

Old Dominion University's 21st Annual Literary Festival

Electric Voice Coming of Age





We think of electricity as a utility, the power that allows us to turn on the light or to make machines work. We recognize its undeniable might in storms. It is often forgotten, however, that inside each of us electric current is constantly moving, that the body itself is invisibly charged.

When Walt Whitman wrote, "I sing the body electric," I believe he was testifying to this and to the truth that the human voice and the syllables that make its meanings are sweet embodiments of the current that sustain our humanity.

Whenever a nation gives in to fear and forces the yearning voices to be silent, that place goes dark. To keep the light, to clarify the heart, there are those who spend their lives finding the words that conduct this quiet lightning, that turn the voice electric.

Tim Seibles
Literary Festival Director



Robert Pinsky,

a prize-winning poet, essayist and translator, became the 39th United

States Poet Laureate in 1997. The author of five books of poetry, including most recently, *The Figured Wheel: New and Collected Poems 1966-1996*, Pinsky propelled Dante onto the best-seller lists with his acclaimed 1994 verse translation of the *Inferno*. He currently teaches in the Graduate Writing Program at Boston University and is a regular contributor to *The NewsHour* with Jim Lehrer, reading poems linked to news events. Pinsky is also the poetry editor of the weekly Internet magazine *Slate*. "He has commented that computers and poetry share two key attributes," reports the *New York Times*, "Speed and memory."

In addition to his poetry, Professor Pinsky is the author of prose works including *The Situation of Poetry* and *Poetry and the World*, as well as a translation of *The Separate Notebooks* by Nobel laureate Czeslaw Milosz. His translation of *The Inferno of Dante* was awarded the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize and the Harold Morton Landon Translation Award, given by the Academy of American Poets. In 1997 Robert Pinsky was awarded the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize by *The Nation* and The Academy of American Poets. In the fall of 1998, he will publish *The Sounds of Poetry: A Brief Guide* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), and an anthology of poems about heartbreak called *Handbook of Heartbreak* (William Morrow).

THIS PROGRAM IS FUNDED IN PART BY A GRANT FROM THE NORFOLK COMMISSION ON THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES.



Maria Luisa Cariño

is a poet, essayist and writer of fiction. She is the recipient of a writing

grant for residency at the Hawthornden Castle International Retreat for Writers in Scotland and a recipient of a 1998 Illinois Arts Council Literary Award for her poem "The Other Annunciation." She also received a British Council grant for the study of literature at Cambridge University. Her poems have appeared in such journals as *Poetry*, *TriQuarterly*, *Bomb*, *The Black Warrior Review*, *Ruptures* and the *Asian Pacific American Journal*. She has also published extensively in the Philippines in magazines such as *Caracoa*, *Ani*, *The Philippines Free Press*, and *Mirror Weekly*. Her most recent books are *Blood Sacrifice* and *In the Garden of the Three Islands*. As of this fall Maria Luisa Cariño joins Old Dominion University's faculty as a visiting associate professor in Filipino and Filipino-American Studies. She will also teach in the English Department.

Jacqueline Woodson

is the author of a number of novels for adults, young adults and children including *Autobiography of a Family Photo*, *I Hadn't Meant To Tell You This*, and *If You Come Softly*. She is a recipient of the Kenyon Review Award for Literary Excellence in Fiction, three American Library Association Awards, and two Jane Addams Peace Award Honors. She has been a fellow at the MacDowell Colony and the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, Massachusetts. She currently resides in Brooklyn, New York.



John McPhee

was born in Princeton, New Jersey, and was educated at Princeton University and

Cambridge University. His writing career began at *Time* Magazine and led to his long association with *The New Yorker*, where he has been a staff writer since 1965. The same year he published his first book, *A Sense of Where You Are*, with Farrar, Straus & Giroux and soon followed with *The Headmaster* (1966), *Oranges* (1967), *The Pine Barrens* (1968), *A Roomful of Hovings and Other Profiles* (collection, 1969), *The Crofter and the Laird* (1969), *Levels of the Game* (1970), *Encounters with the Archdruid* (1972), *The Deltoid Pumpkin Seed* (1973), *The Curve of Binding Energy* (1974), *Pieces of the Frame* (collection, 1975) and *The Survival of the Bark Canoe* (1975). Both *Encounters with the Archdruid* and *The Curve of Binding Energy* were nominated for National Book Awards in the category of science.

Since 1977, the year in which McPhee received the Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Farrar, Straus & Giroux has published *Giving Good Weight* (collection, 1979), *Basin and Range* (1981), *In Suspect Terrain* (1983), *Rising from the Plains* (1986), *The Control of Nature* (1989), *Assembling California* (1993), *The Second John McPhee Reader* (1996), *Irons in the Fire* (1997) and several other works.

