

# francine j. harris

Professor, English

University of Houston

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## **Formal Education:**

MFA Creative Writing, Poetry – University of Michigan.

Bachelor of Arts, English – Arizona State University.

## **Current Service Project:**

Founder, Canon: This creative and critical legacy project will establish a sustainable framework for collaborative preservation and canonization of contemporary Black women's poetry – particularly by writers of color – through seminar, publication, performance and archive.

## **Book Publications:**

***Here is the Sweet Hand* – Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, NY, August 2020.**

Winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award.

### Other Awards:

2022 Kingsley Tufts Award, Finalist.

2020 Audre Lorde Award, Finalist.

### Reviews:

- Labrise, Megan. *30 Books in 30 Days*. NBCC Criticism & Features. February, 2021.
- Marshall, Maya. *Rhino* (online). September, 2020.
- Chaffa, Mandana. "Poetry's Power" *Chicago Review of Books*. August 5, 2020.
- McGee, Lynn. "The Expertly Wrought *Here is the Sweet Hand* Contains Humor, Desire, and Terror." *Lambda Literary*. August 3, 2020.
- *Publishers Weekly* – Starred Review. August, 2020.
- Teicher, Craig. "Keeping the Dark at Bay." *NPR Book News & Features*. Feb 13, 2020.

***Play Dead* – Alice James Books, Farmington, ME, April 2016.**

Winner of the Audre Lorde Award.

### Other Awards:

2016 Hurston Wright/Legacy Award in Poetry, Finalist.

2016 Lambda Literary Award, Finalist.

### Reviews:

- McAdams, Janet. "February 2017 Micro-Reviews." *Kenyon Review*. February, 2017.
- Edwards, Stevie. *Medium*. Jan 3, 2017.
- Freeman, Cal. "*Play Dead* Holds A Mirror Up To Our Culture's Misogyny And Violence." *NPR: Michigan Bookmark*. Nov 1. 2016
- *Publishers Weekly* - Starred Review. April, 2016.
- Burt, Stephen. "*Play Dead*." *American Poets* (Academy of American Poets). Spring-Summer 2016.
- Teicher, Craig M. "In A Dark Time, The Eye Begins to See: A 2016 Poetry Preview" *NPR Books* (online). 2016.

(Books, continued)

*Allegiance* – Wayne State University, Made in Michigan Series. Detroit, MI, February 2012.

Awards:

2012 PEN Open Book Award, Finalist.

2012 Kate Tufts Discovery Award, Finalist.

Reviews:

- Horton, Randall. “When First Books Are Not First Books.” *LA Review of Books*. July 2, 2014.
- Bain, Corrina. *Muzzle* (online). 2012.

## Teaching and Relevant Professional Experience

### Professor of English, Creative Writing Program

University of Houston. Houston, TX

2022 – Current.

Associate Professor

2019 – 2022.

*Courses Offered:*

ENG 6320: Graduate Poetic Forms: The Problem of the Line.

ENG 4383: Undergraduate Poetic Forms.

ENG 8322: Master Poetry Workshop Seminar.

ENG 7322: Advanced Graduate Poetry Workshop.

ENG 6322: Graduate Poetry Workshop.

ENGL 4384: Senior Writing Poetry Projects

ENGL 4351: Poetry Writing Workshop.

ENG 3331: Beginning Creative Writing.

ENGL 7324: Say Her Name: Black Women and their Influence on American Poetics.

ENGL 7324: Modes of Confession.

*Dissertation Committee and Thesis Committee:*

2022/23      Chair: Comprehensive Exams: Josh English (Reader, Dissertation)

Chair: Dissertation: Brittany Crowell

Reader, Thesis: Ashley Warner

2021/22      Chair, Thesis: Aris K. Brown

Reader, Thesis: Erik Brown

2021/22      Chair, Thesis: Kaitlin Rizzo

Reader, Dissertation: Paige Quiñones, Justin Jannise

2019/20      Reader, Dissertation: Michelle Burke

**Writer in Residence, Washington University. St. Louis, MO. Fall 2015 – Spring 2018.**

*Courses Offered:*

Poetry Workshop: Intermediate and Advanced Workshop for undergraduate students.

