

rc news

OUR LIVES RETURN TO THE WALL, TO THE ROCKS OF THE SEA:
OUR KISSES HEAD BACK HOME WHERE THEY BELONG.

MEMORY + EXPERIENCE

EXPLORING HOME



Mark
Linsner
Beth Ann
Lynn
Lynn
John
Knox
Tony
Coutler
Peter
Seaton
Helen
Taylor
Celia
Allred
Dean
Kath
Noel
Rock
Cliff
Mike
Dove
Dove
Wife

{from the director}

“How often have I lain beneath rain on a roof thinking of home.”

– William Faulkner



PHOTO BY CYNTHIA BURTON

“Home” is one of the most evocative words in our language; competing for the honor only, perhaps, with words like “love,” “peace,” and “silence.” With connotations that exceed the quotidian sense of shelter, home is where the heart is, where they always have to take you in; home is the place—or the people, the community—that we think of when we’re feeling alone in the world. As the RC prepares to return home to the East Quad these weightier senses of home

might feel a bit overblown—but only just. The deep affection that many of us—faculty and staff, current students and alums—feel for the quad where we have lived, learned, worked, played, celebrated, explored, argued, loved, and lost is surely heartfelt.

Reclaiming the quad restores our collective sense of identity. Our year away, on the road, and at-large around central campus was exhilarating. We got to test the strength of our community as we learned to navigate unfamiliar pathways. We got to shake loose of our complacency and try new things. And yet we often thought of home. The EQ that we return to in July, 2013, will not be exactly the same as the EQ we left in May, 2012, but many of these changes are just cosmetic. Yes, we have substantially upgraded classrooms and faculty offices; created a new version of the RC Art Gallery; designed new studio arts facilities. We’ve cleaned up the basement, the laundry room, and gotten rid of the scary pipes in the low ceilings. While the Keene Theater was “mothballed” and largely untouched by this process, the New

EQ features a much better theater lobby space and even an outdoor sculpture garden.

In other respects, it’s the same old East Quad with all its glorious layers of memory and experience. Like a palimpsest, each generation of RC students contributes to what makes the quad—and the community it has housed for forty-six years and counting—distinctive and enduringly special. The palimpsest imagery reminds us that as the future gets written the past bleeds through. Scraping off the top layer of the parchment or the building doesn’t necessarily eradicate the text beneath. And there was, admittedly, quite a lot of scraping to do.

Our educational philosophy has always been grounded in the benefits of a living-learning community motivated by the best principles and practice of the liberal arts.

Dozens of people committed hundreds of hours to work on the New EQ. We are thankful to Terry McDonald, the outgoing Dean of LSA, for his continued support and for a not inconsiderable amount of cash to finance the renovations; to Phil Deloria, the associate dean for undergraduate education and his staff, especially Assistant Dean Marjorie Horton; to the LSA facilities team led with such grace and style by Susan Monroe and including Lisa Reiher, designers Renee Cruz and Linda Montgomery; to Bob Johnston and to Monika Dressler, head of LSA’s Instructional Support Services; to our partners in University Housing and to the project managers over in AEC: Architecture, Engineering and Construction, along with a host of others who lent their experience, creativity and keen judgment to this project. They’ll be joining us for the

{from the director}

official Grand (Re)Opening Celebration on September 25th, from 3:00-5:00pm. If you're in the Ann Arbor area, we hope you'll join us, too.

Reclaiming the Quad

Reclaiming this renovated quad returns us to our roots. Our educational philosophy has always been grounded in the benefits of a living-learning community motivated by the best principles and practices of the liberal arts. We still challenge our students to become fully engaged in the process of their own education, to make their own choices, and to excel. We still encourage our students to take risks, to embrace the new and the different while simultaneously respecting the weight of history, to lead and to change the world— whatever that may mean to them.

In this sense, the overall state of the RC is as strong as ever. We are welcoming a new and vibrant incoming class of talented first year students, which includes a granddaughter of one of the RC's founders, Professor Donald (and June) Brown. She joins the granddaughter of the first RC Director, James (and Jean) Robertson. And they join the sons and daughters of a growing number of RC alums in a phenomenon that we greet with a growing sense of pride. The existence of inter-generational RC students is a tremendous vote of confidence in what we do and how we do it. We're dedicating some special attention this year to reaching out to all the members of our alumni community in better and more sustained ways. We'll be continuing our successful "Advice from RC Alums" series in the 2013-14 academic year, and we already have the multi-talented JT Waldman on the schedule. Since graduating in 1998, JT has carved a niche in Jewish graphic novels and educational technology and is eager to share his experiences with his *alma mater*. While back on campus he'll be giving talks at the RC and in conjunction with Hillel and the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies and dropping in on courses to share his provocative work at the intersection of visual history, politics, and memoir.

We're encouraging all RC alums to join us on Facebook, which will be one of our main outlets for launching a survey to explore the post-collegiate careers, lives and interests



of our graduates over the years, and for doing some early-days pre-planning for creative ways of celebrating the RC's 50th Anniversary in 2017. If you have news to share or if you just want to let us know how and what you're doing, please consider emailing us a paragraph or two to upload on the "Alumni in the World" section of the main RC website: www.lsa.umich.edu/rc/. Click the "Alumni & Friends" tab to see contributions from 32 RC alums, and counting. These can be sent to Cynthia Burton, in our Outreach and Communications office, at: caburton@umich.edu.



