

Writing Around the World

New Pinsky Global Fellowships send recent grads abroad for inspiration



Adam Eaglin (GRS'09), seen here in Montserrat, spent the summer in Barcelona writing poetry and studying visual art on a Global Fellowship.

THE ROSTER OF renowned writers who've sought an artistic muse in Rome is long: Henry James and Mark Twain famously found inspiration in Italy's capital, while James Joyce finished *Dubliners* and started *Ulysses*. Last summer, Dan Stone literally followed in their footsteps, tracing their paths as part of an independent study while working on the novel that could put his own name on the illustrious list.

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consider, as a writer: sometimes, when you're removed from home and its comforts, you can see things in a different way," he says.

Stone (GRS'09), a graduate of Boston University's Creative Writing Program, wasn't the only writer heading out into the world for an expatriate experience this year; he and four other recent alumni traveled as recipients of the inaugural Robert Pinsky Global Fellowships in Creative Writing. The Fellowships, established through a \$2 million donation from Robert J. Hildreth, vice chair of Boston University's Board of Overseers, provided funds for up to

four months of study in an international destination. They are named in honor of poet, translator, and critic Pinsky, a College of Arts & Sciences professor of English, who was U.S. poet laureate from 1997 to 2000.

Two poets, two fiction writers, and a playwright received the fellowships, and their plans and destinations varied as much as their genres. Adam Eaglin (GRS'09) went to Barcelona to translate the poetry of José Valente and to study the visual art that influenced his work. Masha Obolensky (GRS'09) spent six weeks in France researching the French feminist author Colette. Nathan Hogan (GRS'09) trekked across Greenland for research on his historical novel about a real-life Arctic explorer. And Maia Rauschenberg (GRS'09) is exploring the wilderness of Patagonia, including a sail through the Straits of Magellan and around Cape Horn, this fall.

"My main goal for this trip was to be inspired," says Rauschenberg. "To be awed by beauty, to feel a sense of space in the wilderness, and to push myself physically and emotionally to really interact with the land and sea."

Hildreth's donation will also establish an annual International Visiting Professorship in creative writing, named for the program's director and founder, Leslie Epstein. Hildreth, the founder and president of an international banking firm, as well as a poet in his spare time, says that both the travel fellowships and the professorship are intended to break BU's Creative Writing Program away from what he calls the parochialism of so many writing programs.

"The chance to work and to teach and to just experience foreign cultures should provide not only material that they would not get otherwise, but also expose them to lifestyles that challenge their thinking," says Hildreth. "If they go into a foreign culture, they will have an experience with profound dislocation and loneliness, and they're going to have to rise to the challenge. And that can have a very interesting effect on writing." JU



FIVE TRAVEL fellowships and a visiting professor honor Pinsky and Epstein.



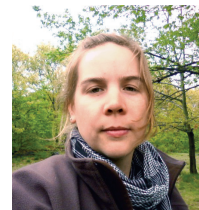
MASHA OBOLENSKY (GRS'09)



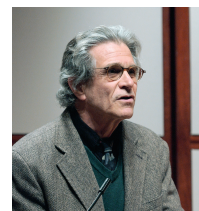
NATHAN HOGAN (GRS'09)



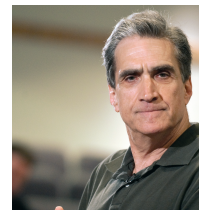
DAN STONE (GRS'09)



MAIA RAUSCHENBERG (GRS'09)



LESLIE EPSTEIN



ROBERT PINSKY



ROBERT HILDRETH