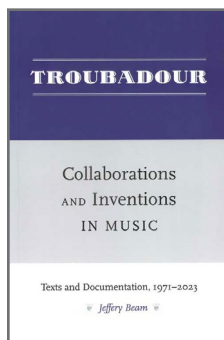


North Carolina Books

Compiled by Al Jones



Troubadour: Collaborations and Inventions in Music, 1971-2023

Jeffery Beam (2023). First ed. Hillsborough, NC: Green Finch Press, and Durham, NC: Horse & Buggy Press. ISBN 978-163901-216-9.

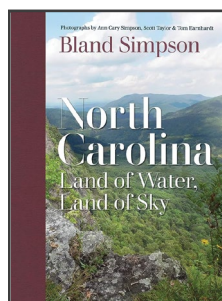
This attractive booklet was a gift to concert attendees and supporters of the April 1 & 2, 2023 PSI Theatre and Durham Arts Council concerts *Life of A Bee*, sponsored by Mallarme Music, soprano Andrea Edith Moore, and other troubadours, to celebrate the 70th birthday of award-winning North Carolina poet Jeffery Beam and introduce the composers who have been inspired by Beam's poetry to make new music.

Troubadour is divided into four parts. Part One: "Texts and Documentation, 1971-2023," presents Beam's poems, along with bibliographic information on where the poems were published originally. Part Two: "Collaborations with Composers, 1996-2023," shows how Beam's poems have inspired compositions by composers of art songs, choral works, and instrumental works. Part Three: "Inventions, 1971-2023," includes songs by Jeffery Beam, including his new "Antique" ballad, his "Lullaby" and children's songs, and his "sung poems." Part Four: "Composers," includes biographical information on the composers with whom Beam has collaborated and bibliographic information on the composers' works inspired by Beam's poetry. The composers are Daniel Thomas Davis, Lee Hoiby, Jeanette LeBouef-Kassam, Holt McCarley, Bo Newsome, Steven Serpa, Tony Solitro, and Frank E. Warren. *Troubadour* concludes with a biographical sketch on Beam, including congratulatory

quotes from former North Carolina Poet Laureates Joseph Bathanti and Shelby Stephenson, and novelists Marianne Gingher and Marly Youmans.

Troubadour will be an important addition to library collections that focus on North Carolina poets and their poetry. Beam has been nominated three times for American Library Association Notable Book and Gay/Lesbian Non-fiction awards.

Plummer Alston "Al" Jones, Jr.
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North Carolina: Land of Water, Land of Sky

Bland Simpson
Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2021. 225 pp. \$20.10.
978-1-4696-6583-2.

Is it possible for all of us to gain a mental picture of North Carolina landscapes, people, and landmarks by reading a book? Throughout the pages of the book, *North Carolina: Land of Water, Land of Sky*, author Bland Simpson, with valuable assistance from his wife Ann Cary Simpson, Scott Clark, and Tom Earnhardt, accomplishes this feat effectively. With the inclusion of numerous color photographs to supplement his narrative, Simpson covers the entire length of North Carolina from the coastline to the mountains. Where possible, the author includes conversations with local townsfolk that he encounters on his journey. Traveling the entire area of North Carolina takes several months, but the author's enthusiasm for the varied people, dialects, and the landscape are portrayed effectively throughout the book.

In this North Carolina guidebook, an extensive bibliography and numerous photographs are provided. Accompanying Simpson on his journey across North Carolina are his wife Ann Cary Simpson, Scott Taylor, a professional photographer, and Tom Earnhardt, a North Carolina writer and naturalist. In order to capture the different regions of North Carolina, Simpson divides the book into four sections as follows: This Wet and Water-Loving Land, Short Hills & Sand Hills, Jump-Up Country, and Epilogue: A Moment on Hooper Lane. The author's writing style as well as the photographs included in the book make the reader want to turn the next pages to see what landmarks will be pictured or described in the book's pages.

Bland Simpson is the 2005 recipient of the North Carolina Award, North Carolina's highest civilian award. He is employed currently as Kenan Distinguished Professor of English and Creative Writing at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. When Simpson is not writing, he spends some spare time as a pianist for The Red Clay Ramblers, a Tony Award-winning string band. Prior to writing this book, his other publications have included the following: *The Great Dismal: A Carolinian's Swamp Memoir* (1990),

The Mystery of Beautiful Nell Cropsey: A Nonfiction Novel (1993), *Heart of the Country: Novel of Southern Music* (1996), *Into the Sound Country: A Carolinian's Coastal Plain* (1997), *Ghost Ship of Diamond Shoals: The Mystery of the Carroll A. Deering: A Nonfiction Novel* (2002), and *The Inner Islands: A Carolinian's Sound Country Chronicle* (2006).

This book is intended as a guidebook to highlight the diverse landscapes and towns dotting the North Carolina countryside. Specific descriptions of waterways, towns, and regional attractions like Grandfather Mountain or the port of Wilmington lend character to the book. Because of its specific scope, *North Carolina: Land of Water, Land of Sky* would be suitable for inclusion in any academic or local library with a focus on state geographical landmarks.

David W. Young

University of North Carolina at Pembroke

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If your interest in North Carolina is more general, the North Carolina Collection at UNC-Chapel Hill frequently updates their blog with new acquisitions to the collection and other posts related to the history, literature, and culture of our state. Connect to the [NC Miscellany](#) here.