

MILESTONES

The Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History
spring 2006 · volume 4 · issue 1 www.unc.edu/depts/stonecenter

Film Animator for The Matrix at the Stone Center

This spring, the Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History welcomes Lyndon Barrois as Artist-in-Residence. Barrois, a Los Angeles based artist and film animator, will be with the center March 6th-9th, 2006 and will conduct workshops with students currently enrolled in its Community Program, an after-school academic and cultural enrichment program.

Now in its fifteenth academic year, Community continues to identify engaging and innovative ways to nurture its students' intellectual growth, skills development, and appreciation of the arts and aesthetics. Bringing Barrois to the UNC campus reflects the center's ongoing commitment to stimulating young minds by stretching the boundaries of their imaginations conjoined with fostering their analytical skills.

With his extensive background in art and film animation, Barrois is one of the few African Americans working at his level in Hollywood today and represents the pinnacle of intellectual and creative achievement in computer-generated film animation. Barrois, who holds a BFA from Xavier University of Louisiana and an MFA from the California Institute of the Arts School of Film/Video, brings to the Stone Center an extensive list of accomplishments and recognitions for his work in film production including his stints as director of animation or supervisor for animation sequence for such films as *Elektra* (Fox, 2005), *I, Robot* (Twentieth Century Fox, 2004), *The Matrix Revolutions* and *The Matrix Reloaded* (Warner Brothers, 2002 & 2003), *Scooby Doo* (Warner Brothers, 2002), *Kung Pow: Enter the Fist* (Twentieth Century Fox, 2002), and for his work as a director on the animated television series, *The PJs*, just to name a few.

Most noted as a skilled Computer Generated Image specialist and stop-motion animator, Barrois is also known as an innovator having created "gumation"—

characters fashioned from chewing gum wrappers and captured through stop-motion filming. His gumation technique and figurines have been featured in Ripley's Believe it or Not! Museums worldwide and were highlighted on Great Moments: The Super Bowl, where the figurines were staged to recreate memorable moments in Super Bowl history. He used his gumation technique to complete the film *They Were the First to Ride*, a depiction of black jockeys who won the Kentucky Derby between the years 1875 and 1902. For his work, he earned awards at the Palm Springs, Columbus, and Chicago International Film Festivals.

Despite his achievements in animation and cinema production, Barrois first and foremost appreciates a well-crafted storyline. While he understands the salient ability for visual effects to complement and enhance the narrative, for Barrois plot and character development remain essential in crafting well constructed and meaningful stories. Prior to his work in cinema Barrois was, and remains, a committed graphic artist and youth educator having gained widespread recognition for his 1986 New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival commemorative serigraph and respect as an instructor with Young Aspirations/Young Artists (YaYa), a New Orleans-based art guild for young people. Over the years, he has conducted animation workshops for youths including a recent claymation session at the DuSable Museum in Chicago. Undoubtedly, this artist supports youth



Lyndon Barrois and a sentinel from *The Matrix*.

development by investing his time and talents in exposing future artists (and cineastes) to the craft.

Workshops are restricted to Community Program enrollees. Barrois will also visit with UNC faculty and students in film production. For further information regarding this Artist-in-Residence, please contact the Stone Center at 962-9001. This residency is supported by the Stone Center, School of Journalism, Johnston Center for Undergraduate Excellence, and by the Departments of Art, and African and Afro-American Studies.

Stone Center Welcomes Back Willie Perdomo



THE SONJA HAYNES STONE CENTER for Black Culture and History will host a residency by Puerto Rican poet and essayist Willie Perdomo from February 9 through March 7, 2006. As Artist-in-

Residence at the Stone Center for the third time, the East Harlem native will conduct a series of writers' workshops for the campus and local communities.

Considered the Langston Hughes of Latino writers, Perdomo is the author of three collections of poetry including *Smoking Lovely* which won the 2004 Beyond Margins Award from the PEN American Center. His work has been included in several anthologies and has appeared in *The New York Times Magazine*, *Bomb* and *Urban Latino*. He is the author of the picture book *Visiting Langston* and has been featured on several PBS documentaries and on HBO's *Def Poetry Jam*. A regular at Manhattan's legendary Nuyorican Poets Café, Perdomo recently co-wrote an episode for the HBO animated series, *Spicy City*. Reviewers have noted that Perdomo writes at the

"intersection of the street and the academy," and strives for total authenticity in his effort to recreate the sights, sounds, smells, and rhythms of East Harlem.

