**Wilkes University English Department Hosts Allan Hamilton Dickson Spring Writers Series**

***Alexander Burns of Quintessence Theater Kicks Off Series***

***on Feb. 6***

The Wilkes University English Department will host the Allan Hamilton Dickson Fund Spring Writers Series featuring Alexander Burns, Ben Lerner and Jean McGarry. Throughout the Spring 2018 semester, the guest artists will visit campus to read from their work and discuss the creative process. The readings will take place in the Kirby Hall Salon, 202 S. River St., Wilkes-Barre. These events are free and open to the public.

**About the artists:**

**Alexander Burns**

**Tues., Feb. 6 at 7 p.m.**

Alexander Burns is founding artistic director of Quintessence Theater Group (www.quintessencetheatre.org), an ensemble theater dedicated to the performance and adaptation of epic works of classic literature and drama in Philadelphia, Pa. In addition to more than 30 shows at Quintessence, he has directed at the Arden Theatre, Trinity Shakespeare Festival and the Shakespeare Theatre. Burns also served as assistant director for productions at Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre and Syracuse Stage, among others.   
  
Burns holds a bachelor’s degree in theater from Northwestern University, was the directing fellow at the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, D.C., and is an alumnus of the Lincoln Center Theatre Directors Lab and the Jack O’Brien Director Fellowship.

Burns will discuss the process of bringing classic works from page to stage.

**Ben Lerner**

**Wed., March 14 at 7 p.m.**

Ben Lerner was born in Topeka, Kan. He received fellowships from the Fulbright, Guggenheim and MacArthur foundations, among other honors. Lerner is the author of three books of poetry—*The Lichtenberg Figures*, *Angle of Yaw* and *Mean Free Path—*and two novels—*Leaving the Atocha Station*and *10:04*. He also has completed several collaborations with artists, including *Blossom*, with Thomas Demand. His most recent book is the monograph *The Hatred of Poetry*. Through his work, Lerner strives to explore the relevance of art and the artist to modern culture.

Lerner holds a bachelor’s degree. in political science and an M.F.A. in creative writing from Brown University. He is Distinguished Professor of English at Brooklyn College.

**Jean McGarry**

**Tuesday, April 17 at 6 p.m.**

A native Rhode Islander, Jean McGarry was educated at Regis and Radcliffe colleges, the University of California-Irvine and Johns Hopkins University. Her professional experience includes newspaper reporter and translator, though she has primarily taught writing at the University of Missouri-Columbia, George Washington University and now at the Writing Seminars at Johns Hopkins University.

McGarry’s books include *Airs of Providence*, *The Very Rich Hours*, *The Courage of Girls*, *Home at Last*, *Gallagher’s Travels*, *Dream Date* and *Ocean State*. Her most recent work, *No Harm Done*, was published by Dalkey Archive Press in 2017. McGarry’s stories appeared in *The Yale Review, Southwest Review* and *The New Yorker,* among others.

**About Wilkes University:**

Wilkes University is an independent institution of higher education dedicated to academic and intellectual excellence through mentoring in the liberal arts, sciences and professional programs. Founded in 1933, the university is on a mission to create one of the great small universities, offering all of the programs, activities and opportunities of a large, research university in the intimate, caring and mentoring environment of a small, liberal arts college, at a cost that is increasingly competitive with public universities. The Economist named Wilkes 25th in the nation for the value of its education for graduates. In addition to 43 bachelor’s degree programs, Wilkes offers 25 master’s degree programs and five doctoral/terminal degree programs, including the doctor of philosophy in nursing, doctor of nursing practice, doctor of education, doctor of pharmacy, and master of fine arts in creative writing. Learn more at [www.wilkes.edu](http://www.wilkes.edu/).

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