Throughout the year, the Writing Life, HoCoPoLitSo’s writer-to-writer talk show, airs encore and debut editions on Maryland educational cable channels, HCC-TV and on YouTube, with 51 editions accessible worldwide. Three new editions were produced: Siobhan Fallon hosted by Kristen Henderson, Paula Meehan and Theo Dorgan in conversation; and Billy Collins hosted by Kendra Kopelke. Four editions debuted, featuring Toi Derricotte, Colum McCann, Paula Meehan and Theo Dorgan in conversation; and Billy Collins hosted by Kendra Kopelke. Four editions debuted, featuring Toi Derricotte, Colum McCann, Patricia Smith, and Rives and Rachel Eliza Griffiths. The fiscal year 2014 program schedule was: July: Roland Flint hosts Robert Hass (encore 1996); August: Laura Lippman hosted by Mary Kay Zuravleff (encore 2009); September: Saul Bellow (remastered 2005); October: Toi Derricotte hosted by E. Ethelbert Miller (debuts 2013); November: Lucille Clifton hosts Linda Pastan (encore 1992); December: Manil Suri hosted by Sangeeta Ray (encore 2009); January: Timothy L. Jenkins hosts Taylor Branch (encore 2000); February: Michael Collier meets Paula Meehan (encore 2000); March: Colum McCann hosted by Terence Winch (debuts 2014); April: Rives and Rachel Eliza Griffiths (debuts 2014); May: Martin Espada hosted by Naomi Ayala (encore 2012) and June: Patricia Smith hosted by Joseph Ross (debuts 2014).

Plan to join us Friday, February 6, 2015

37th Annual Irish Evening

Something is filling them, something
That is like the twilight sound
Of the crickets, immense,
Filling the woods at the foot of the slope...

-Dorisca Jones, “Moon at Dusk” (1967)

By Tara Hart, HoCoPoLitSo board co-chair

I was already pleased with my new home of Columbia, this city of villages, when I attended my first HoCoPoLitSo event in 2004, but the attentive, lively, diverse audience, rapt and reverent during the reading, full of intelligent questions and good conversation afterwards at the reception, deepened that pleasure into a lasting love. Of course HoCoPoLitSo is synonymous with great writers, but forty years ago Ellen Conway Kennedy created this organization for us, the readers: the ideal audience for contemporary literature. Each HoCoPoLitSo event, thoughtfully designed along lines of simplicity and open space to allow the words to flow and shine alchemically among writers and listeners, has become an important piece of Howard County’s cultural history.

Perhaps you were part of the story this past June, as we came together to be “haunted” by Katia D. Ulysse’s words and songs of those whose lives were broken by the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, to hear Irish poets Paula Meehan and Theo Dorgan and the always inspiring music of Narrowbacks, to be delighted by former National Poet Laureate Billy Collins. Or perhaps you were part of HoCoPoLitSo’s 40th Anniversary Celebration, with former National Poet Laureate, Rita Dove, reading from her latest collection, Sonata Mulattia, preceded by a film clip from a documentary with the distinguished presence of violinist Joshua Coyne, playing original music. Our 2014 Lucille Clifton Poetry Series event was offered free of charge to the community in remembrance of the first (and free) HoCoPoLitSo poetry event with Carolyn Kizer and Lucille Clifton on November 19, 1974.

Ten years ago, in that rapt hall, in my new community, I looked around: “Something is filling them, something / That is like the twilight sound / Of the crickets, immense…” Will you join us in the immense pleasures of listening to and learning from the world’s greatest living writers? For the next forty years, we’ll continue to strive to keep our events as beautifully simple, intellectually and spiritually spacious, and accessible as possible. The Howard County Council recently issued a proclamation in recognition of HoCoPoLitSo as a remarkable organization, unique in its contributions to both local and global literary heritage.

The presence and investment of discriminating readers like you sustain and nourish Kennedy’s legacy. Donations to support HoCoPoLitSo’s live literary programs, student outreach, and editions of The Writing Life are gratefully accepted. See www.hocopolitso.org for information about opportunities to purchase the special anniversary anthology, HoCoPoLitSo’s Twenty Years, Twenty Poets, Volume II. 1994-2014, about all of our unique events and giving opportunities.
Poetry, along with performances by Narrow backs really sink in,” wrote one participant. count will grow further as the events of the day flow n through my mind and I am sure that the Sorority was a co-sponsor. Five of the workshop (MD) Alum nae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta form er Maryland Poet Laureate Tara Hart in featured poets Ireland Professor of Writing competition made presentations at ten county students and posting students were chosen by their English/W orld Languages department to receive HoCoPoLitSo’s recognition, and author C ivilization, and author of the novel Jaena Chu, B rendan Sheehy (Centennial) and Destanee Hamilton, Venya G ushchin (Parsons Ridge), Olivia Barlow, Jr., Kyiam M. (Howard), Anika N. Jensen, Sarah A. S. (Oakland Mills), Ja’mia Chun, Brendan Shey (Reservoir), Kosovo Abdi (River Hill), Elloitt Frank, and Yasmine Shomali (Wide Lake); Mallory V. Smith (Howard), youth member of the HoCoPoLitSo Board of Directors, was hon oured with a Youth Poetry Ambassador Award.

Student Audiences

As part of HoCoPoLitSo’s objective of building and maintaining community relationships, the program sponsored the following readings: Siobhan Fallon, award-winning author of You Know When the Men Are Gone, who traveled from her home in Ireland to October, with the Howard County Book Connection, Howard Community College (HCC) and Howard County Public Library System (HCLS). New York Times bestselling novelist V addy Ramer, a survivor of the Khmer Rouge regime’s brutality in Cambodia, with HCLS; in February, Temperament Through Time: How Music Became a Battleground for the Great Minds of Western Civilization, featuring acclaimed author Steven Isacioff and Washington Post classical music critic and author Anne Mudgette, with the Candlelight, and in Maryland MacArthur Genius Grant Fellow Chimamanda Adichie, the author of Americanah, with the HCLS.

Honored Poets

The list includes cash and major in-kind contributions from July 1, 2013-October 30, 2014. Special gifts by the same contributor are listed separately. This list does not include cash and major in-kind contributions from July 1, 2013-October 30, 2014. Special gifts by the same contributor are listed separately.

9. Susan Fleming
10. John L. Barr
11. Susan Padget
12. Larry Lowe
13. Diane Lundberg
14. Margaret Mc Mahon
15. Garth Cobo
16. Rachel Rusk
17. Harry Treanor
18. Lynda McPherson
19. Martin McConica
20. Chuck Erwin
21. Mike Bushee
22. Carol Emery
23. Tim Curry
24. David B. Schmidt
25. Doug Chriss
26. Rob Woods
27. Clay Brammer
28. Anne B. Muster
29. John Starnes
30. John D. Naquin
31. John B. Fisher
32. Mary Louise"