



STETSON MFA JUNE 2025

RESIDENCY GUIDE

STETSON
UNIVERSITY

Table of Contents

Welcome Letter	3
Land Acknowledgment	4
About Stetson	4
About DeLand	5-6
<i>Food, Drinks, Local Attractions, Nearby Attractions</i>	
Arrival Info	6
<i>Flying, Driving</i>	
Orientation & Reception Info	7
Housing Info	7
Campus Info	8
<i>Parking, PCard, Library, Gym, Pool, Dining, Hand Art Center</i>	
Building Codes, Duncan Gallery, Health & Safety	9
Schedule	10-15
Faculty, Guest, Staff & Student Bios	16-25
Parking & Building Map	26-27

Staff Contact Info

The best way to reach the group, including staff, is by using the WhatsApp group all students, faculty, and guests have been asked to join ahead of time (see email and Canvas for invite link)

MFA:

- Savannah Kater, Program Coordinator: 386-341-6809
- Brendan Bowles, Director: 647-403-3453
- Ryan Rivas, Publishing Coordinator: 786-547-0430
- Shelby Smotherman, Tech Goddess: 386-299-8158

Stetson:

- Public Safety Office available 24/7: 386-822-7300.
- Conference Services Housing Help 24/7 service number will be provided in WhatsApp and email in the days leading up to the event

Welcome to the June 2025 Residency

Dear MFAotA-ers,

One of the great pleasures of being the Director of a program like this—a program that is alive and unusual and committed to re-thinking what’s possible—is that I’m routinely confronted with challenges and questions that I could never have predicted waking up on any given morning.

One such question arrived in my inbox, late in the residency at Stetson last summer, with an email from a student asking something to the effect of, “Would it be possible to stand in the main fountain as part of my end of residency performance?” As an artist, getting an email like this, I had one thought: cool, why not? As a Director I had four thoughts: 1) Is it safe? 2) Is it possible? 3) Who do I ask? 4) Oh god, the Provost RSVP’d yes and is going to be there to see this so I better make sure we do it right.

Luckily for us, it turns out the fountain is chlorinated, public safety/campus security had some concerns to be assuaged, and the Provost remains a wonderful and committed champion of the program. More than all that, Ella’s piece was a wonderful ending to an evening of great and memorable performances. Which is all a long way of saying: 1) welcome back to Stetson and 2) here we go again!

And to get us going, we’ve got a great lineup of evening readings and performances, as well as afternoon exploratory sessions and world-class instructors for our morning workshops. In all things, we continue to aim to expand the field, whether in prose or poetry, offering classes designed to lift your work off the page or canvas and into new forms—sculpted, collaged, directed, or performed. For this go around we’ve got “Sculpting in Time: Adapting Text into Image Through Film” with the filmmaker Justin Lerner, “Interdimensional Text and Conceptual Art (Language in 2D, 3D, and 4D)” with multidisciplinary artist Leah Sandler, “Place Poetics: Landscape, Memory, and Journey” with the poet Kenzie Allen, and “Readings and Performances” with MFAotA-favorite, Steven Dunn. In your core workshops in fiction we’ve got Sarah LaBrie offering her expertise in memoir, scriptwriting, and fiction, alongside myself. In poetry we’ve got the intrepid duo, Terri Witek and Cyriaco Lopes, joined by the return of Urayoán Noel and, for the first time as core faculty, Derrick Austin.

We’ve also got some other programing that we’re still cooking up, including our publishing discussion with Ryan Rivas, details TBA, as well as an optional talk on applying for residencies, retreats, and fellowships as part of our ongoing “Life Post-MFA” series. We’ll also have another submission party and a free afternoon and evening on Wednesday (see the around town section of the program for suggestions on what to do). To help make these events possible, we’ve got Shelby Smotherman back as our tech goddess, Savannah Kater as our program coordinator, and we’re teaming up again with various partners to get you access to the full range of campus offerings, including the Sampson Gallery, Elsewhere, the Hand Art Center, the Gilespe Museum, and heck, maybe even the main fountain if last summer is any indication.

Let me end by thanking you for joining us and for making space in your life to focus on your own growth as artists and writers, as well as making time to join us in this particular space, and to make it your own. My hope, as always, is that we offer something to excite, disorient, and send you home buzzing with ideas (even as you might be drained of energy).

Until then,



Brendan Bowles, Director, MFAotA

Land Acknowledgment

Stetson University is located in DeLand, Florida, the ancestral home of the Timucua, Mascogo, Miccosukee, and Seminole people; we recognize their ongoing resistance to settler colonialism, of which Stetson University and by extension the MFA program are complicit.

In the spirit of historical accuracy and reconciliation, here are resources for further learning:

Seminole - <https://native-land.ca/maps/territories/seminole/>

Timucua - <https://native-land.ca/maps/territories/timucua/>

Mascogo - <https://native-land.ca/maps/territories/mascogo/>

Miccosukee - <https://native-land.ca/maps/territories/miccosukee/>

Landback movement: <https://landback.org/u/>

About Stetson

4

Stetson University was founded in 1883 as DeLand Academy, and later changed its name to Stetson in honor of John B. Stetson, a major donor and manufacturer of the Stetson hat (you can take a photo beside his curiously large statue near the fountain). The initial building, DeLand Hall, is still in use and is the oldest building in Florida in continuous use for higher education. In 1905, Stetson University College of Law was the first law school in Florida to admit women, and Stetson might also have been the first university to have co-ed residence halls. Until 1995, Stetson was a Baptist college but broke ties over social issues including drinking on campus and a change to how trustees were selected, which saw a relaxation of the requirement that three-quarters of the trustees be Baptist. Stetson is currently a private, not-for-profit institution unaffiliated with any particular religion.

