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Poetry Foundation Announces Winter/Spring 2009 Literary Series

CHICAGO—The Poetry Foundation is pleased to announce its 2009 Winter/Spring Literary Series. The upcoming season of public poetry events includes poetry readings by former U.S. Poet Laureates Rita Dove and Robert Pinsky, and the second half of *Art Beyond Borders*, a yearlong partnership with the Art Institute, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

Thursday, January 15, 6 p.m.

Art Beyond Borders: Eamon Grennan

Fullerton Hall

Art Institute of Chicago

111 South Michigan Avenue

Free admission

Eamon Grennan was born in Dublin in 1941 and educated at University College Dublin, where he studied English and Italian, and at Harvard, where he received his Ph.D. in English. He has been awarded fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Guggenheim Foundation. His poems have also been awarded a number of Pushcart prizes. *Leopardi: Selected Poems*, his 1997 translation, received the PEN Award for Poetry in Translation, and a volume of poetry, *Still Life with Waterfall*, was the recipient of the 2003 Lenore Marshall Award for Poetry from the Academy of American Poets. Grennan's most recent collection is *Matter of Fact* (2008). Widely published in American and Irish journals, he taught for 30 years at Vassar College, where he was the Dexter M. Ferry Jr. Professor of English.

360 Degrees: Art Beyond Borders brings together Chicago's leading cultural institutions—the Poetry Foundation, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs—to celebrate cultural, social, and political life around the world. Leading museum directors, renowned musicians, poets from around the globe, and cultural leaders explore the role of art and culture in our ever-shrinking world.

Thursday, February 5, 6 p.m.
Art Beyond Borders: Robert Pinsky
Fullerton Hall
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Avenue
Free admission

While serving as U.S. Poet Laureate for an unprecedented three terms from 1997 to 2000, Robert Pinsky founded the Favorite Poem Project, which gave a resonant voice to America's vigorous and varied poetry audience. Pinsky has been active as a critic, poet, and translator of verse, and recently authored a prose book, *The Life of David* (2005). His newest book—his seventh—is *Gulf Music* (2007), winner of the Theodore Roethke Prize. Pinsky is a professor at Boston University and the poetry editor for the online magazine *Slate*. He has also written the "Poet's Choice" column for the *Washington Post* and has been a regular commentator on *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*. In 2003 he made a cameo appearance on the popular television show *The Simpsons*.

Friday, February 13, noon
Found in Translation: Tomaz Šalamun
Fullerton Hall
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Avenue
Free admission

Tomaz Šalamun was born in Zagreb in 1941 and is considered one of the foremost figures of the Eastern European avant-garde. His influential books have been translated into 19 languages, and nine of his 37 books of poetry have been published in English, including *Poker* (2003) and *Row* (2006), both translated by Joshua Beckman; and *Woods and Chalices* (2008), translated by Brian Henry. He has been a Fulbright Fellow at Columbia University, a member of the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa, and a cultural attaché at the Consulate General of Slovenia in New York. In spring 2008 he was appointed Visiting Professor in Creative Writing and Distinguished Writer in Residence at the University of Richmond.

Saturday, February 14, 8:30 p.m.
Poetry Off the Shelf: August Kleinzahler & Heather McHugh
Chicago Hilton
729 South Michigan Avenue
Free admission

August Kleinzahler is the author of 10 books of poetry, including *Red Sauce*, *Whiskey*

and Snow (1995); *Green Sees Things in Waves* (1999); *Live from the Hong Kong Nile Club: Poems, 1975–1990* (2000); and *The Strange Hours Travelers Keep* (2004), winner of the International Griffin Poetry Prize. His latest collection is *Sleeping It Off in Rapid City: Poems, New and Selected* (2008). Allen Ginsberg said about him: “August Kleinzahler’s verse line is always precise, concrete, intelligent and rare—that quality of ‘chiseled’ verse memorable in Basil Bunting’s and Ezra Pound’s work. A loner, a genius.” He has taught writing at Brown University, the University of California at Berkeley, and the Iowa Writers’ Workshop, as well as at workshops for homeless veterans in the Bay Area.

