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Mailer Biography by J. Michael Lennon Now Available

Faculty and advisory board member J. Michael Lennon offers a definitive portrait of literary legend Norman Mailer in his highly anticipated biography, *Norman Mailer: A Double Life* (Simon & Schuster). As Mailer's archivist, executor, and family friend, Lennon had unlimited access to the late author's

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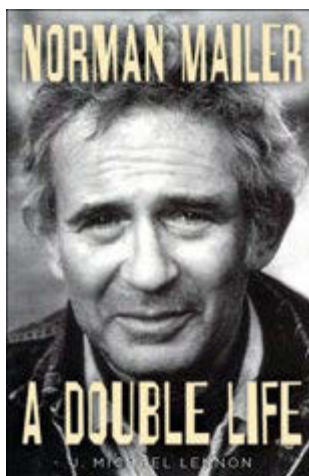
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papers, letters, and other personal documents. Lennon also interviewed more than eighty individuals and the result is a 947-page biography.



While Mailer is a literary legend and model for many, he was also a complicated and controversial figure. In a recent interview, Lennon touched on Mailer's multiple identities: "Mailer could see reality only as a series of oppositions. Everybody and everything, all phenomena, is twinned. All of his own identities—rifleman, novelist, filmmaker, political activist, family man, womanizer, journalist, and so on—had a double. Doubleness was his tool for understanding people, politics, nature, the universe even," Lennon said. "What makes it more fascinating is that each twin has a minority within. Monsters have an enclave of virtue, and the converse is true for saints."

To prepare for this biography, Lennon conducted daily interviews during the last year of Mailer's life. He also culled information from more than 45,000 letters, and spent time with Mailer's family, friends, and colleagues. The final book reveals Mailer's sources and influences for each of his major works, as well as his state of mind at every critical point in his life and career.

Alum Laura Moran Makes National Strides

M.F.A alum Laura Moran was invited to attend the Kennedy Center National Seminar for Teaching Artists in August, 2013. Laura was one of thirty artists invited to participate, thanks to her interest in designing extended residencies in schools. "It was an honor to attend," Moran said. "The Kennedy Center teaching artist materials have evolved my practices and are crucial to securing new residencies and integrating arts into the new common core curriculum."



Moran's experiences at the Kennedy Center prompted her and Thomas

Bosket, a professor at Parsons School of Design Arts, to found a new business, B-Trads: Teaching Artists Alliance. B-Trads, or Beautiful Traditions, “sprouted from our awareness of a need to balance tradition and innovation through creative interaction; to connect disciplined learning to heart-based needs in support of Balance; to allow discovery and expression of all that makes us human—without censure— in order to find that Balance. True teaching provides opportunity for epiphany. Effective teachers provide those opportunities, but we also intentionally notice them, actively acknowledge them, and consciously engage students in reflection and celebration of their discoveries.”

With a select corps of teaching artists, Moran and Bosket will offer workshops and residencies to K-12 schools, adult learners, businesses, organizations, and communities. “Our first teaching opportunity was a partnership with the Upper Delaware River National Park Service in Lackawaxen, PA this past summer. We offered three workshops for adults and two for children—a huge success—which has resulted in plans for the 2014 season. We will also be working with the Delaware Highlands Conservancy to develop eco-arts educational materials.”

Lauran Moran graduated with an M.F.A. in 2012. She received the 2011 Beverly Hiscox Scholarship and gratefully acknowledges the support and encouragement she received during her time at Wilkes.

Michael Mailer Film at Cannes

Faculty member Michael Mailer, producer of more than twenty feature films, recently returned from the Cannes Film Festival where his film *Seduced and Abandoned* premiered. “It was an exciting time walking the red carpet,” Mailer said. The film stars Alec Baldwin and James Toback.



“*Seduced and Abandoned* is a nonfiction film, part mediation on film and the filmmaking process consisting of interviews of film legends such as Polanski, Bertolucci, Scorsese, Copola, and part adventure tale following the ups and downs of Alec Baldwin and James Toback as they attempt to set up a remake of *Last Tango in Paris* (but this one is set in Iraq called *Last Tango in Tikrit*) at the Cannes Film Festival,” Mailer said.

