**THE WRITING LIFE**

### 22 Years On The Air

In FY 2009 six new editions of HoCoPoLitSo’s *The Writing Life* (TWL), a writer-to-writer cable television series, were produced at Howard Community College’s TV Studio:

- Joy Harjo hosted by Barbara Goldberg (Debut January 2009)
- Frank McCourt hosted by Terence Patrick Winch (Debut May 2009)
- Manil Suri hosted by Sangita Ray (Debut June 2009)
- two editions with Thirity Umrigar, Donna Hemans and Helen Elaine Lee hosted by Dr. Tara Hart – *The Craft of Writing* (Debut October 2009) and *Exploring Themes in Literature* (Debut November 2009)
- Laura Lippman hosted by Mary Kay Zuravleff (Debut January 2010)


TWL can be seen on HCC-TV, Comcast Channel 96 or Verizon Channel 41. For more information visit www.HoCoPoLitSo.org.

### 32nd Annual Irish Evening

**THE WRITING LIFE**

### TWL THIS WINTER

#### January 2010

Laura Lippman hosted by Mary Kay Zuravleff (Debut 2010)

In this debut edition author Mary Kay Zuravleff speaks to mystery novelist Laura Lippman about her latest works, the art of the unreliable memory, the process of writing crime novels, Baltimore and her blog, *The Memory Project*. Lippman discusses her popular series character Tess Monaghan, who Zuravleff admits holds a lighter world view and a “useful optimism about humans,” more so than the author. She also speaks about her much darker work, *What the Dead Know*, based on the true story of the disappearance of two sisters from Wheaton Mall. Lippman likens writing a novel to giving birth. “Once it’s over, you forget how difficult it is.”

#### February 2010

Frank McCourt hosted by Terence Winch (Encore 2009)

In this edition, memoirist McCourt is interviewed by writer and musician, Terence Winch. They discuss McCourt’s meteoric rise from abject poverty to worldwide success at the age of 66, with the publication of the first of his trilogy *Angela’s Ashes*. This episode highlights the initial response to his manuscript submission with one publisher, and what followed after it landed on the bestseller list with a different publisher. “Angela’s Ashes freed me,” says McCourt. He goes on to discuss what Winch calls the “beautifully photographed” movie and the ongoing effect of success.

**The Gifts of Adversity**

“OPTIMISM… is an important component of achievement, and is especially important in times of chaos, change and turbulence. Those who have an optimistic outlook will roll with the punches, will be more proactive and persistent and will not abandon hope,” writes psychologist Dr. Martin Seligman.

If HoCoPoLitSo measures the passing year with any degree of optimism, astute observers would see a half-full glass of persistence, possibility, and partnerships. Mindful of recent unemployment and a continuing mortgage crisis, we elected to put the state of the economy on hold – but for a moment – as we surrounded ourselves with extraordinary literary riches this 35th year.

We mourn the loss of Frank McCourt, who charmed the sold-out Irish Evening audience with his tales of Irish childhood and as a teacher. In the spring, HoCoPoLitSo persisted with innovative programming by featuring *A Literary Gathering of Women*, with novelists Donna Hemans, Helen Elaine Lee, Thirity Umrigar, moderator Dr. Helen Mitchell, and poet Lucille Clifton, creating a cultural bridge to the Indian, African-American and Caribbean experience. HoCoPoLitSo continued to nurture partnerships by producing an evening with novelist Laura Lippman and debuting Bookfit at the Coral Triangle Festival of the Arts’ Lakefest. Next year Bookfit matures into *A Day of Poetry*, a baby Dodge Poetry Festival right here in Howard County.

We raise our hopes for a glorious winter reading with short story author Claire Keegan (*Walk the Blue Fields and Antarctica*), whom author Richard Ford calls “that rarest of writers.” Our 32nd Irish Evening will be held Friday, February 19, 2010. (www.brownpapertickets.com/event/89385)

While pessimism has its place – it informs us to be cautious and to seek truth – HoCoPoLitSo adopts strategies that allow us to expect another grand year. But the only way this tiny literary gem can shine and continue to bring authors of such caliber to Howard County is with the help of its Friends.

