

JAN BEATTY

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TEACHING

Faculty Emerita, Carlow University, 2022.

Distinguished Writer in Residence, Carlow MFA Program, 2019-2021

Director, MFA program, Carlow University, 2018-2022.

Interim Director, MFA program, Carlow University, 2017-18.

Full Professor with Tenure, English Dept., Carlow University, 2011.

Mentor, MFA program, Carlow University, 2007-2017.

Director of Creative Writing, Carlow University, 2007-2022.

Director, Carlow University, Madwomen in the Attic Workshop,
2004 to 2022

BOOKS

Dragstripping University of Pittsburgh Press, 2024

American Bastard Red Hen Press 2019 Nonfiction Award, 2021.

The Body Wars University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020.

Jackknife, New and Selected Poems University of Pittsburgh Press, 2017.

The Switching/Yard University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013.

Red Sugar University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008.

Boneshaker University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002.

Mad River University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995, Agnes Lynch Starrett Prize.

Skydog Lefty Blondie Press, 2022, chapbook.

Ravage Lefty Blondie Press, 2012, chapbook.

Ravenous State Street Press, 1995, chapbook.

EDUCATION

MFA, Poetry, University of Pittsburgh, graduated with distinction, 1990.

Iowa Writers Workshop, University of Iowa, attended 1987.

BS, Social Work, West Virginia University, magna cum laude, 1975.

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SELECTED WRITING AWARDS

Copper Nickel Editor's Prize for Poetry, Issue 38, 2024.

Pink Poetry Prize, *Great River Review*, Issue 70, University of Minnesota, 2024.

Poetry International Summer Chapbook Contest, *Finalist*, for *Sanctified*, 2023.

Writing Fellowship, Storyknife, Homer, Alaska, 2022.

2020 New York Times Magazine, "My Father Disappears Into Flowers" chosen for publication by Naomi Shihab Nye.

2019 Red Hen Press Nonfiction Award, National prize and publication for a book of nonfiction, *American Bastard*.

2019, *LitHub*, *Jackknife* chosen by Sandra Cisneros as favorite book of 2018.

2018 Paterson Prize for Poetry, for *Jackknife*, The Poetry Center, Passaic County Community College, National prize for a book published in the previous year.

Writing Fellowship, Brush Creek Ranch, Wyoming, 2019, 2014.

Regional Artist Grant, 2014-15 from Heinz Endowments and Pittsburgh Foundation, \$10,000 for completing a memoir.

Best American Poetry, 2013, "Youngest Known Savior" selected for inclusion.

National Poetry Month Review, 2013, Library Journal named *The Switching/Yard* as one of "...30 New Books That Will Help You Rediscover Poetry."

The Huffington Post, December 17, 2013, featured as one of ten women writers for "required reading."

Paterson Award for Literary Excellence for Previous Finalists of The Paterson Poetry Prize, 2014, for *The Switching/Yard*.

The Milton Kessler Book Award, Binghamton University, Finalist, 2014.

Writing Fellowship, Santa Fe Arts Institute, New Mexico, May, 2015, 2010.

Writing Fellowship, Leighton Studios, Banff, Alberta, Canada, 2014, 2011.

Writing Fellowship, Whooping Crane Trust, James L. Grahl Research Center, March, 2012; March 28-31, 2011.

Paterson Prize, Finalist, for Red Sugar, 2009.

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Writing Fellowship, MacDowell Colony, New Hampshire, Summer, 2009.

Writing Fellowship, Ragdale, Lake Forest, Illinois, 2006.

Special Opportunity Stipend, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, 2004, 2002.

The Milton Kessler Book Award, Binghamton University, Finalist, 2003 for Boneshaker.

Individual Artist Grant, Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts, for production of *Symposium on Women Writers of Color*, Prosody, WYEP-FM, April, 2003.

Writing Fellowship, Jentel Artist Residency, Banner, Wyoming, 2003.

New Person Award, Thomas Merton Center, honoring art and activism, 2003.

Lollapalooza, 2nd Place, Pittsburgh competition, 2002.

Creative Achievement Award, \$15,000 Grant, Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, 2000.

Writing Fellowship, Ucross Foundation, Clearmont, Wyoming, 2000, 1996, 1993.

Writing Fellowship, Hedgebrook, Whidbey Island, Washington, 1999.

The State Street Chapbook Prize for Ravenous, State Street Press, 1995.

The 1994 Agnes Lynch Starrett Prize, for Mad River. Selected for the University of Pittsburgh Press by Dorianne Laux.

Fellowships in Poetry, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, 1994, 1991.

Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry, Arts Humanities Council, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1990.