HBO bought the film for US distribution and will be airing it this fall. Mailer is currently working on a new picture in Louisiana.

San Francisco Production for Playwriting Alum

Drowning Ophelia, a play by M.F.A. alum Rachel Strayer, will be onstage October and November at Repurposed Theatre in San Francisco. The full-length play explores the nature of abuse and forgiveness.



“I’ve been really blessed by how much the director, Ellery Schaar, has included me in this process,” Strayer says. “Since the production is happening in San Francisco and I live in Pennsylvania, I have not had the privilege to attend a rehearsal. However, Ellery has kept me involved all the way. During the auditions she emailed me the headshots and resumes of the actors she called back, calling me once to discuss who she was looking at and then again to discuss who she was planning to cast and why.”

Strayer says she stays in touch with Ellery on a regular basis. “She often sends me pictures through text or email, showing me the theatre space, costumes, the very important bathtub set piece, and even candids from a promotional photo shoot. While Ellery has final say in all the decisions, she has made it abundantly clear that my input is very important to her. Even with the show happening across the country, I feel as though I am an integral part of the production. I could not have asked for a better experience.”

The Wilkes alum and her husband, Jonathon, will attend all three of the opening weekend productions. She has also been invited to do a “playwright talkback” after each performance. Strayer graduated in 2012 and worked with mentor Juanita Rockwell.

Announcements

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! This new track opened at the June 2013 residency. 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, beginning with the fall graduation. 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.

Etruscan Press has great news. Diane Raptosh's *American Amnesia* is one of ten poetry books on the long list for the 2013 National Book Awards. This is the fourth Etruscan book to make the long list.

Akashic Books has made Flavorwire's list of "25 Independent Presses That Prove This is the Golden age of Indie Publishing." In its description of why the press deserved such recognition, Flavorwire says Akashic is "the ultimate indie."

River & South Review, our new student-run literary journal, has launched. The editorial team is derived of current students in the M.A. and M.F.A. Wilkes writing programs. The launch issue debuted in Summer 2013 and the Winter issue is scheduled for publication in December. 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>.

Awards

Awards were presented during the recent summer residency. Joshua Horwitz received the Beverly Hiscox Scholarship and Lori A. May received the Norris Church Mailing Fellowship. Horwitz was featured in the Wesleyan University newsletter with a quote from his mentor Beverly

Donofrio, a fellow Wesleyan alum.

The 22nd Annual James Jones First Novel Fellowship awarded first place and \$10,000 to Margot Singer of Granville, OH for her manuscript titled *The Art of Fugue*. Runners-up in the competition were Jennifer S. Davis of Baton Rouge, LA for her manuscript *Reckonings*; and Timothy Brandoff of New York, NY for his manuscript *Connie Sky*. They were each awarded \$750. Tamara B. Titus, of Charlotte, NC received honorable mention for her manuscript *Lovely in the Eye*. The James Jones First Novel Fellowship was established in 1992 to “honor the spirit of unblinking honesty, determination, and insight into modern culture as exemplified by (the writings of) James Jones.” It is awarded to an American author of a first novel-in-progress. The competition is co-sponsored by the Wilkes University Graduate Creative Writing Program and the James Jones Literary Society.

Faculty/Staff Notes

Bonnie Culver is on the road for those organizations connected to the CW program. October 3-5, she attended the Board of Directors meeting for AWP (Association of Writers and Writing Programs) of which Wilkes is an institutional member. She serves as the Vice-President of AWP whose next national conference is in Seattle, February 26 to March 1, 2014. October 24-26, she will attend the International Norman Mailer Conference hosted this month in Sarasota, FL where she and screenwriting faculty member Ken Vose will continue the annual tradition of a Wilkes University readers theatre presentation on Mailer's work. Bonnie Culver and Mike Lennon are charter members and board members of the Mailer Society. As the JJJ Society president, she will attend the 2013 James Jones Literary Society Symposium, which will take place on November 8 at the Quail Creek Country Club in Robinson, IL. In November, she will return to Mesa, AZ where she spent last year on special assignment for Wilkes. The Wilkes CW program will co-sponsor the Mesa version of the National Novel in a Month (NaNoMo). Alums, students, faculty, if you are interested in knowing more about or participating with any of these organizations, please contact the program director.

