

The Don Difference: George Kalamaras
Video Transcript

0:00-0:19 Sparrow should be a verb. I write poems because I am a man. Almost human, almost dog. Sometimes I wake up, I rarely wake down. Most times, I shake snow from coat and wake unto the world.

0:20-0:39 Well, I've chosen to stay at IPFW because it's a place that nurtures and values not just research and creative endeavor but also teaching, and it values service, community outreach. So I feel like those three elements really fit together beautifully.

0:40-1:00 My poetry is really focused on delving into the unconscious and seeing the unconscious as an ally rather than an adversary of the conscious mind. And in that it's deeply connected in modern literary and artistic movements to the movement of surrealism.

1:01-1:15 I've published, I think it's something like 15 books of poetry, 8 of which are full-length books and then chap books, smaller collections, 7 or so chap books of poetry.

1:16-1:31 To be named poet laureate of one state was an honor that I could not have even imagined before being nominated and then named poet laureate, so it meant a lot to me in terms of having my work recognized.

1:32-2:06 One of the initiatives that I took on was to create a website called the Wabash Watershed, where the rivers of tradition meet the rivers of innovation. I loved the idea of using the Wabash River as a core metaphor because not only is it part of the mythos of Indiana, but I felt that it epitomized as an image what we do with poetry. There's the river, but the river is not really as important without its tributaries.

2:07-2:28 I have always felt that in teaching, I'm often teaching my students lessons that I need to relearn myself, things that I need to hear again. And so one of my approaches in the classroom is to create an environment that is comfortable enough for people to indeed try things out.