Today, Stetson is rated a top four regional university and its DeLand campus has been named one of the most beautiful college campuses in the South. There are more than 2,500 undergraduate students enrolled in 55 undergraduate majors and minors, as well as 1,200 graduate students across 18 graduate programs.

The College of Arts & Sciences, home to the MFA, is the largest college on campus and has several nationally recognized programs, including English and Creative Writing, the Creative Arts department, and the School of Music, Florida's first collegiate school of music.

For more info on the campus and the resources available to you, see the "Campus Info" section.

About DeLand

DeLand is known for its vibrant main street, with its arts and antiques vibe. Stetson campus, just to the north, is only a few blocks away. On weekends, the downtown can fill up with visitors who come to poke around the shops, particularly during the Artisan Alley Farmers Market, every Friday night from 6-9pm and featuring over 40 vendors. Here's some of our favorite places to go downtown:

Food:

- Oudom Thai and Sushi: Very solid Thai food with a large sushi menu and good lunch specials. Vegan and gluten-free options available. Closed Sunday and Monday; open for lunch Tuesday to Saturday.
- De La Vega: A tapas restaurant for Latin fusion and sangria, including empanadas and hibiscus tacos. Can get busy so leave your name with reception and take a wander. Vegan and gluten-free options available. Closed Monday and Tuesday; open for lunch Thursday to Sunday.
- Urban Brick: Serviceable pizza with a patio. Gluten free and vegan options. Closed Tuesday and Wednesday; open for lunch on the weekends.
- Bake Chop: Good quality spot for salads, sandwiches, and bowls. Can get busy, especially for lunch. Vegan and gluten-free options available. Closed Sunday.
- Chica's Cuban Cafe: Traditional Cuban food with a big side patio, attached to the Artisan hotel. Vegan and gluten-free options available. Closed Monday and Tuesday.
- Santorini Greek Cuisine: Popular spot for Greek. Gluten-free but limited vegan options. Closed Sunday & Monday; open for lunch on the weekends.
- Parva Colombian Bakery & Restaurant: this one is a little further out so you'll need a car but worth it for the great bowls. Vegetarian options. Open 7 days a week.

Drinks:

- Trilogy Coffee: Your hipster barista pour-over spot. Has seating, a patio, and an industrial vibe.
- Boston Coffeehouse: cozier and cheaper than Trilogy, with a menu that includes pancakes and lots of sweet coffee with whipped cream-type offerings.
- Sidecar Market & Bar: A spot beloved by Stetson faculty, this "market & bar" is a strange beast. Equal parts antique furniture store, beer/wine bar and pop-up bakery, their logo is "shop, eat, drink!" and that sums it up. Vegan bakery options and the best ice chai in town. Vegan fair on Friday nights, including Big Mac Tacos. Serves Saturday and Sunday Brunch. Oysters on Sundays. Closed Mondays.
- Wanderbar: A craft cocktail bar with a seasonal cocktail menu and classic cocktails. Chill atmosphere in the early evenings and a favorite spot for late nights. Live music on the weekends.
- The Elusive Grape: by wine bar standards, this place is as unpretentious and approachable as it gets. Bills itself as "DeLand's living room". Wine flights with cheese pairings are available from Thursday-Saturday. Closed Mondays.
- Café Da Vinci: Younger spot for live music with a massive courtyard. Hosts a weekly pride night with drag shows on Tuesday. Check website for live music listings.

Local Attractions:

- African American Museum of the Arts: a small museum with a permanent collection and temporary exhibitions on display. Open late morning to afternoon on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.
- Athens Theatre: a restored historic theatre and the “crowned jewel of DeLand,” this venue hosts live theatre and concerts throughout the year. Check the website for current events and listings.
- Cliff’s Books: used books and comics in downtown DeLand. A local institution. Closed Sunday-Tuesday.
- Museum of Art: a gallery with temporary exhibitions. During the conference there will be an exhibition by Cuban-American artist Yolanda Sánchez, who does textile and painting works. Open late morning to late afternoon, Tuesday to Saturday, and afternoons on Sunday.
- Skydiving: DeLand is known as the skydiving capital of the world. There’s a famous spot near the airport for anyone interested (and brave enough) – <https://skydivedeland.com/>

Nearby Attractions:

- Blue Springs State Park: famous for the manatees that come every winter and the natural springs that remain 72 degrees all year long, this is a great spot for kayaking and walking. Swimming is currently closed while the banks are restored. Note that parking fills early and there can be long waits by mid-day, with visitors turned away if the park is full.
- Cassadaga: this nearby town of spiritualists and mediums is the place to go if you’re in need of a crystal or a fortune-teller. The old hotel in town has an Italian restaurant and a board with the contact information for all mediums accepting appointments that day.
- New Smyrna Beach: closest thing to a beach day near Stetson, this beach is nice to walk along but dangerous for swimming. Known as the shark bite capital of the world, it’s a famous spot for surfing.
- More ideas can be found at 101 Activities in DeLand: <https://www.discoverDeLand.org/101-things-to-do-in-DeLand.html>

Arrival Info

The closest major airport is Orlando International Airport (MCO). Alternatives include Sanford (SFB) and Daytona Beach (DAB) and although they are closer to Stetson, the expense of the regional airports can be prohibitive. Once you’ve arrived, all airports have Uber, Lyft, and taxi to get you to DeLand.

If driving, and staying at one of the dorms, please park at University Hall.

