First Armfield Poetry Festival

The first-ever Armfield Poetry Festival, featuring free public readings by four major prize-winning poets, was hosted by the Creative Writing Program on Wednesday November 8th and Thursday November 9th, 2006. It was a resounding success, in every way.

The readings – held in the handsome University Room of Hyde Hall at the Institute for the Arts and Humanities – were very well-attended, with increasingly large crowds, often spilling over onto the floor. There were approximately 350 people in the audience over the two days: students and faculty mostly, but also plenty of poetry-lovers from the university and community. One professor brought his students over from N.C. State. And one former UNC Honors poet, Julie Funderburk, drove all the way from Charlotte!

On Wednesday November 8th, Kenneth Fields gave a wonderfully personable and erudite reading at 3:30 p.m., mostly from his recent book Classic Rough News (2005), a collection of sonnets and sonnet-like lyrics that attest both to Fields’s skills as a writer and to the inexhaustible possibilities of the form. A professor at Stanford for many years, Fields teaches the Advanced Poetry Workshop for the Writing Fellows.

On Wednesday November 8th, Mark Doty – poet, essayist, and memoirist – gave the evening reading at 7:30. The lively and charismatic author of seven books of poetry, most recently School of the Arts (2006), Doty has won many awards: the PEN/Martha Albrand Award for First Nonfiction for Heaven’s Coast: A Memoir (1996), a Lambda Literary Award for Atlantis (1995), and both the National Book Critics Circle Award and the L.A. Times Book Award in Poetry for My Alexandria (1993).

On Thursday November 9th, Marie Howe of New York gave an engaging reading to a packed house (including her young daughter!) at 3:30 p.m. She has published two books of poetry, The Good Thief (1988), winner of the National Poetry Series that year, and What the Living Do (1997), and has also co-edited the book of essays In the Company of My Solitude: American Writing from the AIDS Pandemic (1995).

On Thursday evening November 9th, C. K. Williams – winner of the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry, for his collection Repair – concluded the festival with a thoughtful and challenging reading at 7:30 p.m. “To put it simply,” said the late Stanley Kunitz, “C. K. Williams is a wonderful poet, in the authentic American tradition of Walt Whitman and William Carlos Williams, who tells us on every page what it means to be alive in our time.” He teaches at Princeton University.

Besides giving readings, the four poets also met with students and classes, enjoyed meals with faculty and others, and posed for a series of historic photographs on the rocks near Hanes Hall.

The pre-festival publicity and buzz was considerable, partly owing to the striking poster design by Philip McFee, which was admired by audience and...
Armfield (M.A., English, 1928) "to champion the cause of poetry on the UNC campus." For over twenty years, leading American poets have been brought to Chapel Hill for semi-annual readings, among them Henry Taylor, Charles Wright, Marilyn Nelson, Andrew Hudgins, Erica Funkhouser, Robert Wrigley, Forest Hamer, and Kate Daniels.

- Michael McFee

poets alike. The festival was made possible by a generous gift from the late Blanche Britt.

Ben Fountain ’80 Wins 2007 PEN/Hemingway Award

On March 5, 2007 PEN New England announced that Ben Fountain's book, Brief Encounters With Che Guevara (HarperCollins), won the 2007 Hemingway Foundation/PEN Award for a Distinguished First Book of Fiction. Judges for the award this year were acclaimed fiction writers Elizabeth Berg, Chang-rae Lee and Sue Miller, and their award citation reads:

"The stories in Brief Encounters with Che Guevara are utterly original. In elegant language, Ben Fountain offers us a wide world — a young Viennese pianist in the 19th Century whose eleven fingers mark her gift, an impoverished fisherman in drug-ridden Haiti, an ornithologist, captured by leftist rebels in Colombia — and gives each of his characters, each of his situations, its full weight and moral complexity. This is a powerful debut, funny and sad and provocative, and we look forward to being called to question our assumptions about the world in the writing Ben Fountain will do in the future."

Patrick Hemingway, son of Nobel Prize-winning writer Ernest Hemingway presented the award to Ben Fountain on Sunday, April 1, at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in Boston. Fountain — whose fiction has appeared in Harper's, The Paris Review, and Zoetrope: All Story, and who has previously been awarded an O. Henry Prize and two Pushcart Prizes — received an $8,000 prize from the Hemingway Foundation.

Fountain counts among his influences "Robert Stone, Joan Didion, Norman Mailer, Gore Vidal. The Latin American writers, especially Garcia Marquez and Vargas Llosa. In a rather different vein, Walker Percy. And I very much like the short stories Martin Amis has been writing lately."

Immediately following the Kennedy Library ceremonies, Fountain traveled to Chapel Hill, where on Thursday, April 5, he met Marianne Gingher's fiction class and then gave a reading in Wilson Library's Pleasantas Family Assembly Room, where he was much congratulated and given a warm welcome home.

-Kim Weaver Spurr '88
Assistant Director of Communications College of Arts & Sciences
Director's Report 2006-2007

During 2006-07, Creative Writing at Carolina enjoyed another banner year, offering 26 classes of prose (fiction, nonfiction, children's literature, stylistics, and playwriting) and 18 of poetry, and serving 681 UNC undergraduates, a record number! In 2007-08, we will once again offer over 40 sections of prose and poetry.

The strength of unwavering support that we continue to receive for our program is a marvel. It wells forth from our students, our faculty and staff, and from all over the Carolina campus and well beyond, starting with Department of English Chair James Thompson and the department's administrative board, and it comes our way, too, from our many friends and counselors in South Building, particularly Senior Associate Dean William Andrews and from Jamie May and the terrific staff of the Arts & Sciences Foundation.

The Morgan Writer-in-Residence Program this year brought us National Book Award winner Tim O'Brien, who filled Memorial Hall (capacity 1434) to overflowing at his public reading on February 28th. Mr. O'Brien met with our Creative Writing students on numerous occasions; met the press; conducted a class with journalism students at East Chapel Hill High School; participated in two panel discussions concerning fiction, nonfiction and writing about war; and attended and made comments at a third, sponsored by the College of Arts & Sciences, called War: Coming Home. We again thank the Carolina alumni Allen (65) and Musette (76) Morgan, whose support started this much-appreciated program over thirteen years ago, and whose support continues to be as steadfast as it is enthusiastic.

