

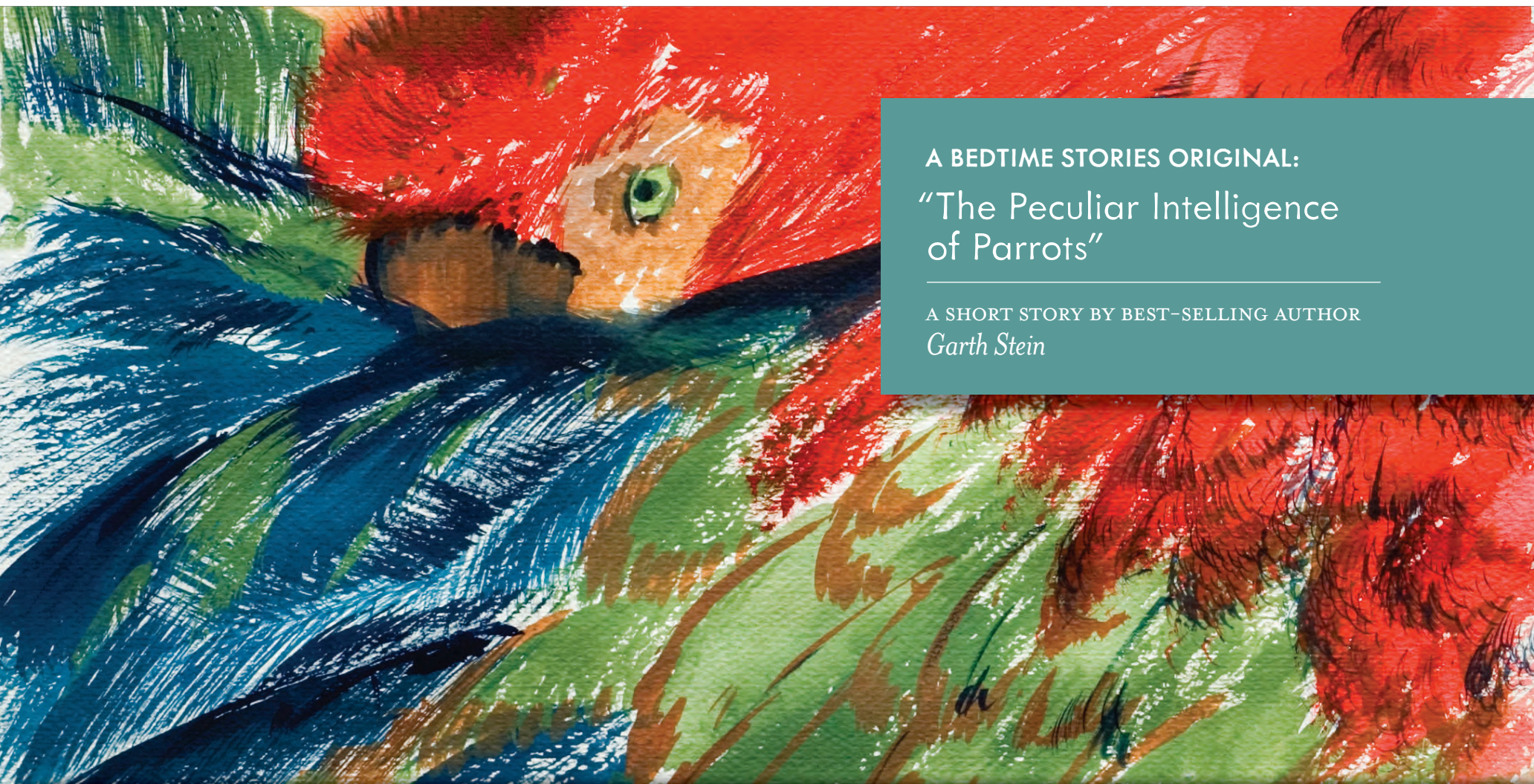
SPARK



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Humanities Washington sparks conversation and critical thinking using story as a catalyst, nurturing thoughtful and engaged communities across our state.

FALL/WINTER 2013



A BEDTIME STORIES ORIGINAL:
"The Peculiar Intelligence
of Parrots"

A SHORT STORY BY BEST-SELLING AUTHOR
Garth Stein

ALSO INSIDE

Washington State Poet Laureate • Page 4 | A Respite From Dementia • Page 8 | Latino Musical Migrations • Page 11

INSIDE

PROFILE 4-7
Washington State Poet Laureate Kathleen Flenniken brings the power of poetry to each of our state's 39 counties. PLUS: I-90 Seattle to Spokane, an original poem by Flenniken.

IN THE FIELD 8-10
here:now, an innovative program at Seattle's Frye Art Museum that mixes conversation and art-making, brings sufferers of dementia and their caregivers closer together.

5 QUESTIONS 11-13
Educator Antonio Davidson-Gómez explores the migrations of Latin music — and how that music and its practitioners have influenced American culture at large.

COVER STORY 14-20
Bedtime Stories — the Northwest's "premier literary event" — turns 15; author Garth Stein shares a Bedtime Stories original; event founder Charles Johnson is honored.

WHY THE HUMANITIES? 21-22
This issue's guest commentary comes from distinguished scholar John K. Roth, who writes about a recent production of The Laramie Project in the rural Methow Valley.

NEWS & NOTES 23

CALENDAR 24

2012 ANNUAL REPORT 25-28

ABOUT HUMANITIES WASHINGTON..... 30-31

SPARK is published semiannually by Humanities Washington, 1015 8th Ave. N., Suite B., Seattle, WA 98109. Founded in 1973, Humanities Washington is the state's flagship nonprofit for public humanities programming. Opinions expressed in *Spark* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Humanities Washington, its trustees or its staff. *Spark* is distributed free of charge via U.S. Mail and through a network of partner organizations throughout the state. For information about editorial content, sponsorship opportunities or to be added to the *Spark* mailing list, contact the editor at spark@humanities.org or 206.682.1770.

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From the Executive Director

HUMANITIES WASHINGTON CELEBRATES 40 YEARS OF SERVICE WITH NEW MAGAZINE, REINVIGORATED PROGRAMS

The humanities strengthen our state for a better tomorrow

By **Julie Ziegler** | Humanities Washington executive director

Eight-track cassettes. Beehive hairdos. Acid-wash jeans. Some things don't endure the test of time.

But the humanities? The humanities will never go out of style.

To share our stories, to build community and bridge divides, to question what it means to be human — these impulses endure no matter how society changes around us.

This fall, Humanities Washington kicks off the celebration of its 40th anniversary year. Since our founding in 1973, we have adapted to meet the needs of our state. In recent years we have reimagined our programs, reinvented our look and remade our service. But the humanities always remain at the heart of our work. We simply have evolved to meet people where they want to experience cultural programming in the current day.

In 1965, our nation's leadership recognized the critical importance of ongoing study of and the ability for the

American people to engage in the humanities by establishing the National Endowment for the Humanities. The founding legislation stated: "An advanced civilization must not limit its

efforts to science and technology alone, but must give full value and support to the other great branches of scholarly and cultural activity in order to achieve a better understanding of the past, a better analysis of the present and a better view of the future."

Almost a decade later, Congress took an important step to connect the general public with the humanities by establishing state humanities councils. With that, Humanities Washington was born. Originally named the Washington Commission for the Humanities, our



FALL/WINTER 2013



Chief Bill Scow and his wife, Alice, stand in front of the Pacific Science Center's Sea Monster House in 1980. The educational reconstruction was supported by one of Humanities Washington's early grants. | Photo courtesy Pacific Science Center (from the Humanities Washington archives)



A 1977 Humanities Washington grant funded a forum on the relationship between the liberal arts, college and the workplace at City College in Seattle. | Photo by John E. Walker (from the Humanities Washington archives)

articles of incorporation specified we would offer “insight into human problems and priorities.” Today — though we have updated the language a bit — we continue to raise questions and give people a forum in which to explore issues.