The Poetry of Home

RC graduates over the course of the last forty-five years stand, cumulatively at one end of the continuum. The over 280 first year students who will be launching their college careers in September stand at the other. Each year during summer orientation we ask these newest members of our community to read and consider a significant work of literature, philosophy or artistic expression. This year's selection, Pablo Neruda's *Twenty Poems of Love and A Song of Despair* is a particularly intriguing text. Published in 1924, and composed while the great Chilean poet was still a teenager, the volume is about love—and ultimately about loss—but it is also about home. As Neruda explains, "Those *Veinte Poemas de Amor y una Canción Desesperada* make a painful book of pastoral poems filled with my most tormented adolescent passions,

The Residential College (RC) is a 4-year, interdisciplinary, living-learning community of 1,000 undergraduates established through the University of Michigan's College of Literature, Science and the Arts (LSA) in 1967. The distinctive educational mission of the RC is to enable students to develop their intellectual interests and creative talents in an environment in which they can find their own voice and relate learning with doing. The RC faculty and staff challenge students to take the initiative in shaping their own education, to participate actively in classes and in extra-curricular programs, to think critically about what they are learning and reflectively about what they are doing, and to engage with the University community as well as the outside world. Learn more at: <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/rc>.

{from the director}

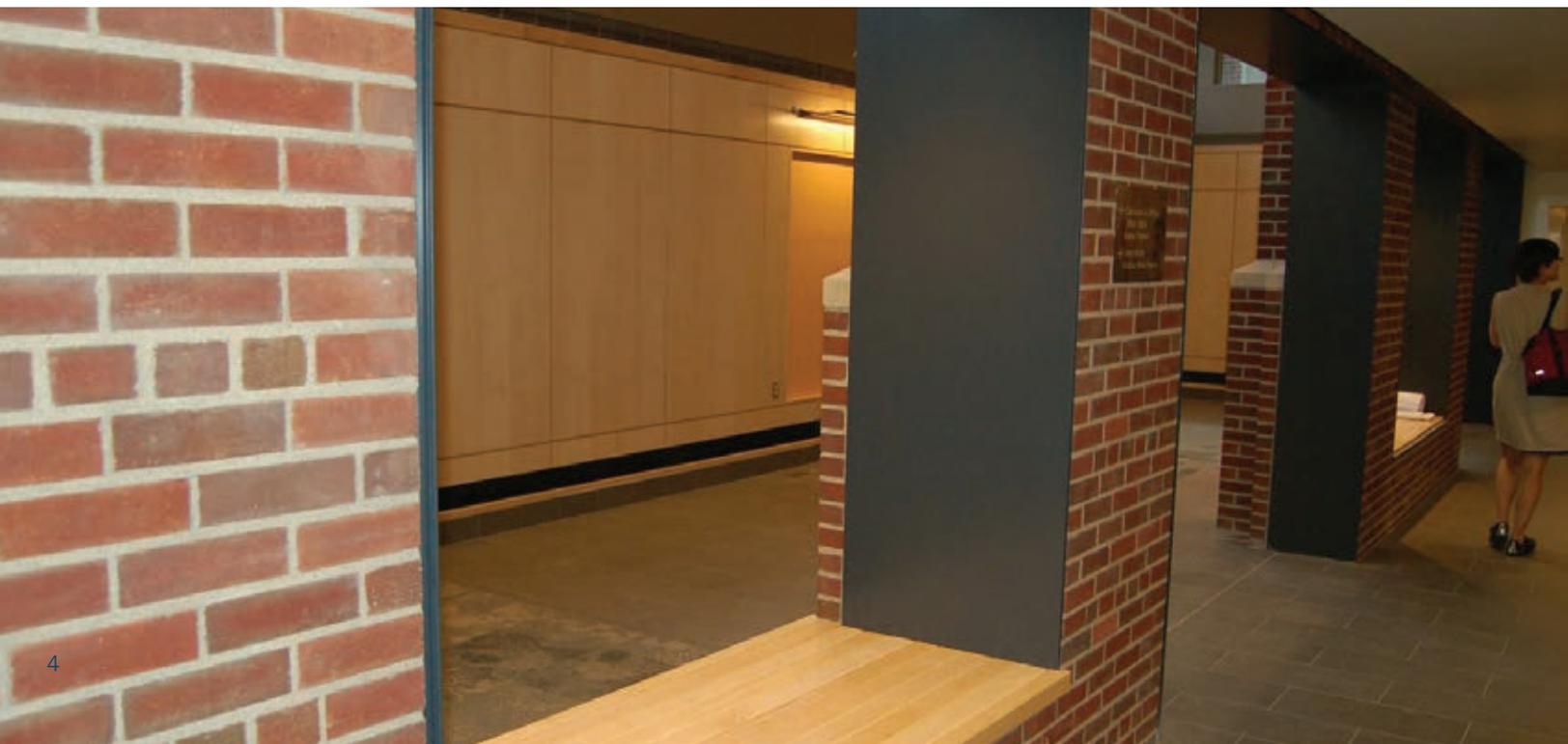
mingled with the devastating nature of the southern part of my country. It is a book I love because, in spite of its acute melancholy, the joyfulness of being alive is present in it. A river and its mouth helped me to write it: the Imperial River. *Veinte Poemas* is my love affair with Santiago, with its student-crowded streets, the university, and the honeysuckle fragrance of requited love.”

