

Revise This - January 2014

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Third Novel for Alum Gale Martin

In Gale Martin's newest novel, *Who Killed 'Tom Jones'?*, receptionist Ellie Overton is gaga for the pop singer Tom Jones. She meets a handsome impersonator at a Tom Jones Festival but when he's accused of killing the competition, Ellie's not quite sure

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he's the one for her. Enter M.A. alum Gale Martin and her romantic, comedic, and curious personality.



"When I was in college, my closest childhood friend married an Elvis impersonator—when white-fringed-jumpsuit Elvis wannabes were popular," Gale says. "I saw how women behaved around these impersonators and wondered what my friend's married life must have been like. This notion stayed with me, for decades longer than my friend's marriage lasted, until I was searching my soul for a hook for a NaNoWriMo book in 2008, and this idea popped into my head."

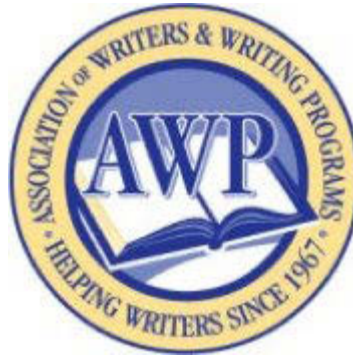
Tom Jones is Gale's third novel. Since graduating from Wilkes, the author has steadily worked on one project after another, kept up her blogging and social media efforts, and tried to be as active in the community as possible. "Life after Wilkes is as challenging as I thought it might be," Gale says. "At first I missed the Wilkes CW Program terribly—the interaction with other writers and faculty—but found ways to ameliorate my separation anxieties."

Gale has participated in a number of reading events and also started a writing workshop to continue the exchange of constructive feedback. Many of the participants are fellow Wilkes members. "In fact, this group, which now includes Nancy McKinley and Donna Talarico-Beerman," Gale says, "were so helpful with my finishing and polishing *Who Killed 'Tom Jones'?* that I dedicated the novel to them." What's next for Gale Martin? She says, "you're only as good as your last novel," so she's already at work on her next manuscript.

M.F.A. Analytical Papers in the Community

As part of the M.F.A. program, students a 6-credit course in literary analysis. The culmination of this term is an analytical

paper of publishable quality. Yet some graduates are taking their thesis topics off the page and into the community.



M.F.A. alum Erin Miele built a course based on her topic for Misericordia University. “As someone who both paints and writes,” Erin says, “I chose to explore affinities between visual art and literature in my M.F.A. thesis, *Painted Words*. Under the excellent Nancy McKinley’s mentorship, I devised a syllabus for a college course on the theme, with a plan to include a range of writers and visual artists.” Some of the writers Erin included are Yeats, Walcott, Sexton, Italo Calvino, and Flannery O’Connor. The painters ranged from Van Eyck to Anselm Kiefer. “The primacy of the visual image in writing was emphasized, as was ‘reading’ a painting,” Erin says. “We also took a look at a variety of ekphrastic works.” Erin is teaching two sections of the course this spring.

Alum Jeff Minton’s analytical paper included a discussion about music and writing and, specifically, about “scoring a narrative in a similar way as orchestral music is scored.” Together with alum Joseph Schwartzburt, faculty member Nancy McKinley, and one of Joe’s colleagues from Savannah, Zach Powers, the team will present a panel based on this topic at the upcoming AWP Conference in Seattle.

“For those of us who double as musicians and writers,” Jeff says, “I feel we have a composer’s toolkit that transfers over to writing. I wanted to make that accessible to non-musicians.” The panel, *Orchestration for Writers 101*, will be presented on Saturday, March 1 at 9 a.m.

“The panel itself focuses on applying musical ideas to better construct a narrative for both writers and teachers,” Jeff says. “We’ll perform, discuss, demonstrate, chat with the audience, laugh a little, have a good time, and ultimately explore these ideas in ways I hope the attendees can bring back home.”

Nancy McKinley will add pedagogical perspective to the panel. “Writers and teachers of creative writing often listen to music as a warm-up, a springboard for bringing words to the page,” she says. “Jeff’s approach is the next logical step: using the analytic mode of musically scoring words on the page so that writers can see the progression of a piece. In the process, writers and teachers gain insight for heightening passages whereby the words and their placement enliven the musicality, in essence, the rhythm and soul of a piece.”

Page and Stage: Alum Creates Opportunities

When Monique Antonette Lewis was in the education internship term of her M.F.A., she encouraged her students to read their creative works in front of an audience. The venue she secured for her students' reading was the



notable KGB Bar in New York City. Since developing a rapport with the KGB management and demonstrating her ability to fill a room, Monique has successfully been running a monthly reading series.

