



BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

Institute for the Study of Culture and Society

APPLICATION FOR FALL 2016/SPRING 2017 SCHOLARS AND ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE

(please type)

Name: CHERYL LACHOWSKI doc

Department/Program: General Studies Writing

Academic Rank: Lecturer

Office Phone: 372-0549 Home Phone: 419-832-0215

Cell: none E-mail: clachow@bgsu.edu

Title of Proposed Project: Ditches: A Montage of the Great Black Swamp

Please indicate your availability for residency:

Fall term: Spring Term: Either term: X but prefer Spring

THE ATTACHED APPLICATION MATERIALS MUST INCLUDE:

- Abstract of Project (350-word limit)
Description of Project (8-10 double-spaced pages)
Current Curriculum Vitae
Budget, if relevant

SIGNATURES

Applicant: Cheryl Lachowski Date: 10/12/15

Department Chair: Cheryl Day Date: 10/12/15

College Dean: Shamsny Date: 10/19/15

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Monday, October 30, 2015, by 5:00 pm. Please submit one print and one electronic copy (email) of the application packet to: Theodore Rippey, Director, ICS, 230 East Hall, theodor@bgsu.edu. Please include ICS Graduate Assistant, Shane Snyder, shamsny@bgsu.edu, on the email submission of the electronic copy.

**CHERYL SCHAFF LACHOWSKI**  
Curriculum Vitae  
2015

**I. ACADEMIC DEGREES**

1985-87 **Master of Fine Arts**, Creative Writing (Poetry), Bowling Green State University,  
Bowling Green, Ohio.

1974-78 **Bachelor of Arts**, Magna cum Laude, Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio—  
Majors: Biology and Philosophy, Phi Beta Kappa.

**II. ACADEMIC POSITIONS**

2014 to present. Lecturer, Dept. of English/GSW, Bowling Green State Univ., OH.

2001 thru 2014. Instructor, Dept. of English/GSW, Bowling Green State Univ., OH.

1997-98. Instructor, Dept. of English, Luther College, Decorah, IA.

1997. Instructor, Northeast Iowa Community College, Calmar, IA.

1989-93. Instructor, Dept. of English, Kutztown University, Kutztown, PA.

1987-88. Intern Instructor, Dept. of English, Bowling Green State Univ.

1985-87. Graduate Assistant, Dept. of English, Bowling Green State Univ.

**IV. TEACHIING EXPERIENCE**

**1. Undergraduate Courses**

At BGSU in General Studies Writing Program:

*Eng 111/GSW 1110*—Introduction to Writing/Introduction to Academic Writing:  
Instruction and practice writing expository arguments primarily based on personal  
experience, with emphasis on organizing and developing ideas. Essays include arguing  
positions with and without sources, proposing a solution, and evaluating.

*Eng 112/GSW 1120*—Varieties of Writing/Academic Writing: Emphasizes critical  
reading and writing skills in order to develop academic arguments. Assignments include  
a critique of an academic article, argumentative essays which synthesize information  
from multiple sources, an analysis essay, and a research paper.

At Luther College:

Taught part-time in Paideia, a required Freshman interdisciplinary course in English and  
History.

This course includes units on Ancient Greek literature and history, China, the African-American Experience, and the Norwegian-American Immigrant Experience. I also did a unit on Utopian Literature. It is taught by all members of both the English and History departments, with a common syllabus, assignments, and exams.

At Northeast Iowa Community College:

Taught English Composition part-time.

At Kutztown University:

*Eng 001—English Composition:* A one semester required Freshman composition class that includes a variety of expository essay assignments, such as comparison/contrast, explanations of a process, evaluation, persuasive argument, and a descriptive synthesis utilizing several sources. A research paper using college-level source material is also assigned. I also taught this same course thru the university to nursing students at Reading Hospital.

*Eng 010—Introduction to Literature:* An exposure to the various literary genres (fiction, poetry, and drama) in order to acquire skills to aid in the reading and appreciation of literature.

