

# Creative writing faculty shares work at annual reading

by Kristi McKim  
features editor

Last Wednesday, literature lovers and fellow fans of poetry, fiction and creative non-fiction could find a more-than appropriate haven in which to fulfill their craving for the written and spoken word. And as if that weren't enough, this literary experience could be had through no effort or laboring of their own! Indeed, this time, the professors were the ones whose hard work was highlighted, at the third annual Behrend Reads literature reading.

Dr. Greg Morris, Professor of English and Chairperson of the English major, hosted the event, by welcoming all students, faculty and community members. He also introduced all featured readers.

To open the evening, Melissa Bender, Lecturer of English and Coordinator of Women's Studies, read poetry from her upcoming poetry collection, *Spice Islands and Other Word Problems*, including "West of Desire in Panic," "Indirect Object," "Aperture," "Canis Minor," "Dead Reckoning," "Longitude," and a historical revisionist poem, "Columbus Discovers Vanilla."

Bender received her Bachelor of

Arts and Masters of Fine Arts from the University of Pittsburgh. Prior to her work at Behrend, she taught at the University of Pittsburgh and the Community College of Allegheny County.

As a writer of fiction, poetry, and literary non-fiction, she has had works published in *Sun Dog Southeast Review*, *American Short Fiction*, *West Branch*, *In Pittsburgh News Weekly*, *O'Henry's Festival Stories*, *The Antioch Review*, and the *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*. In addition to her collection of poems, she also is working on *Machismatic: A Love Trapezoid*, a novel.

The second featured reader was Dr. Diana Hume George, Professor of English and Women's Studies. Dedicating her reading to Constance Coiner, a close friend, colleague, and co-writer who was killed in the tragic 1996 crash of TWA's Flight 800, George read from her dedication to their co-edited book, *The Family Track*: "[Coiner was an] unappointed blaze...made of vigilance; ...[Coiner's] heart beating in me will make me more honest every moment I live."

George proceeded to read a creative non-fiction piece, "The Last of the Raccoon," which considered the

relationships between herself and the Seneca tribe, Iroquois nation, into which she married and from which she divorced. She also read poetry from *Koyannitsqatsi*.

Having received grants for her work from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the New York State Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and other agencies, George has authored ten books including *The Lonely Other: A Woman Watching America*, *The Resurrection of the Body*; along with Coiner, she has edited the forthcoming book, *The Family Tract*, which addresses the pressure to balance the competing demands of work and family life for women and men. George was also nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for her critical study, *Blake and Freud*.

The third and final reader of the night was Alan Michael Parker, Assistant Professor of English and Coordinator of the Smith Series. From his first book of poems, *Days Like Prose* (a National Book Critics Circle "Notable Book from 1997"), Parker read a few selections. He also read more recent work, including "Fog," "A Bag of Tomatoes," and a series of poems from his upcoming book, *Poems About the Vandals and*

*Other Poems*.

Parker's poems have appeared widely in magazines including *Antaeus*, *The New Republic*, *The New Yorker*, and *The Paris Review*; his scholarly works include *The Routledge Anthology of Cross-Gendered Verse* and a forthcoming *Who's Who in 20th Century Poetry*, for which he is serving as North American Editor. A recent recipient of a Fellowship in Literature from the Pennsylvania Council of the Arts, Parker also contributes book reviews to *The New Yorker's* "Briefly Noted" page.

Held in the intimate setting of the Studio Theatre, this reading was well-received and quite-appreciated by the near-capacity audience.

According to Dawn Mitchell, 08, English, "it was really interesting to hear our professors read," she adds, laughing, "especially after they've lectured us on how we're supposed to write."

Tracie Abbott, 04, English, also enjoyed this event, stating that she "was impressed, thoroughly impressed." Abbott continues, "Behrend has a very active writing community; it was good to hear their works read."



photo by Kristi McKim

Dr. Diana Hume George read her poetry and creative non-fiction at "Behrend Reads," Wednesday, February 4.

# Scorsese's Kundun offers cinematic portrait of Tibetan culture

by Jon Stubbs  
staff writer

Martin Scorsese captures the peacefulness and serenity of Tibetan culture with his latest project, *Kundun*. *Kundun* is the true story of the fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet, his discovery of himself and his spirituality, and his peoples' struggle with Maoist China.

The film opens with the discovery of the Dalai Lama when he is only five years old, and describes the

religious training and studying track he was put on. There is an obvious but smooth character development in the Dalai Lama throughout the movie, as we see his disgust in war and beliefs of non-violence develop.