Perdomo's on-campus writing workshops will be held at the center each Tuesday evening at 7pm from February 14 through March 7. These workshops are free and open to the public. Registration begins on January 2 at the center. Applications are available online at www.unc.edu/depts/stonecenter or at the center (150 South Road, Suite 215), and are due by January 23. Notifications will be made by February 9.

In addition to his on-campus sessions, Perdomo will conduct several writing workshops for teenagers at New Horizons, an alternative school in Durham.

For more information, contact the Stone Center at 962-9001.



Spring into Poetry at the Stone Center

THE COMING OF SPRING INVOKES RENEWED LIFE, ENERGIES AND PASSIONS. This March, the Stone Center will mark the coming of a new season by celebrating our passion for words. On March 21 at 7 p.m., the Center's new Tuesday Night Open Mic series begins.

Poets, spoken word artists, writers and first-timers from UNC, Durham, Chapel Hill and beyond can apply their craft at the Stone Center each Tuesday evening at 7pm from March 21 through April 25. The series, cosponsored by TRIBES magazine and Durham's SpiritHouse artist collective, is free and open to the public. It is hosted by Stone Center Graduate Fellow and poet, Raina Leon.

On April 20, the Stone Center will host the annual Day of the Poet, which draws students from area high schools to participate in a day of workshops with in-state and out-of-state poets. This year's wordsmiths will include Dasan Ahanu, Aracelis Girmay, Lita Hooper, Stephanie Pruitt, Oscar Bermeo, Evie Shlockey, Quraysh Ali Lansana, Ebony Golden, Kim Arrington, Mara Jebson and Rich Villar. Day of the Poet workshops are open to UNC students, faculty and staff who submit a short application (available at the Stone Center). The day concludes with a final reading over a bring-your-own brown bag lunch. This event is sponsored by the High School Literacy Project, the School of Education, and the Research Triangle Schools Partnership. Contact Raina Leon at rleon@email.unc.edu or 962-9001 for the workshop schedule or for further information.

On April 21, as a poetic follow-up, ten Day of the Poet artists will gather for a night of poetry in the Stone Center's Brown Gallery and Museum at 6pm. Drawn from throughout the United States, these writers will present some of their most dynamic works. The evening will begin with a poetry 'open mic' session hosted by Leon.

Stone Center Hosts Author Junot Díaz



Junot Díaz

On April 4th at 7pm, the Stone Center will host the Latina/o Cultural Speakers Series for a reading, signing, discussion and Q&A with Afro-Dominican writer, Junot Díaz. Díaz, an associate professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the award-winning author of the innovative short-story cycle/novel, *Drown*, will

address the inter-related topics of silence, color, language, war, and immigration in the post-911 context. Díaz's fiction has appeared in a variety of publications including *The New Yorker*, *African Voices*, *Best American Short Stories*, and *Pushcart Prize*. Díaz has received a Eugene McDermott Award, a fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, a Lila Acheson Wallace Readers Digest Award, the 2002 Pen/Malamud Award, the 2003 US-Japan Creative Artist Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, and a fellowship at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University.

The April 4th event is free and open to the public. It will be held in the Stone Center's Hitchcock

Multipurpose Room and is cosponsored by the English Department, the College of Arts and Sciences, Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, the Institute for African American Research, the Latina/o Studies Gift Fund, and the Stone Center.

The UNC Latina/o Cultures Speakers Series is designed to promote the core diversity values of the University and is dedicated to the interdisciplinary exploration of Latina/o Studies. The Series regularly hosts creative writers and scholars addressing the intersections between Latina/o and African-American cultural production, between specifically Chicana/o and Native American Studies, and between Latina/o Studies and Asian Diaspora Studies.

Future of Minority Studies at UNC

On April 20th, the Stone Center will host a discussion with professors Satya P. Mohanty of Cornell University, Linda Martin Alcoff of Syracuse University, Michael Hames-Garcia of SUNY Binghamton and Paula M.L. Moya of Stanford University about their book, *Identity Politics Reconsidered*. As part of the ongoing national Future of Minority Studies Research Project, *Identity Politics Reconsidered* is a volume of essays examining the scholarly and political significance of social identity. Offering original answers to questions concerning the analytical legitimacy

of "identity" and "experience," the collection delves into the relationships among cultural autonomy, moral universalism, and progressive politics. For more information on the research project, visit <http://www.fmsproject.cornell.edu/>.

