

# CAROLINE MARSHALL DRAUGHON CENTER FOR THE ARTS & HUMANITIES



2022 HIGHLIGHTS

# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

We recently came across a brief essay on the humanities written at the turn of the twenty-first century by the Center's founding director Dr. Leah Rawls Atkins. Typical of her brilliance, Leah begins with a story of Center programming and then provides a statement on the humanities that is worth repeating:

*"The humanities make our spirits soar, elevate our intellects, heighten our awareness of who we are, and give meaning to our lives in this time and place. They enrich our existence, allowing us to reach out and appreciate the differences among us while acknowledging the common threads that bind us together as human beings."*

As you will see in this brief report, we continue this tradition of creating opportunities for reflection on the human experience using the creativity of the arts and the wisdom of the humanities. Through fifty-eight programs that we organized, and another fifty that we co-sponsored, participants in Auburn and around the state had the following responses:

"It's nice to feel like a human again" – A student at Tutwiler Prison for Women following a phenomenal concert with Breeden Eminent Visiting Professor, Khari Allen Lee.

"We just learned about this house in class!" – A 4th-grade Yarbrough Elementary School student entering Pebble Hill on a field trip, reflecting on the virtual tour of the historic Scott-Yarbrough House that their teacher used to prepare students for the visit.

"Where's Robert Inman?" – A sixth grade student in Elba, Alabama who met the acclaimed writer from Elba three weeks prior and hoped Mr. Inman was back in town for another conversation on writing.

"We never knew about this history until now." – A library program participant following a talk on the Rosenwald Schools by Frye Gaillard and Marti Rosner.

"I got to learn, see beautiful quilts, meet new people, and spend time with dear friends. It was a great day!"  
- A participant at the "Every Stitch Tells a Story" Quilt Symposium.

In addition to these 100+ programs, we hosted 131 events and meetings in our facilities in 2022. On any given day, you might find an Osher Lifelong Learning Class in session; a university department holding a retreat or workshop; a memorial service for a beloved member of the Auburn community; a retirement reception, birthday party, baby shower, and more.

Maiben Beard, Erica Dalton, and I welcomed Brittany Branyon as our graduate assistant and Shamlya Taylor as an undergraduate student worker, and both have made significant contributions to the Center since their arrival.

This year we will welcome visiting scholars and guests to the Lowrey Guest House, thanks to the generosity of Jacob Lowrey, III, who honors his fraternal and maternal grandparents through the construction and furnishing of a lovely one-bedroom house tucked away on the property. And as the result of the generosity of Ann Draughon Cousins' family, we have a new endowment in her honor that provides funding for the programs you read about in this report and more.

We look forward to seeing you at Pebble Hill or in your community in 2023!



*Mark Wilson*

# 2022 IN NUMBERS

58

Public Programs

131

Hosted Events  
at Pebble Hill

50

Co-Sponsored  
Programs

# ELBA

Auburn University faculty and students participated in several projects as part of a year-long collaboration between the Draughon Center and partners in Elba, Alabama, including Restoration 154 and the Elba Public Library.

A highlight of the collaboration was the South Alabama Singers Showcase. The Auburn University Singers led a clinic for choral students from Elba, Andalusia, and Enterprise as part of the event. The South Alabama Singers Showcase concert featured students from Elba High School, Andalusia High School, Enterprise State Community College, and Covington County Choral Company.

Abdul-Khaliq Murtadha, Assistant Professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance, led a workshop with Elba High School theater students.

Department of Art & Art History Assistant Professor Zach Koch and students from the Auburn Association of Visual Artists visited Elba to carve pumpkins and turn The Elba Theatre into a haunted art gallery for the annual Pumpkins on the Square event.



Acclaimed author Robert Inman (pictured above) returned to his hometown of Elba for a series of events. Inman visited the Elba Library Book Club, Elba High School, and led a Community Writing Workshop. Middle and high-school students shared essays and artwork with Inman on “what community means to me.”



