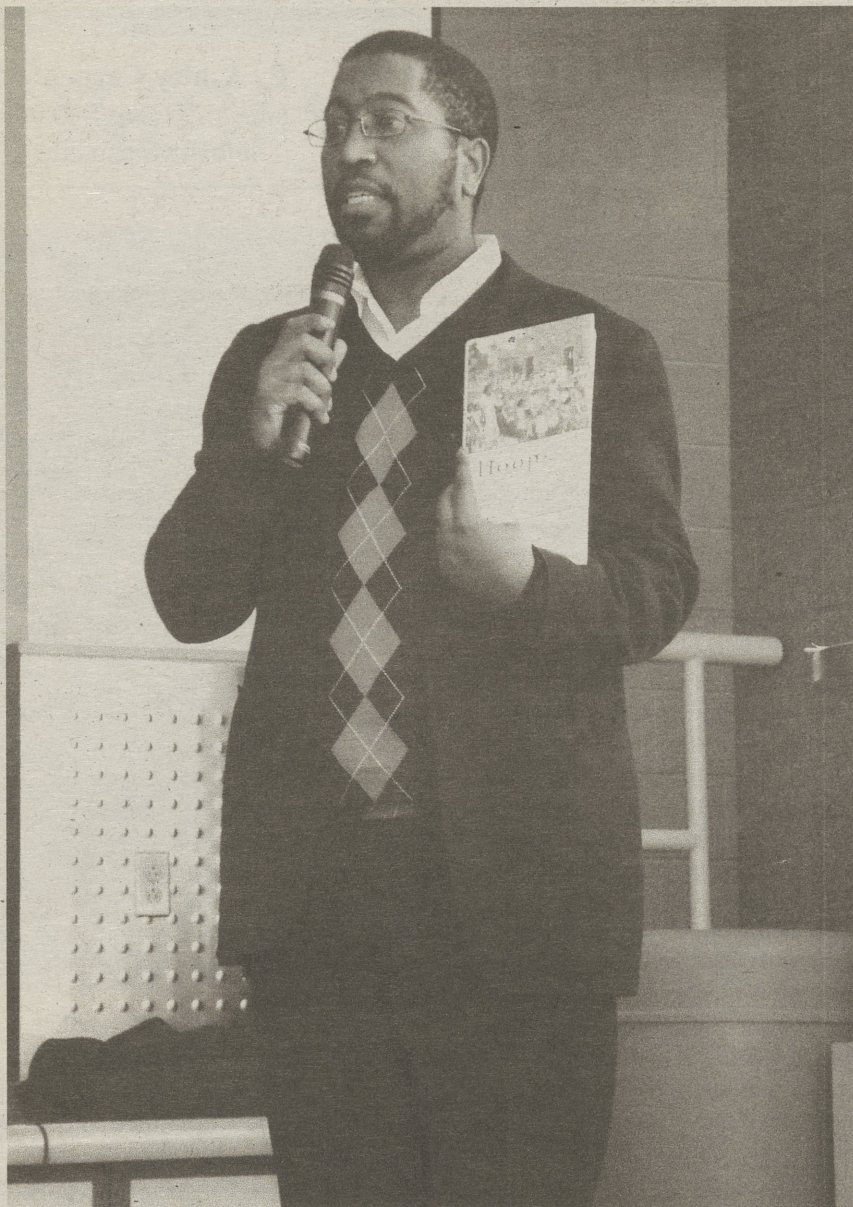


Eye on Campus



Major Jackson Brings Philly Culture To Life

By Kelly Guinan - Lion's Eye Staff Writer - kag5178@psu.edu

On March 4th, the sunlight poured in through the windows of the lobby in Tomezko, while students sat, absorbed in the rhythm echoing off the glass and tile, the rhythm of Major Jackson's poetry. Stanzas filled with imagery of Philadelphia, especially North Philly, filled our ears, and everyone was transfixed by the musical tones of the poetry being read to us.

Major Jackson, who even proclaimed that he had once wished to become an MC, writes poetry that is influenced so heavily by the culture of Philly and music that his readings sound like a rapper laying down the vocals for different tracks. No one could deny the affect the reading had; we were all at once removed from Media and transplanted on Broad Street, on Oxford Ave, on basketball courts scattered throughout the city. Anyone who happened to wander in could be seen standing, listening, then scurrying off to class late, accidentally becoming absorbed in the world we were immersed in as we listened to stories of pick-up basketball games and letters to Gwendolyn Brooks.

Though now living in Vermont, his poetry about the city brings it to life as a living, breathing, evolving being, and his cinematic writing and employment of imagery brings to life the beauty of a place many would refuse to even drive through, let alone experience and embrace it as home. Every basketball court with cracked pavement and missing nets, every freight train with tags and throw-ups gracing the plain paint with splashes of color, and every school letting out crowds of shrieking kids and sulking adolescents is embodied in Jackson's poetry, and it allows students of Penn State to leave the blissful dullness of Suburbia to experience what the streets of Philadelphia have to offer.

