WASHINGTON COLLEGE
literary events
CALENDAR 2019-2020

ROSE O’NEILL LITERARY HOUSE & SOPHIE KERR PROGRAM
The Rose O’Neill Literary House

The Rose O’Neill Literary House exists to inspire students to write beautifully, to induct students into the literary life, and to help them invent the rest of their writerly lives. In collaboration with departments across campus, including English and the Sophie Kerr Committee, the Lit House hosts a robust reading series, often built around literary themes. The Lit House is also home to the Literary House Press, which publishes broadsides and books of exceptional literary merit. Finally, the Lit House offers an internship program that provides over 100 students annually with hands-on experience in literary editing, publishing, and marketing, as well as experience in arts administration and community leadership.


The Sophie Kerr Legacy

Sophie Kerr, a prolific and popular American writer of the early twentieth century, has left an indelible literary mark on Washington College. The gift that Kerr bequeathed more than fifty years ago enables the College to bring to campus a succession of the nation's top writers, editors, and scholars. Edward Albee, Joseph Brodsky, Gwendolyn Brooks, Lucille Clifton, Jonathan Franzen, Lauren Groff, Daniel Handler (Lemony Snicket), Mary Karr, Ted Kooser, Colum McCann, Toni Morrison, Joyce Carol Oates, Robert Pinsky, Claudia Rankine, Charles Simic, Jane Smiley, Natasha Trethewey, and Jacqueline Woodson are just a few of the literary heavyweights who have inspired and instructed the next generation of American writers at Washington College.

In addition to the Sophie Kerr Speaker Series, the Sophie Kerr Gift provides scholarships for students who show literary promise, pays for library books, and supports various student literary activities. The result is a vibrant intellectual culture where the literary arts thrive.

The Kerr endowment also funds the Sophie Kerr Prize, awarded each year to the graduating senior who demonstrates the best ability and promise for future fulfillment in the field of literary endeavor. Valued at $63,537 in 2020, it is the nation's largest literary prize awarded solely to undergraduate students.
Literary House Orientation Open House and Print Shop Demo

**Thursday, August 22, 1:00-3:00 p.m., Rose O’Neill Literary House**

The Lit House welcomes the Class of 2023. Learn about campus publications, try your hand at letterpress printing, and connect with like-minded upper-class students and arts faculty.

Print Shop Workshops

Our free, non-credit workshops are open to WC students, faculty, and staff as well as our Chestertown neighbors. Come learn letterpress printing and book-making with Master Printer T. Michael Kaylor who instructs these 7-week courses. Registration begins August 26. The Beginner’s Workshop begins Tuesday, September 10, and the Advanced Workshop begins Thursday, September 12. To sign up, email lit_house@washcoll.edu.

**Beginner’s Workshop: Introduction to Letterpress**

**Tuesdays 6:30-8:30 p.m., Print Shop, Rose O’Neill Literary House**

**Advanced Workshop: Book Arts**

**Thursdays 6:30-8:30 p.m., Print Shop, Rose O’Neill Literary House**

Literary House Fall Movie Night:

**Where the Wild Things Are**

**Friday, August 30, 6:00 p.m., Enclosed Porch, Rose O’Neill Literary House**

*Where the Wild Things Are* is a 2009 fantasy drama film directed by Spike Jonze, and adapted from Maurice Sendak’s 1963 children’s book of the same name. The film centers on a lonely boy named Max, who sails away to an island inhabited by creatures known as the “Wild Things,” who crown him as their king. Rated PG with a runtime of 104 minutes. Popcorn and snacks will be provided.

