

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY



seventh annual

spring

# LITERARY FESTIVAL

March 30–April 2

**Western  
Carolina**  
UNIVERSITY

Western Carolina University  
Department of English  
828.227.3265  
info@litfestival.org  
www.LitFestival.org

Western Carolina University is a University of North Carolina campus and an Equal Opportunity Institution. 3,000 copies of this public document were printed at a cost of \$727.46 or \$.24 each. Office of Public Relations/Publications: February 2009

## 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 such distinguished regional writers as Fred Chappell, Lee Smith, Kathryn Stripling Byer, and R.T. Smith; well-known American writers Pat Conroy, Li-Young Lee, Thomas Lux, Linda Hogan, Carolyn Chute, Leslie Silko, Ntozake Shange, Karen Shepard, Luis Rodriguez, Maxine Kumin, Sherman Alexie, and Clifton Taulbert; as well as internationally renowned authors such as Eavan Boland, Miroslav Holub, and Welsh poets Menna Elfyn, Iwan Llwyd, and Nigel Jenkins.

For the past several years, WCU's Visiting Writers Series; the Visiting Scholars Fund; the English Department; the Lectures, Concerts, and Exhibition Series; and the Office of the Chancellor have sponsored the Spring Literary Festival.

The festival reflects Western's commitment to providing the best humanities education possible to its students and to bringing the best of the arts to the mountains.

## 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/directions.html](http://www.wcu.edu/directions.html). For a downloadable map of the WCU campus, go online to [www.wcu.edu/546.asp](http://www.wcu.edu/546.asp).** All events of the literary festival except Thursday's reading with Jan DeBlieu take place in the theater of WCU's University Center (#31 on the campus map).

At WCU's main entrance, stay in the left lane to drive left around the traffic circle. Take Memorial Drive, and look for parking behind the University Center (#31 on the campus map).

The University Center theater is on the third floor of the UC (one flight up if you enter the center from Memorial Drive, two if you enter the building from the center of campus).

Thursday evening's festival event, the reading with DeBlieu, will take place in Coulter Auditorium (#32 on the campus map), on the second floor of Coulter or street level if you enter from Memorial Drive.

Cover photo: *Lake Wanaka—Tree & Ducks*, Joseph Meigs, josephmeigs.com

[www.LitFestival.org](http://www.LitFestival.org)

## Parking

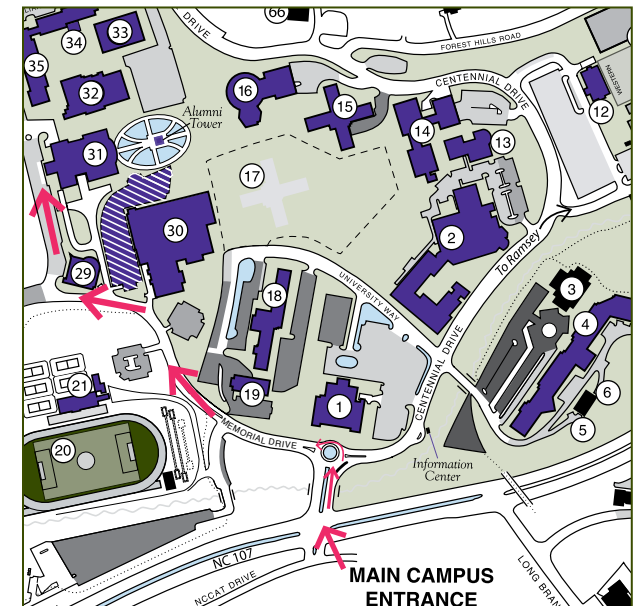
Visitors may park in student or faculty/staff spaces (marked with white or yellow) that are not designated as a special-use space, reserved space, handicapped space, loading zone, etc.

Though visitors sometimes have trouble parking near the University Center and Coulter, they may find spots near the Ramsey Regional Activity Center (#9 on campus map, not shown) and the Fine Arts Center (#2 on campus map). Cat-Tran, a shuttle bus to the center of campus, stops every 15 minutes at outlying parking areas. **For a shuttle map, go online to [www.wcu.edu/9018.asp](http://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 Office or a Lit Festival staff person or by mailing it to the Traffic Office (instructions are on the back of the citation).

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

WCU campus map





# FEATURED WRITERS

ALL PROGRAMS IN THE UNIVERSITY CENTER THEATER EXCEPT  
\*JAN DEBLIEU, COULTER AUDITORIUM\*

## Robert Conley

Monday • March 30 • 12 p.m.



