



EMORY
UNIVERSITY

April 6, 2009

For More Information: Lea McLees: 404-727-0211, lmclees@emory.edu
Elaine Justice: 404-727-0643, elaine.justice@emory.edu

For Immediate Release

ALICE WALKER ARCHIVE OPENS AT EMORY APRIL 23
Symposium, Presentation by Walker Scheduled

The first public exhibition of papers and other memorabilia from the extraordinary archives of Georgia-born Pulitzer Prize winner Alice Walker will open at Emory University Thursday, April 23. The university will celebrate the opening with a daylong symposium on the author's art and life Friday, April 24, followed by a public talk by Walker at 8 p.m. that evening.

["A Keeping of Records: The Art and Life of Alice Walker,"](#) which opens in the Schatten Gallery of the Robert W. Woodruff Library building, features 200 items drawn from one of the most complete archives in existence, says curator Rudolph P. Byrd, Goodrich C. White Professor of American Studies.

Among the materials featured in the exhibition are Walker's scrapbook, which she began keeping when she was 14 years old; drafts of her early writings; photographs; and her notebooks, including those for "The Color Purple." The quilt Walker created while writing "The Color Purple" will be on display April 23 and 24.

"The Walker archive is unique among archives at Emory and elsewhere for its richness," says Byrd. "It is evidence of Walker's belief and self-awareness that she would become an important American writer. The materials date back to her sixth year of life and end in 2007, and include drafts of all her manuscripts, handwritten and typed."

The exhibition highlights the major periods, events and projects in Walker's life in chronological order; explores her personal and professional life roles; and establishes the cultural and historical context in which she worked.

The daylong symposium on Walker is scheduled April 24 at the Emory Conference Center Hotel. Sponsored by Emory's [James Weldon Johnson Institute](#), the 8:15 a.m.-5:30 p.m. symposium features:

- Gloria Steinem, journalist, activist and co-founding publisher of Ms. Magazine
- Howard Zinn, American historian and professor emeritus at Boston University, active in civil rights, civil liberties and anti-war movements
- Susan Booth, artistic director of Atlanta's Alliance Theatre at the Woodruff Arts Center
- Michael Awkward, Afro-American literature and culture scholar, University of Michigan
- Scott Sanders, producer of "The Color Purple" at the Broadway Theater in New York in December 2006
- Susan Kirshner, British and women's literature scholar, Lewis and Clark College
- Deborah Plant, Africana studies scholar, University of South Florida
- Cheryl Wall, scholar of English literature and Black female writers, Rutgers University
- Evelyn White, journalist and independent scholar who authored "Alice Walker: A Life."

The symposium is followed that evening by an 8 p.m. talk by Walker. "Reflections on the Turning of the Wheel: Living a Life of Freedom and Choice" is scheduled for Glenn Memorial Auditorium, 1652 N. Decatur Rd.

-more-

One of the nation's most important living writers, Alice Walker has authored 26 books that span the genres of the novel, poetry and the essay. In 1983 she won the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award for her novel "The Color Purple," which has been adapted for film and stage. Emory is privileged to serve as the custodian of the Alice Walker archive.

Schedule of Events

Exhibition: "A Keeping of Records: The Art and Life of Alice Walker," April 23-Sept. 23, Schatten Gallery and New Books Rotunda, Robert W. Woodruff Library, 540 Asbury Circle, Atlanta, GA 30322. Free and open to the public during regular library hours. Includes 200 items from Pulitzer Prize winner Walker's archive, such as drafts of her early writings, photographs and her notebooks, including those for "The Color Purple." For more information: Julie Delliquanti, jdelliq@emory.edu, 404-727-0136. Parking is available in Fishburne Deck, accessible off Fishburne Lane. Please use public transit when possible.

Symposium: "A Keeping of Records: The Art and Life of Alice Walker," 8:15 a.m.-5:30 p.m. April 24, Emory Conference Center Hotel, 1615 Clifton Road, Atlanta, GA 30329. Scholars, artists and activists celebrate the art and life of Alice Walker and commemorate the public opening of the Alice Walker archive and exhibition. Registration: \$25 fee; no charge for students from any school with valid student ID. To register, visit https://www.alumniconnections.com/olc/pub/EMR/events/event_order.cgi?tmpl=events&event=2225082, or contact Reagon Goodnough at reagon@marketingeventpartners.com or 678-990-9791. Deadline is 5 p.m., April 22. Parking is available at the Emory Conference Center Hotel. Please use public transit when possible.

Presentation: "Reflections on the Turning of the Wheel: Living a Life of Freedom and Choice," a talk by Alice Walker, 8 p.m. April 24, Glenn Memorial Auditorium, 1652 N. Decatur Rd., Atlanta, GA 30322. Open to the public, although free tickets are required for admission. Limit two tickets per person. Tickets are available at the Donna and Marvin Schwartz Center for Performing Arts box office. For more ticket information, call 404-727-5050. Parking available in the Fishburne Deck accessible off Fishburne Lane. Please use public transit when possible.

Sponsors for Alice Walker activities include the Emory's James Weldon Johnson Institute, MARBL, the Office of the Provost Luminaries Series, the Hightower Fund, the Department of African American Studies, and the Graduate Institute of Liberal Arts, as well as the Alice Walker Literary Society and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

###

[The James Weldon Johnson Institute for Advanced Interdisciplinary Studies](http://www.jamesweldonjohnson.emory.edu/)

(<http://www.jamesweldonjohnson.emory.edu/>) fosters new scholarship, teaching, and public dialogue on the origins, evolution and legacy of the modern civil rights movement from 1905 to the present. The Johnson Institute is also committed to the investigation of the impact of the modern civil rights movement upon other social movements in the United States and abroad. These movements include but are not limited to the Women's Movement, the Gay and Lesbian Movement and the Human Rights Movement.

[The Emory University Libraries](http://web.library.emory.edu/) (<http://web.library.emory.edu/>) in Atlanta and Oxford, Ga., are an intellectual commons for Emory University, Atlanta and the world. The nine libraries' holdings include more than 3.1 million print and electronic volumes, 40,000-plus electronic journals, and internationally renowned special collections.

[Emory University](http://www.emory.edu) (<http://www.emory.edu>) is known for its demanding academics, outstanding undergraduate experience, highly ranked professional schools and state-of-the-art research facilities. Perennially ranked as one of the country's top 20 national universities by U.S. News & World Report, Emory encompasses nine academic divisions as well as the Carlos Museum, The Carter Center, the Yerkes National Primate Research Center and Emory Healthcare, Georgia's largest and most comprehensive health care system.