Cross-listed Courses Offered: Poignant Image, Contemporary Lineation, Obsessive Poems, Evocative Poems, Place.

*MFA Thesis Committees:*

Spring 2018: Serena Solin, Luther Hughes, Billy Youngblood, David Hernandez.

Spring 2017: Eric Steifel, Emily Pittinos, Bailey Spencer.

Spring 2016: Cassie Donnish, Nathaniel Rosenthalis.

**Writing Instructor, Poetry: Interlochen Center for the Arts. Interlochen, MI – 2014-2015.**

**Lecturer I: University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI – 2010-2013.**

*Courses Offered:* ENG125 College Writing and Academic Inquiry.

ENG223 Creative Writing as GSI (Graduate Student Instructor).

**Visiting Assistant Professor in Poetry: Centre College, Danville, KY – 2013 (center term).**

*Course Offered:* Writing the American Poem: A Sensory Study of Contemporary Place.

**Program and Publications Coordinator: InsideOut Literary Arts Project – 2008-2009.**

**WITS Writer: InsideOut Literary Arts Project, Detroit, MI – 2003-2009**

Various high school and middle school classroom visit/instruction in Detroit Public Schools.

*Facilitation, Craft Talks and Short Term Residencies*

Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, Poetry Faculty, Middlebury College, Ripton, VT, Summer 2022.

Craft Talk, City of Asylum, "Risking the Ineffable: Finding voice through Risk in Image, Metaphor and Syntax," Pittsburgh, PA, June, 2022

Visiting Hurst Professor, Washington University in St. Louis, Jan/Feb. 2022.

Craft Talk, University of Bloomington, "Against the Cliché: Finding Voice through Craft," Feb 2020.

Craft Talk, "Bob Hicok Wrote a Dumb Essay and Now I Can't Write Poetry," Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX, Sept 2019.

Workshop Facilitation, Poetry Project, New York, NY March 2019.

Research, Father Divine and the Joy of Black Fellowship: Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers, New York, NY, Feb 2019.

Workshop Facilitation, 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y, New York, NY November 2018.

Craft Talk, Goucher College, "Poems for the Collective: Love is a Verb," March 2018.

Workshop Facilitation, Chautauqua Institute, Week-long workshop, June 2018.

Residency at Center for African American Poetics at University of Pittsburgh, Fall 2017  
for Dreamspace Residency in honor of sculptor, Thaddeus Mosley.

Craft Talk, Divedapper Festival at Butler University

“The Disobedient Dreamscape” (as inspired by Alice Notley’s *Certain Magical Acts*) August 2017.

POETRY Foundation Teacher Training: “Incorporating Skill Into Prompt” – Chicago, IL, July 2017.

Martha’s Vineyard Institute for Creative Writing, Vineyard Haven, MA, July 2016

“Resonant Imagery” and “The Evoking: Language that Speaks Politically & Moves Humanely.”

Craft Talk, James Madison Creative Writing Conference, “The Conceptual Image: Seeing What You Can’t See,” Harrisonburg, VA, June 2016.

Interlochen Summer Arts Camp, Faculty – Interlochen Center for the Arts, MI, Summer 2014.

Volume Summer Institute, Neutral Zone, Ann Arbor, MI, June 2013

Co-teaching daily sessions in weeklong conference with Midwest high school aged writers.

### **Selected Publications:**

#### Poetry in Print and Online Journals:

*Indiana Review*, “Mastry.” October 2022.

*Academy of American Poets*. “Burden, Old Story.” October 2021.

*New York Times Magazine*. “Concerto No. 2 in G Minor, Op. 8, RV 315 ‘L’estate.” April 2021.

