

Poetry Month Continues at Conroy Center

Written by Editor

Tuesday, 16 April 2019 09:14 - Last Updated Wednesday, 17 April 2019 06:52



Hear these Beaufort poets and five other diverse South Carolina poets read at the launch of *Archive: South Carolina Poetry Since 2005* on Saturday, April 27, from 5 pm at the Pat Conroy Literary Center. Published by Ninety-Six Press, *Archive* features 46 contributors, documenting the poetic life of the Palmetto State over the past 13 years. This event is free and open to the public; copies of *Archive* will be available for sale and signing after the reading.

Menses

You smell like you've been shot

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down the barrel of a gun

an outlaw slipping off your horse

hauling a mix of rain and sunset

in time to answer prayers

and save me—

the little lady, from myself

or what the law allows.

No life or godless cells cluster

in your wake

as you set fire to my velvet curtains

and cut out with a cache of rubies

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like plucked hearts

so I never suspect

a homemaker

in a killer disguise

who cleans and warms the place.

– Emily Davis-Fletcher

Emily Davis-Fletcher earned a BFA in creative writing from Stephens College and an MA in women's studies from the National University of Ireland Galway. Her poetry has appeared in *Southword*

,
Crannóg Magazine

, the
Irish Examiner

, and
The High Window

, among other journals and anthologies. She has taught creativity and poetry workshops as part of the Life-long Learning program at the University of South Carolina Beaufort. In 2018, Emily was selected to read at the Cork International Poetry Festival Introductions Reading; and, most recently, she was a guest poet at the Deckle Edge Book Festival. Currently, Emily is writing her debut poetry collection,

My Half of Night

, and a screenplay with her best friend Heather.

The Sound of Prayer

A hum rises in the forest
the buzz of bugs and birds
quivering the boughs
of the thousand pines
anchored to the earth
like a thousand monks
in a cloister choir
who chant their thanks
for the sweetness
of breath, of all that is.

– Olivia Stiffler

Olivia Stiffler's first book of poems, *Otherwise, we are safe*, was published by Dos Madres Press in 2013 and was included on *Writer's Almanac's Best of 2014* list. Her second book, *Hiding in Plain Sight*, was published by Dos Madres in 2017. More information is available at her website, www.oliviastiffler.com.

What Goes Unsaid

What goes unsaid
overflows this poem.
It bulges and leaks
threatens to explode.

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What goes unsaid
piles up like cars
in a junkyard
started with an old Buick
in 1956.

What goes unsaid
festers like a “dream deferred”
makes one sick
makes one angry
makes one wonder
if all that goes unsaid
could ever be said.

When what goes unsaid is spoken
the Hoover dam bursts,
Pele erupts fire and ash,
words tumble all over themselves,
a Niagara Falls of words
to be carried away on the
River of Saying.

– Jacquelyn Markham

Jacquelyn Markham is the author of two chapbooks and a collection, *Peering Into the Iris: An Ancestral Journey*, has published in *Anthology of Appalachian Writers*; *Adrienne Rich: A Tribute Anthology*; *North of Wakulla: An Anhinga Anthology*; *Archive: South Carolina Poetry Since 2005*; *Woman and Earth (An Almanac in English and Russian)*; *Fotoalbum: Around the World*; & *Bitterroot International Poetry Journal*, among others. Markham holds a Ph.D. in Creative Writing and teaches women’s and cultural studies and writing as Professor of Liberal Arts.

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Shoulders



Born just before my sixtieth year,

little boy, I rub your shoulders

with the reach of my one hand

and imagine the man you will be.

It's a way, I know, to connect your being

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and becoming with my vanishing.

They will take on mass in time

as you'll want to make things your way

and lift and carry what you must,

as you'll want to make a place or name

for yourself, as you'll want to make love

with someone and turn your head

to watch the beauty of that person

in the world, though you can't quite

look back, nor should you, at those,

like the father holding you now,

who'll go away, then come back to rest

in your head above or your heart beneath.

– Quitman Marshall

Quitman Marshall's book of poems, his fifth, *You Were Born One Time*, won the SC Poetry Archives Book Prize in 2013. A founding host of the Literary Series at Spoleto Festival USA and a winner of the Writers Exchange Award (Poets & Writers), he is presently sailing three manuscripts: *Swampit*

ude

(no

nfiction);

The Bloody Point

(novel); and

American Folklore

(poetry). Since 2001 he has lived in Beaufort, SC, with his wife and now three children.

Alone

If a man knows

he does not need to see a woman

to catch her scent in her clothes

when he is drawn to the window

to watch a cloud that floats

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over the house

and a shadow that slips

through the grass

before he goes back

to the closet

and pulls a silk scarf

and a wool dress

from a tangle of hangers

on hooks,

and kneels

to pick up a shoe,

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why does he sit

on the edge of the bed

with her clothes

when he knows she is not there?

– Warren Slesinger

After he graduated from the Iowa Writers Workshop with an M.F.A., **Warren Slesinger** taught English part time while working full time in the publishing business as an editor, marketing manager or sales manager at the following university presses: Chicago, Oregon, Pennsylvania and South Carolina. His poetry has been published in The American Poetry Review, The Antioch Review, The Beloit Poetry Journal, The Georgia Review, The Iowa Review, New Letters, The North American Review, Northwest Review, Poetry Daily, The Sewanee Review, and The South Carolina Review. At present, he teaches part time at the University of South Carolina-Beaufort.

Pictured above: Jacquelyn, Olivia and Emily (top pic); Quitman and Warren