



NEWS RELEASE

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Emily Dickinson Museum's Emily Dickinson's Poetry 101 Program for New Poetry Lovers and the Curious

Amherst, Mass. – Wondered what all the fuss is about with Emily Dickinson's poetry? Want to know more about her life and work but aren't sure where to begin? Then Emily Dickinson's Poetry 101 is for you. Co-sponsored by Amherst College's Emily Dickinson Museum and the Jones Library, this four-part series of programs will take place on Tuesdays, April 21 and 28 and May 5 and 12, from 7 to 9 p.m. in the large meeting room at the Jones Library in Amherst.

Emily Dickinson's Poetry 101 is designed to introduce readers to Dickinson and her words through lectures, discussion and hands-on experiences with her poetry. Part of the Emily Dickinson Museum's Big Read series of spring events celebrating Emily Dickinson's expansive and enduring legacy, Dickinson 101 is free and open to the public. The talks and speakers for each of the meetings is as follows:

- April 21. "Who is Emily Dickinson?" led by Martha Ackmann. An award-winning journalist and author, Ackmann writes about women who have changed America. She is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and is the current (2009) Augustus Anson Whitney Fellow in Nonfiction at the Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University. Vice-president of the Emily Dickinson International Society, she is the author of a forthcoming book (2011) on Dickinson from Harper/Smithsonian. She teaches at Mount Holyoke College. (The evening will also include a screening of the film *The Poet in Her Bedroom*.)
- April 28, "The Power of Dickinson's Poetry" led by award-winning poet Marilyn Nelson. Nelson will guide participants in unleashing the power of Dickinson's poetry by examining characteristics and major themes of her work.
- May 5, "Emily Dickinson's Legacy: Exploring Her Manuscripts, Publications, and a Dickinson Archive" with Cindy Dickinson, director of interpretation and programming at the Emily Dickinson Museum, and Tevis Kimball, curator of special collections at Jones Library. Participants follow the extraordinary saga of how Dickinson's poetry came to be published and try their hand at editing a Dickinson manuscript.
- May 12, "A Poet's Mind" with poets John Hennessey, Richard Wilbur, and moderator Susan Snively. This panel of eminent poets will provide insights into the mind of Dickinson and reflect on what she has taught them about poetry and how they envision her writing life. Hennessey's collection of poems, *Bridge and Tunnel*, was published in 2007 and his work has appeared in numerous periodicals and journals. He has been resident fellow at the Amy Clampitt House and teaches at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Snively is the author of four books of poetry, including *The Undertow* and *Skeptic Traveler*. She recently retired as director of the Writing Center at Amherst College and now gives guided tours at the Emily Dickinson Museum. Wilbur has published numerous books of poetry, including the two Pulitzer Prize winning collections *Things of This World* and *New and Collected Poems*. He has translated many poets—especially Moliere, Baudelaire and Akhmatova—and won most of the major poetry awards: the Frost Medal, the Gold Medal for Poetry from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, two Guggenheim Fellowships and two PEN translation awards. He is a former Poet Laureate of the United States.

Pre-registration is requested for Dickinson 101, although walk-ins will be welcomed on a space-available basis. Register in person at the reference desk in the Jones Library or contact Beth Girshman (girshmanb@joneslibrary.org or 413-259-3168) or Nan Fischlein, program coordinator at the Emily Dickinson Museum, (nfischlein@emilydickinsonmuseum.org or 413-542-2034). Registration packets may be picked up at the library reference desk during open hours. ASL interpretation available with three weeks notice; contact Girshman at girshmanb@joneslibrary.org.

The Big Read: The Poetry of Emily Dickinson is part of a pilot initiative created by the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Poetry Foundation to celebrate great American poets and the nation's historic poetry locales. Free copies of a reader's guide and a teacher's guide to the poetry of Emily Dickinson will be available to attendees at all The Big Read events. For more information about The Big Read programs please contact Nan Fischlein, program coordinator, at 413-542-2034 or nfischlein@emilydickinsonmuseum.org.

The Emily Dickinson Museum, comprising the Dickinson Homestead and The Evergreens and their three-acre landscape, is devoted to the story and legacy of poet Emily Dickinson and her family. Both properties are owned by the Trustees of Amherst College. The museum is overseen by a separate Board of Governors charged with raising its operating and capital funds. The Homestead was the birthplace and residence of the poet (1830-1886). The Evergreens was the 1856 home of the poet's brother and sister-in-law, Austin and Susan Dickinson.

The Emily Dickinson Museum is located at 280 Main St. in Amherst, Mass. The official museum website is www.emilydickinsonmuseum.org. Beginning March 1, hours are Wednesday through Sunday, from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m.; the museum is closed on major holidays.

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