Few contemporary poets have more fun with language than Heather McHugh, whose linguistically dazzling verse is both playful and profound. Born of Canadian parents in San Diego, California, she grew up in Virginia and attended Harvard. In 1994 McHugh’s volume *Hinge & Sign: Poems 1968–1993* was a finalist for the National Book Award; her latest collection, *Eyeshot*, appeared in 2004. A translator and critic as well as a poet, she has taught at the Iowa Writers’ Workshop and is currently on the creative writing faculty at the University of Washington.

Presented with the Association of Writers & Writing Programs

Monday, February 16, 7:30 p.m.

Poetry on Stage

My Nose and Me: A TragedyLite or TragiDelight in 33 Scenes

Chicago Shakespeare Theater

800 East Grand Avenue

Admission is free, but reservations are recommended. Please call 312.595.5600 or visit www.chicagoshakes.com/nose.

“My Nose and Me: A TragedyLite or TragiDelight in 33 Scenes,” by John Surowiecki, is the inaugural winner of the Poetry Foundation’s Verse Drama Prize. It makes its Chicago debut here, under the direction of Bernard Sahlins.

John Surowiecki is the author of *Watching Cartoons before Attending a Funeral*, *The Hat City after Men Stopped Wearing Hats*, and five chapbooks. He won *Nimrod*’s Pablo Neruda Prize and has received fellowships from the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism. He makes his home in Connecticut, where he is a freelance writer and teaches poetry courses at Manchester Community College.

Bernard Sahlins co-founded the Second City Theater and the International Theatre Festival of Chicago. He has produced and directed shows in Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, London, and Toronto. His memoir, *Days and Nights at the Second City*, appeared from Ivan R. Dee in 2002.

Saturday, April 25, 1 p.m.

Poetry Off the Shelf: Rita Dove

Cindy Pritzker Auditorium

Harold Washington Library Center
400 South State Street
Free admission

Rita Dove served as Poet Laureate of the United States from 1993 to 1995, the youngest person to hold the title and the first African-American. Dove's lyrical and accessible poetry reflects the author's interest in music and drama, as well as her commitment to social justice and her sensitivity to women's issues. Among her many honors are the Pulitzer Prize in poetry, the Heinz Award in the Arts and Humanities, the National Humanities Medal, and the 2006 Common Wealth Award. Among her many collections are *Thomas and Beulah* (1986), *Mother Love* (1995), *On the Bus with Rosa Parks* (1999), and *American Smooth* (2004). She has a new book due out in April 2009. Dove is Commonwealth Professor of English at the University of Virginia, where she has been teaching since 1989. She was elected a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets in 2006.

Co-sponsored with the Chicago Public Library

Thursday, April 30, 6 p.m.
Art Beyond Borders: Philip Levine
Fullerton Hall
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Avenue
Free admission

Philip Levine was born in Detroit to Russian Jewish immigrants. Levine worked in factories while earning his degrees—an experience that strongly influenced his poetry. He is the author of 16 volumes of poetry, including his most recent, *Breath* (2004). He received the Pulitzer Prize for his 1994 collection *The Simple Truth*. His many other honors include the Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize, the Harriet Monroe Memorial Prize from *Poetry*, the Frank O'Hara Prize, and two Guggenheim Foundation fellowships. For two years he served as chair of the Literature Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts, and he was elected a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets in 2000. He lives in New York City and Fresno, California, and teaches at New York University.

Thursday, May 28, 6 p.m.
Art Beyond Borders: Ilya Kaminsky
Fullerton Hall
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Avenue
Free admission

Ilya Kaminsky was born in 1977 in Odessa, formerly the Soviet Union, now Ukraine. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, his family was forced to seek political asylum in the United States. Kaminsky is the author of *Dancing in Odessa* (Tupelo Press,

2004), which won the American Academy of Arts and Letters' Metcalf Award and the Dorset Prize. In late 1990s he co-founded Poets for Peace, an organization that sponsors poetry readings in the United States and abroad in support of such relief organizations as Doctors Without Borders and Survivors International. He is also the poetry editor of *Words Without Borders*, an online magazine featuring international literature in translation. He now teaches writing at San Diego State University.

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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