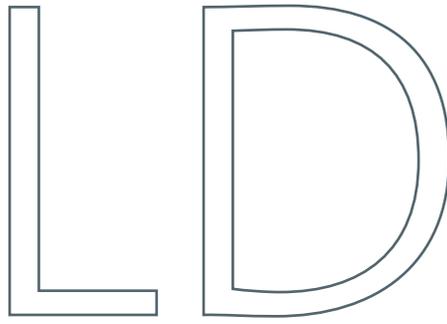
Neruda was a master of language and form; he was also the consummate poet of place. Despite—or perhaps because of—his years of exile from Chile due to his political affiliations, his poetry has a persistent rootedness that I have always found deeply satisfying. But this is a young person’s volume. It was written years before he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature (in 1971), before his exile, before he became, in the words of Colombian novelist Gabriel García Márquez “the greatest poet of the 20th century in any language.” Because youth speaks its own language and because I wanted our incoming class to hear from their slightly more advanced peers I asked the RC Poetry Forum to write a letter to these first year students about why they should read Neruda and why they should care about poetry in general. “Poetry,” they write, “has something for every student,” and they detail some of the benefits, across the curriculum, from creative writing to math class.

“But poetry’s greatest lessons extend beyond the classroom,” they continue. “Reading poetry closely, and writing it, teaches you to consider your words and your actions

before they leave you. Poetry teaches you to check yourself before you wreck yourself. This is what writers call ‘editing’ and what your mom calls ‘good behavior.’ Poetry teaches you to keep an open heart and an open mind, which will serve you regardless of your academic and professional interests. Poetry is therapeutic. The poetry in this book in particular will teach you appreciation of a foreign language, since Neruda originally wrote in Spanish, and of multiculturalism—one of the poems is based on a work by the Bengali literary master Rabindranath Tagore. Also, for those interested, poetry can help you flirt like nothing else.” Maybe I would have said it differently, but I couldn’t have said it better.

This is an exciting issue of the *RC News*. In the pages that follow are contributions from my colleagues on the theme of home and our return to the EQ. This edition also gives us the opportunity to formally welcome two new programs, and two new members of the faculty: Ashley Lucas, the new head of the Prison Creative Arts Project (PCAP), which moves to the quad this summer; and Paula Berwanger, who heads the American Sign Language (ASL) program. Both professors and programs are welcome additions to the RC and signal our ongoing commitment to community-based learning and to language instruction, respectively. So read on, stay connected, think of home. ■





BY LAURA THOMAS (RC '88)

+ N E W

The summer before I entered college, my recently remarried mother sold my childhood home. My two brothers would now be joined by two new stepsisters on many weekends, so my parents needed a bigger house for our newly doubled family. As I was just a few months away from settling into a dorm, I was not about to occupy one of the three bedrooms needed for the younger kids. I set up a bed in the room we dubbed the library and kept my belongings packed for the summer.

After living out of boxes for those months, my move to East Quad to attend the Residential College was for me more than a move to a dorm. It was a move to my next home. I enjoyed visiting my family in the new house, but it wasn't really my house. For the two years I lived in East Quad, my house was the stone fireplace in Greene Lounge, the raucous open mics in the Halfway Inn, and the dim winding halls of the EQ basement.

I thought of my college days often as I packed my office last year to move out of East Quad for the big renovation. As both RC faculty and graduate, I shared the mixed emotions of many of my students, colleagues, and fellow alums. I was ecstatic that the next time I taught a first year seminar in EQ my class wouldn't have to talk above the vigorous surge of flushing through the basement sewer pipes. But I also felt the trepidation that comes when a place we love is about to change forever. This renovation, after all, would be no mere facelift. Many of the beloved spaces I had lived and worked in for many years would be altered beyond recognition. They would be replaced by new spaces,

beautiful and functional. But they would not be my familiar spaces. And what of the personal renovations we were certain to face? When our beloved places change, we, too, must change.

Some of our greatest Midwestern authors take a dim view of the separation from home. In his novel *Sister Carrie*, Theodore Dreiser grounds Carrie's future struggles in her sentimental yet shallow farewell to her home: "A gush of tears at her mother's farewell kiss...and the threads which bound her so lightly to girlhood and home were irretrievably broken." Like Carrie, Willa Cather's *Lucy Gayheart* leaves her small town for turn of the century Chicago, "where a window or a doorway or a street-corner with a magical meaning might at any moment flash out of the fog." The move from small town to big in pursuit of those magical flashes irrevocably changes these characters. Carrie migrates from the Midwest to the East, ever further from home. After the death of her patron, Lucy returns to Haverford forever an outsider.



