

The background is a vibrant, abstract composition of large, overlapping geometric shapes. A large, bold, black number '75' is the central focus, with the '7' and '5' being thick and stylized. The '7' is primarily black with a yellow section on its left side. The '5' is primarily black with a blue section on its right side. The background is filled with various colors: yellow, red, blue, and black, creating a dynamic and modern feel.

ACADEMY OF  
AMERICAN  
POETS

CELEBRATING  
POETS AND  
POETRY FOR  
75 YEARS

from *Leaves of Grass*

The spotted hawk swoops by and accuses me — he complains of my gab and my loitering.

I too am not a bit tamed — I too am untranslatable,  
I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world.

The last scud of day holds back for me.  
It flings my likeness after the rest and true as any on the shadowed wilds,  
It coaxes me to the vapor and the dusk.

I depart as air — I shake my white locks at the runaway sun,  
I effuse my flesh in eddies and drift it in lacy jags.

I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow from the grass I love,  
If you want me again look for me under your boot-soles.

You will hardly know who I am or what I mean,  
But I shall be good health to you nevertheless,  
And filter and fibre your blood.

Failing to fetch me at first keep encouraged,  
Missing me one place search another,  
I stop some where waiting for you.

— Walt Whitman





*Lyn Chase  
unveiling new  
T.S. Eliot  
postage stamp  
with Helen Burns*

INSPIRED BY THE POWER OF POETRY...

The Academy of American Poets  
was conceived in 1934 when a  
23-year-old woman decided to  
do something about what she saw as  
America's neglect of its poets and poetry.  
From these simple beginnings  
75 years ago, the Academy has grown  
to be one of our nation's largest and most  
important literary organizations,  
comprising nearly 9,000 dues-paying  
members, with programs that inspire  
almost 20 million people every year.

IT BEGAN WITH ONE YOUNG WOMAN'S VISION...

Born of American parents, but raised and educated in Paris where poetry has long been revered, Marie Bullock married in the early 1930s and moved to New York City. In America, she found a country seemingly indifferent to its own great literary heritage, allowing many of its most illustrious poets to struggle all their lives to support themselves. So in 1934, with the help of her husband Hugh and friends such as poets Edwin Arlington Robinson and Joseph Auslander, the first Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress, Mrs. Bullock formed the Academy of American Poets and began to raise funds.

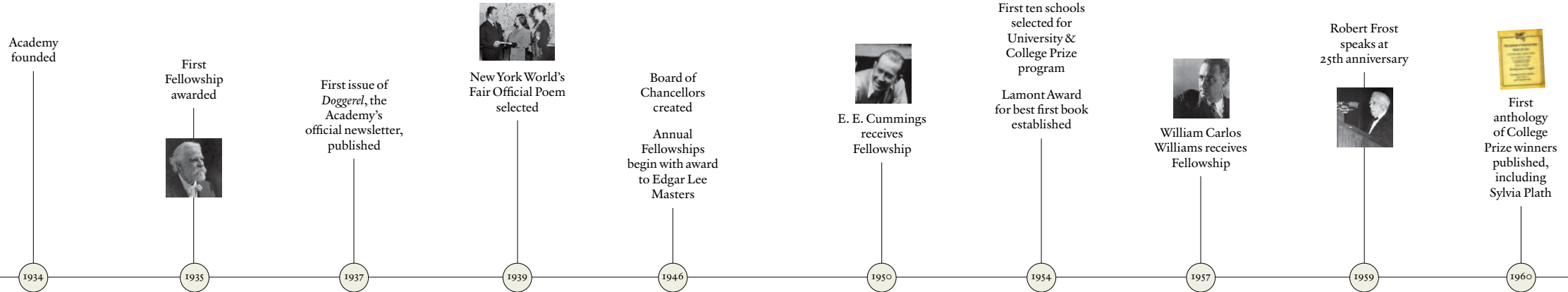




## A UNIQUE ORGANIZATION THAT SHAPED THE COURSE OF AMERICAN POETRY...

The mission of the Academy is concise and direct: “to support American poets at all stages of their careers and to foster the appreciation of contemporary poetry.” Marie Bullock realized that poets needed more than medals and plaques to survive the Great Depression. She tirelessly promoted poets and their work, lectured on poetry, and organized radio broadcasts. She set up a contest for an official poem of the New York World’s Fair, which was read aloud by Orson Welles. She built a membership base for her new organization and was a strong voice for American literary culture. From the beginning, the Academy flourished because its supporters loved poetry and championed its essential role in our nation’s cultural and spiritual life.

“to support  
American poets at  
all stages of their  
careers and to foster  
the appreciation of  
contemporary poetry.”



Dear Mrs Bullock:

That is a fine thing you have done for Edwin Markham; and wish I could help you do as much for other poets in need. But I can think of no one who would make a good collector for your admirable foundation. My friends are chiefly poor poets. The poor make poor beggars. They can't hold their heads up and talk in large enough figures. It is wonderful of you to have American art so much in your thoughts.

Sincerely yours  
Robert Frost

947 West Agarita Ave

San Antonio Texas

January 20 1937

I ought to add: I have just happened to notice Ridgely Torrence's connection with your Academy. Always thinking of others first he. He has no business being on your board. He should be out where he could be made one of your first benefactors. R.F.

Academy of  
American Poets  
25th Anniversary







*W. H. Auden  
(right) with  
Marie Bullock*

When power leads man  
towards arrogance,  
poetry reminds him  
of his limitations.

When power narrows  
the areas of man's concern,  
poetry reminds him of  
the richness and diversity  
of his existence.

