

News release

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First author, illustrator and theme set for 2009 North Carolina Literary Festival

CHAPEL HILL – Children’s book illustrator and author Brian Pinkney is the first writer to be announced, and festival designs created by novelist and illustrator Daniel Wallace are unveiled for the 2009 North Carolina Literary Festival, set for Sept. 10-13.

With the theme “A Celebration of Reading and Writing,” the free public festival at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill will feature a new children’s area, where Pinkney will read from his acclaimed works, share his illustrations and interact with the audience.

Wallace, whose 1998 novel “Big Fish” became a movie, was invited to provide illustrations for the festival logo, new website www.NCLiteraryFestival.org and other event materials.

“We’re confident that Brian’s energy and creativity will captivate our youngest attendees,” said festival director Amy Baldwin. “And Daniel, who teaches in UNC’s creative writing program, is a wonderful example of a multi-talented North Carolina author. We are so pleased that both are lending their artistic excellence to the festival.”

A complete list of authors and a schedule for the 5th biennial festival will be released this summer, Baldwin said. The 2009 festival will feature more than 125 authors representing all genres of books – local and nationally known authors, North Carolina favorites, well-known Southern writers and emerging artists.

More than 100 volunteers will be needed for the festival, Baldwin said. Those interested in helping may register soon at www.NCLiteraryFestival.org.

The libraries of UNC and N.C. State and Duke Universities, with additional support from N.C. Central University, cooperatively organize and sponsor the festival, which rotates biennially among the first three campuses. Since the festival began, it has been held in 1998 and 2002 at Carolina, 2004 at N.C. State and 2006 at Duke.

“This year’s festival will include readings, discussions, exhibits, performances, book signings, lectures and book sales,” Baldwin said. “Programs and activities are designed to attract people of all ages from across North Carolina and beyond.”

The festival’s children’s areas will cater to those 12 years of age and younger. Besides hearing from children’s authors, illustrators and storytellers, kids will be able to join in activities including making book bags, drawing, getting their pictures taken with character mascots and getting autographs from some of the presenters.

Pinkney has received Caldicott Honors from the American Library Association and the Association for Library Service to Children, for “The Faithful Friend” (Simon & Schuster,

1995), written by Robert D. San Souci, and “Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra” (Hyperion Books, 1997) by Pinkney’s wife, Andrea Davis Pinkney. Annual Caldicott Honors recognize illustrators of the most distinguished picture books published in the United States.

Books written and illustrated by Pinkney include “Hush, Little Baby” (HarperCollins, 2005), “Cosmo and the Robot” (Greenwillow, 2000), “Max Found Two Sticks” (Simon & Schuster, 1994), “JoJo’s Flying Side Kick” (Simon & Schuster, 1995), and the winner of the 1997 Boston Globe-Horn Book Award, “The Adventures of Sparrowboy” (Simon & Schuster, 1997).

Pinkney followed in the brush strokes of his father, Jerry Pinkney, also a children’s book illustrator. Brian Pinkney received the Coretta Scott King Award from the American Library Association, which honors black authors and illustrators of outstanding books for children and young adults, and three Coretta Scott King Honor Awards.

Pinkney’s participation in the festival is sponsored by the Susan Steinfirst Memorial Lecture in Children’s Literature in the UNC School of Information and Library Science. Steinfirst taught children’s and young adult literature in the school from 1976 to 1996.

Wallace, the J. Ross MacDonald Distinguished Professor of English at UNC, played the part of a professor in the 2003 film of “Big Fish.” Since that book put him on the literary map, he has written three additional novels: “Ray in Reverse” (Penguin, 2000), “The Watermelon King” (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2003) and “Mr. Sebastian and the Negro Magician” (Anchor, 2007).

Wallace’s work has been published in more than two dozen languages, and his illustrations have appeared in publications including The Los Angeles Times and Italian Vanity Fair. He has illustrated books including “Pep Talks, Warnings and Screeds: Indispensable Wisdom and Cautionary Advice for Writers,” by George Singleton, and “Adventures in Pen Land: One Writer’s Journey from Inklings to Ink” (UNC Press, 2008), by his UNC creative writing colleague Marianne Ginger.

“This is a dream job, drawing pictures for the North Carolina Literary Festival,” Wallace said. “I’m tempted to leave story writing to the amazingly talented festival participants and just spend my time doodling. But I probably won’t.”

Brian Pinkney Web site: <http://www.brianpinkney.net/>

Daniel Wallace Web site: <http://english.unc.edu/faculty/wallaced.html>

About the N.C. Literary Festival

The North Carolina Literary Festival is an educational outreach project that promotes reading and writing and spotlights the literature of the American South. It is cooperatively organized and sponsored by the libraries of UNC and N.C. State and Duke Universities, with additional support from N.C. Central University. Held every other year, the location rotates among the three University campuses at Chapel Hill, State and Duke. In addition to many distinguished keynotes, the 5th biennial festival features North Carolina favorites, emerging artists, well-known Southern

writers, and world-class authors from around the country. Varied in content, the event includes readings and discussions, exhibits, performances, book signings, lectures and book sales. Designed to attract people of all ages within the state of North Carolina and beyond, the festival activities are free and open to the public. www.NCLiteraryFestival.org.

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