PHOTO BY LEISA THOMPSON

Maybe the trepidation over the way a change of place will change us is grounded in our Midwestern sensibility. Even in Ann Arbor, at heart a small Midwestern town, perhaps we sense that our ties to home represent endurance and longevity. But the separation from home is also the catalyst to discovery and wonder. When the RC community read L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* several years back we learned that leaving home is a necessary precondition for the journey of the imagination. If Cather's Lucy Gayheart had never sought a life in Chicago, she would never have experienced the moments of wonder her musical career brings her: "In its calm and serenity there was a kind of large enlightenment, like daybreak." Dreiser's *Carrie*, too,

feels the mission of art amidst her struggles to survive as an actress. These stories show us that the journey away from the familiar sparks the magical flashes out of the fog.

As we were only going to be away from East Quad for an academic year, I didn't unpack my boxes in my temporary South Quad home. Like I did many years ago, I'll save my unpacking for my move back to East Quad this summer.

Maybe the trepidation over the way a change of place will change us is grounded in our Midwestern sensibility.

Our time away from home presented difficulties but also uncovered wonders. I shared space with colleagues I hadn't known well. In advising, more LSA students than ever sought transfers into the RC, drawn by our student forums and community activities in West and South Quad. Soon my familiar possessions will find their next home, and the incoming class will come to view the "new" East Quad as their first adult home. As I return to an East Quad that will be for me both old and new, I'll recall novelist James Baldwin's words in *Giovanni's Room*: "Perhaps home is not a place but simply an irrevocable condition." For our students about to begin their college careers, this irrevocable condition is the journey to wonder only a shift to a new place can begin. ■

LAURA THOMAS teaches in the RC Creative Writing Program.

COMING TO THE RC IN FALL '13 JT Waldman

RC alum, JT Waldman, will present workshops and drop in on some Arts and Ideas and Jewish Studies classes to share his work that intersects visual history, politics, and memoir.

Since graduating in 1998, Waldman has carved a niche in Jewish graphic novels and educational technology and is eager to share his experiences with his alma mater.

LEARN MORE AT JTWALDMAN.COM

Love, We're Going Home Now

Love, we're going home now,
Where the vines clamber over the trellis:
Even before you, the summer will arrive,
On its honeysuckle feet, in your bedroom.

Our nomadic kisses wandered over all the world:
Armenia, dollop of disinterred honey:
Ceylon, green dove: and the YangTse with its old
Old patience, dividing the day from the night.

And now, dearest, we return, across the crackling sea
Like two blind birds to their wall,
To their nest in a distant spring:

Because love cannot always fly without resting,
Our lives return to the wall, to the rocks of the sea:
Our kisses head back home where they belong.

– Pablo Neruda

sign of the times

In Fall 2013 American Sign Language (ASL) and faculty member Paula Berwanger will find a new home in the Residential College.

American Sign Language (ASL) is the language of the Deaf community in the United States and much of Canada, and uses a gestural-visual modality in which manual signs, facial expressions, body movements and postures convey complex linguistic information. It is a fully developed language, with its own systems for articulation, forming words and sentences, and meaning. ASL is separate from English, and is also distinct from other signed languages. An example of the distinction of one signed language from another and from the surrounding spoken language(s) is that, although English is the shared spoken language of the U.S. and Britain, speakers of ASL do not understand speakers of British Sign Language.

ASL is estimated to be the fourth most commonly used language in the U.S. Through learning the preferred language of the Deaf community, students who study ASL gain access to the rich cultural heritage of that community, which includes a distinguished tradition of visual poetry, narrative, and theater. Students of ASL also learn about other aspects of American Deaf culture, as well as social and educational aspects of deafness.

The study of ASL teaches a new perspective on how human languages are structured. Through learning a language that uses a different modality of expression than the oral-auditory modality of spoken languages, students begin to discover properties that are common to all languages.

Finally, study of ASL also provides practical training for students entering a range of professions in the field of deafness, and may strengthen students' qualifications for various non-deafness careers.

The RC will offer a five-course sequence in American Sign Language. "Introduction to Deaf Culture" serves as a pre- or co-requisite to beginning the language courses, and creates a theoretical basis for the study and practice of ASL. The first two courses in "Elementary American Sign Language" introduce students to basic grammatical structures and sign vocabulary. The final two courses in the "Intermediate American Sign Language" sequence introduce additional vocabulary, including idiomatic expressions to expand students' abilities to understand and converse appropriately in various settings. Through a conversational approach, students also continue to study selected literature, history, culture, and outlooks of Deaf people in order to develop an understanding of appropriate standards of communicating in ASL.

