

PRESS RELEASE
Contact: Margaret Bauer, Editor
North Carolina Literary Review
Department of English
East Carolina University
Greenville, NC 27858-4353
office extension: (252) 328-1537

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JIM GRIMSLEY ANNOUNCES TRACE RAMSEY AS WINNER OF THE 2016 ALEX ALBRIGHT CREATIVE NONFICTION PRIZE

Trace Ramsey is the winner of this year's Alex Albright Creative Nonfiction Prize for his essay, "Miller Road." Jim Grimsley presented the \$250 award to Ramsey at the Greenville Museum of Art on September 22. Grimsley, who served as final judge for this year's competition, was in town to read from his memoir *How I Shed My Skin: Unlearning the Racist Lessons of a Southern Childhood*.

Explaining his selection of Ramsey's "Miller Road" for the prize, Grimsley said this essay "does not miss a beat. It is wonderfully detailed and rich with the melancholy of memory. The writer does a fine job of capturing a life through its particulars." The winning essay will be published in the *North Carolina Literary Review* in 2017.

Trace Ramsey, who was a finalist in the premiere Albright Prize competition last year, received the Ella Fountain Pratt Emerging Artists Award in Literature in 2015, contributed nonfiction at the 2015 Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, and received a certificate in documentary arts in nonfiction writing from the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University. The writer is currently working on a memoir-in-essays and a novel. In 2014, Ramsey's anthology of the first six issues of his zine *Quitter (Quitter: Good Luck Not Dying)* was published by Pioneers Press; a new edition of the book is forthcoming in late 2016. The new edition will include all ten issues of *Quitter* as well as the entirety of Ramsey's other zines, *Fog Index*, *Gravity Kills*, and *Lasterday*. Ramsey lives in Durham, NC, with his partner and two children.

Grimsley also announced two honorable mentions in this year's competition: "A Tree Grows on the Moon" by Lee Bridgers features the late Betty Smith, Chapel Hill resident and author of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. Grimsley calls the piece "completely charming, wildly remembered." Bridgers, an artist, musician, and award-winning fine art filmmaker who received a BFA in fine art painting from UNC Chapel Hill, traveled from his home in Utah to Grimsley's reading and award presentation. "My mother is in Goldsboro," Bridgers said. "She's 86 and ... sharp as a tack. This is the perfect opportunity to travel to see her." Bridgers publications include two memoirs (available on Kindle), and he is working on a third. He is also the author of an award-winning guidebook, *Mountain Bike America: MOAB*, which has recently been re-issued as *Mountain Biking MOAB*.

The other honorable mention recipient, Suzy T. Kane, a former copywriter at *LIFE Magazine*, had just returned to her home in Wilmington from a trip to Italy, but also drove to Greenville with her husband Tom to be in attendance at the event. Kane has an MA in the Humanities and has had poems published in a variety of venues. Her published prose and public radio audios are available on her website at www.suzytkane.com. Grimsley said of selecting Kane's "Misadventure in Montclair" for honorable mention, "There is something wonderful about the honesty of this piece." Kane's essay will be included in her memoir, *A Little Tin Heart*, about

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growing up in a three-culture household. Both honorable mention essays will be published by *NCLR* in 2017, too.

Other writers whose submissions were finalists this year are Robert Brunk, Denise C. Buschmann, Wendy Call, Dawn Langley, Joe Mills, and Michael White.

Senior Writer in Residence at Emory University in Atlanta since 1999, Eastern North Carolina native Jim Grimsley is the author of eleven novels and fifteen plays, as well as one of fifty active fellows in the Fellowship of Southern Writers. He has won numerous literary awards and prizes, including the 2005 Academy Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Lila Wallace/Reader's Digest Writers Award, the Lambda Literary Award for Fiction, the Asimov Readers' Award, the Sue Kaufman Prize for First Fiction, and the Bryan Prize for Drama. His writing has been featured regularly in *NCLR*, including, most recently, a short story in the 25th issue, published in July. He read from that story and his 2015 memoir, recently released in paperback, during the evening program. He also met with students on the East Carolina University campus that afternoon to discuss the memoir, which they had read for *NCLR* Founding Editor Alex Albright's English classes.

Published since 1992 by East Carolina University and the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association, the *North Carolina Literary Review* has won numerous awards and citations. This is the second year of the Alex Albright Creative Nonfiction Prize, which was named for *NCLR*'s founding editor. *NCLR* subscribers are encouraged to submit their own creative nonfiction to next year's competition. Find more information about the competition and subscribing on *NCLR*'s website, www.nclr.ecu.edu.