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Rich Media Project Design Document  
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## **XULA Creative Writing Program: Literary Reading Series Website**

### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:***

Xavier has had numerous literary visitors in the past, and will have many who will come in the future, but few have left anything behind; the idea behind this website is to leave a record on-line for future students at our Creative Writing Program, for our Creative Writing faculty as teaching tools, as well as for the larger Xavier, New Orleans, Louisiana and, the literary community beyond, so that they, too, may gain something from these experiences. I will present individual writers who come to our campus through: a photo, a short biography, a bibliography, a 15-minute video of the author reading from his/her work as well as talking about him/herself as a writer at the particular moment in time of the visit (the reason behind the short video is to get an idea of who the author is and interest the audience to read the works of these authors by purchasing their books, and thus supporting the Arts), and several texts of the poems/prose read, as well as an exercise for prospective writers. I will also make links to other sites relating to the writers' work available online. (Their recent visits have been funded by a grant I wrote and received \$15,000+matching XU funds. After this funding ceases attempts will be made to secure other funding.)

### ***STATEMENT of PURPOSE:***

Even through Xavier University is famous for its sciences and premedical program, it is also the home of one of the very few Creative Writing Programs at an HBCU, started in 1997-8. The recent university goal has been to increase the importance of the Humanities and make it closer to the level of the sciences. This website is an attempt to do just that, to recruit students who are interested in becoming writers. I will start this website, but it can be continued by me and others for as long as writers come to visit Xavier. I believe in opening our students to a variety of writers and writings, diverse in their backgrounds, diverse in genres (poets, fiction writers, creative nonfiction writers), as well as styles. We are not able to get a lot of funding from this university or outside sources for the arts. It is important to create a website when we do have on-campus visitors (rather than just keep the material on video tapes or on file in the library) to which anyone (including the visitors themselves) can have easy access in order to preserve material collected for the times when we cannot have the same visitor, or any visitors. There are few websites around at present which have short videos of writers speaking. This would be an original site, founded first at Xavier. I will have a place on the website to measure how many hits the website has received in order to measure its success, as well as a place for suggestions for improvement and/or praise.

## ***CONTENT OUTLINE:***

### **I. Writer:**

There will be a page for each writer (at first there will be eight writers) featured, and the following will appear on the website:

#### **A. General information about each writer:**

The name, photo (with photographer's name), current position and location/residence, when he/she visited campus, and who funded it will appear in this section (The writers funded by the NEA are: Bruce Weigl, E. Ethelbert Miller, Hilda Raz, Agymah Kamau, Henry Taylor, Harryette Mullen, Marcia Southwick and Lenard D. Moore.)

#### **B. Photos from the campus visit:**

Photos from the various activities on and off campus (with the photographer's name).

#### **C. Biographical and bibliographical information:**

The following will be supplied by the writer—biographical information (personal and professional), bibliographical information (major books—creative as well as critical, anthologies—publications of their own in anthologies as well as editors of anthologies, literary journal/magazine publications, and current projects), awards and honors.

#### **D. Video:**

As each writer comes to campus I will video tape (in a studio) each author who will ad lib, with prompts from me—speak of his/her life, literary career, and read several works, excerpts from work to illustrate him/herself as a writer.

1. Approximately a 15 minute video (Xavier production)
2. Audio only of video (important for computers which don't have the video technology)
3. A transcription of the video
4. Two-three poems, or an excerpt from a prose piece or a translation—transcription
5. Copyright information for texts and video
6. Creative Writing exercise for students and writers given by the visitors

#### **E. Links to other websites of interest:**

These links, specific to each writer, will help the audience who wish to do so, to reach other sources on-line, such as the NEA, AWP, the Academy of American Poets, sites of various literary magazines, publishing houses, as well as bookstores on-line where the authors' books can be purchased.

#### **F. Feedback per writer:**

Select feedback from readings and other components of the visits (at each reading we give out a sheet so as to get some feedback from the audience; this is feedback

already collected at each of the readings, not feedback to be given by the web site viewers).

## II. Literary reading series:

This page will inform the audience about the literary reading series itself.

### A. A historical background:

How it began, a little historical background/perspective: who organized it (biographical information of faculty and students assistants small grants), who funded it, how many visitors came per semester

### B. List of past visitors:

This will only be a partial list of past visitors as there is no record of all the visitors to the campus.

