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North Carolina Literary Review

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North Carolina Literary Review Gives Significant Space to ‘Otherness’

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This year’s online issue of the *North Carolina Literary Review* features content by and about the contributions of African Americans in North Carolina’s past and present. The special feature section of the online issue opens with an introduction by the editor, Margaret Bauer, who notes that although “The *North Carolina Literary Review* has featured African American writers since its first issue,” it was time to, quoting North Carolina Poet Laureate Jaki Shelton Green, “make room for the ‘Otherness.’” The special feature section of *NCLR Online 2019* offers several reviews of new books by African American writers of North Carolina, including Green’s chapbook-length poem, *I want to undie you*, a moving tribute to her daughter, Imani Shelton Green, who is also featured on the issue’s cover. *NCLR* Art Director Dana Ezzell Lovelace selected artist Barbara Tyroler’s composites of photographs of Green’s daughter for her latest stunning cover. More of these composites are included inside the issue, with the review and with a poem by Glenis Redmond, inspired by Harriet Ann Jacobs, North Carolina’s “Anne Frank,” a fugitive slave who hid in her grandmother’s attic to escape the sexual predator who claimed ownership of her. This and another of Redmond’s poems featured here are finalists in the 2018 James Applewhite Poetry Prize competition, including an honorable mention poem by Crystal Simone Smith and two poems by L. Teresa Church. Featured with these other poems: art by North Carolina African American artists Ernie Barnes, Selma Burke, Ivey Hayes, and Darryl Hurts. Also in the special feature section: one of the honorable mentions in the 2018 Alex Albright Creative Nonfiction Prize competition, Angela Belcher Epps’s “Sandhill: A Symphony of Souls.”

Other sections of *NCLR Online 2019* include Miriam Herin’s 2018 Doris Betts Fiction Prize story “Lucky” and David Hopes’s “Corin and Dorinda,” which received second place in the Betts competition, sponsored by the North Carolina Writers’ Network and managed by *NCLR*; and more finalists in the Applewhite and Albright competitions, Sally and Joel Thomas, for example, mother and son. Sally Thomas’s “Magus at Twilight” appears in this issue; her second-place poem will be in the print issue, due out this summer. Her son, Joel Thomas,

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received honorable mention in the Albright competition for his essay “Whimsyton, NC.” Its appearance in *NCLR Online* 2019 is his first publication.

The open-access *NCLR Online* issues bring timely and broad attention to the book reviews and literary news stories, which writers can link to on their social media pages. Bauer notes that a record 39 books are reviewed in this issue, up from 29 in 2018. The online issue’s 180 pages, closer to the length of the print issues, is also a record. *NCLR Online* maintains the print issues’ unique and award-winning design, developed by Art Director Dana Ezzell Lovelace, a Professor of Graphic Design at Meredith College in Raleigh.

NCLR is an award-winning literary magazine produced at East Carolina University, with additional funding from the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association. The 2019 issues are also funded, in part, by a grant from the North Carolina Arts Council. The forthcoming print issue will include essays on and interviews with North Carolina African American writers from the slave poet George Moses Horton to Stephanie Powell Watts, author of *No One Is Coming to Save Us*, which received the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work. “Read a review of novel by one of North Carolina’s new literary voices,” Bauer urges, “And then subscribe to *NCLR* so you can read the interview with the author and an essay on the novel.”

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