Kate Flint joined USC English in the fall of 2011, after ten years of teaching at Rutgers University. Hers is a joint appointment with the Department of Art History, and – quite apart from the undeniable attractions of Southern California over New Jersey – she was particularly drawn to USC because of the opportunities for interdisciplinary work that it offers. Already directing the Visual Studies Graduate Certificate, from fall 2012 she will be heading up the Visual Studies Research Institute – one of Dornsife’s 2020 initiatives designed to bring together colleagues and graduates from many different departments. Kate’s own background is in both English and Art History. She studied at Oxford University (where she also taught for 15 years) and at the Courtauld Institute in London. She has published widely on nineteenth and early 20C cultural history and literary studies, including *The Woman Reader 1837-1914* (OUP, 1993), *The Victorians and the Visual Imagination* (CUP, 2000) – both of these books won the British Academy’s Rose Mary Crawshay prize – and *The Transatlantic Indian 1776-1930* (Princeton, 2009). She is General Editor of the *Cambridge History of Victorian Literature* (2012). Kate is currently writing a cultural history of flash photography – she’s a keen photographer and visual artist herself – and just beginning work on a new project on the internationalism of painting in the 19C; she’s also revisiting the topic of reading in the light of the new scholarship and research that’s appeared in the last twenty years. When she’s not exploring Los Angeles, Kate spends a good deal of time in New Mexico; enjoys traveling more widely; and thinks herself extraordinarily lucky to work in a university where she can walk from class to meeting past palm trees and fountains, and where the students are constantly a surprise and a delight.

Devin Griffiths is carving out a career at the intersection of intellectual history, scientific literature, the digital humanities, and the history of material texts. And he sees the supportive environment of USC’s English department coordinating innovative technology with resources like the Huntington and Clark libraries as the perfect place to do it. Devin joins the faculty after a stint at the University of Pennsylvania, where he helped launch a new interdisciplinary undergraduate curriculum, and after finishing his doctoral degree at Rutgers University. At the center of his research is the question of how literary form shapes our understanding of history and natural order. In his current book project, he argues that new forms of retrospective fiction, including the historical novel, the scientific monograph, and the dramatic monologue taught us how to coordinate continuity and difference within an increasingly secular world. At the center of this new sense of history lay new strategies of comparative analysis, which wove systematic analogies into coherent narratives of evolution, differentiation, and change. Devin reports that he is thrilled to be joining USC’s warm intellectual community and start roosting in LA which, given his Southwestern roots, makes the move feel like a bit of a homecoming. And he plans to take in everything from concerts at
The last edition of this newsletter found me completing my first year as Department Chair—a year also memorable for the arrival of my daughter, Thea Lucia, in August 2008. Now I’m into my second term, Thea is going on four, and she has acquired a younger departmental sibling in Owen Anderson, son of recently-promoted Associate Professor Emily Hodgson Anderson.

Emily is one of four junior faculty to have been promoted to tenured Associate in the past three years: the others, each profiled in this issue, are Mark Irwin, Karen Tongson, and Dana Johnson. All are prolific authors and multiple award-winners. Witnessing and applauding the successes of my colleagues has been one of the great pleasures of this job, and their progress gives me my most concrete marker of how well things are going in the department.

But there are other measures too. Another, no less important than faculty recognition, is the level of energy and imagination going into the development of new programs. In that respect these have been a remarkably fertile three years. And here, too, my role is mainly to point with admiration at the accomplishments of others. Abetted by the department’s seemingly tireless Director of Undergraduate Studies, Larry Green, my colleagues have created a spectacular array of new classes, including two innovative “Maymester” courses, “The Poet in Paris” (Cecilia Woloch) and “Writing on the Rez” (David Treuer), taught on location in Paris and Minnesota respectively. Cecilia’s “Poet in Paris,” which debuted last spring, was featured for several months on the Dornsife College website, replete with comments from her lucky students to the effect that it had literally changed their lives. Other new courses include “Editing for Writers,” taught by Susan Segal, a graduate seminar on Article Publication taught by Huntington Library Quarterly editor Susan Green, and a slew of exciting new Senior Seminars, restricted to advanced English majors and capped at a maximum of twelve students. Some of the titles for those seminars: Multi-Media Melville, “The Harlem Renaissance and the Black Arts Movement,” “Self-Conscious Fictions,” “The Decadence,” “Irish Literature and Film,” “Gothic: Gender and Genre.” Yet another of Larry’s innovations has been to create a new two-unit (half-time and half-credit) rubric for experimental courses on specialized topics. I’m currently teaching the first of them myself, on “The World in a Grain of Sand: William Blake, Text and Image.” In the upcoming fall semester we will offer two, “Epic and Empire” and “Image and Imagination in the Pre-Raphaelites.” All in all, I think it fair to say that this department is now offering a richer, more various, and more intellectually substantive slate of courses than ever before. And this is without even having mentioned the new interdisciplinary Narrative Studies major, housed in English but also encompassing courses drawn from the schools of Cinema, Communications, and Theater as well as numerous other departments within Dornsife. Students in the Narrative Studies major, who now number about 50, study and practice story-telling in all genres, media, and historical manifestations.

Classes like these are their own answer to the question, “Why study English?” If other answers are needed, one could do worse than quote this department’s undergraduate Mission Statement: “We tell stories, and stories make us human. We use them to tell what should be, what could be, and the human truth of what is. Study in English is a way of knowing our stories, and at USC we approach them critically and creatively. . . . English specializes in thinking clearly and writing well, in contexts that are culturally broad and historically deep. Job skills through stories?—Yes.” Despite or even because of the accelerating media changes of our culture, it’s unlikely that the skills of reading (in all the expanded senses of this word), expression, and reflection are going to lose their relevance anytime soon. There is evidence that students have noticed this fact, even in a period of broad downturns in humanities study across the country. Of this year’s admitted USC freshmen, 179 declare the intention of majoring in some variant of English—a startling 50% increase over last year. But English is not, of course, only for English majors: no college student should graduate without experiencing how an immersion in language can transform one’s vision of the world. With this principle in mind, we have begun to offer a series of courses geared specifically to non-majors—especially our new multi-genre workshops, “Creative Writing for Non-Majors.”