*Eng 270—Short Story:* A survey of short fiction and its elements (point of view, plot, character, setting, theme, symbolism, and style/tone). Stories range from 19<sup>th</sup> century to Great Moderns to traditional 20<sup>th</sup> century and recent experimental, including works from British, French, Russian, Mexican, South American, Asian, and American authors.

At BGSU as Intern Instructor and Graduate Assistant:

Taught in the General Studies Writing Program: Basic Writing (developmental writing), Introduction to Writing, and Varieties of Writing; and in the General Studies Literature Program.

*Eng 111 and 112—see above.*

*Eng 110—Developmental Writing:* Intensive instruction and practice writing expository arguments based on personal experience, including emphasis on various elements of writing, such as audience awareness, overall organization, paragraph structure, sentence construction, word choice, and grammar/usage/mechanics.

*Eng D200—Science Fiction:* An introduction to literary science fiction, ranging from the classics to contemporary novels.

*Eng 205—The Craft of Poetry:* An introduction to the technical elements in poetry (tone, word choice, literal and suggested meaning, imagery, figures of speech, sound, rhythm, symbolism, and form.

#### **4. Other Teaching/Invitations to Teach**

Luther College, IA, Nov. 2003: Two sections of upper level poetry classes

Bluffton College, OH, Nov. 2003: One section of creative writing (poetry)

Williamsville H.S., Buffalo, NY, Oct. 2003: Two high school English classes

Emporia State Univ., KS, Oct. 2002: One section of creative writing (poetry)

## **VI. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Lilly Conference Series on College and University Teaching and Learning: Evidence Based Teaching and Learning, Traverse City, MI—Oct. 15-17, 2015.

Presented session on “Combating Multisensory Distractions: Contemplative Practices for Students and Educators” with Cheryl Hoy, Acting Director, GSW, BGSU; Amanda McGuire-Rzicznek, Lecturer, GSW, BGSU; and Elizabeth Zemanski, Instructor, GSW, BGSU.

ALICE Emergency Preparedness Training (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evaluate) by BGSU Campus Police—Oct. 2015

Fall 2015, Welcome Back GSW Instructional Development Sessions on the following:

--“Coding in Canvas” by Ann Westrick

--“Why Writing About Writing” and “How to Create and Incorporate WAW Assignments” by Kitty Burroughs, Susan Carlton, and Holly Bird

LawRoom Equity and Diversity Training—(EDU): Stop Harassment & Discrimination and (EDU): Eliminate Campus Sexual Violence—June 2015

GSW Program Meeting: “ADA Compliance & Course Content” session by Michael Kudela from CFE—5/7/15

Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) Prism of Possibility Teaching & Learning Conference Participant—3/6/15

Presented session on “It’s Time to Focus!: Reclaiming the College Classroom through Mindfulness and Meditation” with Amanda McGuire-Rzicznek, Lecturer, GSW, BGSU.

International Visual Literacy Association. Annual Conference at the Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, OH, Nov. 6-8, 2014. Roundtable presentation and discussion “Challenges Facing College Students Today with Visual Literacy: Lessons from Librarians and Interdisciplinary Professors in a Faculty Learning Community” with Eileen Bosch, Assoc. Prof., University Libraries, Library Instruction Coordinator, BGSU; Lynda Dee Dixon, Prof., Dept. of Communication, BGSU; Amy Fry, Assoc. Prof., University Libraries, BGSU; Andrew Hershberger, Assoc. Prof. and Chair, Division of Art History, BGSU; Vera Lux, Asst. Prof., Research and Instruction Librarian, BGSU; Chris Miko, Assoc. Prof., University Libraries, BGSU; and Susan Nelson, Asst. Prof. of Bassoon, BGSU.