The event is cosponsored by the Stone Center, UNC's Institute of Latin American Studies, School of Education, English Department, Curriculum in American Studies, Curriculum in Women's Studies, Modernity/Coloniality Studies, Alpha Phi Alpha, Inc., and the University Program in Cultural Studies.

THE 2006 STONE CENTER

UNDERGRADUATE INTERNATIONAL STUDIES FELLOWSHIPS

The Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History is currently accepting applications for its third annual Undergraduate International Studies Fellowships (UISF). The Stone Center, established in 1988 to support the critical examination of all dimensions of African and African American Diaspora cultures, created the UISF program in support of the University's effort to globalize the campus and internationalize the curriculum.

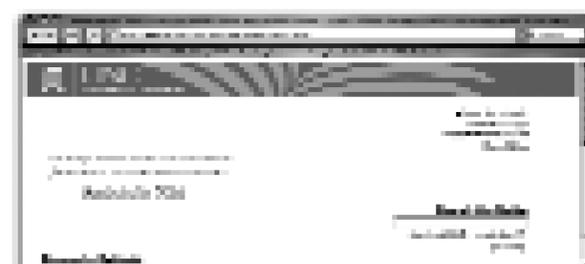
Fellowship recipients are awarded \$2500 toward academic research or study in an international setting. Through the fellowships the UISF program hopes to increase the low numbers of UNC Chapel Hill students of color and other underrepresented students who travel and study abroad.

Students in good standing and enrolled full time are eligible to apply for one of three fellowships. Applications are available at The Stone Center, Suite 215. The deadline for applications is March 20. For more information on the fellowship, contact The Stone Center at (919) 962-9001.

Search for Knowledge at the Stone Center Library

The Sonja Haynes Stone Center Library's Guide to the Web is a valuable resource for scholars and researchers interested in African, African American, and African Diaspora history and culture. Over 400 sites are available in this searchable guide that can be browsed by subject. The topics covered range from the Underground Railroad to Hip Hop music.

<http://www.lib.unc.edu/stone/webguide/index.htm>



A Quick Look Back: Highlights from Fall 2005

The Stone Center's ongoing examination of Black Popular Cultures/Black Popular Struggles opened on September 22, 2005 with a roundtable discussion featuring social analysts Bakari Kitwana, author of *The Hip Hop Generation* and *Why White Kids Love Hip Hop: Wangstas, Wiggers, Wannabes and the New Reality of Race in America* and Raquel Rivera, freelance journalist, sociologist and author of *New York Ricans from the Hip Hop Zone*, an examination of the New York Puerto Rican influence on hip hop culture.

As part of the yearlong series on black popular cultures, the discussion focused on representations of organized resistance to oppression within popular expressions of art, culture and Black aesthetics.

In early October, Suheir Hammad, the award-winning performance poet and HBO regular, visited the Stone Center as its Artist-in-Residence. As part of a weeklong residency, the Palestinian-American writer and author of three collections of poetry including *Born Palestinian*, *Born Black* visited classes, conducted readings, and facilitated writing workshops for the collegiate and local communities. The October 6 presentation and book signing for her new release, *Zaatar & Olive*, drew an audience of close to 200 students and locals.

Four days later, the Stone Center welcomed human rights worker and community organizer Zulia Mena to UNC as part of its Human Rights Brown Bag Lecture series. During the lunchtime discussion, Mena, the first Afro-Colombian woman elected to the Colombian congress and Gimena Sanchez Garzoli, the US representative to the peacekeeping organization, Peace Brigades International, detailed the violent and oppressive landscape

plaguing the South American country and their ongoing efforts at organizing, protecting and rallying international support for local citizens. Particularly chilling were Mena's accounts of group massacres and of the ongoing death threats she receives for speaking out against such injustice.

On October 13, the Stone Center Theatre was the site of a rousing and well-attended performance by the incomparable Sarah Jones. Jones, the multitalented actress, poet, activist and playwright presented *A Right to Care*, a one-woman performance piece examining the American system of health care. Her masterful use of comedic and poignant character portrayals provoked an enthusiastic audience response as she explored the ways ethnic, racial and economic health disparities impact people's lives. Jones' riveting performance ended with a standing ovation and an hour-long question and answer period.