Literary House Series:

**A Reading by Rebecca Makkai**

**Thursday, September 5 at 5:30 p.m., Rose O’Neill Literary House**

Rebecca Makkai is the Chicago-based author of the novels *The Borrower* (2011), *The Hundred-Year House* (2014), and *The Great Believers* (2018), as well as the short story collection *Music for Wartime* (2015), all from Viking Press. Her short fiction won a 2017 Pushcart Prize and was chosen for *The Best American Short Stories* from 2008 to 2011. The recipient of a 2014 NEA fellowship, Makkai is on the MFA faculties of Sierra Nevada College and Northwestern University, and she is the Artistic Director of StoryStudio Chicago.
Literary House Series:

Agents Wanted: Selling Racial Uplift at the Turn of the Twentieth Century—A Tea & Talk with Dr. Alisha Knight
Thursday, September 26 at 4:30 p.m., Rose O’Neill Literary House

Dr. Alisha Knight is Associate Professor of English and American Studies at Washington College. She teaches a range of courses in African American literature and print culture. Her first book, Pauline Hopkins and the American Dream, was published by the University of Tennessee Press in 2012. In addition to her second book project, she is co-editing a scholarly edition of Hopkins’s novel, Hagar’s Daughter, for Broadview Press.

Literary House Series:

Eric Reads the News: Writing Humor in Current Events—A Talk by R. Eric Thomas
Thursday, October 17 at 4:30 p.m., Rose O’Neill Literary House

R. Eric Thomas is a playwright and the host of The Moth in Philadelphia and D.C. He is also a Senior Staff Writer for Elle.com where he writes a daily column. He won the 2016 Barrymore Award for Best New Play and the 2018 Dramatists Guild Lanford Wilson Award. His debut memoir-in-essays, Here For It, will be published by Ballantine Books in 2020. Recent productions include Mrs. Harrison (Azuka Theater), which received a Barrymore nomination for Best New Play, and Time is on Our Side (About Face Theater & Simpatico Theater), which was a finalist for the Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award. He has been commissioned by the National New Play Network, Arden Theater Company, Simpatico Theater, and Act II Playhouse.

Sophie Kerr Lecture Series:

Sophie Kerr 2019 Writer-in-Residence

Jason Fagone is a journalist at the San Francisco Chronicle and is the author of three books, the most recent of which is The Woman Who Smashed Codes: A True Story of Love, Spies, and the Unlikely Heroine Who Outwitted America’s Enemies (Dey Street Books, 2017). The Woman Who Smashed Codes tells the story of Elizabeth Smith Friedman, who solved the secret messages of Nazi Spies during WWII. Fagone’s other books include Ingenious (Crown, 2013), which follows a small group of entrepreneurial inventors who set out to build a practical car that travels 100 miles on the energy in a single gallon of gas, and Horsemen of the Esophagus (Crown, 2006), about competitive eating. Fagone’s nonfiction has appeared in The Atlantic, The New Yorker, Mother Jones, The New York Times Magazine, Wired, GQ, Esquire, and elsewhere.
A Reading by Jason Fagone  
**Tuesday, November 5 at 4:30 p.m., Rose O’Neill Literary House**

The Dark Art of Finding Ideas and Frustrating Your Rival: 
A Craft Talk by Jason Fagone  
**Wednesday, November 6 at 4:30 p.m., Rose O’Neill Literary House**

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**Literary House Series:**

A Poetry Reading by Monica Ferrell  
**Wednesday, November 13 at 4:30 p.m., Rose O’Neill Literary House**

Monica Ferrell is the author of three books of fiction and poetry, most recently the poetry collection *You Darling Thing* (Four Way, 2018). Her novel *The Answer Is Always Yes* (Dial Press/Random House, 2009) was named one of *Booklist*’s Top Ten Debut Novels of the Year. Her first collection of poems, *Beasts for the Chase* (Sarabande Books, 2008), was a finalist for the Asian American Writers Workshop Prize in Poetry and won the Kathryn A. Morton Prize in Poetry. She has been recognized with residencies at the Civitella Ranieri Foundation and the MacDowell Colony, a Wallace Stegner Fellowship, and a *Discovery/The Nation* Prize. She has taught fiction and poetry for the MFA Program at Columbia University, and she is Associate Professor of Creative Writing at Purchase College (SUNY). She was born in New Delhi, India, and lives with her husband and children in Cobble Hill, Brooklyn.