Other key private funds supporting our activities include the Rankin Faculty Support Fund, established by Alex Rankin ('77); the Burrus Fund, established by Ann Williams Burrus ('32); and the Froelich Family Fund, recently established to help increase our lecturers' stipends by Henry ('81) and Molly Froelich of Charlotte; and our Gift Fund. The brand new Walker Percy Fund, an endowment helping underwrite our lecturers, was set in motion just last year by Frank Borden Hanes, Sr. ('42). The Robert Ruark Award — in remembrance of the best-selling North Carolina novelist and focusing on student non-fiction writing about North Carolina's natural world — receives support from expendable funds raised by — and a very generous charitable remainder trust created by retired Greenville, N.C., attorney and author James T. Cheatham III ('57, '61 LLB JD).

The first-ever Armfield Poetry Festival, featuring four fine American poets—Mark Doty, Marie Howe, Ken Fields, and C. K. Williams — occurred over two days in early November, 2006, a single event sponsored by the Blanche Britt Armfield Fund for Poetry (a bequest to us from the late poet Blanche Britt Armfield ’28 MA).

The support of James Kenan III (’68) has given us the Kenan Visiting Writer program, and this year our seventh Kenan Visiting Writer—a former Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford, poet David Roderick, author of Blue Colonial, who has been a wonderful colleague and who, this coming fall, will join the writing faculty at UNC Greensboro. Joining us as our 2007-2008 Kenan Writer will be Joni Tevis, a University of Houston Ph.D. whose first book, The Wet Collection, is due out this July.

In addition to readings by Morgan Writer Tim O'Brien and the four Armfield Festival poets, we also sponsored eight other author readings during the 2006-2007 academic year, by: Susan Kelly, Sarah Dessen, David Roderick, Ellen C. Bush, Jennifer Grotz, David Payne, Ben Fountain, and Michael Chitwood.

All of our Creative Writing faculty members are dedicated teachers who are deeply involved in their own creative work, and they are well known for their passionate engagement with students, colleagues, the larger University and the state and nation. Please see the detailed individual entries on the activities of our faculty, which appear later in this newsletter: Daphne Athas, Michael Chitwood, Pam Durban, Marianne Ginger, Randall Kenan, Michael McFee, Ruth Moose, Lawrence Naumoff, Rachel Richardson, Nina Riggs, David Roderick, James Seay, Dave Shaw, Alan Shapiro, Bland Simpson, Daniel Wallace, and Ross White.

On October 3rd, 2006, the 106th anniversary of Thomas Wolfe's birth, three of our Thomas Wolfe Scholars — Hannah Poston (’07), Kendra Fish (’09), and Nate Lumpkin (’10) — read selections from Wolfe's works at the rededication of our campus' Wolfe Memorial in its new location at the southeast corner of Murphey Hall, a move championed by James Noyes Jr. (’61), Ben Jones, members of the Wolfe Society, and Chancellor James Moeser. Chancellor Moeser gave remarks, as did Chair James Thompson, Director Bland Simpson, and Wolfe Memorial sculptor Richard Kinnaird. At a hat's drop, Department of English & Comparative Literature Professor Todd Taylor shot and produced a DVD of the occasion.

The Thomas Wolfe Scholarship (founded in 2002 by author and philanthropist Frank Borden Hanes, Sr., who was also in attendance at the Memorial's rededication) held its sixth national competition this school year. Its reading committee members again were Rebecca Morphis ('01 MA), Tara Powell ('04 PhD), and Courtney Jones ('01 BA); and its four board of advisors members again were Betts Distinguished Professor of English and Creative Writing Pam Durban, prizewinning novelist David Payne.
(77), and Associate Professors and Scholarship co-directors Bland Simpson (73) and Marianne Gingher, with ongoing counsel and help from Morehead Foundation officers Charles Lovelace (77) and Megan Mazzocchi (82). As we say congratulations and a fond farewell to our second Wolfe Scholar, Hannah Posten (07, who is again Italy-bound), we announce with pleasure that our sixth and seventh Thomas Wolfe Scholars— Maria Devlin of Bronxville, N.Y., and Denise Rickman of Apex, N.C.— will join us and Carolina’s Class of 2011 this coming fall.

In addition to the Wolfe Scholarship, we are fortunate in being able to offer the Wanda Chappell Scholarship (held ’06-‘07 by Alicia Jones, Hannah Bissell, and Carson Riedel) and the Dr. Charles D. and Rita Collins Family Scholarship (held this year by Andre Fernandez).

Another packed house in Bingham Hall’s 2nd floor black box cheered Marianne Gingher’s and Daphne Athas’s Stylistics class’s latest December performance, Divine Interjection: Shall We Poke It?, a show lit by N.C. School of the Arts lighting designer Elijah Vick and recorded/filmed by Jenne Herbst. We celebrate and call attention to all of our readings, events, and competitions to display the depth of our curricular and extra-curricular activities and to express our thanks to the Creative Writing Program’s friends near and far, whose generosity makes possible so much of what we are able to do here. Student support to all the events and opportunities offered by our school-within-a-school is one of great passion and commitment, and all of us—students, faculty, staff, alumni—strive to continue making Creative Writing at Carolina one of the very best undergraduate writing educations available in America.

We appreciate contributions from alumni and friends of Creative Writing at Carolina to our Doris Betts/ Jessie Rehder Creative Writing Fund and to our Max Steele Fund, established to honor these great author-teachers and intended to support through innovations and enhancements the continued vitality of the Program. Interested parties may contact: Mr. James May, Director, The Arts & Sciences Foundation, CB# 6115, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27599.

