

HoCoPoLitSo

Howard County Poetry and Literature Society

10901 Little Patuxent Parkway • Horowitz Center 200 • Columbia, MD 21044

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Power of Voice: A Newsman's Take on Poetry HoCoPoLitSo's Twelfth Annual Blackbird Poetry Festival

Poet and PBS Senior Correspondent Jeffrey Brown headlines the festival, April 30, 2020, 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 Mr. Brown, local writers, and Howard Community College faculty and students, starts at 2:30 p.m. and is free. Mr. Brown will read from and discuss his poetry 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/4531513> or by sending a self-addressed envelope and check payable to HoCoPoLitSo, 10901 Little Patuxent Parkway, Horowitz Center 200, Columbia, MD 21044.

Brown's 2015 volume of poetry, *The News*, was selected as one of best poetry books of May 2015 by The Washington Post. In the forward, Robert Pinsky notes "*The News* is more than a venture into art by someone prominent in another field. In these poems, an unconventional subject for poetry is dealt with from within, by a real poet." In the afterward, Brown says "I got hooked as a reader long ago. But why write poetry? Why write these experiences through poetry? To explore what happened from another angle, to see beyond the camera, to imagine what might be there, to use the language in a different way. Like the news, poetry seeks to inform our lives and helps us to reflect upon who we are and the conditions, disastrous or delightful, of the world in which we live. Here it is -- I am talking to myself, again -- your day."

Workshops, open to the public, will take place in the Kittleman Room of Duncan Hall at 9:30 and 11:30 a.m. Ann Bracken, the author of two collections of poetry, *No Barking in the Hallways: Poems from the Classroom* (2017) and *The Altar of Innocence* (2015), will offer a workshop on poetry as a way of reporting your life as part of the festival. Bracken, twice nominated for the Pushcart Prize, will hold her free workshop at 9:30 a.m. in the Kittleman Room.

For forty-five 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.

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