At The Inkwell is a two-part success story for this M.F.A. alum. Monique simultaneously runs the reading series—featuring indie locals and notable authors such as Wilkes' own Beverly Donofrio and Kaylie Jones—alongside a website, attheinkwell.com, that features book reviews and interviews with up and coming writers.

"I started At The Inkwell because I missed writing stories that helped people," Monique says. "I'm a financial news journalist in NYC and before that I used to cover education and local government for newspapers. I loved that my stories sparked a change in people and the community I lived in, and the positive feedback that I received for the stories. I wanted to feel that passion again."

Monique's goal with At The Inkwell is to serve both the local arts community and her own creative ambitions. "I love creative writing and hope to transition into it full-time one day, so I thought I could interview authors about their books, write book reviews, and host readings."

Announcements

River & South Review, our new student-run literary journal, has launched its second issue. The editorial team is derived of current students in the M.A. and M.F.A. Wilkes writing programs. Each issue features poetry, fiction, and nonfiction—as selected by student editors—

and special theme issues will include additional genres. The journal website is hosted at <http://riverandsouth.blogspot.com>.

New Program Tracks and Updates: Ever thought you wanted to start your own press, e-zine, or literary journal? Thanks to the initiative of Akashic Books editor Johnny Temple and Etruscan's founding editor Phil Brady, alums and current students now have the option of pursuing a Master of Arts in Publishing! Wilkes alums need only take only an additional 18 credits to earn the M.A. in publishing.

Have you found the world of documentary film fascinating? We have also added a Master of Arts in documentary film, which will begin in 2014. Like the new publishing degree, alums need only take an additional 18 credits to earn this degree. The curriculum is being developed now with Robert May, SenArt Films, and others.

Due to student requests, all M.A. graduates will have their area of study on their diploma. For example, if you complete a screenplay for your thesis, your diploma will now read: "Master of Arts in Creative Writing specializing in screenwriting." Beforehand, all diplomas simply read, "Master of Arts in Creative Writing." Should you wish to return to Wilkes and specialize in another area of study, you need only take the last 18 credit hours to earn a second M.A.

For more information on any of these new possibilities or to apply to any of the newly revised program tracks, please email or call Dr. Culver or Ms. Dawn Leas.

Faculty/Staff Notes

Lenore Hart will be teaching at the Ossabaw Island Writer's Retreat in Savannah, GA, Feb 16-21. The five-day writing retreat also includes faculty members Neil Shepard and David Poyer.

Rashidah Ismaili has a new website in development:
<http://about.me/rashidaismaili>.

Dawn Leas has an interview with Lori A. May and a review of *Waking My Mother* by Angela Alaimo O'Donnell in the winter issue of *Poets' Quarterly*. Her poem "Pairs" appears in the January 2014 issue of *Cumberland River Review*, and "Explorer" is part of the Luzerne County

Poetry in Transit 2013-2014 program. Swandive Publishing will be releasing its first collection in spring 2014, which will include work by alums Kait Burrier, Stanton Hancock, Dawn Leas, and Jim Warner, and current student, Andrea McGuigan. Other poets in the collection are Barbara DeCesare, Sarah Zane Lewis, Dale Wilsey, and Eric Wilson.

Ross Klavan 's new novel, *Schmuck*, is now available from Greenpoint Press.

Kaylie Jones will be teaching a Norman Mailer Center workshop in Salt Lake City, Utah this summer. She also participated on a panel at Vogue Knitting Live, reading from her essay in *Knitting Yarns: Writers on Knitting*, published by W.W. Norton.

Karen McElmurray has a short story, "That Night," included in *Red Holler: An Anthology of Contemporary Appalachian Writing*, published by Sarabande Books.

Nancy McKinley 's short story "Ramp" will appear in the spring issue of *The Blue Penny Quarterly*.

Taylor Polites participated on a panel at Vogue Knitting Live, reading from his essay in *Knitting Yarns: Writers on Knitting*, published by W.W. Norton.

David Poyer 's new novel, *The Cruiser*, will be published by St. Martin's Press in May.

Sara Pritchard 's story collection *Help Wanted: Female*, published by Etruscan Press in July 2013, is now available as an audiobook (with Sara reading) through Amazon and Audible.com. A story from Sara's first book of stories, *Crackpots*, is included in *Red Holler: An Anthology of Contemporary Appalachian Writing*, new from Sarabande Books.

Jeff Talarigo was interviewed by Jennifer De Leon in *AGNI* Online where his story excerpt, "The Night Guardian of the Goat," is also published.

