

THE
**AFRICAN AMERICAN
HERITAGE & CULTURAL CENTER
OF NEW BERN**

AND



PRESS RELEASE – DRAFT FOR REVIEW

For Release Immediately

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See attached photo of Speaker

**North Carolina Poet Laureate Jaki Shelton Green
Presents FREE COMMUNITY FORUM in New Bern**

New Bern, North Carolina (November 22, 2019) - On Sunday, December 8, The African American Heritage & Cultural Center of New Bern will host a COMMUNITY FORUM with North Carolina's Poet Laureate, Jaki Shelton Green and New Bern Civic Theatre. The 3:00 to 4:30 event will be held at the historic Athens Theater located at 414 Pollock Street. This extraordinary event is free to the entire community with advance registration. Groups and individuals may register via the theatre's online box office by visiting <https://www.newberncivictheatre.org/tickets>, calling 252-633-0567, or stopping by the box office at 412 Pollock Street Tuesday through Friday, 10am-4pm.

“Jaki Shelton Green is the first African American and third woman to be appointed as the North Carolina Poet Laureate. When he appointed her in 2018, Governor Copper stated that Jaki Shelton Green brings a deep appreciation of North Carolina’s diverse communities to her role as an Ambassador of North Carolina literature” said Ann Herndon, AAHCC Vice-President. During the program Ms. Shelton Green will read from her works and then will engage in discussion with the audience. Her support for the AAHCC is wonderful and we hope she inspires everyone who joins us for the event”. Interested in writing and poetry? AAHCC encourages teachers and students, families and writers and poets from the community to register.

“AAHCC is delighted to partner with the New Bern Civic Theatre for this event” said Tahira Coble Copland, member of the AAHCC Board of Directors. “Not only have the theatre’s Board members and performers supported AAHCC, the location and theatre are perfect for hosting Jaki Shelton Green.”

“NBCT is celebrating over 50 years of community service through the arts in New Bern. Partnering with AAHCC is the perfect partner to expand our repertoire to inspire and engage the community in arts and education.” said Angelina Doyle, Executive Director of the New Bern Civic Theatre.

Jaki Shelton Green’s collegiate and professional experiences include currently teaching Documentary Poetry at the Duke University Center for Documentary Studies, Visiting Professor for the Carlow University MFA Program, Lenoir-Rhyne University Writer-in-Residence, Duke University Teaching for Equity Fellow, Taller Portobelo Artist Colony in Portobelo Panama, University of Panama, Department of Cultural Resources for Brazil, North Carolina Turkish Association,

Alhambra Cultural Center in Marrakech Morocco, NC Symphony, NC African America Cultural Heritage Commission. She is the owner of SistaWRITE and co-partner with Dream Yourself Awake and Vertikal Creative Ventures providing writing retreats and travel excursions for women writers in Sedona Arizona, Ocracoke North Carolina, Agadir Morocco, and Tullamore Ireland.

Awards to the NC Poet Laureate are numerous and include Orange County Baha'i 2019 Light of Unity Award, 2019 NC Humanities Council Caldwell Award, 2019 American Academy of Poets Laureate Fellowship, 2018 Tar Heel of the Year Finalist, 2018 Indies Arts Award, 2018 NC Literary and Historical Association R. Hunt Parker Award, 2018 Phi Beta Kappa Award, 2017-2018 Duke University Faculty Travel Grants, 2017 Certification of Teacher Excellence presented by the Kingdom of Morocco Ministry of National Education, 2016 Kathryn H. Wallace Award for Artists in Community Service, 2014 NC Literary Hall of Fame Inductee, 2014 Pushcart Prize Nominee, 2010 Fine Arts Emerald Award (Raleigh LINKS), 2009 NC Piedmont Laureate appointment, 2007 Sam Ragan Award for Contributions to the Fine Arts of North Carolina, 2003 recipient of the North Carolina Award for Literature (the highest award the state can bestow for significant contributions in science, literature, fine arts, and public service), 2003 North Carolinians Society induction.

Jaki Shelton Green is the recipient of two NC Emerging Artist Grants, the African American Writer's Collective Distinction Award, NC Writers Network Blumenthal Award, 2002 Omega Iota Finer Womanhood Award (Zeta Phi Beta Sorority) Delta Arts Award (Delta Sigma Theta Sorority)

Eight collections of poetry authored by Jaki Shelton Green include Dead on Arrival, Dead on Arrival and New Poems, Masks, Conjure Blues, singing a tree into dance, breath of the song, published by Carolina

Wren Press and Blair Publishers. Her other publications; Feeding the Light, I Want to Undie You are published by Jacar Press. Her poetry has been published in over eighty national and international anthologies and featured in magazines such as Essence and Ms. Magazine.

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ABOUT AAHCC

The African American Heritage & Cultural Center of New Bern is a 501(c)(3) NC nonprofit organization based in New Bern North Carolina and serving communities throughout Eastern North Carolina. It is a dynamic center which actively presents the historic impact and progression of African American heritage and culture in Eastern North Carolina. Contact information: Post Office Box 1354, NBNC 28563-1354 or TheCenterofNewBern@gmail.com.

ABOUT NEW BERN CIVIC THEATRE

New Bern Civic Theatre is a non-profit 501(c) 3 performing arts organization that was established in 1968. The company first performed in various venues throughout New Bern until the early 1980s when it purchased the Historic Athens Theatre where they still perform today. Our mission statement is *to enrich, empower, include, educate, and entertain*. Although entertainment is the most visible part of our operation, it is not the most important. It serves as a vehicle for our organization to provide enrichment through the performing arts to our community. Contact information: PO Box 1531, NBNC 28563, 252-633-0567. Tickets may be acquired by visiting <https://www.newberncivictheatre.org/tickets>

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Image of Dec 8 Guest Speaker – NC Poet Laureate Jaki Shelton Green

