

## **THE BETSY – SOUTH BEACH ANNOUNCES 2016 PROGRAMS FOR NATIONAL POETRY MONTH**

Artists in Residence, Portraits of Poets, Community Readings and Poetical *Eatings*

**For more information** - [dbriggs@thebetsyhotel.com](mailto:dbriggs@thebetsyhotel.com)

**The Betsy - South Beach** ([thebetsyhotel.com](http://thebetsyhotel.com)) has a full slate of events on tap for National Poetry Month 2016, including 20+ visiting poets/writers/artists, a new exhibition featuring 5 visual artists, release of a bi-lingual poetry chapbook, and poetry programming for audiences of all ages. As official host hotel for O, Miami (since 2009), The Betsy is also sponsor for many events, both off-site and on-property – 1440 Ocean Drive, Miami Beach.

*“National Poetry Month programs and our ongoing partnership with Scott Cunningham’s O, Miami Festival, are among the most important of our PACE outreach efforts all year long and cut to the heart of who we are”,* said Betsy owner, Jonathan Plutzik, whose father, Hyam Plutzik, was a three-time Pulitzer Prize finalist in poetry. PACE is The Betsy’s community-based programming (Philanthropy, Arts, Culture, and Education) that has gained the property recognition as one of the world’s great literary hotels.

### **Schedule of Events**

April 1-29 – Soap Box Poetry – The Betsy’s 5<sup>th</sup> annual homage to Hyde Park – at The Betsy – on the stoop

The Betsy Writers Room pays homage to London’s Hyde Park Speaker’s Corner through this annual initiative. Wordsmith, Poetry Champion, and founder of Odd Blue Roses, Ramos Emmanuel Mercado will host this year’s program. Members of the poetry community, are invited to read two poems in any language: one they’ve written and one by an influencer. This year’s readers will be immortalized in a publication that will be given away next year. The Betsy’s Soapbox Events for 2016 are on April 1, 4, 8, 11, 15, 18, 22, 25, 29. (Sunset). The Betsy’s Soapbox Culmination Celebration and Chapbook Release Party will be held on April 29 at 9 PM on The Betsy’s Roofdeck. To participate in these programs, send your inquiry to [artsandculture@thebetsyhotel.com](mailto:artsandculture@thebetsyhotel.com)

April 1 – Poet, Robert Pinsky in Residence – 3x US Poet Laureate, hosted by Betsy – @ the FIU Wolfsonian

Former US-Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky will be an Artist in Residence in The Betsy Writers Room (April 1-3) and will do an O, Miami public reading as part of the Favorite Poem Project at the FIU Wolfsonian April 2 at 7 PM. The event is free and open to the public. No RSVP required. For more information, visit [omiami.org](http://omiami.org).

April 2 – Le Petite Poets – Performance by Youth Poets in the MDCPS with the City of Sunrise – at The Betsy

Le Petite Poets is presented with City of Sunrise Word Up! Poetry Initiative, Orchard Elementary School, in partnership with O, Miami. The showcase places emphasis on writing, reading, and performing original works. Sady Dias, of Sunrise will host with Ed Ponder, Director of Guest Services at The Betsy Hotel. The event will be held on Saturday morning, April 2, from 11 AM to 1 PM in B Bar at The Betsy-South Beach. This event is free, suitable for children and will include lunch, but space is limited to 100 attendees. RSVP to [artsandculture@thebetsyhotel.com](mailto:artsandculture@thebetsyhotel.com)

April 8- Juan Felipe Herrera – Wallcast of US Poet Laureate’s visit to Miami Beach – at NWS Park

The Betsy was proud to host a residency by US Poet Laureate, Juan Felipe Herrera in March 2016, that included a poetry reading at the New World Center for a limited audience of 100 attendees. Video proceedings from that evening (that also included readings by local emerging poets) will be projected onto the big screen in Symphony Park in O, Miami’s annual Poetry Wallcast. For more information on this family-friendly event, visit [Omami.org](http://Omami.org)

April 9- Under the Influence – Reading by Campbell McGrath – at Miami Design Preservation League & The Betsy

Under the Influence, is an annual collaborative reading presented by The Betsy – South Beach with O, Miami, that features FIU Poetry Professor Campbell McGrath with Visiting Poet Kevin Young and regional artist Melanie Almeder. Under the Influence invites presenters to read their own poetry and the poetry of ‘influencers’ – *in other words, to read the poems that inspired them to write poems.* The reading will be at Miami Design Preservation League Visitor’s Center on April 9 from 7 to 9:30 PM, with a reception immediately following on the Roof-deck at The Betsy-South Beach. Both events are free and open to the public. RSVP to [artsandculture@thebetsyhotel.com](mailto:artsandculture@thebetsyhotel.com)

