

Revise This!

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WILKES UNIVERSITY CREATIVE WRITING NEWSLETTER

November 2019

The Norman Mailer Society Conference, 2019

A Different Norman

BY JASON MILLER

In *The Spooky Art*, his treatise on writing, Norman Mailer identifies himself as a writer who changes his persona with every book he writes. As academics who study his work and as writers ourselves, it can be difficult to find a means to access a man whose personality, and work, seem to be in constant flux. This year's Norman Mailer Society Conference, which took place from Thursday, October 10 to Saturday, October 12 at Wilkes University, provided a multifaceted portrait of the artist, and the man, and allowed participants some access into his world. Over the three-day period, Mailer scholars from across the country, along with four of his children, facilitated or participated in panels exploring Mailer's fondness for the theater, his little known (or widely forgotten) essay on graffiti, "The Faith of Graffiti," his political aspirations, his attitudes on violence and war, as well as a discussion on how to promote academic study of Mailer's work in classrooms, both now, and into the

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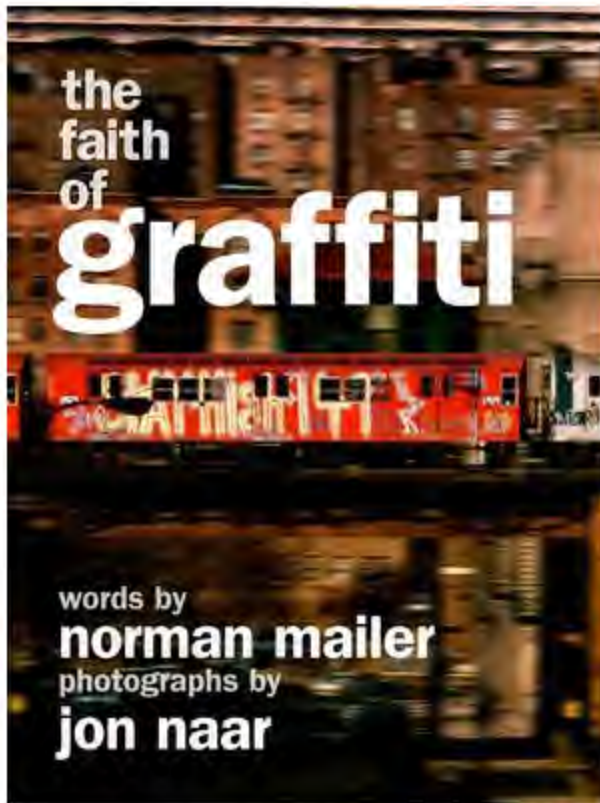
2017

2018

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future.



The first evening of the conference was capped with a tour of the newly christened Norman Mailer Room in the Wilkes University E. S. Farley Library, which features a recreation of Mailer's studio in

Provincetown, MA, where he completed his last work, *The Castle in the Forest*, a novel focusing on Hitler's childhood. The Mailer collection also includes dozens of hand-written manuscripts presenting a unique view into how he worked, his reference library, as well as his own personal reading material. The room, and the conference itself, serve as a reminder that Mailer was more than just his public persona, more than just a novelist. Mailer was also an essayist; a journalist and co-founder of *The Village Voice*; a biographer; a playwright; a filmmaker and actor; an activist and politician. He was also a husband, married six times, and father to nine children. He was awarded two Pulitzer prizes and a National Book Award. He wrote about war, peace, violence, madness, forgiveness, and, apparently, graffiti.

Mailer's youngest daughter, the painter and sculptor Maggie Mailer, gave Saturday's keynote speech. Ms. Mailer spoke about what she viewed as "the different Normans," those experienced by her and her siblings, as well as his differing and ever-changing writing voice and public persona. As I listened to a daughter speak about her father, I heard one artist speaking about another, and I came to the realization that Norman Mailer, proper, is a man for all seasons because he is a man of all seasons; a man whose legacy, and body of work, offers something for everyone because he was, at one time or another, a bit of everything.

The Norman Mailer Room



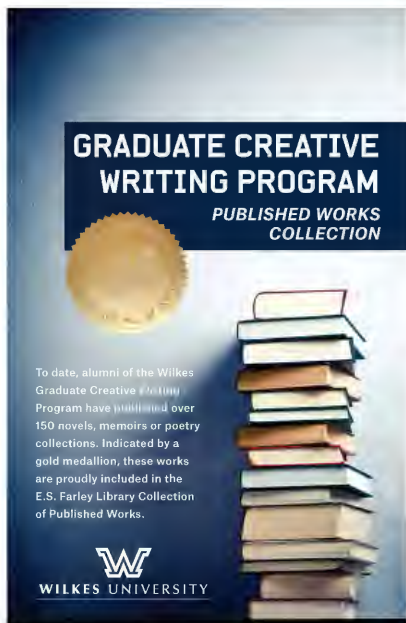
The Pulitzer Prize-winning author, Norman Mailer, now has a permanent home at Wilkes University. The E.S.