Discovery/The Nation Prize, The Poetry Center, New York, Finalist, 1989.

SELECTED LECTURES/PRESENTATIONS

Carnegie Lecture Hall, Poets Aloud Series, Dragstripping book launch, September 5, 2024.

Napa Valley Writers Conference, Faculty, with Jane Hirshfield, C. Dale Young, July, 2024.

San Antonio Book Fair, “Writing From The Taboo,” Sandra Cisneros, Richard Blanco, April 13, 2024.

University of Delaware Writers Series, May, 2023.

University of California Riverside, Writers Week, February, 2023.

Warhol Museum Video Portrait Project, Featured Artist, November, 2022

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Geraldine R. Dodge Festival, Newark, Main Stage Poet, Oct. 2022.

Folger Shakespeare Library, Featured Poet, forthcoming, October, 2022.

Grollier Poetry Book Shop, Boston, invited reading, forthcoming August, 2022.

Miami Book Fair, with Sandra Cisneros/individual reading, November, 2021.

Red Hen Book Launch, with Richard Blanco for *American Bastard*, LA, 2021.

Lit Youngstown, Featured Reader, Fall Literary Festival, October, 2021.

Columbia College Chicago, Creative Writing Reading Series, April 2022.

West Chester University Poetry Center, Reading and Craft Talk, March 8,9, 2021.

University of San Francisco Reading Series, Reading, October 20, 2020.

Writers on the Bay, Florida International University, Reading and workshop, October 24, 2019.

B. Christopher Bothe Memorial Lecturer, McDaniel College, Westminster, MD, April, 2019.

Paterson Prize Reading, Poetry Center, Paterson, New Jersey, Workshop and Reading with Finalist of 2018 Paterson Poetry Prize, April 6, 2019.

What Is It, Then, Between Us?: Poetry & Democracy, Featured poet, national project on social justice sponsored by Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Morristown, New Jersey, with Rigoberto Gonzalez, Reginald Dwayne Betts, others. March, 2019.

Geraldine R. Dodge Festival, Newark, Main Stage Poet, Oct. 2018.

University of Baltimore, Reading, Bogolmony Room Student Center, Sept. 2018.

Lake Tahoe Community College, Reading with Gayle Brandeis, April, 2018.

Why There Are Words Series, Reading, Studio 333, Sausalito, CA, April, 2018.

YMCA Visiting Author Series, Reading, Syracuse, NY, March, 2018.

Hair as Myth and Metaphor: Five Women Poets on Cultural Transgression, presentation and reading with Shara McCallum, Nicole Santalucia, Rachel Wiley, Mia Leonin, AWP conference, Tampa, March, 2018.

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Flatiron Writers Room, with Maggie Anderson, Asheville, NC, April, 2018.

Split This Rock Poetry Festival: Poems of Provocation & Witness, Featured reader, April 14-17, 2016.

Beyond the Poetry Classroom: Serving the Underserved, presentation on the Madwomen with Maria Mazziotti Gillan, AWP conference, Los Angeles, 2016.

The Poem as Bodily Thing, reading and presentation with Todd Davis, Dorianne Laux, Ross Gay, Aimee Nezhukumatathil, AWP conference, Minneapolis, 2015.

"B" Words: a Celebration of Bold, Bossy, Ballsy Women Poets, reading with Grace Bauer, Julie Kane, Madelyn Wagner, AWP conference, Minneapolis, 2015.

Geraldine R. Dodge Festival, Newark, New Jersey, Main Stage Poet, 2014.

Vermillion Poetry Festival, U. of South Dakota, writing workshop, March 2014.

Housing Works Bookstore Café, New York City, HIV/AIDS benefit reading with David Groff, Michael Waters, October 30, 2013.

FAAAM: Femmes Auteurs Anglo-Américaines Conference, "Inscriptions in the Public Sphere." The poem, "Shooter," from *Red Sugar* was presented by Mary Kate Azcuy at the Université of Paris, Ouest Nanterre, on June 14.

Undressing in Public: Poetry and Gender, Keynote speaker for Women's History Month, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, 2013.

Gender/Race/Sexuality: Undressing the Contemporary Poem, with Allison Hedge Coke, Natalie Diaz, Lee Ann Roripaugh, Split This Rock, Washington, DC, 2012.

Rivering: A Reading Contemplation, poetry of the Sandhill Crane migration, with Allison Hedge Coke, Natalie Diaz, Wang Ping, AWP Conference, Chicago, 2012.

