

THE CLINTON AND MARY OPAL MOORE

APPALACHIAN WRITER'S RESIDENCY



Opportunity afforded

THE MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM at Murray State University is pleased to announce Kentucky author Crystal Wilkinson as the 2018 Clinton and Mary Opal Moore Appalachian Writer-in-Residence.



Crystal Wilkinson

CRYSTAL WILKINSON is an award-winning writer and founding member of The Affrilachian Poets, a literary collective that represents the multicultural reality of the Appalachian region. She was born in Ohio, reared in the Indian Creek area of Casey County, Kentucky, and is a graduate of Eastern Kentucky University and Spalding University's MFA Program. Wilkinson's 2016 novel, *The Birds of Opulence*, won the Ernest J. Gaines Award for Literary Excellence, the Weatherford Award for Appalachian Literature, and the Judy Gaines Young Book Award. Wilkinson's other works include the story collections *Blackberries*, *Blackberries*, winner of the Chaffin Award for Appalachian Literature, and *Water Street*, a finalist for both the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award. She is the recipient of the Denny Plattner Award in Poetry from *Appalachian Heritage* magazine and the Sallie Bingham Award from the Kentucky Foundation for Women. Wilkinson currently serves as Appalachian Writer-in-Residence at Berea College and teaches in Spalding University's low-residency creative writing program. She and Ron Davis founded *Mythium: A Journal of Contemporary Literature Celebrating Writers of Color* and the *Cultural Voice*, and together they own The Wild Fig bookstore in Lexington, Kentucky.

THE CLINTON AND MARY OPAL MOORE APPALACHIAN WRITER'S RESIDENCY was created with gifts from Shirley Moore Menendez, John C. Moore, Tom Moore, Nancy Moore Waldrop and Jayne Moore Waldrop in honor of their late parents and their family's eastern Kentucky roots. Clinton Elster Moore (1916-2008) and Mary Opal Moore (1922-2015) were born in eastern Kentucky – Pike and Letcher counties, respectively – but left the mountains in the early 1950s when they moved to far western Kentucky. They settled in Paducah where they remained for the rest of their lives, but they always considered Appalachia their home.



Clinton and Mary Opal Moore

The Moore Residency was created to strengthen literary connections between Appalachia and western Kentucky while enhancing the creative and professional growth of students pursuing their MFA at Murray State. It commemorates the Moores' east-to-west journey in hopes of fostering creativity and understanding between two distinct regions in Kentucky connected by the Cumberland River. The Clinton and Mary Opal Moore Appalachian Writer's Residency takes place during the MFA program's annual July residency and includes a one-week stay for the writer in a private cabin overlooking Lake Barkley on the Cumberland River.

Crystal Wilkinson will read from her work on Friday, July 6, 2018 at 7:30pm on the Murray State campus. The reading is free and open to the public. For more information, please contact Carrie Jerrell, Director of the MFA program, at cjerrell1@murraystate.edu, or visit the MFA website at www.murraystate.edu/mfa.