Paula Berwanger, M.A. Wayne State University, is a Lecturer in the Residential College, formerly in Linguistics, who specializes in American Sign Language and Deaf Culture. Her research interests are in the area of first language acquisition of American Sign Language by children with Deaf parents and second-language learning of ASL by adults. ■

TWO HOMES

BY OLGA LOPEZ-COTIN

In the days after the presidential election I pulled out my citizenship papers and started working on them. After spending the last 25 years in the United States I had finally found reasons and ways to identify myself with this country. I had studied, worked and loved here. I had nurtured an old home, a garden and many native plants around me. I have now two children who grow with a sense of belonging to a wide world of Spanish words and songs, of Mediterranean kisses and American traditions and narratives of hope. Seeing the crowds that congregated in Chicago to celebrate Barack Obama's victory that November night, I saw myself for the first time in that mirror reflecting a myriad of faces and a rainbow of ages and skins. And I understood then that I have two homelands.

For those of us who migrate and have a strong need to root ourselves, homelands of birth feel almost like an instinct. They appear unexpectedly in our memory through a smell or a musical note, or a certain cadence of the speech. They certainly have a taste in our mouths. Mostly, however, they are a constant longing. I long for the sharp dryness of the Spanish south, the rolling yellow hills of sunflowers and the contorted shapes of olive trees. I can also reproduce the waves of the Atlantic with precision, and a noisy narrow street. This remembrance comes along with a strong sense of intangibility: everything exists simultaneously and yet feels immaterial. And I miss the joy of my culture as much as sharing the pain of hopelessness that pervades it these days.

Yet, for those of us who migrate and have a strong need to root ourselves, homelands of adoption feel like a cultivated seed. We explore our new soil, we test our resources and then we set ourselves for a season of growth and harvest. New homelands invite deliberate, rather than instinctive, explorations that transform those otherwise bi-dimensional maps into a range of concrete shapes and sounds as well as connections. We do not base our love for these homelands on memories as much as on what we create and

cultivate in them. And we long to feel part of the landscape and claim a connection with it.

Year after year I teach and live the cycle of the seasons with and through my students:

our common anticipation of the new academic year, the restlessness of the fall and the dormant quality of the winter. I hope with them and for them to discover the richness and complexity of our world, the sorrow and celebration that abounds in our societies, the fractures, the abysses and the bridges to cross them. And lately, as generations of students have come and gone, I see myself encouraging them to embark on a journey through other homelands as I once did. Some may one day claim them as their own through their own emotional experiences, who knows. Possibly, migrations blend loss and gain in such a degree of intensity that it becomes impossible for those who experience them to think of living an alternative life. For the longer we travel, the longer we cultivate new lands as we remember past ones, the more distinctive is the longing for what is lost—both time and space—and the richness of the new spaces we inhabit. ■

Possibly, migrations blend loss and gain in such a degree of intensity that it becomes impossible for those who experience them to think of living an alternative life.

OLGA LOPEZ-COTIN is an instructor in the RC Intensive Spanish Program.

thoughts on home

BY KATE MENDELOFF

Although I have lived in Ann Arbor for over twenty years, when I think of home, I think of my parent's house in Baltimore, where I grew up. My bedroom, walls covered with posters of my plays, the den with shelves of books and our piano, the kitchen table, with its incredibly uncomfortable wooden chairs my mother bought for a dollar at a long ago yard sale, these are my memories of home—my adult memories as well: I was married in the side garden. So, when my widowed mother decided to sell the house last summer and move to assisted living, I had a very emotional month with her, going through all the belongings and learning to say “goodbye” to the past.

As hard as it was, revisiting my life and the lives of my parents was also wonderful. Every object had a story behind it, and often, after I heard the story, I could not let the object go. My mother is the last of a large family. Her parents were Jewish immigrants who came to America in the 1890's, and her oldest sibling was twenty years older than she, so her family story parallels the history of the twentieth century.

My father's father was an immigrant from Vitebsk, Russia who put himself through medical school and went to work as a doctor in the coal mines of West Virginia. My brothers are ten years older than I, and so I experienced events of the 1960's through them—one brother was drafted and then enlisted in the Navy during the Vietnam War, the other was active in Students for a Democratic Society. My mother took me to all the Moratoriums in Washington. When her friends would say, how can you protest the war when your son is fighting over there, she would answer, how can I not?

Last summer I read countless letters; my grandfather's to my grandmother from the French battlefields of WW I, my father's to my mother from Egypt and Palestine after WWII. I even found a cache of love letters from my own past. I kept them all. But two of the most precious finds were a pair of my father's baby shoes from 1918, brown leather high button baby shoes, and his little wooden train. My dad died in 1993 and I miss him terribly, so these possessions were very meaningful to me. So much so that I decided to put them on the set of *The Cherry Orchard* when I produced it the following spring.

When I was sifting through the memories as I packed up the house, I thought about how to find a positive way to channel my feelings of loss. Since I am a theater artist, I wanted to choose a play to work on that would parallel my experience. The obvious choice was Anton Chekhov's final play, *The Cherry Orchard*. It is a play about the end of an era, the loss of aristocratic Russia and the move into the future. But it is also a play about losing home. As I worked with my students on this play, I hope that my personal experience helped me be more sensitive to the emotional state of the characters, and helped my students convey more nuanced performances. An important element was the staging. Ironically, since we had lost our proper home, the Keene Theater in East Quad, we performed in the Matthaei Botanical Gardens Conservatory. Setting the play in this beautiful space, with tropical and temperate plants all around, enhanced the themes of the play and helped create a world true to Chekhov's vision. And there on the shelves of the bookcase were my father's baby shoes and little train. My mother was able to come to the production and see them there, and the circle felt complete. ■

KATE MENDELOFF is an instructor in the RC Drama Program.