Tony Hoagland's

first book, *Sweet Ruin*, was winner of the 1992 Brittingham Prize and published by University of Wisconsin Press; his second book, *Donkey Gospel*, is just out from Graywolf Press and was the 1998 selection of the James Laughlin Prize from the Academy of American Poets. His work has won two grants from the National Endowment of the Arts and has appeared in many magazines and anthologies. He teaches at New Mexico State University and in the Warren Wilson College master of fine arts program.





Scott Cairns

has had his poems appear in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Paris Review*, *Image* and

The New Republic, and has been anthologized in *Upholding Mystery* (Oxford University Press, 1996) and *Best Spiritual Writing* (Harper Collins 1998). His earlier poetry collections include *Figures for the Ghost* (1994), *The Translation of Babel* (1990) and *The Theology of Doubt* (1985). With W. Scott Olsen, he co-edited *The Sacred Place* (1996), an anthology of poetry and prose. His most recent collection, *Recovered Body*, was published in August 1998 by George Braziller Inc. He has taught American literature and creative writing at Kansas State University, Westminster College, University of North Texas, and now serves on the faculty of Old Dominion University.



Jane Bernstein

is the author of *Departures*, a novel, *Loving Rachel*, a memoir, and *Seven Minutes*

in Heaven, a young-adult novel based on a screenplay she co-wrote for the Warner Brothers movie of the same name. Her essays and short fiction have been published in such places as *The New York Times Magazine*, *Creative Nonfiction*, *Glamour*, *Poets & Writers* and *Prairie Schooner*. Recent projects include a screenplay based on the life of voting rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer for director Jonathan Kaplan, and an adaptation of the Kaye Gibbons novel *A Cure for Dreams* for Firebird Films. Honors include a National Endowment Fellowship in Creative Writing, a Pennsylvania State Council on the Arts Fellowships in Media Arts, and two New Jersey State Council of the Arts Fellowship in Fiction. She has just completed a book called *Twilight Time — A Murder and its Aftermath*, which is about her sister's murder in 1966 and its repercussions for her family.

Jane received her master of fine arts from Columbia University and is an associate professor of English and Creative Writing at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



Nicole Brossard

was born in Montreal in 1943. Poet, novelist and essayist, she

has published more than 20 books since 1965. Among those: *A book*, *Daydream Mechanic*, *Picture Theory*, *French Kiss*, *The Aerial Letter*, and *Mauve Desert*. By her ludic, subversive and innovative work on language, Brossard has influenced a whole generation on the questions of post-modernist and feminist writing. She also co-founded the important literary periodicals *La Barre du Jour* (1965) and *La Nouvelle Barre du Jour* (1977). In 1976, she co-directed the film *Some American Feminists*. Ms. Brossard was twice awarded Canada's most prestigious prize for poetry, the Governor General's Award, in 1974 and in 1984. She was also attributed Le Grand Prix de Poésie 1989 de la Fondation Les Forges, and in 1991, she was awarded le Prix Athanase-David. Her work has been translated in English, Italian, Spanish and German. American critic Karen Gould has written: "The contributions of Nicole Brossard to contemporary literature and literary theory and their inevitable intersection through feminist thought have been visionary."

Her most recent novel *Baroque at Dawn* (translated by Patricia Claxton) has just been published by McClelland & Steward.

Sena Jeter Naslund

is author of two short-story collections, *Ice Skating at the North Pole* (Ampersand) and *The Disobedience of Water* (Godine), and two novels, *The Animal Way to Love* (Ampersand) and *Sherlock in Love* (Godine), which has been translated into Japanese and German and was a Book-of-the-Month Club Quality Paperbacks reprint. A recipient of the Lawrence Fiction Prize, and awards from the NEA and the Kentucky Foundation for Women, she founded and continues to edit *The Louisville Review* and Fleur-de-lis Press. She is a University of Louisville Distinguished Teaching Professor and also teaches in the master of fine arts in writing program of Vermont College.



Jack Myers

born in Massachusetts, is Professor of English and Director of

Creative Writing at Southern Methodist University; he also teaches in the low-residency Vermont College master of fine arts program in writing. He is co-editor of *New American Poets of the 90's*, the author of six volumes of poetry, the latest being *Blindsided* (David R. Godine, 1993), and co-editor of five other reference works on poetry, including *A Profile of American Poetry in the 20th Century*, *The Longman Dictionary of Poetic Terms*, and the CD-anthology, *Leaning House Poets*, Vol. 1.

