

the Caribbean Writer

The Literary Gem of the Caribbean

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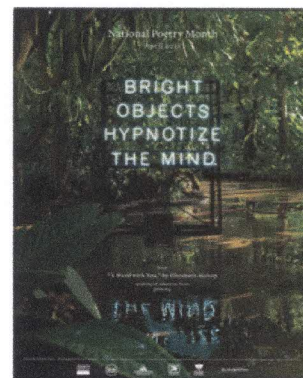
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What is National Poetry Month

The Caribbean Writer invites you to celebrate National Poetry Month in April.

National Poetry Month is a month-long, national celebration of poetry established by the Academy of American Poets in

1996. The concept is to widen the attention of individuals and the media—to the art of poetry, to living poets, to our complex poetic heritage, and to poetry books and journals of wide aesthetic range and concern.

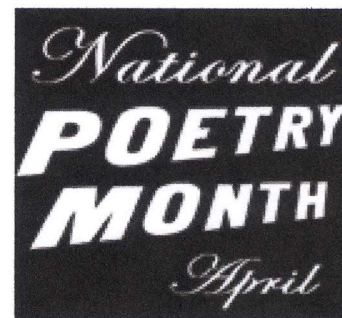


2011 National Poetry Month Poster

Poetry is always present in your life and always available to you. Give yourself permission to write a poem, and to enjoy the process.

Goals for National Poetry Month

- ▶ TCW invites you to enjoy Poetry in the Bathroom.
- ▶ We suggest you host an impromptu poetry reading.
- ▶ We encourage you to allow poetry to find you as you go about your day.
- ▶ We urge you to purchase a volume of poems during this month.
- ▶ We propose you speak to the school district to make sure poetry is an important part of the curriculum.
- ▶ We recommend that you read poems to your children and other loved ones.
- ▶ We advise you to write a poem.



Featured Virgin Islander Tutti Highfield



Tutti Highfield avidly advocates poetry stating, "Everyone should be exposed to poetry; it transports one to different levels and it can embrace everyone and all aspects of life!"



Tutti Highfield is a Puerto-Crucian, who was born and raised in Frederiksted. While in school she did not study a great deal of poetry, but the rhythm of poetry found her in another medium – dance. Mrs. Highfield says, "Poetry for me is dancing." Anyone who knows this vivacious, elegant lady recognizes this as her passion. She continues, "I have always danced and love it so that when Terry and I got married 43 years ago, my exact words were: "If you want this to work, you WILL learn to dance," and we have been dancing ever since."

A former teacher and active member of her community, Tutti Highfield was able to combine both her loves, which she describes fondly. "While teaching at Central, we recited and danced to a few *poesia negroide*—our favorite being, "Majestad Negra" by Luis Males Matos and "?Y tu aguela a' donde ejta?" by Fortunado Vizcarrondo," which she adds were, "both powerful poems."

Owing to her Puerto Rican and Spanish heritage, Mrs. Highfield was exposed, primarily to Spanish poets, and two of her favorite poems and poets are, "La Vida es Sueño" by Pedro Calderon de la Barca and "Canción de Otoño en Primavera" by Rueben Dario.

Pedro Calderon de la Barca is considered one of the most prominent playwrights of Spain from the Spanish Golden Age. A poet, former soldier and Roman Catholic priest, his work is celebrated world-wide. Rueben Dario, a Nicaragua poet, is credited for initiating modernismo (modernism), the Spanish-American literary movement. Crowned as the "Prince of Castilian Letters," Darío is an essential voice of Central and South America and is Nicaragua's greatest diplomat.

In addition to dancing and reading poetry, Mrs. Highfield continues to be intricately involved in the future of education for Virgin Islanders, and consequently is a member of the Board of Trustees of the University of the Virgin Islands. She avidly advocates poetry stating, "Everyone should be exposed to poetry; it transports one to different levels and it can embrace everyone and all aspects of life!!" Tutti Highfield lives a full life, enjoys her hubby, children, grandchildren, friends, and travel. Always mindful of her community and how to enhance the quality of life for its youth, Mrs. Highfield believes, "poetry should be taught in the schools as early as possible. It is a great avenue for learning and reading, especially when students can create, write and share about themselves and their loved ones!"