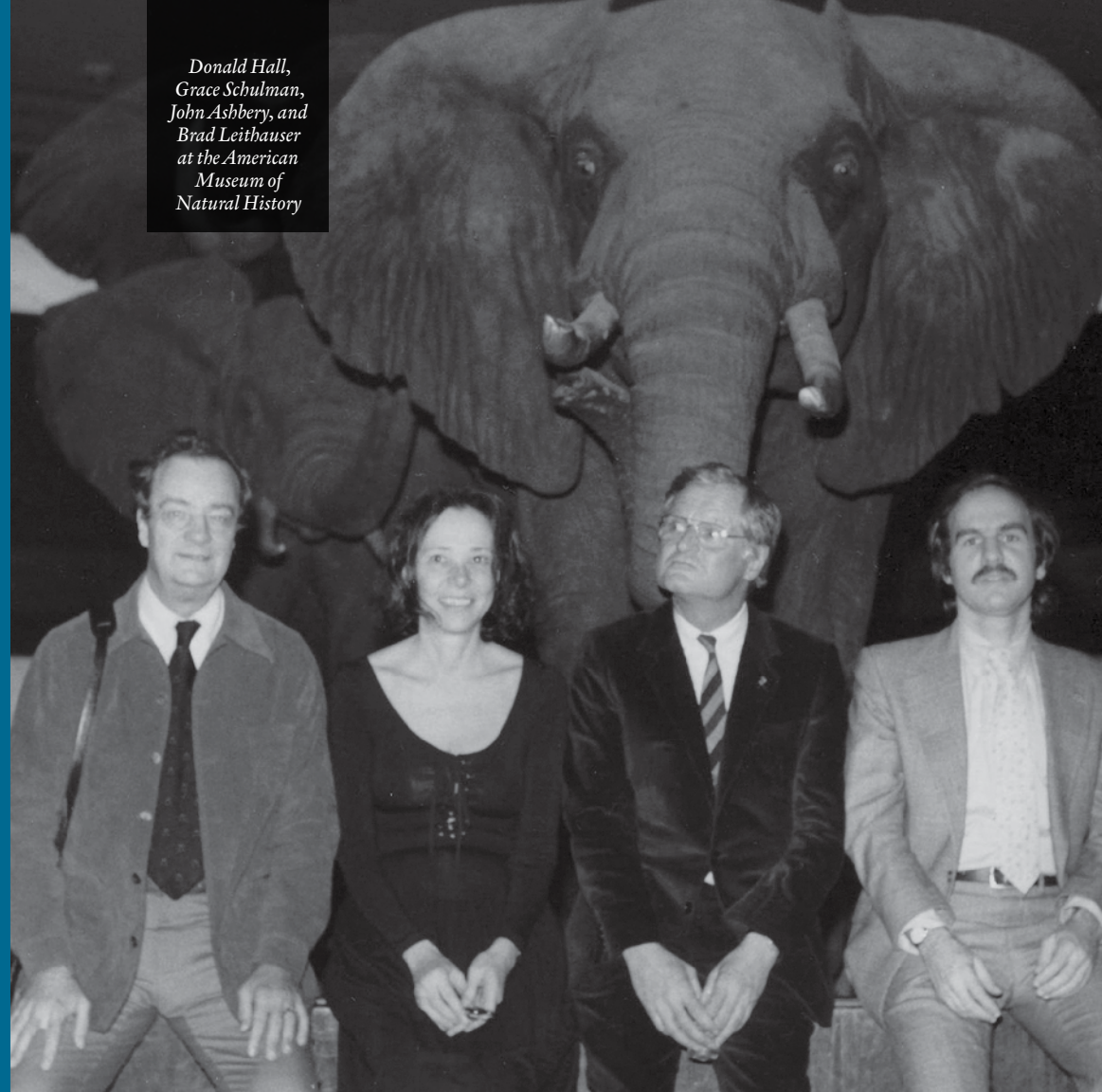
When power corrupts,  
poetry cleanses,  
for art establishes the  
basic human truths  
which must serve as  
the touchstones  
of our judgment.

— John F. Kennedy



*Jay Wright, Poets-in-the-Schools program*

*Donald Hall,  
Grace Schulman,  
John Ashbery, and  
Brad Leithauser  
at the American  
Museum of  
Natural History*



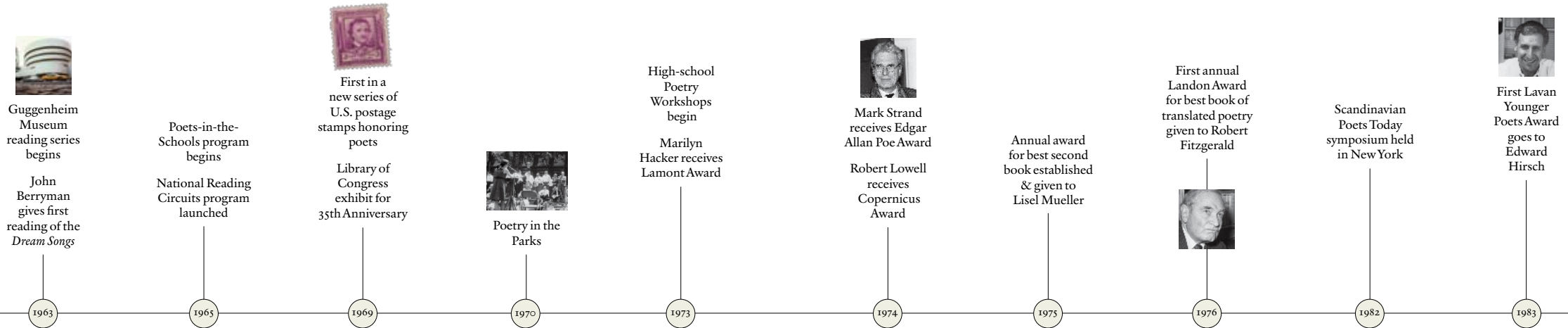


### GUIDED BY “LITERARY PERSONS OF THE HIGHEST STANDING”

In 1946, the Academy established a Board of Chancellors to award annual Fellowships for distinguished poetic achievement – the first award to offer American poets substantial cash prizes. By the 1960s the Academy’s roster of Chancellors and Fellows included many of the most important American poets of the 20th century: Robert Frost, Marianne Moore, Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, Gwendolyn Brooks, W.H. Auden, Robert Lowell, Elizabeth Bishop, Robert Hayden, and John Berryman, among many others.

