

HoCoPoLitSo

Howard County Poetry & Literature Society

ENLARGING THE AUDIENCE FOR CONTEMPORARY POETRY & LITERATURE SINCE 1974

ANNUAL REPORT FY 2011

JULY 2011-JUNE 2012

We've Gone Global!

The Writing Life has been viewed in more than 25 countries on YouTube

BY SUSAN THORNTON HOBBY

All around the world, people are looking for something: food, oil, enlightenment, a good dry cleaner. Some seek words. Now, from HoCoPoLitSo's tiny corner of the world, people can find words that open up the world.

Go to YouTube and search "Martín Espada." Up pops the full half-hour interview Espada gave in the Howard Community College television studio in April 2011, in which he recites portions of "The Trouble Ball," about his father watching his first big-league baseball game. On August 21, 2012, a poetry lover in Turkey searched for Martín Espada, and watched the bushy-bearded poet sit in a cushy armchair in Columbia, Maryland, and talk about how his 11-year-old father sat in Ebbets Field to watch the Brooklyn Dodgers and along the way discovered racism. Perhaps something in Espada's words resonated with that literary type in Turkey.

HoCoPoLitSo has gone global. Not to mention twenty-first century. Twenty-two of HoCoPoLitSo's literary talk shows, *The Writing Life*, are now available in their full length on YouTube,

Australia
Barbados
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Jamaica
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with more being uploaded every week.

HoCoPoLitSo founder Ellen Kennedy began recording *The Writing Life* in 1986 when she decided these fleeting moments of literary epiphany HoCoPoLitSo was creating should be captured on film. These shows are gems. Where else can you get a full half hour of Lucille Clifton, reading "good times" and "carved on a gravestone in a southern baptist churchyard" and laughing heartily with her friend and fellow poet Roland Flint? Both poets are gone now; they live by the resurrecting power of computers.

People from Malaysia, Singapore, Pakistan and Canada watched Clifton's show in August. *The Writing Life* videos have been watched nearly 13,000 times, by viewers around the world.

Literature lovers now have this treasure trove, easily discovered only by following the map of the Internet. If they can't sit in a breathless hall and listen to Rita Dove and Saul Bellow and Frank McCourt, like the lucky ones who live close to HoCoPoLitSo and its programs can, they can watch and listen to the words go out into the world, one tiny screen at a time.



Public Programs

**Total Live
Attendance: 1673**

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2011 HoCoPoLitSo and the English/World Languages Division hosted a Poetry Master Class, "Minding the Stops/Minding the Line" with Cave Canem fellow **Tara Betts** in the Montebaro Recital Hall on the campus of Howard Community College (HCC).

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2011 HoCoPoLitSo's 38th program year opened with "The Promise of Poetry" featuring 2010 National Book Award winner **Terrance Hayes** and **Tara Betts** introduced by Executive Director **Carla Du Pree** in the Montebaro Recital Hall on the campus of Howard Community College.



Hugo Hamilton

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2012 HoCoPoLitSo celebrated its 34th Evening of Irish Music and Poetry with a reading by **Hugo Hamilton**, author of

six books, including *The Speckled People: A Memoir of a Half-Irish Childhood*, at the Smith Theatre. Deputy Head of the Embassy of Ireland **Kevin Conmy** introduced the evening. A prelude by bagpiper **Jared Denhard** began the evening. A concert of traditional Irish music with musicians from Celtic Thunder and Narrowbacks **Linda Hickman**, **Brendan Mulvihill**, **Terence Winch**, **Jesse Winch**, with **Eileen Korn Estes**, along with step dancers from the Caulkin School followed.

THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2012 HoCoPoLitSo presented a workshop with poet **Naomi Ayala** at Long Reach High School, Ellicott City, MD as part of Howard County Public Schools' teacher in-service day.

THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2012 HoCoPoLitSo participated in the Blackbird Poetry Festival, "Poetry in Harmony,"



Kim Addonizio

with HCC's English/World Languages Division. Two morning workshops were offered by **Kim Addonizio** and **Michael Cirelli** at HCC. In the afternoon the poets joined HCC students in an afternoon reading, open to the community, in the HCC Kittleman Room. The festival concluded with "Nightbird," a coffee house reading by **Addonizio**, **Cirelli** and music & poetry by **Mother Ruckus** (poet **Gayle Danley** and songstress **Sahffi**).

**FRIDAY - SUNDAY,
JUNE 15 - 17, 2012**

In conjunction with the Columbia Festival of the Arts and *Little Patuxent Review*, HoCoPoLitSo staffed a table at Lake Fest. Staff and volunteers promoted literary events to the community and met a past HoCoPoLitSo Book Award winner; a friend of Manil Suri; a couple who attended Irish Evening; and **Bill Stanley** who read for HoCoPoLitSo in its early years.