Farley library showcased a collection of Norman Mailer's works, a portrait-donated by his daughter Danielle, and his original writing desk. The room came into public view on October 10 to kick-off the Norman Mailer Society Conference, hosted by the Wilkes University Maslow Family Creative Writing Graduate Program. The room on the second floor of the Farley Library includes Mailer's desk from Provincetown, MA. In addition to his personal effects, the recreated studio holds Mailer's research materials, drafts, notes, and other personal items.

J. Michael Lennon, emeritus professor, and program co-founder, along with his wife Donna Lennon, have donated other personal items and Mailer's manuscripts. The room also contains the citations for Mailer's Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award. Please check out of this replica of literary history the next time you are on campus.

Maslow Family Creative Writing Collection

Members of the Maslow Family Creative Writing Program community strive not only for individual success but also to be a part of a broader writing community. We are pleased to announce that all published works are now accessible through the E.S. Farley Library. Designated by the gold medallion, a search under "[libguides](#)" will provide



you with the entire catalog of published works including, 150 novels, poetry collections, or memoirs.

Through this collection, alumni, faculty, and current students can now access the published works of the writers in their writing community. Enjoy your reading!

Call for submissions: The Maslow Family Creative Writing Collection includes all work received through April, 2017. If you are a member of our writing community and have had novel, poetry collection or memoir published, or play produced or screenplay developed, we welcome you to submit this work to the collection. Please send two copies (one can be autographed) to the following technical services librarian:

Eddie Clem, Technical Services Librarian

E. S. Farley Library | Wilkes University
84 West South Street
Wilkes Barre, PA 18777

Creative Writing Community Workshops at Wilkes University – Winter 2020

Playwriting: Playwriting 101

This six-week workshop will introduce students with the tools to write a short one-act (10 page) play, and further develop their playwriting skills. The first two classes will focus on writing prompts, exercises, and learning the basics of playwriting. The last four classes will give participants the opportunity to workshop their play-in-progress at a table

reading, with all participants providing feedback.

- Meetings: Wednesdays 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- February 5, 12, 19, 26, March 4 and 11
- Cost: \$65.00 for the entire series
- Instructor: Crista Gaskill

Writing Relatable YA Books: The Essential Elements of Storytelling

During this six-week workshop for adults of all ages, participants will focus on the different aspects of craft that will help create reliable and realistic characters young booklovers want to read. The focus of this workshop is to shape image, voice, character, setting and story in young adult books that are representative of the target audience. Workshop participants will study the works of successful young adult authors and engage in writing activities that start the scene. Workshopping each element will take place weekly with peers and the instructor.

- Meetings: Mondays 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- January 27, February 3, 10, 24, March 2 and 9 (no meeting on February 17)
- Cost: \$65.00 for the entire series
- Instructor: Jennifer McLaughlin

Screenwriting Master Class

In this six-week non-credit course, adults of all ages will be introduced to a new way of imagination and creativity, an entry into an alternative reality: media.

This master class will provide participants with an overview of how to write for the screen. Any size screen. Through the use of narrative film and television as a model, participants will discover that learning to write requires learning to read. Participants will learn how to closely read what's on screen, how it got there and why. They will also read screenplays. The master class will be delivered organically, not in the traditional delivery of a series of formulas.

The master class outcome will be a three to four-page sequence of scenes that would act as the opening of either a feature length film or the pilot episode of a TV series. Participants will also craft a page or two on what the rest of the story would hold for the audience.

At the conclusion of the master course, participants will have acquired or sharpened their ability to imagine and create in images, be skilled in how

stories are constructed and be able to put a story on the page, for the camera.

- Online Master. Class
- Six-week online master class begins February 3 and ends March 13
- Cost: \$125.00 for the entire series
- Instructor: Ross Klavan

REQUIREMENTS FOR ONLINE MASTER CLASS

Students must have a sincere interest in media, film and television and have a serious interest in knowing this world as a writer. Students must bring to the course an open, adult mindset and willingness to view screen narrative in its widest form: films viewed in class may include violence, sexual situations, strong language or be shot in black-and-white. Anyone offended by any of these factors should not take the course.

You will be provided with the necessary handouts and scripts (as digital documents). You will have to provide on your own the following films: the pilot episode the TV series *Mad Men*, and the films *The Birdcage*, *The Stepfather* (original version), *The Sweet Smell of Success*, and *Unforgiven*.

These films are easily available on DVD, on Netflix or on Amazon Prime. They are inexpensive to rent.

