



UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME

ENGLISH

**2022-2023 Annual
Joseph M. Duffy Lecture**

The Polymath



Merve Emre

Wesleyan University

Author of *Paraliterary:
The Making of Bad Readers
in Postwar America*,
The Ferrante Letters, and
The Personality Brokers.

**April 14 | 3:30 PM
104 Bond Hall**

More than the academic, the autodidact, or the amateur, the polymath is the figure in whom three crucial developments in literature's modern history as a discipline and a profession converge. The first is the increasingly specialized organization of intellectual labor. The second, which is related to the first, is the decline of classical and vernacular language acquisition. The third is the feminization of language education. The three developments structure one of the greatest (and most delightful) experimental novels of the twenty-first century, Helen DeWitt's *The Last Samurai*.