### A GIFT FOR INNOVATION AND INSPIRATION...

As it expanded, the Academy of American Poets began to focus on poetry *readers*, as well as students first encountering poetry. The Academy set up poetry prizes at colleges and universities. It started a reading series at the Guggenheim Museum and organized national tours for poets. It established an annual award for poets publishing their first book, and for translating poetry. The Academy started the first Poets-in-the-Schools program, which the National Endowment for the Arts adopted as the model for its Artists-in-Residence program.





*U.S. Poet Laureate  
Rita Dove at  
Laureates Reading  
at the Cathedral  
Church of St. John  
the Divine*

## Chancellors of the Academy of American Poets, 1946–2009

### ORIGINAL BOARD OF CHANCELLORS

J. Donald Adams  
William Rose Benét  
Witter Bynner  
Henry Seidel Canby  
Mary Colum  
Max Eastman  
Frank P. Graham  
Robert M. Hutchins  
Robinson Jeffers  
Archibald MacLeish  
F. O. Matthiessen  
William Allen Nielson

### SUBSEQUENT CHANCELLORS

Leonard Bacon  
John Hall Wheelock  
Leonora Speyer  
Robert Hillyer  
Mark Van Doren  
Marianne Moore  
W. H. Auden  
Padraic Colum  
Frederick A. Pottle  
Ridgely Torrence  
Robert Nathan  
John G. Neihardt  
Randall Jarrell  
Louise Bogan  
Richard Wilbur  
Robert Lowell  
William Meredith  
Norman Holmes Pearson  
Elizabeth Bishop  
Allen Tate  
Dudley Fitts  
John Berryman  
Robert Fitzgerald  
Stanley Kunitz  
Anthony Hecht  
Daniel Hoffman  
Robert Penn Warren  
Babette Deutsch  
Howard Nemerov  
David Wagoner  
James Merrill

### 2009 BOARD OF CHANCELLORS

Frank Bidart  
Gary Snyder  
Ellen Bryant Voigt  
Robert Pinsky  
Susan Stewart  
C.K. Williams  
Rita Dove  
Kay Ryan  
Gerald Stern  
Lyn Hejinian  
Sharon Olds  
Carl Phillips  
Victor Hernández Cruz  
Ron Padgett  
Marilyn Hacker  
Edward Hirsch





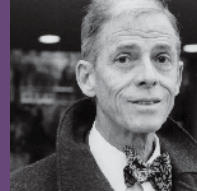
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Robinson  
Jeffers



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Marianne  
Moore



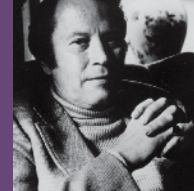
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Randall  
Jarrell



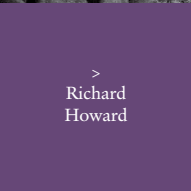
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James  
Merrill



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Elizabeth  
Bishop



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Richard  
Wilbur



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Richard  
Howard



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Carolyn  
Kizer



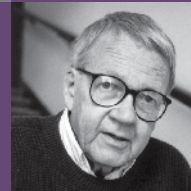
>  
J. D.  
McClatchy



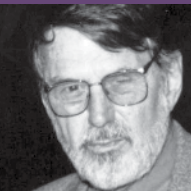
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Jorie  
Graham



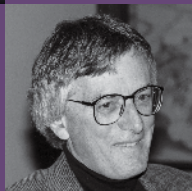
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Donald  
Justice



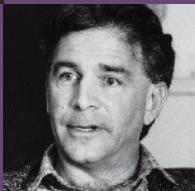
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Robert  
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Wright



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Michael  
Palmer



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Lucille  
Clifton



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Louise  
Glück



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Yusef  
Komunyakaa



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Heather  
McHugh



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Rosanna  
Warren



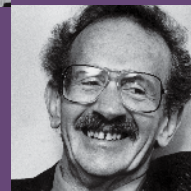
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Susan  
Howe



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Philip  
Levine



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Robert  
Hass



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Nathaniel  
Mackey



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Gary  
Snyder



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Robert  
Pinsky



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Susan  
Stewart



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C.K.  
Williams



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Lyn  
Hejinian



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Sharon  
Olds



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Carl  
Phillips



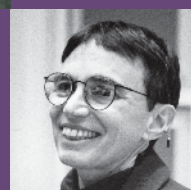
>  
Victor  
Hernández Cruz



>  
Ron  
Padgett



>  
Marilyn  
Hacker



>  
Edward  
Hirsch







*Academy Chancellors,  
Front: Robert Fitzgerald,  
Howard Nemerov, Founder Marie Bullock,  
Stanley Kunitz, William Meredith;  
Back: W. S. Merwin, John Hollander,  
James Merrill, Mark Strand, May Swenson,  
David Wagoner, Daniel Hoffman,  
Anthony Hecht, Mona Van Duyn,  
and Robert Penn Warren*



240 CUMBERLAND STREET, BROOKLYN 9, NEW YORK

January 9, 1959

Rare, rare Mrs. Bullock,

This package with tissue paper nests  
for every separate thing and brown-tinted  
ribbon that did not take an inch and need  
a pinlet to make, is a revolution.