[Winter 2020 Workshops](#)

Announcements

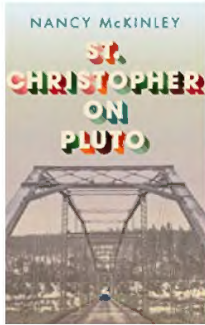
Faculty

Jean Klein's *Generous Rivals*, a full-length play in which Hester Thrale, Samuel Johnson, and James Boswell go head to head in a literary and romantic rivalry for Johnson's attention and for immortality received two productions. Produced by Zeider's American Dream Theater in June of 2019 (the first act) and October 2019 (the Festival version) for the Proteus Festival in Virginia Beach. *Inside and Out*, a short play about a mother and her autistic son, will be produced at a director's workshop at the University of North Carolina in December of 2019.

J. Michael Lennon shared [an article from Deadline Hollywood](#) about *Norman Mailer: A Double Life*, which is under consideration for a film or TV Series.



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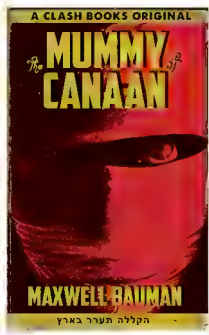
Nancy McKinley is thrilled to announce the publication of *St. Christopher on Pluto*, a novel-in-stories, West Virginia University Press, 2020. There will be a reading and launch during the Wilkes January 2020 Residency (on Thursday, January 9) with a signing of books hot-from-the-press.

David Poyer - In September, *Galaktika* magazine, from Budapest, published the novella-length version of *Stepfather Bank* translated into Hungarian, plus another of David Poyer's short stories, "The Unforgiving Minute," plus a biographical article – in an official "D.C. Poyer" issue.

Alumni

Molly Barari (MFA '17) was selected to present a memoir writing workshop at the 2019 South Dakota Festival of Books. The workshop--sponsored by the South Dakota Humanities Council--took place in October in Deadwood, SD.

Maxwell Bauman (M.F.A.'15) has a literary magazine *Door Is A Jar*, that came out with its 12th issue early in October 2019. Additionally, CLASHBooks just published his new horror novella, [The Mummy of Canaan](#).



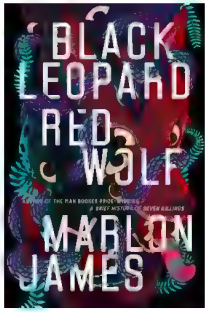
Craig Czury (M.F.A.'18) received the Alexander the Great Gold Medal for Letters and Arts from UNESCO in Salamina, Greece in October. He was awarded Honorary Membership of P.E.N. Albania in June for his promotion of the Albanian language, literature, and culture in the world through his lectures, readings, workshops, and translations throughout Albania and the Albanian diaspora. His *New & Selected Poems* is forthcoming from NYQ Books.

Wendy Decker (M.A. '16) has been hired as an Adjunct Professor at Middlesex County College and Ocean County College in New Jersey.

Patricia Florio (M.F.A. '11) and **Donna Ferarra** (M.F.A.'12) are reading contest submissions for their 2020 edition of *American Writers Review* from the founders of San Fedele Press. Both Florio and Ferarra had readings at Wilkes on June 14, 2019, as well as in August in Neptune, NJ, and in September in Los Angeles, CA. Another event is scheduled in December at the Jersey Shore Art Center in the 3rd-floor coffee bar on 66 South Main Street, Ocean Grove, NJ 07566. Refreshments will be served, and books are available for purchase with a complimentary gift wrap.

Krista Harner's (M.F.A. '08) personal essay, "Square Peg, Round Hole," has been selected to appear in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: The Forgiveness Fix*, which went on sale on November 5, 2019.

Kristin Ivey (M.A.'18) recently had three poems published. "A Midsummers Cavatina" and "Let Me, Bee" were published in August 2019 through the Poetry in Transit contest, sponsored by Kings College. These poems will be displayed on the LANTA buses for the next year in the Scranton area. "Writing, in Parts of Speech," was published in *Spark: A Creative Anthology, Volume IX*, published September 19, 2019. This poem was first penned during CW-501R during her first week at Wilkes in 2016. Ivey is currently serving as *The Write Life* editor.



Marlon James (M.A.'06) was a finalist for the 2019 annual National Book Awards for his fantasy novel, Marlon James' fantasy novel *Black Leopard, Red Wolf*.

Maura Maros's (M.F.A.'18) poem, "A Mother's Guide to Getting By," was published in the *American Writers Review* 2019 in May of 2019. Her short story, "Calling Mum...The home" was published in October 2019 on [Mum Life Stories](#).



Leah Vernon (M.F.A. '15) is currently on tour with her new book *Unashamed: Musings of a Fat, Black Muslim*, which is included in Michelle Obama's "Twenty-One Books to Read After Becoming" ([The Atlantic](#), November 13, 2019).

Current Students

Jason Miller has accepted a position as a freelance reviewer with *ForeWord Reviews*.

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