The second half of the film is concerned with the invasion of Tibet by Mao's Red China and the Dalai Lama's diplomatic relations with China. The Dalai Lama meets with Mao Zedong during one scene of the film and Mao warns His Holiness that "Religion is poison." This seems to

mark the turning point at which the Dalai Lama begins his peaceful resistance of the Chinese, for which he won a Nobel Peace Prize in 1989.

As Scorsese takes us through the first 13 years of the life of the Dalai Lama, he twirls and rolls the camera angles to correspond with His Holiness' point of view. Close-ups on the jewelry and garments of the Tibetan monks truly pull the audience into the culture. Surreal depictions of the Dalai Lama's visions of the future make Buddhist ideals and

philosophies comprehensible for even the most Western of viewers. The camerawork manages to provide an intimate portrayal of His Holiness without spoiling the Dalai Lama's intriguing atmosphere.

Screenwriter Melissa Mathison, wife of Harrison Ford and author of the screenplay for *E.T.*, was very specific about the cast she wanted for the film: "Only Tibetan and Chinese people will be in the movie. No Anglos. No big names."

Scorsese intended to film *Kundun* in northern India, but ended up shooting in Morocco instead. In fact, Martin Scorsese has since been banned from Tibet, and is listed as one of fifty people who can never enter the country.

China has warned the Walt Disney Company (owner of Buena Vista, the distributor of the film) that "to sing the praises of the Dalai Lama [would] not conform with reality." Even though they had not yet seen the film, officials at the Chinese Film Bureau told the Associated Press in Beijing that they did not appreciate the film's focus on the Dalai Lama.

Surprisingly, Disney has not backed down to China, even though China is one of its major markets. With diplomat-for-hire Henry Kissinger advising their every move on this venture, Disney plans to stick to its guns.

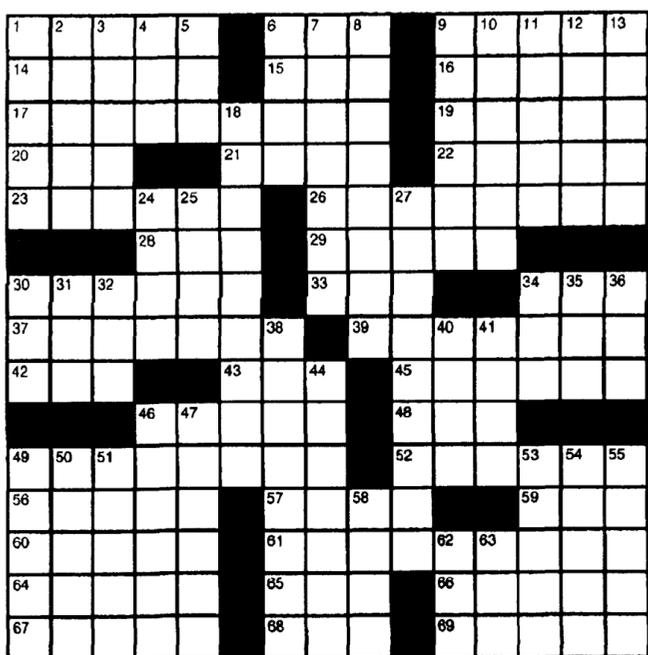
A letter mentioning *Kundun* and various other films critical of the Chinese government was signed by



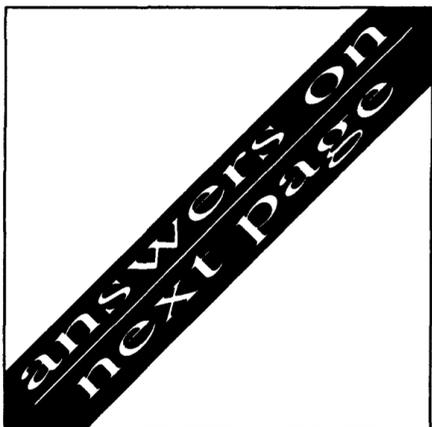
photo by Kristi McKim

Melissa Bender, Lecturer of English and Coordinator of Women's Studies, prepares to share her poetry with the audience.