Fall 2014, Welcome Back GSW Development Sessions on the following:

--“Best Practices for Teaching ESOL Students in GSW Courses” by Kitty Burroughs, Chad Van Buskirk, and Amy Cook

--“Multimodal/Multimedia Course Content Delivery” by Cheryl Hoy, Amanda McGuire Rzicznek, Kate Jurak, and Michael Kudela

--“First-Year Composition and Multimodal Composing” by Cheryl Hoy

BGSU Harassment Training—EDU: Report & Prevent Sexual Misconduct (Ohio) and EDU: Stop Harassment & Discrimination (Lenses US-13F)--3/30/14

BGSU Teaching and Learning Fair participant with CFE Learning Community—2/14/14

CFE Learning Community Member—Improving Undergraduate Information-seeking Practices—Fall 2013 through Spring 2014

GSW Development Session on 1120 Pre-Search unit and weighted grading system by Stephen Boston, Amanda Mcguire-Rzicznek, and Holly Bird—12/6/13

GSW Meeting, including BGSU Active Learning Classroom Training by Liane Ortis in Hayes 126 (ALC)—8/20/13

Safe Zone Workshop (Becoming an Ally and Advocate for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender People), 7/9/13

GSW Handbook training session, 5/2/12

Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) Student Veteran's Train the Trainer session, Spring 2011. Presented material at GSW faculty meeting, 8/2011

CUE (Connecting the Undergraduate Experience—A Proposed Framework for General Education at BGSU) meeting, 2/25/10

“Transforming Your GSW Class with Service Learning”—Ann Westrick and Susan Carlton, 3/26/10

ePortfolio session with CTL, 8/11/10

CTL Integrated Student Learning professional development workshop, 8/2009

“Using Scenarios in the Freshman Comp Classroom”—Greg Glau, 4/18/08

GSW development session by Lise Ede, 10/21/08

College of Arts & Sciences Forum on How Students Learn—Dr. Ken Bains, 11/5/07

MyCompLab orientation, Fall 2007

GSW Composition Forum, 11/9/06

Counseling Center Workshop—How to Work with Students on Mental Health Issues, 9/26/06

GSW development session “Help I Have an International Student and I Don't Know What to Do”—Kitty Burroughs and Dawn Hubbell-Staeble, March 2005

GSW development session “Enabling Learning Disabled College Writers” March 2005

## X. PUBLICATIONS AND EQUIVALENCIES

### A. PUBLICATIONS

#### 1(e). Poetry books

Lachowski, Cheryl. *The Secret Life of Hardware*. Mineral Bluff, GA: Future Cycle Press, 2010. (poetry chapbook)

Lachowski, Cheryl. *Homing*. Emporia, KS: Bluestem Press, Emporia State University, 2001. (poetry collection, winner of the Bluestem Poetry Award)

#### 2(a). Refereed Journal Articles and Poems

Lachowski, Cheryl. "The Burn." *Valparaiso Poetry Review* XI. 2 (Spring/Summer 2010). Web. [www.valpo.edu/vpr/](http://www.valpo.edu/vpr/)

Lachowski, Cheryl. "The Laws of Eco-Poetic-Dynamics." *Third Coast* Spring 2008: 64-66.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "My Sky at Twilight." *Oyez Review* 43 (Spring 2007): 1.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Bog With Obsidian." *Isotope: A Journal of Literary Nature and Science Writing* 3.2 (Fall/Winter 2005): 30-31.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Looking West." *Valparaiso Poetry Review* V.2 (Spring/Summer 2004). Web. [www.valpo.edu/vpr/](http://www.valpo.edu/vpr/) Also listed as poem of the week in "One Poet's Notes" by VPR editor Edward Byrne 10/28/08.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Eyelids of the Sea." *Connecticut Review* XXVI.2 (Fall 2004): 70-71.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Broken Blossoms." *The Eleventh Muse* 2004: 36-37.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Pharmacopoeia: Diazepam." *Passages North* 23.1 (Winter/Spring 2002): 167-68.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Back Home" and "Burs." *Sou'wester* 29.2 (Spring 2001): 15-16, 17-18.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Hawkweed." *The MacGuffin*. XVII.1 (Spring 2000): 140-41.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Homing Devices." *Kenyon College Alumni Bulletin* 21.4 (Fall/Winter 1999): 28-29. (creative non-fiction)