As the Creative Writing Program closes its fifth year under my stewardship, I want to salute, and express my appreciation for, the signal efforts of Susan Irons (M.A., Ph.D. ’01), who organizes special events for the department and our program, and Susan Marston, the department’s accountant— I work constantly with both of them, and their energy, judgment, and counsel are as superb as they are superbly necessary to our successful operations. For over a year and a half, the Creative Writing Program has had the powerful benefit of our skillful Program Assistant Jenne Herbst, who has managed day-to-day operations, fall and spring registrations, administration of prize and scholarship judgments, and has counseled countless students about course selections, program processes, and what they need to do next. When late this summer she joins Northwestern University’s prestigious graduate program to seek a Master of Fine Arts in Writing for the Screen and Stage, we will miss her enormously—yet, given her great good works in helping refine our program’s procedures and, indeed, its vision, Jenne Herbst will remain, to paraphrase poet Fred Chappell, “one of us forever.”

In closing, I also gladly salute and thank our dear friend and colleague Michael McFee (76, M.A. ’78), who not only published a book of poetry and a book of prose last year but also stood in ably at the helm as Acting Director of the program while I was on leave during the fall of 2006; to him and to his leadership go much of the credit for the grand year we have just had. To our friends all over campus, all over North Carolina and well beyond, I say thank you, deeply, for your faith in us here—it is a pleasure and a marvel to teach at Carolina, to bear witness to the emergence of new and talented writers of all sorts, and to see in thousands of ways every year the true meaning of the words work of art.

-Bland Simpson
Director, Creative Writing at Carolina

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### 2007 Creative Writing Awards

**Blanche Armfield Prize in Poetry**
- Brittany Frances Wofford

**Suzanne Bolch Literary Award**
- Brian Key-Geeing Ma

**Mini-Max Short-Short Fiction Award**
- Martin Hyman (First Place)
- Kathryn Bales (Second Place)
- Jesse Wooten (Third Place)

**William H. Hooks Award for Children’s Literature**
- Allie Mullin (Best Picture Book)
- Alston Blake (Honorable Mention-Picture Book)
- Katrina Mann (Honorable Mention-Picture Book)
- Cassidy Taylor (Best Young Adult Novel Chapter)
- Kristen Fields (Honorable Mention-Young Adult Novel Chapter)
- Alana Hodde (Honorable Mention-Young Adult Novel Chapter)
- McKenzie Hamrick (Best Fairytales)
- Jessica Hartung (Best Folktales)

**Willie Lavonsa Moore Prize in Creative Writing**
- Kenton deAngeli (Winner)
- Sarah Bull (Runner-up)

**George B. Wynne Award for Fiction**
- Tanner McSwain

**Robert Ruark Award in Creative Non-Fiction**
- Kitty Lynn
Honors and Highest Honors Graduates in Creative Writing 2007

Fiction—Taught by Randall Kenan

Andre Lima Fernandes Of Bears, Spirits and Assorted White People
Caroline Hamilton Rosemary's Stories: A Collection of Eight Short Stories
Justin Taylor Harbinson Heavens To Murgatroyd (From Book I: The Darkness Made Pictures)
Ashley Elizabeth Payne Basketcase
Courtney Leigh Turco Invisible Woman
Madeline Murray Walter Not Quite a Memoir, Due to Distractions
Marc Aaron Wasserman The Last Mastodon Uprising

Poetry—Taught by Michael McFee

Patrick Joseph Collins Heave 'Round
Megan Patricia Jordan This Good Blood
Teresa Wei-sy Lee The Act of Breathing In
Jessica Kathleen Polka Wunderkammer
Hannah Louise Poston The Lost Box
Marielle Prince Tell the Children

2007 Creative Writing Awards

Max Steele Prize in Fiction
Courtney Turco

Robert B. House Memorial Prize in Poetry
Marielle Prince

Louis D. Rubin, Jr. Prize In Creative Writing
Marc Wasserman

Ann Williams Burrus Prize
Hannah Louise Poston
Megan Jordan-Honorable Mention

Note: Creative Writing poetry and fiction faculty judged the Armfield, Burrus, House, and Wynne Awards

Judges for Creative Writing Awards
Courtney Jones ('01)-Bolch
Mark Meares ('77)-Bolch
Elizabeth Moose ('80)-Bolch
William Hooks ('47, M.A. '50)-Hooks
Pamela Pease-Hooks
Joy Acey-Hooks
David Korzon-Mini-Max
Elizabeth Oliver-Mini-Max
Dave Shaw ('88)-Moore
Jack Betts ('68)-Ruark
Lynn York-Steele and Rubin
Thomas Wolfe Scholars

Nate Lumpkin-2006

‘Nate’s fiction impressed us as being psychologically complex,’ said Marianne Gingher, associate professor of English and co-director of the Thomas Wolfe Scholarship program. ‘In all his writing, Nate seems intrigued by human relationships - how people take advantage of one another, how they mesh or don’t mesh. His understanding of the human psyche and heart struck our committee as both smart and sophisticated.’

Lumpkin, the son of Willis Lumpkin and Pamela Blizzard, graduated in ‘06 from Raleigh Charter High School. He counts honors English and creative writing courses and the philosophy club as influences on his writing.

He enjoys fiction writing, especially short stories, but says that ‘poetry is beginning to be a draw.’ He has his own blog and has written informal essays on it for more than two years.

‘Creation for me is words, most holy, mysterious,’ Lumpkin wrote in his scholarship application essay. ‘I form them and coax them and bind them together, and they do what I ask them most of the time.’

-Kim Weaver Spurr ’88
Assistant Director of Communications
College of Arts & Sciences

Maria Devlin, daughter of John and Donna Devlin, is an ’07 graduate of Bronxville High School in Bronxville, N.Y.

She won Interlochen (Michigan) Arts Camp Creative Writing Awards for Fiction in both 2005 and 2006, and she also took first place two years running in the Young Playwrights Competition sponsored by Blueberry Pond Theatre Ensemble, Ossining, N.Y., with the prize including a staging of her original work.

Of her writing process, Ms. Devlin says: “We see a man embracing his son in a parking lot as if saying goodbye, and we wonder where the son is going and how the father will get on without him. I’ve always been intrigued and tormented by these glimpses. I am fascinated by the people and I long to know more about them. Usually I never learn the real story; I don’t see that father ever again. But sometimes I take that moment, that tiny piece of information, and from it create a character. Characters are why I write. Getting to know them is for me the most enjoyable and the most important part of writing.”

