

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photos available at www.literary-arts.org/public/

Literary Arts Presents the 2007 Poetry Downtown Series

Portland, Ore. – Literary Arts is pleased to announce the seventh season of Poetry Downtown featuring nationally-renowned poets reading and discussing their work. All events take place at the **First Congregational Church** (1126 SW Park) at **7:30 p.m.**

Four-Part Series Tickets: \$100 Patron; \$65 General; \$48 College/Senior (60+)

Individual Event Tickets: \$18 General; \$14 College/Senior (60+); \$5 Youth

Discounted group tickets are available with purchase of six or more.

Tickets are on sale now at 503.227.2583 or www.literary-arts.org.

Mark Strand

Monday, February 26, 2007

Former U.S. Poet Laureate Mark Strand started out as a painter, earning a bachelor's degree in fine art before entering the Iowa Writers' Workshop. During his distinguished career, Strand has shaped poems with a precision that reflects this early influence. He has published 11 books of poems, including *Blizzard of One* (1998), which won the Pulitzer Prize, and *Dark Harbor* (1993), for which he received the Bollingen Prize. His most recent book is *Man and Camel* (2006). Strand has edited numerous anthologies, including *Another Republic: 17 European and South American Writers* (1976) with Poetry Downtown author Charles Simic. He has also published three children's books and several books of translation.

Strand has been honored with three grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, and fellowships from The Academy of American Poets and the MacArthur Foundation. He lives in New York and teaches at Columbia University.

Kevin Young

Monday, March 12, 2007

Kevin Young's poetry resonates with blues rhythms, cinematic images and African-American history. Named by *Village Voice* as a "writer on the verge," Young has published four books of poetry, including *Jelly Roll* (2003), a finalist for the National Book Award and the *Los Angeles Times* Book Award, and *Most Way Home* (1995), which won the Zacharis First Book Award from *Ploughshares*. The Providence Black Repertory Theater recently adapted his film noir in verse, *Black Maria* (2005), for the stage. His latest book is *For the Confederate Dead* (2007).

Young has edited several volumes of poetry, including *Giant Steps: The New Generation of African-American Writers* (2000) and *Blues Poems* (2003). He has received fellowships from the NEA and the Guggenheim Foundation, as well as a MacDowell Colony residency.

Young teaches at Emory University, where he curates the 70,000-volume Danowski Poetry Library.

Carolyn Forché

Tuesday, March 27, 2007

Known for her work as a poet of witness, Carolyn Forché combines the personal and the political to create poems that are powerful sites of resistance. She is the author of four books of poetry, including *Blue Hour* (2003) and *The Angel of History* (1994), which received the *Los Angeles Times* Book Award.

Her translations of exiled poet Claribel Alegria led Forché to El Salvador to work as a human rights advocate. *The Country Between Us* (1982), based on these experiences, won awards from The Poetry Society of America and the Academy of American Poets. She has also edited *Against Forgetting: Twentieth-Century Poets of Witness* (1993), a collection of work from poets who have experienced war first hand.

In 1998, the Edita and Ira Morris Foundation for Peace and Culture honored Forché for her work on behalf of human rights. She lives in Maryland and teaches at Skidmore College.

Charles Simic

Monday, April 9, 2007

Charles Simic began writing poetry in high school when he discovered that one of his friends was “attracting the best-looking girls by writing them sappy love poems.” Throughout his career, Simic has stitched together poems with a playful lyricism that evokes this youthfulness. Since emigrating from Yugoslavia during World War II, he has published more than 60 books, including *The World Doesn’t End* (1989), winner of the Pulitzer Prize, and National Book Award finalists *Walking the Black Cat* (1996) and *The Voice at 3:00 a.m.* (2006). A two-time winner of the PEN International Translation Award, Simic has said that “poetry is not what is lost but what is retained in translation.” He has published four books of essays, most recently *Memory Piano* (2006).

Simic has received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. A New Hampshire resident since 1973, he teaches at the University of New Hampshire.

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Poetry Downtown is a program of Literary Arts, a statewide, nonprofit organization that enriches the lives of Oregonians through language and literature. Other programs of Literary Arts are Oregon Book Awards, Oregon Literary Fellowships, Portland Arts & Lectures, Poetry in Motion®, Writers in the Schools and

Delve: Readers' Seminars. For more information about Literary Arts, please contact Barbara Verchot at 503.227.2583 or visit www.literary-arts.org.