

## **UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI**

### **M.F.A. IN FICTION AND POETRY**

The Department of English offers a two-year program in fiction or poetry leading to the Master of Fine Arts degree. The program provides an opportunity for students of superior ability in creative writing to develop their skills and critical judgment through the practice of writing and the study of literature. The primary aim of the program is to nurture the individual's writing talent; the secondary aim is to prepare students for careers in writing and teaching. Enrollment is kept deliberately small to maximize student/teacher interaction. Degree candidates are expected to produce a book-length work of literary value and publishable quality.

#### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

##### **Admission Requirements**

While it is recommended that applicants have an undergraduate major in English, the program does not discourage applicants from other undergraduate disciplines. Regardless of their undergraduate major, applicants should have a 3.2 grade-point average on a 4.00 scale. Students must submit scores from the general aptitude section of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), three letters of recommendation, transcripts of all undergraduate work, and, most importantly, a writing sample (thirty pages in fiction and twelve pages in poetry). No manuscripts can be returned, and applicants should retain copies of all work submitted. All queries and application materials (GRE scores, transcript(s), letters of recommendation, and writing samples) should be sent, by February 25<sup>th</sup>, to:

A. Manette Ansay  
M.F.A. Director  
Department of English  
University of Miami  
P.O. Box 248145  
Coral Gables FL 33124

## **Degree Requirements**

Candidates for the M.F.A. degree must complete a total of 36 credits. 18 of these are taken in the area of writing specialization. These include workshop courses (12 credits) and thesis (6 credits). The remaining credits are taken in literature and forms/craft classes (12 credits), electives (6 credits), and, for those with a teaching assistantship, a creative writing teaching practicum and the option of taking a second teaching practicum in preparation for teaching composition.

The final thesis must be a book-length manuscript in the student's field of interest. In fiction an approximate one hundred fifty pages are expected; in poetry, fifty.

A portfolio is due at the end of the final semester. It consists of a critical paper, a sample of creative work, a self-assessment, and an annotated bibliography.

## **Financial Aid**

Financial aid is available in the form of both Teaching Assistantships in Creative Writing and Freshman Composition (optional) and a small number of Creative Writing Scholarships. Teaching Assistantships include full tuition and a stipend (\$15,965 for the 2008-09 academic year). Teaching assistants teach two sections of Introduction to Creative Writing, one in fall and one in spring, during their second year in the program. Creative Writing Scholars receive full tuition waivers and may elect to teach Introduction to Creative Writing during their second year at a part-time lecturers' rate.

## **Setting**

The M.F.A. program is housed on the tropical, 260-acre main campus of the University of Miami in Coral Gables, a few minutes from Miami Beach and only two hours from the Everglades and the Florida Keys. The area has great cultural vitality with strong literary, film, visual art and visual poetry traditions. The Department of English currently serves about forty students in its M.A. and Ph.D. programs and fifteen in the M.F.A. program.

## **Visitors, Readings, Prizes, and Literary Journal**

Since its inception, the program has invited distinguished writers to teach graduate courses. They have included Edwidge Danticat, Shelby Hearon, Maxine Kumin, Terese Svoboda, and Juan Delgado. Other distinguished visitors have been Isaac Bashevis Singer and James A. Michener, whose generosity began and helps sustain the M.F.A. program.

This year's Visiting Writers include Paolo Javier (Fall, 08-Spring 09); Rita Wong (Fall, 08) and Debra Dean (Spring 09.) The program offers an active reading series, bringing in writers such as Jay Wright, Marilyn Hacker, Grace Paley, Roland Merullo, M. Nourbese Philip, and A. B. Yehoshua. Annual prizes in fiction and poetry are offered, including the Academy of American Poets Prize, endowed by the Boas Poetry Group.

## **FACULTY**

**JANE ALISON** is the author of the novels *Natives and Exotics* (Harcourt, 2005); *The Marriage of the Sea* (FSG, 2003), which was a New York Times Notable Book; and *The Love-Artist* (FSG, 2001), which has been translated into seven languages. Her short fiction and critical writings have appeared in *Five Points*, *Seed*, *TriQuarterly*, and *The Germanic Review*, among others. She has co-edited a critical series on women writers and has also published several biographies for children. A memoir, *Sisters Antipodes*, will be published in 2009 by Harcourt.

