Brochure: 23rd Annual Literary Festival, 2000: A New World

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A New World

"O brave new world
that has such people in it."
—Shakespeare

23rd Annual Literary Festival October 2–6, 2000 Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA
The first Old Dominion University Literary Festival of this century, of this millennium, will be one of the most exciting ones we've ever had—a showcase for original and mesmerizing writers who represent the fullness and diversity of contemporary American literature. Our "new world" will feature dramatists and poets, nonfiction writers and novelists, writers of hypertext and photojournalists, newly emerging MFA students and Pulitzer Prize winners. Three of the most important names in contemporary American fiction—Tim O'Brien, Steven Millhauser, and Ernest Gaines—will be here.

Old Dominion's 23rd Annual Literary Festival is about new worlds. Whether it be in sonnet form or in cyberspace, true literature is always a new world, struggling with themes that have haunted us in the darkness of the cave or the shadow of the spaceship. The writers who will participate in this year's Festival all trace the path between illusion and reality, allowing us to imagine more deeply and awake to more complex possibilities for the future.

As Shakespeare said, "We are such stuff as dreams are made on." With us this week are the makers of dreams, mythmakers, truth tellers, writers who will bring us to a profound wakefulness.

It is a special pleasure to recognize Ernest Gaines's participation in the 23rd Annual Old Dominion University Literary Festival as a Presidential Lecturer. He is one of our most important American writers, working in the tradition of James Weldon Johnson, Ralph Ellison, and Zora Neale Hurston. The world into which Ernest Gaines was born—on January 15, 1933—is essentially the world which he has distilled into the dense and complex world of his six novels and his stories. The land around River Lake Plantation—near New Roads, Pointe Coupee, Louisiana—is the land around the Pichot Plantation, near Bayonne, St. Raphael Parish, presented in A Lesson Before Dying. The black community in which Gaines grew up became "the quarter" of his 1993 novel. It also provided the setting and social matrix of many of his previous works. A Lesson Before Dying won the 1993 National Book Critics Circle Award for fiction, and was made into a movie, as was his novel The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman. Gaines was a Wallace Stegner, Guggenheim, and MacArthur Foundation fellow, and was a recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts grant. As one critic remarked of the main character in The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman, "In this woman Ernest Gaines has created a legendary figure, a woman equipped to stand beside William Faulkner's Dilsey in The Sound And The Fury." Josh Greenfeld of Life described the novel as "Stunning. I know of no black novel about the South that exudes quite the same refreshing mix of wit and wrath, imagination and indignation, misery and poetry."

Paula Allen's photographs documenting women's invisible histories around the world have been widely acclaimed for nearly two decades. Her work has appeared in U.S. News & World Report, The New York Times Magazine, Paris Match, and Art in America among others. Her long term documentary projects include the war and aftermath in Kosovo, the efforts of Chilean mothers of the "disappeared" to find the remains of their loved ones, "The Troubles" in northern Ireland, and underground nightlife in Havana. Flores en el desierto / Flowers in the Desert, her bilingual book on the women of Calama, Chile, was published in 1999. She is a recipient of both a New York Foundation for the Arts
Fellowship and a Montana Committee for the Humanities grant for her work. She is currently collaborating with a writer and film crew in Africa and Asia to document the controversy, misery, ecstasy, and pain surrounding women’s bodies.

Ron Brooks is a graduate of the Old Dominion University MFA program. He teaches writing at the University of Oklahoma. His poems have recently been published in *Kiosk, Birmingham Poetry Review*, and *Coal City Review*.

Anthony Enns is a graduate of the Hollins writing program and received his MFA from Old Dominion University in 1997. His fiction has appeared in such journals as *Kinesis, 100 words*, and *Impossible Object*. He was the recipient of the Max Steele Writing Award and the Samuel Seldon Playwriting Award and has served as fiction editor for *Reasonable Earthquakes*, a journal of new surrealist writing. He is currently working on a novel, *The Father Machine*, and teaching in Iowa City.

Fran Gordon, director of The National Arts Club’s PAGE reading series, is the author of *Paisley Girl*, a novel. She is one of four finalists for Quality Paperback Book Club’s New Voices Award, and has been a visiting writer to the American Academy in Rome. She teaches in the English Department at Rutgers University and in the Writing Program at The New School University.

