

A Keeping of Records: The Art and Life of Alice Walker

The James Weldon Johnson Institute is pleased to present A Keeping of Records: The Art and Life of Alice Walker. This symposium is a celebration of the art and life of Alice Walker: a genius of the South whose corpus is a permanent part of our national and world literature. Emory University has served as the custodian of the Alice Walker archive, a national treasure, since December 2007. A landmark event in the world of arts and letters, the symposium and eponymous exhibition commemorate the arrival of the Alice Walker archive to the African American Collections of Emory's Manuscripts, Archives, and Rare Book Library (MARBL), and the opening of the Walker archive to researchers and to the public.

The symposium will take place at Emory University on April 24, 2009. The symposium also marks the opening of A Keeping of Records: The Art and Life of Alice Walker, an exhibition of 200 items from the Walker archive located in the Schatten Gallery of the Robert W. Woodruff Library. The exhibition opens on April 23, 2009 and closes on September 28, 2009.

The symposium will feature presentations by scholars with national reputations in the humanities and the humanistic social sciences, as well as leaders in the performing arts. The symposium will be an opportunity to engage in a public dialogue with members of the Emory community and the communities beyond Emory on important dimensions of Walker's life and art. The symposium will conclude with a public talk by Alice Walker in Glenn Memorial Auditorium located on the campus of Emory University. *(This talk is ticketed separately from the symposium. Registration for the symposium does not include a ticket to the talk.)*

Presenters

Michael Awkward is the Gayl A. Jones Collegiate Professor of Afro-American Literature and Culture in the Department of English and the Center for African American Studies at the University of Michigan. He is the author and editor of six books including *Soul Covers: Rhythm and Blues Remakes* and *the Struggle for Artistic Identity*.

Susan Booth is the Artistic Director of the Alliance Theater. Her many credits include serving as director of the stage version of *The Color Purple* which premiered at the Alliance Theater in September 2004.

Susan Kirschner is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of English at Lewis & Clark College.

Deborah Plant is Associate Professor of Africana Studies at the University of South Florida. She is the author and editor of three books including *Zora Neale Hurston: A Biography of the Spirit*.

Scott Sanders is Producer of the stage version of *The Color Purple* which premiered at the Alliance Theater and on Broadway at the Broadway Theater in New York City in December 2006.

Gloria Steinem is cofounder of *Ms.* and a pioneering figure in the Women's Movement. She is the author of five books including *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions*.

Cheryl A. Wall is Board of Governors Zora Neale Hurston Professor of English at Rutgers University. She is the author and editor of eight books including *Worrying the Line: Black Women Writers, Lineage, and Literary Tradition*.

Evelyn White is a journalist and independent scholar. She is the author and editor of three books including *Alice Walker: A Life*.

Howard Zinn is Professor Emeritus of History at Boston University. He is the author and editor of thirteen books including *A People's History of the United States*.

Moderators:

Valerie Boyd is Associate Professor and the Charlayne Hunter-Gault Distinguished Writer-in-Residence in the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Georgia. She is the author of *Wrapped in Rainbows: the Life of Zora Neale Hurston*.

Rudolph P. Byrd is the Goodrich C. White Professor of American Studies and Founding Director of the James Weldon Johnson Institute for Advanced Interdisciplinary Studies at Emory University. He is the author and editor of eight books including *The Essential Writings of James Weldon Johnson*.

Beverly Guy Sheftall is the Anna Julia Cooper Professor of English and the Founding Director of the Women's Research and Resource Center at Spelman College. She is the author, co-author and editor of four books including *Gender Talk: the Struggle for Women's Equality in African American Communities* with Johnnetta B. Cole.

Nagueyalti Warren is Senior Lecturer in the Department of African American Studies at Emory University. Poet and literary critic, she is the author of four books including *Southern Mothers: Fact and Fictions in Southern Women's Writing*.

Program

April 24, 2009

Emory Conference Center Hotel, 1615 Clifton Road, Atlanta, GA 30329

404-712-6000 <http://www.emoryconferencecenter.com/>

8: 15 am Welcome

Rick Luce, Vice Provost and Director of University Libraries, Earl Lewis, Provost of Emory University, and Rudolph P. Byrd, Director of the James Weldon Johnson Institute

8:30 am to 10:00 am

Alice Walker and the Traditions of American and African American Literature

Presenters: Michael Awkward, Cheryl Wall and Deborah Plant

Moderator: Nagueyalti Warren, Emory University

10:30 am to Noon

Producing and Directing Alice Walker: *The Color Purple* from Peachtree Street to Broadway

Presenters: Susan Booth and Scott Sanders

Moderator: Rudolph P. Byrd, Emory University

Lunch: noon to 2:00 pm

2: 00 pm to 3:30 pm

Be Nobody's Darling: Alice Walker as Activist and Feminist

Presenters: Howard Zinn and Gloria Steinem

Moderator: Beverly Guy Sheftall, Spelman College

4:00 to 5:30 pm

Editing Alice Walker: the Life and Writings

Presenters: Susan Kirschner and Evelyn White

Moderator: Valerie Boyd, University of Georgia

8:00 pm

Alice Walker, "Reflections on the Turning of the Wheel: Living a Life of Freedom and Choice"

Glenn Memorial Auditorium

NOTE: This talk is a free event but requires a separate ticket. For more information about tickets to the talk, please call the Schwartz Center Box Office at 404-727-5050.

The cosponsors for the symposium are the Hightower Fund, the Manuscript, Archive and Rare Book Library (MARBL) of the Robert W. Woodruff Library, the Department of African American Studies, the Graduate Institute of the Liberal Arts, the Office of the Provost, the Alice Walker Literary Society, and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Registration

The registration fee for attendance at the symposium is \$25.00. The registration fee will be waived for all students. To register for the symposium, visit

https://www.alumniconnections.com/olc/pub/EMR/events/event_order.cgi?tmpl=events&event=22250

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reagan@marketingeventpartners.com or 678-990-9791.

Remember that the talk by Alice Walker at 8 p.m. on April 24 at Glenn Memorial Auditorium is free but requires a ticket in addition to your symposium registration. For more information about tickets to the talk, please call the Schwartz Center Box Office at 404-727-5050.