

## MFA Class of 2019



**Emily Diehl** is a fiction writer who comes to Bowling Green from Nashville, Tennessee. Her thesis project is a speculative novel in which the inhabitants of a rich swampland become aware that they are slaves. Some of Emily's previous work has appeared in *The Adirondack Review* and *Zephyrus*. During her time at WKU, Emily also interned at Worthy Publishing. In the fall, Emily will begin teaching freshman composition at her alma mater, Trevecca Nazarene University.

**Esther French** was conceived in the Northeast, born in the West, and raised in the South, where she survived high school, undergrad, and now finds joy working in Bowling Green, KY as a community college librarian and First Year Experience instructor. In honor of all the strong women who have influenced her, Esther's thesis project, *Off Her Rocker*, is a book about Sadie, an independent 81-year-old, who moves in with her great-niece and refuses to stay out of trouble. In the future, Esther plans to continue writing stories, scripts, and poems for her own amusement.



**Brodie Gress** is a fiction candidate with a concentration in literature from Bretzville, Indiana, where he grew up on a 4-H fairgrounds complex. He has published poetry with *The Rotary Dial* and *The Raintown Review*, a nonfiction essay with *Newfound*, and fiction with *Chelsea Station Magazine*. This summer, he will be completing a literary internship, and in late June he will defend his thesis, a short story collection. Following graduation, he hopes to continue teaching literature and writing as well as work further on his novel and other works.

**John Paul King** is a fiction writer from Columbus, Ohio. His thesis project consists of two novellas, each with a magical realist bent. Some of John Paul's previous work has appeared in *BlazeVox Magazine* and *Drunk Monkeyes*. After defending his thesis, John Paul plans to turn pro and take up writing full-time.



**Paula Konokh** is a screenwriter who comes to Western Kentucky University from Moscow, Russia. Her thesis is a television project on the theme of growing up. After graduation, Paula plans to move back to Russia and become a professional television writer. Her goal is to become a showrunner in the next two years.

**Hunter Little** is a poet from Brookville, Indiana. Her thesis project is a poetry collection that focuses on the process of growing up and out of complex family relationships and how we try to come to terms with early traumas. Hunter's work has appeared in *Kansas City Voices* and *The Poetry Gymnasium*. Hunter is also the editor and manager of the socially-inclusive blog *Summit*. With an interest in teaching, Hunter is also working on a book chapter with Karl Laves about alleviating student distress and will be present her research on mental health in the classroom at CWPA in Baltimore. After defending her thesis, Hunter will be taking a year to apply to doctoral programs, to work on her mental health research, and hopefully to continue teaching in Burnaby, BC, Canada.



**Marcee Wardell** is a fiction writer who hails from Ortonville, Michigan. Her thesis is a novel centering on a young father in a small town who struggles with navigating complicated relationships and building a meaningful life for himself and his daughter. Some of Marcee's previous work has appeared in *Brainchild*. Marcee has been awarded an editorial internship with Sarabande Books and is also the recipient of the 2019 Outstanding Graduating MFA Student Award. After graduating, she plans to pursue a career in small press publishing and begin compiling a short story collection.