

# The Southeastern Librarian

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## SELA News

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# SELA

SOUTHEASTERN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

## NEWS

## 2024 SELA Conference: Recharge in Rocket City July 14-16, 2024



Left to right: Sarah Simms, Laura Slavin, Crystal Gates, Kristin Rogers, & Becky Bickford

### SELA OFFICER INSTALLATION



Left to right: Laura Slavin, Crystal Gates, & Melissa Dennis



Kristin Rogers & Melissa Dennis



Becky Bickford, Crystal Gates, & Melissa Dennis



Sarah Simms & Melissa Dennis

Photos by Robin Campbell

## SELA AWARD WINNERS

### Ginny Frankenthaler Memorial Scholarship recipients:

- George Farris (Itawamba Community College)

### Hal Mendelsohn Award:

- Laura Slavin (University of Alabama-Huntsville)

### Honorary SELA Memberships were awarded to:

- Michael Seigler
- Dwain Gordon
- Dr. Vicki Gregory
- Sandra McAninch
- Dr. Nan Carmack



Camille McCutcheon & Michael Seigler

### Mary Utopia Rothrock Award:

- Dr. Nan Carmack (Library of Virginia)



Dr. Nan Carmack & Gordon Baker

### Outstanding Southeastern Author Awards:

- Fiction – Mary Kay Andrews for *The Home-wreckers*
- Fiction – Ron Rash for *The Caretakers*
- Nonfiction – Evan Dalton Smith for *Looking for Andy Griffith*

### New Voices Award:

- Caroline Fleming & Ryan Yoakum (Belmont University)



Caroline Fleming, Ryan Yoakum & Neil Foulger

### Outstanding Southeastern Library Program Awards:

- University of Mississippi Libraries for School Library Symposium



Gordon Baker & Melissa Dennis

- Honorable Mention: North Little Rock Public Library for Prom Shop



Gordon Baker & Crystal Gates

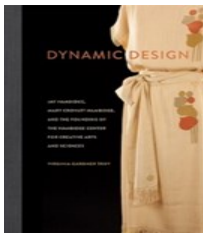
Photos by Robin Campbell

# 2024 Southern Books Competition:

## 72<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary

### Awards for Book Design

#### Excellence in Cover Design



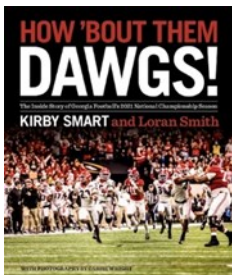
***Dynamic Design: Jay Hambidge, Mary Crovatt Hambidge, and the Founding of the Hambidge Center for Creative Arts and Sciences***

By Virginia Gardner Troy

Published by The University of Georgia Press, 2023

The cover of *Dynamic Design* perfectly represents the artistic content within this beautiful tribute to the lives and work of both Jam Hambidge, a visual artist and “dynamic symmetry” theorist, and Mary Crovatt Hambidge, a weaving and textiles artist. Quarter bound in cloth with paper covered boards, the photograph of one of Mary’s textile masterpieces featured on the cover is complemented textually by the cloth on the spine. Additionally, the font colors of the title, subtitle, and author names pull from the color palette of the dress, making for a visually appealing introduction to the beautiful artwork exhibited inside.

#### Excellence in Page Design



***How ‘Bout Them DAWGS!***

By Kirby Smart and Loran Smith

Published by The University of Georgia Press, 2023

This book incorporates exciting and thoughtful page design while organizing a wealth of information, which requires multiple text elements such as scores, roster charts, and other statistics. The use of their team colors works brilliantly to create page designs and typography that stand out and make sense of the information. The photography of Cassie Wright is equally important to this book. Over one hundred photographs set the reader on the field, providing an intimate portrait of the players, the coaches, and the game. The embossed book jacket is also an attractive design detail. Smart, Smith, and Wright have succeeded in their collaboration to create an exclusive look in Georgia’s 2021 Football National Championship.

