

*The 22nd Annual
Alabama Writers Symposium*

APRIL 25-26, 2019

Monroeville, Alabama

Author Biographies



2019 Harper Lee Award for Alabama's Distinguished Writer

Daniel Wallace is the author of five novels. His first, *Big Fish*, was made into a motion picture of the same name by Tim Burton in 2003, and a musical version on Broadway in 2013. He is a contributing editor to *Garden & Gun* magazine and is the J. Ross MacDonald Distinguished Professor of English at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, where he teaches and directs the Creative Writing Program.

**2019 Truman Capote Prize for Alabama's Distinguished Writer of
Literary Non-Fiction or the Short Story**



B.J. Hollars is the author of several books, most recently *The Road South: Personal Stories of the Freedom Riders*, *Flock Together: A Love Affair With Extinct Birds*, *From the Mouths of Dogs: What Our Pets Teach Us About Life, Death, and Being Human*, as well as a collection of essays, *This Is Only A Test*. Additionally, he has also written *Thirteen Loops: Race, Violence and the Last Lynching in America*, *Opening the Doors: The Desegregation of the University of Alabama and the Fight for Civil Rights in Tuscaloosa*, *Dispatches from the Drownings: Reporting the Fiction of Nonfiction*, and *Sightings*. Hollars serves as a mentor for Creative Nonfiction, and the founder and executive director of the Chippewa Valley Writers Guild. He is an associate professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

**2019 Eugene Current Garcia Award for Alabama's Distinguished
Literary Scholar**

TBD



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Tina Braziel is the director of the Ada Long Creative Writing Workshop at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. In 2017, she served as the writer in residence at Hot Springs National Park in Arkansas. Her debut full-length book, *Known By Salt*, was the 2017 winner of the Philip Levine Prize for Poetry.

Born and raised in Mobile, Alabama, **Lauren K. Denton** now lives with her husband and two daughters in Homewood, just outside Birmingham. In addition to her fiction, she writes a monthly newspaper column about life, faith, and how funny (and hard) it is to be a parent. On any given day, she'd rather be at the beach with her family and a stack of books. Her debut novel, *The Hideaway*, was a Wall Street Journal, USA Today, and Amazon Charts bestseller. Her second novel, *Hurricane Season*, was released in spring of 2018. Her third, *Glory Road*, will be released in February of 2019.

Frye Gaillard is a writer in residence at the University of South Alabama and John Egerton Scholar in Residence at the Southern Foodways Alliance at The University of Mississippi. He is the author of more than 20 books, including *Go South to Freedom*, *Journey to the Wilderness: War, Memory, and a Southern Family's Civil War Letters*, and *The Books That Mattered: A Reader's Memoir*. Gaillard is the winner of the Lillian Smith Award, the Clarence Cason Award for Nonfiction, and most recently, the 2016 Eugene Current-Garcia Award for Distinction in Literary Scholarship. His latest book, *A Hard Rain: America in the 1960s, Our Decade of Hope, Possibility, and Innocence Lost*, was published by NewSouth in 2018.

Ashley M. Jones is the founding director of the Magic City Poetry Festival, 2nd Vice President and Membership Chair of the AWS, co-coordinator of the Nitty Gritty Magic City Reading Series, and a faculty member in the Creative Writing Department at the Alabama School of Fine Arts. She received a 2015 Rona Jaffe Foundation Writer's Award and a 2015 B-Metro Magazine Fusion Award. Her debut poetry collection, *Magic City Gospel*, was published in January 2017 and won the silver medal in poetry in the 2017 Independent Publishers Book Awards. Her second book, *dark//thing*, won the 2018 Lena-Miles Wever Todd Prize for Poetry from Pleiades Press.



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Philip Shirley is an author of both fiction and nonfiction, as well as the CEO of GodwinGroup, the South's oldest ad agency. Over the past decade he has published a collection of short stories, *Oh Don't You Cry For Me* (a finalist for the Jefferson Prize), a social history of baseball titled *Sweet Spot: 125 Years of Baseball and the Louisville Slugger* (with Triumph Books of Random House) co-authored with David Magee, and in 2012 a novel, *The White Lie*, released by Mindbridge Press. His forthcoming work, *The Graceland Conspiracy*, will be released in April 2019. Shirley is the current president of the board of trustees for the Alabama Writers' Forum.

Lila Quintero Weaver was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, but grew up in Alabama. She received her BFA from the University of Alabama. She tells the story of her family's immigration in *Darkroom: A Memoir in Black & White* (The University of Alabama Press, 2012). *Cuarto oscuro: Recuerdos en blanco y negro* is the Spanish edition. In July 2018, Candlewick Press released Lila's first children's book, *My Year in the Middle*.

Schedule of Events

Thursday, April 25

Monroe County Museum

- 1pm - B.J. Hollars, Truman Capote Prize
- 2pm - Eugene Current-Garcia Winner
- 3pm - Frye Gaillard
- 4pm - Daniel Wallace, Harper Lee Award
- 5pm - Book Signing
- 5:30pm - Ticketed Fish Fry
- 7:00pm - Viewing of *Big Fish* with
Daniel Wallace in the historic
Monroe County Courtroom

Friday, April 26

Coastal Alabama Community College

- 8am - Lila Quintero Weaver
- 9am - Philip Shirley
- 10am - Tina Braziel and Ashley M. Jones
- 11am - Lauren K. Denton
- 12:30pm - Literary Awards Luncheon
Monroeville Community House