they have been exceeding our expectations dramatically. Last year, doctoral candidate Kelly Warren won the prestigious CLIR Mellon Fellowship for dissertation research in the Humanities to fund travel to archives for her work on Pan-Americanism in Modernist literature. She also presented “Pan-American Imaginaries: The Problem of the U.S. Canal Zone as Remedial Space” at the American Tropics Conference at the University of Essex, UK. Recent graduate Lauren Cardon has been nominated by Tulane University for a national ACLS/Mellon two-year fellowship and has recently published; she currently serves as a post-doctoral fellow in our Freshman Writing Program. Megan Holt recently presented a paper titled “Revising National Identity: Masculinity and Empire in Blanca de los Ríos’ ‘Las hijas de Don Juan’ and Ford Maddox Ford’s ‘The Good Soldier’” at the 2009 SCMLA Convention in Baton Rouge.

This fall, we were asked by the President to submit a proposal to resume admissions. We took this the opportunity to design new features of our program. So let me give you a sense of where we are now and where we are heading.

Our M.A. program, which admits our very best undergraduate majors, remains vibrant and active. We are very proud to announce that four M.A. students presented papers this October at the regional conference in Baton Rouge sponsored by our discipline’s premier professional organization, the Modern Language Association. Congratulations to Jessica Macleish, Bryan Davis, Nathan Scott, and Christopher England. The M.A. program has provided us with a

place to innovate and experiment with course design and new program features. We now have a special **certificate program in Archival Studies and Digital Humanities** that is unique in the country. Our M.A. students undertake directed, pre-professional work in Tulane-based and Tulane-affiliated archives, such as the Amistad Research Center, the Hogan Jazz Archive, and the Louisiana State Museum. The certificate program will be the centerpiece of our new doctoral program.

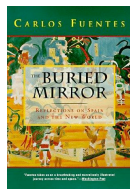
That program will offer students integrated interdisciplinary studies that place British and American literature in the context of global literatures, cultures, and histories. We hope to be admitting new students in the fall of 2011. With this new program, we will have available the intellectual and funding resources to recruit the most highly qualified students in the country. ♦

who are the post-docs?

Since 2006, the department has employed about fifteen dynamic post-doctoral fellows, all recent Ph.D.s from the country’s top institutions. Our “post-docs” design first-year composition classes on engaging themes such as “Sports and the American Dream,” “The Aesthetics of New Media,” and “American Makeovers and Body Transformations.” Many of their upper-level composition courses combine intensive writing with service learning experiences that include volunteering at local homeless shelters and teaching local public school students the art of debate. As Fellows, post-docs also continue their own scholarship, producing publications and conference presentations that enhance the department’s national research profile.

[For more on the work of our post-docs, click here.](#)

what we’re reading



The Buried Mirror
Carlos Fuentes
[Order here](#)



The Blazing World (1666)
Margaret Cavendish
[Order here](#)

Sigma Tau Delta
Congratulations
to our chapter
Alpha Beta Upsilon
for its national award!