While we began in 1973 as a grant-making organization, the mid-1980's marked the beginning of Humanities Washington's work as a program provider. In response to a need for easy-to-implement humanities programming, Humanities Washington created our popular Speakers Bureau program (originally called Inquiring Minds). Celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, the program reaches communities across the state with low-cost, high-quality public presentations that encourage audiences to think, learn and engage in conversation.

Since then we've continued to grow our programming to include Family Reading, Traveling Exhibits, Think &

Drink, Washington State Poet Laureate and other special initiatives, all designed to meet distinct needs for the humanities throughout the state. Collectively, our programs have become a pillar in the state's cultural community.

At 40 we are far from middle-aged. Evidence that we continue to strive and reach to better serve the state includes the publication you are holding right now. We've fully immersed ourselves in the digital space with the creation of a blog (sparkmag.org), a new website (humanities.org) and a presence on Twitter and Facebook. But we're also refreshing our more traditional modes of communication with the revamping of our *Humanities Courier* into this beautiful new publication, *Spark* magazine.

This is just the first of many activities we'll unveil to commemorate our 40th anniversary. Look for new grant opportunities in the coming months

as well as an online peek back at our 40 years of serving the state. To fully participate, I encourage you to sign up for our other modes of communication by going to: humanities.org/signup.

Thank you for being part of our first 40 years. We look forward to serving Washington state for another 40 and hope you'll join us on this exciting journey!

With sincere appreciation,

Julie Ziegler, Executive Director

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OUR MONTHLY E-NEWS:
humanities.org/signup



TWO WORLDS, ONE STATE

Poet laureate Kathleen Flenniken's latest journey takes her to every corner of Washington

By Jefferson Robbins | for Humanities Washington

Poetry rose up from the sinks and cupboards and sheets of Kathleen Flenniken's Seattle home, where she spent her early thirties tending house and raising kids. She welcomed it, and it rewarded her.

Flenniken came to the discipline after a life in other pursuits, as an engineer first and then a homemaker. She'd nudged at the edge of poetry in high school, setting out to decode the work of Robert Frost for a student project. The mission failed.

"*Nothing Gold Can Stay* — these poems, they're like breaking into steel balls," she marvels. "There's no way in. So I think I thought poetry was for gods like Robert Frost."

But as an adult, taking poetry study and composition classes at night and perusing library shelves in her few free hours, she encountered Ruth Stone's brief masterwork *In an Iridescent Time*:

*My mother, when young, scrubbed laundry in a tub,
She and her sisters on an old brick walk
Under the apple trees, sweet rub-a-dub.
The bees came round their heads, the wrens made talk.*

"And I remember thinking, 'Oh my God, I could write a poem about *laundry*!' I was surrounded by laundry. ... It was kind of right in front of me that whole time, but it just took so long for me to discover it."

That discovery has so far yielded publication in a spate of literary journals, two book collections, and the state's highest honor in the field. Named Washington State Poet Laureate in 2012, Flenniken vowed to visit all 39 counties with her self-designed outreach program, bringing poems to school kids and adults alike.

With her laureateship ending in early 2014, she appears to be on schedule, with more than half the state visited.

Top: Washington State Poet Laureate Kathleen Flenniken. | Photo by Elisabeth Flenniken

Bottom: Flenniken works with students at the Spokane Valley Library last year. She plans to visit each of the state's 39 counties at least once during her two-year tenure as poet laureate. | Photo by Jae Macallan (Yoyostring Creative)

"I'm very optimistic," she says. "I might have to read poetry on the side of the road in a couple of the counties, but it'll happen."

With her appointment, Flenniken became Washington's first poet laureate since Gov. Chris Gregoire suspended the program in 2009, citing the state's tight fiscal situation. The post was new then, established in 2007 with poet Samuel Green as the first laureate. Today, the program gets its funding – including Flenniken's \$10,000 annual stipend – entirely through the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities and private contributions.

The poet laureate program is mutually administered by Humanities Washington and ArtsWA (formerly known as the Washington State Arts Commission). The Washington Poets Association was also involved in establishing the position.

Unlike many other states, Washington selects its poet laureate through an application process, and Flenniken was one of more than a dozen hopefuls. Her proposal to work in public schools, with a focus on bringing poetry to elementary grades, helped set her apart.

"We also knew of her reputation as an excellent reader of poetry – her own works, but also other poets' works," said ArtsWA Executive Director Kris Tucker. "She's very warm, sincere, thoughtful, personable and just very approachable."

The 52-year-old Flenniken is a poet of two worlds – and not just geographical. The daughter of a Hanford Nuclear

*I could never love the brown hills
around us. Now, in the city, who
can love the desert in me?*

—Kathleen Flenniken, from her poem *Coyote*

Reservation scientist, she grew up in Richland and moved into the world of engineering. There were a few youthful discursions into artistic pursuits like piano, but poetry was a faraway thing.

"For whatever reason, I had a hard time understanding the difference between performing arts and creative arts. I thought you had to be nervous to be a success – but when I was an adult, I realized I could sit down and write on my own and make as many mistakes as I need to, and nobody needs to see any of them. Nobody needs to see this poem until I'm ready to show it to the world."

The urge to write scratched at her while she was still in college, through her graduation with an engineering degree from Washington State University in 1983 and the three years she spent working thereafter at Hanford. But a few more changes had to be cycled through: marriage, motherhood, a University of Washington master's degree in civil engineering, a private-sector job with a consulting firm.

It was after leaving that job to raise her three children that her pen moved from equations and diagrams to short works of verse. There was no time to write a novel or even a short story in the hurry



Flenniken has released two collections of poetry, *Famous* (2006) and *Plume* (2012).

and hustle of childrearing – but there was always time for a poem.

"People that have working lives can only write when they have a few minutes to rub together," she says. "That's real life. Most writers have a full career, a full life outside their life of writing, and you kind of fit it in any way you know how. And sometimes that's making a choice about form."

Flenniken's own early poems, many collected in her 2006 book *Famous*, began with the domesticity where she lived, but only as a springboard to more universal concerns. *It's Not You, It's Me* imagines the biblical Eve as a frustrated household goddess. *Map of the Marriage Bed* recasts intimacy as a road trip, with its many destinations, rest stops and breakdowns. *Natural History* pictures two lovers fossilized by time and geology, misapprehended by future archaeologists:

Isn't it funny they'll never connect us?

This rock woman with that paper man?

They were never in love.

*She would have pounded him into dust.
He'd have been crushed by a woman like that.*

The dry nuclear country haunted Flenniken's imagery, even when she wasn't writing specifically about her home region. It was easier to write about the Richland topography — “which feels like it's tied deep, deep, deep into my formative years” — after she moved to Seattle.

It's a sentiment captured in her poem *Coyote*: “I could never love the brown hills around us,” she writes. “Now, in the city, who can love the desert in me?”

“I think it's funny I haven't written more about this landscape, the beautiful, green, watery world I live in,” she says of her current city. “I guess it just frees me to write about other things, because it feels so right.”

Even before her poetry was gathered into its first volume, people took notice. With several magazine publications to her credit, Flenniken won a 2003 fellowship from Washington's Artist Trust and a literary fellowship from the NEA in 2005 — a rarity for a poet without a book. That NEA prize, in fact, spurred her to re-edit and reorganize her manuscript of poems into the collection that would become *Famous*.

A few months later, *Famous* won the Prairie Schooner Book Prize from the University of Nebraska Press, which led to publication through the Bison Books imprint. The *Bloomsbury Review* noted its roots in mundane home life, but concluded, “This life is, beautifully and completely, transformed into art.”

From the kitchen-table and backyard settings of *Famous*, Flenniken went further into the autobiographical and historical possibilities of poetry. She began a cycle that specifically probed the Hanford area — and the legacies of betrayal and harm from the radioactive leaks that plagued downwind communities.

“I was finally ready to write about that part of my life,” Flenniken says.


