Keija Kaarina Parssinen

**Education**

**University of Iowa Writers’ Workshop** (Iowa City, IA) May 2009

***M.F.A., Fiction Writing***

* **Thesis, Spring 2009:** *The Ruins of Us,* novel; Advisor: Lan Samantha Chang

**Princeton University** (Princeton, NJ) June 2003 ***A.B., English,*** *Cum Laude*

* **Certificate, Program in the Study of Women and Gender**
* **Thesis, Spring 2003**: While in Search of the Pearl: Dichotomous Masculinity & Chimerical

Femininity in the American Quest Narrative(130 p.);Professor Deborah Nord

* **Junior Paper, Fall 2001**: Bride of Christ, Whore of Babylon: Women in Portrait of the Artist

as a Young Man (20 p.), Professor Kathleen Davis

* **Junior Paper, Spring 2002**: Gender Representations and the Body in Mrs. Dalloway (35 p.),

Professor Kathleen Davis

* **Language Skills**: French

Teaching & Administrative Experience

**Kenyon College** (Gambier, OH) August 2019-present

*Assistant Professor of English & Creative Writing*

* Teach creative writing and literature courses to undergraduate students
* Develop creative writing major
* Advise and mentor undergraduate students

**Cedar Crest College Pan-European MFA Program** (Allentown, PA) January 2015-present

*Program Director* (2016-2018)

* Oversee admissions process
* Plan program marketing and student recruitment
* Plan summer residencies in Europe
* Develop and oversee monthly professionalization and craft webinars
* Hire new faculty

*Faculty Mentor*

* Develop and teach multi-genre craft seminars
* Develop and teach fiction workshops
* Work with students as a faculty mentor
* Serve as thesis advisor and reader

**The University of Tulsa** (Tulsa, OK) August 2015-May 2019

*Assistant Professor of English & Creative Writing*

* Teach creative writing and literature courses to graduate and undergraduate students
* Launch and develop the creative writing major
* Organize reading series
* Recruit and advise creative writing majors
* Direct independent studies and senior projects in fiction writing

**Louisiana State University** (Baton Rouge, LA) August 2014-December 2014

*Visiting Assistant Professor of English*

* Teach Forms of Fiction (MFA) and Capstone Seminar in Fiction (Undergraduate)
* Judge MFA thesis prize
* Offer professionalization guidance to MFA students

**Quarry Heights Writers’ Workshop** (Columbia, MO) September 2010-May 2015

*Founder & Director*

* Lead fiction workshops for adults
* Lead weekend writing retreats
* Organize reading series and community open mic nights
* Conduct private manuscript consultations

**Columbia Independent School** (Columbia, MO) July 2009 – August 2013

*Director of Admissions*

* Evaluate applications and admit qualified students to Junior Kindergarten

through 12th grades

* Coordinate Fall and Winter Open Houses for prospective families
* Host prospective families on campus visits
* Serve as faculty sponsor for Middle/Upper School creative writing club

**The University of Iowa** (Iowa City, IA) August 2007 – May 2009

*Instructor, Fiction Writing*

* Create and teach fiction writing curriculum to undergraduate students
* Advise students on graduate school applications

*Student Editor, Iowa Short Fiction Contest*

*Teaching/Writing Fellow*

**Publications**

*Books*

* **Harper Perennial:** *The Unraveling of Mercy Louis* paperback*,* January 2016
* **Harper Books:** *The Unraveling of Mercy Louis,* March 2015
* **Harper Perennial:** *The Ruins of Us,* novel, U.S. & Canada, January 2012
* **Faber & Faber:** *The Ruins of Us,* novel, UK, Ireland, Australia, South Africa, Middle East, January 2012
* **Newton & Compton:** *Il Matrimonio Segreto,* novel, Italy, June 2013
* **Syrian Ministry of Culture:** أنقاضنا (*Our Ruins),* novel, Syria, September 2019

*Anthologies*

* **Algonquin Books,** *Letter to a Stranger: Essays to the Ones Who Haunt Us*, Ed. Colleen Kinder, forthcoming 2021
* **Lonely Planet** travel writing anthology, contributor, November 2016
* **Lonely Planet:** *On the Road* travel writing anthology, contributor, November 2015
* **Lonely Planet:** *Better Than Fiction* travel writing anthology, contributor, December 2013

