



PHOTOGRAPH BY JACQVYN W. MORGAN;  
COURTESY OF CITY ART GALLERY

## A Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

I am used to writing these introductions in June, in the midst of final proofreading. I sit down to begin this one in April. It seems so strange to be ahead of schedule – or rather, getting closer to my ideal schedule, which would wrap up an issue of *NCLR* as we wrap up an academic year. It only took us twenty years to do this.

Beginning with various publication parties for the 2010 issue and a literary event almost every weekend of the fall, 2010–11 has been another active year for the *NCLR* staff. The end of the calendar year brought news of our latest (and fourth) award from the Council of Editors of Learned Journals (CELJ), and the new calendar year began with an exhibit opening of art created in response to three of James Applewhite's poems. You can read more about all of these activities in the press releases archived on our website's News & Events section. I'll elaborate here only so far as to express my appreciation of Art Director Dana Ezzell Gay, Art Editor Diane Rodman, and graphic designers Pamela Cox and Stephanie Whitlock Dicken. This second design award from CELJ recognizes the collective talent of these four women, their hard work, and their commitment to *NCLR*. We also thank James Applewhite for allowing us to use his poetry for the exhibit Diane coordinated with Greenville's City Art Gallery – and thank you to Peg Hardee and Torrey Stroud at the gallery.



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PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN GAY

While issue production does not allow us to participate in as many literary events in the spring as we do in the fall, I did go to Louisiana to be part of a panel of literary editors and agents discussing publishing issues at the Louisiana Conference on Literature, Language, and Culture, held at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. There I met *Southern Review* Editor Jeanne Leiby. I returned to Greenville raving about this woman, challenged by her, and looking forward to working with her in causes close to both of our hearts: mentoring and publishing. I had only talked with her for a couple of hours, but that was enough to know why LSU hired her – neither Southern nor celebrity writer – the first woman to edit the distinguished literary magazine created in 1935 by Robert Penn Warren and Cleanth Brooks. And then, a few weeks later, I learned of Jeanne's tragic death in a car accident.

As Jeanne and I got to know each other that morning in Louisiana, comparing notes as editors of literary magazines and as women in academe, one professional experience we did not have in common was that Jeanne told me she never had a woman mentor; I was fortunate to have been mentored by Dorothy Scura. Like Dorothy's former students, Jeanne's students will, I know, miss her and remember her always, recalling her influence whenever they meet. To honor another strong woman's courageous and outrageous voice, I dedicate this twentieth issue to Jeanne. And, I rededicate my own voice to mentoring in the tradition of Dorothy and Jeanne. And I send condolences to those who knew her.

The point of concern Jeanne spoke passionately about was a recent report from *VIDA: Women in Literary Arts* regarding gender disparities in publishing houses, large and small, which are publishing significantly more male writers than female writers. Jeanne suspected that there are at least as many women writers as men, and she was on a mission to bring the gender ratio imbalance of published writers to her audience's attention and on a quest to find the reasons for such disparities so that something could be done to rectify the situation. Courageously reviewing her own article-acceptance practices, Jeanne discovered that during her tenure as editor 60% of *Southern Review's* content was by men, 40% by women – and then looking at her submissions, it turns out that only 40% of the submissions were by women. I was impressed that her publication selections

ABOVE TOP **James Applewhite reading at the opening of the City Art Gallery exhibit featuring art inspired by his poetry, Greenville, NC, 13 Jan. 2011**

ABOVE CENTER **NCLR Art Editor Diane Rodman at the Applewhite exhibit opening, City Art Gallery, Greenville, NC, 13 Jan. 2011**

ABOVE BOTTOM **NCLR Editor Margaret Bauer presents the CELJ Best Journal Design Award to Art Director Dana Ezzell Gay at the Applewhite exhibit opening, City Art Gallery, Greenville, NC, 13 Jan. 2011**

matched the ratio of submissions from men and women, but Jeanne was already turning her attention to figuring out why fewer women than men submit in the first place.

Consumed since my return to North Carolina by getting this issue to press, I have not yet had a chance to follow suit and run *NCLR*'s numbers on gender representation, but I will reflect here upon my own record of publishing the work of new writers alongside the literary stars of North Carolina. We do not set out to publish a writer's first story or poem any more than Jeanne consciously published women and men in the same ratio that submitted. But when we like a writer's subject and approach, we have tended to accept work that still needed revision, and then we have worked with the author until the article is ready for publication. Inspired by the VIDA findings – and by Jeanne – I will make a special effort to see that women are well represented as we continue to seek out new voices in North Carolina's literary scene.

Another one of our goals is to promote new books published by small presses, whether in reviews or interviews with the authors. We invite our readers to bring such books and authors to our attention. With this issue, *NCLR* has been promoting North Carolina writers for twenty years. As we embark on our third decade, we'll be starting an online supplemental issue, in which we will publish the literary news and book reviews that have, through this issue, been included in the print issue. These supplemental issues will be open access, thus broadening our audience and thereby expanding our mission of serving as ambassadors for North Carolina writers. The print issue will still be published in the summer, but the online supplement, which will come out in January, should help us to get those print issues

back to our preferred length of 200 pages, which better fits within the limits of our regular print budget but never seems to fit (as this issue attests) the broad scope of North Carolina literature that we want to promote. Subscribers will be notified when the online supplemental issue is out.

Read more about other *NCLR* activities in the introductions to the special feature and North Carolina Miscellany sections of this issue: about how *NCLR* has now formally partnered with the Eastern North Carolina Literary Homecoming held annually at ECU, discussed in the introduction to the special feature section of this issue; and about our new poetry competition, discussed in the introduction to the North Carolina Miscellany section. In between, as always, we include a Flashbacks section for topics related to our past issues' special feature sections.

Another motivation for the online supplement is to bring more people's attention to *NCLR*, and we hope to the print issue – for *NCLR* needs to increase its subscription base if we are going to continue to justify a print budget or ever to bring our budget to the amount we really need. As I told the participants of the North Carolina Writers Network conference who stopped at the *NCLR* table and who attended the publication workshop I conducted last fall, every writer out there should have a subscription to at least one magazine they wish to someday see their own writing published in (of course we hope *NCLR* will be that magazine). And for those of you non-writers who simply enjoy reading great writing, we ask you to pass the word and help support a magazine that celebrates the long tradition of outstanding writing and art in our great state of North Carolina. With that thought, I close with my usual –

Let us hear from you!

*Margaret D. Bauer*

Margaret D. Bauer, Editor



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARGARET D. BAUER

ABOVE *NCLR* Founding Editor, Alex Albright, with this issue's cover artist, Joan Mansfield, and the original Art Director, Eva Roberts, at UBE's exhibit of *NCLR* art through the years, Greenville, NC, 3 Dec. 2010

RIGHT The original *NCLR* logo (left), created 20 years ago by the original Art Director, Eva Roberts, and the new *NCLR* logo (right), created by current Art Director, Dana Ezzell Gay

