

## ***Poetry in April* Submission Guidelines**

We are accepting submissions for readers for our ninth season, April 2009, for Tempe Poetry in April, a reading series that celebrates National Poetry Month on Wednesdays in April. Each season we choose four or five poets to read. This number depends on the number of Wednesdays in that particular April. Our series is presented by Wal-Mart, sponsored by the city of Tempe's Cultural Services Division and catered by Rosemary Delivers.

Our reading series has a unique format. Along with the reading itself, we publish a poetry anthology book that includes each poet. The intent is that the audience may explore the writers in both oral and written form. Following the reading itself, we have an interview period with poet and moderator Catherine Hammond. The discussion is then opened to the audience. We also have an on-line component. By completing all these activities, we enjoy a deep exploration of the poets' work.

With that in mind, it may be useful to understand how poets are chosen *for Poetry in April*.

- The poetry itself has reached a professional level of excellence and sophistication.
- There should be an acknowledgement by the national poetry community of that excellence. Generally the poets will have won important national awards and often have published books to critical acclaim. It is important to note that we are not looking for vanity press publications to fulfill this criterion.
- The poets must have powerful stories to tell and they must be able to share those stories articulately in a discussion.
- The roster of poets must be culturally diverse in keeping with the culturally diverse nature of the city of Tempe and the state of Arizona.

As we put together each season, we emphasize diversity in programming. We always look at the whole of the series and at the four or five scheduled readers to examine ways that their work interacts or even debates with the other readers. We are interested in differences in poetic style among our poets. That may mean varying between lyric and narrative, free verse and prose poetry, language poetry and plainsong. We also look for series-wide variety in backgrounds, gender and stage of career. It is important to note that we view the performance aspect of this series to be a key component: we are looking for a wide, deep and varied experience. It is possible that those balances among the readers may be more art than science. The goal is always to produce the best possible season for the audience of *Poetry in April*.

We add this note about our selection process. Many of our readers have come to the series first as audience members. Please do not try to submit to us without attending one of our readings. Our format is considerably different from other reading series. Nothing may be more useful to your application than actually participating first as a member of our audience.

**This submission process is not a contest.**

*Poetry in April* always is interested in discovering writers who would be appropriate to the series. We are grateful to you for submitting your work and for giving us the opportunity to widen our view of the local writing community.

Please note, however, that some of our readers come to us through other means of discovery than this application. These readers come by our own invitation and we reserve the right to continue that practice also.

Please **mail** to us a cover letter that describes your credentials for the Poetry in April reading series. This should include:

- a one paragraph biography
- a one paragraph statement describing what you would bring to the series, that is, how your story is unique
- If you have a book or books, please send that (those). Otherwise please send 10 pages of your best poems. Poems may be published or unpublished, and there are no restrictions on style, subject matter or length of poems submitted: quality is the single criterion. Please note that the **writer's name, address and telephone number** should be clearly indicated on **the cover page and on each poem**. Please note again, this is not a contest. A blind submission is not helpful to us. We are looking for poets with a national presence and their names should not be secret.

Please include a business-size self addressed stamped envelope. When *Poetry in April* has chosen its roster for April 2009, we will notify you if you include the stamped envelope. We expect to have a roster in place by the end of October 2008. We will not be able to return poems

**Please send your information to Tempe Center for the Arts, 700 W. Rio Salado Parkway; Tempe, AZ 85281 Attention: *Poetry in April***

If you have questions, contact Catherine Hammond, moderator, at [cathmorrow@earthlink.net](mailto:cathmorrow@earthlink.net) or Mary Fowler at 480/350-2880 or at [mary\\_fowler@tempe.gov](mailto:mary_fowler@tempe.gov).

**Deadline for submissions: please postmark your submission no later than July 15, 2008.**

Thank you for your interest in *Poetry in April*. Our series understands that the writing community is right at the core of our celebration of National Poetry Month. We are overjoyed at all the excellent writing we receive and at the richness and diversity we always encounter.

Sincerely,

Catherine Hammond/Mary Fowler