



Houston Museum Announces Appalachian Talk by Author Leslie Harper Worthington

***Hear How Grown Children of Appalachian People View Their Parents and
Ancestors Today Through Original Essays***

CHATTANOOGA, TENN. – Sept. 9, 2017- We live on the edge of Appalachia, yet how much do we really know about this region's people and its culture? On Saturday, Sept. 9, 2017 at [the Houston Museum](#), hear what descendants like [Leslie Harper Worthington](#) are saying now about their parents and ancestors and how they feel about the stereotypical depiction of them.

"Appalachian people are frequently depicted as poorly educated whites who isolate themselves in mountain hollows," said Worthington, whose family is Appalachian but left the region before she was born. "...so I have felt some displacement. That's what my essay in the collection *Seeking Home* is about. I studied the literature of the area for my PhD."

In *Seeking Home*, editors Leslie Harper Worthington and Jürgen E. Grandt turn that stereotype upside down by showcasing Appalachia's ethnic diversity through a lively collection of essays discussing fiction, poetry, letters and songs.

This distinct collection begins with a personal narrative in which Worthington relates how she discovered her own home through teaching Lee Smith's *Fair and Tender Ladies*.

Worthington is the dean of Academic Programs and Services at Gadsden State Community College in Alabama.

Smith's *Fair and Tender Ladies* is the story of a Virginia mountain girl, Ivy Rowe, who wrote of her Appalachian life in words that are colloquial and often misspelled. Leslie's study of the book inspired her to seek out essays from other Appalachian decedents for her book *Seeking Home*.

“Other essays range from the anticipated—Ron Rash, Barbara Kingsolver, Harriette Simpson Arnow—to the unanticipated—Charles Frazier’s magical realism, a Confederate soldier’s journals, and three different examinations of Appalachian poets. Adding further texture to the collection are essays examining the diversity in Appalachian music, including Cherokee song and dance, a discussion of Appalachian mining songs, and an examination of recording technology and authenticity,” she said.

Her co-editor, JÜRGEN E. GRANDT is an associate professor of English at the University of North Georgia. “He was mostly interested in the music of Appalachia. He’s a jazz musician. We were both English professors at Gainesville State College which is now the University of North GA, located in the GA Mountains.”

“*Seeking Home* confirms that just as there are many Souths, there are also many Appalachias. The region is multifaceted, multicultural, and all we have to do is be willing to examine the variety.”

In September, Leslie will give a 45 minute talk at the Houston Museum. “I was hoping to read some of my essays and talk about Appalachian literature and culture. My previous book was about Cormac McCarthy who is from Knoxville, TN. He’s Appalachian and a Tennessean so I thought the audience might be interested. I’d also like to talk about some of the essays in the collection, more than likely the ones about literature because that’s my area, for example Rob Rash.”

To reserve your seat for this FREE event, go to thehoustmuseum.org. 423.267.7176.

Saturday, September 9, 1:00pm-4:00pm

[201 High Street](#)

Author Leslie Harper Worthington will speak about her new book titled “Seeking Home” at 1:00pm.

**Museum will be closed for tours during this special event
Donations encouraged**

About Leslie Harper Worthington

Worthington is the author of *Cormac McCarthy and the Ghost of Huck Finn*. She is the author of *Shaping Words to Fit the Soul: The Southern Ritual Grounds of Afro-Modernism* and *Kinds of Blue: The Jazz Aesthetic in African American Narrative*.

About The Houston Museum

The Anna Safley Houston Museum of Decorative Arts is an integral part of the Bluff View art district in downtown Chattanooga. The museum is a quick stroll from the Hunter Museum of American Art, the River Gallery Sculpture Garden, fine and casual dining, and the Walnut Street walking bridge that crosses the Tennessee River. A tour of the museum, with its extensive collection of Victorian art glass and antiques, provides visitors with insight into Victorian life, the life of the collector, and life in the historic Bluff View neighborhood. The Houston Museum is located at 201 High St. Chattanooga, TN 37403. Like us on [Face book](#). Sign up for our updates at TheHoustonMuseum.org.

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