

Student perspective: A poetry workshop with Julia Kasdorf

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Julia Kasdorf, the 2015 Arons Visiting Poet, reads from her work on Monday (Sept. 21) in Woldenberg Art Center on the Tulane University uptown campus. (Photo by Cheryl Gerber)

I never thought I would be in the same room with two nationally acclaimed writers, yet I found myself sitting in a chair across from renowned poet Julia Kasdorf and Louisiana Poet Laureate Peter Cooley.

The occasion was a poetry workshop that Kasdorf held for a select group of creative

writing students. The three-hour workshop took place in the sunny parlor of the Newcomb College Institute on Sunday (Sept. 20) for young poets from Tulane University, the University of New Orleans and the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts.

Kasdorf was invited to Tulane as the [2015 Arons Visiting Poet](#). In this capacity she [held a reading](#) on the Tulane uptown campus on Monday (Sept. 21) and jumped at a chance to engage more deeply with the New Orleans writing community during a poetry workshop in which she discussed and gave feedback on students' writing.

Every member of the workshop, which included writing instructors as well as students, received a packet of poems written by workshop participants. After reading each poem aloud, participants had the opportunity to voice their opinions on the piece.

Students critiqued peers, instructors and even Cooley ? a professor of English and director of the creative writing program at Tulane ? on elements such as voice, structure and imagery, all under the guidance of Kasdorf.

The experience was unforgettable. Students who had never met before collaborated in an environment that was both comfortable and professional.

"I'm amazed at how well everyone worked together," Kasdorf said. "Thank you for an afternoon of wonderful writing."

In August, Gov. Bobby Jindal selected Cooley as Louisiana Poet Laureate for the 2015-2017 term. The Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, 938 Lafayette St., New Orleans, is hosting Cooley's first poetry reading as poet laureate on Tuesday (Sept. 29). Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for a reception, and Cooley will read from his work at 7 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

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