Of all "revelations" that I might have  
mentioned, Huntley and Palmer digestive  
Biscuits would be my very first, crisply  
preserved in a sealed-by-soldiers mineral lid,  
and then a cap with a rivet. I shall improve!  
I foretell it, and very fast. And rock-lass  
Mrs. Bullock, two jars of chicken jelly, you  
just don't know what it is to hold back  
a mealful sample to be sure of what you are  
giving. The quantity divided is twice as useful  
to me. And such pretty jars.

The calf foot jelly: - again, - a set! you  
mislead me necessarily called. That anyone shall  
have a heart so big. Charming and  
cheerful! And think to choose from. Am obliged  
to have written but worse find me; and the long  
book of that novel. You and Edward Hugh D.  
would have had a large part in my recovery;  
and my optimism to try anything of but the matter.

Love yours,

William Morris



John Berryman  
and Robert Lowell  
reading at the  
Guggenheim  
Museum

## SPREADING THE WORD...

The Academy of American Poets has changed a great deal over the years, and it continues to innovate, creating new programs that have transformed our country's literary conversation. In the 1990s, the reading series expanded to include numerous cities nationwide, and the Academy organized events such as an Asian American festival and a conference of poets on the environment. Regional poetry was celebrated in Alaska and Arizona. The Academy brought Chinese poets to tour the U.S. and arranged poet-exchanges with Mexico and Scandinavia. It also expanded awards, creating the \$100,000 Wallace Stevens Award for lifetime achievement, and it took on the Lenore Marshall Prize for the best book of the year.

The poem...  
is a little myth of man's capacity  
of making life meaningful.  
And in the end,  
the poem is not a thing we see –  
it is, rather, a light by which we may see –  
and what we see is life.

—Robert Penn Warren



Betty Kray at A Poets' Celebration of the Brooklyn Bridge Centenary

1984

American Poets Fund created for poets in need

1985



Joy Harjo at the Southwestern Poetry festival held in Arizona

1989

National Reading Series launched

John Haines, Nora Marks Dauenhauer, William Wadsworth at Alaskan Poetry Festival in Fairbanks



1990

Asian American Poetry Festival begins

Writers on the Environment program

1991



Shu Ting and Carolyn Kizer, "A Splintered Mirror," national reading tour with Chinese dissident poets

1992

Poet Laureate Rita Dove reads at Cathedral of St. John the Divine with Nobel Laureates Czeslaw Milosz, Joseph Brodsky, Derek Walcott, & Octavio Paz



1993



First annual Wallace Stevens Award of \$100,000 for lifetime achievement given to W. S. Merwin

Lenore Marshall Award for best poetry book of the year moved to the Academy

1994

Poets.org, first poetry website initiated

Raiziss/de Palchi Italian Translation awards established

1995

First National Poetry Month

American Poet magazine launched

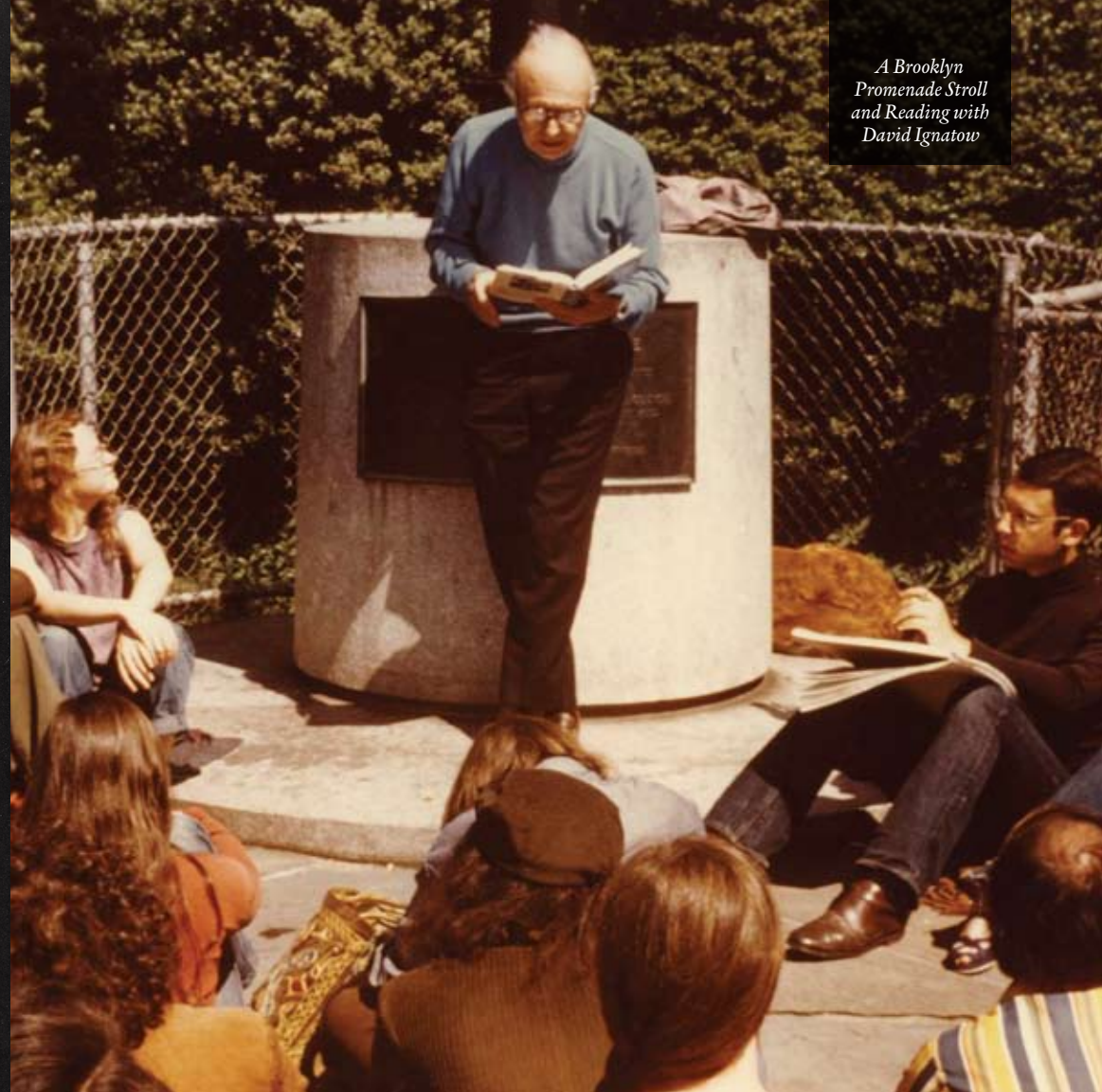
First Eric Mathieu King Awards support publication of poetry books, including Lucille Clifton, Muriel Rukeyser, and others

