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 Communiversity Program, an after-school academic and cultural enrichment program.

Now in its fifteenth academic year, Communiversity continues to identify engaging and innovative ways to nurture in 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 a Los Angeles native will conduct a series of writers’ residence at the Stone Center for the third time, the Center’s ongoing commitment to stimulating young minds by stretching the boundaries of their imaginations conjoined with fostering their analytical skills. 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 development by investing his time and talents in exposing future artists (and cineastes) to the craft.

Workshops are restricted to Communiversity 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.
Stone Center Hosts Author 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. Diaz, 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. Diaz’s fiction has appeared in a variety of publications including The New Yorker, African Voices, Best American Short Stories, and Pushcart Prize.

Diaz 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 UN/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 Redeemed*. As part of the ongoing national Future of Minority Studies Research Project, *Identity Politics Redeemed* 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.

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 TRIBIES magazine and Durham’s Spirit-House 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, Kim Arrington, Mara Jebens 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.

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.

On April 21st, 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. Diaz, an associate professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the award-winning author of the innovative short-story cycle/novel, *Drown*, will

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, treated 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


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, Zaataridiva, 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 focused 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 Jim Davis, host of WNCU radio’s N-Track Flashback.

On October 13, the Stone Center Theatre was the site of a rousing and well-attended performance by the incomparable Sarah 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 portraits 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 N-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 nonprofit 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.

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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.