

:: Bent Writing Institute

bentwriting.com
press@bentwriting.com

1115 e pike st
c/o lgbt community center

seattle, wa 98122
usa

for press only: 206.353.8607
tyler perry, communications

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE :: August 13, 2006

BENT MENTOR SHOWCASE 2006 :: FEATURING DOROTHY ALLISON

Bent Writing Institute & Dorothy Allison
Seattle First United Methodist Church, 811 Fifth Avenue
Friday October 13 & Saturday October 14
Doors 7:30pm / Curtain 8:00pm

Dorothy Allison Mentor Writing Workshop
Seattle First United Methodist Church
Saturday October 14
1pm-3pm

Tickets :: brownpapertickets.com
More info :: bentwriting.com

Bent, the nation's only 'little queer writing institute that could,' is proud to bring to the Seattle stage an incomparable queer artist who *can* and who *has*: Dorothy Allison. Heralded as 'One of the finest writers of her generation' by the *Boston Globe* and 'Simply stunning!' by the *New York Times Book Review*, Allison will again electrify and transform audiences. Over two nights at the First United Methodist Church, more than 30 Bent students will share the stage with Allison for Bent's fifth annual mentor and student showcase and award show.

This Showcase is a rare opportunity to hear not only one of the most talented writers of our time give voice to underrepresented life experiences, but also to hear an array of emerging and acclaimed queer artists attest to the complex intersections of living at the margins of margins. As Tara Hardy, Bent Founder, remarks, "Dorothy Allison has liberated an entire generation of poor and queer voices." As Bent is guided by that value, the chance to honor her as a mentor is not only a landmark for the organization, but an opportunity to say thank you from an entire community of voices who, without her example, might still be living out our own unique, silent solitude.

Also, Allison will facilitate a writing workshop on Saturday, October 14. This exclusive offering is an intimate environment for community members to interact with Allison. Participants will receive advice about their own works as well as insight into the subject of writing itself.

As one Bent artist recalls, "I don't believe I would have kept writing without Dorothy Allison's example of being fearless in the face of all there is to fear; she has inspired me to reach for something bigger than myself in my own writing, to not flinch when I'm writing what is most important. More than any writer, Dorothy has inspired me to not hide, instead to believe in the importance of my own voice."

Dorothy Allison teaches all over the world; it is a profound honor that she will visit Bent. Despite the organization's limited resources, when approached, Allison said she had heard of Bent through several sources, and has wanted to work with this queer writing institute for some time.

Bent is beyond joyful that she will be sharing the stage with our writers, and bringing her power to our community. Always compassionate and ruthlessly honest, Dorothy says of her work, "What I am here for is to tell you stories you may not want to hear." Please join us to hear and to be transformed. For more information on this event and more, go to: bentwriting.com.

Bent Writing Institute • bentwriting.com



:: Bent Writing Institute

DOROTHY ALLISON :: Dorothy Allison grew up in Greenville, South Carolina, and describes herself as a feminist, working class story teller, southern expatriate, sometime poet and a happily born-again Californian. Her short story collection, *Trash* (1988) was published by Firebrand Books, and won two Lambda Literary Awards and the American Library Association Prize for Lesbian and Gay Writing. Allison received mainstream recognition in 1992 with her novel debut *Bastard Out of Carolina*, as a finalist for the National Book Award. The novel went on to win the Ferro Grumley prize, an ALA Award for Lesbian and Gay Writing, and to become a best seller and award-winning movie, and has been translated into more than a dozen languages. Allison's second novel, *Cavedweller* (1998) became a national bestseller, *New York Times* Notable book of the year, finalist for the Lillian Smith prize, and an ALA prize winner. Most recently, Allison has finished a stay as writer in residence at Columbia College, Chicago, and has a new novel, *She Who*, forthcoming from Riverhead. For more information on Dorothy Allison, go to: dorothyallison.net.

BENT :: Bent, a non-profit organization, is the only queer writing institute in the nation. The mission of Bent is to promote and encourage written and spoken word among LGBTIQTS people and in our communities. The concept and work of Bent began August 2000, in the living room of Tara Hardy, Seattle-based writer, performer, and Slam Champ. Since, Bent has grown to a full institute, having served over 200 students, offering a variety of weekly classes and local and regional performances.

The students of Bent are anything but straight; they are rather...bent. These queer artists consistently throw down vocal stylings that electrify spines, make synapses explode, and inspire activism. Their words contest the limits of social consciousness, challenge understandings of class, race, sex, gender, privilege, abilities, queerness, all their intersections, and more. Students include: slam poets, queer orators, a syndicated columnist, members of touring spoken word troupes, published writers, original Bent members, a documentarian, Seattle and national activists, and founders and members of other artistic collectives.

MENTOR SHOWCASES :: These annual spoken word showcases are a chance to see Bent students, whose works are generating much attention both locally and nationally, perform alongside a writer whose work they look up to and have chosen to honor. Moreover, they are a chance to bring underrepresented voices to our greater communities. The showcases are Bent's largest annual fundraiser. There have been four other sold-out showcases and workshops in June 2003, January 2004, August 2004, and October 2005, with standing-room-only crowds and growing student rolls. The last showcase was housed at the Broadway Performance Hall on Capitol Hill, met with two packed nights and critical acclaim. In these prior showcases, Bent has honored queer writers and mentors: Buddy Wakefield, Juba Kalamka, Justin Chin, Michelle Tea, Ivan Coyote, and Sini Anderson.