Terrance Hayes is the author of *Muscular Music* published by Tia Chucha Press in the spring of 1999. His poems have recently appeared in *The Beloit Poetry Journal, Chelsea, Callaloo, Green Mountains Review* and various anthologies of emerging writers. He has received a Red Brick Review Award, a Chester H. Jones Foundation award, and most recently, a Whiting Emerging Writers Award for his poetry. He is currently an assistant professor of English at Xavier University in New Orleans.

Luisa A. Igloria is currently a visiting associate professor at Old Dominion University. She is a poet, essayist, and fictionist, and has five published books including *Blood Sacrifice*, which received the 1998 National Book Award for Poetry in the Philippines. She has been the recipient of the Carlos Palanca Award for Literature, the Philippine equivalent of the Pulitzer Prize. Carlos Angeles has praised her writing saying, “Her work contains some of the most extraordinary and most polished poetry written by a Filipino poet writing in English today.”

Michael Joyce is perhaps best known as the originator of an art form. *The New York Times* called his *afternoon* “the granddaddy of hypertext fictions,” while the *Toronto Globe and Mail* said that it “is to the hypertext interactive novel what the Gutenberg Bible is to publishing.” Two long hyperfictions, *Twilight, A Symphony*, on CD-ROM, and *Twelve Blue*, on the World Wide Web, were both published in 1996 by Eastgate. Three shorter hyperfictions include *WOE, Lucy’s Sister,* and *Lasting Image*. An earlier print novel, *The War Outside Ireland*, won the Great Lakes New Writers Award in 1983. He also has published two collections of essays—*Othermindedness: the emergence of network culture* (2000) and *Of Two Minds: Hypertext Pedagogy and Poetics* (1995). He is currently associate professor of English and director of the Center for Electronic Learning and Teaching at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, NY.

A former social worker, Judy Mercier has an MFA in creative writing from Old Dominion University. She has taught writing and literature courses at Christopher Newport University, Old Dominion, and St. Leo University. Her articles, profiles, and reviews have appeared in *Tidewater Directions, Virginia Woman,* and *Nova*. Her short story, “The Women from Catherine Street” was published recently in *Turning: Writing on Women’s Transformations*. She recently completed *I Won’t Say Heaven: Notes on an Outer Banks Village*, a collection of nonfiction narratives about Duck, North Carolina. She is the co-editor of *Battle Cries on the Home Front: Violence in the Military Family*.

Steven Millhauser is the author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *Martin Dressler* (1996), which was also a finalist for the National Book Award. In his most recent novella, *Enchanted Night* (1999), he captures the suspended dreams and desires of a sweltering summer night in southern Connecticut. He is also the author of the critically acclaimed *The Knife Thrower and Other Stories* (1998) and *Edwin Mullhouse: The Life and Death of an American Writer*. Walter Clemons in *Newsweek* called *Edwin Mullhouse* “a major debut.” Richard Locke in *Life* said it was “Astounding and delightful . . . enormously funny and moving. . . . a thoroughly
original, brilliant first novel.” The New York Times Book Review said it “soars with the breath-held clarity of true fiction.” Critics have declared that Millhauser’s work has a “resonance and fairy tale allure.” According to Kirkus, he is that rarity in American fiction: “the writer who keeps getting better and better.” He teaches at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York.

Tim O’Brien is the author of Going After Cacciato, which received the National Book Award in fiction, and The Things They Carried, which received France’s Prix du Meilleur Libre Etranger and was a finalist for both the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award. In the Lake of the Woods, a work of fiction published in 1994, received the James Fenimore Cooper Prize from the Society of American Historians and was named best novel of the year by Time magazine. His other books are If I Die in a Combat Zone, Northern Lights, The Nuclear Age, and Tomcat in Love. His short fiction has appeared in numerous literary and popular magazines, including Esquire, Harper’s, The Atlantic, and The New Yorker, and in several editions of The Best American Short Stories and The O. Henry Prize Stories. In 1987, he received the National Magazine Award for his short story, “The Things They Carried,” and in 1999 the story was selected for inclusion in The Best American Short Stories of the Century edited by John Updike. O’Brien is the recipient of literary awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Guggenheim Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. He has been elected to both the Society of American Historians and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He currently holds a chair in creative writing at Southwest Texas State University.

