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[Astonished: A New Memoir by Beverly Donofrio](#)

Attendees of recent Wilkes residencies have had the pleasure of hearing excerpts of Beverly Donofrio's then work-in-progress memoir. Now, readers around the world will be able to see the final result in print. The hardcover edition of *Astonished: A Story of Evil, Blessings, Grace, and Solace* has a release date of

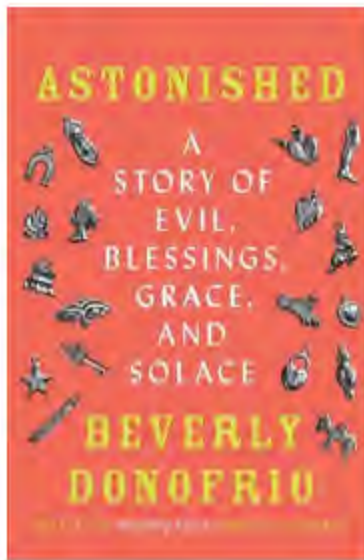
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March 7, 2013.

“It’s all so exciting,” Donofrio said of her reading tour. “There’s often a flurry of activity surrounding a book’s release, interviews and invitations to read or give talks. It’s a time of angst—am I doing enough?—and also the excitement of great possibility. Not only that the book catches on and sells like gangbusters but that my experience of discover and healing will illuminate, help, resonate with, encourage others on their own journeys.”

Donofrio will be going to Washington State, California, Colorado, Texas, New York, and Connecticut on her book tour. “I’ll be seeing many dear old friends and even staying with a few of them along the way—even the little cat I had to give to my friend when I left my life to join a monastery. I tear up every time I think of the reunion,” she said. “It’s always so interesting to meet the people at the events and to hear a bit of their stories. In the past, and I suspect it will happen this time too, I am dumbstruck by how much we all have in common and I end up with a delicious familial feeling that I can carry with me for a while.”

Donofrio’s *Astonished* is featured in the March issue of *O Magazine* in the list of must-read books for International Women’s Day. *Kirkus Reviews* has called this latest memoir “Honest, engaging, and cathartic.” As for the cover design, Donofrio said, “This book possesses, by far, the most gorgeous book jacket of any I’ve written, and it’s in the top ten of any book jacket I’ve ever seen. It’s the color of sunrise and has milagros sprinkled on it. Milagros are the little metal charms you find all over Mexico—of a lung, a foot, an arm, a head, a car, a pig, a key, a girl praying on her knees, you name it, whatever a person might pray for. It’s thought that the milagros, or miracles, bring miracles. On my book they are raised up so that they look like you can almost lift them off and put them in your pocket.”

Astonished follows Donofrio’s spiritual path and how, during her continued search to strengthen her faith, she comes face to face with a rapist holding a knife to her throat. The journey that follows includes time spent at five very different monasteries. Readers are guided through the author’s experience of healing and learning to love life again.

Beverly Donofrio's first memoir, *Riding in Cars with Boys*, has been translated into 16 languages and made into a popular motion picture. Her second memoir, *Looking for Mary*, began as a documentary on NPR and was chosen as a Discover Book at Barnes & Noble.

Kaylie Jones Launches New Imprint

Wilkes faculty member Kaylie Jones has launched a new imprint with Akashic Books. Kaylie Jones Books aims to work with a cooperative of dedicated emerging and established writers who will play an integral part in the publishing process, from reading manuscripts, editing, offering advice, to advertising the upcoming publications.



“Our first release will be Laurie Loewenstein’s *Unmentionables*, which is slotted for January of 2014, and will be a traditional publication with an e-book option,” Jones said. “However, we are currently hard at work developing an effective e-book strategy, which could speed up the process and allow us more publications.”

In addition to Loewenstein’s book, other publications include Wilkes alum Barb Taylor’s *The Sawdust Trail* and alum Jason Carney’s *Starve the Vulture*. Also scheduled for release is J. Patrick Redmond’s *Feeding the Christians*.

“No one will ever be able to pigeonhole KJB into one genre,” Jones said. “Our focus is to publish quality books that have a message that needs to be heard. We are a collective of dedicated writers taking a stand toward helping one another achieve our literary goals and dreams without answering to mainstream, ‘big business’ publishing.”

