



**For Immediate Release**

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### **Poetry Foundation Launches Harriet Monroe Poetry Institute**

CHICAGO —The Poetry Foundation is pleased to announce the launch of the Harriet Monroe Poetry Institute, a new initiative designed to address issues of importance to poetry by bringing together leading advocates and practitioners of the art form—poets, scholars, critics, translators, publishers, arts administrators—and thinkers from all areas of arts and culture.

When fully established, the Poetry Institute will:

- Stimulate fresh ideas by bringing together creative thinking and practical realities, recognizing that a lively presence for poetry in our culture depends on both
- Conduct research on issues, needs, and opportunities in the poetry community
- Design action-oriented programs and partnerships to benefit poetry

For its inaugural events the Poetry Foundation is collaborating with the Aspen Institute, an organization with a broad interdisciplinary reach and an established expertise in convening diverse groups of people. Together with the Institute's Harman-Eisner Program in the Arts, the Poetry Foundation is surveying leaders in the poetry community to determine the most pressing needs of the art form.

“The Foundation is eager to hear the recommendations and priorities of poets, and those involved in publishing and distributing poetry, for how we as a community can work together to the benefit of poetry,” said John Barr, president of the Poetry Foundation. “The results of the query will help frame the Institute's initial program.”

Based on information received from the first phase of inquiry, the Harriet Monroe Poetry Institute will commission and conduct research throughout 2008. At a conference to be held in Aspen in the spring of 2009, invited participants will discuss the research, debate findings, and recommend steps to address the identified needs of the art form. Findings from the conference will shape the Institute's subsequent activities, including research, programs, and collaborations. Ultimately the Poetry Foundation expects to implement programs based on these recommendations.

The Harriet Monroe Poetry Institute, which will operate as an ongoing program of the Poetry Foundation, is located at the Foundation offices in Chicago.

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### **About the Aspen Institute**

Founded in 1950, the Aspen Institute is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering enlightened leadership and open-minded dialogue. Through seminars, policy programs, conferences, and leadership development initiatives, the Institute and its international partners seek to promote nonpartisan inquiry and an appreciation for timeless values. The Institute is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has campuses in Aspen, Colorado, and on the Wye River near the shores of the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland. Its international network includes partner Aspen Institutes in Berlin, Rome, Lyon, Tokyo, New Delhi, and Bucharest, and leadership initiatives in Africa, Central America, and India. The Harman-Eisner Program in the Arts will draw upon the Aspen Institute's long-established convening power and its well-known association with ideas, values, and leadership. It will respond to the need, across the full spectrum of the arts in America, for less isolation among arts advocates and directors, and for more communication and exchange of ideas and best practices. The program will highlight the contribution of the arts to American democracy and support a healthier climate nationally for the arts to flourish. Poetry is the first art form that it will explore. [www.aspeninstitute.org](http://www.aspeninstitute.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 with its partners to create 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. The Harriet Monroe Poetry Institute will bring innovative leaders together to address issues of importance to poetry. A Poetry Foundation initiative, the Institute will support the work of its participants with original research. It will bring lively creative thinking and practical realities together, recognizing that poetry, to have a vigorous presence in our culture, depends on both. The deliberations and findings of its participants will result in recommendations, programs, and partnerships for addressing poetry's unmet needs. For more information, please visit [www.poetryfoundation.org](http://www.poetryfoundation.org).