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Poetry Foundation Receives American Institute of Architects Honor Award

Award is the profession's highest recognition for excellence in architecture

CHICAGO — The Poetry Foundation, publisher of *Poetry* magazine, is pleased to announce that it is one of nine recipients of a 2012 Institute Honor Award for Architecture from the American Institute of Architects.

The Poetry Foundation building opened in June 2011 in Chicago's River North neighborhood. Located at 61 West Superior Street, it carries out the Poetry Foundation's mission of discovering and celebrating the best poetry and putting it before the largest possible audience.

"We are honored and deeply gratified to see this recognition, not just for the Poetry Foundation but for John Ronan and Ruth Lilly. The building represents a conjunction of the talents of a great architect and the generosity of a great patron. Their work has created a lasting tribute to poetry everywhere," said Poetry Foundation President John Barr.

Designed by the Chicago firm John Ronan Architects, the building, which includes 22,000 square feet of interior space and a nearly 4,000-square-foot public garden, takes its cues from the art form it represents. Like a poem that invites multiple readings, the space encourages repeat visits, revealing itself slowly over time. Clad in a black zinc screen wall, the building is by turns opaque and transparent, depending on how it is viewed. It is also environmentally sustainable and built to comply with the US Green Building Council's Silver Level LEED Rating System.

The ground floor of the two-story building is devoted to public use and includes a multipurpose performance space acoustically designed for the spoken word, a library holding a 30,000-volume non-circulating collection, and an exhibition gallery. Foundation and *Poetry* magazine staff offices are located on the building's second floor.

The first space in Chicago dedicated solely to the art of poetry, the new building realizes *Poetry* founding editor Harriet Monroe's dream, set out in her very first editorial, that the magazine would help poets pursue their art, increase public interest in poetry, and raise poetry's profile in our culture. When Harriet Monroe founded *Poetry* magazine in 1912, she wrote that her publication was "a modest effort to give to poetry her own place." Now, as the magazine celebrates its centennial, poetry quite literally has that place.

Funding for the building and other Poetry Foundation programming has been made possible through a generous bequest from the late Indianapolis philanthropist Ruth Lilly.

For images and more information about the Poetry Foundation, please visit www.poetryfoundation.org/building.

About the Poetry Foundation

The Poetry Foundation, publisher of *Poetry* magazine, is an independent literary organization committed to a vigorous presence for poetry in our culture. It exists to discover and celebrate the best poetry and to place it before the largest possible audience. The Poetry Foundation seeks to be a leader in shaping a receptive climate for poetry by developing new audiences, creating new avenues for delivery, and encouraging new kinds of poetry through innovative partnerships, prizes, and programs. Opened to the public in June 2011, the Poetry Foundation building in Chicago provides new space for the Foundation's extensive roster of public programs and events. It also houses a public garden, a library, and an exhibition gallery as well as the offices of the Poetry Foundation and *Poetry* magazine. For more information, please visit poetryfoundation.org.

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