The Stone Center's program examining black popular cultures continued with an October 17 panel discussion on "R&B and Soul Legacies." The panelists included Dr. Portia Maultsby, Professor of Folklore and Ethnomusicology and the Director of the Archives of African American Music and Culture at Indiana University, and Dr. Daphne Brooks, Assistant Professor of English and African-American Studies and a specialist in black performance and popular music culture at Princeton University. The discussion was moderated by Jim Davis, host of WNCU radio's 8-Track Flashback.

Malika Sanders, Executive Director of the 21st Century Youth Movement, delivered the Twelfth Annual

Sonja Haynes Stone Memorial Lecture in the Stone Center Theatre on November 8. Sanders, an accomplished activist and community leader whose Selma-based non-profit focuses on youth empowerment, leadership training and community service, engaged a mesmerized audience with her activist spirit and sharp political insight. Under Sanders' leadership, 21st Century has grown from a modest volunteer effort into a leading 1500-member student organization with 35 chapters in the US, and 3 in western Africa. Sanders' inspiring speech was followed by a 40-minute question and answer period.

Closing out the Stone Center's schedule of fall programs was its third installment of the Black Popular Cultures/Struggles series, held on November 18 which focused on Hip Hop music and its sociopolitical significance on a local level. Accordingly, artists and personalities prominent in the Triangle area engaged in a panel discussion and showcased their various talents. Participants included WNCU's *Straight From Tha' Crate* host, Mike Nice, poets Kim Arrington and Raina Leon, as well as UNC student representatives. The panel discussion was moderated by UNC professor, Perry Hall, and followed by an energetic performance by area Hip Hop crew, Language Arts.



(From left to right) • Performance artist Sarah Jones in character at the Stone Center Theatre • Black Popular Cultures/Struggles Forum on Hip Hop • Poet Suheir Hammad talks with students in the Stone Center Library • Activist Malika Sanders delivers 12th Annual Stone Memorial Lecture (PHOTOS BY RYLANDA NICKERSON)



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Study Abroad by Amy Oraefo

This past summer, one of my greatest dreams came to fruition.

With support from The Sonja Haynes Stone Center Undergraduate International Studies Fellowship and The Class of 1938 Summer Travel Scholarship, I spent the summer pursuing an independent studies project abroad in the African countries of Ghana and Nigeria. As a first generation American born to two Nigerian parents in the United States, the time abroad enabled me to pursue my research interest and learn about two great and powerful countries in Africa, while also learning more about myself. This journey could not have taken place at a better time in my life given that college is the time when one can find their identity, act independently, and accomplish foundational goals.

For my project, "R.E.P.S. (Religious, Educational, and Political Systems) of Ghana and Nigeria" I traveled to Accra, Ghana and Abuja, Nigeria to observe daily and conduct interviews with dignitaries and professionals openly voicing their opinions about issues relevant to their respective countries. In both countries I observed and documented the effects of British colonialism on religious, educational, and political systems. During my time in Ghana, I had the opportunity to interview citizens such as a Catholic nun and a medical doctor and was also able to experience history when I visited El Mina and Cape Coast, two slave castles where Africans were shipped from their continent to be sold in America.



Amy Oraefo in Nigeria with her uncle, Chris Unigwe, Assistant Chief Registrar, Supreme Court, Nigeria.

Admittedly, Nigeria proved very fulfilling for me on a personal level. There, I had the opportunity to shadow and interview my uncle, Chris Unigwe, Assistant Registrar to the Supreme Court

of Nigeria, was exposed to recently passed legislation and the process of making revisions to the constitution, and learned about cases being reviewed by the Nigerian Supreme Court at the time of my visit. I visited the villages where both of my parents grew up, as well as the childhood house of my mother and her family. Traveling to my parents' village and connecting with relatives there was a major accomplishment in my life as I witnessed the root of my existence and completed the puzzle of my history; particularly, since my last visit to Nigeria was when I was three years old.

Now that I have returned from my study abroad trip, I am compiling my field notes and writing a comprehensive paper as an educational tool to aid people in learning about some of the social and political events occurring in contemporary Ghana and Nigeria. I feel blessed to have received the two awards which allowed a mere dream to become reality and ultimately change my life.