April 12- The Poetry of Art Songs – Performance by Miami Music Festival – at The Betsy

The Poetry of Art Songs is presented at Betsy and features alumni of the Miami Music Festival performing German Lieder, French Chanson, Italian Neapolitan classics, and English Arts Songs. This performance in the Salon invites the audience to experience art songs the way they were originally heard where audience and performer communicate directly. During the performance there will be an opportunity to reflect on the words that contributed to the musical experience. The event is on April 12 at 7PM and is free and open to the public as part of The Betsy's ongoing partnership with the Miami Music Festival ([miamimusicfestival.org](http://miamimusicfestival.org)) RSVP to [artsandculture@thebetsyhotel.com](mailto:artsandculture@thebetsyhotel.com)

April 12 – *Portraits of Poets* – (NEW) Exhibition opening with artists present– at The Betsy

The Betsy is proud to announce an art exhibition called *Portraits of Poets*. This collection of works will be placed in The Betsy's three major gallery spaces, the Lobby Salon Gallery (Raymond Elman), the Restaurant Gallery (Robert Zuckerman), and the Underground Gallery (Steven 'ESPO' Powers and Gesi Schilling). Also on exhibition in the hotel is Betsy's permanent collection of photographs of The Beatles and Rolling Stones, two bands whose poetry has stood the test of time. (*"Eleanor Rigby picks up the rice in the church where a wedding has been/Lives in a dream/ Waits at the window, wearing the face that she keeps in a jar by the door"*) Meet the artists at The Betsy, following a performance by the Miami Music Festival - April 12 at 8 PM. The event is free and open to the public. RSVP to [artsandculture@thebetsyhotel.com](mailto:artsandculture@thebetsyhotel.com)

April 14 –EVENT - Honoring the 1st winner of the Derricotte/Eady Chapbook Prize – at The Betsy

The Betsy Writers Room welcomes Poet Rio Cortez (April 10-15), as the inaugural winner of the Toi Derricotte & Cornelius Eady Chapbook Prize for her manuscript *"I Have Learned to Define a Field as a Space Between Mountains"*, that will be published by [jai-Alai Books](http://jai-alai-books.com) in Spring 2016. Rio Cortez is a Pushcart-nominated poet from Salt Lake City, who has received fellowships from Poets House and Canto Mundo Foundations. She was the recipient of the Sarah Lawrence College Lucy Grealy Prize and the 2012 Poets & Writers Amy Award. Rio Cortez reads on April 14 at 7:30 in BBar at The Betsy. The event is free and open to the public.

April 17 - The Yiddish Speaker's Sunday Salon Series – at The Betsy

The Betsy celebrates the legacy of Yiddish language and culture at a monthly community salon where Yiddish (and Y'English) and spoken. The program always welcomes a community artist or scholar to frame the conversation, with recent special guests including Dr. Asher Milbauer (Founder of the Exile Studies Program at FIU), Dr. Haim Shaked (Founder of the Miller Center for Contemporary Judaic Studies at University of Miami), Dr. Curt Leviant (Author of *The King of Yiddish*), Dr. Holli Levitsky (Author of *The Catskills, The Holocaust, and The Literary Imagination* and Director of the Jewish American and Holocaust Literature Association), and Dr. Annette Fromm, speaking on the Humor of the Rabbi of Chelm (Folklorist and Museum Educator). With April's special guest (to be named) slated to read and discuss Yiddish poets and poetry, Lox and Bagels will be served as a gift from Betsy Owners Jonathan Plutzik and Lesley Goldwasser – at 9:30 AM, April 24, in B bar. This event is free and open to the public, but is limited to 50 people, max. RSVP to [artsandculture@thebetsyhotel.com](mailto:artsandculture@thebetsyhotel.com)

April 22-24 – Poetry Press Week - (Elizabeth Scanlon, David Hassler, Major Jackson, Gabby Cavocoressi, & Saeed Jones)

As Host Hotel for O, Miami, the Betsy will host poetry champions (from the worlds of publishing and literary media) during Miami's First Poetry Press Week. Poetry Press Week was established in Portland, Oregon in 2013 with the mission of transforming the way unpublished poetry is presented to the literary industry, the media, and the public-at-large. By encouraging collaboration and bringing together the driving forces of literary production, Press Week hopes to revitalize the poetry publishing industry and revive popular interest in this art form. Events are listed at [Omiami.org](http://Omiami.org).