He was a 1985 National Poetry Series Open Competition winner for his book, *As Long As You're Happy* (selected by Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney), and has received two Texas Institute of Letters awards and two National Endowment for the Arts fellowships.

Anthony Grooms

is the author of *Ice Poems* (Poetry Atlanta Press) and *Trouble No More: Stories*

(LaQuesta Press). Shorter works have appeared in *Callaloo*, *African American Review*, and other journals. He has received awards from the City of Atlanta, the State of Georgia, Breadloaf Writers Workshop and the National Endowment for the Arts. In 1996, *Trouble No More* won the Lillian Smith Award from the Southern Regional Council. Novelist Marita Golden noted that "Grooms writes about the South, civil rights, home folks, black and white people and anything he wants to with more love, humor and finely-honed skill than I have seen in a long time." *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* said, "Groom's stories take us to the center of the phenomenon (civil rights movement) with an honesty and courage long overdue."

Grooms is an Associate Professor of Creative Writing at Kennesaw State University in Georgia.



Li-Young Lee

burst into the American literary consciousness with the

publication of *Rose* in 1986. Fusing memory, family, culture and history, he draws on the language of the people — American and Southeast Asian — and on the stories that sustain their pasts.

Li-Young Lee was born in 1957 in Jakarta, Indonesia, of Chinese parents. In 1959, his father, after spending a year as a political prisoner in President Sukarno's jails, fled Indonesia with his family. Between 1959 and 1964 the Lee family traveled throughout Hong Kong, Macau and Japan until arriving in America.

Li-Young Lee's poems have appeared in a variety of major literary journals, including *American Poetry Review*, *Grand Street*, *The Iowa Review*, *Ironwood*, *Ploughshares* and *TriQuarterly*.

He has received several honors, among them a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, a Writer's Award from the Mrs. Giles Whiting Foundation and creative writing grants from the Illinois Arts Council, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts.

Rose won the New York University's 1986 Delmore Schwartz Memorial Poetry Award and *The City In Which I Love You* was the 1990 Lamont Poetry Selection of the Academy of American Poets. Li-Young Lee currently lives in Chicago, Illinois.

SPECIAL THANKS

Old Dominion University would like to thank Mrs. Edie White, a long-time friend of Arts & Letters, for establishing an endowment for the Literary Festival in memory of her husband and prominent local physician, Dr. Forrest P. White.

Individuals interested in contributing to the Literary Festival Endowment are invited to contact the Dean of Arts and Letters.

Schedule of Events

Tuesday, October 6th

- 2 p.m. *Tony Grooms*, fiction, poetry
Webb University Center
Hampton-Newport News Room
- 3:30 p.m. *Jane Bernstein*, non-fiction
Webb University Center
Hampton-Newport News Room
- 8 p.m. *Robert Pinsky*, United States Poet Laureate
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center
Chandler Recital Hall

Wednesday, October 7th

- 10 a.m. *Jacqueline Woodson*, fiction
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center
Chandler Recital Hall
- 2 p.m. *Jack Myers*, poetry
Webb University Center
River Rooms
- 3:30 p.m. *Jack Myers, Jacqueline Woodson*
Webb University Center
River Rooms
PANEL DISCUSSION — Saying What You
Mean: The Art of Honesty
- 8 p.m. *Nicole Brossard*, poetry, fiction, non-fiction
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center
Chandler Recital Hall

Thursday, October 8th

- 10 a.m. *Scott Cairns*, poetry
Webb University Center
Hampton-Newport News Room
- 2 p.m. *Tony Hoagland*, poetry
Webb University Center:
Hampton-Newport News Room
- 3:30 p.m. *Li-Young Lee, Maria Luisa Cariño*
Webb University Center
Hampton-Newport News Room
PANEL DISCUSSION — A New Dialogue: Asian
and Asian-American Writers in America
- 8 p.m. *Li-Young Lee*, poetry
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center
Chandler Recital Hall

Friday, October 9th

- 10 a.m. *Tony Hoagland, Sena Naslund, Michael Pearson*
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center
Chandler Recital Hall
PANEL DISCUSSION — Who Do You Believe?
Three Genres, Three Takes?
- 2 p.m. *Sena Naslund*, fiction
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center
Chandler Recital Hall
- 3:30 p.m. *Maria Luisa Cariño*, poetry, non-fiction
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center
Chandler Recital Hall
- 8 p.m. *John McPhee*, non-fiction
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.

THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING DEPARTMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS

African-American Cultural Center
Women's Studies Department
Department of Foreign Languages
Multicultural Student Services
Office of the Dean of The College
of Arts & Letters
Institute for the Study
of Minority Issues
English Department
Office of the President
Student Activities and
Leadership Office

