The Lie That Tells The Truth

34th Annual Literary Festival

October 3-7, 2011

Old Dominion University

IDEA FUSION
Among the myriad reasons why we read, we do so in search of truth: historical truth, emotional truth, philosophical truth. Yet the artist Pablo Picasso wrote in 1925 that “Art is not truth. Art is a lie that makes us realize truth, at least the truth that is given us to understand. The artist must know the manner whereby to convince others of the truthfulness of his lies.”

In the foundry of creation, ideas are melted and recast in shapes that fit an artist’s vision. This process adds to and subtracts from the world; it both magnifies and excludes. As Picasso says, it tells lies. Sometimes the lies can soothe us by affirming what we believe; at other times they disturb us by homing in on truths we struggle to deny.

The writers and artists at Old Dominion University’s 34th Annual Literary Festival, by means of poetry, plays, photography, essays, memoirs, music and fiction, will present some of the truths they perceive. Playwright Young Jean Lee says her work “is about struggling to achieve something in the face of failure and incompetence and not-knowing.” Journalist Megan Stack, in the hauntingly titled Every Man In This Village Is A Liar, asks what is knowable and unknowable about war. Poet Naomi Shihab Nye describes poetry as “a way of sitting quietly with words and letting them lead us somewhere.”

We invite you to be led toward knowing, toward truth, by this year’s world-class lineup of writers and artists.

John McManus and Michael Pearson
2011 Festival Directors

Young Jean Lee
Monday, October 3, 2:00 p.m.
Chandler Recital Hall, Diehn Fine and Performing Arts

Young Jean Lee has been called “one of the best experimental playwrights in America” by Time Out New York. She has written and directed seven shows in New York and toured her work to over 20 cities around the world. She is a member of New Dramatists and 13P. Her plays have been published by Theatre Communications Group and by Samuel French. She is the recipient of a 2007 Emerging Playwright OBIE Award, a 2009 Creative Capital Grant, and a 2010 Prize in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Porochista Khakpour
Monday, October 3, 4:00 p.m.
Chandler Recital Hall, Diehn Fine and Performing Arts

Porochista Khakpour was born in Tehran, Iran, and raised in Los Angeles. Her writing has appeared in The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, The Daily Beast and The Village Voice, and publications around the world. Her debut novel Sons and Other Flammable Objects — a New York Times “Editor’s Choice,” Chicago Tribune “Fall’s Best,” and 2007 California Book Award winner — is now in paperback. She recently finished her second novel. She has been awarded fellowships from Johns Hopkins and Northwestern universities and the Sewanee Writers’ Conference, among others.

Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno
Monday, October 3, 7:30 p.m.
The Words and Music of Paul Bowles
Performers TBA
Chandler Recital Hall, Diehn Fine and Performing Arts

Best known for his biography of Paul Bowles, An Invisible Spectator (1990), Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno has also written numerous texts on learning or teaching the English language. His translations include the work of Federico Garcia Lorca, Chilam Balam and Rafael Alberti. He has also written The Continual Pilgrimage: American Writers in Paris, 1945-1950 (1992) and a biography of e. e. cummings (2004).

Yola Monakhov
Tuesday, October 4, 12:30 p.m.
Chandler Recital Hall, Diehn Fine and Performing Arts

Yola Monakhov was born in Moscow in 1974. She completed her MFA in 2007 and her MA in Italian literature in 1998, both at Columbia University, and worked internationally as a
photojournalist in the intervening years. Her solo exhibitions include “Photography After Dante” and “Once Out of Nature.” Her awards include a 2008 fellowship from Greve in Chianti (Fl) / Macina di San Cresci. She is on the faculty at Columbia, Pace University, International Center of Photography, and LaGuardia Community College.

Renée Olander
Tuesday, October 4, 3:00 p.m.
University Village Bookstore

Renée Olander’s poems, essays, reviews and interviews have appeared in publications including Verse and Universe: Poems about Science and Mathematics, Artword Quarterly, Controlled Burn, Sistersong: Women Across Cultures, 5AM, The Café Review, 13th Moon and The Writer’s Chronicle. In 2010, A Few Spells, a chapbook collection of her poems, was released. Recipient of the Kate Smith Award for Poetry and a Pushcart Prize nomination, Olander has taught and directed programs at Old Dominion University for many years.

Mark Halliday
Tuesday, October 4, 7:30 p.m.
Chandler Recital Hall, Diehn Fine and Performing Arts


Elizabeth Searle
Wednesday, October 5, 12:30 p.m.
Virginia Beach Higher Education Center, Room 244A

Elizabeth Searle is the author of a new novel, Girl Held in Home (2011) and three previous books of fiction: Celebrities in Disgrace, a novella which was produced as a film in 2010; A Four-Sided Bed, a novel nominated for an ALA book award; and a story collection, My Body to You, winner of the Iowa Short Fiction Prize. Searle’s theater works based on the Harding/Kerrigan skating scandal have drawn national media attention; a new production of “Tonya and Nancy: The Rock Opera” is being produced in Boston in 2011.