Michael Pearson is the director of the Creative Writing Program at Old Dominion University. He has published essays and stories in The New York Times, The Boston Globe, The Washington Post, The Southern Literary Journal, and Creative Nonfiction, among others. He is the author of four books. His first book, Imagined Places: Journeys Into Literary America (1991) was listed by The New York Times Book Review as one of the notable books of the year. His new book, Dreaming of Columbus: A Boyhood in the Bronx, was published in 1999. Willie Morris, the former editor of Harper’s, said, “Michael Pearson is one of our nation’s finest memoirists. Dreaming of Columbus... should give him the reputation among American writers he so richly deserves.”

Janet Peery’s stories have appeared in Best American Stories, Pushcart Prize Anthology, American Short Fiction, Shenandoah, and other magazines. Her first book, Alligator Dance, appeared in 1993; her novel, The River Beyond the World (1996), was a National Book Award Finalist. She has received awards and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, the Whiting Foundation, and the Guggenheim Foundation. Dorothy Allison, in The New York Times Book Review, said, “The people in Janet’s first collection of stories pull you in, startle you, stay with you long after you have finished the book . . . .” Peery teaches at Old Dominion University.

Michael Parker is the author of the novels Hello Down There, which was named a notable book of the year by The New York Times, and The Geographical Cure, which won the 1994 Sir Walter Raleigh Award. He has published fiction and nonfiction in various journals including Five Points, The Georgia Review, The Washington Post, and Carolina Quarterly. A new novel, Towns Without Rivers, is forthcoming from HarperCollins. Parker is an associate professor of English at University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where he teaches both graduate and undergraduate classes in fiction writing and contemporary literature.

Bino A. Realuyo was born and raised in Manila, Philippines, and studied international relations in the U.S. and South America. His poems have appeared in several literary journals and anthologies in the U.S. and the Philippines including The Kenyon Review, Manoa, New Letters, and The Nation. He is the recipient of the 1998 Lucille Medwick Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America. His acclaimed debut novel, The Umbrella Country, was included in Booklist Magazine’s “Ten Best First Novels of 1999.” He lives in New York City and works in adult education.
Sheri Reynolds's first novel, *Bitterroot Landing* (1994), was nominated for the GRANTA Young American Author Award. Her second novel, *The Rapture of Canaan* (1995), was an Oprah Book Club selection. Her third novel, *A Gracious Plenty*, was published in 1997 to high acclaim. Publishers Weekly said of it, "Reynolds' lyricism and the gentle voice of her heroine carry this poignant but redemptive story." She teaches at Old Dominion University.


Gary Short has been a Stegner Fellow at Stanford and a resident of the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown. His first book of poetry was *Theory of Twilight*. His second book of poems, *Flying Over Sonny Liston*, received The Western States Book Award. He is a visiting assistant professor at Old Dominion University.

Brian Silberman's play *Manifest* received the 1998 Clauder Prize and premiered in 1999 at the Portland State Company. His one-act plays about orphans and abandonment in a small Virginia town, *Walkin' Backward* and *The Gospel According to Toots Pope*, received awards from Arena Stage, The American Alliance for Theater Education, the Kennedy Center, and The Poets' Theatre, among others. His other plays include *Sugar Down Billie Hoak*, produced Off-Broadway and in Chicago in 1997, and *Feral Music*, which recently premiered at Ohio State University. Silberman served in residence at The Edward F. Albee Foundation and The James Thurber House and has taught at New York University, Ohio State University, and Southern Illinois University. He currently teaches at Old Dominion University.

Laurie Stone is the author of the novel *Starting with Serge*, a collection of literary memoirs, *Close to the Bone*, and *Laughing in the Dark: A Decade of Subversive Comedy*. She was a columnist for *The Village Voice* for twenty-five years and her work has been published in *Ms. Magazine, New York Woman, The New York Times Book Review, The New Yorker, The Utne Reader*, and *Art Forum*. Stone is the recipient of grants from The New York Foundation for the Arts and The MacDowell Colony, and she received the 1996 Nona Balakain Excellence in Reviewing Award from the National Book Critics Circle. Stone is currently writing short fiction and a second novel, *Apart from Sex*. She will be Old Dominion's Writer In Residence for fall 2000.