Website: [www.janealison.com](http://www.janealison.com)

**A. MANETTE ANSAY**'s first novel, *Vinegar Hill*, was published in 1994, followed by a story collection, *Read This and Tell Me What it Says* in 1995. She has since published four more novels: *Sister* (1996); *River Angel* (1998); *Midnight Champagne* (1999), a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award; and her latest novel, *Blue Water* (2006). Ansay is also the author of a memoir, *Limbo*. She's been awarded a Pushcart Prize, a Friends of American Writers Prize, and two Great Lakes Book Awards, among others. *Vinegar Hill* was chosen by Oprah Winfrey as her November 1999 Book Club Selection. Ansay's new novel, *Good Things I Wish You*, will be published by HarperCollins in June of 2009

Web site: [www.amanetteansay.com](http://www.amanetteansay.com)

**M. EVELINA GALANG** is the author of two books of fiction—*Her Wild American Self* (Coffee House Press, 1996), a collection of short stories, and the novel *One Tribe* (New Issues Press, 2006). In addition to writing fiction and nonfiction, she has edited the anthology, *Screaming Monkeys: Critiques of Asian American Images* (Coffee House Press, 2003). Galang is the recipient of numerous awards, among them, the 2004 Gustavus Myers Outstanding Book Awards Advancing Human Rights and the 2004 AWP Prize in the Novel, for *One Tribe*. She is currently writing *Lola's House: Women Living with War*, stories of surviving Filipina women of World War II and is at work on her second novel, *Angel de la Luna*.

Web site: [www.mevelinagalang.com](http://www.mevelinagalang.com)

**LESTER GORAN** grew up in Pittsburgh. He is the author of *The Paratrooper of Mechanic Avenue* (1960), *Maria Light* (1962), *The Candy Butcher's Farewell* (1964), *The Stranger in the Snow* (1966), *The Demon in the Sun Parlor* (1968), *The Keeper of Secrets* (1972), *This New Land* (1980), *Covenant with Tomorrow* (1982), *Mrs. Beautiful* (1985), *The Bright Streets of Surfside: The Record of a Friendship with Isaac Bashevis Singer* (1994), *Tales From The Irish Club* (a 1995 New York Times Notable Book), *She Loved Me Once and Other Stories* (1997), *Bing Crosby's Last Song* (1998), and *Outlaws of the Purple Cow and Other Stories* (2000).

More about Goran and his writing can be found in an article in *The Dictionary of Literary Biography*, 2001.

**MIA LEONIN** is the author of two books of poetry: *Braid* (Anhinga Press) and *Unraveling the Bed* (Anhinga Press), and a memoir which will be published by the University of Arizona Press in the fall of 2009. She has been awarded an Academy of American Poets Prize. Her poetry and non-fiction have been published in *New Letters*, *Indiana Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *North American Review*, and *Chelsea*. She has received a Money for Women Grant by the Barbara Deming Memorial Fund and a 2005 Florida Individual Artist Fellowship. Leonin has been writing about theater, dance, and performance in Miami since 2000. She was the theater critic for the *Miami New Times* and is the recipient of a Green Eyeshade Award for theater criticism. She frequently writes about dance, performance, and Spanish-language theater for the *Miami Herald*. In 2007, she was selected to be a fellow in the National Endowment for the Arts/Annenberg Institute on Theater and Musical Theater.

**WALTER K. LEW** is the author of: *Excerpts from: ΔIKTH DIKTE for DICTEE* (1982) (1992), *Treadwinds: Poems & Intermedia Texts* (2002), *The Ga-guhm Poems* (forthcoming). He edited *Premonitions: The Kaya Anthology of New Asian North American Poetry* (1995), *Muae I* (1995), and *Crazy Melon and Chinese Apple: The Poems of Frances Chung* (2000), and was co-editor of *Kôri: The Beacon Anthology of Korean American Fiction* (2001). Lew has received fellowships and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, NY State Council on the Arts, and Association for Asian Studies, among others. Current projects: *The Selected Works of Yi Sang* (compiler and translator from the Korean); a multimedia piece on the career and work of the novelist Younghill Kang.

**MAUREEN SEATON'S** sixth book of poems, *Cave of the Yellow Volkswagen*, is forthcoming from Carnegie Mellon University Press. Her previous collections are *Venus Examines Her Breast* (Carnegie Mellon UP, 2004), winner of the Publishing Triangle's Audre Lorde Award; *Little Ice Age* (Invisible Cities Press, 2001), which was nominated for a National Book Award; *Furious Cooking* (University of Iowa Press, 1996), winner of the Iowa Poetry Prize and the Lambda Literary Award; *Fear of Subways* (Eighth Mountain, 1991), winner of the Eighth Mountain Poetry Prize; and *The Sea among the Cupboards* (New Rivers, 1992), winner of the Capricorn Award and the Society of Midland Authors Award. Her work has appeared in *Bloom*, *Best American Poetry*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Paris Review*, *New Republic*, *Green Mountains Review*, *Indiana Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Quarter after Eight*, *The Gay and Lesbian Review Worldwide*, and many other publications both on and off line. The recipient of an NEA fellowship, Illinois Arts Council grant, and two Pushcart Prizes, she is also the author of a memoir, *Sex Talks to Girls*, published by the University of Wisconsin in fall, 2008.

