

New Rivers Press

April 2010

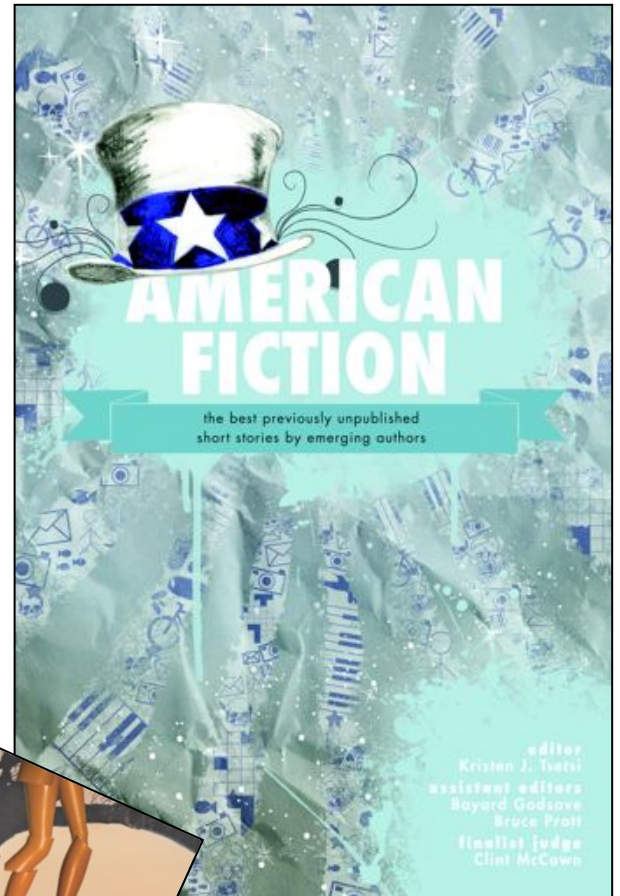
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2010 Book Release

New Rivers Press is scheduled to release four books in 2010.

After an 11-year pause, New Rivers Press has revived its American Fiction anthology series with the publication of *American Fiction, Volume 11: The Best Unpublished Short Stories by Emerging Writers*.

This year also marks the publication of the 120th, 121st, and 122nd winners of the Many Voices Project Series. The books include a collection of short stories, *At Home Anywhere*, by New York author Mary Hoffman, selected by judge Leif Enger; *Birds of Wisconsin*, a collection of poems



by Wisconsin author B.J. Best, selected by judge Joyce Sutphen; and another collection of poems, *Kinesthesia*, by Minnesota author Stephanie N. Johnson.

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MSUM graduate students Drew Olson and Tiegien Kosiak, book team editors for the 2010 New Rivers Press release *Birds of Wisconsin* by B.J. Best.

Press Collaborates with MFA Program Faculty, Students

The mission of New Rivers Press at Minnesota State University Moorhead is to publish and promote enduring contemporary literature and to create academic learning opportunities. New Rivers Press acquires, publishes, and markets high quality, imaginative work from emerging and established writers. Founded in New York in 1968 by C.W. "Bill" Truesdale, the not-for-profit Press has now published over 330 books.

New Rivers Press also teaches MSUM undergraduate and graduate students the business of publishing, offering the opportunity to earn a Certificate in Publishing at the bachelor's or master's level and to work as interns to gain practical experience. The activities of the press and its related curriculum dovetail nicely with the school's Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing program and are also integrated into accounting, art and graphic design, English, marketing, mass communications, promotions, and Web site development classes at MSUM. The book release schedule is matched with the academic calendar.

Each year, graduate and undergraduate students interested in learning about the business of publishing enroll in Practicum in Publishing, part of the university's Certificate in Publishing offering. Al Davis, professor of English and New Rivers Press senior editor, oversees screening manuscripts for the Many

Voices Project contest, while Suzanne Kelley, managing editor, assists student teams as they edit manuscripts. The experience is unique among universities and literary presses and prepares students for additional internships or careers in the publishing industry.

"New Rivers Press is one of the main reasons I came here to MSUM," said Tiegien Kosiak, a candidate and poet in the Master of Fine Arts program. "It's something other programs don't have. It's cool to think that a book I helped to edit will be on the shelves." Kosiak, along with editing partner Drew Olson, helped to edit *Birds of Wisconsin*.

During the semester, student editors and authors work together to improve manuscripts, as necessary, through both structural and substantive edits, using tracked changes in Microsoft Office Word. The changes are purely recommendations for the author. "We're here to make it better if we possibly can," Kosiak said. Outside of working directly with the author, Kosiak said her role at the Press includes providing input to the book's design team and working on other projects, including marketing.

Overall, Kosiak said her experience working for the Press has made her a better writer. "I'm working on poetry for my thesis," she said, "and it made me realize that you need to have intention for everything and to think about structure. It made me notice things in my own writing and to make improvements."