#### Excellence in Original Artwork



***An Unflinching Look: Elegy for Wetlands***

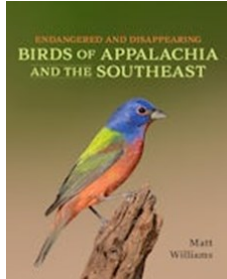
By Benjamin Dimmitt

Published by The University of Georgia Press, 2023

Dimmitt has captured the true beauty of these vast ecosystems and how they are rapidly changing due to climate change. His haunting photographs show diminishing wetlands and vast changes over time that show the erosion of the land and space that

is the home of the beautiful Gulf Coasts of Florida. His works shed a powerful light on how much these lands have changed over time and continue to do so.

### Excellence Overall



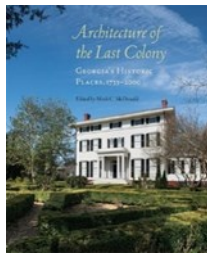
#### ***Endangered and Disappearing Birds of Appalachia and the Southeast***

B Matt Williams

Published by The University Press of Kentucky, 2024

Matt Williams' excellent bird conservation work is matched superbly by beautiful photography, design, and ease of readability. Every bird description is clearly marked with sections on species account, identification, vocalization, nesting, and species conservation data. Included with each description is a color-coded map of the bird's range, occurrence, and seasonal migration. The maps cover the top half of a page, reflecting the bottom half-page photograph of the bird just opposite. Beautiful full-page and double spread photographs of birds are also included and feature significant moments captured by the photographer, such as bird courtship in flight. The book is both coffee table and exhibit worthy, as well as an important contribution to bird conservation.

### Excellence in Historical Significance



#### ***Architecture of the Last Colony: Georgia's Historic Places, 1733-2000.***

Edited by Mark C. McDonald

Published by The University of Georgia Press, 2023

Mark McDonald captures the true essence of the history of Georgia by exhibiting some of Georgia's finest examples of architecture that bring the past to life. The beautiful colors and explanations of each architecture are a snapshot into the past and can be a lesson in past building and style practices. This book also focuses on new style patterns of modern architecture that are just as bold and beautiful as more seasoned exhibits within this collection. The colors and shades literally leap off the page and transform you to visually appealing southern elegance in architecture.

### Excellence in Photography



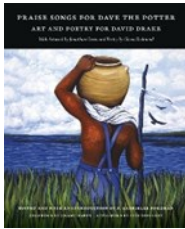
#### ***Shaker Made***

By Carol Peachee

Published by The University Press of Kentucky, 2024

The Shakers' sturdy simplicity used in memorializing their devotion to God, is made evident through Carol Peachee's book. Her brilliant decision to use black and white photography calls further attention to the fine details of light, line, and form, representative of the Pleasant Hill Shakers' craftsmanship. This visually stunning tribute succeeds in creating a full composite, from craftsmanship and art to landscape and buildings. Peachee perfectly captures a living history of the Pleasant Hill Shakers, from mundane to majestic with her unique composition and angles.

## Excellence in Typography



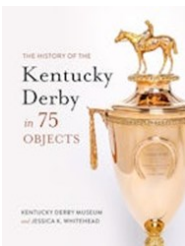
### ***Praise Songs for Dave the Potter: Art and Poetry for David Drake***

Edited by P. Gabrielle Foreman

Published by The University of Georgia Press, 2023

This book shares the brilliance of David Drake and how his pottery transcended history and time. His words jump off the pages as they are visual representation of the words he so eloquently wrote in his artwork. The book and how it is laid out shows the unique style in which he wrote on his artifacts. This book allows the reader to see the soul of David Drake with its vibrant artwork and photography which makes each section on the page come alive.

