

Festival Schedule

All events are free and open to the public.
Authors will sign works after each reading.

Sunday, April 3

7:30 p.m. Novelist Elizabeth Kostova in a Web simulcast emceed by Rob Neufeld, in cooperation with the Asheville Citizen-Times (*Illusions in the University Center*)

Monday, April 4

12 p.m. Gilbert Chappell Distinguished Poetry Reading (student poets) (*UC theater*)

4 p.m. Poets Ginger Murchison and DéLana Dameron (*UC theater*)

7:30 p.m. Don Lee (*UC theater*)

Tuesday, April 5

4 p.m. Lee Martin (*UC theater*)

7:30 p.m. Bret Lott (*UC theater*)

Wednesday, April 6

4 p.m. Frank X Walker (*UC theater*)

7:30 p.m. Susan Vreeland (*UC theater*)

Thursday, April 7

4 p.m. David Gessner (*UC theater*)

5:30 p.m. Reception, featuring the poetry of Fred Chappell, Cathy Smith Bowers and Kathryn Stripling Byer (*Illusions in the University Center*)

7:30 p.m. Alan Weisman (*Coulter recital hall*)

For More Information

Western Carolina University Department of English
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www.litfestival.org

Ninth Annual | SPRING

Literary Festival

APRIL 3-7, 2011



Western
Carolina
UNIVERSITY

About the Festival

Western Carolina University's Visiting Writers Series, the oldest such series in North Carolina, has a long tradition of bringing the best of both established and emerging literary talent to the mountains of Western North Carolina. Over the years, the series has hosted distinguished regional writers, including Fred Chappell, Lee Smith, Ron Rash, Pam Duncan, Kathryn Stripling Byer and R.T. Smith; well-known American writers, including Pat Conroy, Li-Young Lee, Thomas Lux, Linda Hogan, Carolyn Chute, Leslie Silko, Ntozake Shange, Luis Rodriguez, Maxine Kumin, Sherman Alexie and Clifton Taulbert; and internationally renowned authors, including Eavan Boland, Miroslav Holub and Chitra Divakaruni.

For the past several years, sponsors of the Spring Literary Festival have been WCU's Visiting Writers Series; the English Department; the Arts and Cultural Events Series; the Office of the Chancellor; the Office of the Provost; the Division of Student Affairs; and the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching. This year, the project received support from the N.C. Arts Council, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources.

The festival reflects Western Carolina's commitment to providing the best humanities education possible to its students and to bringing the best of the arts to the mountains. All events are free and open to the public. Authors will sign works after each reading.

Getting Here

Western Carolina University is located in the scenic mountains of Cullowhee, N.C. For directions to campus, go online to www.wcu.edu/545.asp. For a downloadable map of the WCU campus, go online to www.wcu.edu/546.asp.

All events of the Literary Festival except Thursday's reading with Alan Weisman take place in WCU's A.K. Hinds University Center (#31 on the campus map), either in the theater or Illusions. Both venues are on the third floor, one flight up if entering the University Center from Memorial Drive, two if entering the building from the campus center. For parking behind the University Center, pick up Memorial Drive by staying to the left in the traffic circle at WCU's main entrance. Continue up the hill and around a sharp bend to the right, and the University Center is on the right. Thursday's reading with Weisman will take place adjacent to the University Center in the recital hall of the Coulter Building (#32 on the campus map; the recital hall is on the second floor or at street level if entering from Memorial Drive).