*Short Fiction*

* **The Southern Review:** Short fiction, “Rock Wednesday,” Spring 2020
* **The New Territory:** Short fiction, “The Host,” September 2019
* **The Arkansas International:** Short fiction, “The Pearl Diver’s Son,” Fall 2018
* **Slice Magazine:** Short fiction, “Wildfires,” Spring 2017
* **This Land magazine:** Short fiction,“The Gates of Tunis,” Winter 2016
* **QU Literary Magazine:** Short fiction,“Godly Bodies,” May 2015
* **New Delta Review:** Short fiction,“The Caulbearer,” December 2014
* **Salon:** Short fiction, “Snow Miser & Heat Miser,” December 2014
* **Five Chapters:** Short fiction, **“**These Things Other Than Beautiful,” February 2012

*Essays, Reviews, Interviews*

* **Gulf Coast: A Journal of Literature & Fine Arts,** Collaborative essay, “Homeland Insecurity,” with Tariq Al Haydar, forthcoming January 2021
* **The Washington Post:** Book review, *You Exist Too Much* by Zaina Arafat, June 2020
* **The New York Review of Books Daily:** Essay, “Pandemic Journal: Dispatch from Granville,” March 2020
* **The New York Review of Books Daily:** Essay, “The U.S.-Saudi Story, Through the Eyes of an Aramco Brat,” January 2020 (featured article of the week)
* **The Washington Post:** Book review, *Bird Summons* by Leila Aboulela, February 2020 (selected a best review of the week by Lit Hub)
* **Los Angeles Review of Books:** Book review, *10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World* by Elif Shafak, December 2019
* **World Literature Today:** Interview, Leila Aboulela, December 2019
* **World Literature Today:** Interview, Aminatta Forna, July 2019
* **Slate:** Essay, “Is it Ethical for Americans to Work for Aramco?” January 2019
* **World Literature Today:** Travel essay, “Playtime in Vienna: The Austrian literary scene finds its sense of humor,” November 2018
* **World Literature Today:** Book review, *Happiness* by Aminatta Forna*,* November 2018
* **Off Assignment:** Travel essay,“To the Sri Lankan Maid Who Was Erased,” May 2017
* **The Brooklyn Quarterly:** Book review, *Dear Committee Members* by Julie Schumacher*,* Fall 2015

*Poetry*

* **Crucible** (Barton College): *This,* Spring 2009
* **The Refined Savage:** *Afternoon at the Blue Hangar,* Issue 5, 2007
* **The Country Mouse Literary Journal:** *Repentance for a Feminist Reading of* On the Road*,* 1st Prize, Summer 2006 Contest; *Saudade,* Summer 2006
* **Monday Night Literary Journal:** *Vernal Day*, 2006
* **Her Circle Ezine:** *Ritual*, Spring 2006

**Literary Awards, Grants, Fellowships**

* George & Eliza Gardner Howard Foundation Fellowship Semi-Finalist (Brown University, 2020)
* Hedgebrook Residency (40 residencies awarded from pool of 1,325 applicants, *The Book of Fate,* 2020)
* Whiting Foundation Writer-in-Residence grant (2020)
* Ragdale Foundation Residency (*The Book of Fate,* 2020)
* Pushcart Prize nomination (“The Host,” 2019)
* MacDowell Colony Fellowship (*The Book of Fate,* 2018)
* Corporation of Yaddo Fellowship (*The Book of Fate*, 2018)
* Vermont Studio Center Residency Grant (*The Book of Fate,* 2019)
* Playa Summer Lake Fellowship (*The Book of Fate,* 2018)
* Vermont Studio Center Visiting Writer (December 2020)
* Oklahoma Center for the Humanities Faculty Research Fellowship (*The Book of Fate,* 2017)
* Alex Award from the American Library Association (*The Unraveling of Mercy Louis,* 2016)
* Book of the Month Club Pick by Emily St. John Mandel (*The Unraveling of Mercy Louis,* 2015)
* Kirkus Star (*The Unraveling of Mercy Louis,* 2015)
* Best Book of the Year by Kansas City Star, Lone Star Literary Life, Missouri Life, Brazos Bookstore, Wild Detectives Bookstore (*The Unraveling of Mercy Louis*, 2015)
* Long-listed for Chautauqua Prize (*The Ruins of Us,* 2012)
* Michener-Copernicus Award (*The Ruins of Us,* 2009)
* *National Geographic Traveler* Book of the Month (*The Ruins of Us,* 2012)
* Best Regional Book of the Year, *Today’s Zaman* newspaper, Turkey (*The Ruins of Us,* 2013)
* My Time Fellowship from the Sustainable Arts Foundation, The Writers’ Colony at Dairy Hollow (2016)
* Teaching & Writing Fellowship (University of Iowa, 2008-09)
* Truman Capote Fellowship (University of Iowa, 2007-08)
* J. Donald Feagin Visiting Artist Grant (University of Tulsa, 2016 & 2018)
* Internationalization grant (University of Tulsa, 2016)
* Faculty Development Summer Research Fellowship (University of Tulsa, 2016 & 2017)
* Faculty Research Grant (University of Tulsa, 2018)