# KHARI ALLEN LEE

Musical artist and composer Khari Allen Lee is serving as the Daniel F. Breeden Eminent Visiting Scholar in the Arts and Humanities for the 2022-23 academic year. An award-winning artist, Lee holds degrees from Auburn University, Berklee College of Music and the University of New Orleans, and he has served on the faculty of University of New Orleans, Loyola University, Tulane University and the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts. Lee's extensive recording, performing and touring experience includes work with artists Alvin Batiste, Ellis Marsalis, Aretha Franklin, DeeDee Bridgewater, Delfeayo Marsalis, John, Branford Marsalis, Stevie Wonder, the Treme Brass Band, Terence Blanchard, Sheila E., Raphael Saadiq and Academy Award-winning film, Green Book, just to name a few.

This past August, Lee was joined by pianist Jeremy Samolesky and 14-year-old cellist Jacob Shin (pictured below) for "Early Autumn Serenade," a concert of classic and modern music. In November, Lee held a concert and conversation with students at Tutwiler Prison for Women.

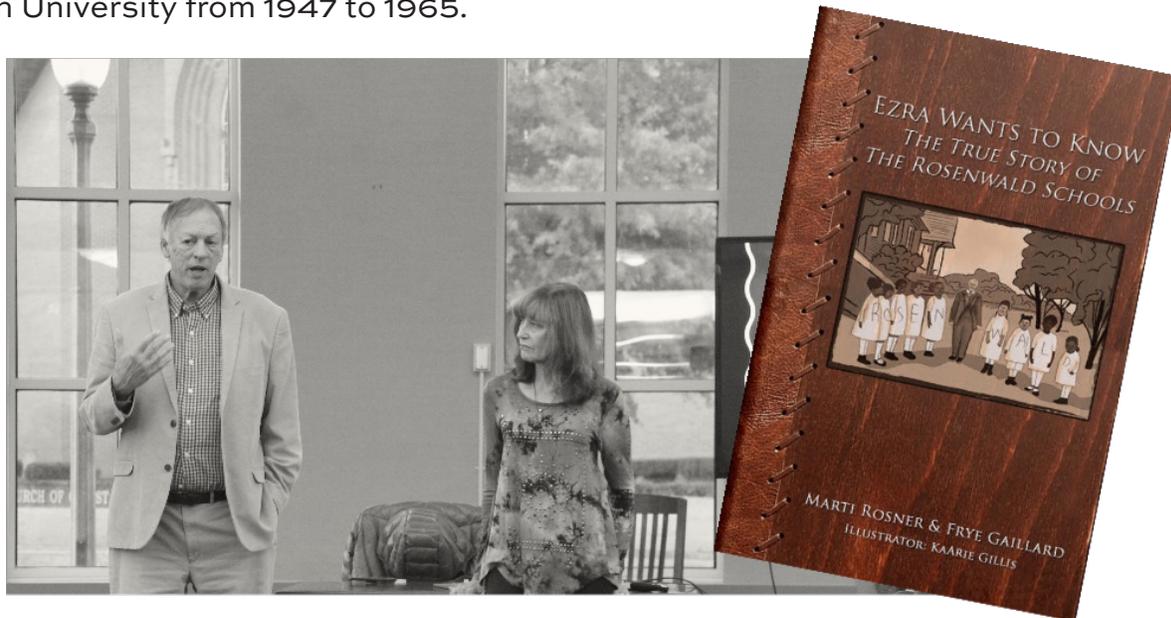
Visit [aub.ie/leetutwiler](http://aub.ie/leetutwiler) to watch a video and read more about the performance at Tutwiler Prison for Women.

"It's been a long time since I've heard an actual instrument," said an Alabama Prison Arts and Education Project student at Tutwiler. "It really took me somewhere. It's a great honor for someone to see that we are human and that we are still here."



# DRAUGHON SEMINARS IN STATE & LOCAL HISTORY

From Florence to Elba and in between, authors Marti Rosner and Frye Gaillard traveled throughout Alabama as part of the 2022 Draughon Seminars in State & Local History. Rosner and Gaillard discussed their book *Ezra Wants to Know: The True Story of the Rosenwald Schools*, illustrated by KaArie Gillis. Draughon Seminars in State and Local History are funded by the Kelly Mosley Endowment in honor of Dr. Ralph B. Draughon, president of Auburn University from 1947 to 1965.