Students initiate and complete special projects for the Press, including writing

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Collaborative Design Benefits Press, Students

Every August, Professor Allen Sheets, Art Director at New Rivers Press, selects several senior art and design students who can meet hard deadlines, communicate clearly, and produce work that isn't "following whatever trend is happening," he said, to design New Rivers Press book releases.

These students get creative. Some draw cover art, but most adjust and augment their own photos using Adobe InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop. For example, Morgan Hoyt, who designed the cover and interior of *Birds of Wisconsin* by B.J. Best, photographed a pet-shop parakeet through a cage. This year's student designers also include Mandee Nyhus for *At Home Anywhere* by Mary Hoffman, Bryan Murphy for *Kinesthesia* by Stephanie N. Johnson, and Heather Donarski for *American Fiction, Volume 11*.

In December, New Rivers Press Director Wayne Gudmundson, Senior Editor Al Davis, and Managing Editor Suzanne Kelley select a cover from three proposed designs. By January, work on interiors begins. "On the inside, we don't want to be noticed," Sheets said. He said the trick is providing visual interest that lets the writing dominate. For example, Hoyt created decorative borders and boxes for page numbers to add spice.

When the design is finalized, galleys go out in April or May, but improvements may continue over the summer. Printing begins in the fall.

New Rivers Press manages costs by hiring

such student designers. Hoyt describes her sensibilities as "clean and somewhat modern." Students benefit by gaining precious experience. Hoyt points out that while many designers in the market only get to create covers, New Rivers Press designers engage in *full book design*, which the students can include in their portfolios and resumes upon graduation.

The New Rivers Press design program garnered national attention in 2009 when three of its student designers were selected to receive the American Inhouse Design Award for Excellence, which is sponsored by *Graphic Design USA*. Ali Eickhoff, Angi Lennington, and Stephanie Thomas each designed one of the Press' 2008 titles, including the cover and interior pages. Their innovative and eye-catching designs were selected by *Graphic Design USA* out of more than 4,000 entries nationwide.

Eickhoff designed *Bend with the Knees and Other Love Advice from My Father*, a collection of short stories by Benjamin Drevlow; Lennington

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MSUM art and design student Mandee Nyhus walks through the interior design of the book *At Home Anywhere* by Mary Hoffman.

EDITING: Students also initiate, complete special projects for the Press

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and submitting study guides for New Rivers Press titles, writing and designing a newsletter, contacting authors for sales, developing signage, writing articles for external publications, providing books from the warehouse to the distributor, implementing book sales, writing content for Web pages, and soliciting literary blogs to review and link to New Rivers Press book titles.

“MSUM provides space and covers some overhead, but editorial decisions are made independently.”

So Many Rooms Has a House But One Roof, a poetry collection by Margaret Randall, was the first title

published by New Rivers Press, printed by Truesdale in November 1968 using an old Chandler & Price letterpress in a Massachusetts barn. The Press moved to Minnesota in 1978 to live among the thriving literary small press community in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

Since 2001, the Press has been publishing from MSUM. The university provides space and covers some overhead expenses, but editorial decisions are made independently.

Unlike typical university presses, New Rivers Press is not expected to publish academic monographs and faculty publications.

Staff, book production and marketing expenses are borne by the Press, which leverages the short run digital printing services of BookMobile with typical print runs of 800 to 1,000 copies. Distribution to libraries and booksellers is handled by Consortium Book Sales & Distribution, the premier distributor for literary small presses in the United States.

DESIGN: Students win awards

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designed *Hollow Out*, a collection of poetry by Kelsea Habecker; and Thomas designed *Slippery Men*, a collection of essays by Penelope Schwartz Robinson.

Eickhoff's cover shows a raw lamb chop and a fresh slice of lemon photographed on a white plate, resting on a red-checked cloth. To Eickhoff, this represents the gritty, rural feel of the stories. Eickhoff appreciated the chance to “sell” work to a client—to formally mount and present it. “To be able to go to Amazon.com and say, ‘You can actually buy this!’” is better than showing mock-ups, she says.

Hoyt observes that designers “create a harmony” between writer and designer. Each complements the other. This is how Sheets sees it: “Design is not a solution. It’s a journey to a solution.”

Meet Suzanne Kelley, Managing Editor

Suzanne Kelley is the managing editor at New Rivers Press. She joined the Press in September 2009. Kelley is a PhD candidate in history at North Dakota State University, where she has also been an editorial fellow and managing editor for *Agricultural History* and a book copy editor for the North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies. Her dissertation is “Preserving an Era and a Place: Memory Artists of the Plains and Prairies.” She continues to teach North Dakota History, American Indian History, and Great Books of the Great Plains. She earned her Certificate in Publishing from MSUM.