To study literature is not only to encounter “the best which has been thought and said,” in Matthew Arnold’s memorable phrase, it is also to discover the ways in which we are simultaneously at home in, and strangers to, our “own” culture. I think a lot about this issue in my own teaching and writing, partly because from time to time I teach my subject, British Romantic literature, to second-language students in Istanbul, Turkey (inquiring minds will find an account of one such class on pp. 44-45 of Paul Theroux’s 2006 travel memoir, Ghost Train to the Eastern Star). The Romantic writers I study were themselves profoundly committed to literature as a means of “defamiliarization,” of making the known world foreign—or as Wordsworth put this more simply, of seeing “ordinary things in an unusual way.” To see the strange in the familiar, and the familiar in the strange, is to renew one’s openness to the world: and my own experience of defamiliarization has led to at least one unanticipated consequence, my recent marriage to a Turkish artist, Zafer Sari, whom I met while teaching in Istanbul. Some of Zafer’s sculptures now adorn the English Department’s office and commons areas; for his part, Zafer has been inspired by the works of Romantic poet, painter and engraver William Blake to create a new series of works in dialogue with the touchstones of his adopted culture. As I cast my mind back over developments in this department of the past several years, these personal changes provide a backdrop for the incremental transformation of our collective endeavor: the creation of new courses, the arrival of new faculty, and—alas—the departure of others, for what comes around must also go around. Two of this department’s most distinguished and admired senior faculty members, Tom Boyle and Jim Kincaid, will officially retire at the end of this year, and a third, David Lloyd, will move to another university. They will be greatly missed, but their work—as teachers, writers, and scholars—will stay with us and with their many students, those “second selves,” as Wordsworth put it, who carry their words and their wisdom into worlds and lives as yet unknown.

NEW HIRES JOIN ENGLISH
- continued from pg. 1

Disney Hall and the exploding craft beer scene (he’s an amateur brewer) to a careful sampling of the best food trucks for lengua and tacos al pastor. A passionate sailor, Devin is hatching plans to visit each of the Channel Islands. He extends an open invitation to anyone interested in chancing the Santa Anas this fall.
Graduating from USC as an English major with a Creative Writing emphasis in 2006, Tea Obreht published a national best-seller, *The Tiger’s Wife*, with Random House last year. The tale of generations of Balkan conflict filtered through a young protagonist's journey of self-discovery, the novel's critical success has been as phenomenal as its status as a *New York Times* and *LA Times* bestseller. Not only was the novel a finalist for the 2011 National Book Award, it won the 2011 Orange Prize for Fiction, awarded to a book written by a woman whose previous recipients include Marilynne Robinson and Zadie Smith. Born in Yugoslavia and brought up in Egypt and Cyprus, Tea moved to the States when she was 12. Her writing workshops at USC were “completely life-changing,” she reports, citing in particular the mentorship of T.C. Boyle and Patty Seyburn. After completing her BA at USC, Tea earned an MFA at Cornell.

Young Adult fiction writer and former English major Patrick Ness graduated from USC in 1997 and now lives in London. But he returns to campus in triumph for this year's LA Times Book Festival of Books, as a nominee in Best Young Adult Fiction for *A Monster Calls*. His trilogy, *Chaos Walking*, has received numerous awards: the third volume, *Monsters of Men*, was shortlisted in 2011 for the prestigious Arthur C. Clarke Award and won the Carnegie Medal, for which the first two volumes were also nominated. Looking for the next *Hunger Games* film franchise, Lionsgate has snapped up the rights to the trilogy and is working with Doug Davidson, of *How To Train Your Dragon* fame, on adapting Ness's dystopian interplanetary tale to the big screen.

Poet Becca Klaver earned her bachelors in English in 2003 and is completing a PhD in English at Rutgers. Upon graduating from USC, Becca helped to found Switchback Books, a feminist poetry press promoting women writers. In 2010 her first full-length volume of poems, *L.A. Liminal*, was published by Kore Press. Originally, Klaver came to USC to learn screenwriting, but once she took a Thematic Option course, "Varieties of Love and Literary Form," with Joseph Boone, she changed her major to literature and creative writing. "I give credit to Prof. Boone for advising me to switch," she said. "I kept taking creative writing classes and just wanted more and more." Raves Carol Muske-Dukes, one of Klaver's teachers: "Who knew there were poems this cock-eyed brilliant and convincing to be written about our most spectacularly illusory City? Who knew Klaver was going to burn up Paradise with a full-blown literary style, like a rocket-hot Santa Ana? What a radiant, wickedly-liminal debut, what a star show of sheer talent: hip, lit, hallowed."

Unlike Becca, Paul Legault opted to remain a screenwriting major but took several creative writing workshops in the department; now he is a graduate student at UVA. His poetry collection *The Madeleine Poems*, won the Omnidawn First Book Award and has been published by Omnidawn Press. It is dedicated to his grandmother, Madeleine, who was diagnosed with cancer.
Graduates from the English PhD program are making their mark on the profession with the publication of their first (and in some cases second) books.

“Highly recommended” by Choice, James Penner’s *Pinks, Pansies, and Punks: The Rhetoric of Masculinity in American Literary Culture* (Indiana UP 2010) takes its readers, writes David Savran, on “an elegant and entertaining walk through the urban jungle of U.S. literary culture since the 1930s,” revealing “the paradoxical connections between hard and soft masculinities in U.S. public culture. A pleasure to read, this is a valuable contribution to both literary studies and gender analysis.” James is an Assistant Professor at the Univ. of Puerto Rico’s main campus.

Cambridge has recently published Annalisa Zox-Weaver’s masterful study, *Women Modernists and Fascism* (2011), which examines how the dramatization and exploitation of the images of figures like Hitler and Goring by photographer Lee Miller, film-maker Leni Riefenstahl, writer Gertrude Stein, and journalist Janet Flanner add complexity to understandings of the modernist political imagination. Annalisa is an independent writer living in Santa Monica whose next book is on Gertrude Stein as art collector.

