



Vermont College of Fine Arts

SUMMER 2023 COMMENCEMENT

SATURDAY, JULY 29, 2023
Colorado Springs, CO



2023
COMMENCEMENT

about vcfa

Welcome to our inaugural college-wide commencement ceremony, marking the close of a historic Summer 2023 Residency, as all six of VCFA's MFA Programs — Film, Graphic Design, Music Composition, Visual Art, Writing, and Writing for Children & Young Adults — gathered together for the first time on the campus of Colorado College.

Vermont College of Fine Arts is a place where the creative expression of individuals is nurtured and a sense of community flourishes. Our student-centered, low-residency educational model is driven by individualized teaching, learning, and advising.

Our six degree-granting programs have, since their inception, operated independently, and while this decentralized approach has had many strengths, it has also presented meaningful challenges that have prevented the college from being as nimble and responsive to the changing demographics and needs of our students, as higher education costs rise, and the demands on faculty and staff increase.

Artists have always been at the forefront of provoking new thinking, innovating new models, and inspiring change. It is in that spirit of those groundbreaking leaps of faith that we come together as six programs that share a commitment to innovation, individualized learning, and community.

While the location of our physical residencies has changed, the spirit of VCFA has not. Brilliance, inspiration, synergies, and excellence continue to form the heart of the VCFA experience.

order of events

Processional

Eric Wicks, *Organist*

Gonfalonieres: Tanya Patterson (VCFA staff), Wayne Lockwood (W '24), Jessie Keating (VA '24), Christine Derr (WCYA '24), Trey Dugger (MC '24), Ted Whisenhunt (GD '24), Emilie McDonald (F '24)

Land Acknowledgement

Mary-Kim Arnold (W '16), *Associate Dean of Equity & Inclusion in Teaching & Learning*

Welcome

Leslie Ward, *VCFA President*

Conferring of the Honorary Degree

Naomi Shihab Nye | *Doctorate of Humane Letters*

Conferring of the Graduate Degrees

Presented by Matthew Monk, *Academic Dean*

Recessional

Eric Wicks, *Organist*





Naomi Shihab Nye

Summer 2023 Honorary Degree Recipient

Naomi Shihab Nye was born to a Palestinian father and an American mother and grew up in St. Louis, Jerusalem, and San Antonio. Drawing on her Palestinian-American heritage, the cultural diversity of her home in Texas, and her experiences traveling in Asia, Europe, Canada, Mexico, and the Middle East, Nye uses her writing to attest to our shared humanity.

Nye is the author of numerous books of poems, most recently *Cast Away: Poems for Our Time* (Greenwillow Books, 2020). Her other books of poetry include *The Tiny Journalist* (BOA Editions, 2019); *Voices in the Air: Poems for Listeners* (Greenwillow Books, 2018); *Transfer* (BOA Editions, 2011); *You and Yours* (BOA Editions, 2005), which received the Isabella Gardner Poetry Award; and *19 Varieties of Gazelle: Poems of the Middle East* (Greenwillow Books, 2002), a collection of new and selected poems about the Middle East.

She is also the author of many books of poetry and fiction for children, including *Habibi* (Simon Pulse, 1997), for which she received the Jane Addams Children's Book Award in 1998. Nye's additional honors include awards from the International Poetry Forum and the Texas Institute of Letters, the Charity Randall Prize, the National Book Critics Circle Lifetime Achievement Award, and four Pushcart Prizes. She has been a Lannan Fellow, a Guggenheim Fellow, and a Witter Bynner Fellow. In 1988, she received the Academy of American Poets' Lavan Award, judged by W.S. Merwin.

honorary degree

MFA IN FILM

Peter R. Coward
 Jen Gilomen
 Maha Francis Haddad
 Timothy Aaron Hastings

Nathaniel Otto Metzger
 Biaina Nazari
 Sabrina Rachelle Resnick
 Leslie Singer
 Nora Matilde Suárez

Samantha Schmidt
 Lacy Snapp
 Liam Spires
 Marlene Stearns
 John P. Streit, Jr.
 Lea Tomaswick
 Stephen Henry Welter
 Carol L. Willis

MFA IN GRAPHIC DESIGN

Cory Ann Dinsmore
 Richard Lee Heffner
 Zachary Leader
 Ray Masaki
 Ana Teresa Melendez
 Kyla E. Paolucci
 Jessica Robles
 Annette von Brandis

MFA IN WRITING

Samantha Fields Alviani
 Diego R. Antoni Loaeza
 Elena Maria Aponte
 Amy Asay
 Maya Asulin
 Robert Atwood
 Laurie Dionne Babcock
 Dario R. Beniquez
 Jonathan Perry Cate
 Henry Cesari
 Dana Cheaib
 Jenna Crowder
 Colleen Fairchild
 Steven Laurence Fisher
 Evan Gerald Verne Frolov
 Beneth Goldschmidt-Sauer
 Micaela Green
 Abigail Martin Greenbaum
 Elizabeth Kwon Gulsvig
 Sara Kristina Hartley
 Myrth Ileana Killingsworth
 Stephanie LaRose Gatlin
 Emily Fortune McArdle
 Linda Michel-Cassidy
 Lee S. Mirkovic
 Daniel Keith Morgan
 Lauren Alice Myers-Hinkle
 Matt Nilsen
 Mystery Post
 Jade Rolof Holmes