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First-Year Reading  
**Tuesday, November 19 at 7:00 p.m., Rose O’Neill Literary House**

Come hear Washington College first-year writers read from their original work!
Literary House & Sophie Kerr Series:

Writers as Editors Series Presents Kate Bernheimer
Thursday, February 6 at 4:30 p.m., Rose O’Neill Literary House

Kate Bernheimer is the author of the story collections *Horse, Flower, Bird* (2010) and *How a Mother Weaned Her Girl from Fairy Tales* (2014), both from Coffee House Press, as well as three novels. She is the editor of the World Fantasy Award winning and bestselling collection *My Mother She Killed Me, My Father He Ate Me: Forty New Fairy Tales* (2010) and the World Fantasy Award nominee *xo Orpheus: 50 New Myths* (2013), both from Penguin Books. She both founded and edits *Fairy Tale Review*. Her nonfiction has been published in the *Los Angeles Times, The New York Times, The New Yorker*, and featured on NPR’s *All Things Considered, Marketplace, and Weekend Edition*. With Laird Hunt, she was recently a finalist for the Shirley Jackson Award for the co-authored novella *Office at Night*, a joint commission of Coffee House Press and The Walker Art Center. And with her brother, she co-curates the *Places* series “Fairy Tale Architecture.” Her children’s books, edited books, and short stories have been translated into many languages including Chinese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Catalan, Italian, Greek, Hebrew, Turkish, and Japanese. She is Associate Professor of English at the University of Arizona in Tucson, where she teaches creative writing and fairy tale classes.

Literary House & Sophie Kerr Series:

Writers as Editors Series Presents Aimee Nezhukumatathil
Tuesday, February 25 at 4:30 p.m., Rose O’Neill Literary House

Aimee Nezhukumatathil is Professor of English and Creative Writing in the University of Mississippi’s MFA program. Her newest collection of poems is *Oceanic* (Copper Canyon Press, 2018). She is also the author of the forthcoming book of illustrated nature essays, *World of Wonder* (Milkweed, 2020), and three previous poetry collections: *Lucky Fish* (2011), *At the Drive-In Volcano* (2007), and *Miracle Fruit* (2003)—all from Tupelo Press. Her most recent chapbook is *Lace & Pyrite: Letters from Two Gardens* (Organic Weapon Arts, 2014), a collaboration of nature poems with the poet Ross Gay. She is the poetry editor of *Orion* and her poems have appeared in *Best American Poetry* in both 2015 and 2018, as well as in *American Poetry Review, New England Review, Poetry, Ploughshares*, and *Tin House*, among others. Her honors include a poetry fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Pushcart Prize.
The Literary House at AWP Conference & Bookfair

March 4–7, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Henry B. González Convention Center, San Antonio, Texas

Visit the Rose O’Neill Literary House in the Bookfair at the 2020 Association of Writers and Writing Programs Conference in San Antonio. Our students are excited to be there! We will be debuting our 2020 AWP Commemorative Broadside (a collaborative project with American Literary Review) and the sixth issue of Cherry Tree: A National Literary Journal @ Washington College. Visit awpwriter.org to register.

Sophie Kerr Series:

A Nonfiction Reading by Casey Cep
March 17, at 4:30 p.m., Hynson Lounge, Hodson Hall

Casey Cep is a writer from the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Her work has appeared in The New Yorker, The New York Times, and The New Republic, among many other publications. Her first book is Furious Hours: Murder, Fraud, and the Last Trial of Harper Lee (Knopf, 2019). A proud graduate of the Talbot County Public Schools, she has an A.B. from Harvard College and an M.Phil. from the University of Oxford, where she studied as a Rhodes Scholar.

Literary House & Sophie Kerr Series:

Writers as Editors Series Presents Jonathan Segal in Conversation with Paul Hendrickson
Thursday, April 2 at 4:30 p.m., Rose O’Neill Literary House

Jonathan Segal is a 1966 graduate of Washington College, where he majored in English and took courses in creative writing. He is now Vice President and Senior Editor at Alfred A. Knopf in New York City. He has edited seven Pulitzer Prize-winning books, and his authors include Paul Hendrickson, Arthur Ashe, Elie Wiesel, and Tony Blair, among others.