An Associate Professor of literature and creative writing at Columbia College in Chicago, Samuel Park has followed up a debut novel with an even more successful second effort, *This Burns My Heart* (Simon and Schuster 2011). This saga of life in South Korea after the Korean war has been widely reviewed, from the Chicago Tribune’s “extraordinary . . . a page turner of a book” to the Boston Globe’s “Vivid . . . atmospheric.” It has been chosen as an Amazon Best Book of the Month, a People magazine “Great Reads in Fiction,” one of the Today Show’s “Favorite Things,” a Kirkus Reviews’ Editor’s Pick, and an Indie Next List Notable Book.

Sean Zwagerman, Associate Professor of English at Simon Fraser University, has published *Wit’s End: Women’s Humor as Rhetorical and Performative Strategy* (Univ. of Pittsburgh P 2010). He uses Austin’s speech-act theory to examine humor in a range of women writers including Zora Neale Hurston, Dorothy Parker, and Louise Erdrich, as well as humor in female characters in male writers such as James Thurber and Edward Albee representing.

In addition, Unhae Langis has published *Passion, Moderation, and Virtue in Shakespearean Drama* with Continuum Books (2011). “The standard of Langis’s historical scholarship is exemplary,” comments one reviewer. An Assistant Professor at Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania, Unhae has kept busy by publishing four articles on Shakespeare in the last two years. Another Early Modern Studies alumna, Shefali Rajamannar has authored *Reading the Animal in the Literature of the British Raj* (Palgrave Macmillan 2012), of which one reviewer writes, “This is a must read for scholars of nineteenth-century studies, postcolonial theory, history, and animal studies. [This book] is a fascinating, nuanced study that puts animals back into empire and empire studies.”

Now an Associate Professor at Cal State Los Angeles, James Garrett’s *Wordsworth and the Writing of the Nation* was published by Ashgate in 2008. And latest word has it that Sun Hee Lee, who teaches at Carleton College, has published *How to Analyze the Films of Tim Burton* (Abdo 2011).

Graduates of the department’s PhD program in Creative Writing and Literature continue to publish at an awe-inspiring rate. Amy Schroeder’s book of poems, *The Sleep Hotel* (Oberlin College P 2010), was the winner of the 2009 FIELD Poetry Prize. Publisher’s Weekly praises the way in which “the harsh lines and sentence fragments in Schroeder’s hard-to-forget debut create collisions between the libidinal and the numinous.”

Amaranth Borsuk’s book of poetry, *Handiwork* (Slope 2012) has been selected by Paul Hoover for the Slope Books Prize, and she has recently coauthored with Brad Bouse *Between Page and Screen*, forthcoming April 2012 from Siglio. Working at the interface of language and new technologies, the latter is a book with “no words, only inscrutable black and white geometric patterns that, when coupled with a computer webcam, conjure the text. Reflected on screen, the reader sees himself with open book in hand, language springing alive and shape-shifting with each turn of the page.”
**HITTING THE PRESSES**  
*continued from pg. 4*

Reaping rave reviews from critics across the country, Bonnie Nadzam's *Lamb*, a dark and psychologically piercing book whose eerie affinities to Nabokov's *Lolita* have not gone unnoticed, has won the prestigious $10,000 prize for first novel from The Center for Fiction in New York. *The Cleveland Plain Dealer* calls *Lamb* "brilliant, dark and very disturbing . . . in this stunning debut, Nadzam takes a lot of risks, and the results are thrilling." and *High Country News* concurs: "Nadzam keeps the reader off-balance, veering between sympathy and repulsion for [the titular character] and his actions. *Lamb* puts an original spin on the traditional myth of the West through modern-day characters who long to be 'saved' and renewed by the Rocky Mountain landscape."

Now an Assistant Professor at Kansas State, Katherine Karlin has recently published a short story collection, *Give Me Work* (Triquarterly 2011), which gives rare insight into the place of work in the lives of a wide spectrum of women. *Publishers Weekly* writes, "Clear-eyed and rough without being raw, this bracing debut story collection is enlivened by an effective mix of bodily warmth and mechanical grit. . . These stories are a miracle of pacing, hitting the short story sweet spot time and again and ending exactly when they should. . . Karlin deserves serious attention."

Recent graduate Andrew Allport won the 2011 New Issues Poetry Prize for his manuscript *the body | of space | in the shape of the human*, for which he received a $2,000 award and publication by New Issues this year. Inspired by the sixth book of Augustine’s *Confessions*, Allport’s lyrics move from a series of elegies for his father to more abstract and philosophical meditations on being and time. David Wojahn, judge the New Issues competition, compared Allport’s lyrical ferocity to that of Heaney’s *Death of a Naturalist* and Lowell’s *Lord Weary’s Castle*, commenting, “This is august company indeed.”

**ECHOLS RETURNS TO USC AS STREISAND CHAIR**

Professor Alice Echols is no stranger to the hallways of Taper. For five years she was an Associate Professor in English, Gender Studies, ASE, and History at USC before moving in 2009 to Rutgers University (New Brunswick) where she was a Full Professor of American Studies and History. Although Echols made wonderful connections with faculty and graduate students during her time at Rutgers, she is returning to USC as a Professor of English, the Director of Gender Studies and the Center for Feminist Research, and, most fabulously, as the new Barbra Streisand Chair of Contemporary Gender Studies. Echols, who is best known for her work on the social movements and pop music of the 1960s, recently made a considerable splash with her cultural history of disco, *Hot Stuff*, which was widely reviewed and lavishly praised. Disco may have been exceptionally slight music, especially lyrically (e.g. “shake your booty!”), but she argues that it nonetheless ended up transforming America in ways that were hardly slight at all. Echols has been on sabbatical this past year, researching and writing about a Depression-era financial scandal in which her grandfather played a distressingly prominent role. She is looking forward to getting into a USC classroom again and to fostering through Gender Studies and CFR all manner of exciting interdisciplinary discussions.