# THIRD THURSDAY POETRY SERIES

Featured poets and readers in 2022 include Michael McFee, Jessica Jacobs, Sanjena Sathian, Heather Christle, Rose McLarney, Anton DiSclafani, Alyssa D. Ross, Charlotte Pence, and Chiyuma Elliott (pictured below). The Third Thursday Poetry Series at Pebble Hill is sponsored by the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts & Humanities, Department of English, and Southern Humanities Review in the College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University; the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Auburn University; and the Alabama State Council on the Arts.





# EVERY STITCH A STORY

Scholars, quilters, and quilt enthusiasts gathered at Pebble Hill in October for *Every Stitch a Story: A Symposium on Quilts in Alabama*. Speakers included Gail Andrews (Birmingham Museum of Art), Ryan Blocker (Alabama Department of Archives & History), Zanice Bond (Tuskegee University), Beth Hunter (University of Alabama at Birmingham), Carole King (Old Alabama Town), Sylvia Stephens (Hyattsville, Maryland), Susan Walker (Montgomery, Alabama), Wini McQueen (Macon, Georgia), and Yvonne Wells (Tuscaloosa, Alabama).



# BLACK BELT TREASURES

In partnership with Black Belt Treasures Cultural Arts Center, we hosted the third annual Black Belt Treasures at Pebble Hill. This special event included a holiday market, artist demonstrations, and live music. Black Belt Treasures Cultural Arts Center is a non-profit organization based in Camden, Alabama. The organization was started with the objective to stimulate the economy in Alabama's Black Belt region through the sale and promotion of fine arts and heritage crafts, as well as the provision of arts education opportunities. Featured artists in 2022 included Marilyn Ammons (jewelry and mixed media); Betty Anderson (fiber/folk art); Maggie Brand (painting); Carole Bandy Carson (painting); Homer Johnson (jewelry and wood carving); Kristin Law (pottery); Andrew McCall (wisteria baskets); Laura Murray (coloring books and notecards); Bud Rogers (wood turner); Laura Spencer (soaps); and KayBri Desserts.

## YARBROUGH QUILT

A special quilt returned to Pebble Hill as part of *Every Stitch a Story*. The Yarbrough Crazy Quilt (or Silk Quilt) was completed by Mary Strudwick Yarbrough. Family members are memorialized in the quilt by embroidered initials and dates. Mary kept a notebook documenting the history of each square. The quilt was on loan courtesy of the Alabama Department of Archives & History.

Mary Strudwick Yarbrough was born in Demopolis, Alabama. She attended Alabama Normal College in Livingston from 1909-1911. After working as a schoolteacher in Tuscaloosa and Montgomery, she became a Government Demonstrator in Home Economics for Wilcox and Clarke counties. In 1921 she began the squares of her quilt while living in Demopolis. In February 1928, Mary married Dr. Cecil Yarbrough and moved to Auburn. She continued to work on her quilt, enlisting the help of friends and family. The quilt was completed at Pebble Hill in 1959.



# SUNDILLA CONCERT SERIES

In 2022 we continued our partnership with the Sundilla Concert Series. A not-for-profit, volunteer effort, the Sundilla series provides original, acoustic music in an intimate, gracious setting where it can be enjoyed by performers and listeners alike. Artists featured at Pebble Hill included Hiroya Tsukamoto, Scott Cook, Meaghan Farrell, Wes Collins, Randall Bramblett Band, April Verch, Nicholas Edward Williams, The Close, Jeff Black, Michael McDermott, The Tannahill Weavers, The Black Feathers, Airpark, and Ryanhood.