Left: Major Jackson speaking about his poetry in the Tomezko lounge.
Photo courtesy of Kelly Guinan

On March 26th 2009 the Women's Commission Luncheon was held in the Tomesko building. It included lunch and refreshments for students and faculty and gave everyone there the opportunity to gather and observe women's achievements. Theresa Walls was awarded the title of "Woman of the Year." Walls is a staff assistant in IST. She was awarded due to her dedication to her job, the campus, and community. She does this all with a smile, willing to help students, faculty, and staff. She has been employed at Penn State Brandywine for over 29 years and goes out of her way to improve campus life. If anyone on campus ever needs a helping hand, Theresa is there to lend it. She initiated and organizes the A.I. DuPont Ronald McDonald House dinner every year. Congratulations to Theresa.

The key note speaker at the luncheon was Dr. Afaf Meleis, author and Dean of Nursing at the University of Pennsylvania. She also serves as Council General of the International Council of Women's Health Issues. She presented a Power Point presentation on the "Global Issues in Women's Health." During this presentation she talked about the many problems and issues women face on a daily basis. It was both informative and proved insight that many women may not have known were current issues today. It was an honor and privilege to have her come and speak at our campus. The Women's Commission Luncheon was a very delightful event and we are grateful to all of those worked on it and made it happen.

Women of the Year Honored at Luncheon

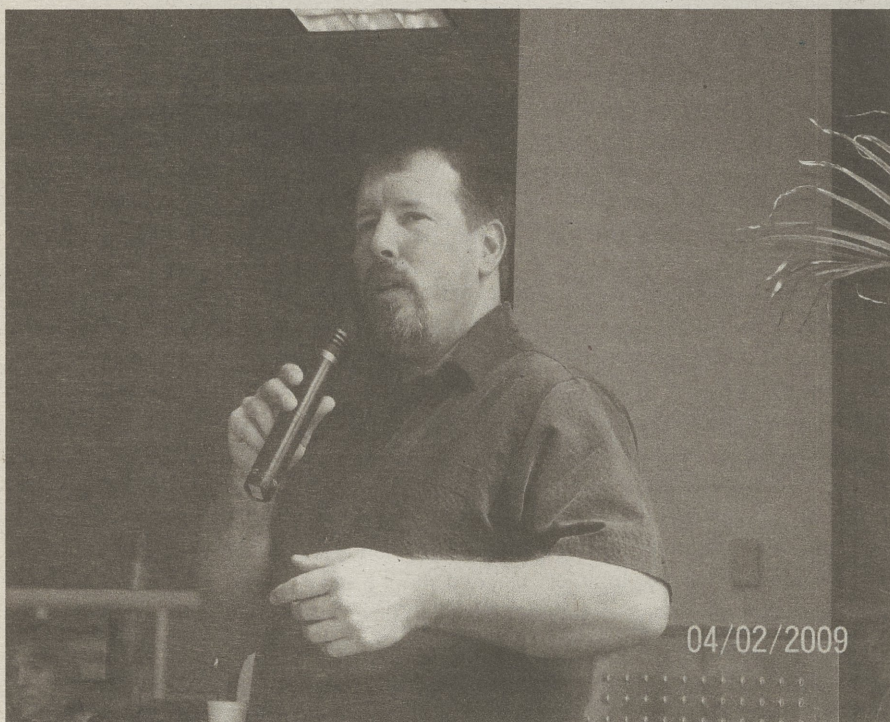


Left: Theresa Walls, 2009 Woman of the Year - Photo courtesy of Penn State Brandywine's website

By Christina Furia - Lion's Eye Staff Writer
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Litapalooza Literary Festival a Success

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Poet Brian Turner discussing his views on war -
Photo by Jennifer Santangelo

On Thursday April 2nd the Penn State Brandywine English Department and Dr. Adam Sorkin sponsored the 13th Annual Literary Festival affectionately termed "Litapalooza". This year's festival included, as always, open mike readings from students. Two brave souls named Joseph Laut and Erica Naylis broke the ice by reading poems they had written for Ms. O'Brien's creative writing class. They were followed by special guest Brian Turner. Brian Turner is a soldier from Fresno, California. He was deployed to Iraq in February 2003 and spent a year there. It was during this time that he wrote the poem "Here, Bullet," which is also the name of his book of collected poems.

"Here, Bullet" is a powerful poem. Brian Turner said he "still does not understand that poem" and he added that he "thinks that's a good thing". He went on to elaborate that he was in the desert listening to the band Queen's of the Stone Age and it just flowed from his pen onto the paper. He stated that he folded it up and carried it in his breast pocket for the rest of his time there. Mr. Turner was a soldier for seven years. In addition to his time in Iraq, he was also deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1999. His poems tend to be dark yet insightful, and are full of the strife that he witnessed on his wartime missions. Brian Turner's book won the 2005 Beatrice Hawley Award, the New York Times "Editor's Choice" selection, the 2006 Pen Center USA "Best in the West" award, and the 2007 Poets Prize.

After more open mike readings, Penn State's literary Magazine Penn in Hand was distributed and the winners of their writing contest were announced. The first place poetry winner was Rahel Teklegiorgis for her poem "Welcome Home," second place went to Dana Gibson who wrote "Honeybees," third was Mary-Therese Capaldi's "A Notice," and an honorable mention went to Kate Sowinski's piece "Aphelion." Catherine Wahl won for her short story titled "For Them."