

# J. Preston Witt

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## EDUCATION

**MFA Creative Writing**, The Ohio State University, 2014

- Thesis Advisors: Lee Martin (primary), Erin McGraw (secondary)
- Focused on fiction, but also took workshops in poetry, playwriting, and nonfiction.

**B.A. English Literature**, University of Michigan, 2010

- Graduated *magna cum laude* from the Honors Program; senior thesis earned High Distinction
- Phi Beta Kappa

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

**Visiting Professor**, Romanian American University, February - March 2015

- Invited to teach a one-week creative writing intensive for undergraduates.

**Composition Instructor**, Post University, January 2015

- Teach online writing courses to undergraduate and graduate students.

**Composition Instructor**, The Ohio State University, Fall 2011 – Spring 2014

- Full responsibility for five sections of composition, one per a semester.
- Planned and taught two unique writing-intensive courses:
  - 1) *Myth, Legends, and the American Dream: Cultural Narratives and Social Imperatives*
  - 2) *Representations of Technology: Blessings and Curses, Saviors and Demons*
- Integrated multimedia and instructional technology to enhance student engagement.
- Taught one innovative writing course that emphasized in-class student collaboration through laptops, blogs, video, and multimedia presentations.

**Creative Writing Instructor**, The Ohio State University, Fall 2011 – Spring 2014

- Full responsibility for two sections of creative writing: *Intro to Fiction*
- Planned and taught one traditional workshop: two stories per student, readings, critical writing assignments, and student-to-student written critiques.
- Devised a generative writing course: students wrote one story (8-20pgs.) each week of the semester based on skill-oriented prompts. Readings, in-class writing, and workshops with verbal student-to-student critiques were also included.

**Nonfiction Workshop Instructor**, The Ohio State University, Winter 2014

- Taught a single class as a guest instructor for an advanced undergraduate nonfiction workshop. The lecture focused on structural concerns for personal and lyric essays.

**Literary Publishing Instructor**, The Ohio State University, Fall 2013

- Taught a single class as a guest instructor about the realities of working for a literary journal. The class focused discussion on current trends in literary publishing.

**Discussion Leader**, Buckeye Book Program, The Ohio State University, 2011

- Led group discussions for first-year students based on books chosen by the Diversity and Outreach Program.

## **FICTION: PUBLICATIONS AND AWARDS**

**Able Muse 2014 Fiction Contest Winner**, the story “Lesson One” was awarded first prize and will be published in the upcoming winter issue of *Able Muse*.

**Trainwreck**, a forthcoming anthology from Red 76 press.

**Ninth Letter**, Summer 2014, “A Shovel, a Chest, a Tree, a Fence, a Loon, a Heron, a Hole”

**AWP Intro Award Nominee 2014**, “Every Door, Every Window”

- The short story was selected to represent The Ohio State University MFA program for the competition.

**The New Guard**, published a selection from the novella *Coldbrook*, 2011

**Machigonne Fiction Contest**, finalist for a selection from *Coldbrook*, judged by Debra Spark, 2011

**Black Warrior Review**, Fiction Contest Finalist, Summer Issue 2011, a selection from *Coldbrook*.

**Glimmertrain**, 2010 Finalist for the Open Fiction contest: “A Boy, a House, a Bear, a Cast-iron Stove, a Man, a Winchester, etc.”; a selection from the novella *Coldbrook*.

## **WRITING FOR PERFORMANCE**

**Art Is Fun Art Is Fun Art Is Fun**, January 2014

- A solo performance written and performed for *Ten Tiny Performances* at Short North Stage in Columbus.

**Let’s Talk About the Circle of Life, Friends, Let’s Sing and Dance**, September 2013

- Wrote and directed a short piece of dark comedy.
- Produced by OSU’s Lab Series in affiliation with InTransit: an experimental play festival performed in automobiles.

**Happy Panda Shoots Himself**, a full-length original play, 2012-2013

- Mad Lab Theatre, April 7-28, 2013: Produced for a three-week run at a professional company in Columbus.
- Mid-American Theatre Conference, March 7-10, 2013: One act from the play was selected for a performance and workshop.
- The Lab Series at The Ohio State University, October 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012: I directed a production of the full-length play.
- Works-in-Progress with CreativeRights, April 8 and 9, 2012: Invited to Ann Arbor, MI to perform a scene for a gallery audience.

**Straightjacket**, a short play co-written and performed in 2011 with poet Darrel Holmes

- PEN Dirty Laundry Lit, Dec 3, 2011: Invited to Little Temple in Los Angeles, CA by the PEN Foundation to perform the piece.

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

**Fiction Editor**, *The Journal*, August 2013-present

- Choose and solicit fiction content.
- Promote the magazine and manage day-to-day operations.

**Co-Founder, Editor**, PhoneFiction Inc., March 2013-present

- Started a high-tech experimental publishing project that works with authors, literary editors, and educators in order to promote literary short fiction and non-fiction.
- Pitched initial concept, received grant, organized team, developed business strategy.
- Devised an innovative writing contest.
- Edit and manage all content at [www.phone-fiction.com](http://www.phone-fiction.com) (launched July 5<sup>th</sup> 2013).

**Associate Fiction Editor**, *The Journal*, 2012-2013

- Advised the Executive Editor on all publication decisions.
- Managed rejections and emails; gave a second reading to all submissions.
- Interviewed authors for the website.

**Mother Tongue Reading Series**, 2012-2013

- I produced a monthly reading series in Columbus, OH. We attracted a regular crowd of 50+ and had a variety of performances: fiction, poetry, and comedy.

**The OSU Press Wheeler Prize for Poetry**, 2013, 2014

- Read book manuscript submissions.

**The OSU Prize in Short Fiction**, 2011 and 2012

- Read short story collection submissions.

## INVITED CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

**PLAYA**, Summerlake, OR, November - December 2014

- Selected for a five-week, fully funded residency.

**Trainwreck**, a writing residency, November 2014

- A new traveling residency sponsored by the artist cooperative Red 76.

**The Writer's Craft: A Russell Banks Sampler**, Panelist, March 2014

- Bexley Community Book Club, 2014

**Martha's Vineyard Creative Writing Institute**, Scholarship recipient, July 2013

**Virginia Center for the Creative Arts**, 2011

- Invited to perform scenes from *Straightjacket* during a collaborative residency.

**Wexner Center for the Arts**, June 2010

- Facilitated an hour-long gallery talk on the Mark Bradford exhibit.

**CIC Conference, 2010**

- Made a presentation to other CIC literature scholars of my paper titled, “Developing the Postmodern Narrative: Rewriting *The Tempest*.”

**OTHER WORK AND ARTISTIC ENDEAVORS (Selected)**

**Quora.com**, Independent Quality Content Editor, July 2014 – present

- Develop user-generated content.

**PhoneTheatre**, July 2013-present

- Designed and built a smartphone application that facilitates audience-driven dramatic works.

**Josiah McElheny: Towards a Light Club**, Wexner Center for the Arts, January-April 2013

- Danced twice a week as a member of McElheny’s gallery exhibit.

**Cornering a Hare**, Urban Arts Space, Columbus, February 2013

- Performed as part of Paige Phillips’s gallery exhibition.

**Whiteberry, Blackberry**, gallery installation in *MFA+MFA*, 2011

- An audio and hyper-text projection poem shown at the University of Michigan, made in collaboration with Darrel Holnes.

**REFERENCES**

Lee Martin, PhD, Creative Writing Faculty  
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