

Nikky Finney

Nikky Finney was born in South Carolina, within listening distance of the sea. A child of activists, she came of age during the civil rights and Black Arts Movements. At Talladega College, nurtured by Hale Woodruff's Amistad murals, Finney began to understand the powerful synergy between art and history. Finney has authored four books of poetry: *Head Off & Split* (2011); *The World Is Round* (2003); *Rice* (1995); and *On Wings Made of Gauze* (1985). The John H. Bennett, Jr. Chair in Creative Writing and Southern Letters at the University of South Carolina, Finney also authored *Heartwood* (1997), edited *The Ringing Ear: Black Poets Lean South* (2007), and co- founded the Affrilachian Poets. Finney's fourth book of poetry, *Head Off & Split*, was awarded the 2011 National Book Award for poetry.