Suzanne Kelley

Donations Vital for New Rivers Press

Philanthropy remains a vital source of income for many small presses, especially literary presses, who can't survive on their book sales alone. In Minnesota, literary presses rely heavily on the McKnight Foundation, the Jerome Foundation, The Bush Foundation, and the Minnesota State Arts Board, in addition to a host of local companies, which give charitably to the arts. Even New Rivers Press, which depends on MSUM to cover some overhead and facilities costs, is unable to bring in enough money through book sales to feed the editorial process. "Without fundraising, we couldn't make it a go," said Wayne Gudmundson, director for the Press.

Gudmundson has been director since the Press moved to MSUM in 2001.

Since 1982, New Rivers Press has been a not-for-profit press, which means donations to the press are tax deductible. Prior to its move to MSUM, the Press had considerable debt, but thanks to a \$40,000 grant from the McKnight Foundation, MSUM and the Press were able to retire the debt and begin anew, while still honoring existing book contracts and remaining true to the original mission of publishing new and emerging literary writers. "The McKnight Foundation saw that MSUM would be a good home for New Rivers Press," Gudmundson said, "but we go back for yearly support."

Historically, the McKnight Foundation and the Jerome Foundation have been significant contributors to New Rivers Press. However, like many other nonprofit organizations, the Press in recent years has experienced a downturn in support.

There are many ways you can contribute to New Rivers Press. You can donate to support general operations, so that we can continue to publish good books, or you can help support the teaching component of the press, so that students can continue to learn the business of publishing. You can also support a particular book or series.

"Philanthropy remains a vital source of income for many small presses, especially literary presses, who can't survive on their book sales alone."

Contribution Levels

Member Up to \$99 - 20% discount for purchase of New Rivers Press books.

Writer's Circle \$100 to \$499 - Member benefits plus three New Rivers Press books.

Editor's Circle \$500 to \$999 - Writer's Circle benefits plus a signed set of the new book releases for the current year.

Publisher's Circle \$1,000 to \$2,499 - Editor's Circle benefits plus recognition as primary donor on the Copyright page of a forthcoming book.

The Legacy Circle \$2,500 and above - Recognition in forthcoming books for those who include New Rivers Press in their estate plans.



If you would like to join the New Rivers Press family,
please contact Wayne Gudmundson, Director,
at 218.477.2296 or gudmund@mnstate.edu

Book Series

American Fiction Anthologies

After an 11-year pause, New Rivers Press has revived its American Fiction anthology series with *American Fiction, Volume 11: The Best Unpublished Short Stories by Emerging Writers*, an anthology of stories selected through a national competition. The series was originally carried by Birch Lane Press/Carol Publishing Group.

American Fiction Series

The American Fiction Series is New Rivers Press' conduit for publishing fiction outside the Many Voices Project competition. Recent titles include Rachel L. Coyne's *Whiskey Heart*.

American Poetry Series

The American Poetry Series is New Rivers Press' vehicle for publishing poetry outside the Many Voices Project competition. Recent titles include Holaday Mason's *Towards the Forest* and Lisa Gill's *Mortar & Pestle*.

Many Minnesotas Project

The Many Minnesotas Project is a series of anthologies about particular ethnic groups in Minnesota. Most recently, the Press published *To Sing Along the Way: Minnesota Women Poets from Pre-Territorial Days to the Present*, which received the 2007 Midwest Booksellers' Association Honor Award for Poetry and the 2007 WILLA Award for Poetry.

Many Voices Project

Since 1981, New Rivers Press has been publishing the work of new and emerging writers through its Many Voices Project competition. The submission period is Sept. 15 through Nov. 1 each year with winners selected in poetry and prose. The Press recently concluded screening 2009 submissions for publication in 2011.

New Rivers Abroad Series

New Rivers Press occasionally publishes translations of literary writing from outside the United States in its New Rivers Abroad Series. Recent publications include a collection of contemporary Swedish poetry entitled *The Forest of Childhood*. The Press continues to seek manuscripts and funding for this series.

Partnerships

New Rivers Press is actively partnering with other arts organizations to publish books. The Press worked with the Plains Art Museum in Fargo, ND, to publish a gallery catalog and reappraisal of the sculptor Duane Hanson. The Press also worked with the University of Southern Maine's Stonecoast MFA Program in Creative Writing to publish *Slippery Men* by Penelope Schwartz Robinson, the winner of the Stonecoast Book Prize. Forthcoming, New Rivers Press will publish the winner of Fairfield University's Fairfield MFA Book Prize. The Press is actively seeking such partnerships.

Advisory Board

New Rivers Press is a not-for-profit literary small press that has published 320 titles since 1968. Wayne Gudmundson, director; Alan Davis, senior editor; and Suzanne Kelley, managing editor, are responsible for day-to-day operations. Administrative supervisors at Minnesota State University Moorhead include Bette Midgarden, vice president of Academic Affairs; and Tim Borchers, dean of the College of Arts and Humanities. The ad hoc Advisory Board includes writers and other members of the literary community as well as others who support the arts.