The result was *Plume*, published last year through the University of Washington Press — a work that's Washingtonian in its focus but universal in its embrace. Flenniken's poetic voice recalls the pride engendered by John F. Kennedy's visit to the Hanford reactors, and the doubts that came in retrospect. *Self-Portrait With Father As Tour Guide* memorializes the poet's introduction to her father's largely secret world as a Hanford chemist. The poet's kindergarten-age body is scanned for radiation exposure in *Whole-Body Counter*; *Marcus Whitman Elementary*: “I shut my eyes again and pledged / to be still; so proud to be / a girl America could count on.”

The topic she's composing on now is larger still: America, and her relationship to it.

“It feels like a problematic love affair, in many respects, and I'm finding ways to talk about the country that really aren't based in place,” she says. “They're based more in my emotional understanding of the country, and trying to figure out how to write about that.”

In the meantime, between writing and her work as president of the nonprofit Floating Bridge Press poetry-publishing house,

Flenniken moves from county to county, putting poetry in the hands of all comers — retirement home residents, library listeners, and of course, the state's third-, fourth- and fifth-graders.

“They are very open at that age,” she says, “and their minds are also expanding to the possibility of metaphor. ... All of a sudden, some kind of switch has flipped, and they can do it. It's some sort of learning milestone — at some point, metaphor-making turns on. They become very confident and interested writers — and they're very good listeners.” 



MORE ONLINE

5 QUESTIONS INTERVIEWS WITH
KATHLEEN FLENNIKEN:
SparkMag.org/tag/fall13-flenniken

FLENNIKEN SHOWCASED IN
HUMANITIES WASHINGTON'S
ORGANIZATIONAL VIDEO
SparkMag.org/tag/fall13-video

Above: Flenniken chats with attendees at the Bedtime Stories gala in Seattle last year. This fall, the poet laureate is taking part in the Spokane edition of the annual literary event (see details on pages 14-15). | Photo by Tracey Salazar

I-90 SEATTLE TO SPOKANE

By Kathleen Flenniken | Washington State Poet Laureate

*One tree represents a thousand — no, a million — beyond your view.
One stump a million stumps.
And one tumbleweed —*

but there's never just one tumbleweed.

And who can live off this tractor, this truck?

*How many soft ice cream cones
pass hand to hand through the drive-up window?*

*You pass at 70 a crude white cross erected as a memorial,
caught in the rooster-tail splash of a semi.*

*Pull in for gas and a half-flat of strawberries
and a child's face peers from behind a hip
as her father makes change
wishing each in turn a safe journey.*

*Tufts of cheat grass
punctuated with political signs,
leaning left or right.*

*Fields of wheat on rolling loess plains, smoothed by wind
into patterns like buttercream frosting.*

*Water tower. Bare brown hill. Old snow.
The 30-foot-high emblazoned letter "O" or "C" or "R"
and the fierce — remember it — pride.
Bomber pride. Bulldog pride. Blue Devil pride.
Driving a basketball down the lane.
Drawing a shooting foul. For the game. For the game ...*

*You unfold a lawn chair in your mind on that knoll,
on those green velvet foothills. You've baited the hook
of childhood and your future. Once, no a thousand times,
staring out a backseat window.*

INNOVATIVE DISCUSSION PROGRAM BRINGS ADULTS WITH DEMENTIA, CAREGIVERS CLOSER TOGETHER

here:now at the Frye Art Museum combines gallery discussion with art making to bring participants into the present moment and out of the disease

By **Abby Rhinehart** | Humanities Washington communications officer

A man in his 60s struggles to articulate why he thinks a hat in a painting is old. “It’s . . . it’s all messed up. It’s crumpled and dirty and it’s on the floor.”

Another man chimes in “Yep. It’s just . . . it’s spent.”

They’ve gathered around a painting called *The Condemned* as part of the here:now program at the Frye Art Museum in Seattle. here:now is a program for adults with young-onset or early- to middle-stage dementia and their care partners that allows participants to put aside their conditions and connect around art and discussion.

Participants in the program include parents and children, husbands and wives,

who all participate as equals. During the first half of the program, they talk about two pieces of art in the gallery; in the second half, they create their own art inspired by those discussions.

During a recent visit by *Spark* magazine, participants talk about *The Condemned* in an open-ended conversation led by one of the Frye’s educators. They think about what the two men in the painting may be feeling and what their relationship might be like. They examine how the artist used a contrast of light and darkness to set the scene.

Then they move on to another painting, an impressionistic image of snow around a mountain stream. One participant says it reminds him of the way the snow looked in

the early mornings in his youth, when he was an avid hiker. It reminds another of her trip to Mt. Rainier.

After the discussion, the here:now group moves to the studio. Their teaching artist, Tamara Keefe (from the Elderwise center), reads the poem *Sunrise* by Mary Oliver; a few of the participants smile delightedly and tell Tamara how beautiful the poem was. Then, based on what they have seen in the gallery and a few helpful tips from Keefe about painting with light, they put watercolor to paper, as they all paint sunrises inspired by the poem.

Some of the participants blend colors together skillfully, creating landscapes. Some come out with figures rather than a landscape, painting distinct shapes. All of



Adults with dementia and their caregivers engage in lively discussion while gathered around a work of art in the Frye Art Museum in Seattle. | Photos courtesy of the Frye Art Museum

the participants talk about their art with their companions.

here:now is an art program built on discussion. “Conversation encourages a lively exchange about art, culture, life and family that can kindle new connections between the care partner and the person with dementia and build a renewed understanding and appreciation of their relationship,” said Mary Jane Knecht, manager of adult programs at the Frye. “These discussions explore how the works of art relate to participants’ own experiences, how themes of art inform participants’ lives and how works of art help us interpret historical and contemporary culture. We invite participants to ‘step outside the disease’

*“We invite participants
to ‘step outside the disease’
through conversations about works
of art that bring joy, excitement,
curiosity and reflection.”*

—Mary Jane Knecht, manager of adult
programs, Frye Art Museum

through conversations about works of art that bring joy, excitement, curiosity and reflection.”

here:now offers two programs: A series of six two-hour classes (like the one described above), which include a gallery

tour, a studio art experience and social time, and a monthly, discussion-based gallery tour that lasts about an hour and a half. Both programs are free, but advance registration is required as space is limited.

“The program has been enthusiastically received, so much so that we have a waitlist to participate,” said Knecht. “However, with the Humanities Washington Spark Grant we’re excited to double the capacity of the program. We’ve found it difficult to ask people to wait, especially considering the progression of dementia.”


The program has attracted the attention of medical professionals, particularly doctors at Virginia Mason researching dementia. Dr. Lee Burnside, physician at Virginia Mason and medical director

of the retirement community Horizon House, is currently studying the impact of here:now on participants' lives and their relationships with their caregivers. The Frye Art Museum hopes this study can serve as a resource for other museums looking to create similar programs.

Care partners have noted that here:now participants with dementia often come away from the program more focused and less anxious, and with renewed energy. In return, the care partners can take a chance to relax. One commented, "I love this time when there is nothing to do but think about a painting and create art. I can't tell you how great it is to see the Alzheimer's to-do list take a back seat to art!"

here:now also creates a shared experience between caregiver and patient and connects them with others who are going through similar experiences.

"We emphasize what people are able to do, and draw upon their strengths as individuals, regardless of their diagnosis," said Knecht. "When we witness

participants sharing in basic aspects of human experience — community, self-expression, joy — we know these programs are resonating." 

Left: In the studio, participants are invited to let their imagination run wild. The art projects spark additional conversations between dementia sufferers and their caregivers.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

FRYE ART MUSEUM

ESTABLISHED: 1952

SERVES: Approximately 80,000 annually

MISSION:

"The Frye Art Museum is a living legacy of visionary patronage and civic responsibility, committed to artistic inquiry and a rich visitor experience. A catalyst for the Frye Art Museum's engagement with contemporary art and artists is the Founding Collection of Charles and Emma Frye, access to which shall always be free."

FRYE
ART MUSEUM

TO LEARN MORE:

Visit fryemuseum.org or, to participate in the here:now program, contact herenow@fryemuseum.org or call (206) 432-8265.



Conversation during here:now focuses on works of art rather than dementia, offering participants a much-needed respite.



