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# [Introduction]

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## *Portfolio of International Writing*

Each fall at the University of Iowa, the International Writing Program hosts several dozen well-established writers from around the world. Over the course of three months, the visitors write new work, research, translate classics and each other, collaborate on new projects, and interact with university departments and the local community. This past year marked a significant anniversary for the program. It was in 1967 that Paul and Hualing Nieh Engle founded the IWP, in the hopes of uniting fiction writers, poets, essayists, playwrights, and screenwriters from every corner of the earth for writing and fellowship. Over the subsequent forty years, the program has hosted nearly 1,100 writers from more than 120 countries. Current director Christopher Merrill likens this tradition to E.M. Forster's urgent call, "only connect." As Merrill says, "In a world where suspicion and distrust too often hinder conversation, the IWP strives to place writers in a forum where exploration and dialogue transcend national, political, and cultural borders. To bring writers together in the spirit of hope and fellowship—and to give talented individuals the time and tools necessary to create great art—these are the IWP's most cherished projects."

This portfolio highlights the work of seven writers at the IWP in 2007 (Andronikova, Bossi, Epstein, Miller, Ra, Simpson, and Todd), and of three writers from earlier residencies (Hartwig, Norcliffe, and Šalamun). Samples of writing by all the writers in residence since 2001, as well as biographies and program information, can be found at the program's Web site, [iwp.uiowa.edu](http://iwp.uiowa.edu).

—Hugh Ferrer