If attending but staying offsite, students can park in any of the lots for commuters or faculty/staff, but not student spaces, as those are reserved for summer students. See the Parking Map at the end of this guide for spots.

Orientation Info

Please plan to arrive between 1-4PM on Saturday, June 7 and check-in with Savannah at University Hall dorms.

Returning students must bring their Hatter1 cards with them. New students will receive a Hatter1 card at the time of check-in.

Our first event will be the orientation tour with Ryan Rivas at 4:30 pm, departing from inside Rinker Welcome Center.

Welcome Reception and Dinner to follow and open to all students, staff, faculty, and guests at C.U.B. at 5:45 pm (see schedule for more information).

Housing Info

All students who elected for Stetson Housing will be staying at University Hall, a former motel across the street from the main campus. All rooms have a private bathroom, WIFI, a desk/chair, adjustable A/C, and access to a paid laundry and a common room with a TV and a kitchen. More info, pictures, and a video can be found here: <https://www.stetson.edu/administration/housing/university-hall.php>

7

All students staying in housing can check in on June 7th between 1-4PM.

Students must pick up their keys from Savannah Kater on the 7th and are responsible for returning the keys to Savannah before checking out on the 15th. Each student is personally responsible for their own keys. Students must pay a \$50 deposit to receive keys. The deposit will be returned at checkout with the return of the keys.

All students must depart by 12PM on June 15th.

If staying at University Hall, in addition to your normal packing, you'll want to bring:

- sheets for a Twin XL
- bedding
- towels
- pillows
- shower toiletries

According to conference services, "the only thing provided is toilet paper."

Paid laundry is available on site.

Campus Info

Parking: Students can park in any of the lots for commuters or faculty/staff but **not** student spaces as those are reserved for summer students. See map at the end of the guide.

Hatter1 Card: All Stetson students must have a Hatter1 Card to access buildings and resources, including the gym and library. Savannah Kater will distribute cards at check-in for new students. Do not lose these or you will be responsible for the replacement, including the replacement fee. Please hold onto your Hatter 1 card between semesters or you will once again be responsible for replacing it at your own expense and convenience.

duPont-Ball Library: As a Stetson student you have full library access, including the catalogues, media library, laptop-borrowing privileges and a 3D-printer. Hatter1 Card required.

Summer library hours:

- Mon - Thurs: 8AM – 8PM
- Fri: 8AM – 5PM
- Sat: 10AM – 5PM
- Sun: 11AM – 8PM

Hollis Center: As a Stetson student you have full access to the Stetson gym, including the weight and cardio rooms, aerobics and spin studios, the field house and outdoor pool. There are also day lockers and a changeroom. You will be required to check in at the front desk and sign a waiver for your first visit.

Hollis Center Summer hours:

- Weekdays: 12PM - 7PM
- Weekends: Closed

Hand Art Center Summer hours:

- Tues - Fri: 11AM - 4PM
- Sat: 12PM - 4PM

Pool Summer hours:

- Weekdays: 12PM - 7PM
- Weekends: Closed

Dining: Those who have elected to stay in the dorms will have all meals included and available at Lynn Dining Hall for breakfast and lunch and dinner provided by Chef Synaca of Homegrown Catering.

Coffee Shop Summer Hours (located in CUB):

- Check online at <https://dineoncampus.com/stetson>

Building Codes

- Elizabeth Hall 206: 2-3-1-4
- Elsewhere: 2-5-4-6-3

Using Duncan Gallery

Students need to scan their IDs at the front door to access the space. The space is accessible 24/7. Lights are to the far left when you enter the room, by the metal cabinet. There is also an A/C override button there if A/C needs to be kicked on. Slop sink is to the right for cleaning brushes or other messy materials.

Students are free to use the space and any furniture as they wish, as long as things are put back as they were found at the end of the residency. There are painting taborets and easels stored in the back hallway that can also be brought out. Any consumable materials that are stored in there are for classes next year, so we ask that students do not use those.

Health & Safety

9

Given that this is Florida in the summer, our largest concern will be the heat and the weather. Please drink plenty of water.

Public Safety: Stetson's public safety team is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can reach them at 386-822-7300. In the event of an emergency, please call 9-1-1

Lightning: Florida has regained the title as the state with the most lighting strikes. While on campus you might hear our slightly unnerving lightning siren. One blare means threat of lightning. Three blasts mean all clear.

Stetson Health: the on-campus doctor's office for non-emergency medical needs. This office is run in partnership with AdventHealth and provides primary care to students. Patients are seen by appointment and services are charged through health insurance. You can reach them at 386-822-8150 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4:30 p.m.

Advent Health DeLand: the main hospital in town. Open 24 hours. Available at 386-943-4522

SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, JUNE 7, 2025

- 1 – 4PM: Arrival and check-in
New students will receive Hatter1 cards from Savannah Kater
University Hall
- 4:30PM: Orientation walking tour
with Ryan Rivas
Meet at Carlton Union Building (CUB) – Faculty & Staff Lounge
- 5:45PM: Opening reception & dinner
For all students, guests, staff and faculty
Carlton Union Building (CUB) – Faculty & Staff Lounge

