

October 2013

## Alumnae Notes

### *News from past winners of the Amy Award*

#### 2012

*Rio Cortez*

Since receiving the Amy Award last year, Cortez has graduated from the Creative Writing MFA program at NYU. A Canto Mundo fellow and a second year Cave Canem fellow, she has had work featured in *Sugar House Review*. She continues working for Penguin Books, where she is an assistant manager, Trade Sales Analysis & Planning.

#### 2011

*Jenny Xie*

Xie received the 2012 Narrative Poetry Prize, the Poets & Writers McCrindle online editorial fellowship, and a writer's grant from the Elizabeth George Foundation. Her poetry has appeared in journals such as *Gulf Coast*, *Narrative*, and *Barrow Street*. She is currently a lecturer at NYU.

*Caitlin Doyle*

Doyle's poetry has appeared in the *Atlantic*, the *Threepenny Review*, *Birmingham Poetry Review*, and others. She has received scholarships, fellowships, and grants through a variety of sources, including the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, the Association of Writers and Writing Programs, the Sewanee Writers Conference, and the Association of Literary Scholars, Writers, and Critics. Doyle recently served as the Emerging Writer-In-Residence at Penn State University. Currently a finalist in the 2013 Ruth Lilly Fellowship competition, Doyle will hold a fellowship this fall as a Writer-In-Residence at the James Merrill House. You can visit her website at this link: [CaitlinDoylePoetry.com](http://CaitlinDoylePoetry.com).

About the Amy Award, Doyle writes: "As an emerging writer, I have learned that seeking validation from outside sources ultimately proves fruitless; it can only come from within, spurred by a sense of conviction about one's own output. But prizes, publications, and other forms of recognition do offer something of rare consequence: encouragement. Receiving the Amy Award in 2011 offered me a vital burst of encouragement at a decisive moment in my life as a poet. What an honor to read my poetry to a packed house at the New York Society Library along with the other two winners! Participating in the Amy Award reading made me feel as if my words had been heard in a fuller way than ever before. My experience as a recipient of the Amy Award continues to galvanize my spirits while I work toward the completion of my debut poetry collection."

#### 2009

*Alexandra Wilder*

Wilder was born and raised in Toronto and is a graduate of the poetry MFA program at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York. Her poems have appeared in *Tin House*; *Conjunctions* online; *Memorius*, *Taddle Creek*; the *Texas Review*; and in *Moosehead Anthology X: Future Welcome*, published by DC Books and edited by Todd Swift. Since winning the Amy Award in 2009, her work has appeared in *RATTLE*, *Interim*, *Her Royal Majesty*, and *Caketrain*. She is currently at work on finishing her chapbook, *Sister Has a Handlebar Heart*, and is also at work on another series of interconnected poems. From 2007-2011, Wilder was managing director of the 92nd Street Y Unterberg Poetry Center. She is currently a program associate at WritersCorps in San Francisco, a program of the San Francisco Arts Commission and the San Francisco Public Library that places professional writers in community settings to teach creative writing to youth.

#### 2010

*Simone Kearney*

Kearney's poems have been published, or are forthcoming, in: *Boston Review*, *Stonecutter*, *Bridge Journal*, and *Ragazine*, among others. She has written a chapbook, *In Threes* (MinuteBooks 2013), and a chaplet, *Room Service* (Belladonna 2013). She attended the Josef Albers Foundation residency and the Ragdale residency this year (for art and writing, respectively). She is working on extending an art and poetry collaboration with Christian Hawkey, called "Fatherless Calligraphy," the first installment of which was published by *Bridge Journal* (and performed at the Poetry Project in Manhattan). She has taught at Rutgers University, Pace University, and Ramapo College, and has a website at [SimoneKearney.com](http://SimoneKearney.com). (But she notes that it is currently under construction.)

#### 2008

*Annabelle Moseley*

Moseley's collection, *The Clock of the Long Now*, was published in 2012 by David Robert Books and made the Poetry Foundation's Bestseller List for Contemporary Poetry in July 2012. Her chapbooks include: *The Fish Has Swallowed Earth* (Aldrich Publishing 2012)

and *The Divine Tour* (Finishing Line Press 2012). She was the 2009-2010 Walt Whitman Birthplace Writer-in-Residence. Moseley founded and edits *String Poet*, the journal of poetry and music, and hosts the New York Times-featured String Poet Studio Series. Lecturer at St. Joseph's College in New York and 2012 Pushcart Prize nominee, Moseley has appeared or is forthcoming in such journals as *Able Muse*, *Measure*, the *National Review*, the *Nervous Breakdown*, and *Umbrella*. Her poem, "Breakable," was chosen by *O, The Oprah Magazine*, one of twelve featured on Oprah.com for Poetry Month 2011. Recently, the expanded and illustrated second edition of her young adult novel, *The Delaney: Journey to Banba* was released in both print and e-book form by Sheeran Press. The second book in the Delaney series is forthcoming later this year. You can visit her website at AnnabelleMoseley.com.

About the Amy Award, Moseley writes: "Winning the Amy Award was not only a great honor; it spoke to the importance of legacy in the poetry world. The best poetry, even as it is unique, owes something to the past, to the legacy great poets have handed down. As a young poet, it was a wonderful affirmation to receive this award. It was also meaningful to learn more about Amy Rothholz's legacy and to be reminded that, as writers, we can honor the painful losses we encounter by giving them purpose through the words we shape on the page."