Le Thi Diem Thuy is a writer and solo performance artist. Born in Vietnam and raised in Southern California, she currently resides in Massachusetts. Her prose and poetry have appeared in *The Massachusetts Review, Harper's Magazine*, and *The Best American Essays of 1997*, as well as in anthologies *The Very Inside, Half & Half, and Watermark*. Her solo performance works, *Red Fiery Summer* and *the bodies between us*, have been presented at, among other venues, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the International Women Playwrights' Festival in Galway, Ireland, and the New World Theater at the University of Massachusetts. A book of prose titled *The Gangster We Are All Looking For* is forthcoming from Alfred A. Knopf.

Christin Lore Weber grew up in Minnesota, leaving home after high school to enter a convent. A nun for fourteen years, she taught English and religion in high school and junior college. After leaving the convent, she continued her education, receiving a master of arts degree in theology and a doctor of ministry degree. Her novel, *Altar Music*, was published in 2000. Nonfiction books include *Circle of Mysteries* and *Finding Stone*. She lives in Oregon.
FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

MONDAY, OCTOBER 2
11 A.M.  LE THI DIEM THUY  
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center/Chandler Recital Hall

2 P.M.  CHRISTIN LORE WEBER  
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center/Chandler Recital Hall

8 P.M.  PAULA ALLEN  
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center/Chandler Recital Hall

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3
11 A.M.  MICHAEL PARKER  
Webb Center, Hampton/Newport News Room

2 P.M.  PANEL DISCUSSION: THE FUTURE OF THE BOOK.  
BINO REALUYO, LAURIE STONE, TIM O'BRIEN  
Webb Center, River Rooms

4 P.M.  BINO REALUYO  
Webb Center, Hampton/Newport News Room

8 P.M.  TIM O'BRIEN  
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center/Chandler Recital Hall

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4
11 A.M.  FRAN GORDON  
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center/Chandler Recital Hall

2 P.M.  MICHAEL JOYCE  
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center/Chandler Recital Hall

4 P.M.  PANEL DISCUSSION: NEW WRITING FOR A NEW WORLD.  
COLLIN BROOKE, JOEL ENGLISH, MICHAEL JOYCE, FRAN GORDON  
Webb Center, Hampton/Newport News Room

8 P.M.  STEVEN MILLHAUSER  
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center/Chandler Recital Hall

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5
4 P.M.  TERRANCE HAYES  
Webb Center, Hampton/Newport News Room

8 P.M.  ERNEST GAINES, PRESIDENT'S LECTURE SERIES SPEAKER  
Mills Godwin, Jr. Life Sciences Building, Auditorium

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6
11 A.M.  MFA GRADUATES JUDY MERCIER, ANTHONY ENNS, RON BROOKS  
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center/Chandler Recital Hall

2 P.M.  LAURIE STONE  
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center/Chandler Recital Hall

4 P.M.  MFA FACULTY LUISA IGLORIA, MICHAEL PEARSON, JANET PEERY, SHERI REYNOLDS, TIM SEIBLES, GARY SHORT  
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center/Chandler Recital Hall

8 P.M.  BRIAN SILBERMAN  
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center/Chandler Recital Hall

Campus Map—Parking for all events is available in Lot 27, which is adjacent to the Health and Physical Education Building and across the street from the Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center.

We would like to thank the Office of the President and the President's Lecture Series, the Hugo A. Owens African-American Cultural Center, the College of Arts and Letters, the Department of English, the Department of Foreign Languages, the Institute for the Study of Minority Issues, Norfolk Commission for the Arts and Humanities, the Office of the Provost, and the Department of Women's Studies.

Special Appreciation—Old Dominion University thanks Mrs. Edie White for her longtime support of creative endeavors, in particular for establishing an endowment for the Literary Festival in memory of her husband, Dr. Forrest P. White.