SUNDAY, JUNE 8, 2025

- 10 7:30AM – 8:30AM Breakfast at Lynn Commons
- 10AM Individual Student Conferences with Core Faculty
TBD with Core Faculty
- 12:30PM – 1:45PM Lunch in CUB Faculty & Staff Lounge
- 2:00PM – 3:30PM *Exploratory Workshops*
Session 1 Exploratory Workshops will meet in the following:
Leah Sandler: Elizabeth Hall 316
Justin Lerner: Elizabeth Hall 206
- 5:00PM Graduating Student Performances Tech-run through
For graduating students only
- 5:30PM – 6:45PM Dinner in CUB Faculty & Staff Lounge
- 7:00PM – 8:30PM Graduating Student Performances and Q&As
Meet at Rinker Welcome Center - Orientation Room
JT Green – Duncan Gallery
Allison Miehl – Lynn Presentation Room
(see Student Bios for details)

MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2025

7:30AM – 8:30AM Breakfast at Lynn Commons

10AM – 12:30PM *Core Workshops*
Derrick Austin in Elizabeth Hall 316
Brendan Bowles in Elizabeth Hall 204
Sarah LaBrie in Elizabeth Hall 206
Urayoán Noel in Elizabeth Hall 202
Terri Witek & Cyriaco Lopes in Hand Art Center

12:30PM – 1:45PM Lunch in CUB Faculty & Staff Lounge

2:00PM – 3:30PM *Exploratory Workshops*
Session 1 Exploratory Workshops will meet in the following:
Leah Sandler: Elizabeth Hall 316
Justin Lerner: Elizabeth Hall 206

5:30PM – 6:45PM Dinner in CUB Faculty & Staff Lounge

7:00PM – 8:30PM Evening Reading & Performance with Justin Lerner & Leah Sandler
Rinker Welcome Center – Orientation Room

TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 2025

- 7:30AM – 8:30AM Breakfast at Lynn Commons
- 10AM – 12:30PM *Core Workshops*
Derrick Austin in Elizabeth Hall 316
Brendan Bowles in Elizabeth Hall 204
Sarah LaBrie in Elizabeth Hall 206
Urayoán Noel in Elizabeth Hall 202
Terri Witek & Cyriaco Lopes in Hand Art Center
- 12:30PM – 1:45PM Lunch in CUB Faculty & Staff Lounge
- 2:00PM – 3:30PM *Exploratory Workshops*
Session 1 Exploratory Workshops will meet in the following:
Leah Sandler: Elizabeth Hall 316
Justin Lerner: Elizabeth Hall 206
- 5:30PM – 6:45PM Dinner in CUB Faculty & Staff Lounge
- 7:00PM – 8:30PM Evening Reading & Performance with Derrick Austin & Brendan Bowles
Rinker Welcome Center – Orientation Room

12

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11, 2025

- 7:30AM – 8:30AM Breakfast at Lynn Commons
- 10AM – 12:30PM *Core Workshops*
Derrick Austin in Elizabeth Hall 316
Brendan Bowles in Elizabeth Hall 204
Sarah LaBrie in Elizabeth Hall 206
Urayoán Noel in Elizabeth Hall 202
Terri Witek & Cyriaco Lopes in Hand Art Center
- 12:30PM – 1:45PM Lunch in CUB Faculty & Staff Lounge
- 2:00PM – 3:30PM Next Steps Discussion: Life post-MFA (**attendance optional**)
Applying for Fellowships, Residencies, and Conferences
CUB Faculty & Staff Lounge
- 5:30PM – 6:45PM Dinner in CUB Faculty & Staff Lounge
- Evening Free night

THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2025

- 7:30AM – 8:30AM Breakfast at Lynn Commons
- 10AM – 12:30PM *Core Workshops*
Derrick Austin in Elizabeth Hall 316
Brendan Bowles in Elizabeth Hall 204
Sarah LaBrie in Elizabeth Hall 206
Urayoán Noel in Elizabeth Hall 202
Terri Witek & Cyriaco Lopes in Hand Art Center
- 12:30PM – 1:45PM Lunch in CUB Faculty & Staff Lounge
- 2:00PM – 3:30PM *Exploratory Workshops*
Session 2 Exploratory Workshops will meet in the following:
Kenzie Allen: Elizabeth Hall 316
Steven Dunn: Elizabeth Hall 206
- 5:30PM – 6:45PM Dinner in CUB Faculty & Staff Lounge
- 7:00PM – 8:30PM Publishing panel featuring Ryan Rivas:
A Brief Overview of the Literary Publishing Landscape
Rinker Welcome Center - Orientation Room
- To Follow Submission Party and Burrow Press Pop-up
Carlton Union Building (CUB) – Faculty & Staff Lounge

FRIDAY, JUNE 13, 2025

- 7:30AM – 8:30AM Breakfast at Lynn Commons
- 10AM – 12:30PM *Core Workshops*
Derrick Austin in Elizabeth Hall 316
Brendan Bowles in Elizabeth Hall 204
Sarah LaBrie in Elizabeth Hall 206
Urayoán Noel in Elizabeth Hall 202
Terri Witek & Cyriaco Lopes in Hand Art Center
- 12:30PM – 1:45PM Lunch in CUB Faculty & Staff Lounge
- 2:00PM – 3:30PM *Exploratory Workshops*
Session 2 Exploratory Workshops will meet in the following:
Kenzie Allen: Elizabeth Hall 316
Steven Dunn: Elizabeth Hall 206
- 5:30PM – 6:45PM Dinner in CUB Faculty & Staff Lounge
- 7:00PM – 8:30PM Evening Reading/Performance Kenzie Allen & Urayoán Noel
Rinker Welcome Center – Orientation Room