Reading: Writing Sex: Implicit Censorship in Contemporary Poetry with Wanda Coleman, Sharon Doubiago, Dorianne Laux, AWP Conference, Denver, 2010.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Periodicals: *New York Times Magazine*, *The Atlantic*, *Poetry*, *Academy of American Poets poem-a-day*, *Best American Poetry*, *Buzz Feed*, *North America Review*, *New England Review*, *Pleiades*, *Copper Nickel*, *Agni*, *TriQuarterly*, *Barrow Street*, *Shenandoah*, others.

How to Write It Bloody, writing tips in anthology, [The Practicing Poet: Writing Beyond the Basics](#), Ed. Diane Lockward, Terrapin Books, 2018. Named a Best Book for Writers by *Poets & Writers*.

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Stray, An interview by the poet on the poem, The Crafty Poet: A Portable Workshop, Ed. Diane Lockward, Terrapin Books, 2016. Named a Best Book for Writers by *Poets & Writers*.

Place: Putting Your Finger On It, essay in anthology: The Working Poet: 75 Writing Exercises and a Poetry Anthology, Autumn House Press, 2010.

Finding Red Sugar, essay in anthology: Making Poems: 40 Poems with Commentary by the Poets, State University of New York Press, 2009.

American Life in Poetry, Poet Laureate Ted Kooser's weekly column, 2006.

Writer's Almanac, National Public Radio, Garrison Keilor, March 15, 2006.

Ghost Story, essay in Creative Nonfiction, 2000.

My Pittsburgh, introductory essay to Pittsburgh Revealed, Photographs Since 1850, U. of Pgh. Press, 1997, accompanying book to Carnegie Museum exhibit.

EDITORIAL WORK

Voices from the Attic Carlow University Press, Series Editor of yearly anthology of women poets, *Voices from the Attic*, 2007-2020.

Mad Books Senior Editor of small press poetry books by women. Eight full-length collections and seven chapbooks published from 2008-2022.

Chapter & Verse Poetry editor for bi-weekly feature in *Pittsburgh City Paper* showcasing the work of regional poets, 2002-2012.

SELECTED READINGS

L.A. Times Book Festival; Miami Book Fair; Geraldine R. Dodge Festival, Waterloo, New Jersey; Split This Rock Poetry Festival, Washington, D.C.; Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York; Columbia College, Chicago; SUNY Binghamton, New York; St. Mark's Theater, New York City; KGB Bar, New York City; Writers Out Loud, New York City; Beyond Baroque, Venice, California; University of the Pacific, Stockton, California; the Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh; Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh; Clark College, Mountain Writers Series, Vancouver, Washington; Florida International University, Miami; Elliott Bay Books in Seattle; University of Nebraska, Lincoln; University of Vermont, Burlington; Paradise Valley College, Phoenix, Arizona; Cody's Bookstore, Berkeley, California; Fresno State University, Fresno, California;

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Judge, Steve Kowitz Poetry Prize, 2029 (forthcoming)

Judge, Laura Boss Poetry Book Award, New York Quarterly Books, 2025.

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Host and Producer of *Prosody*, WESA-FM, Public radio show, NPR affiliate, interviewing national and international writers, 1994—2017.

Judge, 2016, Dogfish Head Prize for Poetry, with Carol Frost, Baron Wormser.

Judge, 2015, Anhinga Prize for Poetry.

Judge, 2011 Public Poetry Project, Pennsylvania Center for the Book.

Judge, 2010 Split This Rock Poetry Contest.

Judge, 2009 Liam Rector Book Prize.

REFERENCES

Diane Glancy, Poet and writer of the loss of Native traditions, *Fort Marion Prisoners and the Trauma of Native Education*; More than 25 books of poetry, fiction, nonfiction; Macalester College; Mentor, Carlow University.

Lee Ann Roripaugh, Poet and writer, biracial daughter of Japanese immigrants; *tsunami vs. the fukushima 50*; Director of Creative Writing, U. of South Dakota, Editor of *South Dakota Review*; South Dakota Poet Laureate from 2015-2019.

Praise for *Dragstripping*, 2024:

“Jan Beatty writes at full throttle, a plunge into the self without flinching. These poems are highways, the finish lines smoking with ‘the truth that drags and bitters.’ Stories stripped raw. Brave, honest, death-defying, Beatty’s poetry roars.”

—**Sandra Cisneros**, *Woman Without Shame*

“Don’t pretend you can’t see this,” demands the fierce speaker in Jan Beatty’s *Dragstripping*. With unblinking grit, Beatty’s malleable language and line—from narration to lyric image, from couplets to prose—affirm that “blues is three chords and the truth—// And poetry is long-lined lies and a deep dive / into the body’s costly river.” These astonishing poems have been captured in the very act of re-defining identity and desire, “because who wants a watered-/down heart?” In her eighth brilliant collection, Beatty once again proves herself a skilled master poet who sings of loss, grief, and trauma—but she also whispers a refrain of dynamic resolve: “Now I’m a heart without a head, walking. / I don’t need to be right— / I just need it to be worth it...”

