



William Davidson, the 2019-2020 Rafael Rodriguez/Golden Age Fellow I at International House, UC Berkeley



I am a new Ph.D. student in English at UC Berkeley. Since my teenage years, growing up in Greater London, I've always been fascinated by the ways in which literature can collapse and nuance cultural distinctions. With each new text opening a door to a series of possible worlds, literature is a way of engaging with both lived and unlivable experiences. Whilst my love of writing began with Romantic poetry, Science Fiction and the novels of writers like McCarthy and Steinbeck, my current research interests lie in the poetics of Continental and Anglophone Modernism, at the intersection of poetry and philosophy.

Between finishing school and beginning my undergraduate, I spent time working in London, in catering, as a bookseller and then finally for a literary magazine. During this time, I also began to write and think about texts more seriously. As an undergraduate at the University of Oxford, I began to broaden the depth of my historical, literary and philosophical understanding, and came to view literary studies as a hybrid discipline that incorporates all of the humanities. For our current historical moment, in view of the ecological and political crises that confront us, I'm keen to think more about how the non-standard logics of poetic thought can supplement questions in contemporary critical, technological and ecological theories.

Since completing my undergraduate degree, I've been working as a tutor and have spent several months living in Hamburg, learning German. In my personal life, I spend a lot of time reading and writing, I enjoy learning languages, playing chess and am a very keen cook. I've always been interested in the natural world, so am thrilled at the idea of being so close to the sea as well as the mountains and forests of Northern California. I'm greatly excited at the prospect of living in the International House at UC Berkeley, of sharing ideas and experiences with such a diverse and talented community. In this regard, I must thank the generosity of the donors, friends and alumni who made this fellowship possible.



The Rafael Rodriguez/Golden Age Graduate Fellowship was made possible by the generosity of I-House alumni from the "Golden Age" (1946-1952), who created the fellowship in honor of fellow alumnus Rafael Rodriguez of Costa Rica. The fund provides for a full room and board grant for one entering graduate (Ph.D.) international student of great promise who may lack the financial resources to come to CAL and is deemed likely to benefit from, and contribute to, life at I-House.