Web sites:

- [http://www.scene360.com/STORYboard\\_interview\\_seaton](http://www.scene360.com/STORYboard_interview_seaton)

- <http://voices.e-poets.net/Pride2K/index>

## **VISITING FACULTY**

**DEBRA DEAN**'s bestselling debut novel, *The Madonnas of Leningrad*, was translated into more than a dozen languages and received wide critical acclaim. It was selected as a *New York Times* Editors' Choice, a Borders Original Voice, a #1 Booksense Pick, a Booklist Top Ten Novel, and a Notable Book of the Year by the American Library Association. A collection of short stories titled *Confessions of a Falling Woman* was published in January, 2008. A native of Seattle, Dean worked as an actor in the New York theatre for nearly a decade before opting for the life of a writer. She is currently working on a second novel.

**PAOLO JAVIER** is the 2008/9 Visiting Associate Professor in Poetry at the University of Miami. He is the author of *LMFAO* (OMG Press), *Goldfish Kisses* (Sona Books), *60 lv bo(e)mbs* (O Books), and *the time at the end of this writing* (Ahadada), which received a Small Press Traffic Book of the Year Award. A 2007/8 Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Writer-in-Residence, Javier is co-editor of book reviews for *Boog City*. He edits and publishes *2nd Ave Poetry*, a small press devoted to innovative art and writing.

**RITA WONG** is the author of *monkeypuzzle* (Press Gang 1998) and *forage* (Nightwood 2007, awarded the Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize in 2008). She received the Asian Canadian Writers Workshop Emerging Writer Award in 1997, and her poems have appeared in anthologies such as *Ribsauce: a CD/Anthology of Words by Wome*, *The Common Sky: Canadian Writers Against the War*, *Shift and Switch: New Canadian Poetry*, *Making a Difference: Canadian Multicultural Literatures in English*, and more. She is an Assistant Professor in Critical + Cultural Studies at the Emily Carr University of Art + Design in Vancouver, Canada, and is also a visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Miami.

## **SOME OF OUR GRADUATES**

**Chantel Acevedo** ([www.chantelacevedo.com](http://www.chantelacevedo.com)) currently lives in Auburn, Alabama, where she is Assistant Professor of English at Auburn University. She is the author of *Love and Ghost Stories*, a novel, published by St Martin's press (2005) and winner of the 2006 Latino Literacy Now Award and a finalist for the John Gardner Fiction prize. She has also been a Fulbright scholar in Japan and New Zealand. **Terrence Cheng** ([www.tcheng.net](http://www.tcheng.net)) is the author of *Sons of Heaven*, published by William Morrow, and winner of an honorable mention from the Barnes and Noble Discover Awards. He has also received a Literature Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. Cheng teaches at Lehman College, part of the City University of New York, where he is Assistant Professor of English and Creative Writing. **Garfield Ellis** is a two-time winner of the Una Marson prize for adult literature. He has twice won the Canute A. Brodhurst prize for fiction (The Caribbean Writer, University of Virgin Islands) 2000 & 2005 and the 1990 Heinemann/Lifestyle short story competition. Garfield is the author of four books: *Flaming Hearts*, *Wake Rasta*, *Such As I Have* and, most recently, *For Nothing at All*, published by MacMillan. **Allison Eir Jenks** has published a collection of poems, *The Palace of Bones*, with Ohio University Press. **Mia Leonin** is a full time member of the

creative writing faculty at the University of Miami. (See bio above.) **Paul Perry** is the author of two collections of poems: *The Drowning of Saints* (Salmon Poetry) and *The Orchid Keeper* (Dedalus.) **Michelle Richmond** ([www.michellerichmond.com](http://www.michellerichmond.com)) is the author of the New York Times and San Francisco Chronicle best seller *The Year of Fog*, which is forthcoming in nine languages and is currently in development with Newmarket Films. The German translation, *Ein Einziger Blick*, was a bestseller in Germany. Her latest novel is *No One You Know*. **Brenda Serotte** is the author of *The Blue Farm* (Ginninderra Press, 2005) and *The Fortune Teller's Kiss* (University of Nebraska Press, 2006). **Celia Lisset Alvarez** is the author of a chapbook, *Shapeshifting*, published by Spire Press. Her poetry collection, *The Stones*, was published by Finishing Line Press in 2006. She teaches at St. Thomas University.