Maria Devlin-2007

Denise Rickman of Apex, daughter of Diane and Edward Rickman, is an ’07 graduate of Southeast Raleigh Magnet High School, Raleigh, N.C.

She took first place for the eleventh grade in the highly-regarded Raleigh Fine Arts Literary Society Contest in 2006 for her short story “Across the Universe,” and she won Scholastic’s prestigious National Gold Key Award her short story, “Egg Girl” in 2006, when then appeared nationally in Scholastic’s book, The Best Teen Writing of 2006.

Ms. Rickman says, “My problem, everyone agreed, was that I read too much. A teacher asked me once if I was trying to escape. She meant well, but completely missed the point. I didn’t read because I was unhappy. I wanted the stories.” And she adds: “Books calmed me down, made me think that life might not be so bad if it produced people like Flannery O’Connor, Truman Capote, and James Baldwin, and inspired all their beautiful, heartbreaking, mesmerizing stories.”

Denise Rickman-2007

History of the Thomas Wolfe Scholarship

The Scholarship honors author and UNC alumnus Thomas Wolfe, best known for his 1929 novel, Look Homeward, Angel, Frank Bordon Hanes, Sr. of Winston-Salem a novelist, poet, and retired journalist who graduated from UNC in 1942, contributed $2 million to establish the scholarship. Hanes, who helped found UNC’s Arts and Sciences Foundation in 1975, has long supported faculty and programs in the literary arts. The scholarship, established in 2002, provides full financial support for four years at UNC. Candidates are chosen based on their written work, which can include poetry, fiction, literary nonfiction and drama. The winner is selected based on literary ability and artistic merit.
Kenan Visiting Writers

David Roderick 2006-2007

David Roderick is the former Wallace Stegner Fellow in Poetry at Stanford University and lecturer at the University of San Francisco. His book of poetry, Blue Colonial (Copper Canyon Press, 2006), won American Poetry Review's Honickman First Book Prize. The title poem, Blue Colonial, won Meridian’s Editor’s Prize for Poetry in 2002.

In Blue Colonial, Roderick memorializes his hometown of Plymouth, Mass., by excavating and re-imagining its individual and collective histories. He uses dramatic and narrative effects to explore the burdens of historical inheritance: vanished Native American tribes, the seeds of American culture, and our physical and psychological encroachment upon the natural landscape.

"David Roderick is one of the finest young poets and teachers in America, and we are very fortunate to have him with us for a year," said Michael McFee. "His collection of poetry, Blue Colonial, is simply terrific. These are carefully-made poems — vivid, precise but evocative, and brilliant at imagining (in sympathetic detail) the lives of early Americans like William Bradford and John Billington. David Roderick is a rising star, a poet well worth hearing."

The publisher of Blue Colonial also writes of Roderick: "Whether he is writing about historical legacy or his own backyard, Roderick has arrived at a voice of distinct solitariness and precise observation. With passion and sly wit, he has composed a strangely luminous book, a poetry collection that resonates with gravity, fine music and a deep regard for the task of being human in the world."

Roderick graduated with a master of fine arts in poetry from the University of Massachusetts Amherst in 2001. He has won numerous awards, including scholarships and fellowships from the Bread Loaf Writers Conference, the American Antiquarian Society and the Gilman School in Baltimore.

Roderick's poems and stories have appeared in leading literary publications such as The Antioch Review, The Hudson Review, The Missouri Review and The Virginia Quarterly Review.

-Kim Weaver Spurr '88
Assistant Director of Communications
College of Arts & Sciences

Editor's Note: David Roderick has been named the 2007-2008 Amy Lowell Poetry Travelling Scholar. Roderick will spend a year abroad living and writing and will receive a stipend from the Trust set up by the poet, Amy Lowell. He is joining the faculty at UNC-Greensboro.

Joni Tevis 2007-2008

Joni Tevis is from Easley, South Carolina, and earned her PhD in Literature and Creative Writing from the University of Houston Creative Writing Program.

Her work has been published in Isotope, Shenandoah, Conjunctions, Pleiades, The Bellingham Review, North Dakota Quarterly, Plenty, and elsewhere.

The Wet Collection, her book of lyric essays, will be published in August 2007 by Milkweed Editions.

In The Wet Collection follows Tevis through several adventures—one comical and stirring essay details her summer spent working as a cemetery salesman; another tells of her unmistakable horror at having to dress up like a beaver when working as a park ranger. Still others read like meditations in the style of Anne Carson, or a young Annie Dillard, and all of them are cast in the light of Tevis's Southern upbringing.

The publisher of The Wet Collection writes of Tevis: "Written with a poet's lyricism, a scientist's precision, and a theologian's understanding of the world as it shifts around us, The Wet Collection is the exciting debut of a distinctive new voice."

"Right when we are moving to expand our offerings in non-fiction and to establish a non-fiction concentration within Creative Writing at Carolina, we are most fortunate to have Joni Tevis, a young yet distinguished essayist, with us for a year," said program director Bland Simpson.
Morgan Writer-In-Residence

Tim O’Brien 2007

"My life is storytelling," Tim O’Brien once said. "I believe in stories, in their incredible power to keep people alive, to keep the living alive, and the dead." An important member of the generation of soldier-artists who came back from Vietnam, he has created new ways to tell the story of that war's moral, physical, and spiritual cost.

O’Brien was born in Austin, Minnesota, a small prairie town, in 1946. After graduating from Macalester College in 1968, he was drafted into the Army ('to fight a war I hated') and served for thirteen months in Vietnam, earning a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star, and the Combat Infantry Badge. In 1970, he began graduate study at Harvard, but left without a degree: 'instead of writing my dissertation, I was writing what I needed to write.'

