

P O E T R Y



F O U N D A T I O N

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Fernando Perez Talks Poetry

Major League Baseball player reflects on the role of poetry in his life

CHICAGO — The Poetry Foundation, publisher of *Poetry* magazine, is pleased to announce that Tampa Bay Rays outfielder Fernando Perez is featured in the September issue of *Poetry* magazine. As a contributor to *Poetry*, Perez joins the varied ranks of non-poets—including singer Neko Case, actor Alfred Molina, psychiatry professor Kay Redfield Jamison, and *Vanity Fair* columnist Christopher Hitchens—who have recently written for the magazine about the place of poetry in their lives.

Perez is a graduate of Columbia University in New York City, where he received a degree in American studies and completed the creative writing program. He joined the Tampa Bay Rays in 2008 and was one of six Ivy Leaguers to be appointed to the roster of Major League Baseball teams in the 2009 season. A longtime reader of contemporary poetry, Perez has named Robert Creeley and John Ashbery among his favorite poets.

Perez says he turns to poetry when he's "after displacement, contrast" from the game of baseball. "The thick wilderness," he continues, "of, say, late Ashbery can wrangle with the narrowness of competition."

Created with the belief that not only should poetry have a wider audience, but the range of people writing about poetry should be diverse, *Poetry*'s occasional special feature The View from Here this month includes short essays from Brenda Starr writer Mary Schmich and writer William T. Vollmann. Vollmann, like Perez, reminds readers of poetry's role in opening minds.

With their distinct backgrounds, contributors to this month's issue of *Poetry* also connect to poetry in individual ways. They may see poetry as an aid in professional life, as chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit Dennis Jacobs states: "My long interest in poetry has yielded a respect for the language that people should employ when they undertake to speak the law." Or they may regard it, as music and comic book critic Douglas Wolk says, "as a sort of chisel to break my brain open." Alternatively, poetry can be greeted as a departure from the daily grind.

Poetry's September issue also includes new poems by Samuel Menashe, Belle Randall, Don Paterson, Lucia Perillo, Atsuro Riley, Desirée Alvarez, Sandra McPherson, Spencer Reece,

Malachi Black, and Dan Beachy-Quick, as well as prose and criticism by Ange Mlinko and Michael Hofmann.

About *Poetry* Magazine

Founded in Chicago by Harriet Monroe in 1912, *Poetry* is the oldest monthly devoted to verse in the English-speaking world. Harriet 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 significant poet of the 20th century.

About the Poetry Foundation

The Poetry Foundation, publisher of *Poetry* magazine and one of the largest literary organizations in the world, 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 literary prizes and programs. For more information, please visit www.poetryfoundation.org.

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