

# *PCAP NEWS*

*November 2022*

The PCAP newsletter aims to keep incarcerated artists, writers, and performers informed of what the Prison Creative Arts Project (PCAP) is doing and how to be involved. If you know someone who would like to receive this newsletter, please have them write to us.



# *Update from the Director*

by **Nora Krinitsky**

Hello, Prison Creative Arts Project artists, writers, performers, and community members! Here in Ann Arbor, we are enjoying crisp fall days and beautiful bright colors on the trees. Students are still enjoying spending time outside before the temperatures get too low. I'm in denial about the months of cold and snow ahead!

At long last, we have begun to facilitate in-person workshops in prisons again this fall! It has been more than two years since PCAP workshops occurred in person. Our facilitators and participants worked hard to stay connected through correspondence workshops over the past several years, but nothing can replace the connections and collaborations that happen when we can share a space together. Sharing a workshop space allows participants and facilitators to build trust much more quickly and genuinely than can be accomplished through correspondence. It is a critical component of the workshop community and collaboration.

Because we had to suspend in-person workshops for so long, most current PCAP students have never facilitated a workshop before. Our students are bursting with excitement about the workshop facilitation process. They are also working hard to learn the many details involved in visiting prisons and facilitating a workshop—planning the session, traveling to the facility together, going through the facility's clearance process, getting to know the participants, and developing a community together. I'm grateful to all of them for taking on this vital role at PCAP. I'm also thankful to those of you who are participating in workshops—whether as PCAP veterans or as new participants—and for all that you do to make your workshop a supportive space.

Last weekend I had the privilege of accompanying PCAP staff and volunteers during several prison visits in the Upper Peninsula. Together we met with artists inside and selected artwork for the annual exhibition. Collectively our team visited six prisons in just five days! I think I drove nearly eighteen hours in all...quite a feat! As always, it was inspiring and humbling to see the creativity and innovation of PCAP artists inside prison. We collected a wide range of pieces, including paintings and drawings as well as several three-dimensional sculptures. I can't wait to see all of the art in the gallery together in a few months!

During our PCAP facilitator training at the beginning of the semester, we discussed some of the practices that make for successful workshops. One of those practices is artistic risk-taking. There are many ways to take artistic risks—you could try an artistic mode you've never tried before, you could attempt a new technique in your usual artistic practice, you could engage with a subject that you haven't explored before, or you could be open and vulnerable about your own experiences.

It can be challenging and even frightening to take an artistic risk! But so often the best work results. There is no better way to grow as a creator than to try something new and push outside your comfort zone. I thought about this a lot during our prison visits in the UP. We met many artists who took risks with the pieces they submitted and the techniques they used. I really admired their vulnerability and their commitment to growing their artistic practices. I encourage you all to take an artistic risk this fall, whether that is in a workshop or on your own!

# Updates for Writers

by **Phil Christman**

## Call for Writing

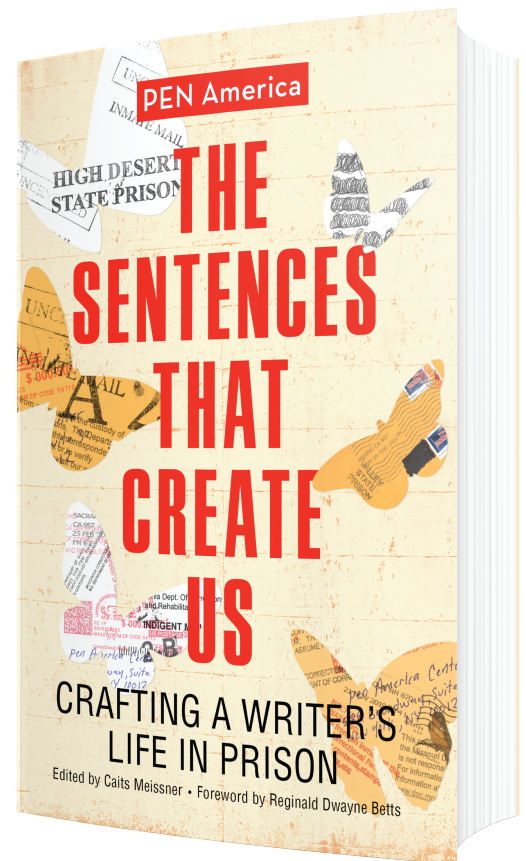
The *Michigan Review of Prisoner Creative Writing* is accepting your submissions of poetry, fiction, plays, and short essays year-round. We tend to do most of the reading during the school year, and acceptance/rejection letters go out at the end of the semesters (so if you send something during the summer, you may not hear back about it till December). Please do not send novel- or novella-length works or other whole books, as we cannot publish them. Please accompany your submission with a note that includes any pen names you want us to use, your MDOC or BOP ID number, and your current address. The place to send them is, as always:

Attn: Phil Christman  
Prison Creative Arts Project  
1801 East Quad  
701 E. University  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1245

## Free Books From PEN America

A couple of other items: PEN America has produced an anthology that every reader of this newsletter should know about (and that some readers of this newsletter helped to create!). *The Sentences That Create Us: Crafting a Writer's Life in Prison*, edited by Caitis Messner, is an invaluable book. It is a good general guide to getting started in writing — it would work for any creative-writing workshop, inside or out — but it is specifically geared to writers who are practicing their trade in prison. I was especially pleased to see submissions from Curtis Dawkins and Justin Monson, both of whom I'm proud to have published in the *Review*. Of the pieces that aren't by my comrades, my favorite was probably the essay by Mitchell S. Jackson, the brilliant author of *The Residue Years*. (There's also a contribution by Piper Kernan, for anyone out there who was a fan of *Orange Is the New Black* in its original book incarnation.) I'll be using it in future iterations of my English 221 class. Best of all, it's free! At least it's free to anyone reading this in prison (I paid for the ebook). You can fill out a form (or have someone complete it for you) to have it mailed directly to you here: <https://myumi.ch/V7zkN> (this is a case-sensitive address).

