

P O E T R Y



F O U N D A T I O N

For Immediate Release

November 3, 2008

Media Contact: Anne Halsey, 312.799.8016; ahalsey@poetryfoundation.org

**Poetry Foundation and Chicago International Children's Film Festival Award
\$10,000 Poetry Film Prize**

CHICAGO — The Poetry Foundation and Facets Multi-Media are proud to announce that “Migrations,” by filmmaker Alyssa Sherwood, is the inaugural winner of the \$10,000 Poetry Film Prize. Selected by a jury from more than 80 entrants, the film is based on a poem by Dorian Merina, a Filipino-American poet and journalist. The award was presented last night at the closing night ceremony of the 25th Annual Chicago International Children's Film Festival.

The Poetry Film Prize recognizes excellence in language and cinematography and celebrates the best film based on a poem or poet. It is given to a filmmaker whose use of verse in film opens new artistic vistas and inspires children to an appreciation of poetry. Unique in the field of poetry *and* in the film industry, the prize was created as part of *Reel Poetry*, a larger initiative between the Poetry Foundation and CICFF created to highlight the possibilities of poetry in film, especially for a young audience.

“Film is a highly concentrated, image-based art form, and so it has a great deal in common with poetry,” said Nicole Dreiske, founder and artistic director of Facets. “The merging of these two powerful art forms allows children to discover brilliant poets and poems through a medium they already know and love.”

“Migrations” (USA, 2007, 7 minutes) employs surreal animation and acute language to connect the Manila Galleon Trade (a 16th- and 17th-century trade route from China to Mexico, by way of the Philippines) with present-day dilemmas of immigration and the movement of people and cultures around the world.

“‘Migrations’ is at once a film of stirring visual and linguistic artistry,” said Anne Halsey, media director for the Poetry Foundation. “It is the perfect first recipient of a prize designed to spark the creation of quality films for children based on poetry.”

Reel Poetry is a multi-program partnership between the Poetry Foundation and the Chicago International Children's Film Festival designed to engage children as audiences, aesthetes, and appreciators of both poetry and film. The collaboration celebrates poetry and makes the art form's complex beauty and craft relatable to a young audience. Supported by special curriculums for teachers and discussions facilitated by trained media educators, the *Reel Poetry* program is designed for upper-level elementary and middle school students and has garnered the attention of public school teachers and arts educators across the country.

About Facets Multi-Media and the Chicago International Children's Film Festival

Founded in 1975, Facets Multi-Media is the nation's leading conservator of great film and one of America's foremost cinematheques, screening 300 films a year and hosting tributes, retrospectives and premieres of films created by artists across the globe. Called "a temple of great cinema," by critic Roger Ebert, Facets' mission is to present and preserve high quality, multi-cultural cinema for diverse audiences and to offer seminars, classes, and a broad spectrum of educational and cultural programs for adults and children. The most important of these programs is the Chicago International Children's Film Festival (CICFF), the largest festival of films for children in North America and the first juried, competitive festival of children's film in the United States. The CICFF is the only children's film event to be recognized by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences as an "Academy-qualifying" festival. For more information, please visit www.cicff.org.

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.