**GIOIA NAMED WIDNEY PROFESSOR OF POETRY**

Dana Gioia took an unusual path to his present position at USC, where he holds simultaneous appointments in the Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences; the Thornton School of Music; the Sol Price School of Public Policy; and the Marshall School of Business. After a 15-year career as an executive at General Foods, Gioia quit business to write fulltime. Already a well-published poet, he had emerged into national prominence when his essay, “Can Poetry Matter?”, was published in *Atlantic Monthly*. That article, along with the book by the same title, has been credited with helping to revive the role of poetry in American public culture. Gioia later assumed the chairmanship of the National Endowment for the Arts, greatly expanding its mission through a series of prominent national initiatives and wider distribution of direct grants; the programs he instituted during his tenure include Poetry Out Loud, a national recitation contest for high school students. Gioia is the author of four collections of poetry, including *Interrogations at Noon*, which won the 2002 American Book Award; his latest, *Pity the Beautiful*, is due out this spring. He has also edited many anthologies, most recently *100 Great Poets of the English Language*; translated poetry from Latin, Italian and German; and written two opera libretti. At USC, Gioia lectures on poetry for the General Education program and teaches a course on opera libretti through the Thornton School.
NEWLY TENURED ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

Over the past two years, USC has granted tenure to four of English’s superb junior faculty: eighteenth-century scholar Emily Anderson, poet Mark Irwin, novelist Dana Johnson, and queer, gender and cultural studies scholar Karen Tongson. We asked all four how they reacted to the news of their promotion and what they’ve been doing since.

After getting tenure a year ago this spring, Dana Johnson recalls being overwhelmed by the support of her colleagues, who wined and dined her with congratulatory meals and drinks. She grieves over the fact that she will never in her life be as well fed again. It was a glorious send-off for the summer, she reports, which was mainly spent working on final edits of her forthcoming novel, Elsewhere, California, to be published by Counterpoint Press in June. Rooftop, poolside readings of Joan Didion and Raymond Chandler were inspiration to finish edits, as was fellow tenured colleague, Karen Tongson, outstanding Old-Fashioned maker, who imagined a celebratory tenure bash on the rooftop. It’s been a year, and they haven’t had that party yet, but summer is just getting started and hope springs eternal.

After receiving tenure last spring, Karen Tongson thought she might actually take a moment to breathe and relax. Boy, was she wrong. In the last year, Tongson launched a new book series with Henry Jenkins for NYU Press, titled Postmillennial Pop, assumed editorship of the Journal of Popular Music Studies, and joined the editorial board of American Quarterly. In the summer immediately after she received tenure, Tongson’s book, Relocations: Queer Suburban Imaginaries was released by NYU Press (August 2011). That same summer, Karen lived in Brooklyn and took a month to travel through Germany, England, France and Portugal, giving lectures in London and Berlin. Inspired by her time on the road--and singing LOTS of karaoke in various international settings--Tongson also published two guest pieces: one on the Smog Cutter in Virgil Village and another on Henry Jenkins’ “Confessions of an Aca-Fan” blog. Throughout fall 2011 Tongson has been busy lecturing up and down the state and at George Washington U, Northwestern and ASA. In the intervening time she recruited a new crop of graduate students to English as Director of Graduate Admissions. Tongson will also be on two panels at the LA Times Festival of Books here at USC: one on Queer LA, and another on The Politics of Popular Music. Despite a busy and tumultuous couple of years--sadly, she lost her dear, 18-year-old cat Holstein this past March--Tongson also took the time to settle down a bit: she just bought a new home in Echo Park, and looks forward to sharing many Old-Fashioned with her friends and colleagues in her new backyard.

The year-plus since tenure has been a busy and happy one for Emily Anderson: she’s been at work on various scholarly projects, from an article on Shylock as a “celebrity character” in the eighteenth century (which appeared in PMLA) to an invited lecture on the status of belief in Frankenstein. Most broadly, her current research examines a historically-specific obsession, common to 18th-century novels and plays, with representing characters that remain somehow un-representable. This work encompasses figures from Oroonoko to Frankenstein and takes into account the authorial and acting strategies that render these characters recognizable to audiences across time. She continues to organize the long 18th-century colloquium at the Huntington Library and recently organized a conference at the Clark Library on connections between eighteenth-century fiction and philosophy with UCLA colleague Sarah Kareem. She also has a new man in her life, Owen Michael Anderson, who arrived at the start of last spring semester. Owen has already attended several department meetings and academic conferences, and he promises to be an engaged colleague and research assistant.

Post-tenure, Mark Irwin fondly looks back at spending three weeks in France and Italy, via an Advancing Scholarship in the Humanities Grant, where he put finishing touches on a collection of essays on distortion in contemporary painting and poetry. The highlight of the trip to Europe was a three night stay in Seminario Vescovile Sant’ Andrea in the hilltown of Volterra, Italy, the same cloud-capped town that inspired Dante’s Inferno. Christopher Columbus, as a boy, also attended the church next to the monastery (seminario). “Our room had 20 ft. ceilings and a 16 ft. bay window that opened over the valley for only 40 Euros a night & endless vespers!,” reports Mark. Currently finishing an essay entitled “Origin, Place, and Time in the Poetry of W.S. Merwin” for a book on the U.S. Poet Laureate’s work, Mark also has new poetry and essays in American Poetry Review, Poetry, Ecotone, Pleiades, and Volt. His American Um, New & Selected Poems (1987-2010) appears in 2012.

FLASH ALERT! Associate Professor Aimee Bender, nationally renowned short-story writer and novelist, has just been promoted to Full Professor. Story in next newsletter!
CONTINUING TO DEFY THE ODDS: GRADUATE PLACEMENT

Despite dismal placement records in English departments nationwide for the past four years, USC English PhD graduates have fared surprisingly well. This year, under David Lloyd’s tutelage in his final year as Placement Director, six students have accepted positions (with a seventh weighing an offer), five of these tenure-track assistant professorships. Beating the odds, two PhD students have been offered and accepted assistant professorships at the same institution—Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Tanya Heflin, who completed her dissertation on frontier and native American women diarists, has been hired into the English Department, as has Alexis Lothian, who specializes in US fiction, queer studies, and digital media and wrote her dissertation on queer temporality in science fiction. Nora Gilbert, whose dissertation on censorship in 19C fiction and 20C film is being published by Stanford, has nabbed an extremely competitive Victorianist position at the University of North Texas.

