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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“A KATRINA RETROSPECT” A PROGRAM DEDICATED TO THE IMPACTS OF HURRICANE KATRINA

VICKSBURG, MS (July 1, 2010): The Southern Cultural Heritage Foundation is partnering with Lorelei Books to present “A Katrina Retrospect”, a program dedicated to the impacts of Hurricane Katrina. This event will be held on Saturday, August 21st from 2pm-4pm in the Southern Cultural Heritage Auditorium. As we approach five years since Katrina, this program will include authors, artists and photographers that translated their stories and visions through their talents to help individuals understand this horrible tragedy. A book signing and exhibit by statewide and regional figures such as Ellis Anderson, Melody Golding, Toni Orrill and H.C. Porter will begin at 2pm. A panel discussion will begin at 3pm and will include the four participants, National Weather Service Warning Coordination Meteorologist, Stephen Wilkinson, and Mississippi College sociologist department chair, Gary K. Mayfield, Ph.D., to discuss the many impacts Hurricane Katrina contributed to the area and the human spirit. This event is free and open to the public.

Ellis Anderson is an award-winning freelance writer and photographer living on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi. After riding out Katrina in her town of Bay St. Louis, she began blogging about her astonishing experience and then detailed the bizarre life of the community for the next three years. Some of the essays from the blog are included in her new book, Under Surge, Under Siege, the Odyssey of Bay St. Louis and Katrina, published by University Press of Mississippi in June. The book features over 50 photographs by Anderson and Joe Tomasovsky, with cover art by H.C. Porter.

Melody Golding is an acclaimed Vicksburg based photographer, author and artist. Her Hurricane Katrina photographic collection has been acquired by The Smithsonian Institution Museum of American History Archives Center Collection and for the first time since 1910, has acquired this work about Mississippi by a Mississippian. It is also the Smithsonian’s sole acquisition documenting Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi. Her solo national traveling exhibition, Katrina: Mississippi Women Remember has been shown at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C., ongoing at The Department of Homeland Security Congressional Hearing Room and to more than a dozen sites including museums, colleges and universities and being used by these institutions of higher learning as an educational resource to explore art, gender studies, sociology, meteorology and history. Golding’s interviews and research are also compiled in a book, published by the University Press of Mississippi, also entitled Katrina: Mississippi Women Remember. Her work on this project was supported in part by the Mississippi Humanities Council. All proceeds from the sales of the book go directly back to the Coast’s ongoing recovery.

Toni Orrill is a poet and author from New Orleans. A graduate of Tulane University, she has been a strategist, media consultant and advertising executive before writing full-time. It was during a transformative summer 2005 that she uncovered her proseful style, capturing an experience of emotional loss with a spiritually provocative voice. Her ability to sense the subtleties of physical, spiritual and human nature in a deep and relevant way is what makes her work compelling and soul-satisfying. The Broken Fall: A Katrina Collection was published in 2009.

H.C. Porter is Mississippi's premier social realist and cultural storyteller. She is known for her environmental paintings capturing everyday moments in the lives of Mississippians from the Delta to inner city neighborhoods. In September 2005, just two weeks after Hurricane Katrina landed full force along the Mississippi Gulf Coast, the focus of her work shifted to telling the visual stories of those putting their lives back together in the coastal communities of her home state. Porter's eighty-one paintings were combined with audio of the painting's subjects in an extraordinary merger of art, history, and humanity, and unveiled in the form of a traveling exhibition entitled Backyards & Beyond: Mississippians and Their Stories - The First Year After Katrina. In 2008 the book, Backyards & Beyond: Mississippians and Their Stories, was released. Her signature gallery is located in Vicksburg, MS.

Gary K. Mayfield, Ph.D. is the Department Chair of Sociology and Social Work and Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Associate Professor of Sociology and Social Work at Mississippi College. He received a B.A. in Sociology, Louisiana College; M.A. in Sociology, Stephen F. Austin State University; M.Div. in Psychology and Counseling, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary; A graduate certificate in Gerontology and M.S.W. in Health Domain within an Administrative Track, University of Georgia; Ph.D. in Sociology, Emory University.

Stephen Wilkinson graduated from Florida State University with a degree in Meteorology and started working with the National Weather Service (NWS) in 1993. He was a General Forecaster for the NWS near Cincinnati, Ohio and a Lead Forecaster in Charleston, SC for around 5 years each. He is now the Warning Coordination Meteorologist in Jackson, MS. His job is to promote severe weather preparedness through working with Emergency Managers, the media, and the general public.

For more information, please call the SCHF office at 601-631-2997 or email info@southernculture.org.

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