Paul Hendrickson teaches writing workshops in advanced nonfiction as Senior Lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania, where he received a Provost’s teaching award in 2005. He worked for over 30 years in daily journalism, including as a feature writer at The Washington Post. He is the author of seven books, the most recent of which is Plagued by Fire: The Dreams and Furies of Frank Lloyd Wright (Knopf, 2019). His book, Hemingway’s Boat (Knopf, 2011), was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award and won the Chicago Tribune’s annual Heartland Prize. His previous book, Sons of Mississippi (Knopf, 2003), won the National Book Critics Circle Award as well as the Heartland Prize. He has been a finalist for the National Book Award and has held fellowships from the Guggenheim and the NEA. He has degrees in English from St. Louis University and Penn State.
Literary House Series:
Creative Nonfiction Writer Kathryn Nuernberger,
2020 Mary Wood Fellow

Kathryn Nuernberger’s third poetry collection, Rue, is forthcoming in Spring 2020 (BOA). Her other publications include The End of Pink (BOA Editions, 2016), which won the 2015 James Laughlin prize from the Academy of American Poets, and Rag & Bone (Elixir Press, 2011), which won the 2010 Antivenom Prize. A collection of lyric essays, Brief Interviews with the Romantic Past (Ohio State University Press, 2017), won the Non/Fiction Prize from The Journal. She teaches in the MFA Program at University of Minnesota. She has received grants from the NEA, the American Antiquarian Society, and the Bakken Museum of Electricity in Life.

A Creative Nonfiction Reading by Kathryn Nuernberger
**Tuesday, April 14 at 4:30 p.m., Rose O’Neill Literary House**

Writing as Ritual Act: A Craft Talk by Kathryn Nuernberger
**Wednesday, April 15 at 4:30 p.m., Rose O’Neill Literary House**

Senior Reading
**Tuesday, April 21 at 7:00 p.m., Rose O’Neill Literary House**

Come hear graduating senior writers read from their original pieces. The Literary House will also announce the winners of the Literary House Genre Fiction Prize, the William W. Warner Prize for Creative Writing on Nature and the Environment, and the Pfister Poetry Prize.

Sophie Kerr Prize Event
**Friday, May 15 at 7:30 p.m., Hotchkiss Recital Hall, Gibson Center for the Arts**

This event to announce the winner of the annual Sophie Kerr Prize features a keynote address by a noted author and readings by the student finalists. Previous speakers have included National Book Award-winner Colum McCann; Pulitzer Prize-winner Michael Dirda; renowned poet Mary Jo Salter; 1982 Sophie Kerr Prize Winner Peter Turchi; author Roy Kesey; journalist, author, and literary critic Maureen Corrigan; and author and 2002 Sophie Kerr Prize Winner Sarah Blackman. In 2020, the Prize will be valued at $63,537.
At the Cherry Tree Young Writers’ Conference, high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors can experience the literary community that Washington College has to offer and discover the many opportunities available to undergraduates: internships and funding grants in publishing, writing, and editing; a host of student-run publications; and the chance to serve as editorial screeners on *Cherry Tree*, Washington College’s national literary journal. At the Young Writers’ Conference, students can take intensive creative writing workshops in a choice of three genres (poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction). They can discuss literature at the college level with current English department faculty, attend professional readings at the Rose O’Neill Literary House, and even take a class in how to draft effective college admissions statements. Find more details at www.washcoll.edu/ywc.

*All events listed in this brochure are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted. Visit lithouse.washcoll.edu and english.washcoll.edu for updates, more info, and additional events.*

**Parking Information**

Most parking spaces on campus are open to visitors after 3:00 p.m. There is limited parking behind the Rose O’Neill Literary House, and we have one accessible-designated space as well. Most of our literature-loving friends can find parking on campus in Lots C and D (highlighted on the map on the facing page). Parking spaces may also be found behind the Publications House (located at the corner of Brown Street and Washington Avenue), or in the Reid Hall parking lot, located right next door to the Literary House.
“Be the active citizen your community needs.

BE THE COMMUNITY YOU NEED.

When you find something you like, don’t just take it—

MAKE MORE OF IT.

That is the faith I hold for you, and that is what the word PROMISE ultimately means.”

—2002 Sophie Kerr Prize winner and author Sarah Blackman, in her keynote address for the announcement of the 2019 Sophie Kerr Prize, awarded for literary promise.