### C. Activities:

What kind of on-campus events occurred? These were not just readings, but in and out of class workshops, and informal events.

## III. Feedback:

This will be used to assess the success of the website.

### A. Web statistics:

This will be public so as to show its success.

### B. Select quotes:

A selection of quotes from feedback forms of a more general nature.

### C. Guest book:

This will give website users the chance to offer feedback, suggestions, and to ask questions.

### D. Contact information:

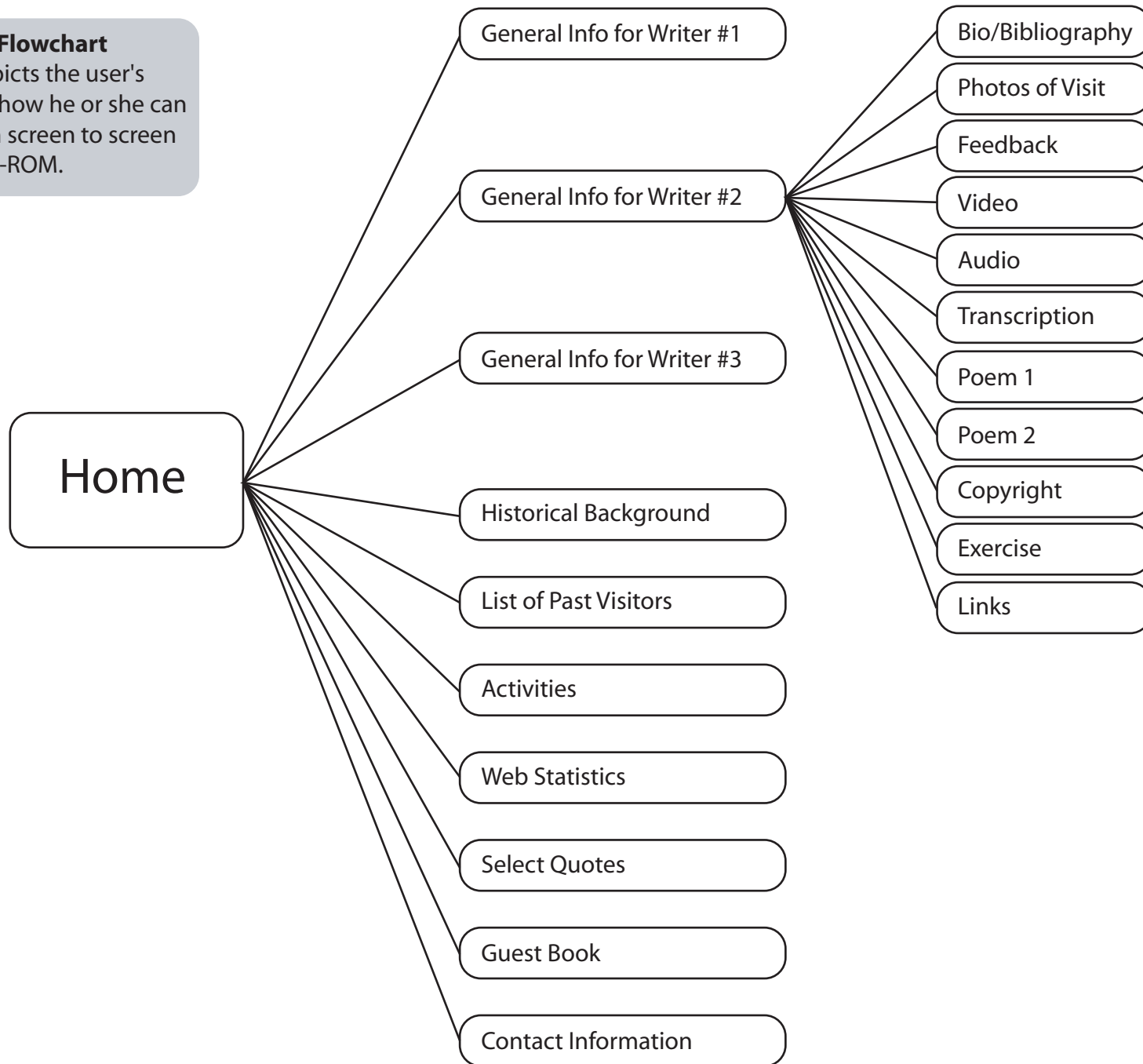
Website users may wish to contact the webmaster and/or the organizer of reading series.