What he needed to write were books, eight to date, beginning in 1973 with the war memoir, If I Die in a Combat Zone, Box Me Up and Ship Me Home. His first novel, Northern Lights (1975) was followed by Going after Cacciato (1978), winner of the National Book Award for fiction, and The Nuclear Age (1985). The Things They Carried (1990) won the Prix du Meilleur Livre Etranger, and In the Lake of the Woods (1994) won the James Fenimore Cooper Prize from the Society of American Historians. Tomcat in Love was published in 1998 and July, July in 2002. The Things They Carried is, among other things, Tim O’Brien’s meditation on the value of telling and writing stories. "Sometimes remembering will lead to a story," he writes, "which makes it forever. That’s what stories are for. Stories are for joining the past to the future. Stories are for those late hours in the night when you can’t remember how you got from where you were to where you are. Stories are for eternity, when memory is erased, when there is nothing to remember except the story."

-Michael McFee

Events in Brief

Past Events 2006-2007
Susan Kelly, September 12, 2006-Donovan Lounge
Sarah Dessen, September 19, 2006-Donovan Lounge
Thomas Wolfe Memorial Dedication, October 3, 2006
Michael McFee, October 5, 2006-Donovan Lounge
David Roderick, October 24, 2006-Donovan Lounge

Armfield Poetry Festival
Kenneth Fields, November 8, 2006-Hyde Hall
Mark Doty, November 8, 2006-Hyde Hall
Marie Howe, November 9, 2006-Hyde Hall
C.K. Williams, November 9, 2006-Hyde Hall

Ellen C. Bush, January 23, 2007-Donovan Lounge
Jennifer Groetz, February 13, 2007-Donovan Lounge
David Payne, March 22, 2007-Donovan Lounge
Ben Fountain, April 5, 2007-Wilson Library
Michael Chitwood, April 10, 2007-Donovan Lounge

Upcoming Events 2007-2008

2007 Thomas Wolfe Prize Lecture
Reynolds Price
October 3, 2007, 7:30 p.m.
III Carroll Hall

Fall Armfield Poet
Gregory Orr
October 11, 2007, 3:30 p.m.
Donovan Lounge

2008 Mogan Writer-in-Residence
Alice McDermott
February 24-29, 2008
TBA

Spring Armfield Poet
Claudia Emerson
April 10, 2008, 3:30 p.m.
Donovan Lounge

More events will be booked—please check out the Carolina Events calendar or the English Department events calendar at www.english.unc.edu
Thomas Wolfe Prize

George Garrett 2006

George Garrett, recipient of the 2006 Thomas Wolfe Prize, was honored earlier than planned. He was to visit Chapel Hill in the fall, receive his medal, and present the annual Thomas Wolfe Lecture. However, medical issues thwarted his plans to travel to Chapel Hill. Therefore, a Carolina delegation delivered the prize to Mr. Garrett in his hometown of Charlottesville, Virginia. The delegation from Carolina included Bland Simpson, writer and Director of the Creative Writing Program; Michael McFee, poet and Interim Director of the Creative Writing Program; Pam Durban, writer and Doris Betts Professor of Creative Writing; Michael Chitwood, poet and Creative Writing instructor; and Alice Cotten, representative of the Thomas Wolfe Society.

On August 8 the group drove to Charlottesville and presented Mr. Garrett with the medal at a festive luncheon, which included Garrett’s wife and son, former Kenan poet Thorpe Moeckel and his Hollins colleague Richard Dillard, two directors of Virginia humanities programs, an editor at the Virginia Quarterly Review, two faculty members in the UVA MFA program, and two former Carolina Honors students now studying in that program, Joe Chapman and Julia Hansen. All guests were there out of admiration and affection for George Garrett. He clearly felt honored to receive the Prize and appreciated the celebratory occasion. When his health improves, he plans to write a piece about Thomas Wolfe.

George Garrett has “influenced more writers than Faulkner.” So proclaims novelist Madison Smartt Bell and while that proclamation might raise a few eyebrows among the apostles of Saint William if one looks at the incredibly varied career of Mr. Garrett it is easy to see how the case can be made.

Editor, translator, dramatist/scriptwriter, Virginia Poet laureate, award-winning fiction writer, adored teacher and mentor and wide-ranging reviewer and essayist, Garrett has been plying all these trades for more than five decades and his list of stellar books is matched only by his list of stellar students, who, like Bell, have gone on to successful writing careers of their own. The author of 32 volumes and editor of dozens more, Garrett may be best known for his historical trilogy of novels that explored Elizabethan intrigues and particularly the mind of Sir Walter Raleigh. Writer and professor R.H.W. Dillard has explained how an unabashed Southern writer like Garrett might come to such subject matter—and in his explanation perhaps gets at the essence of Garrett’s literary focus: “The South of Do, Lord, Remember Me is, like Chaucer’s England, a confused landscape in which religion and sex, honesty and petty evil, the haunting dream of purity and the fallen world of lies are so subtly interwoven that no one can judge another or even himself or herself, and in which the most serious of religious pilgrimages is at once an occasion for true religious feeling and unrestrained bawdiness.”

In novels such as Death of the Fox; Do, Lord, Remember Me; An Evening Performance and The King of Babylon Shall Not Come Against You as well as numerous volumes of poetry and nonfiction including his new and selected Days of Our Lives Lie in Fragments, Garrett has taken up the many occasions of human feelings in all their range and bawdiness.

Perhaps lauded most for his historical fiction, Garrett is a that rare thing—a true man of letters, writing poetry, scholarly critiques and even the screenplay for “Frankenstein Meets the Space Monster.” His career has seen many successes, both in publishing and in the classroom and was capped last year by the Library of Virginia’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

But whether grounding his work in his native South or setting it in outer space, Garrett has never strayed far from his real love, which is the telling of the tale. A celebrated raconteur, Garrett delights with story no matter the occasion, either across the dining table or on the page. What one of his characters says in his novel The King of Babylon Shall Not Come Against You rings strikingly true for the author himself: “And one of the things this old Judge was forever and a day saying was that our stories are who we are. Not that our stories reveal who we are in the fullest sense. And that our stories can be translated, like something in a foreign language, like a foreign film with subtitles, into the simple clarity of a simple statement. But that our stories are who and what we are, nothing more or less.”