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Coltsfoot." *Potpourri*. 11.3 (1999): 44.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Lacunae." *Trapeze* 4.1 (Winter 1998): 7.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Wichita." *Trapeze* 4.3 (Fall 1998): 21.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Naming the Snow." *Kansas Quarterly* 23.1-2 (1992): 210-212.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Three Women" and "Wanting to Talk." *Prairie Schooner* 64.4 (Winter 1991): 83-85, 85.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Mass for 5 Voices." *Southern Poetry Review* XXVIII.2 (Fall 1988): 18-19.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Seventeen." *Black River Review* III (1987): 16.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Breaking into Blossom: A Brief Examination of the Nature Poetry of James Wright and Mary Oliver." *Black River Review* II (1986): 15-19. (essay)

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Phi Beta Kappa: Class of '78." *Kenyon College Alumni Bulletin* 10.2 (June 1986): 40.

Lachowski, Cheryl. "Pa'ndau: Flower Cloth." *Carolina Quarterly* 39.1 (Fall 1986): 80-81.

Schaff, Cheryl. "Ark Two." *Glass Review* 1 (Spring 1982): 10.

Schaff, Cheryl. "Passion Play." *Glass Boot* 1 (Summer 1981).

### **3(b). Book Reviews**

Lachowski, Cheryl. Reviews of *Seven Trees Against the Dying Light* by Pablo Antonio Cuadra and *Unwavering* by Gyorgi Voros in *ISLE (Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment)* 16.1 (2009): 188-90.

### **5(a). Published Reports**

With Brophy, Patrick et al. (as Cheryl Schaff). *Coal: Mining and Use in Indiana, Vol. III*. Terre Haute, IN: Center for Technology Assessment and Policy Studies, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology. Dec. 1977.

Mason, Thomas and Cheryl Schaff (eds.) *A Technology Assessment of Power Plant Siting in Indiana*. Terre Haute, IN: Center for Technology Assessment and Policy Studies, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, July 28, 1977.

With Brophy, Patrick et al. (as Cheryl Schaff). *Coal: Mining and Use in Indiana, Vol. II*. Terre Haute, IN: Center for Technology Assessment and Policy Studies, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Apr. 1977.

With Brophy, Patrick et al. (as Cheryl Schaff). *Coal: Mining and Use in Indiana, Vol. I*. Terre Haute, IN: Center for Technology Assessment and Policy Studies, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Feb. 1977.

## **B. EQUIVALENCIES**

### **Musical Arts/Audio disc (CD)**

Lachowski, Cheryl (poetry) and Tim Story (music). *Beguiled Improvisations*. MuseMusic, 2003.

### **Poetry Readings/Performances**

Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio. 3/20/11. Narrated *Spirit of the Well: A Celebration of the Spring Equinox*.

Bowling Green State University Planetarium, 2008.

Vespers Unplugged, First Unitarian Church of Toledo, monthly in 2005 and 2006.

Bowling Green State Univ. Planetarium, 2004.

Luther College, Iowa, 2003.

Bluffton College, Ohio, 2003.

NY State English Teachers conference, Albany, NY, 2003.

Williamsville Poetry Festival, featured poet, Buffalo, NY, 2003.

Wildwood Metropark Manor House, Toledo, 2003.

Univ. of Toledo, Ohio, 2002.

Emporia State Univ., Kansas, 2002.

Bowling Green State Univ., Ohio, 2002.

Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio, 2002.

Luther College, Iowa, 1998.

Core States Seven Sundays Series, Reading, PA, 1995.