Two students have landed positions in state, who is completing a dissertation on Chicano/ Latino gang narratives and culture, & Culture, will be assuming a job as Assistant Professor of Chicano and ethnic literatures at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. Adrienne Walser’s assistant professorship of Literature is at Bard College’s MAT program in Delano, California, where she will be teaching courses in modernism as well as educational pedagogy. Her dissertation is on modernism’s poetics of dislocation. Rounding out this year’s hires to date, poet and critic Amaranth Borsuk, who has been on a prestigious Postdoctoral Fellowship in Writing and Humanistic Studies at MIT, has accepted a three-year renewable lectureship at Univ. of Washington, Bothell.

Last spring saw another cadre of graduate students rising to the rank of Assistant Professor as well as taking visiting positions. Yetta Howard’s dissertation on the anti-aesthetics of lesbianism saw her triumph over nearly 600 other candidates for her position at CSU, San Diego, while Peter O’Neill’s work on Irish transatlanticism and race won him a tenure-track position in Comparative Literature at the University of Georgia. Meanwhile, Jane Austen and popular culture specialist Alice Marie Villasenor moved to Buffalo NY to become Assistant Professor at Medaille College, while Brooke Carlson, who wrote on profit and printing in early modern English drama, moved to Korea to teach at Hankuk University.

Creative writer Stefan Clark moved from a one-year visiting position at Reed College in Washington to an assistant professorship at Augsburg College last year. At the same time Michael Cucher, who specialized in representations of Zapata in popular American and Chicano culture, took a one-year visiting assistant professorship at Colorado College; since, he has been hired as a lecturer in the Department of American Studies and Ethnicity at USC. Another Americanist, Andy Hakim, began a renewable lectureship in writing at New York University. And Jeffrey Solomon, who is turning his dissertation on Truman Capote and Gertrude Stein into a book, moved from a visiting assistant professorship at St. Olaf’s College in MN to a similar visiting position at Puget Sound University in Washington.

Spring 2010 saw three students garner tenure-track assistant professorships: early Americanist Lucia Hodgson at Texas A & M; Shakespearean Unhae Langis at Slippery Rock U in PA; and transAmericas modernist Ruth Blandon at East Los Angeles College. At the same time Michael Robinson, a Romanticist and theorist, took a lectureship in the Cultural Encounters program at Bogacizi U in Istanbul.

NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS BEGIN PROGRAM

Cecilia Caballero, born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, graduated from UC Berkeley in 2010 where she double majored in English and Chicana/o Studies. Here at USC, she is interested in 20C literatures of the Americas, decolonial feminist thought, race and ethnicity, and Chicana/o Latina/o literature, spiritualities, and cultural production.

Gray Fisher relocated from Philadelphia after having earned his B.A. in English at Furman University in Greenville SC. His work centers on 20C American literature and film with a special focus on music, queer theory, and affect theory.

Megan Herrold, got her BA from Hendrix College, and her MA from the UVA. She is studying early modern poetry and drama and is interested in charting the financial and social (gendered) underpinnings of trust. She is also interested in intersections of poetry and music.

After spending the first half of her life in Indonesia and Singapore, Viola Lasmana lived in San Francisco for twelve years, and now calls Los Angeles her fourth home. Her research interests include 19th-20th century American literature, Whitman, digital humanities, digital pedagogy, and theories of the archive.

A native of Colorado, Nathan Pogar earned his undergraduate degree at the U of Colorado at Colorado Springs. Broadly speaking, he is interested in 20C American literature, specifically in modernism and interracial homoerotic desire depicted in the novel from pre-World War II to post-World War II literature.
NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS - continued from pg. 7

Diana Arterian, born and raised in central Arizona, resides in Los Angeles where she is on the founding board of Gold Line Press, the curator of the annual Sumarr Reading Series, and the creator of the La Misin Writers Retreat in Baja, Mexico. Her chapbook Death Centos is forthcoming from Ugly Duckling P and she has poems which have appeared in many journals.

Vanessa Carlisle attempts to live and write where the boundaries of genre between philosophy, literature, erotica, politics and cultural criticism tend to melt. She writes stories and essays, when she’s not storming the castle, and she likes sincere people who try hard. While a psychology student at Reed College, she co-authored I Was My Mother’s Bridesmaid: Young Adults Talk About Thriving in a Blended Family (Wildcat Canyon P 1999) with her sister Erica Carlisle. Her novel A Crack in Everything was published in 2010.

Todd Fredson, poet and non-fiction writer, won the 2011 Patricia Bibby First Book Prize for his collection of poems, The Crucifix-Blocks (forthcoming from Tebot Bach). His poems have appeared in American Poetry Review, Blackbird, Gulf Coast, Interim and other journals, as well as in anthologies. He lives with his partner, Sarah Vap, and their two sons in Santa Monica.

Edward Gauvin, fiction writer and mutant starfish prince of literature, is the translator of Châteaureynaud’s A Life on Paper: Stories. A graduate of the Iowa Workshop, he has received fellowships from the American Literary Translators Association and the Clarion Foundation and residencies from Ledig House and the Banff International Literary Translation Centre. He translates from the French for the New York Times and also translates graphic novels. Edward lives in Echo Park with his partner and their dog.

Ryan McIlvain was born in Utah and raised in Massachusetts. A former Stegner Fellow at Stanford, he has published fiction and nonfiction in the Paris Review, and other journals, and has received honorable mentions in the Best American Short Stories and the Best American Nonrequired Reading. His first novel, Elders, is forthcoming from Hogarth in early 2013.