True in the book, true in the life. A master storyteller is exactly who and what George Garrett is.

-Michael Chitwood
Daphne Athas spent the summer in Pylos and on the island of Paros in Greece continuing work on a new novel. The books deals with three Americans and a Pole who find themselves in the Iran of the 1970’s, five years before the revolution of the Mullahs and the hostage crisis of the Carter administration. On the flight from Greece through London in August last summer she got caught in the Heathrow terror threat delay, and spent time in London hearing the stories of all travelers delayed. Editing and formatting work on the grammar text, GRAM-O-RAMA is completed, with the book under contract and scheduled for late summer of 2007.

Michael Chitwood has a new book, *From Whence*, out from LSU press, and in the fall 2007 Tupelo Press will publish his next book, *Spill*. In October his work will be the subject of the 26th annual Emory and Henry Literary Festival celebrating Appalachian writers. He has work in recent issues of or forthcoming in *Poetry Field*, *Poetry Northwest*, *Southern Poetry Review*, *New Letters*, *crazyhorse*, and *The Three Penny Review*.

Pam Durban’s essay, “Clocks”, which first appeared in *Shenandoah* magazine, was reprinted in *The Pushcart Prize—Best of the Small Presses*, Vol. XXXI 2007. Her short story, “Island,” was published in the 10th Anniversary Issue of *Five Points* magazine and another story, “Rowing to Darien,” was reprinted in *High Five: The Best of Five Points*. A personal essay, “A Southern Story,” was published in *American Studies in Scandinavia*. In the fall of 2006, she was a Faculty Fellow at UNC’s Institute for the Arts and Humanities. Also in the fall, she spent a few weeks as a Fellow at the Virginia Center for Creative Arts in Amherst, Virginia.

Marianne Gingher published for *Rambler* magazine six personal narratives (“A Woman at Work and Play”) about the writing life. Her short story, “Margaret’s War”, appeared in the *North American Review*, and an essay, “Confessions from a Southern Writers’ Literary Love-Fest,” was published in *The Southern Review*. She recently completed editing GRAM-O-RAMA: *Great Stuff to Do With Grammar Besides Trashing It, but That Too!*—Daphne Athas’s maverick playbook of grammar instruction, philosophy, and innovative exercises for turning the grammar lesson into performance art—no joke! Daphne and Marianne teach a class together based on GRAM-O-RAMA. The book will be available in the fall. Marianne was awarded the 2007 Johnston Excellence in Teaching Award and she will be a Chapman Fellow at the Institute of Arts and Humanities in spring 2008.

Randall Kenan was inducted into the Fellowship of Southern Writers this year, along with Dorothy Allison, Shannon Ravenel and others. He was on the faculties of both the Sewance Writer’s Conference and the Bread Loaf Writer’s Conference this past summer. He gave readings and lectures in Virginia, South Carolina, New York, and Texas. An interview with him appeared in the journal *Image*, and a piece on his work and influences appeared in the *North Carolina Literary Review* (#15). His new book, *The Fire This Time*, is in stores now.

Michael McFee published two new books in the past year: his first collection of prose, *The Napkin Manuscripts: Selected Essays and an Interview* (University of Tennessee Press, September 2006), and a chapbook of one-line poems called *The Smallest Talk* (Bull City Press, March 2007). His most recent full-length collection of poetry, *Shinemaster*, won the Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award from the Western North Carolina Historical Association, which honors books by native of the region or about the history and culture of the mountains; past winners include Wilma Dykeman, John Ehle, Fred Chappell, Gail Godwin and Charles Frazier. He published new poems and essays in such places as *Gettysburg Review*, *Shenandoah*, *Inch, Three Penny Review*, *Mississippi Quarterly* and *The Book of Irish American Poetry from the Eighteenth Century to the Present*. He gave many readings and talks in the past year, and was a featured author at the 25th anniversary Appalachian Writers Festival at Emory and Henry College in September. He was acting director of the Creative Writing Program last fall during Bland Simpson’s leave.
Ruth Moose had a poem chosen by Ted Kooser for his poet laureate project sponsored by the Library of Congress. The Poetry Foundation and the University of Nebraska. In addition, she lectured at the 16th Annual CPCC Literary Festival on writing children's literature and published book reviews in the News & Observer, Minneapolis Star and Tribune and The Pilot. She is a participant at the Society of Children's Book Writer's and Illustrators Conference, on the staff of the North Carolina Writer's Network Conference and is poetry editor for The Rambler magazine. Methodist College's 16th Symposium on Southern Writers featured a panel of papers on her work, and she recently had a short story accepted at the Alaska Quarterly Review, Cresote, and The New Renaissance. Both her books of short stories were recently reprinted under a new title, Rules and Secrets.

Lawrence Naumoff spent the last year teaching intro through advanced classes and finishing up a purely comic Southern novel. Naumoff has this summer off—the first time in three years without teaching duties—and hopes to finish the book and find a publisher. If successful, it would be his seventh published novel. Last summer he sold his farm and moved into Carrboro.

James Seay and friend Roy Blount, Jr. offered a discussions and PowerPoint presentation at the North Carolina Festival of the Book at Duke regarding their nearly thirty years of annual fishing trips in the Florida Gulf. His revised essay on Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha appears in the expanded and revised 2nd edition of the Encyclopedia of Southern Culture.

Rachel Richardson's poems have appeared this year in Shenandoah, Ninth Letter, PN Review, Notre Dame Review, Crab Orchard Review, Michigan Quarterly Review, and the online journal Blackbird. She received the Dorothy Sargent Rosenberg Prize for Poetry, and has recently been nominated for both a Pushcart Prize and inclusion in the upcoming anthology, Best New Poets 2007.

David Roderick was named the winner of the 2007-2008 Amy Lowell Traveling Fellowship and in the fall term he will begin teaching in the MFA Writing Program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.


Dave Shaw's first collection of stories, Here Comes the Roar, won the Katherine Anne Porter Prize and was published in 2003. His second collection, The Usual Larks, was runner-up for the 2008 Richard Sullivan Prize. His Stories have appeared in England, Japan, New Zealand, and throughout the U.S. He currently is Publications Director for UNC's Center for the Study of the American South.

