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Campus and community invited to Prairie Gate Previews to learn about upcoming festival’s featured writers

Summary: In preparation for the March event, the Prairie Gate Literary Festival committee will introduce the community and campus to five featured writers, including novelist Kiese Laymon tonight.

(February 14, 2011)-A series of five free public programs, dubbed Prairie Gate Previews, is in progress at the Morris Public Library to introduce the public to each of the five writers who will be featured at this year’s first annual Prairie Gate Literary Festival. The festival will be held on March 25 and 26, 2011, on the University of Minnesota, Morris campus and will feature readings by the five previewed writers as well as workshops in writing drama, fiction, poetry, and nonfiction.

On Monday, February 28 at 7 p.m., Brook Miller, associate professor of English, will introduce novelist Kiese Laymon. On Saturday, March 5 at 11 a.m., Jayne Blodgett, campus librarian, will introduce memoirist and poet Mary Rose O’Reilley. And on Monday, March 21 at 7 p.m. Chrissy Kolaya, writer, and student Jessie Sherman ’11 will introduce novelist Eric Gansworth.

The completed previews have introduced Tom Hennen, a poet with family ties to the region who ran the Prairie Gate Press on the Morris campus for many years. Argie Manolis, Office of Community Engagement coordinator, spoke about Hennen’s work, shared some of his poems, and lead a discussion. Athena Kildegaard, poet and English teaching specialist, previewed poet Philip Bryant.

Books by the authors will be available for checkout at the Morris Public Library and for purchase at the campus bookstore, John’s Total Entertainment, and the Prairie Renaissance Cultural Alliance.

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