

# William Fargason

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## EDUCATION:

Ph.D. in Creative Writing, Poetry (awarded August 3, 2019)

- Florida State University
- Major Area of Concentration: Post-1900 American Poetry
- Minor Area of Concentration: Elegy as a Genre
- Title of Dissertation: *Love Song to the Demon-Possessed Pigs of Gadara*, directed by Dr. James Kimbrell. Committee members: Barbara Hamby, Dr. David Kirby, Dr. Andrew Epstein, and Dr. Juan Carlos Galeano.

Masters of Fine Arts in Poetry (2014)

- University of Maryland
- Title of Thesis: *Clean Theory*, directed by Dr. Joshua Weiner. Committee members: Dr. Stanley Plumly, Dr. Elizabeth Arnold, and Michael Collier.

Bachelor of Arts in English (2010)

- Auburn University

## BOOK PUBLICATIONS:

*Love Song to the Demon-Possessed Pigs of Gadara*, University of Iowa Press (forthcoming April 2020)

- Winner of the 2019 Iowa Poetry Prize

### Jacket Copy:

*Love Song to the Demon Possessed Pigs of Gadara* explores what might be born from the intersections of masculinity, mental illness, and embodied suffering. In his debut collection, William Fargason inspects the pain of memory alongside the pain of the physical body. Fargason takes language to its limits to demonstrate how grief is given a voice. His speaker confronts illness, grapples with grief, and heals after loss in its most crushing forms. These poems attempt to make sense of trauma in a time of belligerent fathers and unacceptable answers. Fargason necessarily confronts toxic masculinity while navigating spiritual and emotional vulnerability.

### Advance Praise:

“Every sense engaged, each filament of intellect glowing, memory fully aflame—it’s not easy to survive such aliveness. So implies poet Fargason in this *Love Song*. Heights of awareness and passion and fullness are met by counterparts in depths of doubt and despair, of a past that ground down, that haunt writer and reader. This is a book of darkness and hope, of vision and rage. Reading Fargason’s work made me feel that I am not alone in the grief and fear of this world; I am a part of it and it a part of me, but that also one (I, we, the poet, the reader) is integrally part of something larger. The project of life is something utterly worth living as deeply as possible, paths and pasts and pigs and pain and all.” — Brenda Shaughnessy, 2019 Iowa Poetry Prize Judge

“In Will Fargason’s first book, *Love Song to the Demon-Possessed Pigs of Gadara*, accelerating phrasal momentum and sharp figurative detail merge to put us in the prison made by child abuse and chronic pain. The narrow confines of such experience, its isolating effect,

remind me of Elaine Scarry’s descriptions of torture. Fargason’s enactments of what’s happening to him and what has happened warp perception, as when he sees a lake as ‘a window I want to roll down.’ But he can’t. He’s trapped. Entrances and exits are repeatedly inverted, mirrors mirroring mirrors. The speed of the poems and their disarmingly sudden stops keep us off-guard, push us past what we think we know. About anything—pain, death, fear, anger. These poems wake their readers up. What else is poetry for?”—  
Elizabeth Arnold, author, *Skeleton Coast*

