Mayborn Conference Features Ira Glass

Pack your bags and prepare yourself for one of the biggest events this summer! The fifth annual three-day Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Conference, July 24-26, 2009, features award-winning speakers, with Ira Glass, public radio host as Saturday night’s keynote July 25.

Ira Glass hosts *This American Life*, a radio program broadcast on more than 500 public stations each week with more than 1.7 million listeners.

Friday night speaker Paul Theroux is widely acclaimed as the nation’s most renowned travel writer – the quintessential explorer with an instinct for noticing the odd, compelling detail.

Alma Guillermoprieto will address conference attendees on Sunday, July 26. Guillermoprieto is a Latin American correspondent for the New Yorker and the New York Review of Books. She is also widely acclaimed for her incisive grasp of the mysterious mixture of culture and politics that shape the region.

For ticket information and reservations, go to: www.themayborn.unt.edu/maybornconference2009
Elise Brooking
Mayborn Graduate Assistant

Poodle skirts and bobby socks themed the night as the 2009 Journalism Banquet “rock ‘n rolled” through past decades of the industry and into the future on April 18. The unveiling of the new Frank W. and Sue Mayborn School of Journalism highlighted the event as guest keynote speaker, Bob Ray Sanders, associate editor and senior columnist for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, delivered a stirring speech to students, faculty and alumni.

“Here’s a guy [Sanders] who has been in journalism for more than 40 years. He still remembers those lessons his professors impressed upon him,” said Neil Foote, journalism professor and banquet committee chair.

Anthony Scott (‘08) said, “Coming back as an alum was really fun because I got to sit with mentors and talk to people who work in the industry.”

Sanders explained those life lessons with an anecdote from his college years at UNT, then North Texas State University.

“To give you an idea how old I am and how long I’ve been in the business, the textbook in my sophomore reporting class described a “good lead” as being like a woman’s skirt: “short enough to be interesting, but long enough to cover the subject,” he said as the crowd chuckled.

“When I came into journalism, we still had linotype machines and manual typewriters.”

Sanders recognized just how far the industry has come since his first days in the business.

“You see, I’m working for a newspaper today. One I’m very proud of. But at one time, a newspaper, like most in the South, would not even print a picture of someone who looked like me,” he said.

“I got that first job on the day of graduation, primarily because I had graduated from this university and from this outstanding program,” he said, his arm outstretched toward UNT Journalism and Mayborn faculty members, alumni and current students.

“I’m standing on the shoulders – broad, sturdy shoulders – of some great people.”

Addressing the current issues that are threatening newspapers today, Sanders reflected on the “ride” he’s had throughout his 20 plus years in the profession.

“I’ve had a great ride,” he said. “A ride that seems more like a roller coaster right now. One, when the coaster drops from the highest point, you wonder when it’s going to hit bottom. One where some of our newsrooms, because of once unheard-of layoffs, cutbacks and bankruptcies, seem more like mausoleums.”

However, Sanders didn’t dwell on the downward drop for long.

“I came by to tell you that despite the obituaries being written, newspapers are not on their death beds and journalism is far from being killed off as much as I think some media outlets are trying to do it,” he said, matter-of-factly.

“We still need you. Those of you who are committed to truth, and yes, even those of you who are trying to change the world,” he said.

Sanders ended with two quotes, one from Lorraine Hansberry, the first African-American playwright to produce a drama on Broadway. He used a line inscribed on her tombstone: “Yes, I care. I care about it all. It takes too much energy not to care.”

Then he quoted Carolyn Rodgers, a poet, writer and noted figure in the African-American community: “There is a well in me, and if I open up I can flow forever.”
Visiting McMurtryle: Archer City or bust for writing students

Jake Kemp
Mayborn student

There is no better way to gain appreciation for an art form than to fully immerse yourself in it. Every summer, in Archer City, Texas, a group of young writers gets the opportunity to immerse themselves in the art of literary nonfiction in a place that has born some of the most impressive works of storytelling of our time.

Archer City is the hometown of Larry McMurtry, the Pulitzer-Prize winning author of Lonesome Dove, The Last Picture Show, Terms of Endearment and co-wrote the screenplay for Brokeback Mountain.

“Archer City is a place where would-be writers go to become writers,” said George Getschow, who teaches the summer course. This will be the fifth year the course has been offered.

“You go into Archer City as one person, and you come out quite another,” Getschow said.

Professionals enjoy the experience along with students. “It’s complete immersion into writing,” Erik Calonius, author and former writer for The Wall Street Journal, said. “It’s a place where you can be renewed and inspired.”

The course offers an opportunity for writers to find their voice and recognize their full creative potential. Archer City is more than just a physical location, it is a place of mind.

“Some people have called it a literary boot camp. I call it a literary Disneyland. It is full of fun and adventure, but of the literary sort. It is McMurtryle,” said Getschow.