For more news and information about the press, visit kayliejonesbooks.com.

Thom Ward on Tour with Etcetera's Mistress

Advisory Board member Thom Ward has been busy touring with his latest poetry book, *Etcetera's Mistress* (Accents Publishing). On February 7, 2013, Ward read and recited poems at Georgia Tech's McEver Poetry reading series at Kress Auditorium in downtown Atlanta.

Ward said it was "a great crowd of students and the general public. It was the largest of the year with 318 people in attendance." An AV of the event and Ward's reading is available online [here](#).



The event began with an introduction by Thomas Lux. Our Wilkes advisory board member read with Georgia poets Laura Newbern and Dan Veach to a standing room only crowd. Ward sold more than forty copies of *Etcetera's Mistress*, though he says he "did not have enough time this time around to rap Robert Frost's 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening.'"

Thom Ward is also the author of *Small Boat with Oars of Different Size*, *The Matter of the Casket*, and *Various Orbits*.

Faculty and Alum Work With Northampton House Press

New titles from Northampton House Press LLC, a company founded in 2011, includes *Blood & Honor* by Wilkes alum Chelle Ang, *Ordinary Angels* by Joan La Blanc, and *Empyres: Bloodblind* by Wilkes alum John Koloski. "It's thrilling to see my book become a reality," Koloski said. "I thought nothing could compare to seeing the e-book online, but then I held my first galley copy! That beautiful glossy paperback came with a note from Dave Poyer stating that there's nothing like a new book in one's hand. He was absolutely right!"



Koloski has also taken on the role of Science Fiction and Horror

acquisitions editor, while Joan La Blanc acquires Romance, Wilkes faculty member Bob Arthur manages Poetry acquisitions, and David Poyer acquires all other genres.

The Wilkes connection to Northampton House Press doesn't end there. Poyer said, "Works are in production from Neil Shepard, Rashidah Abu-Bakr, and Ken Vose, along with several books by graduated program members." This semester, Wilkes student William Horn is interning with the publishing house.

"Northampton House publishes carefully selected fiction—historical, romance, thrillers, fantasy—and lifestyle nonfiction, memoir, and poetry," Poyer said. "Its mission is to discover great new writers, especially those graduated from accredited MA/MFA programs who have not yet achieved commercial recognition, and give them a chance to springboard into fame."

The publisher aims to bring something new to the marketplace and to readers, particularly the kind of works that may be overlooked by large trade houses. "Watch the Northampton House list at www.northampton-house.com," Poyer said, "and Like us on Facebook to discover more innovative works of high quality from brilliant new writers."

Announcements

Watch for an important new program announcement in the next issue!

If you plan on attending the annual AWP Conference and Bookfair, taking place in Boston MA, March 6-9, 2013, you'll find ample Wilkes representation. Faculty Gregory Fletcher and Jean Klein, and alum Laurie Powers are on the panel "The Ten-Minute Play: the Essential Ingredients," Nancy McKinley is presenting on the panel "International Women's Day Reading from *Becoming: What Makes a Woman*," and Christine Gelineau will present on the panel "Second Sex, Second Shelf? Women, Writing, and the Literary Marketplace." Jim Warner, alum and former assistant program director, will once again host the All-Collegiate Poetry Slam and Open Mic every night of the conference. Bonnie Culver, program director, is on the AWP national Board of Trustees and was a member of the Boston Conference committee. She noted, "There are more presentations this year than any other year in AWP history. It promises to be another fantastic conference." For more information about AWP and the conference schedule, visit awpwriter.org. Don't forget to stop by Wilkes/ Etruscan Press booth in the Bookfair!

Faculty/Staff Notes

Philip Brady took part in “The Next Big Thing” project and his interview is available at *The Write Life*.

Bev Donofrio’s new memoir, *Astonished: A Story of Evil, Blessings, Grace, and Solace*, is now available.

Christine Gelineau has a poem about Wilkes-Barre in *North American Review*.