Antonio Davidson-Gómez leads a conversation on *Mapping Latino Musical Migrations* at Whatcom Community College earlier this year. The interactive presentation utilizes several instruments popular in Latin music. | Photos by Adam Knight

Antonio Davidson-Gómez wants you to hear the music he explores ... but he also wants you to hold it in your hands.

The veteran percussionist makes the instruments part of his presentation as he traces the roots of Latin music as it's known — in its many, many forms — in America today. In Davidson-Gómez's engaging talk for Humanities Washington's Speakers Bureau, *Mapping Latino Musical Migrations*, he makes his audience part of the orchestra in a hands-on performance session.

"Truly, there is no one instrument that is omnipresent across Latin genres," Davidson-Gómez says. "There are, however, instruments that are integral to various styles."

STORIES IN SOUNDS AND SONGS

Mapping the migrations of Latino music with educator Antonio Davidson-Gómez

By Jefferson Robbins | for Humanities Washington

He should know, having explored Latin music traditions as both a performer and scholar. A former schoolteacher, he crafted curricula, including the online teacher course for the EMP Museum's *American Sabor* exhibit, which explored the same territory as his Speakers Bureau talk. As a musician, he plays regularly with the Touché jazz sextet, a Gypsy jazz ensemble in the style of the Hot Club of Paris, and has performed on record with flutist Gerald Beckett. He's now the educational services manager at Seattle public television station KCTS.

Humanities Washington: There seem to be two main sources of Latino music as it's known in America today: Afro-Latin and ranchera. How did those paths diverge to create two distinct styles?

Antonio Davidson-Gómez: There are actually dozens of musical forms that connect with Latino and Latin-American cultures. Some of these musical styles migrated from Latin America (cumbia, merengue, tango, etc.), others were already here as the United States expanded westward (corridos), and still others (salsa, reggaetón, etc.) have evolved recently among Latinos in the United States or as a dialogue between Latinos, Latin Americans and others.

It's also important to note that Latinos have been very much part of the evolution of other American music forms not always considered "Latin." For example, it was the Cuban musician Mario Bauzá who helped propel a young Dizzy Gillespie, which in turn helped spur the evolution



Participants make music during Davidson-Gómez's presentation at Whatcom Community College.

of jazz from swing to bebop. Similarly, Ritchie Valens and other Latinos contributed to the early sound of rock while the members of ? and the Mysterians, Alice Bag and others helped propel punk. Similarly, Lee Quiñones and Richard "Crazy Legs" Colón contributed to the early aesthetics of hip-hop. In Washington, we're very fortunate to have some top scholars uncovering these stories, including Marisol Berrios-Miranda, Michelle Habell-Pallan and Shannon Dudley, who curated the EMP Museum's *American Sabor*, which is now touring under the auspices of the Smithsonian.

HW: How did Latin music first arrive in the United States, and how did it gain its first popularity with non-Latino audiences?

Davidson-Gómez: A preliminary way to answer this question might be to consider

"Identity and heritage are intensely political and personal at the same time."

—Antonio Davidson-Gómez, educator

some of the Latin music (and) dance crazes that have passed through the United States. This includes everything from *Begin the Beguine* to the mambo and cha cha fads of 1950s New York (to) Santana (to) Miami Sound Machine and so on.

But in order to really answer this question, we have to ask ourselves what we mean when we use the term "Latin music." For me, the answer has to do with music that is created by people or cultures that have origins in Latin America. The great thing about music that fits into the broad category of Latin music is that it is the music of intersecting lives and stories. Most of the musical forms that emanate from Latin America are wonderful and unique blends of the African, indigenous and European influences that shape the region. In some, one element is more present than another. Like jazz, Latin music is only possible when diverse people and musical ideas come into contact, react to each other and continue to reinvent.

So, going back to the question of when and how Latin music comes to the United States, the answer depends on how you approach the question. One might point to the first musical fad in the United States that was framed as "Latin," but I think that you could also make the argument that

Latin musical ideas became part of the United States much earlier — perhaps when Mexican *vaqueros* (cowboys) shared the sung poetry of corridos, accompanied by a lonely guitar by a campfire, with Anglo cowboys who were learning from them how to bring cattle up through Texas into Kansas and beyond. Just as the lariat comes from the (Spanish word) *lariata* and chaps come from *chaparrales*, I think there is a deeper connection to the United States' love affair with the guitar.

HW: Ranchera and its offshoots are commonly heard in the United States today, but for a long time they took a back seat to Afro-influenced Latin styles — samba, bossa nova, salsa and so on. Why is that?

Davidson-Gómez: Música ranchera has always been popular in the Mexicano and Mexican-American ranching communities. It has its own evolution which existed outside the mainstream. Meanwhile, other Latin styles like tango, mambo, cha cha chá, boogaloo, samba and bossa nova were appropriated as fads in Hollywood or New York over the past century. As such, they became much better known in American popular culture. The strong ties between New York, Cuba and Puerto Rico are not lost in this process. But, this type of success can be a mixed bag for these art forms and the people who love them. Some see it as success, others may see it as the commercialization of their beloved Afro-Caribbean traditions. Ranchera, on the other hand, continued to cater to its own community, off the Top 40 radar. Over recent decades there

have been a number of factors that have propelled this style. From Selena to the growth of Mexican-American communities to the expansion of Mexican-dominated Spanish language media, *música ranchera* and other “*música regional mexicana*” have grown in popularity and market share.

At the same time, a whole new aesthetic is developing which I find really exciting: Young people are picking elements of rural and urban identity (such as *ranchera* and hip-hop) and creating their own blend. It reminds us of the fluidity and vivacious nature of culture — as expressed through music, art, language and dress.

HW: Is there a single instrument that you think of as being essential to Latin music, be it a type of drum, a stringed instrument or something other?

Davidson-Gómez: This is a great question! It allows us to remember the diversity of Latin musical forms. It’s hard to imagine *música tejana* or *cumbia* without an accordion, but you’d be hard pressed to find one in a Cuban conjunto or salsa band. Congas and bongó have been adopted from the Caribbean into many styles, but there are many styles that call for harp, horns or flute and eschew percussion. The guitar is fairly universal, but only in concept. The guitar had not fully evolved before Latin-American cultures took shape. As such, you’ll find distant cousins of the guitar — like the *cuatro*, *jarana*, *bandola*, *laúd*, *tres* and *vihuela* in various traditions.

MORE ONLINE

BRING DAVIDSON-GÓMEZ TO YOUR COMMUNITY:
humanities.org/speakers

CHECK OUT THE SOUNDS OF AMERICAN SABOR: americansabor.org

What I really (like) is how new and traditional instruments are coexisting side by side in new iterations of Latino music and identity. This is found in the popularity of Mexican *son jarocho* (style) along the West Coast and the coexistence of *bandoneón* and turntables in *nuevo tango*.

HW: Latinos have come to the forefront as performers in United States pop, but often with pseudonyms. Baldemar Huerta became Freddy Fender. Richard Valenzuela became Ritchie Valens. ? and the Mysterians were all Mexican by way of Michigan. Why have Latinos so often had to smuggle themselves into the musical mainstream?

Davidson-Gómez: Latinos in music, like many other entertainers, have often felt that they should hide their ethnicity to be successful. From Anthony Quinn and Rita Hayworth to Ritchie Valens, many Latinos have found success by another name. Particularly in the mid-20th century, people of Latin-American, Italian, Greek, Jewish and other heritages were told or chose to change their public identities. People of color had the added layer of racism on top of the assimilation

question. These pressures do not seem as overt as they were a generation or two ago, and pop culture is beginning to reflect that. Still, identity and heritage are intensely political and personal at the same time. Some artists want to proclaim their heritage and others are concerned they will be pigeonholed by it. Race, racism and ethnocentrism are still around, but generally speaking, our society has become more open to its own diversity. In my parents’ childhood there was pressure to conform to what was perceived as “American.” Thankfully, now what is “American” seems to conform more to who we are — and that is deliciously complicated. Sometimes it has blue eyes, sometimes it has curly black hair, sometimes it speaks with an accent, sometimes it covers its hair. ^h_w



Congas have been adopted from the Caribbean into many styles of Latin music.