1996





*J. D. McClatchy  
and James Merrill  
at an Academy  
event*



*A Brooklyn  
Promenade Stroll  
and Reading with  
David Ignatow*





Galway Kinnell,  
Helen Chasin,  
May Swenson

*As an educator, I receive a lot of compliments on my profession; it is a noble cause, etc. But, truth be told, it is you who make us look good with resources, lesson plans, and support.*  
— 8th-grade teacher

*I love your perfectly formatted mobile archive! Thank you for filling my bus time and my heart.*  
— Mobile website user

*No organization has done more to foster, promote, and honor the poetry and poets of this country than the Academy of American Poets.*  
— Anthony Hecht

*The Chancellors suggest through their differences in voice, in region, and in theme the even greater diversity now made possible for a rising generation of poets.*  
— James H. Billington,  
Librarian of Congress

*Just a note to encourage the Academy to continue the poetry read-a-thon for middle/high-schoolers next year... I can tell you that a love of poetry starts right in those turbulent years.*  
— High-school English teacher

*The students have been reading with gusto all day. It is also a school-wide event with staff having poems in their pockets to share in other classes.*  
— A teacher

*Do yourself a favor and peruse the revamped web site from the Academy of American Poets. It's like a literary Disneyland.*  
— Yahoo!

*The compilations [from the Audio Archive Anthology] offer a who's who of 20th-century poetry.*  
— Wall Street Journal

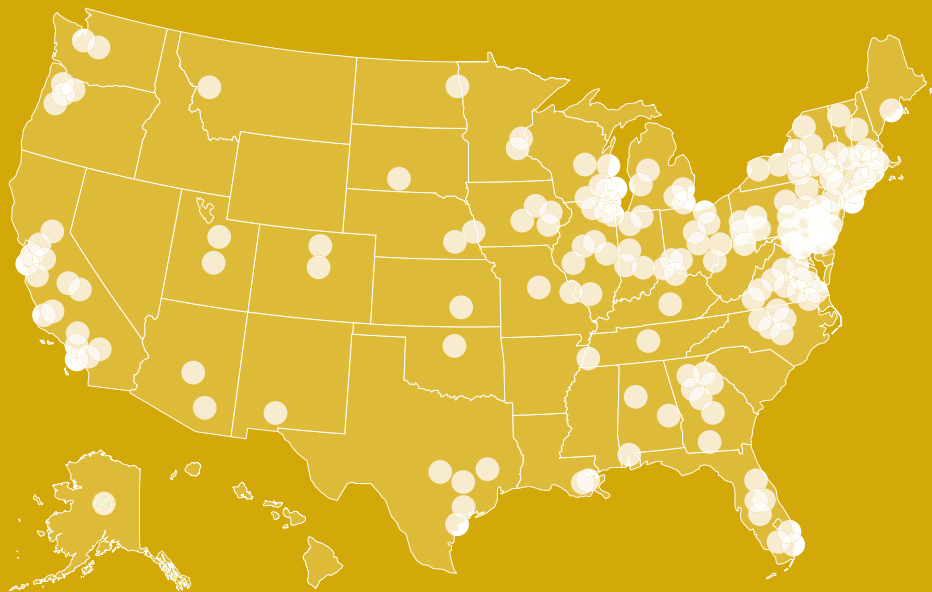
*Three cheers for what illuminates,  
And has for fifty years— a torch  
That mercifully does not scorch—  
The singers of our fifty states!*  
— James Merrill

*For poetry lovers everywhere, a great stopping-off place on the World Wide Web is the official site of the Academy of American Poets— Poets.org is a trove of information.*  
— Christian Science Monitor

*The Academy of American Poets has been a formidable presence on the New York City poetry reading circuit for the past 60 years.*  
— Library Journal

*To speak only of the awards it administers... the Academy bestows on American poetry a judicious cradle-to-grave solicitude.*  
— Richard Wilbur





Academy  
Poetry prizes  
are awarded at over  
**200 COLLEGES  
AND UNIVERSITIES**



*James Tate  
receives the  
Wallace Stevens  
Award from  
Jonathan Galassi*

Poetry is the supreme form  
of human locution in any culture.  
By failing to read or listen to poets,  
a society dooms itself to inferior  
modes of articulation –  
of the politician, or the salesman,  
or the charlatan...It forfeits,  
in other words, its own  
evolutionary potential,  
for what distinguishes us from  
the rest of the animal kingdom  
is precisely the gift of speech.