Christine Gelineau has a poem, “Eating Blueberries,” in the new issue of *Gargoyle Magazine* and her poem “Accident” has been accepted for the winter issue of the journal *Broad Street*. Also, she will have a poem included in a forthcoming book from H.L. Hix, accepted for publication by Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Ross Klavan has a comic novel due out from Greenpoint Press. *Schmuck* has an official publication date of January 21, 2014. He was also consultant on a script for director Rich Devaney and is a voice on Amazon's TV series *Alpha House*.

Dawn Leas has a poem, "Empty Cars," in the fall issue of *San Pedro River Review*. Her reviews of *Gold* by Barbara Crooker and *What Remains* by Caroline Maun, as well as a Q&A with Michael Czarnecki about his *Poems Across America* Tour, appear in the Fall 2013 issue of *Poets' Quarterly*.

Michael Mailer's new film, *Seduced and Abandoned*, premieres on HBO in October.

Nancy McKinley's short story "Love, Masque & Folly" appears in the short fiction anthology *Voices from the Porch*, published by Main Street Rag. Nancy's short story "Ramp" has been accepted by *The Blue Penny Quarterly* for Spring 2014.

Neil Shepard has a new poem, "Street," based on the James Nares' video installation in The Metropolitan Museum, coming out in *The Manhattan Review*. Other new poems will appear in *Barrow Street*, as well as in Amherst College's new literary magazine on place, *The Common*. His poem "No" will appear in *The TV Anthology: Rabbit Ears*, which will appear in print and podcast. His poem "Town Green: South Royalton" was selected as poem-of-the-week for the poetry blog, *THEthe*, by guest-editor Christine Gelineau. In September, Shepard gave a poetry reading at The Burlington Book Festival, did a radio interview for the literary program WriteTheBookin VT, and performed in nightclubs with his long-time ensemble, PoJazz.

Jan Quackenbush had a concert-reading of his new play, *Fire on the Water*, at La MaMa Theater's La Gallariain NYC.

Susan Cartsonis had an article, "Why Women Should Get the Jobs," published in *ArtsHub*, an Australian digital magazine.

Student/Alum Notes

M.F.A. alum Amye Archer reviewed Beverly Donofrio's latest book, *Astonished*, for *Brevity*.

M.A. alum Tom Borthwick has a short story accepted for publication in

Bewildering Stories. TwentyFiveEight Studios is also going to be turning it into a short film.

M.F.A. alum Cory Brin will have his poem “A Rainy Drive” published in a poetry collection, *This Time Around*, by Eben and Wein Publishing.

M.F.A. alum Tara Caimi ’s essay “Cat-Face” was published in *Pithead Chapel*, and her essay “Without Words” was selected for inclusion in the nonfiction anthology *Whereabouts: Stepping Out of Place*, published by 2Leaf Press. Both essays are excerpts from the full-length memoir Tara completed during her time in the creative writing program at Wilkes.

M.A. alum Chris Campion published his debut novel *The Jiu-Jitsu Bum* with Northampton House Press, LLC.

M.A. alum Cindy Dlugolecki has had three staged readings of her ten-minute play *At the End of Her Rope* in 2013 as part of Playwrights Alliance of PA: Hershey Area Playhouse in June; Mt. Gretna’s Cicada Festival in August; and Open Stage of Harrisburg in October.

M.F.A. alum Brian Fanelli ’s poem “Adjunct Plight” appeared in *The Los Angeles Times* over the summer. In addition, his poem “A Cub Reporter’s Mentor” was accepted for publication by *Blue Collar Review* for a future issue, and his poem “State of Emergency” was accepted for publication in the next issue of *North Chicago Review*. In addition, Brian’s full-length book of poems, *All That Remains*, will be out this fall through Unbound Content.