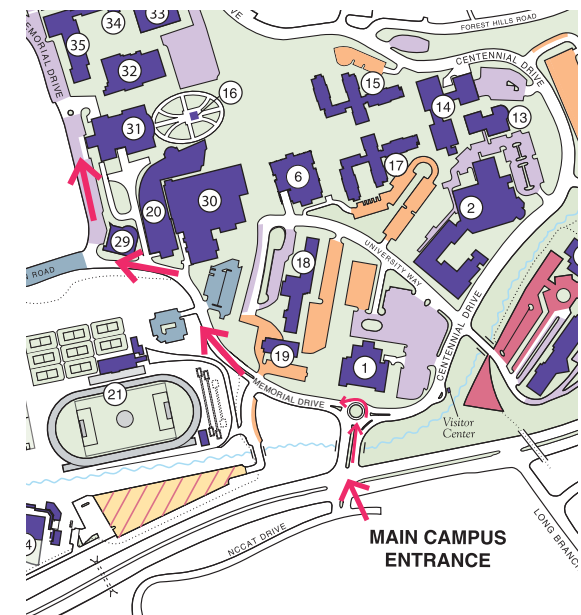
On the cover – *Love Letter*, by Janine Paris WCU '11, charcoal and acrylic on prepared masonite, 2009

Parking

Visitors may park in student or faculty/staff spaces (marked with white or yellow) that are not designated as special-use, reserved, handicapped, loading zone, etc. Parking by the University Center and Coulter is limited; visitors may find spots near the Ramsey Regional Activity Center (#9 on the campus map, not shown) and the Fine and Performing Arts Center (#2 on the map). Cat-Tran, a shuttle bus to the center of campus, stops every 15 minutes at outlying parking areas. Find a shuttle map online at www.wcu.edu/9018.asp.

University Police do not ticket for evening events, but they do occasionally ticket for daytime events. Visitors who receive a parking citation for no registration may have it waived by filling out the back of the citation and bringing it to the English Department offices or to a Literary Festival staff person, or by mailing it to the Traffic Office.

WCU Campus Map



This project was supported by the N.C. Arts Council, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources.

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www.ncarts.org

Featured Writers

www.litfestival.org

Cathy Smith Bowers | 5:30 p.m. Thursday, April 7, Illusions

North Carolina Poet Laureate Cathy Smith Bowers' poems have appeared widely in publications such as *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Georgia Review*, *Poetry*, *The Southern Review* and *The Kenyon Review*. She is a past winner of the General Electric Foundation Award for Younger Writers, a recipient of a South Carolina Poetry Fellowship and winner of the South Carolina Arts Commission Fiction Project. She now teaches in the MFA program at Queens University of Charlotte and at Wofford College. Smith Bowers is the author of four collections of poetry: *The Love That Ended Yesterday in Texas*, *Traveling in Time of Danger*, *A Book of Minutes*, and *The Candle I Hold Up to See You*. *Traveling in Time of Danger*, poet Jane Hirshfield says, "possesses a sensuous intelligence, a tongue both observant and precise, a brave and vulnerable heart. Bowers brings to the page powerful grief-stories, the witness of fully open eyes. Reading her poems, I find myself instructed, awakened and moved."



Kathryn Stripling Byer | 5:30 p.m. Thursday, April 7, Illusions



A native of southwest Georgia, former N.C. Poet Laureate Kathryn Stripling Byer maintains a blog, *Here, Where I Am*, that was named one of the thirty best poetry blogs of 2009. Her first book, *The Girl in the Midst of the Harvest*, was an Associated Writing Programs finalist, chosen by John F. Nims. LSU Press has published most of her subsequent books, including *Wildwood Flower*, the Academy of American Poets Lamont Selection; *Black Shawl*, chosen by Billy Collins for the Brockman-Campbell Award; and *Catching Light*, the Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance Best Book of Poetry in 2002. Her most recent book, *Coming to Rest*, received the Hanes Poetry Award from the Fellowship of Southern Writers in 2007. Her poetry has been set to music for chorus, mezzo-soprano and soprano. Her most recent publication is a collaborative chapbook of poems with longtime friend Penelope Scambly Schott entitled *Aretha's Hat: Inauguration Day 2009*, published by Ash Creek Press in Portland, Oregon.

Fred Chappell | 5:30 p.m. Thursday, April 7, Illusions

In 2004, Fred Chappell retired after forty years in the English Department of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. During this period, he published twenty-six books of poetry, fiction and critical commentary. Various awards have been conferred upon him, most recently the Thomas Wolfe Prize. His wife, Susan, and son, Heath, have made gratitude one of the healthier parts of his



life. For five years he served as poet laureate of the state and in that capacity visited approximately 250 schools, colleges, universities, retirement homes, churches and other venues. His latest book of poetry is *Shadow Box* from Louisiana State University Press; latest fiction, *Ancestors and Others: New and Selected Stories* from St. Martin's Press, New York. Fred and Susan still live in Greensboro, tending cats, plants and (mostly) their own business.