Corinna McClanahan Schroeder holds a B.F.A. from the U of Evansville and an M.F.A. from the U of Mississippi, where she was the recipient of a John and Renée Grisham Fellowship. Her poems appear in journals such as Tampa Review, Copper Nickel, and Hayden’s Ferry Review. She is the recipient of a 2010 AWP Intro Journals Award in poetry and was named a finalist for the Poetry Foundation’s Ruth Lilly Poetry Fellowship in 2011. Raised in Missoula, Montana, Sarah Vap has published three collections of poetry and has two collections forthcoming in 2012. Her first book, Dummy Fire, was awarded the Saturnalia Poetry Prize. Her second, American Spikenard, was selected to receive the Iowa Poetry Prize. Her third, Faulkner’s Rosary, was released by Saturnalia Books in 2010. Her prose and poetry is widely published in journals and anthologies. She lives with the poet Todd Fredson and their children in Santa Monica CA.

Tim Wirkus’s short fiction has appeared in Subtropics, Gargoyle, Cream City Review, Sou’wester and Ruminant Magazine. He has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize, recognized on the list of Other Distinguished Stories in Best American Mystery Stories 2011, and selected as a finalist in Narrative’s 30 Below contest. He lives in Irvine with his wife, Jessie.
  “Teaching the Teachings of the Stage: A Graduate Seminar in Restoration to Romantic Drama,” Romantic Circles: Pedagogy Commons (Sum. 2011).
  “Theatrical Women.” Rev. of Nora Nachumi, Acting Like a Lady: British Women Novelists and the Eighteenth-Century Theater, for The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation (Summer 2011).
  Rev. of Children’s Fiction, 1760-1808, ed. Anne Markey, Times Literary Supplement (July 2011).

Molly Bendall, Under the Quick, Parlor Press 2009.


  “Catching Loti’s Drift.” Forthcoming, Criticism.
  co-editor with Nancy Vickers, PMLA Special Topics Issue: Celebrity, Fame, Notoriety 126.4 (Sept. 2011).

  Wild Child, Viking 2010.
  When the Killing’s Done, Viking 2011.

  “Afterword,” South Central Review, Fall 2011, Special issue: Re-Framing Renoir.
  “Near Dark: An Appreciation,” Film Quarterly, 64 2 (Winter 2010).

  “University Village” (poem) Collier’s (Sept. 2011).

  Out of Sorts: On Typography and Print Culture (U of PA P, 2010).


———, “The Art of Composition is the Art of Transition.” *Poetry International* (Fall 2011): 17.


Viet Nguyen, “Fatherland.” *Narrative* (June 2011)


LEEE AND WRIGHT WIN
DEPARTMENTAL POSTDOCS

The past several years has seen the increasing role played by postdoctoral fellows in the intellectual life of the English Department. Postdocs—new PhD recipients seeking professional experience before taking up a fulltime appointment—typically teach anywhere from one to three courses a year while developing their research and publication profiles.

Recent Mellon postdocs Casey Shoop and Jonathan Berliner, both specialists in modern/contemporary American literature, taught a wide variety of classes—from contemporary American fiction, to Native American Literature, to Literature and Film—during their appointments at USC; Berliner has also taught for the Claremont Graduate School, and Shoop is now a Visiting Assistant Professor at Loyola Marymount.

The tradition continues with the English Department’s two current postdocs, Julia Lee and Erika Wright. Julia Lee comes to us from Harvard, where she took her PhD in 2008 after graduating summa cum laude from Princeton. Lee placed first out of 800+ international applicants to the brand-new Provost’s Postdoctoral Fellowship Program in the Humanities, arriving at USC in fall 2011. She is the author of a groundbreaking book, The American Slave Narrative and the Victorian Novel (Oxford UP 2010), which argues that the plot of the antebellum slave narrative—including such characteristic episodes as the struggle to attain literacy and the escape from bondage—was a major formal influence on nineteenth-century novelists including Charlotte Bronte, Thackeray, Gaskell, and Dickens. Lee has also published an important article on Ralph Ellison and is co-editing an anthology of Caribbean women writers with Jamaica Kincaid. At USC, Lee has taught courses ranging from our sophomore British Literature survey to an upper-division course on Victorian fiction and The Wire. After her postdoc expires, in spring 2013, she will begin an appointment as Assistant Professor of African-American Literature at the University of Nevada-Los Vegas.

Erika Wright, who took her degree from this department in 2009, was one of only five recent USC PhDs to win a coveted College Distinguished Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship in the inaugural year

LEE AND WRIGHT - continued on pg. 13
Diana Arterian, Poems appeared or forthcoming in Anamesa, DUM DUM, Foothill, Iron Horse Literary Rev., ROAR, and Two Serious Ladies.


Stephan Clark, “My Year of European Underwear” (essay), Ninth Letter.

Elizabeth Cantwell, Poems forthcoming in Spillway, Foothill, eilmae, Splash of Red, The Los Angeles Review, and PANK.


Stacy Gnall, Heart First into the Forest (Alice James Books, May 2011).

Genevieve Kaplan, In the ice House, Red Hen P 2011.


Stacy Gnall, Heart First into the Forest (Alice James Books, May 2011).


Stacy Gnall, Heart First into the Forest (Alice James Books, May 2011).

Stephan Clark, “My Year of European Underwear” (essay), Ninth Letter.

Elizabeth Cantwell, Poems forthcoming in Spillway, Foothill, eilmae, Splash of Red, The Los Angeles Review, and PANK.


Stacy Gnall, Heart First into the Forest (Alice James Books, May 2011).


Stacy Gnall, Heart First into the Forest (Alice James Books, May 2011).

Stephan Clark, “My Year of European Underwear” (essay), Ninth Letter.

Elizabeth Cantwell, Poems forthcoming in Spillway, Foothill, eilmae, Splash of Red, The Los Angeles Review, and PANK.


