

JEROME FOUNDATION FY 2008 Grants Awarded in Literature

African Voices Communications

AFRICAN VOICES, New York City, is dedicated to presenting art and literature by writers and artists of color. It strives for literary and artistic excellence while showcasing the unique and diverse stories within the African Diaspora. It's published the work of more than 500 emerging writers and artists. In addition to publishing a literary magazine, it sponsors readings, conferences and art exhibitions. A Jerome grant of \$7,500 enhanced the organization's capacity to serve emerging writers, paying contributors' fees for emerging poets and fiction writers and publication costs.

The Asian American Writers' Workshop

THE ASIAN AMERICAN WRITERS' WORKSHOP, New York City, received \$21,000 in support of programs and services that support the development of new works by emerging Asian American writers. The Workshop, devoted to Asian American arts and letters, operates writing workshops, hosts author readings, organizes panel discussions about issues affecting its constituents, offers programs for young authors, supports emerging writers through mentoring and fellowships, sponsors writing competitions, and presents an annual literary awards program. Jerome support is directed to those programs that engage emerging authors.

Cave Canem Foundation

Directors authorized \$8,500 for CAVE CANEM, New York City, in support of a New York City-based workshop for emerging African American poets. Cave Canem is a home for the many voices of African American poetry and is committed to cultivating the artistic and professional development of African American poets. The 11-session workshop included instruction in craft and the creation and critique of new poems, followed by public readings with poets presenting work produced while in the workshop. Noted African American poets who have strong teaching abilities lead the workshops. Outcomes are participants' increased self-confidence, a deepened appreciation of diverse aesthetics and a willingness to experiment with new strategies and forms.

Coffee House Press

COFFEE HOUSE PRESS, Minneapolis, Minnesota, received a two-year grant of \$32,500 in support of the publication of books by emerging authors. Coffee House Press is a literary publisher noted for consistently high editorial standards, a sense of discovery and a commitment to celebrating diverse writers. It reviews solicited and unsolicited manuscripts to identify new and emerging voices. Jerome Foundation support is directed toward six books by emerging authors, the majority of whom are based in Minnesota and New York City. The books include works in fiction, memoir and poetry.

The Council of Literary Magazines and Presses

THE COUNCIL OF LITERARY MAGAZINES AND PRESSES (CLMP), New York City, received a two-year grant of \$92,000 in support of a pilot program titled Face Out: Maximizing the Visibility of Emerging Writers. CLMP, a national service and advocacy organization, supports and promotes noncommercial literary publishing to ensure that readers and writers are well served by a strong and vibrant literary culture. Through Face Out, CLMP competitively awarded grants to four independent publishers to build emerging author/publisher relationships with eight writers. Funding supported author advances, author tours and author-focused marketing initiatives. CLMP provided technical assistance through workshops, roundtables and evaluation sessions for the publishers and emerging writers participating in the program. The strategies and techniques developed were documented in monographs.

Graywolf Press

GRAYWOLF PRESS, St. Paul, Minnesota, received \$15,000 in support of the publication of books by emerging authors. Graywolf Press is dedicated to the creation and promotion of thoughtful and imaginative contemporary literature essential to a vital and diverse culture. It supports authors whose work conveys a distinct vision by way of a singular voice and a vigorous engagement with the possibilities of language. It publishes poetry, fiction and literary nonfiction; local as well as national and international writers; and established authors alongside new emerging talents. Throughout its history, Graywolf has taken risks on new writers whose readership is unproven. These include first and second book authors for whom Jerome subsidy was awarded. The Press secures opportunities for emerging writers to further their careers and their writing.

Hmong Arts Connection

THE HMONG ARTS CONNECTION, St. Paul, Minnesota, received \$11,000 to support literary publication, public readings and writing workshops for emerging artists working in poetry, short fiction, novel and memoir. The mission of Hmong Arts Connection is to promote and preserve Hmong expressive culture. It publishes Paj Ntaub Voice, a journal that builds a vibrant body of emerging Hmong writers and visual artists, promotes their work, and celebrates and affirm their artistry to the broader public. Paj Ntaub Voice has published over 200 emerging Hmong writers and artists.