DéLana R.A. Dameron | 4 p.m. Monday, April 4, UC theater



DéLana R.A. Dameron has received fellowships from New York University, Cave Canem Foundation, Soul Mountain and the Constance Saltonstall Foundation for the Arts. Her debut collection, *How God Ends Us*, won the 2008 South Carolina Poetry Book Prize as selected by Elizabeth Alexander. A native of Columbia, S.C., Dameron currently resides in New York.

David Gessner | 4 p.m. Thursday, April 7, UC theater

David Gessner is the author of six books of literary nonfiction, including *Sick of Nature*, *Soaring with Fidel* and *Return of the Osprey*, which was chosen as one of the top ten nonfiction books of the year in 2001 by *The Boston Globe*. His essay "Those Who Teach, Write" appeared in the college issue of *The New York Times Magazine* in September 2008, and other essays have appeared in "Best American Nonrequired Reading," the Pushcart Prize anthology, NPR's *This I Believe*, *The Georgia Review* and *Harvard Review*. He is a contributing editor to *OnEarth* magazine, the journal of the National Resources Defense Council. Gessner is currently a professor at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, where he also edits the literary journal of place *Ecotone*. He now devotes much of his energy to blogging on his website, *Bill and Dave's Cocktail Hour*.



Elizabeth Kostova | 7:30 p.m. Sunday, April 3, Illusions

Elizabeth Kostova holds a bachelor of arts in British studies from Yale University and a master of fine arts in creative writing from the University of Michigan. Her first novel, *The Historian*, a tale of three generations of historians on the track of the original Dracula, was the fastest-selling debut novel in American publishing history. It has sold more than three million copies worldwide in forty languages, has won numerous awards, and film rights were acquired by SONY Pictures. Her second novel, *The Swan Thieves*, a story of artists, psychiatry and the rise of Impressionist painting, was published in January and is currently being translated into twenty-eight languages. In addition to her writing, Kostova teaches for writing conferences at the University of Michigan and in Eastern Europe, reads and lectures internationally, and is co-founder of the Elizabeth Kostova Foundation, which provides competitive opportunities for Bulgarian writers as well as opportunities for native-English writers to travel to Bulgaria.



Don Lee | 7:30 p.m. Monday, April 4, UC theater



Don Lee is the author of two novels, *Wrack and Ruin* and *Country of Origin*, as well as a story collection, *Yellow*, all from W.W. Norton. He has received an American Book Award, the Sue Kaufman Prize for First Fiction, an O. Henry Award, a Pushcart Prize and the Fred R. Brown Literary Award. For nineteen years, he was the principal editor of *Ploughshares*. He now teaches in the graduate creative writing program at Temple University.

Bret Lott | Tuesday, April 5, at 7:30 p.m., UC theater

Bret Lott is the best-selling author of twelve books, most recently the novel *Ancient Highway*. Other books include the story collection *The Difference between Women and Men*; the nonfiction book *Before We Get Started: A Practical Memoir of the Writer's Life*; and the novels *Jewel*, an Oprah Book Club pick, and *A Song I Knew by Heart*. Born in Los Angeles, he received his undergraduate degree in English from California State University Long Beach and his master of fine arts from the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where he studied under James Baldwin. He works at the College of Charleston doing the job he most loves: teaching. His honors include having been named Fulbright Senior American Scholar and writer-in-residence to Bar-Ilan University in Tel Aviv, Israel; having spoken on Flannery O'Connor at the White House; and having been appointed a member of the National Council on the Arts.