Bland Simpson has recently been named Bowman and Gordon Gray Distinguished Term Professor, and he spent fall term '06 as a Chapman Fellow at UNC's Institute for the Arts & Humanities. He continues to perform as a member of both the Red Clay Ramblers and the Coastal Cohorts. The Cohorts released the CD "Wild Ponies" in August '06, and, in October '06, UNC press published Simpson's The Inner Islands: A Carolinian's Sound Country Chronicle, with photography by his wife, School of Government Associate Dean Ann Cary Simpson.

Daniel Wallace's new book, Mr. Sebastian and the Negro Magician, is now in stores. He will be joining Creative Writing at Carolina in January 2008 as the J. Ross Macdonald Distinguished Professor of English.

Ross White continues to serve as the editor of Inc, the magazine of short poetry and microfiction. His micropress, Bull City Press, has published books by Ellen C. Bush and Michael McFie. He has poetry forthcoming in The Carolina Quarterly.

In Memoriam
Lowry Matthews Betts
1930-2007
1975
Tom Daley joined Quincy Troupe, Patricia Smith and Regie Gibson on the faculty of the Online School of Poetry (www.onlineschoolofpoetry.com) a new school for the study of poetry and poetry writing. He was a poet-in-residence at several high schools in Asheville, NC, and Atlanta, GA and was a visiting instructor in poetry-writing and performance at Stonehill College in Easton, MA. He led a retreat for poets and songwriters on Star Island last September. He had work in the Del Sol Review, Passages North and Harvard Review. His manuscript, Shim, was a finalist for the 2006 Emily Dickinson First Book Prize given by the Poetry Foundation.

1977
Warren Rochelle is an associate professor of English at the University of Mary Washington. His new book, Harvest of Changelings, was released in May.

1979

1980
Beth Cooley's second novel, Shelter, was published by Delacorte Press (November 2006). She continues to teach at Gonzaga University where she is chair of the English Department. During the summer of 2006, she taught in Italy.

1983
Pamela Duncan's The Big Beautiful was published in March. It's a sequel of sorts to Moon Women, wherein Cassandra Moon takes off to the coast of North Carolina to start a whole new life for herself. To read more about it, see her website: www.pameladuncan.com

1984
Michael Parker won the North Carolina Award Literature awarded in the fall of 2006.

1987
Kimberly Gilley Becker has poems in recent or forthcoming issues of Borderlands, Georgetown Review, Snowy Egret, Southern Hum, StorySouth, and Words-Myth, among other print and online journals. Work is included in an upcoming women's poetry anthology from Red Hen Press. Poems of hers also inspired a dance choreographed by Dr. Lenette Perry of the Tennessee Children's Dance Ensemble. She attended the inaugural Flanked Women's Writer's conference in Washington, DC last summer.

1989
Stephen Ausherman's latest novel, Fountains of Youth, was published by Livingston Press (University of West Alabama) in July 2006. He lives in New Mexico and maintains a site at www.restlesstripes.com.

1990
Michelle Barton Lona married Pabloe Lona in 1993 in Cusco, Peru, and they have 2 sons—Pablo Emilio and Joaquin. She has been living in Peru since 1991 and is currently at work on a novel set in Chapel Hill.

1991
Jennifer Layton is now the Assistant Editor of Indie-Music.com and a regular contributor to Newport's Mercury Magazine. Recent articles include an interview with the Grammy Award-winning band Train and comedian Bill Burr. Visit her online at www.jenniferlayton.com or www.myspace.com/jenniferlayton.

Brendan Mathews earned his MFA from the University of Virginia (05) and received a scholarship to the 2006 Sewanee Writers Conference. His stories have appeared in the Southern Review and are forthcoming in Triquarterly and Glimmer Train.

1995
William Conescu's book Being Written will be published in 2008 by Harper Perennial. Being Written is a subversive, humorous, and nail-biting tale of a man in crisis and the lengths to which he will go to provide meaning to his life and justify the space he takes up on the page. This was his main project while he was working on his MFA at NC State. William has also had two short stories accepted for publication later this year—one by New Letters and one by Green Mountain Review. He is also teaching an undergraduate workshop at Duke during the summer session.


1996
Heather O'Neill Shows has been named Director of Scholarships, Vanderbilt University.

1998
Alec Morrison is an Editorial Projects Writer for Sports Illustrated.
1999
Heather Johnson Jester had gotten her teaching degree and had been teaching English, Creative Writing, and directing the literary magazine at a high school in Charlotte. In January 2006, she received her MFA in Creative Writing at Queens University. Last summer she and her husband were in Monferrato, Italy. They have since moved to NYC to teach, ready, write, laugh, dance, and live.

Sara Majka has moved to Tivoli, NY, where her husband is teaching at Bard College. She has stories coming out in Night Train and Zone 3.

2000s

2001
Stuart Albright teaches was named Durham Public Schools' Teacher of the Year-2006. He has started a creative writing class at Jordan High.

Kimberly O'Connor began her MFA in Poetry at the University of Maryland last fall.

2002
Henry Kearney is currently a student in the MFA program at Warren Wilson College. He won the 2007 Ausable Fellowship awarded by Ausable Press.

2003
Kerri French graduated with her MFA in Creative Writing from UNC-Greensboro and is now living in Boston where she is teaching at Mount Ida College. Her work has been published in Agenda Broadsheet 7, Fugue, The Blotter and Unpleasant Event.

2004
Mela Kirkpatrick is National Endowment for the Arts Chair, Dana Gioia's, executive assistant.

Stephanie Horvath is looking for a publisher for her YA book, That Scotland Summer.

2005
Lucy Bryan Green taught high school English and creative writing at a small private school over the past year. She began working as an Office Administrator for Troxell & Gibbons Associates Architecture, in August 2006. She and her new husband Brandin live in Winston-Salem.

Erika Kranz has accepted admission to Georgetown University's School of Law.