Stacy Gnall, Heart First into the Forest (Alice James Books, May 2011).
Lee and Wright - continued from pg. 11

of the program. A specialist in Victorian literature and the history of medicine, Wright has taught Narrative Medicine to medical students at the Keck School as well as variety of courses on Victorian Literature and Women in Literature for English. Her book in progress, Fictions of Health, explores the paradox of health and of “healthy narrative” in Romantic and Victorian fiction, as well as in medical handbooks of the period. Her other publications include an article on Jane Austen, and she is a frequent presenter and panelist at conferences, including the most recent convention of the Modern Language Association. She is currently developing a new project on professionalism and secrecy, an offshoot of her enthusiastically-received class on “Victorian Secrets” last fall. Wright, who took her BA from UCLA and completed an MA at CSUN before beginning her PhD program, was the recipient of many prizes and awards while completing her degree, including the Marta Feuchtwanger Fellowship for research on the political novel; she is active participant in the annual Dickens Universe conference.

______, "Why Do We Argue about the Way We Read?" American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, San Antonio TX. Mar. 2012. 


Leo Braudy, Presenter, History Prize, LA Times Book Festival, Apr. 2012. 

______, Keynote, (Dis)junctions Conference on Narrative, UC Riverside, Apr. 2012. 


FACULTY PAPERS, CONFERENCES, READINGS ... continued from pg. 14


Margaret Russett, “Rousseau” and “The French Revolution,” Bogazici University, Apr. 2010.
A Response to Ian Duncan, Scott’s Shadow, Stanford U, Apr. 2010.


______, The Loudest Voice Reading Series (Fiction Reading), LA (Sept. 2011).


Elizabeth Cantwell, “The Mathematics of Sonnet Coronas: John Donne and Lady Mary Wroth’s Infinite Poetics.” Graduate Conference at the Massachusetts Center for Interdisciplinary Renaissance Studies (October 2011).


Heather Dundas, Organizer, “Creativity and the Older Woman Writer.” (presentation), College Commons, USC. (Feb. 2011).


______, Panelist, City of Santa Monica Community Access Grant Program (Jul. 2009).

______, Song, “No Art, No World”; created with 5th grade students from Walter Reed Middle School and David Joyce, composer, performed by the Los Angeles Master Chorale, Holiday Wonders program (Dec. 2009).


Lisa Locascio, “Shopping for a Ghost: Helga Crane Haunts Copenhagen,” 102nd Annual Meeting of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies, Brigham Young University, Salt Lake City UT (May 2012).


______, Fiction Reading at Tongue and Groove Reading Series, Los Angeles CA (Oct. 2011).


______, Fiction Reading at Featherless Reading Series, Los Angeles CA (Nov. 2011).


______, Fiction Reading at Chi Chi’s Word Parlor, LA CA (Oct. 2010).

______, Fiction Reading at I Had It Bad Reading Series, NY (May 2010).

______, Fiction Reading at Second Draft Reading Series, NY (Apr. 2010).


GRADUATE STUDENT PAPERS  - continued from pg. 16

JIMMY GAUNT'T MEMORIAL PRIZE

Last year’s winners, pictured above, were English seniors
Paige Cohen, Colin Dwyer, Lauren Perez, Laura Brun, and Kendra Walter.

The Jimmy Gauntt Memorial Fund was established in honor of a USC English major and aspiring artist who, after graduating in 2006, was tragically killed by an automobile in 2008. The fund supports an annual award to be given to outstanding undergraduate majors who have demonstrated a commitment to the arts.

Donations to the fund may be sent by check to:
Jimmy Gauntt Memorial Fund
c/o Bhanu Anton Cruz
USC College Advancement Suite 4100
444 S. Flower St, 41st Floor
Los Angeles CA 90071
GRADUATE STUDENT HONORS

J. A. Bernstein, Prism Review Fiction Contest, Finalist (2010).
_______, Dissertation Research and Writing Award (2010).
_______, Gold Family Graduate Fellowship (Summer 2011).

Jackson Bliss, FLAS fellowship to study Japanese at UC Berkeley (Summer 2010).

Amaranth Borsuk, Gulf Coast Writing Prize for the poem “A New Vessel” (2011).
_______, College Book Art Association Member Award for Between Page and Screen (2012).
_______, Award for Excellence in Teaching, Center for Excellence in Teaching, USC.
_______, International Summer Field Research Award (Summer 2010).


Jillian Burcar, Winner, Boston Opera Collaborative and Juventas New Music Ensemble’s 2011 Opera Project, librettist for “Light & Power: The Rivalry Between Nikola Tesla and Thomas Edison.”
_______, Finalist in Poetry, Flatmancrooked, 1st Annual Poetry Prize for “Zooology #1” (2010).
_______, Honorable Mention in Fiction, Glimmer Train, Short Story Award for New Writers for “Reptile” (2010).
_______, Graduate Student Professionalization Initiative Grant for a Monsters, Myths and Media initiative.

Jennifer Clark, finalist Western Writers of America Spur Award, Short Fiction, for “As Is” (2010).


Heather Dundas, International Summer Field Research Award (Summer 2010).

_______, USC Interdisciplinary Research Group of the Center for Religion & Civic Culture, Research Fellowship (Fall 2012).

Bryan Hurt, Dissertation Research & Writing Award (Sum. 2010).


Trisha Tucker, Charles Davis Award for Best Graduate Student Presentation at the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association Convention (2011).
_______, Research Grant, Historical Society of the Episcopal Church (2011).
_______, English Department Summer Fellowship, USC (2011).


Michelle Wilson, USC English Dissertation Fellowship (2010-2011).

Genevieve Kaplan, Conference Attendance Award Fall 2009.
_______, Winner, To the Lighthouse Poetry Publication Prize, In the ice house, A Room of Her Own Foundation & Red Hen Press (Fall 2010).
_______, Second Place, USC Libraries Wonderland Award, for Alice’s Alphabet (Apr. 2010).

_______, John Steinbeck Prize for Fiction, Reed Magazine (2011).
_______, Second Place, Edward W. Moses Graduate Creative Writing Competition (2011).
_______, Merit Fellowship, Summer Literary Seminars (2011).
_______, Shortlisted for Charles Pick Fellowship at the Department of Literature, University of East Anglia (2009).


Bonnie Nadzam, Dissertation Research & Writing Award (Summer 2010).

Saba Razvi, Dissertation Research & Writing Award (Summer 2010).

