



Governor's Awards
IN THE HUMANITIES

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2021
PASTIDES ALUMNI CENTER

The Governor's Awards in the Humanities



MICHAEL ALLEN

Michael Allen has served as a National Park Ranger, an Education Specialist, and a Community Partnership Specialist for the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor. His career has been defined by his community activism and his deep-seated interest in our nation's spiritual growth as it relates to history and culture. Through the leadership of Congressman James E. Clyburn and the support of Michael Allen, the U.S. Congress passed the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Act in 2006 to establish the United States' first and only African American National Heritage Area. In 2014, the NPS appointed Allen as a lead team member on the NPS Special Resource Landmark Study exploring the history and legacy of the Reconstruction Era. As a result of this groundbreaking study, a new NPS site called the Reconstruction Era National Monument was established. After more than 37 years in public service, Michael Allen retired from the NPS in December 2017.



JANNIE HARRIOT

Jannie Harriot is an educator, a community leader, and a titan of cultural preservation. Harriot was instrumental in the founding of the Butler Heritage Foundation, an organization formed by alumni of Harriot's alma mater, Butler High School, with the mission of restoring the closed campus for public use as a community center. In 1993 she was appointed as a charter member of the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission (SCAAHC) by Governor Carroll Campbell. During her twelve-year tenure as chair, the SCAAHC has published the annual "African American Historic Places in South Carolina" guide; a survey of African American schools in South Carolina entitled "How Did We Get to Now?"; an introductory resource guide for entrepreneurs entitled "The Business of Rural Heritage, Culture and Art"; and a project capturing the experiences of African Americans in South Carolina during the pandemic entitled "Black Carolinians Speak: Portraits of a Pandemic."



SIMON LEWIS

Thoroughly southern, Simon Lewis was raised in the South of England and near Cape Town, South Africa. Inspired by his mother's experience as a farmer's wife in South Africa, his doctoral dissertation focused on white women writers on farms in Africa. Since 1996 he has taught in the English Department at the College of Charleston, specializing in African and postcolonial literature. After moving to Charleston, he quickly became fascinated by Charleston's African heritage and became enthusiastically involved with the Carolina Lowcountry and Atlantic World (CLAW) program. For the last two decades he has been associated with CLAW as either Associate Director or Director, overseeing numerous public lectures, symposia, and conferences on topics as diverse as foodways, material culture, and public history. As a scholar, he has published two monographs on African and British literature and is the editor of four volumes of essays.



THE RICE MUSEUM

Established in 1970 as a part of the South Carolina Tricentennial event, the Rice Museum exhibits a permanent collection of dioramas, maps, paintings, artifacts and displays that tell the history of rice cultivation in Georgetown County. The Rice Museum chronicles the development of this most important American industry and its impact on not only South Carolina, but internationally as well. The museum is housed in the Old Market Building behind the iconic clock tower and in the adjacent Kaminski Hardware Building. The Maritime Museum Gallery is located on the third floor of the Kaminski Hardware Building. Also located in the Kaminski Hardware Building are the Prevost Art Gallery and the Rice Museum Gift Shop. Rotating installations provide visitors interesting and topical exhibits of art and history. Art by South Carolina artists and artisans is a major feature of the Gallery. The Museum Gift Shop is filled with unique pieces by artists and artisans from around the world.

The Fresh Voices in the Humanities Awards



LYDIA BRANDT

Dr. Lydia Mattice Brandt graduated summa cum laude with a B.A. in Art History from New York University, after which she earned her M.A. in Architectural History and a Ph.D in Art and Architectural History at the University of Virginia. She has taught the history of architecture, American art, and the theories and methods of historic preservation at the University of South Carolina since 2011. The University of Virginia Press published her first book, *First in the Homes of His Countrymen: George Washington's Mount Vernon in the American Imagination* in 2016. In 2021, Dr. Brandt published *The South Carolina State House Grounds: A Guidebook*. She hosted a podcast tour of the site, "Historically Complex," produced with Historic Columbia. She has authored three National Register of Historic Places nominations in Columbia and completed a survey of 750 buildings in the city's downtown, with a special focus on mid-twentieth-century modern architecture.



TAMARA HERRING

Tamara Herring is the Executive Director of Morris Center for Lowcountry Heritage, a non-profit museum and cultural arts center located in Ridgeland, SC. The Morris Center's mission—to cultivate community experiences through education, preservation, and celebration of the region's rich history and culture—is close to Tamara's heart. Under her leadership, the Morris Center has increased its advisory board from seven to nine members, diversifying to include four women of color, and expanded with a new 3,000 square foot addition. The Morris Center also increased arts-based programming to support annual art and cultural travel exhibits and varied programming to reflect the diversity of the local community. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Herring ensured the viability of the Morris Center by obtaining grant funding and SBA financing. She is a Creative Connector for *Create Rural, SC* an initiative of SC Arts Commission's *The Art of Community: Rural SC*.



CHRISTOPHER THOMAS

The Reverend Christopher B. Thomas is a native of Sacramento, Calif. and earned a B.A. in history from California State University. He earned his M.A.T.S. and Th.M. degrees from Liberty University and Trinity Theological Seminary and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in historical theology from the University of Nottingham. Rev. Thomas is an ordained elder in the Church of God in Christ and serves as Senior Pastor of New Generation Outreach Ministry. Active in community affairs, he serves as a mentor for MODELS Academy and on the board of directors for Community Initiatives, a non-profit organization in Greenwood, SC. Rev. Thomas is Director of the Dr. Benjamin E. Mays Historical Preservation Site that is a part of the GLEAMNS Human Resources Commission. Inc. and has been instrumental in helping persons across the Lakelands region of South Carolina and beyond to know more about the life and legacy of Dr. Mays.



KASIE WHITENER

Dr. Kasie Whitener's first novel, *After December*, has been called "a breakthrough debut" and "outstanding fiction." Her short story "Cover Up" won the Carrie McCray Prize in 20016. Her second novel, *Before Pittsburgh*, releases August 17, 2021. She produces, directs, and hosts the weekly radio show *Write on, SC* that encourages writing craft. Dr. Whitener serves as a board member of the South Carolina Writers Association and a member of the South Carolina Humanities Speakers Bureau. As a business owner, Dr. Whitener provides research, writing, and training for consultants. She is an instructor at the University of South Carolina. At her core is GenX nostalgia, libertarian politics, and not-quite-getting-over-the-90s. Dr. Whitener has presented for Bowling Green State University's Winter Wheat Literary Festival, the Pat Conroy Literary Center, and the Fairfax County Public Library.

Agenda

WELCOME

Randy Akers

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SOUTH CAROLINA HUMANITIES

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Tom Mack

BOARD CHAIR

SOUTH CAROLINA HUMANITIES

Fresh Voices Awards Presentations

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Christopher Thomas

Kasie Whitener

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Michael Allen

Jannie Harriot

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The Rice Museum

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