## POETRY PUBLICATIONS:

- “You Dreamed in ICU” in *ellipsis...literature & art* (forthcoming)
- “Ode to Klonopin” in *The Cortland Review* (forthcoming)
- “Elegy with a Wavelength of Sound,” “On the Way to the Reading,” and “The Day My Father Sold His Plane” in *The Rupture* (forthcoming)
- “Ark” in *Michigan Quarterly Review* (forthcoming)
- “A Silverfish in the Childhood” and “River” in *The Adroit Journal* (forthcoming)
- “Blood Poetry” in *Glass: A Journal of Poetry* (forthcoming)
- “Elegy with my Great-Grandmother’s Piano” in *Colorado Review* (forthcoming)
- “Ode to the Mattress on the Side of the Interstate” in *Rattle* (forthcoming)
- “When My Father Calls Me a Pussy” and “Punch List, 1994” in *Diode* (December 2019)
- “Nocturne with Choking in Calloway Gardens” in *The Minnesota Review* (April 2019)
- “Ash on the Tongue” in *Prairie Schooner* (October 2018)
- “Elegy with Digital Flowers” in *Salt Hill* (September 2018)
- “People as Seasons as People” in *JuxtaProse Literary Magazine* (September 2018)
- “Coming to Terms” in *Nightjar Review* (July 2018)
- “I’m Trying Not to Cry in this Harbor Freight Tools” in *Golden Walkman Magazine* (June 2018)
- “Tightrope” in *New Ohio Review* (March 2018)
- “Porcelain Nocturne” republished in *poems2go* (March 2018)
- “Cages” in *Florida’s Best Emerging Poets: An Anthology* (January 2018)
- “There is No Power in Blame” in *Poetry Northwest* (January 2018)
- “When You Were Out of Town Last Weekend” in *Pleiades* (January 2018)
- “Not an Entrance” in *The Threepenny Review* (December 2017)
- “Pygmalion” and “Coffee After Some Time” in *Horsethief* (November 2017)
- “Porcelain Nocturne” in *Washington Square Review* (October 2017)
- “For My Father” in *Crab Orchard Review* (July 2017)
- “Emo, 2005” in *Narrative* (May 2017)
- “Outpatient,” “Open Letter to the Past,” and “Clean Theory” in *Botticelli Magazine* (May 2017)
- “Floodwaters in South Carolina” in *Poet Lore* (April 2017)
- “Of No Consequence” in *The Massachusetts Review* (March 2017)
- “Song” in *Narrative* (January 2017)
- “Sieve” in *The Chattahoochee Review* (December 2016)
- “Prayer” in *The Cincinnati Review* (December 2016)
- “Upon Receiving my Inheritance” in *Rattle* (December 2016)
- “Aubade with Barbed Wire” on Poets.org by the Academy of American Poets (September 2016)
- “Fig Leaf” and “Collage of Memories that Forms a Box” in *The Adroit Journal* (August 2016)
- “Images of Kurt Cobain’s Shotgun Released” in *Rattle* (March 2016)
- “Forecast” in *Tinderbox Poetry Review* (February 2016)
- “What We Are Given” in *Valparaiso Poetry Review* (January 2016)
- “Sugar” published on Poets.org by the Academy of American Poets (December 2015)
- “San Destin, Florida” in *DIALOGIST* (October 2015)

“On Your Way to Work” and “Love Song to the Demon-Possessed Pigs of Gadara” in *Indiana Review* (June 2015)  
 “Carving” in *Barrow Street* (February 2015)  
 “If Then” and “At Montauk” in *Southern Indiana Review* (December 2014)  
 “Aquarium” and “Birthmark” in *New England Review* (May 2014)  
 “Egg Tooth” in *The Baltimore Review* (April 2014)  
 “Lumber” in *JMWW* (April 2014)  
 “A White-Tailed Deer” in *Grist* (February 2014)  
 “Call It By Its Name” in *Ostrich Review* (February 2014)  
 “Third Date” in *Banango Street* (January 2014)  
 “Birds” in *Bayou Magazine* (Fall 2013)  
 “First Date” in *Sakura Review* (August 2013)  
 “Aim” in *Nashville Review* (August 2013)  
 “Second Date” in *Eclectica Magazine* (July 2013)  
 “Because Because,” “Scribble,” and “Polar Bear” in *New World Writing* (June 2013)  
 “Cartoon” in *New Orleans Review* (April 2013)  
 “Sour Wine” in *H.O.W. Journal* (April 2013)  
 “Pull and Arc” and “Clarity” in *Eclectica Magazine* (April 2012)

#### **NONFICTION PUBLICATIONS:**

“Velvet” in *The Offing* (November 2019)