Michael Cirelli



Edith Pearlman

her newest book *Binocular Vision* to a sold-out crowd at Historic Oakland. She was a 2011 National Book Award finalist and winner of the National Book Critics Circle award.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27, 2012

In partnership with the Columbia Festival of the Arts and Town Center Community Association, short-story writer **Edith Pearlman** read from

Student Programs

MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2011 HoCoPoLitSo and Howard County Public Schools presented **Bill's Buddies**, a troupe of Shakespearean actors from the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, to Clarksville and Elkridge Landing Middle Schools and a class from Marriotts Ridge High School, which hosted the program. ■ Poet-in-residence **Sandra Beasley** made presentations at ten county high schools and the Homewood Center from November to March and Howard Community College in April 2012. ■ HoCoPoLitSo held its 31st All County Writing Competition for county high school students. This year's judges were **Patricia Van Amburg**, poet and HCC professor; **Joyce Braga**, young adult author; and engineer **Mark Braga**. The creative writing winners were **Amy Farb** (Centennial), **Wei Yue Lu** (Centennial), and **Mary Simpson** (Centennial) in the personal essay category; **Caroline Crowder** (Mt. Hebron), **Jaclyn Andrews** (Howard), **Patricia Carmona** (Mt. Hebron), and **Bridget Mackrell** (Mt. Hebron) in the poetry category; and in the short story category, **Rebecca Curran** (Mt. Hebron), **Julia Dunn** (Howard), and **Sydney Chanmugan** (Mt. Hebron). ■ In addition, 26 students were chosen by their English Departments to receive HoCoPoLitSo's **Promise and Achievement Award in Language Arts**. The honorees were: **Lauren Berman**, **Jacob Smith** (Atholton) **Sarah Calvert**, **Wei Yue Lu** (Centennial), **Emily Schweich**, **Anneliese Faustino** (Glenelg), **Sierra Simpson**, **Jason Schoenfeld** (Hammond), **Sierra Peters**, **Rachel McMurrer** (Homewood Center), **Lindsey Sablowski**, **Madeline Studt** (Howard), **Jessica Guerrero**, **Justin Biegel** (Long Reach), **Courtney O'Haro**, **Jonathan Mathews** (Marriotts Ridge), **Nicholas Cortina**, **Hannah Vaughan** (Mt. Hebron), **Lynn Cournoyer**, **Ross Rheingans-Yoo** (Oakland Mills), **Haley Sweeton**, **Alexander Shaw** (Reservoir), **Ifeoluwa Olujobi**, **Christina Romano** (River Hill), **Emma Boone**, **Joe Wan** (Wilde Lake). ■ HoCoPoLitSo board members and staff made book award presentations at 12 public high schools and Homewood Center.

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Ensure HoCoPoLitSo's FUTURE. Gifts and pledges to the HoCoPoLitSo Fund at the Columbia Foundation from February 1996-November 15, 2012. In FY 2012, \$11,000 in operational funds were provided.

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HoCoPoLitSo is grateful to all who support our programs and mission.

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This list includes cash and major in-kind contributions from July 1, 2011-October 30, 2012. Serial gifts by the same contributor are merged. Every effort has been made to include all names and to spell them correctly. Please let us know if there are errors or omissions.

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HoCoPoLitSo is grateful to everyone for their generous cash and in-kind gifts that help to defray each year's operating expenses. Please consider making a donation to HoCoPoLitSo on-line at www.HoCoPoLitSo.org.

HoCoPoLitSo

Howard County Poetry & Literature Society

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Plan to join us
Friday, March 1, 2013



35th Annual Irish Evening



THE WRITING LIFE

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 YouTube, accessible world-wide.

Five new editions were produced: "The Promise of Poetry" with **Terrance Hayes** and **Tara Betts** (2011); **Alice McDermott** hosted by Ron Charles (2012); **Hugo Hamilton** hosted by Terence Winch (2012); **Kim Addonizio** and **Michael Cirelli** (2012) and **Edith Pearlman** hosted by Carrie Brown (2012).

Three (3) editions debuted: **Martín Espada** hosted by Naomi Ayala (October 2011); **Colm Tóibín** hosted by Belinda McKeon (February 2012); "The Promise of Poetry" with **Terrance Hayes** and **Tara Betts** (April 2012).



Terrance Hayes



Tara Betts

TWL ON-AIR SCHEDULE

In July 2011 **Madison Smartt Bell** hosted by Michael Collier (1991); in August **W. S. Merwin** hosted by Roland Flint (1994); in September **Philip Levine** hosted by Elizabeth Spires (1998); in October **Martín Espada** hosted by Naomi Ayala (Debut 2011); in November **Li Young-Lee** hosted by Michael Collier (1996); in December "A Literary Gathering of Women, Pt 1" and in January "A Literary Gathering of Women, Pt 2" with **Thrity Umrigar**, **Donna Hemans** and **Helen Elaine Lee** hosted by Tara Hart; in February **Colm Tóibín** hosted by Belinda McKeon (Debut 2012); in March **Stanley Kunitz** hosted by Gregory Orr (1993); in April "The Promise of Poetry" with **Terrance Hayes** and **Tara Betts** (Debut 2012); in May **Joy Harjo** hosted by Barbara Goldberg (2009) and in June "Celebrating **Sterling Brown**" with Roland Flint and Michael S. Harper (1994).

SPECIAL APPRECIATION

We thank Sarah Cotner, who drafted a preservation plan for *The Writing Life*; Lee Waxman for documenting HoCoPoLitSo events with photographs; and Sebastian Warren, a fellow with The Mission Continues, for his organizational and strategic thinking.