

P O E T R Y



F O U N D A T I O N

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January 18, 2012

Poetry Celebrates 100 Years

Monthly magazine has published continuously in Chicago since its founding in 1912

CHICAGO — *Poetry* magazine, published by the Poetry Foundation, celebrates its centennial in 2012. Founded in Chicago in October 1912 by editor Harriet Monroe, *Poetry* is the oldest monthly devoted to verse in the English-speaking world. As the magazine turns 100, it holds fast to the principles that guided it from the beginning: to discover new voices, present new work by internationally recognized poets, and enliven discussion about and readership for contemporary poetry.

“Only a handful of literary magazines are still publishing after 100 years; a poetry magazine that reaches that milestone is a rarity indeed,” said Poetry Foundation president John Barr. “*Poetry* remains, as T.S. Eliot wrote in 1954, ‘an American Institution.’”

Poetry established its reputation early and published the first important poems of T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Marianne Moore, Wallace Stevens, H.D., William Carlos Williams, Carl Sandburg, Sylvia Plath, Gwendolyn Brooks, and other now-classic authors. In recent years, more than a third of the poems published in each issue are submitted by writers who have never before appeared in *Poetry*’s pages. By showcasing both established and emerging poets alongside provocative reviews, essays, and criticism, *Poetry* sparks conversation and brings new readers to the art form.

“The magazine today is a testament to those who have come before,” said *Poetry* magazine editor Christian Wiman. “Put together Harriet Monroe—an intrepid woman who wanted a magazine equal to the art and architecture she saw everywhere around her in turn-of-the-century Chicago; 90 years of persistence and poverty; a dozen editors feeding and herding poets like feral cats; and a \$200 million windfall in 2002 from the reclusive Ruth Lilly, and you get a magazine unlike any other.” More on the history of the magazine is available as a part of an electronic press kit available at poetryfoundation.org/100years.

No one would be more astonished by *Poetry*’s centennial than Monroe herself, whose “little magazine” often teetered on the brink of bankruptcy; indeed, at the time of her death during the Great Depression, she was deeply skeptical about the magazine’s survival. But the magazine did more than endure—in recent years *Poetry* has enjoyed record circulation and won prestigious awards, including two National Magazine Awards in 2011.

Rather than a single gala event, the Poetry Foundation and *Poetry* magazine will celebrate the milestone throughout all of their programs in 2012. Some highlights of the year to come:

- ***The Open Door: One Hundred Poems, One Hundred Years of Poetry Magazine***, edited by Christian Wiman and Don Share. The University of Chicago Press will publish the anthology in October 2012 to commemorate the release of the first issue of *Poetry* in October 1912.
- **Eleven new Pegasus designs:** Long the symbol of both poetic inspiration and *Poetry* magazine, the Pegasus has evolved over the decades. To usher it into a new century, the editors have commissioned 11 new designs to adorn the magazine's covers in 2012. Artists including Milton Glaser, Cathie Bleck, Felix Sockwell, Michael Bierut, and Marian Bantjes will reimagine the mythical winged horse.
- **Magazine release parties:** The journalist and poet Eliza Griswold headlines the January magazine release party on January 19, 2012. Future magazine release parties include the March 1, 2012, event "Shoot the Canon," in which readers heed Ezra Pound's command to "make it new again" with discoveries from the magazine archive.
- **Library Book Club:** In 2012, the Poetry Foundation library celebrates *Poetry*'s centennial by discussing a title from a contributor to that month's issue. In February, the book club will discuss Dean Young's *Fall Higher*. Space is limited to 15 participants. Register in advance by emailing library@poetryfoundation.org.
- **Centennial Field Trips:** On these themed visits to the library, high school students will learn about operating a magazine, and they'll construct their own—using materials from the Poetry Foundation Library.
- **Printers' Ball:** Ever forward-thinking, the seventh edition of this popular literary festival will be themed "Printers' Ball 3000," and will celebrate the magazine's millennial.
- **Centennial event programming:** Events includes programs highlighting the work and lives of past literary greats and *Poetry* contributors Gwendolyn Brooks, Langston Hughes, Archibald MacLeish, and Carl Sandburg. Contemporary contributors, including Averill Curdy, Thomas Sayers Ellis, Calvin Forbes, Susan Hahn, Major Jackson, Philip Levine, Laurence Lieberman, Christina Pugh, Roger Reeves, Kevin Stein, and Kevin Young will also appear at 2012 Poetry Foundation events. In October, longtime *Poetry* contributor Seamus Heaney will headline the 58th annual Poetry Day reading. More information about event programming is available at poetryfoundation.org/programs/events.
- **Centennial content online:** Poetryfoundation.org will feature weekly articles, regular podcasts, blog posts, and other material to highlight poems and content from *Poetry* over its 100-year history.

- **Gallery exhibitions:** From August to December 2012, never-before-seen photos from the magazine archive and original artwork will be on display in the Poetry Foundation's gallery.
- **Plus:** Other plans include centennial-themed public art to celebrate the magazine's relationship with the city of Chicago and a set of postcards featuring original art and poems from the magazine. More events will be planned in the coming months. Updates to the centennial calendar will be available at poetryfoundation.org/programs/events.

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About *Poetry* Magazine

Founded in Chicago by Harriet Monroe in 1912, *Poetry* is the oldest monthly devoted to verse in the English-speaking world. Monroe's "Open Door" policy, set forth in Volume 1 of the magazine, remains the most succinct statement of *Poetry*'s mission: to print the best poetry written today, in whatever style, genre, or approach. The magazine established its reputation early by publishing the first important poems of T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Marianne Moore, Wallace Stevens, H.D., William Carlos Williams, Carl Sandburg, and other now-classic authors. In succeeding decades it has presented—often for the first time—works by virtually every major contemporary poet. In 2011, the magazine was honored with two National Magazine Awards. It celebrates its centennial in 2012.

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.

About the Poetry Foundation Library

The Midwest's only library dedicated exclusively to poetry, the Poetry Foundation Library exists to promote the reading of poetry among the general public, and to support the editorial needs of all Poetry Foundation programs and staff. Visitors to the library may browse a collection of 30,000 volumes, experience audio and video recordings in private listening booths, and view exhibits of poetry-related materials. In addition to providing public access to its collections in the form of a reading room, the library creates interactive programs to inspire a wider readership for poetry in readers of all ages. The library's collection aims to present the best poetry, in English or in translation, of the modern and contemporary era, as well as including representative selections of the major poetic works of all eras. A children's collection contains a range of titles to engage young readers.

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