14

SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 2025

- 7:30AM – 8:30AM Breakfast at Lynn Commons
- 10AM – 12:30PM Exploratory Workshops (**no core workshops today**)
Session 2 Exploratory Workshops will meet in the following:
Kenzie Allen: Elizabeth Hall 316
Steven Dunn: Elizabeth Hall 206
- 12:30PM – 1:45PM Lunch at CUB Faculty & Staff Lounge
- 2:00PM – 3:30PM Rinker Orientation Room: Tech Check for Final Student Performances
All current students
- 4:00PM – 6:15PM Current Student Performances
Rinker Welcome Center – Orientation Room
- Dinner to Follow For all students, guests, staff and faculty
Carlton Union Building (CUB) – Faculty & Staff Lounge

SUNDAY, JUNE 15, 2025

7:30AM – 8:30AM Breakfast at Lynn Commons

10AM – 12:30PM Check out of dorms and depart ***Return keys to Savannah Kater***

CORE FACULTY



Derrick Austin is the author of *Tenderness* (BOA Editions, 2021), winner of the 2020 Isabella Gardner Poetry Award, and *Trouble the Water* (BOA Editions, 2016). His third collection, *This Elegance*, is forthcoming from BOA Editions in Spring 2026. His debut collection was honored as a finalist for the Kate Tufts Discovery Award, Thom Gunn Award for Gay Poetry, Lambda Literary Award for Gay Poetry, and the Norma Faber First Book Award. *Tenderness* was a finalist for a Golden Poppy Award, Lambda Literary Award for Gay Poetry, and a Northern California Book Award. A Cave Canem fellow, he is the recipient of a Ron Wallace Poetry Fellowship at the Wisconsin Institute of Creative Writing, a Stegner Fellowship, and an Amy Lowell Poetry Traveling Scholarship. He has had poems and essays commissioned by The Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, The New Museum, Craft Contemporary, The Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Arts, The Brick (formerly LAXART), and The Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles.



Sarah LaBrie is a TV writer and the author of *No One Gets to Fall Apart*, a memoir published by HarperCollins in 2024. The book was named a New York Times Editors' Pick and Notable Book of the Year and was highlighted by Elle, NPR, and Esquire as a best memoir of the year. Her libretti have been performed at Walt Disney Concert Hall and the Apollo Theater, and she has written on television series including *Minx*, *Blindspotting*, *Made for Love*, and *Love, Victor*. She has received fellowships from the Ucross Foundation, Yaddo, Sewanee, and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and was nominated for Best Television Comedy Script at the 2024 Women's Image Network Awards for her work on *Blindspotting*.



Brazilian-American artist **Cyriaco Lopes** has exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in Rio de Janeiro, the Museum of Art of São Paulo (MASP), El Museo del Barrio in NYC, the Centre Wallonie Bruxelles in Paris, Casa Degli Artisti in Milan, among other international venues. In 2022 he had a solo exhibition at Satchel Projects in Chelsea, NYC. His work has been selected and curated in exhibitions by critics such as Yasufumi Nakamori, Paulo Herkenhoff and Adriano Pedrosa, as well as by artists such as Lygia Pape, Janine Antoni, Luciano Fabro, and Ryan Trecartin. He is the winner of the NYC World Studio Foundation Award, the Contemporary Art Museum Saint Louis Project Award, and the São Paulo Phillips Prize of trip to Europe. His performances with poet Terri Witek have been seen at the Centro Nacional de Cultura in Lisbon, Portugal, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia, the Salford Museum, in

Manchester, England, the Atlantic Center for the Arts, FL, the Centre del Carme Cultura Contemporanea, in Valencia, Spain, and Oi Futuro Center for Art & Technology, in Rio, Brazil. Their collaboration was featured at the 2023 ARCO Madrid, where their gallery, The Liminal, won one of the two special mentions by the jury.



Urayoán Noel is the author of eight books of poetry--most recently *Trans-
versal* (Arizona 2021), named a book of the year by the New York Public Library and longlisted for the PEN Open Book Award--and of the critical study of Nuyorican poetry *In Visible Movement* (Iowa, 2014), winner of the LASA Latino Studies Book Prize. A finalist for the National Translation Award and the Best Translated Book Award, his most recent translation is Nicole Cecilia Delgado's *adjacent islands/islas adyacentes* (Ugly Duckling Presse, 2022). Noel has been a fellow and faculty of CantoMundo and the Macondo Writers Workshop and has also received fellowships from the Mellon, Ford, and Howard Foundations. Forthcoming from La Impresora in Puerto Rico is his hybrid prose text *Cuaderno de Isabela / Isabela Notebook*.

Noel's visual work has been published in the New York Times and exhibited in museums and art spaces in New York and Puerto Rico as well as at Poesiefestival Berlin and is included in collections of Latin American and Latinx electronic literature. He lives in the Bronx and is Director of Graduate Studies for NYU's MFA in Creative Writing in Spanish.



Terri Witek's newest books include *Down Water Street* (aboveground press) and *W / \ SH*, a dystopian collaborative work with poet Amaranth Borsuk (Anhinga Press/ Visual Poetry Series), both forthcoming. Her work has been included in many journals and anthologies, including 2 from 2021: *JUDITH: Women Making Visual Poetry* (Timglas) and *WAAVe* (Women Asemic Artist and Visual Poets) Witek's art/text mixes are often featured in collaboration: she teaches Poetry in the Expanded Field in Stetson University's low-residency MFA of the Americas with Brazilian visual artist Cyriaco Lopes; they also lead The Fernando Pessoa Game at the Disquiet International Literary Program each summer in Lisbon. Their collaborative work has been represented at ARCO in Madrid and in Seoul, Chania (Crete), Miami, New York, Philadelphia, Lisbon, and Valencia, Spain.