#### *Idra Novey*

The year Novey won the Amy Award, she also published her first book of poems with Alice James Books, *The Next Country*, which was a finalist for the 2008 ForeWord Book of the Year in poetry. Her second book of poems, *Exit, Civilian* was selected by Patricia Smith for the 2011 National Poetry Series. Her poems have been featured on NPR's All Things Considered, in *American Poetry Review*, *Slate*, *A Public Space*, and *Poetry*, which awarded the poems the 2013 Friends of Literature Prize for poems published in the magazine in the past year. Her website is IdraNovey.com

#### *Leigh Stein*

Stein's first full-length collection of poems, *Dispatch from the Future*, was released from Melville House last year. Publishers Weekly chose it for their Best Summer Books of 2012, and it was also a pick for the Rumpus Poetry Book Club. Her first novel, *The Fallback Plan*, was also released in 2012, and received praise from *Elle*, *O Magazine*, *Nylon*, and *New York Magazine*. She is currently teaching poetry to children in the NYC public schools through Community Word-Project. Her website is LeighStein.com. Stein writes: "Winning the Amy Award was a huge honor."

### 2007

#### *Shabnam Piryaee*

Piryaee's essay, "To Be a Poet in America," is forthcoming in the anthology *Others Will Enter the Gates: Immigrant Poets on Poetry, Influences, and Writing in America* from Black Lawrence Press. She has written and directed three poetry films that have screened at film festivals and art galleries internationally, and has recently completed a novel.

#### *Jessica Max Stein*

Stein teaches writing and literature at the City University of New York (CUNY), and received her MFA in creative writing from Brooklyn College. Stein (usually called "Max"), is writing the biography of Muppet performer Richard Hunt, entitled *Funny Boy: The Richard Hunt Story*. Her writing appears regularly in *make/shift magazine* and in the *Bilerico Project*. Her website is JessicaMaxStein.com.

### 2006

#### *Cecily Parks*

Parks' first collection of poems, *Field Folly Snow* (University of Georgia Press 2008) was a finalist for the Norma Farber First Book Award and the Glasgow/Shenandoah Prize for Emerging Writers. She has received fellowships from the MacDowell Colony, the Ucross Foundation, the Saltonstall Foundation, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and Yaddo. She is at work on another collection, *O' nights*, which includes poems that have appeared in *American Letters & Commentary*, *Kenyon Review*, *Orion*, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, the *Yale Review*, and elsewhere. Parks writes: "I remain grateful to Paula Trachtman and Edward Butscher for establishing the Amy Award, which was an invaluable source of recognition and encouragement at an early stage of my career."

#### *Frances Justine Post*

Post's collection, *Beast*, is forthcoming from Augury Books in 2014. Since winning the Amy Award in 2006, she completed an MFA in poetry at Columbia University and received the Discovery/the *Boston Review* Poetry Prize, the Inprint Verlaine Poetry Prize from the University of Houston, and a year-long residency from the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council. Her poems have appeared in *American Letters & Commentary*, the *Boston Review*, *Denver Quarterly*, the *Kenyon Review*, *Pleiades*, and others. She is currently earning her PhD in the Creative Writing Program at the University of Houston, where she is a poetry editor for *Gulf Coast*. Her website is FrancesJustinePost.com.

About the Amy Award, Post writes: "The Amy Award was one of the first poetry awards I had the honor of receiving and the first major reading I had ever done. I was so nervous that I don't really remember my actual reading, but I remember being blown away by the talent of the other women being honored that night. I remember board members and supporters coming up to me (total strangers, no less) who told me how much they enjoyed my work. It was the first real indication that people beyond my family and friends believed in and supported my work. It was a revelation and an honor that I will never forget."

## 2004

*Hila Ratzabi*

Ratzabi lives in Philadelphia, where she founded the Red Sofa Salon & Poetry Workshop. "The workshop," she writes, "takes place in my living room and includes homemade food and wine." She is at work on a collection of poems that respond to climate change and will attend the Vermont Studio Center in March 2014 to continue this work. She has poetry forthcoming in the *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Drunken Boat*, and the *Normal School*, and has published a chapbook, *The Apparatus of Visible Things* (Finishing Line Press 2009). Her website is RedSofaSalon.com.

## 2003

*Wendy Wisner*

Since winning the Amy Award, Wisner has published a book of poems, *Epicenter* (CW Books 2004), and a chapbook, *Another Place of Rocking* (Pudding House Press 2010); a second book, *Morph and Bloom*, will be out this fall from CW Books. Wisner's poems have appeared widely, in journals including *Prairie Schooner*, *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Natural Bridge*, and *Verse Daily*. Her website is WendyWisner.com. About the Amy Award, Wisner writes: "I have many fond memories of winning the Amy Award. As a young writer, it gave me the confidence to move forward, to know that my words were reaching someone."

## 2001

*Stella Padnos-Shea*

Padnos-Shea's poems can be found in *Chest Medical Journal*, the *Sow's Ear Poetry Review*, the *Comstock Review*, *Lapetitezine.com*, and *ldyprts.tumblr.com*, an online collaboration with jewelry artist Margaux Lange. She participated in the Breadloaf Writers' Conference in Vermont and presented at the Fourth Annual Creative Writing Festival at Suffolk County Community College. In an early incarnation, one of her poems was nominated for a Pushcart Prize. Stella regularly performs her work at Studio 26 Gallery in Bushwick, Brooklyn. Having been employed as a college English instructor, jewelry maker, and therapist, she is currently embarked on her greatest and most challenging project yet: raising her toddler, Mirabel, while sustaining a marriage.



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