

## Bringing North Carolina Literary Treasures, Old and New, to Light

by Margaret D. Bauer, Editor

When he created the *North Carolina Literary Review*, Alex Albright had the wonderful audacity to invite A.R. Ammons to be “staff poet,” and each of the issues under Alex’s editorship include original Ammons poems. Not a North Carolina native myself, I took a little more time to develop that kind of relationship with a poet, but for numerous issues now, including this one, James Applewhite has been my Ammons.

Two other of North Carolina’s literary gems who have shared their talent with *NCLR* year after year are Fred Chappell and Allan Gurganus. Fred Chappell has written about the intercontinental novels of Angela Davis-Gardner, which we include in this section as a “flashback” to the 2015 global issue. In turn, Gary Richards revisits Allan Gurganus’s novel *Plays Well with Others*, which he wrote about for our 2008 humor issue, and in his witty essay, he alerts the writer to an outstanding debt. Following up on this essay, delivered at the 2017 North Carolina Writers Conference, Jane Holding and J.W. Bonner share their tributes from the evening banquet in honor of the author. (Read the other Gurganus tributes from the conference in *NCLR Online* 2018.)

As usual, enjoy in this section several of our finalists from the three writing competitions we run during the year, including the winner of the 2017 Alex Albright Creative Nonfiction Prize competition, John Thomas York, who also won the very first James Applewhite Poetry Prize. We appreciate *Our State* Editor Elizabeth Hudson for serving as the final judge for the 2017 Albright competition. Another second-time winner here is Robert Wallace; in his case, this is his second time to win the Doris Betts Fiction Prize.

And finally, several of the finalists in the James Applewhite Poetry Prize competition have been finalists previously, like third-place winner Catherine Carter, or their poems relate to themes of back issues, including Jo Taylor’s Amelia Earhart–inspired poem, which hearkens back to our 2003 issue, and Kenneth Chamlee’s poem inspired by a German artist, reminiscent of the 1997, 2015, and 2017 issue themes. Serving as the final judge, James Applewhite selected poems by two of these finalists for honorable mention: Annie Frazier and Diana Pinckney. There are still more finalists, more honorable mentions, and the winner by poets new to our pages in the North Carolina Miscellany section of the issue and one in the special feature section – as well as in all three sections of *NCLR Online* 2018 (where we also published W.A. Polf’s second place Betts Prize story). It was, indeed, another successful year of creative submissions.

Building on that success, we have news of a new writing prize offered to inspire submissions: the Paul Green Foundation will award \$250 to the best Paul Green content selected for publication in *NCLR*. Having spent many hours with the Paul Green Papers in the Southern Historical Collection at UNC Chapel Hill, I can attest to the riches yet to be discovered in those archives about North Carolina’s preeminent playwright. This year is the thirtieth year of the Archie K. Davis Fellowships, which provide funding for research travel to North Carolina archives. I would suggest exploring the Green Papers’ detailed online collection overview for a topic and then applying for a Davis Fellowship to fund a research trip to Chapel Hill. ■

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