– Joseph Brodsky, Nobel Laureate

Seven major Academy  
book awards are given,  
from a  
**FIRST BOOK**  
award to recognition for  
**LIFETIME**  
**ACHIEVEMENT**

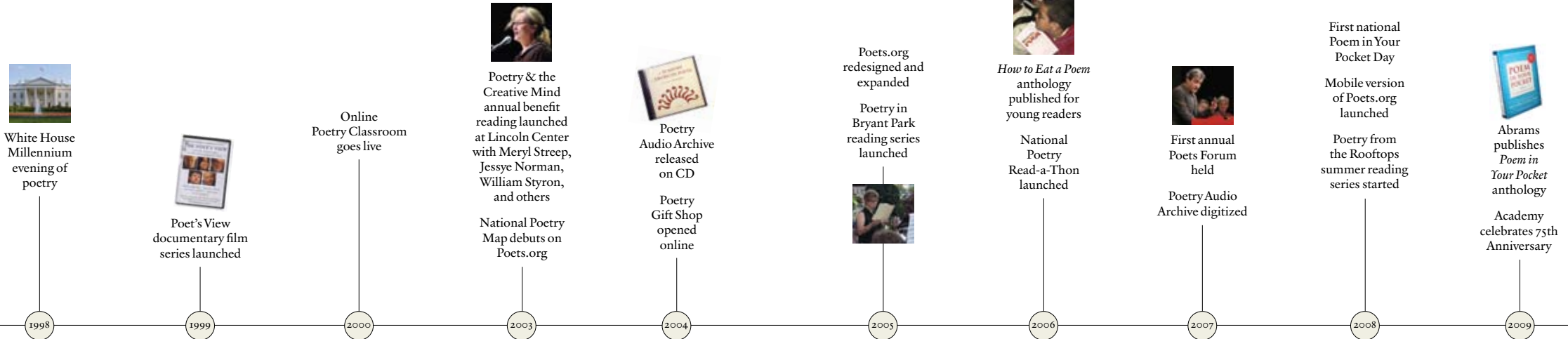


### SPANNING THE NATION...

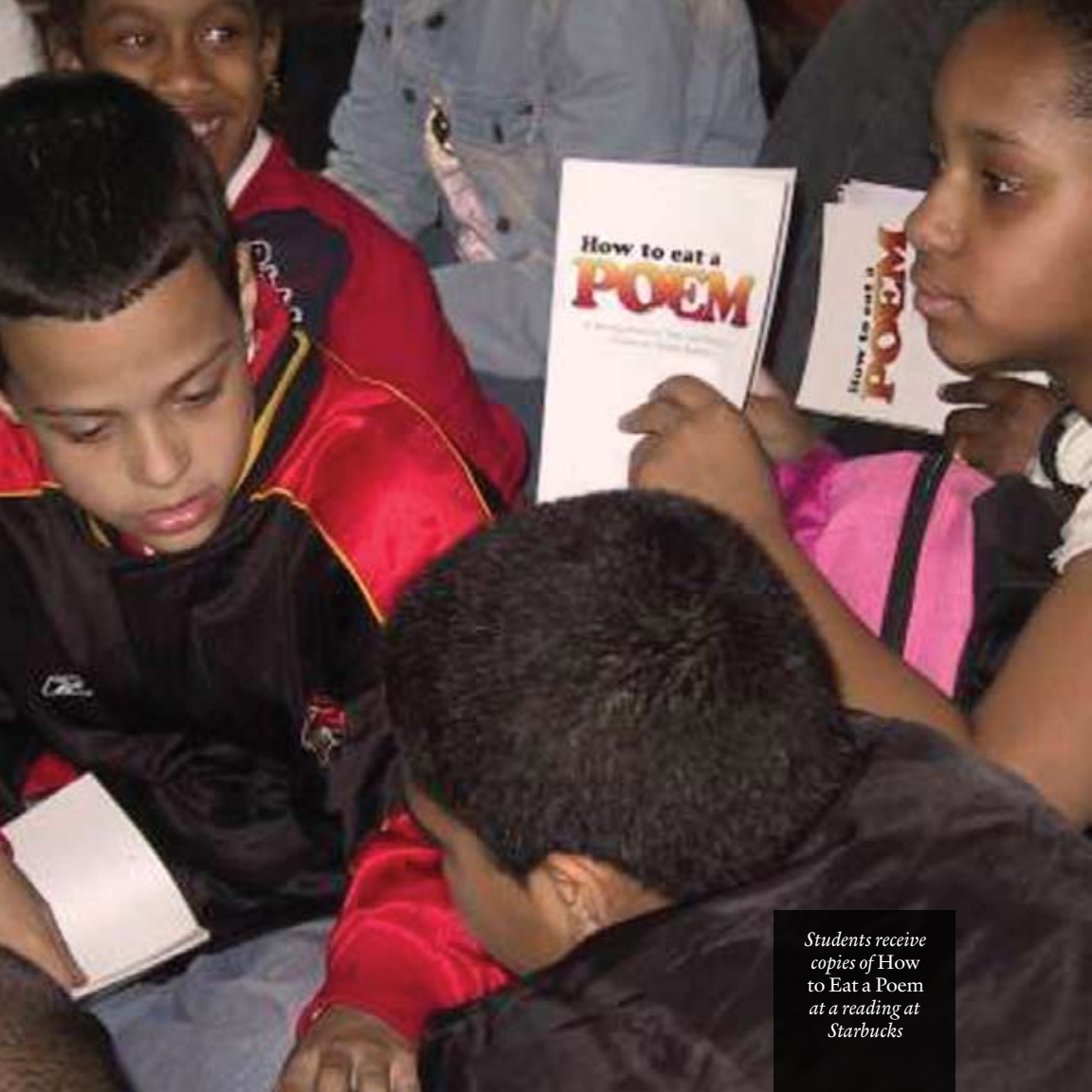
The Academy of American Poets was the first organization of its kind to recognize the vast power of digital communication to increase the reach of poetry in American and beyond. Inaugurated in 1995, Poets.org was the first major website dedicated to poetry on the Internet. By every standard of measurement (website visits, page views, etc.) Poets.org is the most visible expression of poetry in the world of new media. Users come from every state and many countries, from huge cities and remote residences – well over ten million a year.

### INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION...

Working with publishers, libraries, and educators, the Academy established National Poetry Month, which is now an annual grass-roots celebration that reaches millions of students, teachers, and poetry lovers. Media trend surveys show that National Poetry Month provides a yearly jump in the reading and discussion of poetry, and media coverage itself has also expanded dramatically. Popular with poets and their readers, the month-long series of activities ensures that poetry remains a vital part of our literary heritage.







Students receive copies of *How to Eat a Poem* at a reading at Starbucks



200,000 free National Poetry Month posters, designed by famous graphic artists, are sent to schools and libraries every year





Poet Laureate  
Kay Ryan signing  
a book at the  
Poets Forum



Poets.org,  
the Academy's website,  
is visited over

**10 MILLION**  
times each year and delivers a  
wealth of poems, audio,  
and special features



*Jonathan Demme, Yusef Komunyakaa,  
Graydon Carter, Robert Caro,  
Candace Bushnell, Dianne Reeves,  
Meryl Streep, Philippe de Montebello,  
Liz Smith, and John Guare at the  
annual benefit reading,  
Poetry & the Creative Mind*



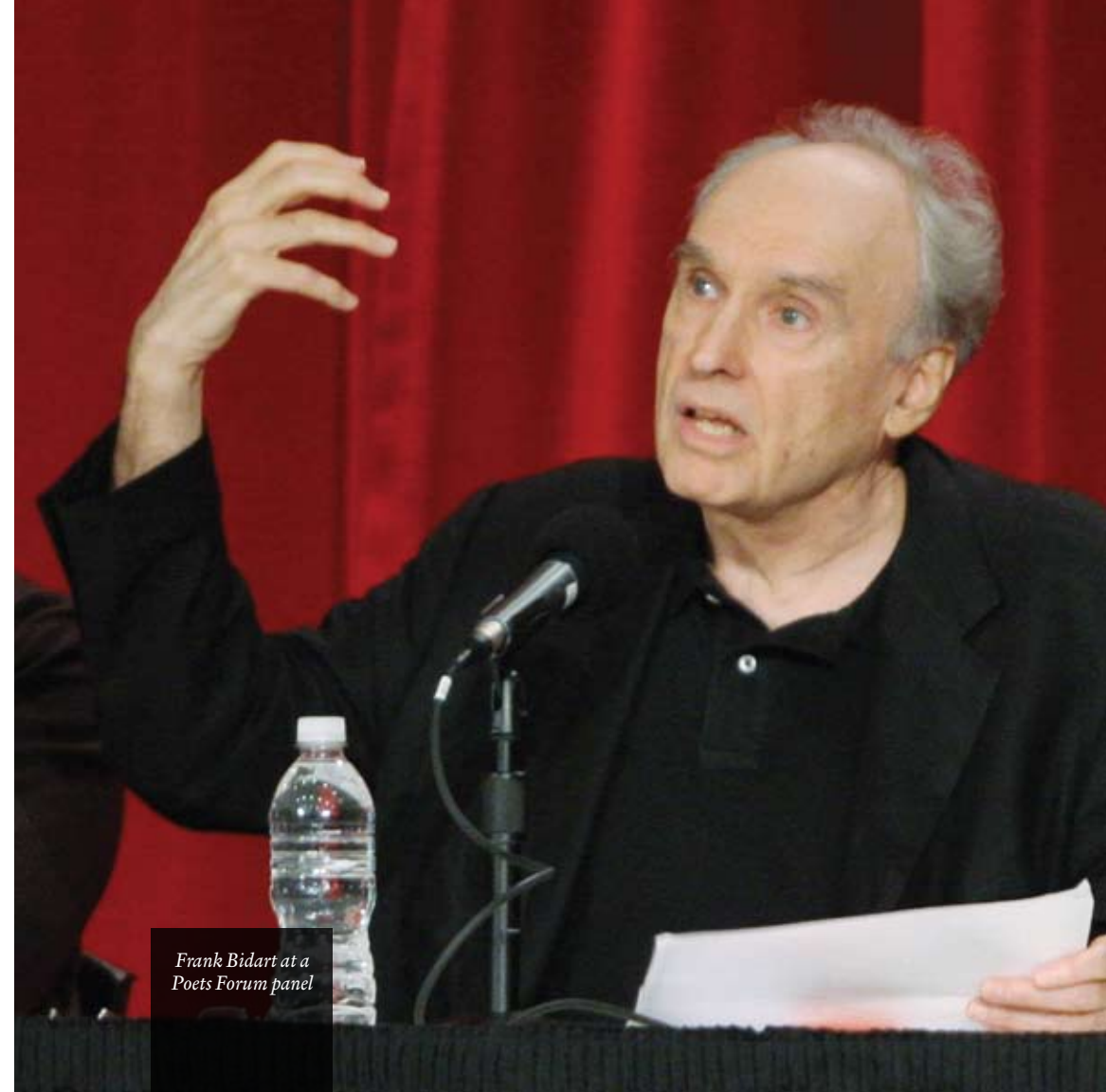
American Poet,  
the Academy's  
journal, is  
sent to nearly  
9,000 members  
twice a year