### **XI (A). INVITED PAPERS READ TO PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES**

Presented session on “Combating Multisensory Distractions: Contemplative Practices for Students and Educators.” Invitation from Lilly Conference Series on College and University Teaching and Learning: Evidence Based Teaching and Learning, Traverse City, MI—Oct. 15-17, 2015. Presentation and discussion with Cheryl Hoy, Acting Director, GSW, BGSU; Amanda McGuire-Rzicznek, Lecturer, GSW, BGSU; and Elizabeth Zemanski, Instructor, GSW, BGSU.

“Challenges Facing College Students Today with Visual Literacy: Lessons from Librarians and Interdisciplinary Professors in a Faculty Learning Community.” Invitation from the International Visual Literacy Association. Annual Conference at the Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, OH, Nov. 6-8, 2014. Roundtable presentation and discussion with Eileen Bosch, Assoc. Prof., University Libraries, Library Instruction Coordinator, BGSU; Lynda Dee Dixon, Prof., Dept. of Communication, BGSU; Amy Fry, Assoc. Prof., University Libraries, BGSU; Andrew Hershberger, Assoc. Prof. and Chair, Division of Art History, BGSU; Vera Lux, Asst. Prof., Research and Instruction Librarian, BGSU; Chris Miko, Assoc. Prof., University Libraries, BGSU; and Susan Nelson, Asst. Prof. of Bassoon, BGSU.



“The Indiana Coal Industry: An Undergraduate/Faculty Assessment.” Invitation from the Second International Congress on Technology Assessment. Technology Assessment: Creative Futures. Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, Oct. 24-28, 1976. (as Cheryl Schaff)

## **XII. SERVICE**

### **A. Department**

Committee Membership:

- GSW Merit Committee 2015-16
- GSW Promotion and Review Committee 2014-15
- Smith Awards 2009
- GSW 112 Think Tank 2008 and 2007
- Leland Awards 2007 and 2006
- Merit Evaluation Committee 2005 and 2004

GSW 6020 Observation Partner for graduate student Coral Nardandrea, Fall 2015.

GSWin (GSW Newsletter) publication “‘Improving Undergraduate Information-seeking Practices’: A Summary of My Learning Community,” Vol. 1, Iss. 2, Spring 2015.

GSW 6020 Observation Partner for graduate student Nicole Connolly, Fall 2014

GSW 6020 presentation on Attention Focusing Exercises—9/23/14

GSWin (GSW Newsletter) publication on Attention Focusing, Vol. 1, Iss. 1, Fall 2014.

GSW 6020 assistance as mentor for first year graduate student Nicole Brue (dual classroom observations and consulting)—Fall 2013

Reading GSW exemplary portfolios—Spring 2015, Fall and Spring 2014, Fall and Spring 2013

Campus Preview Day, staffed GSW table 2014, 2012, 2010, 2009, and 2006.

President’s Day, staffed GSW table 2012 and had open classroom 2015, 2014, 2012, and 2011.

Assisted in Eng 602/6020 for GSW graduate student training 2010, 2005, 2004.

Presented material from the Center for Teaching and Learning’s (CTL) Student Veteran’s Train the Trainer session to GSW faculty meeting 8/2011.

### **B. College**

Great Ideas Dinner/Honors Program. Discussion of PBS video *Digital Nation* 2011.

Poetry/music presentation by invitation to BFA “Ceramics Students Tea” 2010.

**C. University**

Discussion leader for Freshman Orientation Common Reading session on *A Pearl in the Storm* 8/2012.

**XV. HONORS AND AWARDS**

**A. Membership in Phi Beta Kappa, Kenyon College, 1978.**

**B. Awards**

Nomination for a 2003 Pushcart Prize.

2001 Bluestem Poetry Award for *Homing*.

1<sup>st</sup> Prize Essay Contest. *Black River Review* 1986. "Breaking Into Blossom: A Brief Examination of the Nature Poetry of James Wright and Mary Oliver."

Graduated Magna cum laude, Kenyon College, 1978.

Distinction on Biology Senior Exercise, Kenyon College, 1978.

Kenyon Merit List, 1974-78.