EXPLORATORY WORKSHOP FACULTY



Kenzie Allen is the author of *Cloud Missives* (Tin House, 2024). She is a Haudenosaunee poet and multimodal artist, and the recipient of a 92NY Discovery Prize, an inaugural James Welch Prize for Indigenous Poets, the 49th Parallel Award in poetry, broadside prizes from Sundress Publications and Littoral Press, and fellowships from Vermont Studio Center, Aspen Writers' Foundation, and In-Na-Po (Indigenous Nations Poets). A finalist for the National Poetry Series, her poems have appeared in Poetry magazine, Boston Review, Narrative magazine, Poetry Daily, Best New Poets, and other venues. Kenzie is an

Assistant Professor of English at York University, where her research centers on documentary and visual poetics, literary cartography, and the enactment of Indigenous sovereignties through creative works. She is a first-generation descendant of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin.

18



Leah Sandler is an interdisciplinary artist, writer and educator based in Central Florida. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Rollins College in 2014 and a Master of Fine Arts from University of the Arts Philadelphia in 2017, and currently teaches at Stetson University. Recent exhibitions include CPCH TV (a solo exhibition at the South Bend Museum of Art), Quarter Life Crisis! (a 2-person exhibition at the Casselberry Sculpture House), Body Acclimation Strategies (a solo exhibition at Touche Boutique Miami), and CPCH Staging Area (a solo exhibition at Laundromat Art Space Miami). Sandler's writing and projects have been featured in publications including Burrow Press Review, Locust Projects: A Closer Look,

Textur Magazin, Salat Magazin, SPECS Journal, and Mapping Meaning Journal. She is the author of *The Center For Post-Capitalist History's Field Guide to Embodied Archiving*, published by Burrow Press, released in 2021, and *Notes From the Archivist*, published by Bodiless Editions, 2024.



Steven Dunn, a.k.a Pot Hole (cuz he's deep in these streets) is the recipient of a 2021 Whiting Award, and the author of three novels: *Potted Meat* (2016), *water & power* (2018), and *Tannery Bay* (2024), which is co-written with Katie Jean Shinkle. *Potted Meat* was a finalist for the Colorado Book Award and shortlisted for Granta Magazine's Best of Young American Novelists and adapted to a short film by Foothills Productions. *The Usual Route* has played at L.A. International Film Festival, Houston International Film Festival, and others. He was born and raised in West Virginia.



Justin Lerner is an award-winning filmmaker from Boston whose career began when his short film *THE REPLACEMENT CHILD* was chosen as one of ten to world premiere at Telluride Film Festival. His first feature, *GIRLFRIEND*, premiered at Toronto Int'l Film Festival and won a Gotham Independent Film Award (Audience Award). His second feature, *THE AUTOMATIC HATE*, made its world premiere at SXSW Film Festival and was later nominated for the Flash Forward Award (Best First or Second feature) at Busan Int'l Film Festival. Lerner's third feature, *CADEJO BLANCO*, premiered at Toronto Int'l Film Festival and Guadalajara Film Festival, later

being nominated for the John Cassavetes Award at the 2024 Independent Spirit Awards. It also won the Grand Prize at Festival Icaro, the Young Blood Prize at Reims Polar Film Festival, and it was nominated for Best Iberoamerican Feature at the 2022 Ariel Awards, Mexico's version of the Oscars. It has been released theatrically in more than a dozen countries including Spain, France, Mexico, the U.S. and the UK later this year. In 2016, Lerner was a co-founder of the Cinema School at Francisco Marroquín University in Guatemala City, where he currently spends part of each year as a visiting professor. He is also a partner of La Danta Films, a production company based in Mexico City and Guatemala City.

GRADUATING STUDENTS



Jessica "JT" Green is an interdisciplinary artist and writer based in West Palm Beach. Her writing spans poetry, comedy, and psychological thrillers, and she is currently developing *Teeth*, a hybrid-genre project that weaves together her diverse artistic influences. In visual art, she primarily works with sketch and ink.

Driven by a deep love for language, JT is learning Portuguese and plans to work between Portugal and the United States. This June, she will attend the Disquiet International Residency in Lisbon as a Sullivan Scholar. Her work explores psychological trauma, the influence of technology, and workplace dynamics, blending sharp societal critique with humor and playfulness.



Allison Miehle is a speculative fiction writer and MFA student in Stetson University's MFAotA. In past lives she has been a journalist, a magazine editor, and a technical writer. She's been published in *Olit* and *Daily Drunk* magazines, and reads for *Taco Bell Quarterly*. She lives, writes, and plays tourist in Central Florida. Tweet her bread pics @allison_typing.

STAFF



Brendan Bowles, Director of Stetson MFA, is a writer from Toronto, Ontario. His work has been published and produced for stage and radio and has won some of the largest short story awards in Canada. He was a Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford University and a Fiction Fellow at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, Massachusetts. He is currently the Director of Stetson University's MFA of the Americas.



Savannah Kater, MFA Program Coordinator, is a New England Native who currently resides in Port Orange, Florida. Her work has been published in *Collateral Journal* and the *WAAVe* (Women Asemic Artist and Visual Poets) anthology. She has also curated site-specific visual poetry addressing the multi-generational effects of war. She is the CEO and founder of the nonprofit Scrap the Waste Corporation and is passionate about community outreach. Kater received three degrees from Stetson University, including MFAotA.



Ryan Rivas is the author of *Nextdoor in Colonialtown* (Autofocus, 2022), *Lizard People* (ThirtyWest, 2023) and *The Estuary* (forthcoming from Texas Review Press, 2027). He is the Publisher of Burrow Press, and the Coordinator of MFA Publishing at Stetson University. He writes about the convergence of Florida history, colonialism, suburbia, the gothic, literature, and art at ryanrivas.substack.com.