## IV. Home Page:

Provides links to sections orienting paragraphs and will include an image of a visitor on our campus.

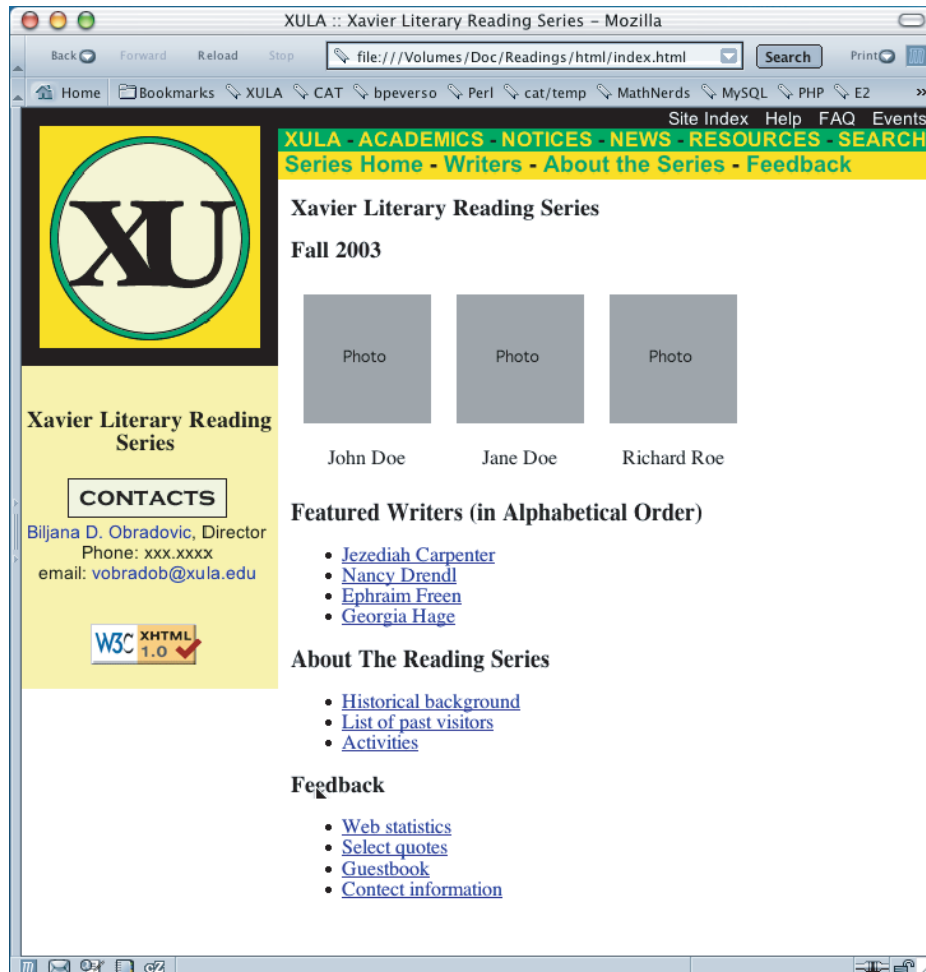
**Experiential Flowchart**

This chart depicts the user's experience -- how he or she can navigate from screen to screen within the CD-ROM.



## Interface Mockups

This sketch gives a rough idea of what the site will look like.



## ***MEDIA INVENTORY:***

### **I. Images:**

I (or someone else) will take the photos of the writers during the visit, but the initial (general information) photos come from the writers themselves (I am a published photographer and artist).

- A. (Initially) Eight photographs of writers (one of each, with photographers' names) will come from the writers themselves (general information).
- B. (Initially) I will take photos during the visits: some class visits, luncheons, dinners, informal potluck parties, the craft workshops, and readings (if I am not available a trained photographer, student or faculty, will fill in).
- C. I will then scan some and put them on the webpage. In the future I will take digital photos.
- D. I will also scan the flyers for each writer, as well as some book covers.