Academy  
Chancellors,  
counter-clockwise  
from left:  
Galway Kinnell,  
Frank Bidart,  
Nathaniel Mackey,  
Kay Ryan,  
Rita Dove,  
Gerald Stern,  
Ellen Bryant Voigt

#### ENLARGING THE GIFT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY...

At present, the Academy has avid participants all across the country, an energetic and committed staff, and a balanced budget. It continues to reach audiences through traditional means, such as the respected journal *American Poet*, and also allows the new media generation to look up poems on the go with a mobile version of Poets.org. The Academy has produced a series of documentary film profiles of contemporary poets, and it preserves audio recordings of poets, that are available in a variety of digital formats. The annual Poets Forum includes readings, literary walking tours, and public discussions which explore the frontiers of poetry today. Poem in Your Pocket Day is the culminating event of the poetry year, reaching students in schools across America.



Frank Bidart at a  
Poets Forum panel

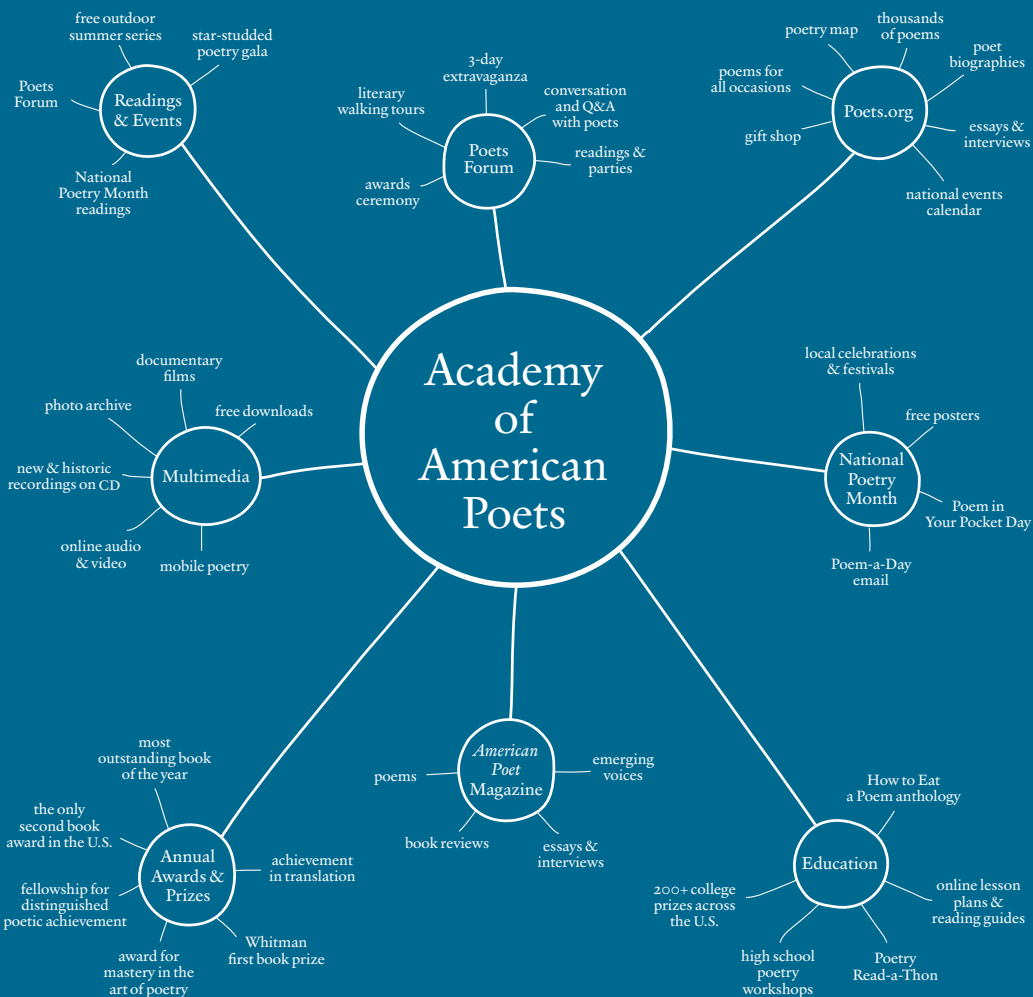


AFTER SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS...

The Academy of American Poets still reflects Marie Bullock's goal of supporting poets and her inventiveness in finding new ways of spreading the word. Proud of its past, the Academy is committed to a future as America's foremost poetry organization. We invite you to join us in expanding and enriching the Academy's essential work in the years to come.

David Daniel  
reading in the  
Poetry in the  
Parks series





#### ACADEMY BOARD LEADERSHIP

Marie Bullock  
1934 – 1986

Lyn Chase  
1987 – 1994

Jonathan Galassi  
1994 – 1999

Henry Reath  
1999 – 2001

Paul Gottlieb  
2002

Liza Bennett  
2002 – 2005



Eunice Panetta  
Board Chairman  
2005 – present

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Betty Kray  
1963 – 1981

Gigi Bradford  
1981 – 1982

Henri Cole  
1982 – 1988

Nancy Schoenberger  
1988 – 1989

William Wadsworth  
1989 – 2001



Tree Swenson  
President &  
Executive Director  
2002 – present



ACADEMY OF AMERICAN POETS

584 Broadway, Suite 604  
New York, NY 10012

*Poets.org*