BEDTIME STORIES TURNS 15 WITH 'PILLOW TALK' TALES

By **Andrew Wahl** | Humanities Washington communications director

In 1999, a celebrated Northwest author helped write a new chapter for Humanities Washington.

Bedtime Stories, the brainchild of National Book Award winner Charles Johnson (see story, Page 20), brought together local authors to craft original short stories to debut at an annual dinner gala benefiting the state's flagship humanities organization.

"From its inception, Bedtime Stories has been an amazing success," said Julie Ziegler, Humanities Washington's executive director. "Over the years, attendees have heard inspired new works from more than 50 Northwest authors. And the event has raised nearly \$1 million to support humanities programming around the state."

The Seattle Bedtime Stories literary gala turns 15 this fall. It is joined again by Bedtime Stories Spokane, which debuted in 2012. This year, authors will unveil original short works inspired by the event theme, Pillow Talk.

"The event has raised nearly \$1 million to support humanities programming around the state."

—Julie Ziegler,
Humanities Washington's executive director


The fun gets underway with Bedtime Stories Spokane, taking place Sept. 20, 2013, at the Spokane Club. This year's writers are Washington State Poet Laureate Kathleen Flenniken (*Plume*), Sharma Shields (*Favorite Monster*), Shawn Vestal (*Godforsaken Idaho*) and Jess Walter (*Beautiful Ruins*). The emcee is Gary Stokes, executive director of Friends of KSPS.

Bedtime Stories Seattle returns to the Spanish Ballroom at The Fairmont Olympic Hotel Oct. 4, 2013. The evening's writers are Erica Bauermeister (*The Lost Art of Mixing*), Rebecca Brown (*American Romances*), Charles Johnson (*Middle Passage*) and Harold Taw (*Adventures of the Karaoke King*). The event emcees are Gene

Ambaum and Bill Barnes (*Unshelved* comic strip) and the honorary co-chairs are Garth (*The Art of Racing in the Rain*) and Drella Stein.

The Seattle gala will also see Johnson honored with the Humanities Washington Award in recognition of his outstanding and exemplary achievement in the public humanities.

Bedtime Stories is a fundraiser supporting Humanities Washington's efforts to spark critical thinking and conversation, nurturing thoughtful and engaged communities across our state. Our programs — from Family Reading to Traveling Exhibits — bring high-quality cultural programs throughout the state.

For information on becoming a sponsor or purchasing a table for either event, contact Wendy Stauff at events@humanities.org or (206) 682-1770 x109. A limited number of individual tickets are also available. 

JOIN US!



2013 Bedtime Stories Spokane authors (left to right): Kathleen Flenniken, Sharma Shields, Shawn Vestal and Jess Walter. | Provided photos

Bedtime Stories Spokane

WHEN: FRIDAY, SEPT. 20, 2013

WHERE: SPOKANE CLUB, 1002 W. RIVERSIDE AVE., SPOKANE

SPOKANE SPONSORS

ESTEEMED PROFESSORS:

Hagan Foundation Center for the Humanities

PEMCO Insurance (Statewide Sponsor)

The Spokesman-Review



2013 Bedtime Stories Seattle authors (left to right): Erica Bauermeister, Rebecca Brown, Charles Johnson and Harold Taw. | Provided photos

Bedtime Stories Seattle

WHEN: FRIDAY, OCT. 4, 2013

WHERE: THE FAIRMONT OLYMPIC HOTEL'S SPANISH BALLROOM, 411 UNIVERSITY ST., SEATTLE

SEATTLE SPONSORS

LITERARY LEGEND:

amazon.com

RENOWNED CRITICS:

The Boeing Company

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David and Catherine Skinner

MORE ONLINE

5 QUESTIONS INTERVIEWS WITH THIS YEAR'S BEDTIME STORIES AUTHORS: SparkMag.org/tag/fall13-bedtime

NOTE: For information on becoming a sponsor or purchasing a table for either event, contact Wendy Stauff at events@humanities.org or (206) 682-1770 x109. A limited number of individual tickets are also available.



THE PECULIAR INTELLIGENCE OF PARROTS

By **Garth Stein** | author of *The Art of Racing in the Rain*

Have you bolted your house to its foundation yet?

Read the newspapers. Turn on the TV. “A megathrust quake is inevitable.” “It’s just a matter of time before the Cascadia fault lets loose.” “The ocean floor will rise; volcanoes will erupt; low-land soil will liquify.”

I repeat: have you bolted your house to its foundation yet?

My dad had this line he thought was really funny. If he and my mom were fighting, he would say, “Every other weekend, two weeks over the summer and Christmas every other year.” He would pause, and

then deliver his punch line: “That’s when you can come stay in my condo in West Seattle after the divorce.”

That’s funny, right? But then one weekend I found myself sitting in my divorced dad’s condo in West Seattle, and I realized that sometimes when people make jokes, they’re actually foretelling the future. Like Cassandra, who could tell the future but no one would believe her. Imagine you could tell the future, but you didn’t even believe yourself. That’s my dad. The shape of an “L” on his forehead.

My name is Trevor and I live in Seattle near Seward Park, and I’m in sixth grade. I have a little brother who’s pretty cool. His name is Joseph Benjamin, so we call him Joby. He’s only five. Which means my parents didn’t have sex very often. Like once every seven years or so. Which is part

of the reason that my dad is living in West Seattle and my mom is dating her Pilates instructor.

I’m pretty much in charge of Joby, because my mother isn’t really good at the whole “mother thing.” Her words. So one afternoon I put a couple of frozen burritos in the microwave, and I turned on the local news to check the weather – and there was a feature about a gang of feral parrots, maybe two hundred of them, living in Seward Park. Parrots squawk a lot, a scientist said, and people get sick of the noise, so they set them free and they somehow find each other in Seward Park. So after we ate our burritos, I put Joby in his Chariot and took him down to the park to look for them.

I didn’t think we’d find them, but it seemed like an adventure. We went up the hill and deep into the woods and the



city faded away, and, up in a tree, Joby saw one right away. Like it was expecting us. It was dark and scruffy and had a long tail. It had the distinctive curved beak, and a round head and upright stance, and when I looked at it I was mesmerized. A parrot in Seward Park. I realized the trees were full of them. We had found their home.

“Polly want a cracker?” I asked, and I took out a box of Ritz crackers and tossed one of them high into the air. None of them budged. Not even a blink.

“Polly want a peanut?” I asked, and this time I fired a roasted unsalted peanut at one parrot’s head, and I swear to God, that parrot reached out with its foot and snatched the peanut out of the sky, cracked it open with its sharp beak and ate the nuts out of it. Then he looked at me – right at me – wondering if I might have more.

I had more. I fired another peanut at the same parrot and got the same result. And soon, Joby and I were covered with parrots.

Parrots don’t talk, they imitate. They can sound like they’re talking, but they don’t really form sentences. They’re like Xerox machines made out of feathers and blood.

But they do read.

And one day, when Joby and I went to visit our parrot friends, they brought us a whole bunch of newspapers, which I didn’t think was totally weird initially. I mean they live in a busy park in the middle of the city. People leave their papers around and the parrots steal them, right? And I might have thought it was random, the papers they brought us. Except they were all from different months and different years, even. And they all featured one of three things: a story about a potential earthquake, a drawing of an old-fashioned hot air balloon, or an ad for a rubber raft.

“What do you think?” I asked Joby as we studied the papers.

He said: “An earthquake balloon boat.”

I love Joby. Five years old and he plays the piano like a crazy piano genius. Not like a little kid who’s been taking lessons for years and can play some Chopin Étude that’s been pounded into his head by a \$40-an-hour piano teacher. Joby, who has never taken a piano lesson in his life, can hear a song on the radio and then sit at an empty piano at a shopping mall or school

auditorium or some aunt’s house where my mother has dumped us for a weekend so she could go to an ashram with her boyfriend because my dad refused to take us because “it wasn’t on his schedule,” Joby can sit down and play that song. Beautifully. Straight out of his head. Like – bang! Elton John or Billy Joel. And, sure, it’s corny like, *New York State of Mind*. But he can play it so it makes you cry. That’s what pisses me off about all this. Joby should be famous. He should be on *America’s Got Talent*, or something. He shouldn’t be lost to anonymity and mediocrity because his parents are losers. (Did I tell you about the “L” on my mother’s forehead? It’s bigger than my father’s.)