Is HoCoPoLitSo’s glass half full or half empty? HoCoPoLitSo will look for the gift in adversity, and pour on the upcoming season with heft and spirit.

HoCoPoLitSo is grateful to have been awarded a $5,000 NEA grant that will continue to fund programs featuring a diverse slate of poets and writers. In one breath, we thank you, our donors, for supporting us through these lean times and ask that you donate to help us match this funding that will allow us to keep the glass filled and flowing.
Season's Highlights

OCTOBER 5, 2008 Opening the 38th season, musician/poet Joy Harjo, a member of the Myvke/Creek Nation, lured in the audience with music and poetry at “Nature by Poetry, A Family Affair,” at the Howard County Conservancy. Children of audience members took a nature hike and tinned with haiku taught by poet Timothy Singleton.

FEBRUARY 20, 2009 HoCoPoLitSo celebrated its 31st Evening of Irish Music and Poetry with Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Eileen Kernan, Terence Winch, Jesse Winch, the Columbia Archives, Howard Co PoLitSo

JUNE 15, 2009 Sue Ellen Thompson taught “Poetry as Autobiography,” a topic that focused on autobiographical poetry and writing to include the reader, at the Montebello Recital Hall.

JUNE 23, 2009 For the Festival’s literary finale, HoCoPoLitSo co-sponsored a wine and cheese reception and “An Evening with Laura Lippman” at the Jim Rouse Company Foundation Student Services Hall at HCC.

Student Audiences

DECEMBER 12, 2008 HoCoPoLitSo and Howard County Public Schools featured Carlin’s Poets in Residence, Bill’s Buddies, a troupe of Shakespearean actors from the Folger Shakespeare Library, to middle school students from Bonnie Branch, Longwood, and Elkridge Landing. Marriotts Ridge High School hosted the program, a small group of high school students participated in a workshop.

DECEMBER 20 THROUGH MARCH 2009 Poet-in-residence Elizabeth “Liz” Rees made presentations to 500 students from county high schools and the Homewood Center.

In the spring, HoCoPoLitSo held its 28th All County Writing Competition for county high school students. Judges included Virginia Paush, formerly Howard High School English department head, Timothy Singleton, hakku poet and entrepreneur, Nora Scanlan, former Howard County high school English teacher, and Ted Haggerty, a former English teacher. The nine creative writing winners were: Sarah Hayashi (Centennial), Caitrin Proemans (Centennial), and Bill Gi (Centennial) in the personal essay category, Jessica Stein (Centennial), Eve Mobley (Glenelg) and Megan Lebencham (River Hill) in the poetry category, and in the short story category, Mark Lehtonen (Hammond), Aaron Mick (Central), and Chelsea Anderson (River Hill). In addition, twenty-two students were chosen by their English Department to receive HoCoPoLitSo’s Poetry and Achievement Award in Language Arts. The honorees were: Jumoke Bello, Jonathan Englerg (Atholton), Jing Liu, Stephen Rane (Central), Elizabeth Asher, Eve Mobley (Glenelg), Mark Lehtonen, Hannah Grabenstein (Hammond), Julia Chadwick, John Engler (with Laura Lippman) at the Jim Rouse Company Foundation Student Services Hall at HCC.

April 23, 2009 During Professional Development Day, poet-in-residence Truth Thomas encouraged 40 Howard County public school English teachers in their class in poetry by inviting them to read aloud.

PLatinum BenefAECtORS ($15,000 & over)

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GOLD BenefACTORS ($1,000-$14,999) University of Maryland, College Park Howard County Government Eugene and Helen Mitchell Foundation Columbia Arts Council Howard County Historical Society Howard County School System

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Bill’s Buddies (for the Folger Shakespeare Library)

SILVER BenefACTORS ($500-$999)

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