April 26-27 - Poet, Frank Bidart – at Viscaya Gardens

The Betsy is proud to welcome poet-in-residence, Frank Bidart who has gained critical attention and praise as a poet of uncompromising originality. Bidart's book *Desire* was nominated for the triple crown of awards—the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, and the National Book Critics Circle Award—and received the 1998 Rebekka Bobbitt Prize. Bidart's recent books include *Watching the Spring*

*Festival* (2008), his first book of lyric poems; and *Metaphysical Dog* (2013), which won the National Books Critics Circle Award and was a finalist for the National Book Award. Frank Bidart will present a poetry reading with Peg Boyers, Executive Editor of *Salmagundi* magazine and author of *Hard Bread* and *Honey with Tobacco*. The joint reading is on April 27 at 7 PM at Viscaya Gardens. No RSVP required. For more information, visit [Omiami.org](http://Omiami.org)

April 27-29 - Writer, Tim O'Brien –Great American 'soldier' writer receives Sanders Fiction Award @ FIU

The Betsy – South Beach in partnership with Florida International University's Writers on the Bay Program hosts Tim O'Brien, author of the acclaimed novel, *The Things They Carried* (1990), a critically acclaimed collection of semi-autobiographical, interrelated short stories inspired by O'Brien's experiences in the *Vietnam War*. O'Brien is also known for his war novel, *Going After Cacciato* (1978), and written about Vietnam war. O'Brien will receive the Lawrence Sanders Award for Fiction from Florida International University, with a public program on April 28 at 8 PM at FIU. FIU - Biscayne Bay Campus, Wolfe University Center ballroom (WUC-244). The event is free and open to the public.

April 28 - Poetry Paella Party - The Betsy w/U of Miami the Asian American Writers Conference - at Betsy

The Betsy is proud to present a community showcase of Miami writers and poets, hosted by Pablo Cartaya, including Jaswinder Bolina, Adrian Castro, MJ Fievre, Mia Leonin, Geoffrey Philip, and Carlos Pintado—on the Roof Deck of the Betsy. The night includes surprise readers from the talented pool of conference attendees, as well as a specially prepared paella dinner and drinks. Tickets can be purchased from – with attendance on Betsy's Roof Deck limited to 100 people. 7-10 PM

April 29- The Betsy's Soapbox Culmination Celebration and Chapbook Release Party – at Betsy

Hosted by Motivational Poet and founder of Odd Blue Roses, Ramos Emmanuel Mercado. Invited readers will include the more than 50 Soapbox Readers from 2015 and 2016. Sautéed Sonnets will be provided at a Tranquil Picnic at Dusk – on the Roofdeck of The Betsy Hotel – from 9 PM to 11 PM, titled after this humorous poem written by Carol Brown. Betsy's Literary Drink for 2015 – *Mot Juste* will be served.

**The Tranquil Picnic - By Carol Brown**

I'd love to be with you in a canoe  
accompanied by summer's softest breeze,  
enjoying the verdant valley view  
while drifting on a river lined with trees.

Ahead would be a peak that whisks the sky.  
We'd look above us from our little boat  
to where the eagle and the osprey fly  
as in the quiet glow of dusk we'd float.

We'd dock on sand and find a cozy spot  
to roast some hot dogs in our campfire's heat  
and spread the luscious picnic foods we'd brought;  
then relishing tranquility, we'd eat!

Amid dark, silent pines, by fire's bright light,  
we'd snuggle happily into the night.

**About The Betsy**

The Betsy-South Beach ([thebetsyhotel.com](http://thebetsyhotel.com)) is a boutique hotel located on Ocean Drive that embraces 'things that matter' under the auspices of a Philanthropy, Arts, Culture, and Education Program - with a very special focus on poetry and literature. Each room at the hotel has a small library, and a poetry bookmark is placed on each guest's pillow every night. Since reopening in 2009, the hotel has become a catalyst for energized discourse, innovative thinking, and charity, working with hundreds of nonprofit partners. The Betsy is a 2012 and 2015 Knight Foundation Arts Challenge Grant recipient for its literary programs ([thebetsywritersroom.com](http://thebetsywritersroom.com)). The Betsy is located at **1440 Ocean Drive**, Miami Beach. [305-760-6900](tel:305-760-6900)

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