Robert Conley has written more than 80 books, many about Cherokee people, including *Sequoyah*, *Zeke Proctor*, and *Ned Christie*. In addition, he has been awarded the Western Writers of America Spur award three times. The Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storytellers named him Wordcrafter of the Year in 1997, and he was also named Oklahoma Writer of the Year in 1999. In 2000, he received a Cherokee Medal of Honor from the Cherokee Honor Society, and June 12, 1993 was proclaimed Robert J. Conley Day by the mayor

of Wichita Falls, Texas. Conley is a member of the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma. He is the new Sequoyah Distinguished Professor of Cherokee Studies at Western Carolina University.

## Brian Brodeur

Monday • March 30 • 4 p.m.

Brian Brodeur is the author of *Other Latitudes*, winner of the University of Akron Press's 2007 Akron Poetry Prize, judged by Stephen Dunn, and *So the Night Cannot Go on Without Us*, which won the Fall 2006 White Eagle Coffee Store Press Poetry Chapbook Award. Recent poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Gettysburg Review*, *Margie*, *The Missouri Review*, *River Styx*, and *Verse Daily*. Brian lives and works in Fairfax, Virginia.



## C. S. Carrier

Monday • March 30 • 4 p.m.



C. S. Carrier's poems have appeared in *Pleiades*, *Verse*, *Redactions*, *LIT*, *Castagraf*, and *Good Foot*. He was born in Dayton, Ohio, and grew up in North Carolina. He holds degrees from Western Carolina University and from the Program for Poets and Writers at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He lives and works in Northampton, Massachusetts. James Tate calls Carrier's first book of poems, *After Dayton*, a Four Way Books Stahlecker selection, "an explosion of language, eerily precise,

creating an alternate world in which one is surprisingly comfortable. It's a beautiful place to start your new life, and for this we should be grateful. These poems are an amazing jolt to the head, just what real poetry should be."

## A. Manette Ansay

Monday • March 30 • 7:30 p.m.



A. Manette Ansay's first novel, *Vinegar Hill*, was published in 1994, followed by a story collection, *Read This and Tell Me What it Says*, in 1995. She has since published four more novels: *Sister*; *River Angel*; *Midnight Champagne*, a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award; and her latest novel, *Blue Water*. Ansay is also the author of a memoir, *Limbo*. She's been awarded a Pushcart Prize, a

Friends of American Writers Prize, and two Great Lakes Book Awards, among others. *Vinegar Hill* was chosen by Oprah Winfrey as her November 1999 Book Club Selection. Ansay's forthcoming novel, *Good Things I Wish You*, will be published by HarperCollins in June 2009. She lives with her daughter in Florida, where she teaches in the MFA program at the University of Miami.

## Jeffrey Lent

Tuesday • March 31 • 4 p.m.



Jeffrey Lent was born in Vermont and grew up there and in western New York State, on dairy farms powered mainly by draft horses. He studied literature and psychology at Franconia College in New Hampshire and SUNY Purchase. He lived for many years in North Carolina and now resides with his wife and two daughters in

central Vermont. His novel *In the Fall* was a national bestseller, was a *New York Times Book Review* Notable Book for 2000, and earned him placement in both Barnes & Noble's and Borders' new writer programs. His follow-up, *Lost Nation*, was a summer reading pick of the *Washington Post* and *USA Today*. Both novels were BookSense picks, Book of the Month main selections, have been widely translated, and are currently under film option. *Publishers Weekly* calls his third novel, *A Peculiar Grace*, "a transcendent story about the healing power of love and art ... magisterial and beautifully written." *After You've Gone* is his fourth novel.

## Steve Yarbrough

Tuesday • March 31 • 7:30 p.m.

Steve Yarbrough was born in Indianola, Mississippi. His father was an auto mechanic, a cotton farmer, a gin operator, and finally a technician at a TV station, and his mother was a store clerk. He was an all-state lineman and has played in various country and rock bands. Yarbrough is the author of three story collections and three novels: *The Oxygen Man*, which received the Mississippi Author's Award, the California Book Award, and an award from the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters; *Visible Spirits*; and *Prisoners of War*, a finalist for the PEN/Faulkner award. His work has been translated into Japanese, Dutch, and Polish. He is the recipient of a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. He is now the James and Coke Hallowell Professor of Creative Writing at Cal State, Fresno. His newest novel, *The End of California*, was published by Knopf in June 2006. Yarbrough is married to the Polish literary translator Ewa Hryniewicz-Yarbrough and divides his time between Fresno, California, and Krakow, Poland.



## Scott Huler

Wednesday • April 1 • 4 p.m.



Scott Huler was born in 1959 in Cleveland and graduated from Washington University. He has written on everything from the death penalty to bikini waxing, from NASCAR to the stealth bomber, for such newspapers as the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and the *Los Angeles Times*, and such magazines as *Backpacker*, *Fortune*, and *Child*. His award-winning radio work has been heard on *All Things Considered* and *Day to Day* on National Public Radio and on *Marketplace* and *Splendid Table* on American Public Media. He has been a staff writer for the *Philadelphia Daily News* and the *Raleigh News & Observer* and a staff reporter and producer for Nashville Public Radio. He was the founding and managing editor of the *Nashville City Paper*. He has taught at Berry College and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and sometimes serves as guest host on *The State of Things* on WUNC-FM. *No-Man's Lands* is his fifth book; his work also has been included in the *Appalachian Adventure* and in such anthologies as *The Appalachian Trail Reader* and *Speed: Stories of Survival from Behind the Wheel*. He lives in Raleigh, N.C.