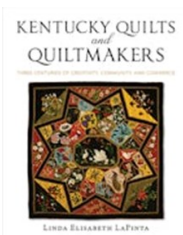
## Honorable Mention



### ***The History of the Kentucky Derby in 75 Objects***

By Kentucky Derby Museum and Jessica K. Whitehead

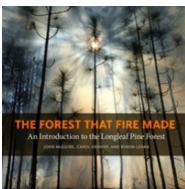
Published by The University Press of Kentucky, 2024



### ***Kentucky Quilts and Quiltmakers: Three Centuries of Creativity, Community, and Commerce***

By Linda LaPinta

Published by The University Press of Kentucky, 2023



### ***The Forest That Fire Made***

By John McGuire, Carol Denhof, and Byron Levan

Published by The University Georgia Press, 2024

## The Southern Books Competition

The Southeastern Library Association (SELA) started the competition in 1952 and continues it today. Trade publishers, university presses, specialty publishers, and private presses—located in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, and Puerto Rico—are eligible to enter the competition.

The competition represents the Association's commitment to the book as a vital part of library service. Awards are made based on design, typography, and quality of production. Judges are knowledgeable book people associated with book design, printing, bookselling, publishing, and librarianship.

After award-winning books for the biennium are exhibited at the conference of the Association,

they are available for viewing at the permanent archive at the Valdosta State University Archives and Special Collections, Odum Library, 1500 N. Patterson Street, Valdosta, GA 31698. For information, contact: Douglas R. Carlson, Program Coordinator, [drcarlso@valdosta.edu](mailto:drcarlso@valdosta.edu).

## The 2024 Competition Judges

**Peggy Balch** has her MLIS from the University of Alabama and MA in history from the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). She is the Curator of the Reynolds-Finley Historical Library (RFHL), a part of UAB Libraries. Her responsibilities include the management, preservation, exhibition, interpretation, and development of the RFHL, a collection of rare books and manuscripts pertaining to the history of medicine, science, and health care dating from the 14th century through the mid-20th century. She regularly utilizes the collection for instruction and research support to students and scholars, often drawing upon the material culture and history of the book to enhance educational encounters with rare scientific texts in a variety of ancient and modern languages.

**Christie Halloran** has worked for UAB Libraries in Birmingham, AL for over 15 years, where she is part of the Interlibrary Loan Department. She previously held library positions at The University of South Alabama and Spring Hill College, both in Mobile, AL. Christie holds a Bachelor of Science in Art Education with a minor in painting, from the University of Alabama, where she taught for the University of Alabama's Youth Art Program. She also taught art in the public school system of Charleston, SC after graduating college. Christie is a freelance artist who enjoys art projects of all types. In her spare time, she loves attending art shows, concerts, and watching documentaries.

**Sylvia McAphee** is the Assistant Professor and Metadata Librarian for Continuing Resources at the University of Alabama at Birmingham's UAB Libraries. She has worked in libraries for over 25 years. She received her M.L.I.S. from the University of Alabama. She works in the Resource Acquisitions & Metadata Services Department where she catalogs print, equipment, special collection items, and special projects. She is the proud aunt to a niece and two nephews.

## SELA CONFERENCE KEYNOTE: ASHLEY M. JONES

*Ashley M. Jones is the Poet Laureate of Alabama and served as the Keynote speaker for the 2024 SELA Conference. Below is a copy of the keynote given. During the keynote, several of her poems were read, the first poem is reprinted in its entirety, the remaining poems read during the keynote only include the title. Please visit Ashley M. Jones' [website](#), for more information about her work including the poems in the keynote.*

Good morning, and thanks so much for having me at the 2024 South Eastern Library Association Conference. Whenever I'm asked to speak at any event celebrating librarians, I jump at the chance because libraries are so important, not just in these times where the work of librarians is under attack, but always, because we were all helped at some point along the way because of a library.

Libraries shaped my childhood. I remember, even before I went to school, going with my parents to my local library to check out books—my mom had taught me to read at an early age, and books were the most wonderful portal to adventure and fun. I would load up by the armful, devouring the books as quickly as I could once I got them home. Once I started school, I kept that very same routine with my school's library—stocking up on as many books as I could each week when we visited the library. Yes, there were Accelerated Reading points to be won, but I truly loved to go to all the different places books could lead me. And, as a die-hard Reading Rainbow fan, I knew that reading was much more than just collecting points or earning pizza vouchers. It was a way of life, and it was a portal to knowledge and understanding. I read about magical lands, about families, about emotions. I read about history and friendships. I read chapter books and picture books—anything I could get my hands on, I read.