M.F.A. alum Chris Bullard 's first full-length book of poetry, *Back*, was published in November of 2013 by CW Books, an imprint of WordTech Editions. Kattywompus Press recently published his chapbook, *Dear Leatherface*, for publication in January of 2014. Minor Arcana Press accepted his poem, "Sidekick," for the anthology, *Drawn to Marvel: Poems from the Comic Books*, to be published in February of 2014. *Fledgling Rag*, a literary review, will feature a selection of his poems in its Issue 13 which will appear in April of 2014.

M.F.A. alum Craig Czury has poems from "*American Know-How: Patent Pending*" in the *Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Gazette*.

M.A. alum Jason Donnelly 's novel, *Gripped*, was released by Perfect Edge Books in September. He has also released his creative thesis as a Kindle book.

M.F.A. alum Brian Fanelli 's full-length book of poems, *All That Remains*, was recently published by Unbound Content. The book has been nominated for the Working Class Studies Association's Tillie Olsen Creative Writing Award. Brian was recently interviewed by *Open Alphabet* about the book, as well as by *Boston Literary Magazine*, and *Poets' Quarterly*. He will be doing several readings for the book in 2014, including at the KGB Bar in New York City.

M.F.A. alum Tyler Grimm is currently designing a brand new class for Elizabethtown College, The Psychology of Creative Writing. Tyler will also begin teaching Writing and Analysis of Short Story and advising students beginning in the summer.

M.F.A. alum Matthew S. Hinton has accepted the position of Coordinator of Writing at Misericordia University.

M.F.A. alum Laurie Loewenstein 's debut novel, *Unmentionables*, the inaugural novel in Akashic's Kaylie Jones Books imprint, has received a starred review in the January 15th, 2014 issue of *Library Journal*. The book was also selected as a Midwest Connections Pick for January.

M.F.A alum Carol MacAllister 's short story, "Upgrade," will be included in *The Upcoming* speculations anthology. Her book, *Mayan Calendar Reveal*, prompted an invitation by *UFO Magazine* editor and TV personality Bill Byrnes to be his guest on their 90-minute radio theater call-in show to discuss her research for the novel. Her collection of horror, *The Blackmoor Tales*, published by Northampton House Press, has received good press particularly through the Horror Writers Association membership. MacAllister's poems have been included in the recent issue of *Word Fountain*.

M.F.A. alum Lori A. May has an essay, "After the Winds Die Down," in the February issue of *1966 Journal* (Trinity University); her essay, "Independence Road," in the December issue of *Northern Cardinal Review*; and another essay, "Motor City Redux: In Pursuit of the American Dream," in the winter issue of *Midwestern Gothic*. Her latest poetry book, *Square Feet*, was published in January with Accents Publishing.

M.A. student Andrea McGuigan published an interview with Ross Klavan in The570.com. She was also awarded the Jennifer Diskin Memorial Scholarship at the January residency.

M.A. alum Lori M. Myers had her play "91366" accepted for publication by HaveScripts. Lori wrote the play while attending Wilkes and in Jean Klein's foundations class. Also, her short story, "Heartland Flyer," was published by Alban Lake Publishing in *Disturbed Digest*.

M.F.A. alum Richard Priebe 's short story, "A Bilingual Battle," was recently published as part of the *Terrible Tuesdays* series by Akashic Books.

M.F.A. alum William Prystauk recently conducted an interview with horror director Stuart Gordon (of *Re-Animator* fame) for The Last Knock podcast. His essay, "How to Prepare Students for Their Online Experience in Converge: A Journal of Faculty Collaboration for Distance Education," has just been published. He has written and will direct the short film, *Tigers in the Soup*, a family drama, in January. He is currently developing Kickstarter campaigns for the crime drama *CASE #591*, which he will direct this June, and for the animated comedy-fantasy he has written, *MegaClimax 5000*.

M.A. alum Dania Ramos was selected as a finalist in the 2013 MetLife Nuestras Voces National Playwriting Competition at Repertorio Español.

M.F.A. alum Carrie Reilly has a poem, "Hesitation Wounds," in *Apiary 7: The Power Issue*. She recently read at the launch party in Philadelphia.

M.F.A. alum Jonathan Rocks recently signed with the Silver/Bitela Agency in Los Angeles, California.

M.A. student Bill Schneider 's short story, "Yesterday Once More," will appear in *Silly Tree Anthologies* in January 2014.

M.F.A. alum Michael J. Soloway will have his essay, "Women and Children First," published by *Hippocampus Magazine* in January. Michael

was also recently promoted from Managing Editor to Editor-in-Chief of *Split Lip Literary Magazine*.

M.A. student Francisco Tutella had a poem included in the Luzerne County Poetry in Transit 2013-2014 program.

M.F.A. alum Morowa Yejidé 's novel, *Time of the Locust*, was covered by books editor Patrik Henry Bass in the January print edition of *Essence Magazine*.

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