



# MEDGAR EVERS COLLEGE of The City University of New York

*The Center for Black Literature*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **The Ninth National Black Writers Conference**

### **Black Writers: Reading and Writing to Transform Their Lives and the World**

NEW YORK - The Center for Black Literature at Medgar Evers College, CUNY will host the Ninth National Black Writers Conference (NBWC) ***Black Writers: Reading and Writing to Transform Their Lives and the World*** on Friday, March 28, 2008 through Sunday, March 30, 2008. The Conference is dedicated to the centennial of Richard Wright's birth. Featured authors include Randall Robinson, Cornel West, Ruby Dee, Julia Wright, Amiri Baraka and the notable Susan L. Taylor as the Honorary Conference Chair.

The three -day conference, to be held on the Medgar Evers College campus in Brooklyn, NY, will feature discussions, youth workshops, talkshops, author readings and signings. In addition, an array of vendors will be on display at the NBWC marketplace. Early registration at discounted rates for the biennial conference has already begun.

The 2008 Ninth National Black Writers Conference: ***Black Writers: Reading and Writing to Transform Their Lives and the World*** draws upon famous novelist Marita Golden's concept of the transformative power of literature and focuses on the ways in which black writers use literature to transform their lives and the larger global community. It examines this concept of literature as transformative from historical, cultural, and political perspectives.

Described by bestseller author Walter Mosley as "the most significant gathering of black writers in the country," the National Black Writers Conference is the largest gathering of its kind in North America and has been described "as a glorious opportunity to meet fellow writers and scholars and a fertile environment for creativity!" Initially conceived in 1986 by the late author John Oliver Killens, the Conference has consistently attracted a stellar array of writers and scholars including Maya Angelou, Amiri Baraka, Alice Walker, and others.

Dr. Brenda M. Greene, Director of the National Black Writers Conference and Executive Director of the Center for Black Literature states that, "Black writers and artists have had a tremendous impact on our global culture. This Conference offers writers, booksellers, scholars, youth and the general public opportunities to engage in conversations on the ways in which black literature impacts their lives and the

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lives of others. Language and story are important to our survival. Through our stories we create memories and history. Our stories represent our lifeline to the past, present and future.”

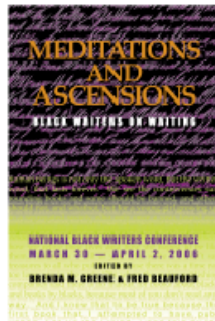
As part of its tribute and recognition to black writers, there will be a special Awards Program and VIP Reception on Saturday, March 29, 2008 at 6:30 pm. Conference attendees must register for this program. Sonia Sanchez will receive the lifetime literary award. Other honorees for the Conference include Susan L. Taylor, Randall Robinson, Cornel West and Cheryl and Wade Hudson of **Just Us Books**.

The Brooklyn Public Library at Grand Army Plaza will host a special pre-conference Reading on March 9th at 1:30 pm by acclaimed author John Edgar Wideman. Wideman’s most recent book is **Fanon: A Novel**.

The NBWC’s list of confirmed participants for the program consist of such literary visionaries, scholars, poets, and publishers as John Edgar Wideman, Jerry Ward, Brenda Marie Osbey, Haki Madhubuti, Thulani Davis, Quincy Troupe, Kevin Powell, David Durham, Terry McMillan, Nancy Rawles, Jabari Asim, Valerie Kinloch, Eisa Ulen, Thomas Bradshaw, Valerie Boyd, Fred Beauford, Regina Brooks, Martha Southgate, Tayari Jones, Thomas Glave, William Jelani Cobb, Angela Dodson, Jaira Placide, Kassahun Checole, Quraysh Ali Lansana, and Thomas Ellis Sayers, just to name a few.

This year's Conference has received funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, Brooklyn Assemblyman Karim Camara, the Big Read, Barnes and Noble, the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation, the New York Historical Society, Con Edison and the Washington Mutual Savings Bank. The Center for Black Literature is also partnering with AALBC (African American Literature Book Club), the Brooklyn Public Library, the PEN American Center, the Brooklyn Literary Council, The BIG READ, The Links Incorporated, the Caribbean Research Center, the Center for Law and Social Justice, the Center for Nu Leadership, the Dubois Institute, and the Caribbean American Chamber of Commerce.

## ***Meditations and Ascensions: Black Writers on Writing***



An added feature of the NBWC approaching conference will be the release of the proceedings of the 2006 Eighth National Black Writers Conference, ***Meditations and Ascensions: Black Writers on Writing***, published by Third World Press. Contributors to ***Meditations and Ascensions: Black Writers on Writing*** include Marita Golden, Walter Mosley, Ishmael Reed, Herb Boyd, Haki R. Madhubuti, Valerie Boyd, Elizabeth Nunez, Samuel Delany, Tananarive Due, Valerie William Wesley and many more. The





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book was edited by Dr. Brenda M. Greene and Fred Beauford and includes a foreword by Myrlie Evers, activist and widow to the slain civil rights leader Medgar Evers. Production is in progress for the highly anticipated book. The public can order the book along with early registration for the conference.

For further information about this historic literary event and for conference updates, please call 718 270-4811, email: [nbwc@mec.cuny.edu](mailto:nbwc@mec.cuny.edu), or visit the conference website at [www.mec.cuny.edu/nbwc](http://www.mec.cuny.edu/nbwc).

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