Jean Klein had a production of a 10-minute play, *Life Swap*, at the annual Short Shorts at The Venue on 35th in Norfolk VA.

Dawn Leas has two poems, “Current” and “A Lesson on Resilience,” included in the special flood edition of *Word Fountain*. Her review of Ghosts in a *Red Hat* by Rosanna Warren appears in the January 2013 issue of *Poets’ Quarterly*, and her essay, “A Running List,” was recently featured on the blog, *and i ran*.

J. Michael Lennon reports that Simon and Schuster announced a publication date of November 1, 2013 for his next release, *Norman Mailer: A Double Life*. The official biography of Mailer (who died in 2007), the founding chair of the Advisory Board of the Wilkes MA/MFA Creative Writing Program, took six years to write, and is approximately 340,000 words in length. Mailer was the keynote speaker at the June 2005 writing conference that kicked off the Program. His wife, Norris Church Mailer (also a distinguished novelist) succeeded him on the Advisory Board, and regularly attended graduation ceremonies for the Program until her untimely death in November 2010. Lennon’s biography is the first to use Mailer’s extensive correspondence (45,000 letters) and unpublished manuscripts, as well as interviews with his nine children and ex-wives. Mailer was married six times. His longest marriage was to Norris, from 1980 to his death. The Mailers established a scholarship in her name shortly after the Program was founded. Lennon co-founded the Program with current Director, Dr. Bonnie Culver.

Nancy McKinley’s short story, “Sweet the Sound,” was published in *Blue Lake Review*.

Kevin Oderman’s essay, “Trips Not Taken,” has been published in

shadowbox.

David Poyer's new book, *The Whiteness of the Whale*, was reviewed in Publishers Weekly. The book will be officially released April 3, but is available for pre-order now and David would like to remind everyone that pre-orders are a great way to help an author.

Juanita Rockwell contributed a piece, "A minute comes and goes with all its possibility," to OneMinutePlays.wordpress.com.

Neil Shepard was interviewed in *Delphi Quarterly*.

Thom Ward's poetry book, *Etcetera's Mistress*, was reviewed by George Wallace in *BigCityLit*.

Student/Alumni Notes

M.A. alum Jennifer Bokal worked as the managing editor for *Paddlewheel*, a literary anthology. Jennifer's short story, "Infinity Plus One," also appeared in the book and had its beginnings as an exercise in the Fiction Foundation course at Wilkes University.

M.F.A. student Kait Burrier co-founded "Sixteenhundred," a collaborative column that covers concerts and festivals across the country. "Sixteenhundred" features an event review by Kait and photos by Jason Riedmiller. It is currently published online and in print via *The Weekender*.

M.A. alum Bobbi Button is hosting a series of "Write With Your Child" evenings for her 7th and 8th grade students and their parents. The first evening was a success with 26 people in attendance.

M.F.A. alum Tara Caimi's personal essay, "Lucky Teeth," is forthcoming in the March issue of *Fire & Knives*.

M.F.A. student Chris Campion has an essay, "Back to the Start: Reclaiming Your Voice and Confidence in Writing," in *The Write Life*.

M.A. alum Joe Cetta's episodic novel, *Parade Day: A Wholly Remarkable and 33% Non-Fictional Account of Scranton and its St. Patrick's Day Parade*, is now available on Amazon, published under the pseudonym Joe Goats.

M.A. alum Kevin Conner recently had a short film produced; *Pitchfork* is

currently in post-production. Also, his poem "Translating" was featured in *Naugatuck River Review*, and another poem, "Skinny," was featured in *The New Guard Review*.

M.F.A. alum Craig Czury was a featured poet at the 2012 Semana de las Letras y las Lecturas, International Poetry Festival in Rosario, Argentina. His poems appear in the online anthology *¡Ríoparaná!* and *Aldebaran Review*. His book, *Kitchen of Conflict Resolution*, was published as *La Cocina de Resolución de Conflictos*, translated into Spanish by Esteban Charpentier y Griselda García, ArbolAnimal Ediciones, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

M.F.A. alum Brian Fanelli has poems forthcoming in the spring/summer issues of *Poetry Quarterly*, *Popshot*, and *Eunoia Review*.

