

# HoCoPoLitSo

Howard County Poetry and Literature Society  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Poetry of Wit and Wonder HoCoPoLitSo's Eleventh Annual Blackbird Poetry Festival

Mississippi's Poet Laureate Beth Ann Fennelly headlines the festival, April 25, 2019, on the campus of Howard Community College, a day devoted to verse, with workshops, book sales, readings, and patrols by the Poetry Police. The Sunbird poetry reading, featuring Ms. Fennelly, as well as poet Teri Ellen Cross Davis, local authors, and Howard Community College faculty and students, starts at 2:30 p.m. and is free. Ms. Fennelly will read from and discuss her poetry, including her most recent work, *Heating & Cooling: 52 Micro-Memoirs*, during the Nightbird Poetry Reading, starting at 7:30 p.m. in the Montebaro Hall of the Horowitz Center for Visual and Performing Arts. Nightbird admission tickets are \$15 each (seniors and students \$10) available on-line at <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4026338> or by sending a self-addressed envelope and check payable to HoCoPoLitSo, 10901 Little Patuxent Parkway, Horowitz Center 200, Columbia, MD 21044.

Fennelly's newest book, *Heating & Cooling: 52 Micro-Memoirs* (2017), was selected as one of the ten best Southern books of 2017 by the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*. "Readers, you are in for a hootenanny of a wild ride. This is Fennelly at her most laid-bare, wickedly funny, and irrepressibly poetic best," raves *Kirkus Reviews*. The director of the MFA program at the University of Mississippi, Fennelly has published her work in more than fifty anthologies and has won numerous awards and honors, including a Pushcart, the Wood Award from *The Carolina Quarterly* and *The Black Warrior Review* Contest. Fennelly is the author of three poetry collections: *Open House* (2002), *Tender Hooks* (2004), and *Unmentionables* (2008). She is also the author of a book of essays, *Great with Child: Letters to a Young Mother* (2006), "may be the best book ever to give for a baby shower" noted the *Tampa Tribune*. In 2013, Fennelly and her husband, Tom Franklin, co-authored a novel, *The Tilted World*, set during the 1927 flood of the Mississippi River.

Teri Ellen Cross Davis is the author of *Haint*, winner of the 2017 Ohioana Book Award for Poetry. A Cave Canem fellow serving on the advisory council of Split This Rock, Davis is the poetry coordinator for the Folger Shakespeare Library. Reviewing *Haint*, *The Triangle's* Sam Sweigert wrote, "Beginning to end, Cross Davis beckons her readers to shine a light and to witness the slow magic of a soul's journey through life's knowings and unknowings."

Steven Leyva, a Cave Canem fellow and author of the chapbook *Low Parish*, will offer a workshop on "The Poetics of Animé" as part of the festival. Leyva, who is an assistant professor at the University of Baltimore, will hold his free workshop at 9:30 a.m. in the Rouse Company Foundation Student Services Hall, room 400.

Hanna Al-Kowski, of Marriotts Ridge High School, will perform her winning poetry recitation at the Nightbird. Hanna won first place in the regional tri-county and second place in the state-wide Maryland Poetry Out Loud competition that recognizes great poetry through memorization and performance.

For more than 40 years, HoCoPoLitSo has nurtured a love and respect for the diversity of contemporary literary arts in Howard County. The society sponsors literary readings and writers-in-residence outreach programs, produces *The Writing Life* (a writer-to-writer talk show), and partners with other cultural arts organizations to support the arts in Howard County, Maryland. More information at [www.hocopolitso.org](http://www.hocopolitso.org).

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