*Plume*, “Five-Minute Cooking” and “I don’t know what to do about the solitude I need.”

*New York Review of Books*. “Sonata in F Minor, K. 183: Allegro” July 23, 2020.

*New York Review of Books*. “It is a Choice.” January 11, 2020.

*Academy of American Poets*. “Did anyone ever ask any one of Nikita’s daughters?” August 2020.

*Kenyon Review*, “Michael Moses Ward Has Drowned.” September/October 2020.

*Harper’s*. “I Won’t Beg.” reprint selected by Ben Lerner. August 2020.

*Electric Literature*. “The Meek,” and “I Cleaned the House. August 3, 2020.

*Academy of American Poets*. “Rabbit.” March 2020.

POETRY. “Curtains.” Feb 2020.

*American Poetry Review*. “Ablate the Suncups, not the Ice.” plus three poems. Jan/Feb 20.

*New Republic*. “I Won’t Beg.” September 2019.

*Unmargin*. “May They Remember.” July 2018.

*Believer*. “I think of her sometimes now, sometimes.” January 2018.

*Academy of American Poets*. “Single Lines Looking Forward.” January 2018.

*Academy of American Poets*, Commission for “Imagine Our Parks” Project, November 2016.

*The Baffler*. “Long Division.” September 2016.

*From the Fishhouse*, Ten Poems. June 2016.

*PEN America*. Four Poems. May 2016.

*Academy of American Poets*. “The Neighbor’s Buddy Watching my Screen.” April 2016.

*Literary Hub*. “A Horizon of Train Yards,” and other poems. April 2016.

POETRY. “first, take a fistful of hair.” April 2016.

*Prairie Schooner*. “In the outfield, daydreaming.” Fall 2015.

*Bat City Review*. “Afterwards the boys” and “The Lot, Vacant Then.” Issue 11m 2015.

POETRY. “Gravity furnace.” February 2016.

POETRY. “This is a Test.” April 2015.

*Hunger Mountain*. "Where you could sit up straight." December 2014.  
POETRY. "enough food and a mom." September 2014.  
*Boston Review*. "What Milkman Stepped Off Into," et al. October/November 2014.  
*Southern Indiana Review*. "Suicide Note #10." Fall 2012.  
*Meridian*, Issue 29, May 2012.  
*Hanging Loose*, "Castle." Spring 2012.  
*Michigan Quarterly Review*. "What you might find buried under C.F. Kettering." Winter 2011.  
*Callaloo Journal*. "A Bench in College Station." vol. 33, no. 4, Fall 2010.  
*Indiana Review*. "Here is the Sweet Hand." vol. 31, no. 2, 2009.  
*Ploughshares*. "because when all is told, I love objects." vol. 34, no. 4, Winter 2008-09.  
*Ninth Letter*, "there under the light..." vol. 5, Spring/Summer Issue, 2008.

Features/Interviews:

VS Podcast, w/Danez Smith and Franny Choi, POETRY Foundation, July 2021.  
Beeder, Amy Plume, "Interview with francine j. harris." October 2020.  
Vinson, Arriel. *Electric Literature*, "Poetry About Finding Power in the Grotesque," October 2020.  
*Poets House Presents*, October 2020.  
*Poets & Writers*, Ten Questions, August 2020.  
*Poetry Now*. "gravity furnace." December 2018.  
*Four Way Review*, July 2017.  
*Ploughshares blog*, August 2016.  
*Divedapper*, May 2016.  
*Metro Times Weekly*, Detroit, MI, March 2013.  
*Michigan Quarterly Review*, June, 2012.

Short Fiction:

"Dr. Gaffe and John." *B O D Y* (online). Summer 2012.  
"Castle." *Hanging Loose*, *Hanging Loose* 100, Spring 2012.