- ACROSS
- 1 Acts down in the dumps
  - 6 Blighted tree
  - 9 Localities
  - 14 Overthrow
  - 15 By way of
  - 16 Bloodsucker
  - 17 Bowing respectfully
  - 19 Eagle's nest
  - 20 Likable candidate?
  - 21 King of comedy
  - 22 Playground ride
  - 23 Golfer's porter
  - 26 Most ungainly
  - 28 "\_\_\_ in the Family"
  - 29 Patriot Allen
  - 30 Swindler's assistants
  - 33 Body of water
  - 34 Diamond stat
  - 37 Best policy?
  - 39 Viler
  - 42 List-ending abbr.
  - 43 Obvious toupee
  - 45 Becomes a gully
  - 46 Snatched
  - 48 Shout to surprise
  - 49 Municipal officials
  - 52 Forward flow
  - 56 Jungle vine
  - 57 Swan lady
  - 59 Couple
  - 60 Greek column type
  - 61 Sacred pageants
  - 64 Prepared to propose
  - 65 Guy's date
  - 66 Mother-of-pearl
  - 67 Curvy letters
  - 68 Shifty
  - 69 Mild oath
- DOWN
- 1 Melody
  - 2 Japan's second-largest city
  - 3 Whimpered
  - 4 Stretch of time
  - 5 Healing waters
  - 6 Depraved
  - 7 Writers' payment rates
  - 8 Powerful folk
  - 9 49th state
  - 10 "\_\_\_ and Rockin'"
  - 11 Ghostly
  - 12 Corrosive stuff
  - 13 Piece of paper
  - 18 Huge whirlpool
  - 24 Landscape dip
  - 25 Hardships
  - 27 Harpooner's craft
  - 30 Haggard novel
  - 31 Much in demand
  - 32 Abbr. for a business
  - 34 Eliminate
  - 35 Hive builder
  - 36 Tax letters
  - 38 Seasonal burners
  - 40 Press clothes
  - 41 Othello, e.g.
  - 44 Military rank
  - 46 Mentally feeble
  - 47 Expanses of land
  - 49 The same
  - 50 Silverdome team
  - 51 Polonius, Laertes, et al.
  - 53 City on the Mohawk
  - 54 Excalibur, e.g.
  - 55 Garden waterers
  - 58 John of the PGA
  - 62 First grade
  - 63 Old cloth



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forty-one members of the film industry and sent to the Chinese Embassy in Washington D.C. Signers included Spike Lee, Sidney Lumet, and Oliver Stone. The first line read "We, the members of the film community, have over the last several years become increasingly alarmed at the Chinese government's attempts to dictate what artistic projects can be undertaken in or on China."

In an interview with PBS, Scorsese stated his feelings on China's policy: "I am concerned about Tibet and I do get mad sometimes when I think about it. I'm not a Buddhist so I get very very angry at times but...you make a movie when you're angry. That's the way to make a picture."

Featured next week...  
 Review of Brownie Mary's new album, *Naked*; by John Amorose

## Restaurant review: Lonestar Steakhouse and Saloon

by Daniel Riefstahl  
staff writer

Strap on your spurs; grab your hat, and head on over to Lonestar Steakhouse, located on upper Peach Street. You may wonder where the parlor doors are that always grace the entrance way of a saloon: they were no where to be seen, but there were plenty of western decorations to satisfy even the toughest of cowboys.

Choose between the bar room, which holds a big screen TV, or the main dining room, for that more private setting. There are booths or tables to choose from—and don't forget to grab yourself a bucket of peanuts when you arrive. No need to deal with a mess, just throw the shells on the floor: that is the western way. Whether you have been trapped in

an office, hitting the books, or rounding up steer, start your meal with a nice, cold beer. There is domestic and imported beer, as well as a fine selection of wines and spirits. For those young cowpokes, there is a full selection of non-alcoholic beverages. Something smells great: it could be their slow-cooked ribs, burgers, chicken, seafood, or their famous mesquite grilled steaks. The steaks are the specialty and range from \$9.50 - \$18.00.

All meals include a steaming hot loaf of bread and butter, a generous salad, and your choice of a baked potato, baked sweet potato, steak fries, or Texas rice. If you choose the potato or sweet potato, you better loosen your chaps because they serve the biggest potato this side of the Mississippi.

I chose the mixed grill for \$17.95.

It included a choice 6 oz. Filet steak, sweet bourbon salmon, and three jumbo, mesquite grilled shrimp. I chose the oversized, seasoned steak fries to compliment my steak. The portions were generous and very well should have been for that price. Although the price was steep, my meal was wonderfully prepared and deliciously satisfying.

The service was fast and friendly. We were seated immediately and our drinks came just as fast. They were refilled without even asking. We waited only fifteen minutes for our meals, which flew by as we munched on the addictive peanuts and fresh, warm bread.

If you ever have that undeniable urge for a thick, juicy steak I suggest you rustle yourself up some friends and head down to Lonestar.