Checkov's The Cherry Orchard performed in the Matthaei Botanical Gardens Conservatory.

FINDING HOME: PRISON CREATIVE ARTS PROJECT (PCAP)

BY ASHLEY LUCAS



PHOTO BY BILLIE LUCAS

I was fifteen years old when my father went to prison and about twenty-five before I was brave enough to talk about it. At that point I was a graduate student studying ethnographic theatre and decided that the way to break my silence was to create an interview-based play about the families of prisoners. I've performed the resulting collection of thirteen monologues as a one-woman show on a kind of intermittent tour across the United States and in Ireland and Canada for almost ten years now. I've done the play inside prisons and in free-world venues, almost always alone in both the performance itself and this larger work of trying to start community conversations about what it feels like to have a family member in prison.

In the 2008-2009 school year, I received a Ford Foundation Fellowship, giving me a year to conduct research on the University of Michigan's Prison Creative Arts Project (PCAP). I followed a class of new students through a year in this remarkable program which sent them in pairs into adult prisons, juvenile detention centers, and urban high schools throughout Michigan to facilitate arts workshops. Nearly instantaneously I ceased being alone. Not many of the folks at PCAP have family in prison, as I do, but all of a sudden I was connected to literally hundreds of current and former PCAP members who understood the transformative value of the arts in prison contexts. In this community, at long last, I found a home.

In January 2013, I was hired as faculty by the University of Michigan with a joint position in the Residential College

and the Department of Theatre & Drama. My new appointment also includes directing PCAP—work in which English professor Buzz Alexander has tirelessly labored for the last twenty-four years. Thankfully, Buzz, Janie Paul (a PCAP professor in Art & Design), and the three excellent PCAP staff members—Sari Adelson, Shannon Deasy, and Vanessa Mayesky—continue to teach and work for PCAP as the organization makes the two biggest transitions

in its history: a change in leadership and a move from the English Department to the RC. The staff and I will be moving into the newly renovated East Quad this summer, and the 2013-2014 school year will mark the first time that PCAP courses are offered in the RC.

PCAP could ask for no better home than the RC. With its commitment to social justice programming and the arts, the RC feels to me like a broader version of PCAP, providing a safe haven to those of us who long for a community of thoughtful, artistic peers who strive to change our world for

One river, or one ghetto, can stand for another, next to which, or inside of which, one now has at least a modicum of control. Remembrance may be communal or individual. Most often, it is both.

the better. In terms of its curriculum, PCAP fits seamlessly into the RC's Social Theory and Practice major as well as its Criminal Justice and Peace and Social Justice minors. The RC's theatre, creative writing, and visual arts faculty have welcomed us with open arms, and we are very grateful for the opportunity to be a part of such a vibrant and creative community.

Home is the place where you know that you belong, and this year in the RC, even in this time of newness and change, both PCAP and I are coming home. ■

**Claudette: remember
Where you come from, girl.
Sometime in her life a bird
needs to circle home.**

**Detroit, An American Autopsy
Charlie LeDuff**



OLLEY OLLEY OXEN FREE

BY ELIZABETH GOODENOUGH

In children's games the catchphrase "olley olley oxen free" invites those still hiding to come out without penalty, to touch home base. Hide and seek, kick the can, rounders, and all manners of tag scatter players. They run away, find hide-aways, whatever it takes to escape. But the universal goal of playground sport—the safety zone we called "gool" in 1960s Michigan—is to circle home. How well rules like these prepared us to find our place in the world. Like a bird flying within a smaller and smaller radius towards home, we fulfill our quest to nest.

Remembering where we came from—the "vast cathedral space of childhood" as Virginia Woolf called it—covers wild places close to home. It also inspired roads taken in the Fall 2012 course, "Reading and Writing Landscapes of Childhood: Play, Place and Personal Story". Originally entitled "Growing Up Near the Great Lakes", this seminar explored, as did British author Roger Deakin, "the undiscovered country of the nearby." In traveling ways to familiar spots, one traditional course follows a close reading of children's books. A newer approach enhanced by technology offers the audio walk.

To chart our route back to the wilderness of home, we combined both.

First we read picture and chapter books by Michigan children's authors and illustrators: *The Legend of Sleeping Bear Dunes* by Kathy-Jo Wargin and Gilbert van Frankenhuyzen, *Paddle to the Sea* by Holling C. Holling, *Copper-Toed Boots* by Marguerite DeAngeli, *To Keep the South Manitou Light* by Anna Egan Smucker, and *January's Sparrow* by Patricia Polacco. We observed 10-year-old Kenny, narrator of *The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963*, crawl behind the family couch for weeks after witnessing the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing. In the natural affiliation of remembrance, author Christopher Paul Curtis recalls that he had actually been hiding behind his family's couch in Flint, Michigan while his father and mother watched the TV news announcing the explosion. Until that moment this child had never seen his parents cry. These tears resemble what forest ecologists call a "buried seed pool." Scorched by fire, the private woods of early life challenge us to survive and even use trauma to create art.

