



Jesmyn Ward Visit



Jesmyn Ward

Two-time National Book Award-winning author **Jesmyn Ward** will speak at Liberty Hall on Thursday, 11 April, at 7:30 pm as part of the Hall Center’s **Humanities Lecture Series**. The event is billed simply as “An Evening with Jesmyn Ward.” Ward received her first National Book Award for her novel *Salvage the Bones* (2011). She won for a second time with *Sing, Unburied, Sing* (2017). The MacArthur Foundation noticed this striking achievement and awarded her a MacArthur Genius Award in that same year. Hall Center publicity for Ward’s talk notes that her

stories “are largely set on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi where she grew up and still lives” (though she was born in Berkeley, CA, and earned an MFA at Michigan). “[H]er writing is deeply informed by the trauma of Katrina and its social and economic repercussions.” According to her Tulane University website, Ward is now a full professor of English, who also works closely with Tulane’s Newcomb College Institute and the New Orleans Center for the Gulf South. Although her novels have received the most attention, she has also earned acclaim for her 2016 memoir, *Men We Reap*, and as the editor of a collection of essays and poems, *The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks about Race* (also 2016).

Beyond the Dateline



Paul Outka



Megan Kaminski

Paul Outka and **Megan Kaminski** are the latest KU faculty members to represent KU English in Asia and Australia. Not surprisingly, both trips had an environmental angle. Outka was a plenary speaker at the second international conference of the Foundation for the Study of Literature and the Environment - India, an affiliate of ASLE (see “Presentations”). The conference was held on the campus of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetnam in the district of Kollam, state of Kerala, on the southwest peninsular

Calendar

M 8 Medieval & Early Modern Seminar, “Herd, Flock, Swarm: A Shakespearean Lexicon on Creaturely Collectivity,” **Joseph Campana**, English, Rice University, 3:00-4:30 pm, Hall Center Seminar Room.

Special Graduate Student Professionalization Event, “Academic Publishing from the Perspective of a Journal Editor,” **Joseph Campana**, English, Rice University, and Editor, *SEL: Studies in English Literature*, 5:00-6:00 pm, 4002 Wescoe.

Place, Race, & Space Seminar, “Recovering Untold Stories,” Cheryl Brown Henderson, Brown Foundation; Deborah Dandridge, KU Libraries; **John Edgar Tidwell**, English; **Darren Canady**, English, 3:00-4:30 pm, Hall Center Seminar Room.

T 9 Voting Department Meeting, 4:00 pm, 4051 Wescoe.

R 11 Humanities Lecture Series, “An Evening with Jesmyn Ward,” fiction writer **Jesmyn Ward**, English, Tulane University, 7:30 pm, Liberty Hall.

F 12 Cavalier Conference on Writing and Literature, including presentations by **Wen Xin** and **Kali Jo Wacker**, KU English, as well as a keynote address by **Kathleen Blake Yancey**, English, Florida State University, 8:30 am-3:00 pm, JCCC, Overland Park, KS. Paid registration required by 5 April.

Humanities Lecture Series Public Conversation Session with **Jesmyn Ward**, 10:00 am, Hall Center Conference Hall.

M 15 Maria Dones, MFA Defense, 1:00 pm, 3025 Wescoe (Anatol, Johnson, *Moriarty*).

Graduate Creative Writing Visiting Writers Series presents poet **Asiya Wadud** with **Mercedes Lucero**, English, 7:00 pm, The Raven Book Store.

W 17 ENGL 101 Textbook Fair, come-and-go to explore the new ENGL 101 textbook, *Becoming Rhetorical*, and chat with the editors, 10:00 am-2:00 pm, 3025 Wescoe. Refreshments.

Interdisciplinary Graduate Research Workshop, “The Anachronistic Nation: Pre-Modern Constructions of English National Identity,” **Jacob Herrmann**, English, 12:00-1:30 pm, Hall Center Seminar Room.

tip of the subcontinent (Paul did some wading in the Arabian Sea). The founder of the university is Amma, a prominent guru (at KU we make do with a Girod). Outka met with Amma as part of the official agenda. Besides the usual regimen of panels and papers, invited speakers at the five-day conference were afforded an opportunity to sample India's "Responsible Ecotourism" program. Outka enjoyed an overnight tour of the Kerala backwaters which included a visit to a river village and a bird sanctuary ("endless waterfowl" and first encounters with flying foxes and a monitor lizard). This was his first trip to India. He calls it "an overwhelming, beautiful, breathtaking, sometimes heartbreaking place to go." Kaminski's trip to Australia was similarly diverse. As one might expect, she presented a poetics paper at a conference at Deakin University in Melbourne, collaborated with a Deakin colleague, and gave a poetry reading (see "Presentations"). However, she also did field work and research at Wilsons Promontory National Park and the Healesville Sanctuary for native animals. She developed a special fondness for Ollie, an eclectus parrot. The November weather in Australia was "beautiful and warm." This environmental interlude inspired some poetry writing both there and, since her return, here. She continues work on her current book project which "focuses on environmental trauma and picks up on an ongoing interest in animals that exist on and are entangled with the overlap/edges of capital and the wild."