Or you can just write to Vanessa Mayesky at PCAP and she'll include you in a bulk order of the book that we will send to PEN at regular intervals.



# Humanize the Numbers

by **Isaac Wingfield**

Humanize the Numbers is a recurring PCAP photography workshop at Thumb CF led by PCAP faculty Isaac Wingfield. As with most PCAP courses, this workshop brings students from the University of Michigan to collaborate alongside people in Michigan prisons. The workshops allow prisoners to reclaim ownership of their humanity through their creative freedom and expression. Images from these workshops are scheduled for exhibition at the Detroit Historical Museum in Spring 2023. The exhibit aims to highlight the diverse faces, voices, perspectives, and stories of people who are in prison, bringing them out into the community for the public. It ultimately seeks to encourage empathy and inspire people to better support returning citizens and people who are incarcerated.

The exhibit team is currently seeking additional voices and perspectives to include in the exhibit. This includes gathering as many responses as they can to the following two reflective questions: First, what are 3-5 words you would use to describe yourself? Second, if you could tell someone without connections to the prison system something about your experiences, what would you tell them? We would love to learn your perspectives! You can write to the PCAP office, c/o Humanize the Numbers.

## PCAP Art Auction

by **Sarah Unrath**

Has PCAP impacted you and your work? Interested in giving back? Consider making a significant contribution to PCAP by donating a piece of art to the 2022 Art Auction!

One hundred percent of the funds raised at the auction support the *27th Annual Exhibition of Artists in Michigan Prisons* (Spring 2023). The auction will feature artwork by artists in prison, PCAP curators, University of Michigan faculty, and other local artists.

This event will be held on Saturday, December 3rd, BOTH in-person and virtual. Now friends near and far can join in on the fun!

Selection trips for the *27th Annual Exhibition* are underway, and you can designate pieces for the 2023 Art Auction when we come and visit. We can't wait to see you again and hear all about what you've been working on!



# Linkage Community News

by Sarah Unrath

Planning on paroling soon? Stay connected with PCAP and sign up for the 2023 Linkage Community season! The goal of Linkage is to help members connect with their creativity, with each other, and with the larger community at the University of Michigan and beyond.

2022 was a busy year for Linkage. We were thrilled to be back in person, showcasing artwork and collaborating with artists across the state. From exhibitions like We Bear at the annual Ann Arbor Art Fair, to ArtPrize in Grand Rapids, Linkage continues to support artists on their journey to share their unique human experiences through the power of the arts.

As a Linkage Community member, you can:

- Discover upcoming arts and culture events near you
- Volunteer with the editing team for PCAP's literary journal
- Join PCAP's group of speakers for events and classes
- Get support in artistic representation and networking online
- Join one of our **NEW Working Groups** for more specialized experiences and opportunities
- Keep in touch with PCAP and Linkage members about exhibits, performances, collaborations and so much more!

**Please request a registration form as soon as you have a release date.** Upon release, you can also register by mail, online, or over the phone (see the form for details). If you prefer to fill it out online, please visit [myumi.ch/84Vwg](https://myumi.ch/84Vwg) (this is a case-sensitive address).

As always, write to us if you have any questions or concerns. The PCAP team is happy to help.



Linkage Community at ArtPrize, October 2022.

# November 2022 – March 2023

Ongoing: Rolling submissions for *Michigan Review of Prisoner Creative Writing*

## November – December

Weekly workshops at select facilities

27th Annual Exhibition art selection visits

PCAP Art Auction, December 3, Michigan Union

## January – March

Weekly workshops at select facilities

27th Annual Exhibition, March 21–April 4, 2023, Duderstadt Gallery

Opening Celebration - Tuesday, March 21st

Public Tour - Saturday, March 25th

Launch Party: *Michigan Review of Prisoner Creative Writing* volume 15 -  
Sunday, March 26th

The Artist Panel and Artists' Family/Friends Lunch - Sunday, March 26th

Virtual Family Day - Sunday, April 2nd

## About PCAP

### Mission Statement

The Prison Creative Arts Project brings those impacted by the justice system together with the University of Michigan community for artistic collaboration, mutual learning, and growth.

### Contact Us

PCAP at University of Michigan  
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[pcapinfo@umich.edu](mailto:pcapinfo@umich.edu)  
[www.prisonarts.org](http://www.prisonarts.org)

### PCAP Faculty

Director: Nora Krinitsky  
Phil Christman, Ben Gaughran, Megan Holmes,  
Ashley Lucas, Toby Millman, Eugene Rogers,  
Isaac Wingfield

### PCAP Staff

Emily Chase, Mary Heinen McPherson,  
Vanessa Mayesky, Sarah Unrath

### Annual Exhibition Curators

Emily Chase, Jeff Clark, Caleb Foerg,  
Charlie Michaels, Bryan Picken, Sarah Unrath,  
Kimiko Uyeda, Martín Vargas, Mae Wilson