Articles and Essays:

"A Walk in Interlochen." Video Essay. *Volatile* (for *Los Angeles Review of Books*) (online). July, 2016.  
"Open Your Mouth" and "Toward Something We've Known." Featured Blogger. *Harriet*. 2015.  
"Brother." 2014.  
"Civilly Unseen." *Blueshift Journal*. February 2015.  
"Where We Write: On Being a Michigan Writer from Detroit." *Poets & Writers*. Sept/Oct 2013.  
"Speaking in Tongues." *Tran(studies): The Hub of Trans-formation Studies*. 2013.

Anthologies:

(forthcoming) *Personal Best*, ed. by Carl Phillips, et al. Copper Canyon.  
*Best American Poetry*, ed. by Tracy K. Smith, Scribner, 2021.  
*Furious Flower: The Complete Edition*, Triquarterly Northwestern, Evanston, IL, 2019.  
*The Golden Shovel Anthology: New Poems Honoring Gwendolyn Brooks*, Univ of Arkansas, 2017.  
*BreakBeat Poets*, Haymarket Books, 2015.  
*Read America(s)*: ed. Alluri, Bryant, Locked Horn, 2016.  
*A Detroit Anthology*, Rust Belt Chic Press, Detroit, MI. December, 2014.

*Poetry in Michigan*, New Issues, Michigan, 2013.  
*Killer Verse: Poems of Murder and Mayhem*, Alfred A. Knopf, NY, September 2011.  
*To Be Left With the Body*, AIDS Project Los Angeles, June 2008.  
*The McSweeney's Book of Poets Picking Poets*, McSweeney's Books, San Francisco, 2007.

**Recent Feature Readings and Appearances:**

*Virtual:*

Washington University in St. Louis, Hurst Reading, February 2022  
Unsung Masters Series Reading, the poems of Margaret Danner, October 2021.  
Farrar, Straus and Giroux 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reading, April 2021.  
Montclair University, Montclair, NJ, April 2021.  
Holloway Series, University of California, Berkeley, March 2021.  
Left Banks Books, St. Louis, MO, September 2020.  
New York Review of Books, September 2020.  
Hugo House, Seattle, WA, July 2020.

*In Person:*

(forthcoming) Princeton University, November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
University of California, Geisel Library, San Diego, October, 2022.  
Dartmouth College, Robert Hayden Symposium, Sanborn House, September, 2022  
Rice University, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
Cave Canem, Guest Poet, City of Asylum, June 2022.  
Unbound Literary Fest, Columbia, MO, March 2022  
University of Bloomington, February 2020.  
Honors College, University of Houston, February 2020.  
The Poetry Project, New York, NY, May 2019.  
Pete's Candy Store, Brooklyn, NY, March 2019.  
Bates College, Lewiston, ME, March 2019.  
Rutger's University, Newark – February 2019.  
Lillian Vernon House, Alice James 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, sponsored by New York University, Sept 2018.  
Northwestern University, Black Poetics Collective/Poetry & Poetics Colloquium, April 2018.  
Goucher College, Baltimore, MD, March 2018.  
Missouri State University, Springfield, MO, February 2018.  
Reed College, Portland, OR, February 2018.  
Bread Loaf Writers Conference, Middlebury, Vermont, August 2017.  
Divedapper Poetry Carnival, Butler University, Indianapolis, IN, August 2017.  
MacDowell Artist Colony, Peterborough, NH, July 2017.  
River Styx at CAM, St. Louis, MO March 2017.  
Alice James Books reading, AWP, Washington, D.C., February 2017.  
Elms College, MA, February 2017.  
University of Southern Indiana – Evansville, IN, October 2016.

Bryant Park Series – New York, NY, October 2016.  
Brews & Prose – Cleveland, OH, June 2016.  
Left Bank Bookstore – St. Louis, MO, April 2016.