Awarded Technology Assessment Fellowships at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Terre Haute, Indiana, Summers 1976 and 1977.

**Abstract**

My ICS Fellowship project is a book-length work-in-progress titled *Ditches: A Montage of the Great Black Swamp*, consisting of poems, prose poems, and creative non-fiction. It is rather hard to classify by genre. The purpose is to give a multi-dimensional voice to a landscape and its occupants (human, animal, plant), which have been radically changed over time. The book will be a mix of natural, human, and spiritual histories of the Great Black Swamp in NW Ohio as it is transformed from a glacial lake to forested swampland to industrialized mono-crop mega-farms. Clearing trees in the 1800's and draining the swamp with clay tiles and 16,000 miles of constructed ditches allowed this change. But what has been lost for the gain? We no longer seem to have much connection to the geographies we inhabit. The book will explore and re-envision our connections and is divided into two sections: Watershed and Homestead. Organization is primarily by place instead of chronology, following the Maumee River of NW Ohio from western Lake Erie through past and present locales on the river where the Great Black Swamp used to be. The historical and geographical dividing line between the sections is the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1796 near present-day Waterville. After this time, white settlement of the area occurred, along with removal of Native American residents to western reservations, transforming the landscape from marsh and hardwood swamp to agricultural acreage and populous towns. Having an understanding of how past and present agriculture has altered the land and our relationship to it is a crucial element in restoring our connections to the natural world, which is why it is a central focus in *Ditches*.

## **Description**

### *Rationale for and goals of the project*

As a resident of Wood County, Ohio, specifically Grand Rapids, a village of historical significance on the Maumee River, I am intimately connected to the former Great Black Swamp as a geographical place. In addition, my husband and I have grown and marketed organic heirloom vegetables and herbs on our three acres just outside of town for almost ten years and for six years in neighboring Henry County. So the connection is also to the natural history of the area. Being surrounded by conventional agriculture, such as production of genetically modified corn and soybeans, wheat, and tomatoes, we have experienced firsthand what has become of the land since its settlement in the 1800's. Since NW Ohio also has numerous historical landmarks, there are constant reminders of human history in addition to the natural history of this place. At one time, my husband served as the historical interpreter of Grand Rapids' Isaac Ludwig Mill, and our property is adjacent to the Seven Eagles Historical Education Center where there are annual living history encampments. What initially struck me about NW Ohio, however, was the existence of deep and shallow ditches in almost all rural locales. I've seen these ditches flooded with rainwater or snowmelt; choked with cattails, weeds, and muskrats; scraped bare by frontend loaders doing routine maintenance; and even serving as a disturbing, sometimes deadly, resting place for cars, vans, semi's, and school buses that have lost control on slick roads. I became fascinated with these ditches. How were they constructed? What is their purpose? What is their relationship to the local ecosystem?

Much of my past poetic work has focused on human connections to the natural world, to listening to and reflecting what Theodore Roszak has called "The Voice of the

Earth.” These connections are similar to those developed in Deep Ecology, a contemporary ecological and environmental philosophy emphasizing the complex inter-relationships between all living things. In this geographical place I currently inhabit, the voices are especially diverse and complex. Not only is there biological diversity, but there is human diversity in the indigenous human population, the white settlers arriving from different parts of the U.S. and world, and the more contemporary Mexican migrant farmworkers. In addition to human and natural history of the Great Black Swamp, a spiritual dimension and history can also be explored. There have been two prominent religious myths imposed on this landscape that I want to deconstruct in order to understand and recover our broken connections with the land: 1) Wilderness as the Garden of Eden/Paradise or Wilderness as Hell/Evil and 2) the corollary myths of agricultural development as either Eden or Hell. The epigraph I will be putting on the title page reflects this attempt at deconstruction: “No paradise, no fall / Only the weathering land / The wheeling sky,” from Gary Snyder’s poem “Milton by Firelight.”