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Intermedia Arts Minnesota

A grant of \$52,000 was made to INTERMEDIA ARTS in support of the 2008 Writer-to-Writer Mentorship Program, the S.A.S.E./Jerome Fellowships for Writers and the VERVE Awards for Spoken Word Poets. This constellation of three literary/spoken word programs serving emerging artists was originally supported under the auspices of S.A.S.E.: The Write Place. S.A.S.E./Jerome Fellowships have made it possible for over 70 emerging writers to enhance their literary work and careers in ways that are meaningful to them. Five to seven grants ranging in size from \$500 to \$5,000 are awarded via an open call and competitive review by an independent panel. The Writer-to-Writer Mentorship Program identifies mentors and solicits applications from emerging writers who work with these mentors to develop in skill and confidence, and receive highly individualized attention and learning. The program is offered twice a year, in fall and spring semesters. The VERVE Awards for Spoken Word Poets provide five \$3,000 stipends to emerging Minnesota spoken word poets. Selections are made by a nationally recognized spoken word artist. VERVE Awards are used for various purposes specific to the recipients.

The Loft Literary Center

THE LOFT LITERARY CENTER, Minneapolis, Minnesota, received a two-year grant of \$100,000 in support of the Mentor Series. The Loft serves over 600,000 writers and readers of all ages each year. Its mission is to foster a writing community, support the artistic development of individual writers and build an audience for literature. The Loft received support for the Mentor Program, initiated in 1979 as a vehicle for emerging Minnesota writers to work in small group settings with nationally recognized writers, and to be mentored by them in various ways ranging from review of their work to providing inspiration and examples for a writing life. Twelve emerging Minnesota-based writers (four in poetry, four in fiction, and four in creative nonfiction) are selected through a competitive process to work with six nationally acclaimed writers (two in each genre). The program includes individual conferences, group sessions, craft seminars, manuscript conferences and public readings.

The Loft Literary Center

THE LOFT LITERARY CENTER, Minneapolis, Minnesota, received a two-year grant of \$100,000 in support of the Minnesota Writers Career Initiative Program. The Loft, an independent literary center, fosters a writing community, supports the artistic development of individual writers, and builds an audience for literature. The Career Initiative Program serves writers who have achieved recognition for their work and have the potential to significantly expand that recognition and audience. The program, which utilizes and leverages this potential in order to advance the writers, is open to poets, prose writers, authors of children's literature and spoken word artists. Projects may include editorial or mentoring support for new manuscripts; career development activities such as developing public speaking skills, book tours and collaborations with other writers or artists; strategies for connecting with communities or regions important to a writer's voice or genre; and the creation of audio books, CDs and websites.

MILKWEED EDITIONS

MILKWEED EDITIONS, Minneapolis, Minnesota, received a two-year grant of \$46,000 in support of the publication of four single author books and one anthology. Milkweed Editions, an independent, nonprofit literary publisher, releases 12 to 20 new books each year in the genres of fiction, nonfiction and poetry. Jerome Foundation funding was directed toward books by emerging authors. In 2008, in celebration of the 150th anniversary of Minnesota as a state, Milkweed published an anthology of writing from the region. A portion of Jerome funding was used for the inclusion of works by emerging writers.

Mizna

MIZNA, Minneapolis, Minnesota, is an Arab-American organization devoted to promoting Arabic culture and giving voice to Arabs through literature, art and community events. A two-year grant of \$32,000 supported the Mizna literary journal, which publishes new work by emerging and established artists, Arabs and non-Arabs. The selection process for writers begins with a call for submissions, which are then reviewed by a journal selection committee. Jerome funding of the journal supports artists' fees and publication expenses, with the requirement that a majority of the artists published be residents of Minnesota and/or New York City.

Rain Taxi

A grant of \$10,000 was awarded to RAIN TAXI, Minneapolis, Minnesota, in support of the State-to-State Poets Exchange, operated in cooperation with The Poetry Society of America, New York City. Rain Taxi is dedicated to promoting a broad spectrum of contemporary literature. It publishes the **Rain Taxi Review of Books**, enhanced by a website, a reading series, a chapbook publishing program, and the Twin Cities Book Festival. Jerome funding enabled Rain Taxi to launch a pilot program, the State-to-State Poets Exchange, serving two emerging poets, one from Minnesota and one from New York City. The purpose was to provide opportunities for emerging poets to advance works-in-progress by reading and discussing them in public dialogues with noted literary editors in the two cities. Rain Taxi published an edited version of each dialogue in the **Rain Taxi Review of Books**. Poets were selected through review of applications submitted in response to an open call.