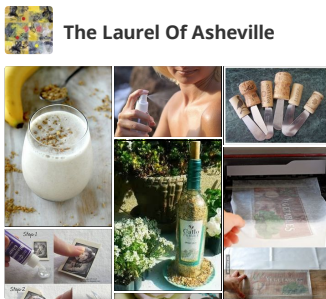




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Web Exclusive: Next West End Poetry & Prose Readings Set for June 13

Emily Bonner



Leah Shapiro

The celebrated West End Poetry and Prose Reading Series will conclude its spring season of events on Saturday, June 13 at West End Bakery, 757 Haywood Road in West Asheville. A staple for area literary enthusiasts, this free event will feature readings by Luke Hankins, Katherine Soniat, David Novak, and series curator Lockie Hunter. The reading begins at 7 p.m. and is free and open to the public.

The West End Reading Series arose out of the West End Bakery owners'

PHOTOS

desire to create family friendly events for the Asheville community to attend on weekend evenings. Each reading takes place on the second Saturday, March–June, and September–December. Local writer Lockie Hunter jumped at the chance to create an opportunity for writers to share their work in a meaningful environment.

“The idea of gaining a greater sense of self through being exposed to the chronicles of others is something that is alluring,” says Lockie whose impressive literary resume includes an MFA in fiction from Emerson College, and the 2013–14 Regional Arts Project Grant for poetry. “The readings allow our community the opportunity to experience a wide variety of genres and styles.” Lockie is also curator of the quarterly Juniper Bends Reading Series.

Each reader brings something different and fantastic to this event. Luke Hankins has authored a collection of poems, *Weak Devotions*, serves as the Senior Editor at Asheville Poetry Review, and is the founder and editor of the nonprofit literary press Orison Books. Poet Katherine Soniat has released seven collections—*Bright Stranger* is forthcoming, spring of 2016—and has taught at Virginia Tech, Hollins University, and in the Great Smokies Writing Program. David Novak is a celebrated storyteller who enthralls audiences with his ability to bring classic myths to life and has performed at the nation’s top storytelling festivals.

Past readings have featured equally notable writers, however, Lockie notes that the real purpose of the event is to bring people together to experience a remarkable diversity of writing and art. “Our readers have shared Neruda translations, novel chapters, excerpts from travel diaries, confessional poetry, performance (slam) poetry, and even a dramatic reading from a play.”

The various forms of writing shared at the West End Bakery event represent a powerful opportunity to build community through shared experiences. “Coming together as a family to experience ‘live’ art of any sort is powerful,” says Lockie. “But especially powerful is the notion that that the family read and listen together and open their hearts to other’s narratives to gain a larger world view.”

Though this event concludes the Spring Series, the West End Poetry and Prose Reading Series will return in the fall. For more information on this and future events, visit [their Facebook page](#).

*Emily Bonner is earning her bachelor’s degree in literature with grades 6-12 teaching licensure from UNC Asheville. She spends her spare time riding horses, writing poetry, and practicing her savasana yoga pose.*