Instead of trying to develop any one aspect of this place from a single academic discipline, it is more interesting and illuminating to me to address the whole cacophony of voices in something like geological core samples that capture various time periods at specific locations. That is why I subtitle *Ditches* “a montage of the Great Black Swamp.” This montage will have a structure, though, just like other art forms may be constructed to direct the eye/ear/mind. Eventually, I hope to produce a full-length published work of poems, prose poems, personal narratives, and creative non-fiction in two parts: Watershed and Homestead. Text, in book form, is by its very nature usually read in a linear fashion, so there will be an organization to the material as I place it in the book.

Since the content is not chronologically linear, however, there will be other unifying devices throughout the book, such as recurring images of specific animals/insects/birds, trees, wildflowers, and the river. Additionally, there will be related versions of the same piece in each section. Examples are the poems Where the Rain Goes (i) and (ii) and prose pieces called Abecedarium (i) and (ii), which examine flora and fauna of the Watershed and Homestead at different time periods.

*Nature, scope and intended outcome of the work the applicant proposes to accomplish*

I already have done quite a bit of historical research and have composed the very beginning of the Watershed section. Geographically, the text begins near the mouth of the Maumee River at Lake Erie, specifically at the current Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. Poems and prose poems start the section, beginning with a description of tundra swans on the marsh. Interspersed with some factual information about NW Ohio geography, the names of Black Swamp area rivers, creeks, and ditches (yes, even the ditches have names), and Davis-Besse nuclear power station are poems concerned with the scientific processes that feed the watershed. Included next is a non-fiction prose account of a visit to Ottawa Wildlife Refuge and its newly constructed visitor center. Following this are poems and prose poems about the Laurentide ice sheet that covered the area during the Pleistocene period. At the end of the material in the Watershed section that I have completed so far are poetic musings on the difficulty of experiencing a place or time period through different human and non-human perspectives, especially the spiritual dimension. Essentially, “Any spiritual history of the Great Black Swamp has been long

forgotten. / Trying to listen, to remember, is difficult. / There is noise. There is silence. /  
In the absence of the sacred, there is only disconnection.”

Some of the completed stand alone poems in the Watershed section have already been published separately in literary journals, and many of them have been written to music. These poems include the following (\*=published, composer of music in parentheses with the poem title the same as the song title, with permission):

A Ripening (Ashley/Story)

Broken Blossoms\* (Peter Maunu)

Glass Green (Tim Story)

Hum (Tim Story)

I Saw a Thousand Swallows (Dwight Ashley)

In the Days of Small Sorrows\* (Tim Story)

Map of the Warm Night (Tim Story)

My Sky at Twilight\* (Peter Maunu)

Triptych: Stranded II, The Art of Standing, The Art of Standing Remix, and Holes

Within Holes (Dwight Ashley)

Walking

I will insert prose passages between these poems for coherence, but I also plan to add other poems and prose poems that have not yet been written.

In addition to the beginning and other parts of the Watershed section, I have completed several stand alone pieces that belong in the Homestead section, some of which have also been published and/or are written to music. These poems include the following:

History

Fever

Black Swamp/Bright Sun (Dwight Ashley)

Looking West\*: A mix of New West and Looking Back (Peter Buffett)

Nothing Had Changed (Ashley/Story)

Perhaps (Tim Story)

The Burn\*

The Luminous/The Dark\* (Tim Story)

Thereunder

These Few Words\* (Tim Story)

Two Spirals (Peter Maunu)

Wild Geraniums

and a long poem in eighteen parts titled A Yearbook: God, TV, and My Suburban

WASP Girlhood.

Homestead will also eventually include non-fiction journal entries from experience assisting my husband with Homestead Gardens, our organic heirloom vegetable and herb business. I also have written a piece of short fiction titled Sister Odette, which takes place at the Toledo Farmer's Market, and I may include it in this section, too.