Service

University of Iowa Writers’ Workshop – Post-graduate Fellowship Judge (2020)

Granville Public Library Story Contest – Judge (2020)

Great Lakes Colleges Association New Writers Award – Judge (2020)

Kenyon Review – Consulting Editor (2019-present)

John Crowe Ransom Prize – Judge (2020)

Kenyon Student Novelists Group – Faculty Advisor (2020)

Playa Summer Lake – Juror of Applications (2018-present)

Nimrod International Journal of Prose and Poetry – Editorial Board (2017-19)

Oklahoma Center for the Humanities – Board of Directors (2017-19)

University of Tulsa RAW Creative Writing Club – Faculty Advisor (2017-19)

Public Appearances

*2020*

* Denison University’s Reynolds Young Writers’ Workshop, Granville, OH
* Ragdale resident reading, Lake Forest, IL (Kaveh Akbar, Laurie Frankel, Benjamin Dreyer, et al)

*2019*

* Kenyon Review Literary Festival panel, Gambier, OH (Ira Sukrungruang, Orchid Tierney, Ruth Awad)
* Story Magazine reading, Columbus, OH (Ira Sukrungruang)
* “Writers for Migrant Justice,” Gambier, OH (Ira Sukrungruang, Orchid Tierney, Molly McCully Brown)
* A Conversation with Rachel Kushner, Congregation B’nai Emunah, Tulsa, OK
* A Conversation with Peter Heller, Magic City Books, Tulsa, OK
* Keynote address, Tulsa City County Library Creative Writing Contest Awards Ceremony, Tulsa, OK

*2018*

* Pan-European MFA faculty reading, Vienna, Austria (Alice Miller)
* Brandeis Book & Author Luncheon, Boca Raton, FL (Peter Heller, Andrew Gross, Shanthi Sekaran)
* George Saunders reading, Tulsa, OK (introduction)
* The Corporation of Yaddo, Saratoga Springs, NY (reading)
* Playa Summer Lake, Summer Lake, OR (reading)
* Jennifer Croft reading, Tulsa, OK (introduction)
* Brandon Hobson reading, Tulsa, OK (introduction, Q&A)
* Aminatta Forna reading, Tulsa, OK (introduction, Q&A)
* The MacDowell Colony, Peterborough, NH (reading)

*2017*

* Chikaskia Literary Festival, Tonkawa, OK (reading, signing)
* Tom Perotta reading, Tulsa, OK (introduction)
* Alison Wellford reading, Tulsa, OK (introduction)
* Ibtisam Barakat reading, Tulsa, OK (introduction, Q&A)
* “Writing Through the Hard Parts,” Nimrod International Journal Conference for Readers & Writers, Tulsa, OK (panel moderator, Jericho Brown, Laura Van Den Berg)

