



Art by Kelly L. Adams

A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

I began work on this issue after finishing my tenth year here at East Carolina University, the birthplace of the *North Carolina Literary Review*. And with this tenth issue under my editorship, *NCLR* is helping to celebrate ECU's 100th year as an institution of higher learning and saying thank you for the university's unwavering support of this important publication venue for North Carolina writers, artists, and photographers. So enjoy the ECU-focused special feature section. As always, editing this issue of *NCLR* has been a learning experience that has further developed my appreciation for the cultural riches of our state.

And speaking of Eastern North Carolina talent, the *NCLR* staff continues to participate in ECU's Eastern North Carolina Literary Homecoming. Indeed, we drew from this now annual event for the opening essay for our special feature section, Allan Gurganus's keynote speech for the 2004 inaugural ECU literary festival, in which he celebrates Eastern North Carolina as being much more than the region you have to drive through to get to the beach. In turn, an interview with playwright Samm-Art Williams submitted to *NCLR* has influenced the "homecoming" planning committee's choice of keynote speaker for the fourth literary homecoming. After you read this interview, I know you will want to attend the homecoming (September 28-29) in order to meet the Burgaw, NC, playwright in person this coming fall.

For several years now, *NCLR* has received letters from grateful poets who have submitted their work for consideration by our poetry editor, my former colleague here at ECU, Jeffrey Franklin. These correspondents express their gratitude for the thoughtful feedback Jeff so often provides, so I thought they and others would likely be equally delighted to learn more about him. I took the opportunity of this issue's focus to invite another poetry editor, James Smith of the *Southern Poetry Review*, to interview Jeff for our readers – and to invite Jeff to submit some of his own poetry for our pages. Thus do we, the rest of the editorial staff, also show our gratitude for Jeff's service to *NCLR* since the 2000 issue. Jeff will also be returning for the next Eastern North Carolina Literary Homecoming, so "his"

poets will also have a chance to meet him in person after reading about him in this issue.

Again this year, *NCLR* managed the Doris Betts Fiction Prize competition for the North Carolina Writers Network, selecting Linda Beatrice Brown, who had visited ECU for the 2006 literary homecoming, as the final judge. We thank her for her service in both capacities. Look for the first and second place stories she selected in the 2008 issue, but in the meantime, readers will find in this issue the 2006 Betts Prize story, selected by last year's final judge, Jill McCorkle. Also related to the Betts Prize, I take this opportunity to announce that *NCLR* now offers two specific pipelines for unsolicited fiction submissions: the Betts Prize competition and original fiction related to an issue's special feature section. For more information about the Betts competition go to www.ncwriters.org. Our upcoming special feature topics and deadlines are listed in the front of this issue. We will continue to read poetry, creative nonfiction, and one-act plays for the general (NC) Creative Writing section. More detailed submission guidelines can be found on our website.

Special thanks go out this year to ECU School of Art faculty Gil and Jackie Leebrick and Joan Mansfield for their help with matching ECU alumni artists and photographers with content throughout this issue. So, not only does this issue include a special feature section Commemorating 100 Years of Writers and Writing at ECU, but also it features artists and photographers of ECU *throughout* its pages. And I thank Martha Elmore and the rest of the Joyner Library Special Collections staff for their help with acquiring photographs from the Papers of ECU emeriti creative writing faculty Ovid Williams Pierce and Vernon Ward.

Current subscribers will definitely want to **check your mailing labels for your subscription expiration dates to make certain you don't miss the 2008 issue, featuring North Carolina Humor, with which we plan to include (at no extra cost) a two CD audio of several of your funniest favorites.** If your subscription expires with this issue or if you are not yet a subscriber, please go to our website at www.ecu.edu/nclr for a subscription/renewal form or to www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/affiliates/lit-hist/lit-hist.htm for an augmented membership in our affiliate, the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association, which includes a subscription to *NCLR*. Your renewal, new subscription, back issue purchase, or donation helps to ensure the continuation of this publication. So —

Let us hear from you,

Margaret D. Bauer

Margaret D. Bauer, Editor