Look, I’m busy. I’m in sixth grade. I’ve got tons of work to do all the time. And my parents are screw-ups. So while I was

impressed by the newspaper collection presented to me by the feral parrots of Seward Park, and while I was moved by my brother's assessment of those articles, I guess, like any adult figure, I ignored the signs.

It was a few weeks after the newspaper incident that the next strange thing happened. My dad was bringing me home from West Seattle one morning and he stopped abruptly in the middle of 31st Avenue. A family of five raccoons was crossing the street.

"I've never seen raccoons in the day before," I said to my dad.

"Neither have I," he admitted. "They're probably rabid. Stay away from them."

But they didn't look rabid.

That night I was taking the compost to the bin in the back alley, and I saw a coyote run by. Really! In Mount Baker. Raccoons in the street. Coyotes in the alley. Parrots bringing newspapers.

I'm no genius. But I'm not a dumb ass, either. I got myself ready.

A blow-up raft and foot pump. Two hundred feet of nylon rope cut into five-foot lengths. Aluminum paddle. Five bags of roasted, unsalted peanuts. Seventy-nine dollars of accumulated cash gifts, excluding coins (too heavy). My dad's grill lighter. Survival radio my Uncle Lester gave me before he vanished mysteriously

(possibly a Jewish mafia kill, my dad says). Water purification tablets I got with my mom's REI dividend because she never uses it. Water bottles for me and Joby. Jalapeno beef jerky from Leschi Market. Underwear and socks for me and Joby.

That's what's in my earthquake preparedness kit. What's in yours?

My mother was over at Jake's house when it started. Jake lived nearby, and my mom said I was big enough to watch Joby and I should call her if anything went wrong.

If you've never been in one, let me tell you: It's scary as shit. It starts as a deep rumble. And the dogs start barking, and then the car alarms go off, and it's a cacophony of sound. But when the shaking doesn't stop right away and it grows into an earth dance, and when you can picture these huge tectonic plates ramming against each other twenty miles below the ground, you realize your scale is tiny compared to what is happening. Titans are clashing. And you? You are a speck on one of their swords.

When the electricity goes out and the dogs are so afraid they've stopped howling but the wave is still going even though you've counted to twenty a bunch of times. That's when it gets really scary. When it keeps going beyond that.

The first thing I do is make sure I'm alive, and I am. So the next thing I do is make sure Joby is alive, and he is. And that is very good. Our entire house — not bolted

to the foundation, by the way — has slid down the hill and is resting neatly in the street. The world is full of people in pajamas. They're all standing outside of their houses — or what's left of their houses, as many are in rubble. They're scratching their bleeding heads. Some of them are screaming in pain. But the ones who aren't in pain are silent, like zombies.

And there's a terrible sucking sound, like the earth is taking one long, deep wet breath.

I put Joby in his Chariot and pedal as fast as I can down Lake Washington Boulevard. The world is devoid of electric lights, but full of light from the moon and from fires that have ignited from broken gas lines. We snake our way through the carnage of fallen trees.

I look back at Joby. He's in his bicycle stroller scared to death. "We'll be okay," I reassure him, though I'm not so sure myself.

We make it to Seward Park, and I blow up our raft with the foot pump. I throw a couple of peanuts into the air. Nothing. Maybe our parrots have already fled. I tie the lengths of nylon rope to the safety rope that encircles our raft. I don't know if it's going to work, but those parrots were trying to tell us something when they brought us the newspapers: an earthquake balloon boat. I grab a handful of peanuts and throw them high into the air.

“Polly want a peanut?” I yell.

They appear out of nowhere. They don’t take the peanuts; they’re just as afraid as we are. I hold one of the ropes in the air. God I hope this works; it was their idea! One of the birds flies over me and grabs the rope with his talons and lifts it into the air. Others follow his lead. Joby and I climb into the boat and the birds start flapping like mad, and suddenly we’re flying.

Parrots are exceptionally smart, the TV show said. They are also exceptionally strong fliers. They take turns on the ropes, doing a neat little rotation, so we always have about a hundred birds flying in a cloud around us, forty of them holding onto our ropes. Like this, we fly through the night at about three hundred feet.

I don’t know if it’s going to work, but those parrots were trying to tell us something when they brought us the newspapers: an earthquake balloon boat.

Both floating bridges are gone. We clear Mount Baker ridge and get a view of downtown. Columbia Center is gone, as is the building that looks like a giant circumcised penis. Everything is glowing orange from fires. Puget Sound has surged, maybe a tsunami. Harbor Island and SoDo are submerged under black water. The West Seattle Bridge has collapsed. I wonder where our dad is. I wonder about our mom. But there’s no room for them in our raft anyway.

I point south and the birds turn our craft; we follow I-5, which looks like a river. Everything is dark. The entire coast, it seems. I turn the crank generator on my little survival radio and tune for a station, but I get only static. Finally, I find a weak signal.

“... devastation is absolute. The entire West Coast has fallen into the sea. If anyone can hear us, please help. Please. Send help ...”

We continue flying through the night with no known destination and just the kindness of a rag tag group of feral parrots to depend on. Joby looks up at me.

“When are we going to get there?” he asks.

I don’t have the heart to tell him I’m not sure there’s even a there to get to.

“Soon, Joby,” I say. “We’ll get there real soon.” ^h_w



Provided photo

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Garth Stein is the bestselling author of *The Art of Racing in the Rain* and two other novels. He is the co-founder of the nonprofit organization Seattle7Writers and currently lives in Seattle’s Columbia City neighborhood with his wife, three sons and their dog Comet.

Stein debuted “The Peculiar Intelligence of Parrots” in 2010 at Humanities Washington’s annual Bedtime Stories literary gala in Seattle. He returned to Bedtime Stories as emcee in 2011 and as a guest reader in 2012. This year, he and wife Drella are serving as honorary co-chairs of the Seattle event.

To learn more about Stein, visit garthstein.com.



CHARLES JOHNSON HONORED WITH HUMANITIES WASHINGTON AWARD

Celebrated author, teacher makes lasting impact on state's literary scene

By Jefferson Robbins | for Humanities Washington

Charles Johnson | Photo from the Humanities Washington archives

Charles R. Johnson sees storytelling as problem-solving. Fifteen years ago, he helped give Washington writers a new riddle to answer.

Johnson, 65, was among the founders of Humanities Washington's annual Bedtime Stories gala, in which writers from around the state develop an original story based on a theme, then present them live at a dinner event. Fitting, then, that when Johnson receives the organization's Humanities Washington Award Oct. 4, he'll do so as part of this year's Bedtime Stories readings at the Fairmont Olympic Hotel in Seattle.

The Humanities Washington Award is presented annually to "extraordinary individuals and organizations working throughout Washington state to ensure that the humanities are a part of our lives." It was initiated in 1995 in memory of Yakima's Heather C. Frank, who was an ardent supporter of the public humanities throughout her lifetime.

"It's very humbling," Johnson says. "I was just looking over the past recipients of this particular award, and they're very, very

MORE ONLINE

5 QUESTIONS INTERVIEWS
WITH CHARLES JOHNSON:
SparkMag.org/tag/fall13-johnson

JOHNSON READING OF "NIGHT
HAWKS" AT BEDTIME STORIES 2008
SparkMag.org/tag/fall13-johnson-video

distinguished and diverse people ... who've all made very selfless contributions to the humanities, to culture, to literacy."


That describes Johnson, too, though he shrugs off the suggestion with a laugh. The Seattle author, scholar and illustrator has won the National Book Award, MacArthur and Guggenheim fellowships, and numerous other honors for his work — not least his 1990 novel *Middle Passage*, an odyssey into the 1830s slave trade.