**Honors, Awards, Fellowships and Distinctions:**

2022 Kingsley Tufts Award, Finalist  
2021 Winner, 2020 National Book Critics Circle Award for *Here is the Sweet Hand*.  
2021 Finalist, Audre Lorde Award for Lesbian Poetry.  
2021 Alternate, Rome Prize.  
2020 Nomination, Civitella Fellowship.  
2019 Pushcart Award for “Versal.” Originally published in Beloit, © 2020 *Here is the Sweet Hand*.  
2019-2024 CLASS Professorship, University of Houston, TX.  
2018-2019 Rona Jaffe Fellowship, Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers, New York Public Library, New York, NY.  
2018 Honorable Mention: Sheila Margaret Motton Book Prize by the New England Poetry Club.  
2017 Katherine Bakeless Nason Fellowship, Bread Loaf Writers Conference.  
2016 Finalist, Hurston Wright/Legacy Award in Poetry for *play dead* (announced in October).  
2016 Winner, Audre Lorde Award in Poetry for *play dead*.  
2016 Winner, Lambda Literary Award in Poetry for *play dead*.  
2015 NEA Creative Writing Fellowship for Poetry.  
2014 Winner, Friends of Literature Prize for Poetry.  
2014 Finalist, Hunger Mountain Ruth Stone Prize for Poetry.  
2014 Winner, Boston Review Poetry Contest.  
2012 Finalist, PEN Open Book Award for *allegiance*.  
2012 Finalist, Kate Tufts Discovery Award for *allegiance*.  
2011 Winner, 2011/2012 Zell Postgraduate Fellowship in Creative Writing.  
2010 Winner, Academy of American Poets University Prize – University of Michigan.

**Judging/Service:**

University of Houston:

Upper Division Curriculum Committee, 2021/22  
Search Committee for Assistant Professor in African American Studies, 2021/22.  
Consulting Faculty Editor, Gulf Coast Magazine, 2021/22.  
Gulf Coast Journal Advisory Committee Board Member, 2021.  
Ad-hoc committee for Online Resources for Majors and Minors, 2020.  
Ad-hoc committee for CWP program review, 2021.  
Committee Chair, CWP Speakers Bureau, University of Houston, 2019-2020.  
Creative Writing Program Panel, UCross Award Reviewer, 2019-2020 and 2020-2021.  
Creative Writing Program Panel, Creative Writing Award Reviewer, 2019-2020.

Other Service:

(*forthcoming*) Moderator, Inprint, conversation w/Carl Phillips and Yusef Komunyakaa, 2021.

Moderator, Inprint Margaret Root Brown Reading Series, conversation w/Jericho Brown, April 2021.  
Judge, Norma Farber First Book Award, 2021.  
Screener, NEA Creative Writing Fellowship, 2020.  
Judge, Jake Adam York Prize, Milkweed Editions, 2020.  
Panelist, Bread Loaf Admissions for work-study submissions, 2018.  
Panelist, University of Michigan Admissions for MFA in Poetry, 2016-2018.  
Judge, Kurt Brown Prize for WC&C Writing Conferences, Solo judge, May 2017.  
Prelim Judge, 2017 Discovery/Boston Review Poetry Contest Award.  
Panelist, NEA Creative Writing Fellowship, 2017.  
Co-host, Podcast: *All Up in Your Ears* – Monthly poetry podcast with Gabrielle Calvocoressi,  
Jonathan Farmer and Kaveh Akbar, 2016.  
Panelist, Slash Pine Press Semiannual Chapbook Competition. University of Alabama, 2009 – 2012.  
Co-Host, *Skazat!* Series – Open Mic/Reading Series –Ann Arbor, MI, 2011-2012.  
Facilitator, Zell Fellowship Project – MFA Craft Discussion Group– 2011/2012 Academic Year.

#### **Short Term Residencies & Conferences, Awarded**

Hermitage Artist Retreat – Englewood, FL. Awarded 2020 (Residency scheduled for 2021/22).  
Bread Loaf, Fellow – Middlebury College, VT, August 2017.  
MacDowell Artist Colony – Peterborough, NH, June/July 2017.  
Cave Canem Fellowship – Pittsburgh, PA. Awarded 2003, Attended 2003, 2007, 2008.