Shelby Smotherman is a writer, artist, and theatrical technician working in the Tampa Bay Area. Most often, she works with paint and lighting and uses language from her technical background to fill her poetry, as well as taking heavy influence from pop culture.

Student Bios (Artists in Residence)



blaze is an interdisciplinary artist and human from Tallahassee, FL. blaze is quite literally the product of many fires a(blaze). blaze is most enlivened by performance and time-based media, as well as installation, multi-media art practices and the word. blaze also relishes the space and potential of a sketchbook.



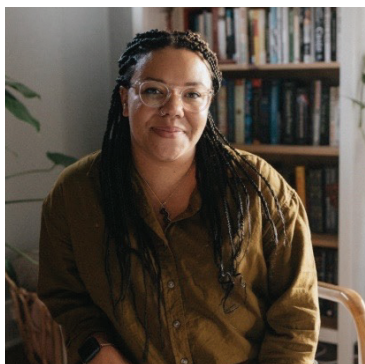
Jonathan Burton is a Writer, Actor, and Director native to Brooklyn, NY. His multidiscipline approach to storytelling brings unique life to all his creative endeavors, especially in the realm of film and live performance. Jonathan's artistry is a dedication to his passion for Black Liberation, his Caribbean heritage, and love for the world of sci-fi. He treats every form as a conjuring, a prayer to the truth, and a ladder into the abyss; hoping to one day uncover something worth leaving behind.



Daniella "Ella" DiPasquale is a poet, amateur photographer, and a fourth-semester MFA student at Stetson University. She has authored and self-published a chapbook of poetry titled *Boyfriend(ish)* (2022). Her poems and photography have been featured in several online publications and showcased in an art exhibition at Stetson University. Ella's recent work explores the phenomenology of the feline species, delving into how the animal world, particularly that of cats, intertwines with humanity and spirituality. Affectionately known as the "Crazy Cat Poetess" at Stetson, Ella is renowned for hosting cat funerals in fountains and gifting cat hair to her fellow MFA residents.



Ryan Forrest is currently a student at Stetson University, working on publishing his first novel and writing his second publication. Ryan has loved writing since he was in high school and decided to enroll at Stetson University with goals to improve his skills and eventually teach others how to write creatively.



Dejah Griffin is a bi-racial Black poet, designer, and single mother living in Washington state. She earned her BA in Graphic Design from Flagler College in 2018 and brings a multidisciplinary lens to her creative work, blending design, spoken word, and poetry. Her work explores relationships, spirituality, and the way time and space shape who we are. She shares her writing in community spaces and workshops, guided by a deep interest in the stories we carry, the ones we choose to tell, and how curiosity before assumption can build deeper connection. For her, poetry is a powerful tool for understanding the world, especially when it's honest, unfinished, and a little messy.



Courtney Hanks is a writer, illustrator, and educator based in Orange City, Florida. She holds a BFA in Creative Writing from the University of Central Florida and is currently pursuing an MFA in Prose at Stetson University. Her work is characterized by lyrical prose, emotional resonance, and a focus on themes of memory, identity, and the quiet complexities of everyday life. As both a storyteller and visual artist, she is drawn to narratives that explore the intersection of beauty, wonder, and human vulnerability.



Deidre Jackson is a quintessential romance junkie who once devoured 200 romance novels in a single summer before their senior year. They've always enjoyed writing stories and sharing them with others. Their publishing career began in the fourth grade with a best-selling class newspaper, which was quickly shut down by the school principal for competing with the school's official one. These days, Deidre is channeling their passion for the written word through teaching English and Drama to high school students.



As the owner of Healing Through Artistic Mediums LLC, **Ayoola Olubukola** is a narrative artist, multimedia expressionist, published poet and self-titled griot. She is a prolific creative who centers vulnerability and intentional release, using her voice, oil pastels, gouache, and visual media graphics as some differing creative mediums. Her work dissects elements of intergenerational inheritance, while focusing on cultural identities and medical experiences through poetic ethnographies & narrative performances. Her artist tag—A.O.Catharsis—and poet persona—Her Silence—inspire her to speak from a need of catharsis in our healing communities. With over a decades-worth of service within the Sickle Cell Disease community as an ambassador, creative

researcher, health coach, liaison, patient advocate, and presenter, Ayoola is a Temple University Alumna and current MFAotA student at Stetson University.

Student Bios (Artists in Residence)



Born in Georgia and raised in Florida, **Erik Rodriguez** is a creative at heart that draws inspiration from childhood nostalgia and personal experiences. He graduated from UCF with a Bachelor's in English with a path of Creative Writing and he continues to pursue his educational goals via the MFA program at Stetson University. Rodriguez finds joy in music and poetry, often linking the two when he creates musical arrangements that are often accompanied by an emotion or a feeling that is purposefully sewn into the melody. Rodriguez currently hopes to write a book of poems on cynicism and mundane annoyances, as he finds that identifying these pet peeves in a humorous way is a method of subsisting in a turbulent and lively world.



Melanie Rufrano, Stetson MFA Prose student, is a writer from Long Island, New York. While publishing poetry in literary magazines throughout university, Melanie focused her studies in cognitive sciences, psychology, and neuroscience. She is a Magna Cum Laude graduate from USCB, and member of The National Society of Leadership and Success, now pursuing her passion in fiction.



