

Event title: Disciplinary Poetics

Type of event: Poetry Craft and Criticism

Event description: This critical panel examines a few ways poetry intervenes and enhances--provides alternative models of research to--disciplines that constitute literature's "outside." This is a meta-corrective to the once astounding but now flaccid notions of interdisciplinarity and genre hybridity. How do the disciplinary logics of biology, information science, philosophy, political economy, anthropology, history, geography, journalism, classics, visual arts, etc. react to a poetic working over?

Moderator: Patrick Durgin is the author of *PQRS* and, with Jen Hofer, *The Route*. A poet, scholar, and art critic involved with performance and poets theater, Durgin has also published three artists books: *Daughter*, *Singles*, and *Zenith*.

Participant: Devin King is the poetry editor for The Green Lantern Press. Books and Chapbooks include: *The Grand Complication*, *These Necrotic Ethos Come the Plains*, *A Resonant Space*, and *CLOPS*. He is at work on a book of criticism about the overlap between poetry and sound studies.

Participant: Jennifer Nelson is an assistant professor of Art History at UW-Madison. She has written two books of poetry: *Aim at the Centaur Stealing Your Wife* and *Civilization Makes Me Lonely*. Her art historical academic monograph is *Disharmony of the Spheres: The Europe of Holbein's Ambassadors*.

Participant: Tyrone Williams is the author of seven books of poetry: *washpark* (with Patrick Clifford) , *As iZ*, *Howell*, *Adventures of Pi*, *The Hero Project of the Century*, *On Spec* and *c.c.* He teaches literature and literary theory at Xavier University in Cincinnati Ohio.

Participant: Marty Larson-Xu is a PhD candidate in English at Columbia University. He is currently working on a dissertation about the intersection of contemporary poetry and contemporary art.

Moderator's Opening Remarks: A friend and I were recently marveling at the ways in which "artistic research" programs in Europe enact much lauded theories of interdisciplinarity while excluding literature (and poetry in particular). The School of the Art Institute and the University of Chicago are currently running an "Arts, Science & Culture Initiative" that does the same. Yet hybrid genres and "poetry off the page" are established pursuits within creative writing curricula and literary criticism. We aim for parity.

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I can think of one recent example that is a good one not necessarily because it was reset methodology in its discipline but because it is philosophically astute and so it is persuasive but daring, and might finally lead to such a reset, if not mere reassurance for those devoted solely to poetry. If we define poetics as the discipline that composes and critiques using the same medium, language, then it is a disciplinary poetics that is envisioned in Kathryn Yusoff's *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None*. Yusoff is a geologist. In the book she upsets theories of "the Anthropocene" by showing how geologists have theorized matter as property and properties of matter coincidentally, and instilled in this theory anti-black racism. She also uses, as central to a counterdiscourse of "inhuman geology," Aime Cesaire, Fred Moten, and especially Dionne Brand, to posit a self-determining relationship between black bodies, colonial culture, and emancipatory politics. When lines of verse and prose fiction by Brand and Cesaire cycle back through her chapters, she makes the fit between poetry and geology seem quite obvious. It might seem obvious when some modernists did historiography in their poems, but it also seemed suspicious and/or obviously wishful thinking. When a geologist's observations hinge on what poems do, and not just what they say as some kind of adornment, that's another matter.