That love of reading led me to my life's passion—writing poetry. I was seven years old when I discovered I was born to be a poet. I had been in a racial existential crisis since Kindergarten, when I had my first brush with racism. That event tumbled me into the depths of low self esteem, and into a true questioning of how I was supposed to deal with the hatred that exists in this world—how could I be joyful about my culture when people made me feel so bad about it? How could I feel comfortable when I worried about what else people might do just because they couldn't find my humanity because of racial prejudice? When I found, on one of our school library visits, the book *Honey I Love and other love poems* by Eloise Greenfield, I was changed forever. This book showed me that there was a full and worthy joy in being Black—that we were linked to freedom fighters like Harriet Tubman, and that any racism or discrimination we faced was entirely the problem of the aggressor. I was enough, and joyfully so, just as I was. When I recited the poem “Harriet Tubman” from that book in 2nd grade, I knew, that day, that poetry was what I wanted to do—it made me feel alive, proud, and totally confident. I feel that way to this day. I'm glad that book was available to checkout that day, because I don't know where I'd be without that pivotal experience.

Loving libraries and reading also led me to my passion for truth-seeking, always. Learning about my culture and about Black writers and Black history was, unfortunately, mostly left up to my own self study, as I didn't often find myself represented on syllabi or in class lessons, and that was true all the way through my educational journey. I'll be starting my PhD studies this fall, and I still have not had a Black writing teacher. I had a couple of Black literature teachers, but the vast majority of my education in Black poetry and Black literature has been done on my own, going to libraries and checking out books that could lead me to my people. In fact, I was re-invigorated to write about my culture and heritage as an undergraduate when I spent hours in the University library reading book after book of Black poets' work. Libraries bridge the gap—where our traditional education might not cover everything we truly need, libraries are full of so much knowledge that can be the difference between cultural awareness, historical knowledge, and empathy and a life of blind ignorance.

Now that I'm serving a term as the first person of color and youngest person to be named Poet



Laureate of Alabama in the state's history, I'm accurately aware of the important role libraries and librarians play in our society. At every event I've done with librarians or at libraries, it is clear that librarians are the great protectors of our cultural history and our earnest and authentic pursuit of knowledge. I see the joy of library patrons as they come to programs, and I hear them sharing grateful words with the librarians who plan events and rally around books and authors. I see how comfortable people are in the arms of a library. Until recently, the political control of educational systems didn't touch the sanctuary of the library. Until recently, people from all walks of life could feel welcomed and safe in the stacks of the library. It is vital that we fight to make sure libraries remain a protected space. When people study this time period centuries in the future, will they learn the truth, or will the libraries be censored into some sanitized version of reality?

I consider it a part of my artistic practice to perform that same work—to make space for knowledge, empathy, and the truth. Like the shelves of the libraries of my youth, my poems seek to inform and invite readers to an empathy-making look into the human condition. I'd love to read a few poems of mine which I think do that work:

First, I'll read a poem which deals with history—I truly believe looking honestly at our history through poetry is a great way to sit with the human experience instead of just the black and white photos, the controlled or politicized narratives, or even the fears of those who wish that history to remain buried. This is a poem about Ann Williams, which I wrote as the script for an animated musical webseries called "The History of White People in America" which is distributed online by PBS. This episode premieres in October. Ann Williams was enslaved in Maryland, and she was told, because the TransAtlantic Slave Trade was outlawed, that she, like many other enslaved people in the northeast, would be sold south.

### **ALL GOD'S CHILDREN GOT WINGS**

"I got wings, you got wings, all of God's children got wings! When I get to Heaven gonna put on my wings; I'm gonna fly all over God's Heaven! Heaven, Heaven. Everybody talkin' 'bout Heaven ain't goin' there, Heaven, Heaven; gonna fly all over God's Heaven!"