*2016*

* A Moveable Feast, Winston-Salem, NC (could not appear due to weather)
* *The Unraveling of Mercy Louis* Paperback Book Launch, Oklahoma Center for the Humanities, Tulsa, OK
* “Dangerous Lives of Young Women in Fiction,” BookCourt, Brooklyn, NY (panel, Tracy O’Neill, Kimberly McCreight, Robin Wasserman, Miranda Beverly-Whittemore)
* Oklahoma Library Association Sequoyah Luncheon, Tulsa, OK (keynote)
* “Complicated Women,” Arkansas Literary Festival, Little Rock, AR (panel, signing with Ashley Warlick)
* Top Ten Haute Young Authors, Friends of the SMU Libraries, Dallas, TX (talk, signing)
* Pan European MFA Faculty Reading, Dublin, Ireland
* University of Tulsa Creative Writing Major Launch, Tulsa, OK (panels, introductions, Q&As with Phil Klay, Rilla Askew, Vu Tran, Benjamin Lytal)
* Hisham Matar reading (introduction, Q&A)

*2015*

* Brazos Bookstore, Houston, TX (reading, signing)
* BookPeople, Austin, TX (reading, signing)
* Lake Travis High School, Austin, TX (talk, signing)
* BookPassage, San Francisco, CA (reading, signing)
* A Great Good Place for Books, Oakland, CA (reading, signing)
* Write On Mamas, Mill Valley, CA (talk, signing)
* Book Depot, Mill Valley, CA (reading, signing)
* Well Read Books, Fulton, MO (reading, signing)
* Left Bank Books, St. Louis, MO (reading, signing)
* Lake Travis Community Library, Lakeway, TX (reading, signing)
* Daniel Boone Regional Library, Columbia, MO (reading, signing)
* Missouri River Regional Library, Jefferson City, MO (reading, signing)
* Boone County Historical Society, Columbia, MO (reading, signing)
* Columbia Independent School, Columbia, MO (talk, signing)
* BookSmart Tulsa, Tulsa, OK (reading, Q&A)
* “Jogging Memories,” Texas Book Festival, Austin, TX (panel, signing with Jill Alexander Essbaum)
* Exquisite Corpse with Slice Magazine & PEN America, Texas Book Festival, Austin, TX (Neal Pollack, Sarah McCoy, Marisa Marchetto, Sung J. Woo)
* Jennifer DuBois reading (introduction, Q&A)
* Victoria Kelly reading (introduction, Q&A)
* Mary Helen Specht reading (introduction, Q&A)
* Louisiana Book Festival, Baton Rouge, LA (could not appear for family reasons)
* Chapters: Tulsa City County Libraries, Tulsa, OK (talk, reading)
* Local and national book club appearances and Skype session

*2014*

* “Readers & Writers,” Baton Rouge, LA (reading, James Wilcox, Lara Glenum, Mari Kornhauser)
* Little Dixie Regional Library, Moberly, MO (talk, reading, signing)
* “Celebrate Local Authors Day,” Daniel Boone Regional Library, Columbia, MO (opening remarks)
* Local and national book club appearances and Skype sessions

*2013*

* “Indies First,” Well Read Books, Fulton, MO (signing)
* Missouri River Regional Library, Jefferson City, MO (talk, reading, signing)
* One Read Author Talk, Columbia College, Columbia, MO (keynote address)
* “Home: A One Read Art Show,” Columbia, MO (reading, signing)
* Golden Key Kiwanis Club, Columbia, MO (talk, reading)
* Columbia Independent School (talk, reading)
* “Intersection,” KBIA-NPR radio & television program (author roundtable)
* “Off the Clock,” KBIA-NPR radio program (interview)
* “Columbia Morning with David Lile,” KFRU radio program (interview)
* Local and national book club appearances and Skype sessions

*2012*

* “The Ties that Unbind: Two Novels about Mid-East Fault Lines,” Texas Book Festival, Austin, TX (panel with Ayad Akhtar)
* Tattered Cover, Denver, CO (reading, signing)
* Left Bank Books, St. Louis, MO (reading, signing)
* Books-a-Million, Joplin, MO (reading, signing)
* Orr Street Studios, Columbia, MO (reading, signing)
* BookPeople, Austin, TX (reading, signing)
* Lake Travis Community Library, Lakeway, TX (reading, signing)
* Boheme Café and Wine Bar, Houston, TX (reading, signing)
* BookPassage, Corte Madera, CA (reading, signing)
* BookCourt, Brooklyn, NY (reading, Emma Straub and Ted Thompson)