M.A. alum Donna Ferrara ’s script *Arvin Lindemeyer Takes Canarsie* was named a Top Finalist in the ASU Feature Length Screenplay Contest. Her play *The Waiting Place* has been chosen for consideration for a yearlong workshop at William Paterson University New Playwrights Competition.

M.F.A. alum Patricia Florio has a cookbook available through Serendipity Media Press. ***Cucina d’ Amelia: My Mother’s Sicilian and Neapolitan Recipes*** is currently available in a digital edition and will soon be available in print as well.

M.F.A. alum Rachael Goetzke published a memoir excerpt with *The Writing Disorder*.

M.A. student April Line has written for the Jamie Chavez Blog. She also reviewed Tim Parrish's *Fear and What Follows* in *West Branch Life's* Fall issue.

M.F.A. student Heather Lowery 's essay "Keeping It Real" was recently published in *Poets' Quarterly*.

M.A. alum Gale Martin is a presenter at the 2013 Literary Festival at Alvernia University in Reading, PA. She is discussing her latest novel *Grace Unexpected*. She also participated in BookFest PA in State College, PA during Arts Festival Week, sponsored by Schlow Library of Centre County.

M.F.A. alum Vicki Mayk is teaching a first-year foundations class for freshmen, "The Power of Story," at Wilkes University. The class explores the ways that story is used to communicate in many contexts. Her personal essay "Road Warrior" was selected for publication in *Hippocampus Magazine's* Road Trip issue in July 2013.

M.A. alum Lori M. Myers had her musical *Talk, the Musical*, with music by Nicholas Wilders, produced by Gretna Theatre this past summer. Her play *A 21st Century Christmas Carol* was accepted for publication by Contemporary Drama Service. Her short story "Nina" will be published by *Zest Literary Journal*. She also recently interviewed singer/actress Shirley Jones for *B Magazine*.

M.F.A. student Linda M.C. Nguyen 's short story "Pretty Things" was published by the *Sassafras Literary Magazine* in September 2013.

M.F.A. student Travis Nicholson recently accepted a position as Assistant Professor of English at University of Arkansas - Monticello. He has also interviewed fellow Wilkes alum Chris Campion for *The Write Life*.

M.F.A. alum William Prystauk 's short horror film *Too Many Predators* is an Official Selection at both the Twisted Tails Film Festival in Texas, and the New Jersey Horrorfest. His short drama *Tigers in the Soup* is in pre-production.

M.F.A student Nisha Sharma 's thesis, *My So-Called Bollywood Life*, won first place in the 2013 annual Write Stuff Literary Contest in the Young Adult Fiction category.

M.A. student Thomas Simko will have a nonfiction piece, "The Long Goodbye," published in *War, Literature, & the Arts*.

M.F.A. alum Donna Talarico is Director, Integrated Communications at Elizabethtown College and also is editor of the College alumni magazine and online newsroom, E-town NOW. Her previous position was Integrated Marketing Manager. In the spring and summer of 2013 she presented at a number of national and regional conferences including Penn State's Social Media Summit and the Mid-Atlantic Web Conference at Gettysburg College.

M.A. alum Douglas James Troxell was a guest on *Read First, Ask Later*, a radio show on *I <3 Radio* that discusses literature and conducts interviews with authors. His short story "The Working Dead," a story he started writing in his 501 fiction workshop, will appear on *Dark Futures Fiction* in October as part of their zombie-themed month.

M.F.A. alum Sandee Gertz Umbach, who has relocated to Nashville, TN, will be visiting the Western Pennsylvania area to give a reading at the Carnegie Library, Pittsburgh, on Sunday, October 20 as part of their Sunday Poetry Series. She will also be a Guest Lecturer at the University of Pittsburgh that same week where her book, *The Pattern Maker's Daughter*, is being taught by Professor William Scott in an English course focusing on Working Class Literature.

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