—**Ellen Bass**, *Indigo*

Jan Beatty has written a wildly associative and resolutely secular rebel’s “lives of the saints”—one in which her love for the blues and rock music is continuous with her working class roots, and in which familial, communal, and sexual love coalesce into unforgettable portraits of democratic life on the brink of revelation. You’ll find no stick-figure pieties or fool’s gold politics here. Everything the poet sees, she sees with the precise eye of passion.

—**Tom Sleigh**, *The King’s Touch*

Past praise:

“Beatty’s new poems . . . shimmer with luminous connection, travel a big life and grand map of encounters.”

—**Naomi Shihab Nye**, *The New York Times*

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Jan Beatty's visceral urgency and courageous truth telling is a gust of welcome fresh air. These poems are astoundingly alive!

—**Tracy K. Smith**, Pulitzer Prize winner, U.S. Poet Laureate

“Nobody has a better sense of the colloquial American idiom. Nobody among her contemporaries writes better poems about urban working-class life.”

—**Ed Ochester**, Pitt Poetry Series

“I love Jan Beatty’s poetry. It is wild, erotic, and outrageous. She celebrates the physical, the sexual, and the abused, but her poems have a spiritual, if bitter, and even mystical, quality. She writes of betrayal, the ruin of innocence, false learning, delight, and pity. She is truly an ecstatic poet. She is also a good writer, with countless strategies, full of generosity, wisdom and knowledge. She belongs to no ‘school’ but skirts—and represents—they all. She knows the magic of song. She is worshipful—and tragic. She belongs with Rukeyser, Olds, and Plath.”

—**Gerald Stern**, *Blessed as We Were: Late Selected and New Poems, 2000–2018*

Praise for *American Bastard*, 2021:

“I don’t think I’ve ever read a book like this one. I hadn’t known some live haunted by their own blood ghosts. It will be medicine for those wounded by their own births and illuminating for anyone who thought they understood notions of home and kin. It’s as if Beatty’s lived homesick for herself. *American Bastard* is as brutal and beautiful as Beatty’s poetry. A surgery of the self. Precise and invasive, exploratory and celebratory, debilitating and transformational.”

—**Sandra Cisneros**, author of *The House on Mango Street* and *A House of My Own: Stories from My Life*, MacArthur Genius Grant.

Jan Beatty's *American Bastard* starts with a threat - with razor like prose she backs you up against the wall of your naive assumptions. A monumental work of wild innovative storytelling, wholly original, *American Bastard* would be unbearable in its pain were it not rendered with such exquisite craft and beauty. As a reader you're either in or out, I suggest you stay in for one of the decade's premier memoirs.

- **Sapphire**, *Push* (made into the Academy Award-winning movie, *Precious*), *The Kid*

American Bastard dares and succeeds at reimagining and redefining memoir as a genre where stream of consciousness meets essay, meets magical realism, meets reportage, meets poetry to create an epic mosaic only possible through the literary genius of Jan Beatty. And as if that weren't enough, an enthralling yet gracious exposé about adoption that confronts and educates us through a voice that is at times tender and broken, at times angry and fierce, but always unflinchingly honest with herself, the people in her life, and her readers. - **Richard Blanco**, Presidential Inaugural Poet for Barack Obama, *The Prince of Los Cocuyos: A Miami Memoir*

—2021 Social Media Reviews: • Interview in [90.5 WESA](#) • Featured on [The Rumpus](#). • Interviewed on [The Culture Buzz](#) • Reviewed in [On the Seawall](#) • Guest writer for [Lit Hub](#) • Reviewed in [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) • Featured in [City Paper](#). • Reviewed in [International Swans](#) • Reviewed in [Severance Magazine](#) • Featured in [Pittsburgh Magazine](#)

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Scholarly papers on Jan Beatty's writing:

Mary Kate Azcuy, Monmouth University presented her paper, "Jan Beatty's 'Shooter,' A Controversy For Feminist & Gender Politics," at 2013 Conference: *Women's inscription into the public sphere*. Université Paris X, Ouest Nanterre La Défense, Paris, France.

Carrie Conners, City University of New York. '*Ping Ping Ping / I break things*': *Productive Disruption in the Working-class Poetry of Jan Beatty, Sandra Cisneros, and Wanda Coleman* Journal of Working-Class Studies, 2018.