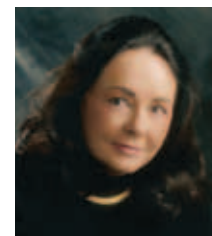
Lee Martin | 4 p.m. Tuesday, April 5, UC theater

Lee Martin is the author of the novels *The Bright Forever*, a finalist for the 2006 Pulitzer Prize in Fiction; *River of Heaven*; *Quakertown*; and the forthcoming *Break the Skin*. He also has published two memoirs, *From Our House* and *Turning Bones*, and another memoir, *Such a Life*, is set to appear in 2012. His first book was the short story collection *The Least You Need to Know*. He is the co-editor of *Passing the Word: Writers on Their Mentors*. He is the winner of the Mary McCarthy Prize in Short Fiction and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Ohio Arts Council. He teaches in the MFA program at Ohio State University, where he was the winner of the 2006 Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching.



Ginger Murchison | 4 p.m. Monday, April 4, UC theater

After retiring from a thirty-year teaching career, Ginger Murchison, together with Thomas Lux, founded Poetry at Tech, Georgia Tech's poetry program and reading series, for which she served seven years as associate director and currently serves as one of its McEver Poetry Chairs. A two-time Pushcart nominee and a graduate of Warren Wilson's MFA program for writers, she has published poems in several journals and a dozen anthologies. Her first collection of poems, *Out Here*, was published by Jeanne Duval Editions in 2008. She is editor of the acclaimed *Cortland Review*. She and her husband, Clyde Mynatt, make their home in both Atlanta and Sanibel Island, Florida.



Susan Vreeland | 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 6, UC theater



Before publishing her first novel, *What Love Sees*, Susan Vreeland had a long career as a public school teacher and prolific feature writer on art and travel. She is the author of several well-known art-related novels, including the *Girl in Hyacinth Blue* (made into a Hallmark Hall of Fame production in 2003), which traces an alleged Vermeer painting through the centuries, revealing its influence on those who possessed it; *The Passion of Artemisia*; *The Forest Lover*; *Life Studies*; and *Luncheon of the Boating Party*. Her most recent book, *Clara and Mr. Tiffany*, was published in January. Her many awards and honors include several books on the *New York Times* list of best sellers, an International Dublin Literary Award nomination, and many others. *The Girl in Hyacinth Blue* was a finalist for the Book Sense Book of the Year selection, *Independent Publisher* magazine's Storyteller of the Year Award and *ForeWord* magazine's Best Novel of the Year Award. Her work has been translated into twenty-five languages.

Frank X Walker | 4 p.m. Wednesday, April 6, UC theater

Frank X Walker is the author of four poetry collections: *When Winter Come: The Ascension of York*; *Black Box: Poems*; *Buffalo Dance: The Journey of York*, which won the Lillian Smith Book Award in 2004; and *Affrilachia*. A 2005 recipient of the Lannan Literary Fellowship in Poetry, he serves as writer-in-residence and lecturer of English at Northern Kentucky University. Of Walker's work, Ricky L. Jones, the author of *Black Haze*, has said, "The work of Frank X Walker is an eclectic, powerful mixture of liberating style, profound insight and unwavering organic connection to the intellectual, political and cultural struggles of a people. He stands in the tradition of Du Bois, McKay, Robeson, Hughes and other great writers, poets and performers whose contributions have transcended time and space to give generation after generation pause and hope."



Alan Weisman | 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 7, Coulter recital hall

Alan Weisman's most recent book, *The World Without Us*, a best seller translated into thirty languages, was named the best nonfiction book of 2007 by both *Time Magazine* and *Entertainment Weekly*; the No. 1 nonfiction audiobook of 2007 by iTunes; a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award in Nonfiction; a finalist for the Orion Book Award; and a Book Sense 2008 Honor Book. His previous books include *An Echo in My Blood*; *Gaviotas: A Village to Reinvent the World*; and *La Frontera: The United States Border with Mexico*. He also wrote the introduction for *The World We Have* by Thich Nhat Hanh. A senior producer for Homelands Productions, Weisman's documentaries have aired on National Public Radio, Public Radio International and American Public Media.



Find links to readers' guides, Facebook discussion pages and more at www.litfestival.org.