The Caribbean Writer salutes Tutti Highfield and applauds her role in promoting education and culture. We invite her to continue dancing to the music of poetry.

NATIONAL
POETRY
MONTH • APRIL
www.poetry.org

Introducing you to the African American Poet, **Robert Hayden (1913-1980)**, born Asa Bundy Sheffey in Detroit, Michigan. He earned his BA from Detroit City College, 1936, participated in the Detroit Federal Writer's Project 1936-38, and earned his MA from the University of Michigan, 1942, where he studied with W.H. Auden who had a profound impact on his poetry. He was a professor at Fisk University in Nashville for over twenty years, then went to teach at University of Michigan until his death.



Books and Awards:

Heart-Shape in the Dust: Poems (1940); *The Lion and the Archer* (1948); *Figure of Time: Poems* (1955); *A Ballad of Remembrance* (1962); *Selected Poems* (1966); *Words in the Mourning Time* (1970); *The Night-Blooming Cereus* (1972); *Angle of Ascent: New and Selected Poems* (1975); *American Journal* (1982); and *Collected Poems* (1996).

He twice received the Hopwood Award for poetry; won the Grand Prize for Poetry at the World Festival of Negro Arts for *A Ballad of Remembrance* and earned the Russell Loines Award from the National Institute of Arts and Letters

Frederick Douglass by Robert Hayden

When it is finally ours, this freedom, this liberty, this beautiful
and terrible thing, needful to man as air,
usable as earth; when it belongs at last to all,
when it is truly instinct, brain matter, diastole, systole,
reflex action; when it is finally won; when it is more
than the gaudy mumbo jumbo of politicians:
this man, this Douglass, this former slave, this Negro
beaten to his knees, exiled, visioning a world
where none is lonely, none hunted, alien,
this man, superb in love and logic, this man
shall be remembered. Oh, not with statues' rhetoric,
not with legends and poems and wreaths of bronze
alone,
but with the lives grown out of his life, the lives
fleshing his dream of the beautiful, needful thing.

Jeriline Vaughn

Elementary Education Major, STT Campus

Favorite poem and poet: "Phenomenon Woman" by Maya Angelo

"Poetry is a unique form of writing that allows individuals to express their thoughts deeply, with no strings attached. When I write poetry, it makes me feel like the world is in my hands. It brings out my imagination on paper to the fullest."

A Splendorous Rock

Beauty is the essence of St. Thomas.
Its sparkling ocean on a sunny day,
the aquatic marine life beneath Magens Bay.
The orange sun setting at U.V.I,
the spectacular scenery from the Tramway ride.
The vivid rainbow that appears after the storm
subsides,
The extravaganza of fruits and the fluorescent
colors of the hibiscus collide.
A kaleidoscope of troupes during carnival time,
the tropical mountains that one can climb.
An Island of splendor, St. Thomas is to me;
alive and vibrant in the Caribbean Sea.

Eustus Saunders

Business Administration Major, STX Campus

Favorite Poet: William Shakespeare

"Poetry gives me the opportunity to express my deepest thoughts, through words, without any limit. I see poetry as a chance to say whatever I want, whether literally or figuratively. Poetry gives me a sense of belonging. Because the poems are my personal thoughts, I feel honored to share them and have people read about my experiences."

I Want to Sing

I want to sing
I want to sing songs of freedom
I want to sing about being unshackled
I want these songs of joys to be sung around the
world
I want our laughter, our satisfied smile and our
unburdened sighs
to fill the hearts, minds and body of every man,
woman boy and girl
I want the world's lustrous melody to forever
linger like honey on the combs