Students spend 10 days in McMurtryle. Past groups have had the opportunity to visit with McMurtry himself, whom Getschow describes as “the literary equivalent of the pope.” Several other established nonfiction writers come along to help the students workshop their writing.

The Archer City course is tied to The Mayborn Literary Nonfiction conference, as the students dig deep into the stories and the tactics of the speakers. “Archer City is where we go to practice what we have learned at the conference. The two are inextricably connected.” If you are serious about becoming a writer, Archer City is for you. Stop by the Mayborn office, GAB 207 for more information. The time spent in Archer City is July 27 - Aug 2. The course number is JOUR 5350.001.

‘MCMURTRYLAND’ - The Royal Theater in Larry McMurtry’s town of Archer City, Texas www.royaltheater.org

July 24-26, 2009

THE MAYBORN
Literary Nonfiction Conference

Register and see speaker bios: TheMayborn.unt.edu

Don’t miss the event of the summer!

Recipients of the $10,000 Mayborn scholarship for the 2009-2010 academic year

Elise Brooking
Noah Bunn
Tasha Hayton

Rebecca Hoeffner
Sarah Perry
Jayme Rutledge

2009 Conference Speakers

Ira Glass
Radio host of This American Life
Paul Theroux
Renowned travel writer and author
Alma Guillermoprieto
Latin American correspondent and author
Roy Blount Jr.
Humor writer
Julia Reed
Contributing editor and author
Michael W. Kauffman
Journalist and Narrative Historian
Gordon Grice
Nature writer
Stephanie Elizondo Griest
Journalist and memoir writer
Roger Thurow
Foreign correspondent, WSJ
Michael Hall
Writer, Texas Monthly
Bill Minutaglio
Nonfiction writer
John Parsley
Senior editor, Little, Brown and Co
Susan Warren
Texas Bureau Chief, WSJ
Allen and Cynthia Mondell
Media Projects, Inc.
Dianne Solis
Senior writer, DMN
Alfredo Corchado
Mexico City Bureau Chief, DMN
Joy Sewing
Fashion/beauty writer, Houston Chronicle
Michael Mooney
Writer, Village Voice Media
Ashley Harrell
Writer, Village Voice Media

Summer Calendar

TBD - Mayborn Magazine Release Party

July 24-26 - The Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Conference

July 27-Aug 2 - Archer City class

Aug 27 - First day of Fall 2009 classes
NEW SCHOOL | continued from front page

felate, KCEN-TV, before his death in 1987. Sue Mayborn now owns all three outlets.

“The best schools are known for their names, and we benefit greatly from the Mayborn name,” Land said.

The journalism graduate program already bears the Mayborn name, as does the literary nonfiction conference the school holds every summer.

“This gives us a great branding opportunity. The Mayborn name is well-known as a publishing family in Texas, and our conference has already gained national recognition and been identified as simply “The Mayborn,”” he said.

Civic journalism has become a buzz word in recent years, but Land says Frank Mayborn was doing civic journalism 60 years ago.

“Civic journalism means giving back to the community, and that’s what we stand for. That’s why we are so proud to be associated with the Mayborn name,” Land said.

As many newspapers cut traditional reporting jobs and struggle to find a feasible business model, some may assume that the need to have well-trained journalists will diminish. This is not the case, according to Land.

“We are a school of function, not form. Journalism is a function - the function is to provide accurate, fair, unvarnished information to people to help them make decisions about their lives. This will not change.”

The Mayborn School will focus on the basics, like good writing, information gathering, and interviewing, Land said.

JAMEELA SAYED ALI is head of the Public Communication Division in Kuwait’s Ministry of Education.

JOEL BRILLANT works as a freelance copywriter.

BO CARTER is advisor to The Lasso at Texas Woman’s University.

SUNNY CEARLY is the advertising manager at The Journal Record Publishing Co., a Tinker Air Force Base Publication.

HEDISH CONNOR works in corporate communications for Idearc Media.

TRICIA DAMERON performs a number of tasks for the Oklahoma House of Representatives. She also blogs about cooking food, growing food, and pondering food at Oklavore.com.

AMANDA HICKS is a journalism/photography teacher at Colleyville Heritage High School in Colleyville, Texas.

RAYMOND GRAHAM III is a self-employed real estate agent.

STEPHANIE LANDA is the senior assistant editor at Wintergreen Orchard House in Westford, MA.

DAN MALONE is an instructor at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas.

AMBER MAUS is the media director at First Methodist in Richardson, Texas.

JOSEPH OKECH is a sociology Ph. D. student at UNT.

ELLEN ROSSETTI had a baby on May 19. Welcome to the world, Matthew Daniel Rossetti.

DAVID WACHANGA is an assistant professor of journalism at the University of Wisconsin - Whitewater.

MEGAN WEADOCK is managing editor of Security Products magazine in Dallas.

Compiled by Jake Kemp