2006
Selena Beckman-Harned is working on her Master's in Professional Writing at Carnegie Mellon University.

Rebecca Chasnovitz has started studying at UNC School of Medicine.

Sebastian P. Gibbs is living in LA and working at a small post-production company called Zap Entertainment, which specializes in Entertainment News production for overseas markets. He has done everything from interviewing actors, writers and directors about their latest films, to producing and editing segments for an entertainment news show, to writing the host's show scripts.

Matt Pelz is working on his MA in Creative Writing form the University of Northumbria at Newcastle.

Hicks Wogan has begun the University of Mississippi's MA program in Southern Studies.

Marriages
Laura Ashley Fine ('03) married Rodney Lee Ledford.

Births
Tara Bennett Killian ('99), baby girl-Lara.

Sherry Shaw '92 is the winner of the 2006 Thomas Wolfe Fiction Prize for her story "October." Final judge Josephine Humphreys said Shaw's story "achieves the sense of mystery we hope for in fiction, lifting the story to a level of rich complexity."

Shaw is seeking an agent for a recently completed novel. She and her husband, Ashley Smith (J.D., '92), recently visited Hawaii.

Caitlin Doyle '06, our first Thomas Wolfe Scholar, has just been offered the prestigious George Starbuck Fellowship at Boston University, the largest financial award for an incoming graduate student, covering full tuition and including a semester-long teaching position.

Nic Pizzolatto, Kenan Visiting Writer 2005-2006, teaches fiction at the University of Chicago and the paperback edition of Between Here and the Yellow Sea came out in June 2007. He is currently finishing up a novel that should be published in 2008. He really misses North Carolina and hopes to get back one day soon.
Current CW Students

Sarah Bull-Class of 2009

Sarah Bull, a junior who is pursuing a major in English and a minor in Creative Writing, won an honorable mention in The Atlantic Monthly's student writing contest.

Bull won one of seven honorable mentions given in the fiction category for her short story, "Like Gold." The other two contest categories were poetry, and personal or journalistic essay. The Atlantic Monthly will publish some of the winning manuscripts; Bull is still waiting to hear if hers will be chosen. Winners were announced in the May 2007 issue.

Bull is a transfer student from The University of Montana at Missoula; her first semester at UNC was fall of 2006. It's difficult to pick one city as her hometown, she said, although her parents moved to Durham about a year ago. Before that, she lived in Flemington, N.J.; Franklin, Mass.; and Binghamton, N.Y. Her transient nature is reflected in her award-winning short story, which takes its title from a line in John Donne's poem, "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning."

"I wrote the story in Durham shortly after my parents and I moved here," she said. "Having left The University of Montana and then SUNY, Binghamton, where I took a few courses during the summer, I felt as though my life had become a series of drawings away from the people I barely had a chance to appreciate. ... I think an almost fundamental human experience is feeling helpless in the face of one's circumstances. I wrote the story in that spirit."

Bull is enjoying her time at Carolina and calls the English professors "enormously accomplished and intelligent." She is thrilled to be walking where Walker Percy and Thomas Wolfe — two among a long list of her favorite authors — once walked. She enjoyed a course on Asian-American literature and theory taken with Jennifer Ho during her first semester, and she is taking a poetry class with George Lending and a creative nonfiction memoir class with Alan Shapiro this spring. The class with Shapiro is her first prose workshop.

"I'm pursuing a major in English because I believe in the power of articulation, specifically via the written word," she said. "Poetry and literature add a dimension to my life about which it is difficult to say enough. I view my major in English as pure pleasure — a chance to interrogate the nature of books and words and the people who produce them."

"I've been teaching creative writing for over 30 years, and I have seldom encountered a student, on any level — graduate or undergraduate — as gifted and well read or disciplined as Sarah," said Shapiro, the William R. Kenan Jr. Distinguished Professor of English. "She makes my job easy."

Bull said she has no favorite written genre. "I read and relish everything from 'The Elements of Style' to Plato to Wallace Stevens to Jacques Derrida."

Andrew Chan-Class of 2008

Andrew Chan, a senior and Thomas Wolfe Scholar, is part of the Helena Rubinstein Internship Program at The Museum of Modern Art in New York City. Chan was accepted as a film intern.

The Helena Rubinstein Summer Internship is a full-time, ten-week, paid internship. Each Tuesday a full day of field trips are organized to other museums, galleries, foundations, corporate collections, private collections, alternative spaces, nonprofit organizations and artists' studios in the city.

Summer interns also have the opportunity to develop and deliver public gallery talks about the Museum's permanent collection.

-Kim Weaver Spurr '88
Assistant Director of Communications
College of Arts & Sciences
We Want To Hear From You

Dear Friends and Alumni of Creative Writing at Carolina:

Greetings once again—I hope that all is well with you and that you will take time to share your most recent news with us for the “Alumni” feature in Chapter & Verse, our newsletter. A form follows for that purpose. Please mail it back at your earliest convenience. You may also email us at C&V@unc.edu

Deadline for responses this year is September 30th.

We are ever grateful for your help—as you see with each succeeding issue of Chapter & Verse, we make our funds go a long way in support of academic and literary programming and student life and letters beyond the classroom. If you are thinking of making a give to the Carolina First campaign, please consider designating that gift for the Creative Writing Program, and please come by Greenlaw Hall whether to attend a class one more time, or just to visit.

On behalf of all of us here in Carolina’s Creative Writing Program, I send you our best wishes. We are proud of all your accomplishments, literary and otherwise, and we are always eager to hear from you.

Warmest regards,
Bland Simpson
Director, Creative Writing Program
UNC-Chapel Hill

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Return form to: Creative Writing at Carolina, 203 Greenlaw Hall, CB# 3520
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3520 or email your info to C&V@unc.edu

Note: If you are emailing your info— please include your year of graduation and/or your maiden name if applicable
"I discovered the joy of self-expression under the madcap guidance of a bespectacled female English teacher named Jessie Rehder, who wore floppy sweaters and no-nonsense shoes and short-cropped hair."

--Eli N. Evans '58, writing of Carolina's first Creative Writing director in his celebrated memoir *The Provincials* (1973)