## LIVING DEMOCRACY

Four Auburn University students participated in Living Democracy during the summer of 2022: Cori Akins (Chatom), Brin Allen (Collinsville), Dioselin Cruz (Elba), and Ashby Henry (Camden). The program, co-sponsored by the David Mathews Center for Civic Life, provides a unique living-learning experience in public humanities and community engagement, and students learn to write stories of the work of citizens under the direction of Associate Professor of Journalism Nan Fairley. Check out their stories at [auburn.edu/livingdemocracy](http://auburn.edu/livingdemocracy).

## ALABAMA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

The Alabama Historical Association hosted its 74th Annual Meeting in Florence in April 2022, which featured a keynote by Don Noble, Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Alabama. The 75th Annual Meeting will be held in Prattville. Join us for presentations from historians, tours of historic sites, keynote presentations, and an awards banquet. Visit [alabamahistory.net](http://alabamahistory.net) for more information.

## AWARDS

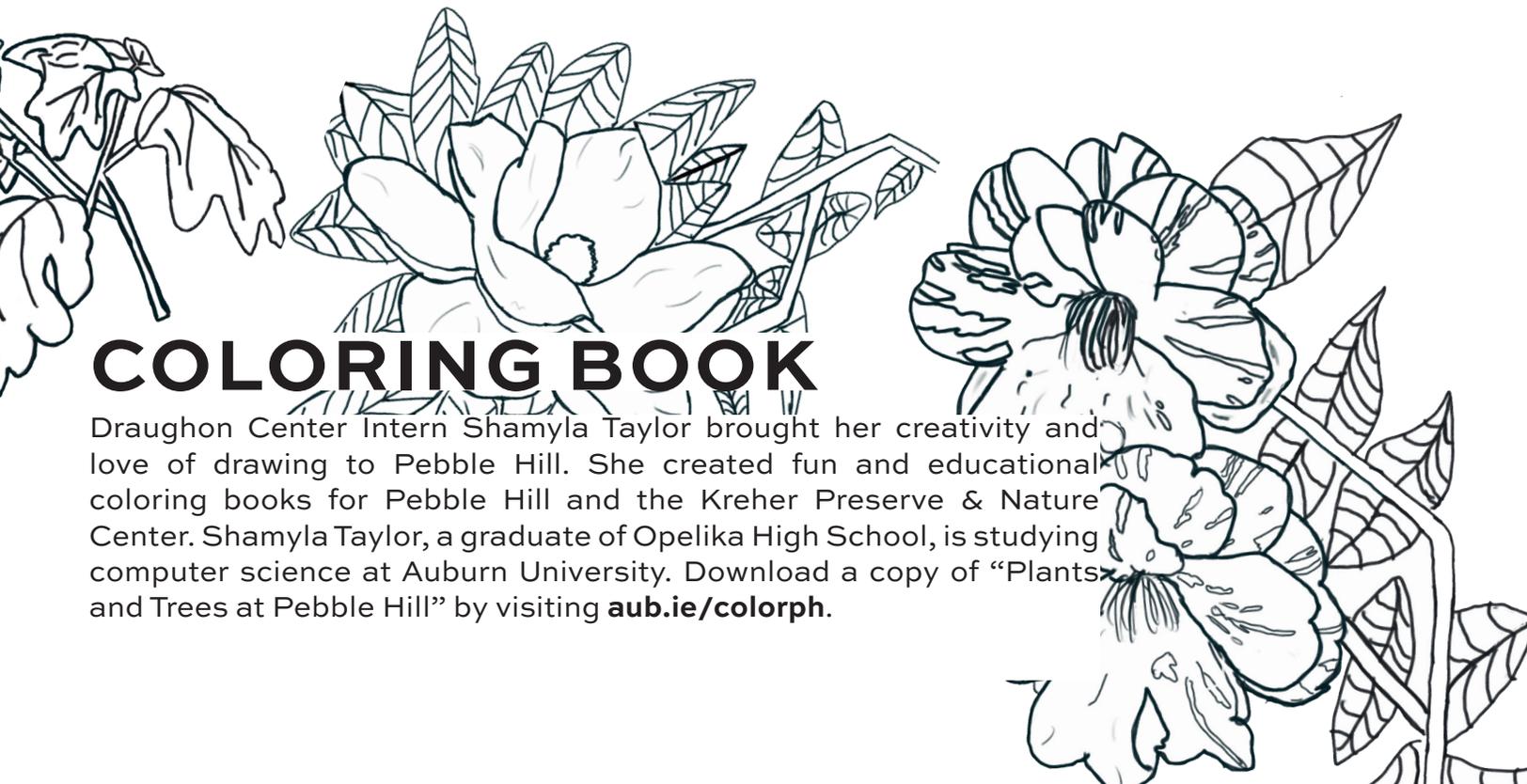
Logan Barrett (left, with Dr. Wayne Flynt) is the recipient of the Bert Hitchcock Graduate Award in Southern Studies and Wayne Flynt Endowed Graduate Research Award in Alabama History and Culture for 2022. Barrett is a student in the Department of History at Auburn University. Barrett received a B.S. from the University of Montevallo and an M.A. from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