## Jewell Parker Rhodes

Wednesday • April 1 • 7:30 p.m.

Dr. Jewell Parker Rhodes is the author of five novels: *Voodoo Dreams*, *Magic City*, *Douglass' Women*, *Voodoo Season*, and *Yellow Moon*, and a memoir, *Porch Stories: A Grandmother's Guide to Happiness*. *Hurricane Levee Blues*, a sixth novel, is forthcoming, as is a young adult novel for Little, Brown entitled *Ninth Ward*. She has authored two writing texts: *Free Within Ourselves: Fiction Lessons for Black Authors* and *The African American Guide to Writing and Publishing Nonfiction*. Her novels have been reprinted in Germany, Italy, Canada, Turkey, and the United Kingdom, and reproduced in audio, including, National Public Radio's *Selected Shorts*. Her literary honors include a Pulitzer Prize nomination, the American Book Award, the National Endowment for the Arts Award, the Black Caucus of the American Library Award for Literary Excellence, the PEN Oakland/Josephine Miles Award for Outstanding Writing, two Arizona Book Awards, and a finalist citation for the Hurston-Wright Legacy Award.



## Pamela Duncan

Thursday • April 2 • 4 p.m.

Pamela Duncan was born in Asheville and raised in Black Mountain, Swannanoa, and Shelby, NC, and currently lives in Cullowhee, NC, where she teaches creative writing at Western Carolina University. She holds a BA in journalism from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an MA in English/Creative writing from North Carolina State University in Raleigh. Her first novel, *Moon Women*, was a Southeast Booksellers Association Award finalist, and her second novel, *Plant Life*, won the 2003 Sir Walter Raleigh Award for Fiction. She is the recipient of the 2007 James Still Award for Writing about the Appalachian South, awarded by the Fellowship of Southern Writers. Her third novel, *The Big Beautiful*, was published in March 2007.



## Ron Rash

Thursday • April 2 • 4 p.m.



Ron Rash is a descendant of Southern Appalachian families who was raised in Boiling Springs, earned bachelor's and master's degrees in English, and published collections of both poetry and short stories before transitioning to writing novels. He is the author of three previous prizewinning novels, *One Foot in Eden*, *Saints at the River*, and *The World Made Straight*; his fourth novel, *Serena*, published by HarperCollins, has been named to the *Publishers Weekly* "Best Books of the Year" list and came in at No. 7 on the online retailer Amazon's list of the 100 best books of 2008. Those accolades have been accompanied by a flurry of glowing reviews in newspapers and magazines across the nation, including the *New York Times*, in which reviewer Janet Maslin praised Rash's "elegantly fine-tuned voice." Rash has written three collections of poems and three collections of stories, among them *Chemistry and Other Stories*, which was a finalist for the 2007 PEN/Faulkner Award. A recipient of the O. Henry Prize, he teaches at Western Carolina University.

## Jan DeBlieu

Thursday • April 2 • 7:30 p.m.

\*COULTER AUDITORIUM\*

Jan DeBlieu is the author of four books and dozens of articles and essays about people and nature. Her first book, *Hatteras Journal*, is considered a regional classic on the Outer Banks. It has been reprinted in paper by John F. Blair, Publisher. *Meant to Be Wild* was chosen as one of the best science books of the year by *Library Journal*. *Wind* won the John Burroughs Medal for Distinguished Natural History Writing, the highest national award given for a volume of nature writing. *Year of the Comets: A Journey from Sadness to the Stars* was published by Shoemaker & Hoard in Spring 2005. All her books remain in print. Most of DeBlieu's work explores the subtle ways we are shaped by the landscapes where we live and work. She has contributed essays to many national publications, including the *New York Times Magazine*, *Audubon*, and *Orion*. A longtime environmental activist, in the late 1980s she helped form a group that successfully kept oil companies from drilling off the Outer Banks. She lives on Roanoke Island with her husband and son.



## Gilbert-Chappell Distinguished Poets

Thursday • April 2 • 12 p.m.



Catherine Carter, Distinguished Poet for the western region, presents the work of three emerging poets. The Gilbert-Chappell Distinguished Poet Series supports the mission of the North Carolina Poetry Society to foster the reading, writing, and enjoyment of poetry across the state. Three Distinguished Poets, one each from the east, central, and west of North Carolina, mentor a middle-school, a high-school, and a college or university student.