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March 27, 2002
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NEWS RELEASE

AWARD-WINNING POETS, AUTHORS WILL SHARE VERSE AND ADVICE AT UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON LITFEST

DAYTON, Ohio — Less than a month after published and aspiring authors from around the country gathered at the University of Dayton to teach, learn and celebrate writing a la Erma, writers will again converge on the UD campus. This time the focus will shift from prose to poetry as nearly 30 published and award-winning authors and poets perform at the second-annual Litfest Friday and Saturday, April 5 and 6.

All festival activities are free and open to the public and include poetry workshops for children and adults, author readings, an evening of coffeehouse-style performances of live jazz, blues and recitation, a used-book sale, games and activities for children and book-signings and other opportunities to converse with the authors.

A full schedule of activities, authors' biographies and related links can be found at <http://www.as.udayton.edu/english/litfest>. To register or for more information, call Litfest chairman Nick Obis at (937) 229-2454.

Featured artist Quincy Troupe, who has twice been crowned "heavyweight champion of poetry" at the World Poetry Bout in Taos, N.M., will present one of three poetry workshops Friday afternoon and recite to the accompaniment of award-winning jazz saxophonist Willie Morris III during Friday evening performances.

At the close of Litfest, Carmen Lee, host of the monthly poetry readings at BackChat Cafe in Yellow Springs, will host an adults-only poetry slam featuring nationally renowned slam champion Shane Koyczan from 8 p.m. to midnight Saturday in the Kennedy Union Pub. Admission is \$3.

Litfest made its debut in 2001 as a one-day event and featured local authors, children's activities and a slam. Based on the event's success, organizers from UD's graduate program in English decided to expand the festival as a precedent for future organizers, Obis said. "This year we added an evening of performance and other activities, and hopefully there will be other additions in following years. The goal is to grow Litfest into one of the biggest and most recognized events on campus."

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LITFEST SCHEDULE — FRIDAY, APRIL 5

Activities begin with a series of poetry workshops from 3 to 5:30 p.m. at various locations in the Jesse Philips Humanities Center. The workshops are geared toward young adult and older participants:

- “So Real It’s Surreal” — Michael Salinger will explore imagery and metaphor in creative writing using exercises based on surrealist parlor games. Salinger’s work has appeared in dozens of literary journals including *Poetry Magazine*, *Sapphire Magazine* and *Taproot*. His most recent collection, *Sunday Morning*, has been published by Burning Press.
- “Performing Poetry” — Scott Woods will work with participants on open mic, feature and slam performing. Woods’ music and poetry performance group, “The Black Air Poets,” recorded its first CD, *Touch*, in 2001. He has published short stories and prose in a variety of journals and published poetry collections *Poetic Predator* and *Come and Feel*.
- “Poetry Workshop” — Quincy Troupe is professor of creating writing and American and Caribbean literature at the University of California, San Diego. He has written, coauthored and edited more than a dozen books and six volumes of poetry, including *Avalanche*, *Embryo* and *Snake-Back Solos*, winner of the American Book Award. He won the Peabody Award for writing and coproducing *The Miles Davis Radio Project* broadcast on National Public Radio and published *Miles and Me*, a candid account of his friendship with legendary jazz artist Miles Davis.

Author and musician Bob Fox, who also serves as literature program coordinator for the Ohio Arts Council, will open Friday evening’s music and poetry performance session at 6:30 p.m. in Sears Recital Hall in the Jesse Philips Humanities Center. Fox will mix readings of original poetry with selections of original and other traditional blues pieces on acoustic guitar. Fox took second place in the 2002 River City Blues performance competition in Marietta, Ohio, and in 2001 published *Greatest Hits, 1965-2000*, a collection of original poetry.

At 7 p.m. Quincy Troupe will perform poetry to the accompaniment of Willie Morris III, associate professor of music and director of the jazz ensemble at UD.

At 8 p.m. poet, author, editor and teacher Ron Whitehead, who claims dual residency in Kentucky and Iceland, will perform with music by Scaramongo and violinist Marisa Barnes, jazz vocalist Yoruba Mason and Anonymous, a band from Iceland. Whitehead’s publications include *I Will Not Bow Down: Selected Poems 1990-1995* and *Eve & The Ophidians*. His CDs include *From Iceland to Kentucky and Beyond*.

Local musician and poet Jim Dwyer will close the evening with a performance beginning at 9 p.m. with Joe Tuss and Richard Roll from his band, the Riverdale Rats.

LITFEST SCHEDULE — SATURDAY, APRIL 6

Activities for children grades two through six will begin with a writing workshop from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Ryan C. Harris Learning Teaching Center, located on the lower level of

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Roesch Library on campus. Trudy Krisher, author of *Spite Fences* and *Kathy's Hats: A Story of Hope* and assistant director for learning assistance at UD, will coordinate reading, writing and craft activities around a theme of hats.

Other children's activities in the LTC include a writing contest from 1 to 2 p.m., literary games and crafts from 2 to 3 p.m. and stories, poetry and music from 3 to 4 p.m.

A used- book sale and poetry readings will run concurrently with children's activities in the LTC. Poets and authors will read from their works in 15-minute blocks from noon to 5:30 p.m. Scheduled readers are Herbert Woodward Martin, Susan Jelus, Shannon Doyne, Diane Kendig, Daniel Gray-Kontar, Michael Salinger, Drew Perfilio, Jim Dwyer, LeShawn Jackson, Will Clemens, John Drury, Terri Ford, Janet McAdams, Elinor Benedict, Deanna Pickard, Myrna Stone, David Petreman and Scott Woods.

The post-festival poetry slam will begin with social time from 8 to 8:30 p.m. in the pub. Featured slammer Shane Koyczan will perform from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. followed by recitation by slam poets Scott Woods, Ed Mabrey, Michael Salinger, Nikki Allen, D.J. Brewer, Chris Jankowski, Jim Dwyer, Furaha, Kim Brazwell, Jason Brazwell, Drew Perfilio and John Booth.

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For media interviews, contact **Nick Obis** at UD at (937) 229-2454, at home at (937) 396-1724 or via e-mail at obisnich@notes.udayton.edu.