#### **AWARDS:**

2019 Iowa Poetry Prize Winner, *Love Song to the Demon-Possessed Pigs of Gadara* (University of Iowa Press)  
 2018-2019 Edward H. and Marie C. Kingsbury Fellowship (Florida State University) for my manuscript *Love Song to the Demon-Possessed Pigs of Gadara*  
 2016 *Rattle* Poetry Prize Finalist, “Upon Receiving my Inheritance”  
 2016 John Mackay Shaw Academy of American Poets Graduate Award (Florida State University)  
 2016 Nomination for an Award for Excellence in Teaching College Composition (Florida State University)  
 2015 Work-Study Scholarship to the Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference (Middlebury College)  
 2015 Academy of American Poets Graduate Award (Florida State University)  
 2015 Nomination for the *New England Review* Emerging Writers Award  
 2014 Stanley Plumly Thesis Award in Poetry, *Clean Theory* (University of Maryland)  
 2013 Lannan Fellow, appointed by The Folger Shakespeare Library  
 2012-2013, University of Maryland Distinguished Teaching Assistant  
 2013 Academy of American Poets Poetry Prize, Honorable Mention (University of Maryland)  
 2011 Lannan Fellow, appointed by The Folger Shakespeare Library  
 2010 Robert Mount Hughes, Jr. Poetry Prize, First Runner-Up (Auburn University)

#### **BOOK REVIEWS:**

Book review of Matt Rasmussen’s *Black Aperture* in *The Southeast Review* (September 2015)  
 Book review of Richard Siken’s *War of the Foxes* in *The Southeast Review* (June 2015)

#### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE:**

Literature 2081: “Contemporary Literature”

- Florida State University, Instructor of Record: Summer 2018.
- This course offered students multiple genres of contemporary literature, including: a survey course of twentieth-century American poetry, a novel, a survey of short stories, a book of

lyric essays, and a book of poems. Students were introduced to the historical and cultural significance surrounding the texts, as well as the terminology associated with each diverse discourse community.

Creative Writing 3311: “Poetic Technique”

- Florida State University, Instructor of Record: Fall 2017, Fall 2018, Spring 2019, and Summer 2019.
- This course focused on creative writing, specifically poetry. Students were taught poetic forms, and were required to turn in their own poems, as well as critical papers of assigned readings. Most of the course centered on workshoping and critiquing their poems, but assigned readings (both poems and essays) were discussed in order to help the students’ own writing.

English 3310: “Article and Essay Technique”

- Florida State University, Instructor of Record: Summer 2017 and Spring 2018.
- This course focused on writing creative nonfiction. Students were required to analyze creative nonfiction pieces as well as write stories of their own, including a Personal Essay, a Lyric Essay, and a Flash Nonfiction.

Literature 2030: “Introduction to Poetry”

- Florida State University, Instructor of Record: Spring 2017.
- This course was a survey course of twentieth-century American poetry, covering the major figures and literary movements such as: Modernism, Imagism, Harlem Renaissance, Post-Modernism, Confessionalism, The Black Mountain Poets, Beat Poetry, Black Arts Movement, Language Poetry, Contemporary Poetry, etc.

2016 *The Adroit Journal* Summer Mentorship Program

- Served as a mentor in this national summer program to two high school poets. Throughout the seven-week mentorship, I assigned my two mentees with poetry readings, writing assignments, and prompts for their poems. I met with them over Skype to workshop their poems with them, helping them craft their poetic voice, work on their poetic form, and strengthen their knowledge of contemporary poetry.

English 2135: “Research, Genre, and Context: Writing for Situation”

- Florida State University, Instructor of Record: Spring 2016 (Honors), Spring 2017, and Spring 2020.
- Focused on research-driven academic writing, with an emphasis on composing and analyzing different genres of writing.

English 5998: Submitting to Literary Journals

- Co-created this course with Dr. Rob Stevens (Malone University) at Florida State University in Spring 2015, and ran it in Fall 2015. This course is still offered each semester.
- This course was designed to help fellow graduate students find literary journals to submit to, craft cover letters, and organize submissions. Each graduate student picked journals to give presentations on, with handouts for classmates.

English 1102: “Exploring Ourselves, Our World, and Beyond”

- Florida State University, Instructor of Record: Spring 2015.
- Focused on a variety of writing styles—the personal essay, the argumentative essay, the analytical essay, etc.—but mainly focused on researched-based rhetoric.

Florida State University Reading and Writing Center

- Florida State University: Fall 2014, Spring 2015, Summer 2015, and Spring 2016.
- Tutored both undergraduate and graduate students, helping them in their writing assignments for English courses as well as other areas (History, Religion, etc.). I would work with them on every stage of their papers, from prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing.