### **II. Video:**

Videos of the Writers: Xavier University will produce the videos. So far Melvin Claverie, the Media Specialist, has taped all the 15-minute videos with my help. They need to be taken from the video and put on the web—Bart Everson, the CAT media specialist, knows how to digitize these.

### **III. Text:**

- A. Transcripts of the videos—I will transcribe the videos with the help of a student assistant.
- B. The poems/prose pieces will come from the writers' books (permission needed to place them on the web).
- C. Writing exercises will come from the writers (on the video). Five have already done so. Each of the writers is a creative writing teacher as well, and has his or her own exercise that he or she is happy to share and help younger writers.
- D. Copyright Information: I will get them directly from the writers and their publishers.
- E. Biographical/Bibliographical information—provided by the writers.
- F. Literary Reading Series Information—I will provide most of this information, but will need help from her colleagues in the English Department on the historic part (Dr. Thomas Bonner and Ms. Patrice Melnick).
- G. Feedback—Examples from evaluation pages given to the audience after each event—these need to be sifted through to pick the best comments. I will do this with the help of a student assistant.

### **IV. Audio:**

- A. Audio of the videos—these will come from the video tapes produced by Xavier. Bart Everson, CAT media specialist, knows how to do this.

### **V. Scripted Components:**

- A. Web statistics
- B. Guest book

Website viewers will give these directly, and the web statistics will come from these. (Interactive components, scripts need to be installed or custom built.)

VI. Website links:

These will come both from the writers and from me (some research needed).

*Skills Assessment:*

I know how to author a webpage.

Melvin Claverie, Media specialist, knows how to shoot video.

Bart Everson, CAT Multimedia Artist, knows how to digitize the video and audio for the website.

I can take pictures with my camera, but will learn how to take digital photos.

I can do research on the website links.

I can find a way to seek permission/copyright from the writers/publishers.

I can write texts.

I have made all the flyers.

I know how to scan photos.

P.J. Christie, XU Web Developer, could provide assistance with web development.

***IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:***

Plan:

Summer 2003: *initial work*

Locate a web copyright page for all authors and/or their publishing houses to sign and send back to me by the beginning of the fall. Start transcribing video tapes. Ask Dr. Thomas Bonner and Ms. Melnick to recall past creative writing visitors' history.

Fall 2003: *collect and prepare component materials*

The videos of all eight writers will have been completed (with Melvin Claverie's help) and by the end of the fall Bart Everson can digitize the video and audio to place on the web. All the photographs and biographical/bibliographical information has been collected by me. I will have all the photos of the authors by the fall and can pick the one I wish to use for the website. Begin transcribing and typing up the videos with a student assistant (the NEA will still be paying \$500 for two more students and I can use one for the series and another for the website).

Spring 2004: *construct site*

Construction of the website begins with all its components with Bart Everson, P. J. Christie and me. The website should be launched by the end of the semester for evaluation only (see evaluation plan below).

**PHASE ONE OVER**

Budget:

Video tapes and video camera (equipment from Xavier) for recording: tapes \$25

Latest Fireworks for working on photos: \$100

Photo development and/or use of digital camera (free): \$80



***EVALUATION PLAN:***

A form will be used to evaluate the educational value of the site.

**Schedule:**

Fall 2004: *Usability test will be conducted using directed tasks in a controlled environment to evaluate the navigability and ease of the site (usability, how well one can use the website, is it user-friendly).*

- A. Develop form and tasks
- B. Administer usability tests (with directed tasks)
- C. Administer questionnaire (form)
  - 1. Ask Creative Writing Faculty to ask students to visit the website and give feedback. Give them a form to complete.
  - 2. Ask the eight writers who have participated in the series to visit the website and offer feedback. Give them a form to complete.
  - 3. Ask ten-twenty other writers (different genres) who are not familiar with the series to offer feedback (Dr. Obradovic is in contact with such writers and they are willing to actually preview the site). Give them a short form to complete.

Summer 2004: *Critiques ongoing. Evaluation by users.*

**Fall 2004:**

Assessment: After receiving critiques/feedback I will use these in improving the website, then launch it.

**Budget:**

Forms need to be distributed to critics by snail mail (photocopies for students) or by e-mail: \$50