E. Ethelbert Miller, a fellow writer and academic who created a one-year blog project with Johnson as its focus, considers his subject a Renaissance man. "I'm always learning

something from Charles," Miller says. "He is a master teacher and mentor to many."

An Illinois native, Johnson has lived in Seattle since 1976, when he arrived to teach at the University of Washington. In that time, he has proved to be a force in the local arts community while producing a torrent of stories, essays and other media projects.

Bedtime Stories had its origins in 1998 with Johnson's problem-solving aesthetic, when he suggested that Humanities Washington's then-president Margaret Ann Bollmeier stage authors' readings with fresh works created from a seed concept — "bedtime" — rather than existing stories. Johnson penned a story for the inaugural event in 1999 — and for every Seattle event since.

"For me, it's been a joy to participate every single year, for the simple reason that I love storytelling, and I like to be given a challenge as a professional writer," Johnson says. "... It isn't writing for money, and it isn't writing for attention. It's writing to solve a puzzle that you've been given. And I think that's what the creative process is really all about." 

'A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE'

The humanities bring a rural Washington community together for a discussion

By John K. Roth | guest commentary

Earlier this year, people from the Methow Valley in rural Washington came together for a conversation. About hate and forgiveness. Ignorance and understanding. And what it means when tragedy leaves a community forever changed.

The occasion was a production of *The Laramie Project*, a play about the murder of Matthew Shepard, a gay university student who was robbed and beaten to death just outside Laramie, Wyo., in October of 1998. Supported by a grant from Humanities Washington, the two-show production drew more than 200 people to The Merc Playhouse in Twisp, a town of fewer than 1,000. I was honored to facilitate the insightful discussion that followed the show both nights.

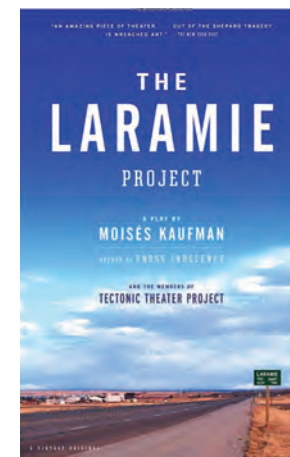
The murder of Matthew Shepard left its mark on Laramie. Nevertheless, the people of that community continued to affirm what one of the play's characters says about the town: "It's a good place to live. Good people, lots of space." Even when tragedy strikes, the same can be

said of Twisp and many other places in Washington state, including its cities, where space is not wide open rural-style but still vast and rich with possibilities.

Humanities Washington supported the Merc's production and discussion of *The Laramie Project* because its mission is to spark conversation and critical thinking to help make Washington's communities good places to live. The theater gatherings in Twisp serve as a perfect example of that mission in action. Actors explored not only a script but also questions prompted by the events that led to the play, and the audience responded. That conversation — its agreements and disagreements, its doubts and hesitations as well as its convictions and passions — nurtured the inquiry, insight and inspiration needed to support and sustain all that is good in the civic life we share.

Active for 40 years in places small and large all across this state, Humanities Washington believes passionately in the transformative power of humanities

"Such content helps people deepen respect for one another, strengthens awareness of where we have been and where we need to be going, and shows why it is essential to take nothing good for granted."



The cover to *The Laramie Project*, a play inspired by the 1998 murder of University of Wyoming student Matthew Shepard.
| Provided photo




Rose Weagant, Joe Marver and Morgan Tate, three of the actors from The Merc Playhouse's recent production of *The Laramie Project*. | Photo by Mark Wenzel (courtesy of The Merc Playhouse)

programming. Such content helps people deepen respect for one another, strengthens awareness of where we have been and where we need to be going, and shows why it is essential to take nothing good for granted. In public places like The Merc Playhouse, the humanities bring people together in these ways.

With resources from the National Endowment for the Humanities, augmented and leveraged by its own fundraising, Humanities Washington is notably part of a national network of 56 state and territorial humanities councils. Throughout the United States, in libraries and museums, classrooms and parks, pubs and malls, these independent nonprofit organizations champion

grassroots programs that advance literacy, awareness and appreciation of the history Americans share, and understanding of the significant and often difficult issues that face our country and world in the 21st century.

Given our international and interconnected circumstances, the United States needs to be increasingly innovative, competitive and strong. If our country is to sustain that vitality, individual Americans have to be creative, well-educated and capable of making complex decisions that are strategically and ethically sound. Making the world a good place to live depends on those ingredients. Humanities Washington exists to grow, sustain and expand them. Participation

in its activities gives all Washingtonians an opportunity to advance that worthy cause. 



John K. Roth, professor emeritus of philosophy at Claremont McKenna College, is a resident of Winthrop, a member of The Merc Playhouse board and a trustee of Humanities Washington. He also chairs the Federation of State Humanities Councils.

Compiled by **Humanities Washington staff**

Prime Time Family Reading Program to Expand

STATEWIDE – A combination of demonstrated need and strong support from both public and private funders has led to an expansion of Humanities Washington's Family Reading program in 2013-14.

Using the Prime Time Family Reading curriculum developed by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, Humanities Washington partners with local libraries to deliver services to educationally and economically at-risk families across the state. Each six-week series, led by a scholar and storyteller, builds reading skills, nurtures familial bonds and helps participating children become stronger readers and thinkers.

Following a 2012 pilot program in Lynnwood, Prime Time expanded to Shoreline and Spokane earlier this year. Thanks to generous support from The Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Wockner Foundation, Prime Time is set to return to Spokane and expand to Mukilteo and Walla Walla this fall.

In addition, Prime Time series in Port Townsend, the Tri-Cities and other areas are planned for 2014.

"We're thrilled that additional support is allowing us to meet needs in other areas around the state," said Julie Ziegler, executive director of Humanities Washington.

MORE ONLINE: For more information about Humanities Washington's Family Reading program, visit humanities.org/reading

Humanities Washington Moves to New Office

SEATTLE – Humanities Washington recently relocated to Seattle's South Lake Union neighborhood. The new address is:

Humanities Washington
1015 8th Ave. N., Suite B
Seattle, WA 98109

Email addresses – including the main address, info@humanities.org – and phone numbers – including the front desk, (206) 682-1770 – remain the same.

Office hours: Mon–Fri, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Four Organizations Earn Summer Spark Grants

STATEWIDE – Humanities Washington recently awarded \$28,500 during the summer round of its revamped Spark Grants program. The awards went to four innovative programs around the state aimed at encouraging community dialogue:

- **Bellingham:** Whatcom County Library Foundation – Whatcom Reads! 2014
- **Seattle:** Short Run small press fest – Read/Write
- **Spokane:** KYRS – Thin Air Community Radio

- **Omak:** Wenatchee Valley College at Omak – Mourning Dove Symposium and Celebration

More information about each of these programs is available at SparkMag.org/tag/fall13-grants.

Grant recipients will roll out their programs over the next several months. All of these programs will be open to the public. Look for more information, as details become available, at humanities.org/calendar.

MORE ONLINE: To learn more or apply to one of Humanities Washington's Grants programs, visit humanities.org/grants

Community College Leaders Join Humanities Washington Board

STATEWIDE – Humanities Washington welcomed two new members to its Board of Trustees in 2013:

- Mary Carr, of Spokane, is executive director of Library Services for the Community Colleges of Spokane.
- Joan Penney, of Mount Vernon, is the dean of Humanities and Social Sciences at Edmonds Community College.

Carr and Penney joined the board in January and are each serving an initial term of three years. Both also serve on the organization's Fund Development Committee.

MORE ONLINE: For more information about Humanities Washington's Board of Trustees, visit humanities.org/board

JOIN US!

A selection of upcoming Humanities Washington events

9.16-9.17.13

**HIDDEN TREASURES IN
WASHINGTON'S MUSEUMS**

NORTH CENTRAL WASHINGTON

– Journalist Harriet Baskas presents a fast-paced, photo-filled and, at times, offbeat tour of Washington history through the stories of museum artifacts that are rarely – if ever – shown to the public. Four conversations over two days, visiting Entiat, Chelan, Manson and Wenatchee.