Close reading of such moments raises the question of how home shapes identity. The genesis of site-driven plots led us to ponder what memory preserves, including relationships between the organic systems of storytelling and

walking. Our tracing of narrative patterns and mapping of childhood secret spaces culminated in each student composing an environmental autobiography to be shared in Readers' Theatre. But these stories could not be separated. In fact they braided together in unexpected ways with the guidance of Anja Bieri, a cultural geographer from Switzerland who lives

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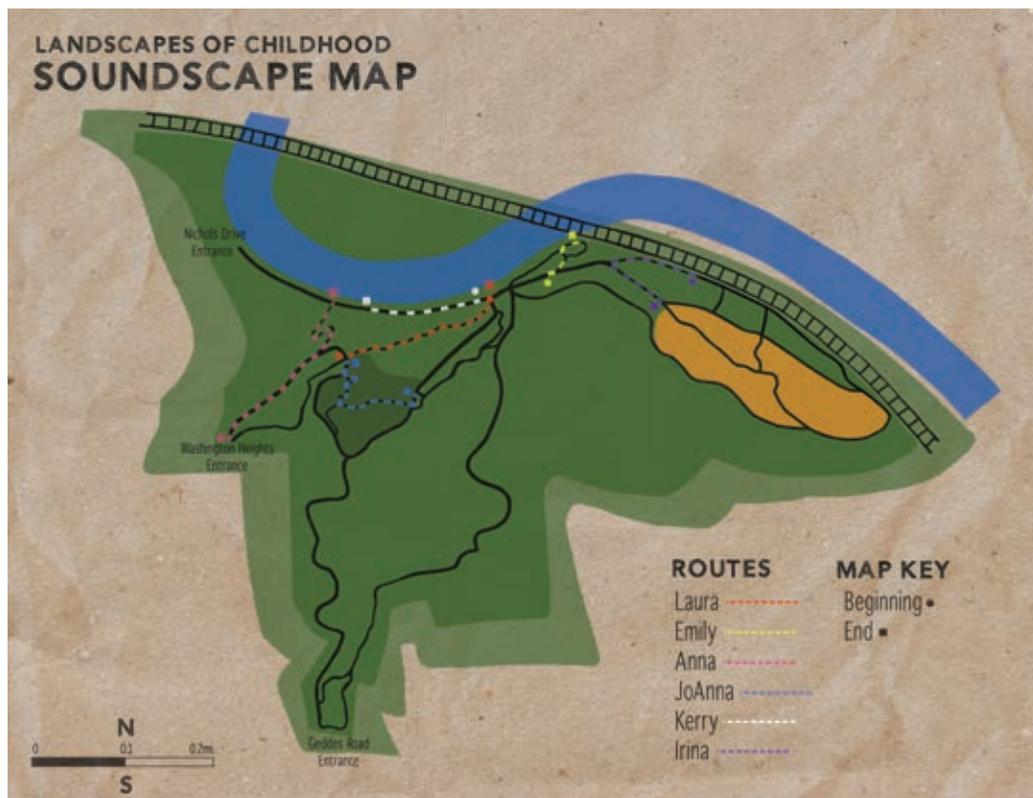
in Ann Arbor. In five workshops including three at Nichols Arboretum, we explored with Anja the cultural dimension of landscape through creating audio-walks—sound and voice compositions that guide the walking listener. Soundscapes open the personal and cultural imagination of both the maker and the receiver of the audio-walk. Students combined

embodied research, social science, aesthetic education, and new media, crossing the borders between art and theory. The production of digital audio walks (mapped below) helped us find paths back “home.”

By auditory imagining we traveled to Beaver Island with the blast of the ferry horn, returned to Romania with the clatter of an approaching and passing train, ordered coffee from a barista in the brandscape of Chicago, and heard mountain streams in Appalachia. Students mastered Garage Band, analyzed each others' audio-walks, and charted paths through remembered stories, both their own and those we read in class.

Thanks to an RC grant, in Fall 2013 we can make this work available to a wider audience by publishing online both acoustics and an interactive map, designed by Laura Amtower, graduate student at School of Art and Design, who enrolled in the course.

An exhibition on the first floor Gallery at Hatcher Library will showcase the project in Fall 2013. ■



Laura Amtower's map of Nichols Arboretum showing routes chosen by six students to compose their audiowalks, Fall 2012. Visit landscapesofchildhood.wordpress.com.



Erin Winkler and Becky Winkler Dhakal

PHOTO BY PETER SMITH PHOTOGRAPHY

[RC PROFILES]

Erin N. Winkler

I was born and raised in Ann Arbor, and although I moved away fifteen years ago, in many ways it still feels like home. In 1998, I graduated from U-M with a double major in Social Science (RC) and Afroamerican and African Studies (LSA). From there, I headed out to the University of California, Berkeley, where I earned a PhD in African American Studies in 2005. Next I spent a year as a postdoctoral fellow in African American Studies at Northwestern University before joining the faculty in the Department of Africology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 2006, where I am now an associate professor. I teach courses such as “The Psychological Effects of Racism,” “Raising Children, ‘Race-ing’ Children,” and “Race in US Popular Culture”. My interest in these issues began when, as a child, I would observe racial inequities in

society and would try to argue against them, but often lost such arguments when I didn’t have the requisite information to support my points, which ran counter to the dominant narrative. That all changed at U-M, where my RC and CAAS degrees provided the necessary knowledge and laid the groundwork for my career in African American Studies.