The Harry M. Philpott Endowment for the Humanities Grant Program is administered by the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts & Humanities for the enhancement of the quality of classroom teaching in the humanities in the College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University. The endowment is named in honor of Dr. Harry M. Philpott, Auburn University's eleventh president, who served from 1965 to 1980. Recipients for 2022 include Dr. Elijah Gaddis and Dr. Keith Hébert; Dr. Alexandra Grundler; Dr. Beverley Park Rilett; and Dr. Ezekiel Stear.



# LOWREY GUEST HOUSE

Thanks to generosity of Jacob F. B. Lowery, III, Auburn University Class of 1969, in honor of his fraternal and maternal grandparents, we will host our first visitor in the Lowrey Guest House in February. The one-bedroom house features pine flooring from two one-hundred-year-old slash pine trees that had to be removed for construction. We look forward to hosting Breeden Eminent Visiting Scholars and generations of guests in this unique asset at Pebble Hill.



## COLORING BOOK

Draughton Center Intern Shamyla Taylor brought her creativity and love of drawing to Pebble Hill. She created fun and educational coloring books for Pebble Hill and the Kreher Preserve & Nature Center. Shamyla Taylor, a graduate of Opelika High School, is studying computer science at Auburn University. Download a copy of "Plants and Trees at Pebble Hill" by visiting [aub.ie/colorph](http://aub.ie/colorph).

# TEACHING PEBBLE HILL WORKSHOP

In 2021 we officially launched Teaching Pebble Hill, a local history resource for educators in Auburn, Alabama and beyond. In June, Shannon Brandt, Instructional Coach at Yarbrough Elementary School and Pebble Hill Teacher in Residence, led a workshop for fourth grade teachers from Auburn City Schools and Lee County Schools. In addition to presentations by Associate Professor Kelly Kennington and Family Historian Terrance Vickerstaff, teachers traveled to Horsehoe Bend National Military Park. For more information about the lesson plans and future professional development opportunities, visit [aub.ie/teachingph](http://aub.ie/teachingph).

## SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS

In fall 2022, we welcomed fourth graders from Pick Elementary School and Yarbrough Elementary School to Pebble Hill. Students connected with their Alabama history curriculum through activities at Pebble Hill, including a scavenger hunt of the historic house and a game of chunky.



## COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Pre-service teachers in Dr. Sara Demoiny's Social Studies Methods class and Dr. Jesús Tirado's Curriculum and Teaching class in the College of Education made a visit to Pebble Hill as they examined teaching difficult histories.

# STAFF

Dr. Mark Wilson, Director  
Maiben Beard, Outreach Associate  
Erica Dalton Event Coordinator  
Brittany Branyon, Graduate Assistant  
Shamyla Taylor, Student Assistant

# CONTACT US

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**AUBURN**  
UNIVERSITY

Caroline Marshall Draughon  
Center for the Arts & Humanities

The Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts & Humanities in Auburn University's College of Liberal Arts creates opportunities that explore our individual and collective experiences, values, and identities through the creativity of the arts and the wisdom of the humanities.