M.F.A. alum Patricia Florio is working with publisher Sue Richter on a literary journal. They recently worked on a special Valentine's Days Issue of *East Meets West*, *American Writers Review*, available from Sera Publishing.

M.F.A. alum Rachael J. Goetzke is working with The Osterhout Free Library on an in-house literary magazine. *Word Fountain* has just released a special full-color issue to benefit local flood victims. Copies of the magazine can be obtained from the Osterhout Free Library for a donation of at least \$5 per copy. All proceeds will go to an account via the Luzerne Foundation to help still-recovering flood victims.

M.F.A. alum Michelle Henriques-Wilson's debut martial arts fantasy novel, *Blood & Honor*, has been e-published by Northampton House Press under the pseudonym Chelle Ang. The book is available on Kindle, Nook, and Kobo. The author has recently been interviewed by Monique Lewis for *At The Inkwell*.

M.A. student Paul Jackson was interviewed by Monique Antonette Lewis for *At The Inkwell*, about his novel *A Servant's Story* and the sequel which he is writing now. The sequel is called: *A Servant's Story: The War Years*.

M.F.A. alum John Koloski has e-published his first novel, *Empyres: Bloodblind*. It is the first book in the *Empyres* trilogy, with the next two books to follow in 2013 and 2014. The book is available for Kindle, Nook, and Kobo readers.

M.F.A. alum Ginger Marcinkowski is now a monthly health columnist for Bookfun.org, whose readership is over 30,000. Her first novel, *Run, River Currents*, was a semi-finalist in the ACFW (American Christian Fiction Writers) Genesis Contest and received an Honorable Mention at

the New England Book Festival.

M.A. alum Lori A. May wrote new book reviews for Los Angeles Review, Northern Poetry Review, and The Review Review.

M.F.A. alum Jeff Minton was a finalist in *Glimmer Train's* November 2012 Short Story Contest. His story, "Fake Rubber," was written in his Fiction Foundations course.

M.A. alum Lori M. Myers has a short story, "Cooking in a Room with Strangers," included in the anthology *Forever Families* published by Mandinam Press. Also, her play Eleanor and the Christmas Carol, a modern comedic twist on the Dickens' classic, premiered at the Grace Milliman Pollack Performing Arts Center in Camp Hill PA.

M.A. student Linda M.C. Nguyen's short story, "The Blind Side of Control," has been accepted for publication by *Notes from the Underground Magazine* for March 2013. She was also the recipient of the Bergman Foundation Scholarship.

M.A. alum John Plucenik's quarterly magazine, *IndependentNEPA*, will top the \$1 million mark in subscription/advertising revenue by the May 2013 issue. He credits his time in the Wilkes program for his continued success.

M.F.A. alum William Prystauk's short film *Too Many Predators* won Third Place at MoviePoet.com. The short will be entered in upcoming festivals. His quirky drama short film, *Go Blue! A Post-Apocalyptic After School Special*, is in production. His crime thriller, *Bloodletting*, will be shot by LGG Digital Films later this year.

M.A. alum Dania Ramos' play Hielo received public readings at Playwrights Theatre of New Jersey's FORUM Reading Series at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Madison NJ and the Arts on Division Festival in Somerville NJ. *Mi Casa Tu Casa*, a bilingual holiday show she co-created, had its second production at Luna Stage in December 2012.

M.A. student Nisha Sharma's poems "Synesthesia" and "Perfect You" were accepted for publication by *YA Review Network*, an award winning literary magazine for teens.

M.F.A. student Michael J. Soloway's most recent essay, "Sticks and Stones," will be published by *Split Lip* magazine in March 2013.

M.F.A. alum Donna Talarico, founding editor of *Hippocampus Magazine*, reports that Hippo has received great media coverage recently, including coverage in Wood Stove House.

M.A. alum Barb Taylor recently sold her first novel, *The Sawdust Trail*, to Kaylie Jones Books and Akashic Books. Her novel will be released in May of 2014.

M.A. alum Kevin Voglino's second book, *Times Square Kiss*, is now available from Rogue Phoenix Press.

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Wilkes University

84 West South Street
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18766

1-800-WILKES-U

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