English 1101: “Writing for Your Moment—A Multi-Genre Approach to Audience and Voice”

- Florida State University, Instructor of Record: Fall 2014, Fall 2015, Summer 2015, Summer 2016, Fall 2016, Fall 2017 (C.A.R.E. [Center for Academic Retention & Enhancement] section), and Fall 2019.
- Introduced students to both personal and argumentative writing through a teaching method rooted in process pedagogy.

English 271: “Writing Poems and Stories (An Introductory Workshop)”

- University of Maryland, Instructor of Record: Spring 2014.
- Conducted a weekly workshop covering both poetry and short fiction. Taught students how to analyze and critique poems by their peers, published authors, and themselves, utilizing the necessary tools to participate in the discourse of poetry in the classroom and at large.

Academic Achievement Programs, University of Maryland

- English Component Graduate Assistant, June 2011 – August 2014
  - Tutored over 350 students taking English 101.
  - Administered quizzes to reinforce rhetorical and grammatical concepts.
  - Tracked students’ progress and development as writers.
- Summer Transitional Program, English 101 Instructor, Summer 2011; Summer 2012; Summer 2013; and Summer 2014.
  - Taught Pre-English 101 to first-generation, low-income freshmen.
  - Assigned writing assignments to cover necessary rhetoric and grammar.

### **EDITORIAL EXPERIENCE:**

Assistant Poetry Editor at *Split Lip* journal: April 2019—Present.

Poetry reader at *Split Lip* journal: September 2018—April 2019.

Served as the final judge in the 2018 *These Fragile Lilacs* Chapbook Contest.

Poetry staff member of *The Southeast Review* (Florida State University): Fall 2014, Summer 2015, Fall 2015, and Spring 2016.

Poetry Editor of *The Circle* (Auburn University): Fall 2009, Spring 2010, and Fall 2010.

Poetry staff member of *The Circle* (Auburn University): Fall 2008 and Spring 2009.

### **CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION:**

“Mourning Forward: The Narrative Act of Elegy in Richard Siken’s *Crush*,” at the South Atlantic Modern Language Association (SAML) Conference, November 5, 2017.

“Stevens’ and Williams’ Use of Containers Within an Imaginative Reality,” at the University of Maryland’s Graduate English Organization Conference, April 6, 2013.

“The Bodies Electric: Telephone Project,” at the University of Maryland’s Graduate English Organization Conference, March 3, 2012.

### **PUBLIC POETRY READINGS:**

The Jerome Stern Distinguished Writers Series

- February 5, 2019, The Bark in Tallahassee, FL
- April 3, 2018, The Warehouse in Tallahassee, FL
- July 25, 2017, The Warehouse in Tallahassee, FL

100 Thousand Poets for Change Reading

- September 30, 2017, Black Dog Café in Tallahassee, FL
- September 24, 2016, Black Dog Café in Tallahassee, FL

The Warehouse Reading Series

- March 15, 2016, The Warehouse in Tallahassee, FL
  - February 2, 2015, The Warehouse in Tallahassee, FL
- Work-Study Scholars Reading
- August 15, 2015, Bread Loaf Writers' Conference in Middlebury, VT
- The Inner Loop Reading Series
- June, 17, 2014, The Coupe in Washington, DC
- The Space Between
- May 6, 2014, Ebenezers Coffeeshouse in Washington, DC
- Maryland Day MFA Exhibition
- April 26, 2014, University of Maryland in College Park, MD
  - April 23, 2013, University of Maryland in College Park, MD
  - March 24, 2012 University of Maryland in College Park, MD
- Mock Turtle Reading Series
- April 19, 2014, Wonderland Ballroom in Washington, DC
  - September 28, 2013, Wonderland Ballroom in Washington, DC
  - April 20, 2013, Wonderland Ballroom in Washington, DC
  - October 28, 2011, Wonderland Ballroom in Washington, DC
- Graduate English Organization Conference
- March 8, 2014, University of Maryland in College Park, MD
  - April 5, 2013, University of Maryland in College Park, MD
  - March 3, 2012, University of Maryland in College Park, MD

**\*References and mailing address available upon request.**