Naomi Shihab Nye
Wednesday, October 5, 7:30 p.m.
The George M. and Linda H. Kaufman Theatre at the Chrysler Museum

Naomi Shihab Nye is the author and/or editor of more than 25 volumes. Her books of poetry include 19 Varieties of Gazelle: Poems of the Middle East (a finalist for the National Book Award), A Maze Me: Poems for Girls, Red Suitcase, Words Under the Words, Fuel, and You & Yours. Her poems for young adults, Honeybee, won the 2008 Arab American Book Award in the children’s/young adult category. Two new books are forthcoming in winter 2012: There Is No Long Distance Now (a collection of very short stories) and Transfer (a book of poetry and prose).

Jeffrey Lent
Thursday, October 6, 12:30 p.m.
Chandler Recital Hall, Diehn Fine and Performing Arts

Jeffrey Lent was born in Vermont, grew up on dairy farms there and in western New York State, and lived for many years in North Carolina. His novel In the Fall was a national bestseller reprinted four times in its first
month of publication, and was a New York Times Book Review Notable Book for 2000; his follow-up, *Lost Nation*, was a summer reading pick of The Washington Post and USA Today. Both novels have been widely translated and are currently under film option. His third and most recent novel is *A Peculiar Grace*.

**Scott Heim**  
Thursday, October 6, 3:00 p.m.  
University Village Bookstore

Scott Heim is the author of the HarperCollins novels *We Disappear, In Awe*, and *Mysterious Skin*, which was made into a 2005 film by Gregg Araki. He has won fellowships from the Sundance Screenwriters Lab and the London Arts Board. Originally from Kansas, Scott lived in New York for 11 years before moving to Boston in 2003. At present he is working on a screenplay and a new novel. His official website is www.scottheim.com.

**Billy Collins**  
Thursday, October 6, 7:30 p.m.  
President’s Lecture Series, Webb University Center

A typical Billy Collins poem opens on a clear and hospitable note but soon takes an unexpected turn; poems that begin in irony may end in a moment of lyric surprise. No wonder Collins sees his poetry as “a form of travel writing” and considers humor “a door into the serious.” In 2001, Collins was appointed U. S. Poet Laureate and in 2004, he was the inaugural recipient of the Poetry Foundation’s Mark Twain Prize for Humor in Poetry. Billy Collins has published eight collections of poetry; his most recent is *Horoscopes for the Dead*. His work has appeared in a variety of periodicals including *The New Yorker*, *The Paris Review* and *The American Scholar*.

Included among his honors are fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Guggenheim Foundation. Collins is an American phenomenon. No poet since Robert Frost has managed to combine high critical acclaim with such broad popular appeal.

**Indigo Moor and Adrian Matejka**  
Friday, October 7, 2:00 p.m.  
Chandler Recital Hall, Diehn Fine and Performing Arts

*Indigo Moor’s Through the Stonecutter’s Window* received the 2009 Northwestern University Cave Canem prize for a second book. His first book, *Tap-Root*, was published in 2006 by Main Street Rag as part of the Editor’s Select Poetry Series. In 2010, Indigo directed the reading of his original stageplay “Live! at the Excelsior.” His work has appeared in The Arkansas Review, Xavier Review, LA Review, Mochila Review, Boston University’s The Comment, Poetry Now, The Ringing Ear and many other publications.

Adrian Matejka is the author of *The Devil’s Garden* and *Mixology*, which was a winner of the 2008 National Poetry Series. He is the recipient of two Illinois Arts Council Literary Awards and fellowships from Cave Canem and the Lannan Foundation. His work has been featured in American Poetry Review, *The Best American Poetry 2010*, and Ploughshares, among other journals and anthologies. He teaches at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

**Megan Stack**  
Friday, October 7, 3:30 p.m.  
Chandler Recital Hall, Diehn Fine and Performing Arts

Megan K. Stack has reported on war, terrorism, and political Islam from the Arab world, the Middle East and Southeast Asia since 2001. During a decade at the Los Angeles Times, she was based in Jerusalem, Cairo, Moscow and finally Beijing. Her first book, *Every Man in This Village is a Liar*, was drawn from her experiences covering the war on terror, and was one of the five nonfiction finalists for the National Book Award in 2010. For her coverage of Iraq she was awarded the 2007 Overseas Press Club’s Hal Boyle Award for best newspaper reporting from abroad, and was a finalist for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in international reporting. She lives in Beijing with her husband, and is working on her next book - a novel set in contemporary Moscow.

**Joy Williams**  
Friday, October 7, 7:30 p.m.  
Chandler Recital Hall, Diehn Fine and Performing Arts


Special thanks to the Dr. Forrest P. White Endowment, the President’s Lecture Series, the Norfolk Arts Commission, and the University Village Bookstore.
Sunday, October 2
2:00 p.m.
Reception for Yola Monakhov’s “Lebende Bilder”
Baron and Ellin Gordon Art Galleries

Monday, October 3
2:00 p.m.
Young Jean Lee
Chandler Recital Hall,
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts

4:00 p.m.
Porochista Khakpour
Chandler Recital Hall,
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts

7:30 p.m.
The Words and Music of Paul Bowles
Lecture by Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno
Music by Paul Bowles and the composers who influenced him.
Performers TBA
Chandler Recital Hall,
Diehn Fine and Performing Arts

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Wednesday, October 5
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Elizabeth Searle
Virginia Beach Higher Education Center, Room 244A

2:00 p.m.
David Swerdlow
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Garage parking is free for all events.

For more information, please contact the English Department’s Creative Writing Office at 757-683-3929.