10.10.13

**THINK & DRINK:
BIT BY BIT: THE DIGITAL
EVOLUTION OF THE
NEIGHBORHOOD**

TACOMA – Humanities Washington's popular Think & Drink discussion series expands to Tacoma! Join technology journalist Alex Alben and University of Puget Sound Professor Amy Fisher at the Pantages Theater for an enjoyable evening of enlightening conversation and tasty beverages.

10.10–10.11.13

**A WORLD OF SWEETS IN
WASHINGTON STATE**

CENTRAL WASHINGTON – From bienenstich to bánh xu xê, marzipan to mochi, the diverse range of sweets we enjoy across Washington state reveals much about our shared history and culture. Anthropologist Julia Harrison leads this pair of sweet conversations in Moses Lake and Yakima.

10.14–11.25.13

PRIME TIME FAMILY READING

SPOKANE and WALLA WALLA –

The Prime Time program brings families together each week for a fun evening of food, storytelling and discussion. The next pair of free, six-week series get underway this fall, in partnership with the Spokane County Library District and the Walla Walla Public Library.

NOTE: This program is not open to the general public.

12.4.13

**INK-STAINED AMAZONS
AND CINEMATIC WARRIORS:
SUPERWOMEN IN MODERN
MYTHOLOGY**

CENTRALIA – In this lively multimedia presentation, pop-culture historian Jennifer K. Stuller explores how the female hero in modern mythology has broken through the boys' club barrier of tradition. This conversation invites participants to think deeper about popular culture, media, gender images and storytelling.



Mochi at the Panama Hotel Tea & Coffee House in Seattle's International District.
| Photo by Abby Rhinehart

MORE ONLINE

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THESE EVENTS, ALONG WITH A COMPLETE
CALENDAR OF HUMANITIES WASHINGTON ACTIVITIES (SORTABLE BY REGION):
humanities.org/calendar

2012

ANNUAL
REPORT

humanities.org



Emcee Nancy Pearl sparks conversation at Bedtime Stories in Seattle. | Photo by Tracey Salazar



Eager learners at Prime Time Family Reading in Lynnwood. | Photo by Adam Knight

OUR MISSION:

Humanities Washington sparks conversation and critical thinking using story as a catalyst, nurturing thoughtful and engaged communities across our state.

For Humanities Washington, 2012 was a year of tremendous evolution.

Through the lens of our recently refined mission statement (see above), we got to work retooling long-standing programs to better reflect our new focus:

- **Family Reading** piloted Prime Time Family Reading, a humanities-rich literacy curriculum that brings families together with the transformative power of story.
- **Grants** now include Spark Grants, which support cultural programs that bring people together to discuss issues important to their community.
- **Speakers Bureau** introduced a diverse new group of presenters, all eager to travel the state and engage Washingtonians in conversations about a wide range of topics.

• **Traveling Exhibits** found a new partner in the Washington State Historical Society, leading to a tour of the state-centric *Hope in Hard Times: Washington During the Great Depression* exhibition.

Along with newer programs — from Think & Drink to the Washington State Poet Laureate — these revamped offerings better positioned Humanities Washington to bring people together to discuss, think about and celebrate our differences *and* common ground.

In this 2012 Annual Report, we share the highlights from this past year — and thank the supporters who made those successes possible. As we move into the new year — our 40th serving Washington state — I'd like to extend a personal invitation to join us: Visit our website (humanities.org) and online magazine (SparkMag.org) for the latest on our upcoming programs and events.

Thank you for your continued support. The work we do would not be possible without you!



A stylized handwritten signature of John A. Baule.

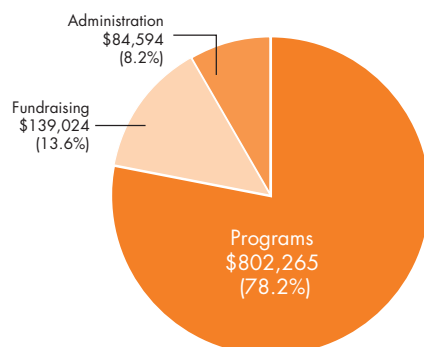
John A. Baule
Board Chair

Humanities Washington is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in Washington state.

MORE ONLINE

EXTENDED VERSION OF THIS
ANNUAL REPORT AND REPORTS
FROM PREVIOUS YEARS:
humanities.org/annualreports

**2012 TOTAL
EXPENSES:
\$1,025,883**



MAKING IT HAPPEN: 2012 SUPPORTERS

Thank You to Our Contributors!

Our friends and supporters help Humanities Washington nurture thoughtful and engaged communities by ensuring we can continue to provide very low-cost or free programming in all corners of the state.

\$35,000 AND ABOVE

The Boeing Company
National Endowment for the Humanities
Wockner Foundation

\$15,000 TO \$34,999

Amazon.com
Norcliffe Foundation
State of Washington

\$5,000 TO \$14,999

The Hugh and Jane Ferguson
Foundation
Kongsgaard-Goldman Foundation
Hazel Miller Foundation
OneFamily Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts/ArtsWA
PEMCO Insurance
Red Lion Hotels Corporation*
David Skinner & Catherine Eaton Skinner
Anne & Jess Walter*
Cynthia Wells & Tim Kerr*

\$2,500 TO \$4,999

Avista Foundation
Kenneth and Marleen Alhadeff
BMO Private Bank
Debbi & Paul Brainerd
A.J. Epstein*
Hagan Foundation Center for
the Humanities at Spokane
Community College
Denise & Thomas Harnly

Lucia & Leo Huntington*
Larry Kinner & Dolores Hecht*
Dan Lamberton & Linda Andrews*
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Michael Longyear*
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ABOUT HUMANITIES WASHINGTON

As the state's flagship nonprofit for the humanities, our work brings people together to learn about their unique pasts and shared present, promotes respect for other perspectives, encourages community dialogue and nurtures relationships that enable us to move toward a more prosperous future.

By acting as a catalyst and facilitator, we support and partner with a wide network of communities, organizations and individuals across the state. Together, we provide low- or no-cost, high-quality cultural and educational programs that engage audiences in conversation, civil discourse, critical thinking and the democratic process.

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Humanities Washington sparks conversation and critical thinking using story as a catalyst, nurturing thoughtful and engaged communities across our state.

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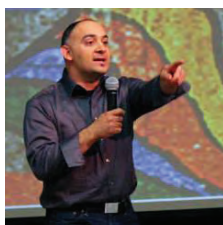
BEDTIME STORIES is an annual literary celebration featuring critically acclaimed Northwest writers unveiling new short stories created specifically for dinner galas in Seattle and Spokane. National Book Award winner Charles Johnson has called it “the region’s premier literary event.”



FAMILY READING uses storytelling and discussion to explore cultural and ethical themes in children’s literature and emphasizes the importance of families reading together. The program partners with local libraries to serve economically and educationally vulnerable families.



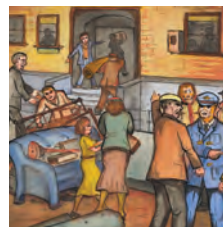
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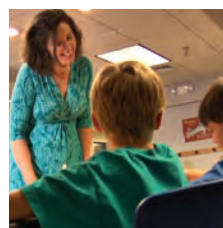
SPEAKERS BUREAU draws from a pool of leading cultural experts and scholars to provide free conversational lecture events for community partners to offer local audiences throughout the state. Speakers present on topics ranging from history to culture to current events.



THINK & DRINK brings hosted conversations on provocative topics and new ideas to pubs and tasting rooms around the state. Each event features topical experts sharing information and stories, then engaging audience members in lively conversation.



TRAVELING EXHIBITS tours museum-quality exhibits and dynamic programming to underserved areas and surprising venues around the state. The 2013-14 exhibit is *Hope in Hard Times*, a look at Depression-era Washington. (In partnership with the Washington State Historical Society.)



WASHINGTON STATE POET LAUREATE serves to build awareness and appreciation of poetry – including the state’s legacy of poetry – through public readings, workshops, lectures and presentations throughout the state. (In partnership with ArtsWA.)

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