Presentations

Harrington, Joseph

Poetry Reading (with Susan M. Schultz), Volcano Arts Center, Volcano, HI, 21 March.

Kaminski, Megan

"Gentlewomen: the Feral, Refusal, and Care," Queer Legacies, New Solidarities Conference. Australian Women's and Gender Studies Association/Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia, 21-24 November 2018.

Poetry Reading (with Ann Vickery and Melinda Bufton). Sporting Poets Reading Series, Melbourne, Australia.

Outka, Paul

Plenary Address, "Environmentalism after Despair," International Conference on Ecology and Culture 2018, Foundation for the Study of Literature and Environment (FSLE), Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Kollam, Kerala, India, 15-17 December 2018.

Announcements, Notes & News

• Who knew that 4Cs could get so lively? And that KU English's rhet/comp contingent, present and past, were at the heart of it? At the 2019 Conference on College Composition and Communication in Pittsburgh this March, Professors **Amy Devitt** and **Mary Jo Reiff**, along with current grad student **Christopher Peace**, teamed

up with **Anis**

Bawarshi

(KU PhD '99), University of Washington,

Angela Jones (KU PhD '02), Western Kentucky University, and **Julie Perino** (KU ABD), North Carolina Wesleyan College to act out rather than merely present a session entitled "Performing Genres for Social Action: Genre Uptakes & 'Disruptures'" They even prepared a professional-looking playbill for attendees. But the



Christopher Peace

theatrical action did not end there. Audience responses to the planned performance (encouraged by the presenters) took the form of improvisational skits also. Session Chair Dylan B. Dryer, University of Maine, and recent Eberhardt lecturer Carolyn Miller, North Carolina State University, participated in the initial performance with the KU thespians. Reiff says the event was "a lot of fun." Is that how you would characterize your last conference session experience?

• **Kenton Rambsy** (PhD '15) is co-editor of a new collection of essays entitled *Lost*

in the City: An Exploration of Edward P. Jones's Short Fiction: <https://doi.org/10.21900/pww.10>. Rambsy is an assistant professor of African American literature and digital humanities at University of Texas at Arlington.

• **Grace Cooper**, a student in **Laura Mielke's** ENGL 177 class in Fall 2018, has been selected to receive a **Phi Beta Kappa First-Year Book Award**.

KU and Regional Events

• **IDRH Event**, "Indigeneity and the Digital," Tiffany Midge, Simons Public Humanities Fellow and Paloma Vargas Montes, School of Humanities and Education, Tecnológico de Monterrey, 8 April, 3:00-4:30 pm, Tommaney Hall, Haskell Indian Nations University.

• **Resident Humanities Fellows**: Mechele Lyon, Theatre, will present on a book-length history of French theatre artists working in the U.S. in the twentieth century. 10 April, 12:00 pm, Hall Center Conference Hall.

• **The Urban Experience Seminar**, "E-governance, or how cities use the internet to deliver info and services," Barney Warf, Geography, 10 April, 3:00-4:30 pm.

• **Humanities Funding at the Federal Level**, with John Peede, NEH Chairman, 11 April, 9:30-11:00 am, Lawrence Public Library.

• **Digital Humanities Seminar**, "Recovering and Experiencing Civil Rights History; Digital Humanities at the Juncture of Rhetoric, Black Studies, and Design," Keon Pettitway, Communication, Eastern Michigan University, 15 April, 3:00-4:30 pm, Hall Center Seminar Room.

• **Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar Lecture**, "How Economics Shapes Science," Paula Stephan, Economics, Georgia State University, 15 April, 5:30 pm, 1111 CapFed Hall.

• **TGIT**, 18 April, 4:00-6:00 pm, Adams Alumni Center.

• **Red Hot Research**, "Knowledge, Access & Production," presenters from Libraries; KU Center for Developmental Disabilities; Kansas African Studies Center; KU Biodiversity Institute & Natural History Museum/Ecology & Evolutionary Biology; Spencer Museum of Art/Visual Art, 4:00 pm, The Commons, Spooner Hall.



Mary Jo Reiff



Amy Devitt