So, when I decided to conduct research on how children negotiate and develop ideas about race, it felt fitting to come “home” to Michigan to do so. My book *Learning Race, Learning Place: Shaping Racial Identities and Ideas in African American Childhoods* (Rutgers University Press, Series in Childhood Studies, 2012), is based on interviews with African American middle-school-aged children and their mothers in Detroit. Of course, Ann Arbor and Detroit are different places

(I'm not eliding them—you can read more about this in the book, as well as my additional reasons for choosing to conduct my research in Detroit), but Detroit became home for me during my time there, and I found a new family there (in addition to my fantastic family of origin in Ann Arbor). The project became even more of a family affair when my sister, Becky Winkler, an RC alumna (1995) and current U-M employee, designed the cover for the book. And my knowl-

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edge of Detroit, which allowed me to do research there with integrity, began here at home at the University of Michigan, with courses such as Heather Thomson's History of Detroit seminar in the RC.

In fact, *Learning Race, Learning Place* turned out to be a book about home—specifically about the significance of home (in this case, Detroit) and place in shaping children's experiences with and understandings of race, racial identity, and racism. Interestingly, I was not asking about the role of home/place when I conducted my research—I was simply

trying to find out more about how children negotiate the various and conflicting messages they receive about race—but it emerged so frequently in the data that I could not ignore it. For example, when asked about children's understandings of race and racism, children and mothers alike raised travel to illustrate and explain those understandings. The travel did not need to be extravagant—the key was contrast between Detroit (home) and elsewhere. Another example is how the mothers in this study saw Detroit (home) as a racial safe space for their children, but whether or not Detroit was home for the mother (whether she herself grew up in Detroit) influenced whether she saw this as a good thing—a gift to her children—or as a “false shield” or “dirty trick” which would leave her children unprepared for what one mother calls “the real world” outside of Detroit.

This project, then, ended up being about “home” in multiple and unexpected ways—about returning home and leaving home; about embracing home and rejecting home; about home as protective and home as harmful; about creating and recreating home. For me, this project showed that you can return home, but doing so necessarily means understanding home in new and transformative ways. My UM education helped me appreciate that, and the RC and DAAS will always represent a piece of home to me. ■

Rebecca (Becky) Winkler Dhakal

Becky graduated from the RC in 1995 with a BA in Arts and Ideas in the Humanities, and focused her studies in anthropology, theater, and fine art. Shortly after she graduated, Becky began working for Zingerman's, where she was the merchandising manager responsible for the promotional strategy, signs, print materials, and merchandising. She also began teaching seminars and doing custom consulting for Zingerman's consulting arm, ZingTrain.

Becky left the Deli full time in 2001, but continued to train and consult for ZingTrain part time through 2011. At the same time (2002-2011), she was doing freelance graphic design and marketing consulting as Luna Design, enabling her to be home when her two boys were babies. They both went to lots of client meetings when they were small. Some of the great local clients Becky worked with during that time included Bellanina Day Spa, Top of the Lamp, The Burnt Toast Inn, Barnes Ace Hardware, U-M Nurse Managed Centers, Vincent York's Jazzistry, Al Dente Pasta, Zingerman's Roadhouse, and local filmmaker Laurie White.

In 2011, Becky obtained a position with the University of Michigan at the Institute of Continuing Legal Education. As the Promotions Manager, she works with a great group of graphic designers who produce all the marketing

efforts for this University unit that supports practicing Michigan lawyers.

Becky is married to Binod Dhakal and his restaurant (just opened April 26, 2013) is Cardamom, a modern Indian restaurant, at 1739 Plymouth Road in the Courtyard Shops. Becky contributed to the menu design and interior design.

Says Becky: “I can say that my degree at the RC fully prepared me for what I do. With my strong liberal arts foundation, I can write, communicate, think critically, and manage complex projects. I can, and do, take into consideration cultural and ethical considerations that are so needed in marketing today. At the time I was in school, we were on the cusp of the digital revolution (we had email, but didn't really use it much; no internet as we know it now), so if I had learned graphic design it would have all been out-of-date a year after I graduated. Instead, I learned fine art and design principals, along with writing and critical thinking at the RC, which has provided the foundation for everything I've done since. RC faculty that had a big influence on my life include Cindy Sowers, Larry Cressman, and Mike Hannum. Also the great Asian culture class I took that was team taught was a paradigm-shifter for me—case in point, I'm now married to a native Nepali!” ■



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The RC News is distributed to more than 5000 alumni, friends and current students of the RC. Please submit any changes, corrections, letters, and/or suggestions to the editor, Cynthia Burton at caburton@umich.edu.

Printed on recycled paper.

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