For this fellowship, I would like to devote full attention to the Watershed section and hopefully complete it. If time permits, I may work on additional pieces for the Homestead section also. Some of this work can then be presented to the public as a performance, a term I prefer to a "poetry reading." I have already performed my complete *Beguiled Improvisations* from memory at the Wildwood Metropark Manor House in



Toledo in 2003. Composer Tim Story was present and encouraged me at that time to produce a CD and booklet of my poetry voiceovers to all the music in his *Beguiled* album, which I have done. My favorite venue has been the BGSU Planetarium with its surround-sound and star-maker projector. I can roam around the aisles, even in the dark with a night sky on the ceiling, reciting poems with musical accompaniment. I did performances there in 2004 and 2008 to receptive audiences. Dr. Dale Smith, director of the BGSU Planetarium, is also very supportive of using that venue for non-astronomy-related programs. At the most recent event, I also tried visuals on the screen up front with my poetry voiceovers to Dwight Ashley's *Ataxia* album selections. So, based on my experience and interests, there are all sorts of possibilities for publically presenting the material I complete during the fellowship period. The BGSU and local community are the perfect audiences for this work since we will be in the actual vicinity of its subject matter.

*Larger significance or implications of the project for the applicant's scholarly or creative field and for the study of culture and society more generally*

Poetry has become such a diverse field, ranging from traditional formal printed verse; to experimental academic printed open forms; to online digital constructions that include audio, visual, and video elements; to spoken word, performance poetry, and poetry slam contests. I started out writing and publishing printed poems in open narrative forms. After reading X. J. Kennedy's essay "Pleasure or Punishment: Hearing a Poet Read," I was moved to learn/recite my work by heart instead of just reading it in public. The oral aspect of poetry became of primary importance to me--the human voice to human ear aspect of storytelling which seems to often be overpowered with visual expression these

days. Therefore “storytelling,” whether through prose or poetry, has perhaps become more passive than active for the audience.

I have always been musically inclined, so it was inevitable that before long, I started writing poems inspired by music and then poems to be spoken over the music. The poems are not lyrics to accompany the sounds but actually meant to reflect the structure and tone/images of the musical piece. The spoken words thus become an integral part of the music and vice versa. Even though there are some other poets who have also moved into spoken word or poetry/music combinations, there still is much room for exploration in this area. Although the initial vision I have of *Ditches* is as a print publication, I can easily see the project morph into an oral performance for public presentation. In the future, there could also be visuals and music associated with the completed work. The online digital possibilities are also interesting. I do, however, firmly believe in the power of the written and spoken word to feed readers’/listeners’ imaginations, so that is my primary medium now.

In terms of breaking genre barriers, poetry and fiction have both evolved into all sorts of interesting forms. My montage will be a combination of more standard academic poems that can stand alone, prose poems, and creative and non-fictional narratives and histories. I can’t say how significant this will be for poetry or literature in general, but I do know that is how I envision this project, and I enjoy being able to mix it up and experiment. There is a lot to be said for having fun with one’s work!

As for the content and subject matter of *Ditches*, I hope the completed work will be a unique way to explore culture and society, past and present, and not just from the human perspective. I have a very specific geographical and historical focus on the Great

Black Swamp for this exploration as I try to give voice to the flora, the fauna, and the land itself. It is very dangerous for humanity to ignore or belittle our connections to the natural world we are a part of and dependent on. In fact, we have become so disconnected that we may be losing connection with ourselves. As David Abram writes in the preface to his *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World*, “Today we participate almost exclusively with other humans and with our own human-made technologies. It is a precarious situation, given our age-old reciprocity with the many-voiced landscape. We still *need* that which is other than ourselves and our own creations. . . . We are human only in contact, and conviviality, with what is not human.” I hope *Ditches* can take this specific, important, and interesting geographical space we personally inhabit in the here and now and let us experience it in a new way, out of linear time, amidst many previously unheard voices. As Abram also states, at the end of the book, “Our task . . . is that of taking up the written word, with all of its potency, and patiently, carefully, writing language back into the land.”