Josie Sigler, Dissertation Research & Writing Award (Summer 2010).


Amaranth Borsuk, Gulf Coast Writing Prize for the poem “A New Vessel” (2011).
_______, College Book Art Association Member Award for Between Page and Screen (2012).
_______, Award for Excellence in Teaching, Center for Excellence in Teaching, USC.
_______, International Summer Field Research Award (Summer 2010).

J. A. Bernstein, Prism Review Fiction Contest, Finalist (2010).
_______, Gold Family Graduate Fellowship (Summer 2011).

USC Dornsife
College of Letters, Arts and Sciences
Department of English
Taper Hall of Humanities, 404
3501 Trousdale Pkwy, University Park
Los Angeles, CA 90089-0354
english@dornsife.usc.edu


Laurie Fisher, “‘This Object Kills Me’: The Intersection of Gender and Violence in Performance of Shakespearean Tragedy.” Chair: Bruce R. Smith. March 2012.


Pamela Grieman, (title not provided by student). Chair: David Lloyd. May 2010.


On April 5, 2012 five seniors presented overviews of their English senior honors theses to gathered faculty, friends, and faculty in the Ide Room in Taper Hall. Under the watchful eye of undergraduate director Professor Larry Green, they have been hard at work all semester at their projects, which will be due at the end of the semester.

Aly Owen’s thesis, titled “If the Glove Fits: The Martial versus the Marital Hand and the Importance of Hand Imagery in Shakespeare,” explores the historical background of hand imagery in Renaissance anatomical studies, in rhetorical theory, and in stage expression. This historical background enables her to illuminate the hand’s appearance within the two Shakespearean genres of marriage comedies and martial tragedies (which entails four close readings) as well as the hand’s function as a larger systemic fulcrum. Aly hopes that her readers will “have the conception in hand” that this image serves as one by which society categorizes, judges, and individualizes in both literal and figurative terms by the time they finish her thesis. Aly’s directors are Rebecca Lemon and Emily Anderson.

A double major in English and Japanese literature, Aishlin Cortell investigates the way in which two early twentieth-century modernists, Djuna Barnes and Tanizaki Junichiro, reimagine the modern subject through the marginal figures of the animal and the lesbian in “Beastly Women and Womanly Beasts: Animals, Lesbians, and the Modern Subject in Djuna Barnes and Tanizaki Junichiro.” By representing interactions between humans and animals rather than simply using animals as symbols of the primitive, Barnes and Tanizaki replace the humanist model of subjectivity with a vision of fragmentary subjects in changing and unpredictable relations to one another, which in turn provides a supportive environment for the emergence of a variety of queer relations. Cortell is bemused—and amused—by the fact that while, over spring break, she was writing her chapter on Tanizaki (in which a man falls in love with his cat), her visiting younger brother was constantly obsessing about the welfare of his own cat, calling its sitter for updates on his pet’s emotional state. Directing Aishlin’s project are Joseph Boone and Akira Lipit.

Inspired by the fusty chaperone of period drama films (so often played by Maggie Smith), as well as her work while studying abroad at University College London last fall, Julia Cooperman focuses on the evolution of familiar starchy, comical spinster of the Victorian period into her more measured portrayal in the early twentieth century in “Vigilant Virgins and Matron Martyrs: Literary Representations of the Chaperone in Victorian and Edwardian Fiction.” Her thesis contends that, although the character of the chaperone exists on the story’s periphery, her authority as an arbiter of a young woman’s experience often renders her indispensable to the plot. Through the chaperone’s action (or inaction), the heroine is able to negotiate changing epochs, international travel, new conceptions of love, and the erosion of Victorian values. Novels that Cooperman examines in depth include Henry James’ Washington Square, E.M. Forster’s A Room with a View, and Virginia Woolf’s The Voyage Out. The influence of historical events such as the reign of Queen Victoria and the British women’s suffrage movement are also considered. Kate Flint and Jim Kincaid are directing Julia’s study.

Daniel Rios’s thesis, “From Eden to Babel: Los Angeles Fiction and the Transnational Dialogics of Race,” examines the political, ethical, and aesthetic underpinnings of transnational imaginings in two groups of Los Angeles novels, interwar “white” writing and post-civil rights minority writing. While the former group of texts—featuring novels by Upton Sinclair, John Fante, and Nathanael West—seek outernational experiences as a means to criticize moral corruption and mass culture at home, their reaffirmations of US imperialist impulses, especially as they relate to representations of race, undermine their projects. The Post-civil rights novels by Oscar ‘Zeta’ Acosta, Sesshu Foster, and Karen Tei Yamashita offer different, more progressive conceptions of transnationality, and articulate the importance inter-ethnic cultural production in the face of rigid cultural nationalism. Informed by transnational U.S. literary theory, race studies, and postcolonial thought, this thesis interrogates the progressiveness of transnationality in both groups and seeks to locate an aesthetics that can best build towards the post-exceptionalist promise of transamerican studies. Although his advisers Tim Gustafson and Bill Handley joke that the topic may be “a bit large” in scope for an undergraduate thesis, Daniel just thinks that means there is more to love.

Like Aishlin’s topic, Jace Brittain’s thesis, “The Rest Is Schweigen: German Romantic Translations of Hamlet,” involves the mastery of two languages. Jace began to develop his interest in the theoretical problems posed by literary translation during a semester-abroad in Berlin, where he studied German literature and theatre. While watching a particularly thrilling German-language production of Beckett’s “Waiting for Godot” at the Berliner Ensemble, he found himself wondering “how one even begins to approach the process of translating” masterworks from one language to another. This led him to Hamlet for “because it struck me as a particularly dense text and one that comments on language and the gap between word and meaning.” Jace came to discover that comparing multiple translations entails unexpected levels of technical difficulty: “I once found myself in Doheny using (as simultaneously as possible) two computer screens, a Kindle, a spiral notebook, and of course, a well-worn copy of Hamlet!” Jace plans to finish his USC career by participating in the “Writing on the Rez” Maymester in Minnesota arranged by English Professor David Treuer. His thesis was directed by David Lloyd.