MFA IN WRITING FOR YOUNG CHILDREN & ADULTS

Alex Abraham
 Christy Chase
 Jessica Chela Herrera
 Christie Marie Cognevich
 Erica Cranden
 Sandra Valerie Feder
 Caitlin M. Gutheil
 Marcus Robert Leeds
 Jean Lizotte Grabow
 Dominic Miller Bucca
 Chelsea A Moyer
 Alexandria Paige Reed
 Shira Schindel
 Amanda Seaboch Gutierrez
 Amy Doryanna Solov
 Michael Stewart
 Victoria Van Every
 Angelina Caterina Veneziano
 Harper Stuart Villani
 Jessica Mae Prather Weiner
 Catherine M. Woodrow

MFA IN MUSIC COMPOSITION

Theodore D. Burnett
 Dirje Andrea Childs
 Christopher Cobleby
 Kalyn Harewood
 William George Harris II
 Eva Victoria Ramos
 John Maclane Schirard
 Carlos Serrano

MFA IN VISUAL ART

Jackie Carpenter
 Feral Fagiola
 Kayla Heikkinen
 Renee Henson

MFA IN FILM

Marya Cohn, *chair*
Joan Darling
Nina Davenport
Damon Davis
Jessica Gorter
Dominga Sotomayor

MFA IN GRAPHIC DESIGN

Silas Munro, *co-chair*
Sereina Rothenberger, *co-chair*
Tasheka Arceneaux-Sutton
James Chae
Lorena Howard-Sheridan
Natalia Ilyin
Nikki Juen
Yoon Soo Lee
Ian Lynam
Matthew Monk
Ziddi Msangi
David Peacock
David Schatz
Ramon Tejada
Anne West

MFA IN MUSIC COMPOSITION

Carla Kihlstedt, *co-chair*
Roger Zahab, *co-chair*
Rick Baitz
Trudy Chan
Don DiNicola
Mike Early
Rob Frankensberry
Andy Jaffe
Ravi Krishnaswami
John Mallia
Lisa Mezzacappa

Frank J. Oteri
John Fitz Rogers

MFA IN VISUAL ART

Eshrat Erfanian, *co-chair*
Mario Ontiveros, *co-chair*
Parastoo Anoushahpour
Luis Jacob
Michael Minelli
Humberto Ramirez
Marie Shurkus

MFA IN WRITING

Connie May Fowler, *co-chair*
Adam McOmer, *co-chair*
Geoff Bouvier
Michael Croley
Tarfia Faizullah
Melissa Faliveno
Harrison Candelaria Fletcher
Fernando A. Flores
Miciah Bay Gault
Barbara Hurd
Richard Jackson
T. Geronimo Johnson
Negesti Kaudu
Samuel Kóláwọlé
Ellen Lesser
Brian Leung
Bret Lott
Robin MacArthur
Patrick Madden
Clint McCown
Philip Metres
Tomás Q. Morín
Wanjikū wa Nūgugī
Elena Passarello
Natasha Sajé
Betsy Sholl
Sue William Silverman
SJ Sindu

Hasanthika Sirisena
Leslie Ullman
Nance Van Winckel
David Wojahn

MFA IN WRITING FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG ADULTS

Martha Brockenbrough, *co-chair*
Linda Urban, *co-chair*
Will Alexander
An Na
Kathi Appelt
Tom Birdseye
Loree Griffin Burns
Sheela Chari
Melanie Crowder
David Gill
Evan Griffith
Louise Hawes
Corey Ann Haydu
Veera Hiranandani
K.A. Holt
Varian Johnson
A.S. King
Jane Kurtz
Martine Leavitt
Kekla Magoon
Cory McCarthy
Anna-Marie McLemore
Emily X.R. Pan
Erica Perl
Mary Quattlebaum
Anica Mrose Rissi
Sara Ryan
Alex Sanchez
Liz Garton Scanlon
Laura Shovan
Cynthia Leitich Smith
Jasmine Warga
Fran Wilde
Jennifer Ziegler

ADMINISTRATION

Leslie Ward, *President*

Mary-Kim Arnold (W '16), *Associate Dean of Equity & Inclusion in Teaching & Learning*

Katie Gustafson, *CFO/VP for Administration*

David Markow, *COO/VP for Student Services*

Matthew Monk, *Academic Dean*

Jericho Parms (W '12), *VP for Institutional Advancement*

J. Scott Price (W '19), *Operations & Logistics Manager*

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Michael Goldstein, *Chair*

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Michael Hogan

Kate Hosford

Barry Johnson

Casper Martin

Katherine Paterson

Andrew Ramsammy

Michael Rosenfeld

Heidi Mohlman Tringe

Jeff Wiggins

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all the staff of VCFA whose contributions to the programs are immeasurable.

**VC
FA**