



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Jane Wald

Executive Director of the Emily Dickinson Museum

t. 413/542-5084

f. 413/542-2152

jhwald@emilydickinsonmuseum.org

Workshops Offer Opportunity to Celebrate Emily Dickinson's Words

AMHERST, Mass.--On Saturday, April 10, as part of "Celebrating Emily Dickinson's Words" and in honor of National Poetry Month, the Emily Dickinson Museum and the Jones Library will sponsor three poetry-writing workshops (two for adults and one for youth). Each workshop will begin at 11 a.m. and conclude at 1 p.m. The workshops will take place at the Jones Library, 43 Amity Street, and are limited to twelve participants each. Participants will be invited to share their work during the Poetry Open Mike at 4 p.m., which will conclude "Celebrating Emily Dickinson's Words." Workshops are sponsored in part by a grant from the Friends of the Jones Library System and the Amherst Cultural Council. Space is limited and registration is required.

Led by poets from the MFA program at the University of Massachusetts, the workshops will use Dickinson quotations and topics as springboards for generating new verse. Poet Hannah Brooks-Motl will lead a workshop for adults that examines "obsession." Poet Henk Rossouw will help adult participants "Loose the Flood" by working with specific lines from Dickinson's poetry. In "The Soul has Bandaged Moments," a special workshop for youth ages 13-18, poet Gale Thompson will help participants explore the emotional side of being a poet.

Anyone from long-time writers to poetry appreciators with a sincere interest in giving poetry a try are welcome to participate. For the adult workshops, a \$10 advance registration fee is required (scholarships are available). The youth workshop (geared for ages 13-18) is free, but pre-registration is required. For more information or to register for one of the workshops, contact the Reference Department at the Jones Library at reference@joneslibrary.org or 413-259-3096.

Poet Hannah Brooks-Motl will lead a workshop for adults that examines "obsession." Poets are often obsessive creatures, compulsively scratching at their own lives and ideas, and the lives and ideas around them. This workshop will focus on the idea of obsession and pursuit, looking at poems by Dickinson and other poets, and generating new work. Hannah Brooks-Motl is an MFA candidate in poetry at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, with degrees in literature from Macalester College and the University of St Andrews.

In a second workshop for adults, poet Henk Rossouw will help participants "Loose the Flood" by working with specific lines from Dickinson's poetry, such as "The Table is not laid without / Till it is laid within" or "This World is not Conclusion," to prompt new creative verse. Last year Rossouw gave a poetry reading in Times Square as a winner of the Poetry Society of America's 2nd annual Bright Lights Big Verse competition. Originally from South Africa, Henk lives in Amherst, where he's in the MFA Program for Poets and Writers at the University of Massachusetts.

In "The Soul has Bandaged Moments," a special workshop for youth ages 13-18, poet Gale Thompson will help participants explore the emotional side of being a poet. Originally from South Carolina, Gale Marie Thompson lives in Amherst and is an MFA student in poetry at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. She works in the Writing Program at UMass teaching Freshman Composition, and is the editor of the online poetry magazine Jellyfish.

The Emily Dickinson Museum, comprising the Dickinson Homestead and The Evergreens, 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 official museum website is www.emilydickinsonmuseum.org. Regular museum hours are Wednesday through Sunday 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. March 31 through December 20, 2010, with extended summer hours 10 a.m. until 5 p.m., June through August. The Emily Dickinson Museum is located at 280 Main Street in Amherst, Massachusetts.

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