-lyrics from the Negro Spiritual

"They brought me away with two of my children, and would'nt let me see my husband—they did'nt sell my husband, and I did'nt want to go;—I was so confus'd and 'istratcted, that I did'nt know hardly what I was about—but I did'nt want to go, and I jumped out of the window; —but I am sorry now that I did it; —they have carried my children off with 'em to Carolina."

-Ann Williams, who jumped out of a third story tavern window to protest being sold away from her children and into the Deep South, 1815

when I was born, God gave me wings—  
feathers fit to fly—  
the wide breadth of the open sky—

when I was born, God said you are and I was.  
this place called maryland can't own my flesh.  
this place called america can't own my blood.  
no master over my love or my womb—no master

no man making devil's deals  
no mistress holding her skin above mine  
no five flat dollars enough to sell me.

they say I'm going south—  
 they can't take us from Africa anymore  
 so they'll just take us from here:  
 can the capitol's shadow hide this sin?

in the south, the sun is mad just like we are—  
 it burns the whole land  
 to spite the men who make us work it.  
 it reminds us that something in this world can be warm.

my children are traded for vulgar currency.  
 and I remember God said you are made of wings,  
 and then I remember the sky, its gift,  
 those clouds which they cannot hold, and my soul—

I remember that God does not know their names.  
 no slavemaster will see the pearly gates.  
 and the window, it says, you are.  
 it says I got wings. feathers fit to fly.  
 when I get to Heaven—there'll be no bones to break,  
 no families unglued by the spit of satan—  
 I'm gonna fly all over God's Heaven.  
 I'm gonna fly.

—

**"All God's Children Got Wings" was commissioned by and appears in Room 608's animated web series, "The History of White People In America"**

Next, a poem about two great leaders who have impacted Alabama forever. John Lewis, who was born in Pike County, AL, and Bryan Stevenson, who currently works in Montgomery, Alabama. Lewis was a civil rights pioneer, giving his very blood for voting rights on Edmund Pettus Bridge on Bloody Sunday. Bryan Stevenson remembers that history with care and an incredible commitment to truth at the Legacy Sites in Montgomery and through his work to fight carceral injustice with the Equal Justice Initiative.

**FREEDOM SERMON—ALABAMA, USA** (title of poem read during keynote)

This is a poem about one of my patron saints, Harriet Tubman. It is one of five pieces I wrote which became the orchestral poetic composition in collaboration with Dr. Rebekah Griffin Greene, *A Portrait of Harriet*, which I've performed once in Birmingham with the Alabama School of Fine Arts Orchestra, and I'll perform in September in Fresno, CA with an orchestra. This poem re-sees the injury Harriet Tubman sustained which she said made way for her visions from God. Those visions showed her how to escape to freedom time and time again.

**V. HOLYHEADHARRIET** (title of poem read during keynote)

**Birmingham Fire and Rescue Haiku, 1963** (title of poem read during keynote)

This poem is set in Kelly Ingram Park in Birmingham, AL at the Children's March in 1963, which was a turning point in the Birmingham Civil Rights Movement. This park is a part of our National Civil Rights Monument here in Birmingham. During the Children's March, Commissioner of Safety Bull Conner met the peaceful child marchers with fire hoses and police dogs. This poem is in their voice.

It is vital that we do our own research to find the truth. And it can be uncomfortable. It is necessary for our growth, and if we truly love this country we must interrogate its past to make hope for the future. This poem, like all my poems, is researched and desires to see reality behind the fables and tall tales we try to hide behind. It tells the story of America.

**MANIFEST DESTINY** (title of poem read during keynote)

Two poems left. This is one I used to call my greatest hit because I read it everywhere, even on Good Morning America. Again, the books will lead us to the truth. This poem talks about the work we all must do, not one region in America. It starts with a quote from a book by Dr. King:

**ALL Y'ALL REALLY FROM ALABAMA** (title of poem read during keynote)

I want to end on a poem about God and freedom.

**WHEN YOU ASK ME FROM WHERE MY HELP COMES** (title of poem read during keynote)

Thank you, and thank you for all you do to keep our country full of knowledge, love, and truth.

**-Ashley M. Jones, Poet Laureate of Alabama**

