



For Immediate Release

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CAROLINA WREN PRESS ANNOUNCES ACQUISITION OF JOHN F. BLAIR, PUBLISHER'S TITLE LIST

New Press to be named BLAIR

Carolina Wren Press is acquiring the distinguished list of books from John F. Blair, Publisher, and will launch its combined list on January 1, 2018, under a new publisher name: Blair.

"We are thrilled to be expanding our existing literary fiction and poetry catalog to include John F. Blair's list," said Lynn York, Publisher of Carolina Wren Press, who made the announcement at the Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance trade show in New Orleans on September 15. "Blair's nonfiction list showcases a diversity of voices and has a compelling and expansive view toward the American South. It was a perfect fit for us."

A Durham-based nonprofit, Carolina Wren will officially change its name to Blair once the acquisition is complete. Consortium Books Sales & Distribution will distribute the new combined list for Blair.

Longtime John F. Blair President Carolyn Sakowski will retire as the deal closes: "Since 1954, we have focused on publishing books about the Southeast that might otherwise have been overlooked. Carolina Wren has a similar mission. The timing is serendipitous for both of us. The combining of our two programs creates the perfect merger."

John F. Blair, located in Winston-Salem, NC, has earned a venerable reputation for publishing books about travel, history, and culture in the American South. Its top-selling titles include more than a dozen volumes of slave narratives and autobiographies of black leaders, such as this season's *This African-American Life* by former Urban League President Hugh B. Price. The press has also published cookbooks, travel guides, nature, and art books, as well as a number of books on Southern folklore.

"I'm excited to combine the lists of these two noted Southern publishers to form one more expansive and integrated independent publisher," said Robin Miura, Carolina Wren Press Associate Publisher and Senior Editor.

“The addition of John F. Blair’s respected nonfiction list will strengthen our offerings, bolster our organization, and provide us with increased ability to continue our mission of publishing fiction and poetry from traditionally underrepresented voices.”

Carolina Wren, founded in 1974, is home to the Lee Smith Novel Prize and the Bakwin Award for Writing by a Woman, as well as a distinguished poetry series. Recent novels from the press have received regional and national recognition from the Independent Publisher Book Awards (IPPY Awards), Crook’s Corner Book Prize, and International Latino Book Awards.

The new Blair will publish the latest Lee Smith Novel Prize winner, *Beaut* by Donald Morrill, in May 2018. *Useful Phrases for Immigrants* by May-lee Chai, winner of the Bakwin Award, will follow in Fall 2018, along with a book of essays by firebrand commentator and essayist Hal Crowther and other titles. The poetry series will continue under the Carolina Wren Press imprint.

“From the beginning, our press set out to publish a variety of voices—including new and all manner of underrepresented writers. We are also particularly (but not exclusively) interested in work for and about the American South,” said York. “We think that our new list will strengthen us financially and allow us to do even better in fulfilling our mission.”