Marie Ketsia Theodore-Pharel (prefers to be called Ketsia--ket-see-uh)) was born in Port-au-Prince Haiti, currently lives in South Florida with her two youngest children and husband. Ketsia earned a bachelor's from Tufts University and a Masters in English from the University of Massachusetts, Boston. She was a recipient of the 2017 and 2019 State of Florida Folklife apprenticeship award for storytelling. She is in her second semester at Stetson University's MFA of the Americas.



Cynde Valenti is a writer and interdisciplinary artist in Ormond Beach, Florida. She graduated with an Associate of Science degree in interactive media from Daytona State College in 2017. Upon graduation, she was inducted into the college's Hall of Fame. She then graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in digital arts from Stetson University in 2019 and is a recipient of Stetson's Ethan F. Greene Award. She has written professionally for WNDB News Daytona Beach and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU). In the Office of Alumni Engagement at ERAU's Daytona Beach and Worldwide campuses, she managed digital communications, edited Talon Talks podcasts, and wrote

for the alumni magazine, Lift. Cynde is currently writing a memoir of her Covid experience between visits to the beach and creating poetic works.



MAP DIRECTORY

ACADEMIC FACILITIES

D2	1	Allen Hall
D4	2	Brown Hall
C2	3	Cummings Gym
D1	4	Davis Hall
D3	5	duPont-Ball Library <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessibility Services• Hollis Family Student Success Center• Writing Center
D2	6	Elizabeth Hall <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lee Chapel
D2	7	Flagler Hall
E4	8	Gillespie Museum
E3	9	Hand Art Center
F4	10	La Casa Cultural Latina
E2	11	Lynn Business Center (LBC) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wands Center / I.T.-Helpdesk
E2	12	McMahan Hall
C2	13	Museum of Art – DeLand <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Second Stage Theatre
F3	14	Ohio Art Studio
E2	15	Presser Hall
E3	16	Rinker Environmental Learning Center (RELC)
E4	17	Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies
D3	18	Sage Science Center
E2	19	Sampson Hall <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ceramics Studio

RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

E4	20	Carson Hall
C4	21	NEW RESIDENCE HALL COMING SOON
E4	22	Catalyst House 245
D2	23	Chaudoin Hall
D3	24	Conrad Hall (Honors and Bonner)
C2	25	Emily Hall
D4	26	Gordis Hall
E5	27	Hatter Hall
E4	28	Hollis Hall
A3	29	Delta Sigma Phi (ΔΣΦ) House
A4	30	Pi Kappa Alpha (πKA) House
A4	31	Phi Sigma Kappa (ΦΣΚ) House

B4	32	Pi Kappa Phi (πΚΦ) House
B3	33	Sigma Phi Epsilon (ΣΦΕ) House
B3	34	Lambda Chi Alpha (ΛΧΑ) House
D4	35	Pi Beta Phi (πΒΦ) House
D3	36	Kappa Alpha Theta (ΚΑΘ) House
D4	37	Alpha Xi Delta (ΑΞΔ) House
D4	38	Alpha Chi Omega (ΑΧΩ) House
D4	39	Zeta Tau Alpha (ΖΤΑ) House
D4	40	Delta Delta Delta (ΔΔΔ) House
C4	41	Alpha Tau Omega (ΑΤΩ) House
E5	42	Nemec Hall
D5	43	Smith Hall
A1	44	Stetson Cove Apts.
A4	45	Stetson Oaks Apts.
A3	46	Stetson Palms Apts.
B2	47	University Hall <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Residential Living & Learning• Hatter1Card Office
E5	48	UVA 100 – Maxcy Hall
E6	49	UVA 200 – Hon Hall
E6	50	UVA 300 – Building 300
E6	51	UVA 400 – Lynn Hall
E5	52	UVA 500 – Rinker Hall
E5	53	UVA – Rinker Clubhouse

STUDENT LIFE

D3	54	Carlton Union Building (CUB) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bookstore• Center of Community Engagement• Coffee Shop• Dean of Students• Fraternity and Sorority Life• Hat Rack Cafe• Lynn Dining Commons• Post Office• Religious and Spiritual Life• Stetson Room & Lee's Garage• Title IX
E3	55	Cross-Cultural Center (Tri-C) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Office of Diversity and Inclusion
C3	56	Ginsburg Hillel House

C3	57	Griffith Hall <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health Service• Student Counseling Services
C3	58	Hollis Center <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rinker Field House• Stetson Pool
D3	59	Marshall and Vera Lea Rinker Welcome Center <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Admissions• Career & Professional Development• Financial Aid• One Stop• Registrar and Bursar• University Marketing
E4	60	Public Safety
C1	61	Racquetball Courts
C1	62	Recreation Tennis/Pickleball Courts
B3	63	Rinker Center for International Learning (WORLD)

ATHLETICS/RECREATION

D5	64	Athletics Training Center
D5	65	Cooper Beach Volleyball Courts
A1	66	Edinger Golf Practice Facility
B3	67	J. Ollie Edmunds Center
C5	68	Mandy Stoll Tennis Center
F5	69	Melching Field at Conrad Park
E6	70	Patricia Wilson Softball Field
F2	71	Sandra Stetson Aquatic Center
F6	72	Spec Martin Memorial Stadium
B2	73	Wilson Athletic Center

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

F4	74	Administrative Services <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Office of Finance• Print Shop
D2	75	Allen House <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Human Resources
D2	76	DeLand Hall
E3	77	Development
E3	78	Development Operations
E3	79	Donor Relations
E6	80	Facilities Management
E3	81	Meadows Alumni House
E2	82	President's Home

