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For Immediate Release

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POETRYFOUNDATION.ORG WINS A WEBBY

New Poetry Foundation Website Tops the Shortlist for International Online Honor

CHICAGO—In its first year, the Poetry Foundation’s website—poetryfoundation.org—has been named Best Website in the Association category for 2007. Notable for its comprehensive scale, poetryfoundation.org is a rich resource featuring an archive of more than 5,000 poems by more than 500 poets, daily and weekly articles on poets and poetry, podcasts of well-known authors reading and discussing their work, poetry news, cartoons, and Harriet the blog, named after Harriet Monroe, the founder of *Poetry* magazine. The 2007 award for Best Association Website will be presented on June 5, at the 11th Annual Webby Awards at Cipriani Wall Street, in New York.

Hailed as the “Oscars of the Internet” by *The New York Times*, the Webby Awards are the leading international awards honoring excellence on the Internet. The awards are judged by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences, a global organization that includes Harvey Weinstein, Arianna Huffington, Matt Groening, Jamie Oliver, Internet inventor Vinton Cerf, and RealNetworks CEO Rob Glaser.

“The Webby Awards honor outstanding work that is setting the standard for the Internet,” said David-Michel Davies, executive director of the Webby Awards. “The selection of poetryfoundation.org as Best Association site is a testament to the skill, ingenuity, and vision of its creators.”

Drawing inspiration from Harriet Monroe, poetryfoundation.org is one of several efforts underway by the Poetry Foundation to strengthen the relationship between poetry and its audience. As Monroe wrote in the first issue of *Poetry* in 1912, “This art, like every other, is not a miracle of direct creation, but a reciprocal relation between the artist and his public.” The site’s extensive poetry archive, searchable via the Poetry Tool, is continuously updated by editors, critics, and readers as they search, read, and comment on the poems they encounter.

“Our goal is to convey the vitality of poetry in America by circulating all types of great poetry and lively journalism about it on the Internet,” noted Emily Warn, editor of poetryfoundation.org. “In little more than a year, we’ve built an audience in the hundreds of thousands. Whether people happen on us by searching for a love poem on Google, or by clicking

a link on the thousands of sites linking to our poems and stories, once they find us, they come back often for what poetry offers.”

Founded in 1996, the Webby Awards presentations are known worldwide for the famous five-word acceptance speeches. Webby Awards are given in more than 100 categories. Winners are selected for recognition based on excellence in the following criteria: Content, Structure and Navigation, Visual Design, Functionality, Interactivity and Overall Experience. This year the competition received a record 8,000 entries from more than 60 countries and all 50 states.

Poetryfoundation.org is produced by the Poetry Foundation under the direction of editor Emily Warn, with design and development by William Drenttel, for Winterhouse, and Betsy Vardell, for RubyStudio. Emily White is the associate editor of the site, Nick Twemlow is features editor, and Michael Marcinkowski is the producer.

About the Poetry Foundation

The Poetry Foundation, publisher of *Poetry* magazine, is one of the largest literary foundations in the world. 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 literary prizes and programs. The Poetry Foundation website, www.poetryfoundation.org, provides a variety of information about poetry as well as articles, podcasts, and reading guides.

The Foundation recently completed *Poetry in America*, an unprecedented study aimed at understanding poetry’s place in American culture. The study found that a lifelong love for poetry is most likely to result if cultivated early in childhood and reinforced thereafter. In 2006, the Poetry Foundation appointed Jack Prelutsky as the nation’s first Children’s Poet Laureate. The laureate serves as an advisor to the Poetry Foundation on children’s poetry and engages in a variety of projects designed to instill a love of poetry among the nation’s youngest readers.

Now in its second year, *Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest*, created by the NEA and the Poetry Foundation, encourages the study of great poetry by offering educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition to high schools across the country.

The Poetry Foundation is currently working on a new series of programs titled *Poetry Across the Atlantic*, designed to renew the venerable and important friendship between the poetries of the United States and those of the United Kingdom. For more information on these and other programs, please visit www.poetryfoundation.org.