

Bios

Mark Abley is an acclaimed Canadian journalist and poet. He is a winner of a Guggenheim Fellowship, and author of a recent book of poems, *The Silver Palace Restaurant*, and *Spoken Here: Travels Among Threatened Languages*.

Dr. Oluseye Peter Adesola from Nigeria is a Professor of Linguistics and Yoruba at Yale University. He was the Assistant Director for the African Anaphora Project and has worked as a Yoruba translator for the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom at the United Nations.

Gratien Alfaro was born in Urepel, France and came to the U.S. at the young age of 16 years old as a shepherd to Los Banos, California. Today he is an accomplished landscaper in the San Francisco Bay area. He is a well-known *bertsolari* who continues to perform at Basque festivals throughout the western U.S.

Miguel Algarín is the founder of the Nuyorican Poets Café in New York City. He is the author of eight collections of poetry and co-editor of *Aloud: Voices from the Nuyorican Poets Cafe*, which won the American Book Award.

Michael Alpert is a pioneering figure in Yiddish music in America. He is the Emmy-award winning director of *Itzhak Perlman: In the Fiddler's House*, a musical tour, as well as a series of related CDs. He is a member of the renowned klezmer ensemble, Brave Old World, and performs at the Gathering with the Heymland (Home-land) Ensemble.

Anselm Berrigan is the author of *Zero Star Hotel*, *Integrity and Dramatic Life*, and the brand-new *Some Notes on My*

Programming. He co-edited the recent *The Collected Poems of Ted Berrigan* with his mother, Alice Notley, and his brother, Edmund Berrigan. He is in his third year of an already remarkable tenure as Director of the St. Mark's Poetry Project.

Ann Biersteker teaches African studies and African literature and languages at Yale University. She has written extensively on literature in Swahili and Gikuyu. Her publications include *Kujibizana: Questions of Language and Power in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Poetry in Kiswahili*; *Mashairi ya Vita vya Kudu: Poetry of the Battle of Kudu* (with Ibrahim Noor Shariff) and *Masomo ya Kisasa: Contemporary Readings in Swahili*. She has also published poetry in English and Kiswahili.

Black 47 espouses an unblinkingly political and thoroughly Irish form of rock 'n' roll, with songs covering topics from the Northern Ireland conflict to civil rights and urban unrest in contemporary New York. Larry Kirwin, their lead singer, is a poet in his own write.

Toni Blackman is a rap lyricist-writer-performer revered in the African American community for her freestyling. She works with hundreds of inner city youth, many of them master freestylers themselves – and none ever goes away without amazement at her mastery of rhythm and rhyme. She has traveled all over the world and been dubbed the U.S. "Ambassador for Hip Hop."

Max Blagg is the author of several books, most recently *Pink Instrument*, a collection of poems; a novel, *Diving for Blondes*; and the forthcoming book-length poem *Auto-bio-a-gogo*. He writes a monthly column,

"Bohemian Veneer," for New York's *Paper Magazine*.

Robert Bly is a renowned translator and author of numerous poetry collections, including *Eating the Honey of Words*, *What Have I Ever Lost by Dying?* *Collected Prose Poems*, and *Meditations on the Insatiable Soul*. His cultural criticism includes the bestseller *Iron John*, which launched the men's movement to national fame.

Carmen Boullosa is the Distinguished Lecturer at City College in the Foreign Languages Department and is one of Mexico's leading novelists, poets, and playwrights. Her latest book of poems, *Salto de mantarraya (y otros dos)*, was named as Best Book of Poetry published in Mexico for 2004 in *El Reforma*. Her latest novel in English is *Cleopatra Dismounts*.

Charles Cantalupo is a poet, scholar, critic, editor and Penn State professor, who recently authored the book of poems, *Light the Lights* (Red Sea Press, 2004) — "a startling and revelatory encounter with the very idea of Africa"; and *Who Needs A Story?: Contemporary Eritrean Poetry in Tigre, Tigrinya and Arabic* (Hdri, 2006)—translations that "testify to the indomitable nature of the human spirit." He wrote and directed the new documentary, *Against All Odds: African Languages and Literatures into the 21st Century*.

Clair are Arthur Cormack, Ingrid Henderson, Mary Ann Kennedy, Maggie MacDonald, Hector Henderson, and Chaz Stewart, a sextet of singers and musicians based in the Highlands who play traditional and contemporary Gaelic song and Highland music, often featuring unusual or forgotten material. Their close harmony vocal



Michael Alpert



Toni Blackman



Robert Bly



Clair



The Dauenhauer's



Matthew Fitt



Edward Hirsh

sound backed up by a fiddle-led powerhouse has been described as “one of the most beautiful sounds in 21st century Scotland.” Their albums include the self-titled *Cliar* and *Gun Tamh*.

Carolina Conroy, author of a book of poems, *The Beauty Wars*, facilitates a monthly memorization circle at Poets House and helps create special events at Teachers & Writers Collaborative.

Jean Curutchet (Kurutxet) was born in San Francisco and two years later his parents moved back to Ezterenzubi, Behenafarroa, their hometown in France. A gardener in San Francisco, he has been improvising poetry for over 30 years. In 2003 he received the National Endowment of the Arts National Heritage Fellowship for his work as a *bertsolari*.

Nora Marks Dauenhauer was born in Alaska and her first language is Tlingit. She has a degree in Anthropology and is internationally recognized for her fieldwork, transcription, translation, and explanation of Tlingit oral literature. She is the winner of many awards including the 1991 Before Columbus Foundation's American Book Award. She is featured in the PBS series, *The United States Of Poetry*.

Richard Dauenhauer was born in Syracuse, NY and has lived in Alaska since 1969. From 1981 to 1988 he served as the 7th Poet Laureate of Alaska, and has focused much of his professional work in applied folklore, linguistics, and teacher-training in the areas of Alaska Native languages and oral literature. From 1983 to 1997 he was Director of Languages and Cultural Studies at Sealaska Heritage Foundation in Juneau and in 2005 he accepted the position as President's Professor of Alaska Native Languages

and Culture at the University of Alaska Southeast.

Rosa Elena Egipciano is from Moca, Puerto Rico. She practices and gives classes on the art of *mundillo*, bobbin lace. She was President of the Cultural Center in Moca and traveled throughout the island giving lectures at various festivals and universities. She currently teaches at Boricua College and likes to recite poetry.

Gil Fagiani co-hosts the monthly open reading of the Italian–American Writer's Association at the Cornelia St. Café. He has two chapbooks of poetry, *Crossing 116th Street: A Blanquito in El Barrio* (Skidrow Press, 2004) and *Rooks* (Rain Mountain Press, 2005), the latter which won Honorable Mention for both the Allen Ginsberg Poetry Award and the Bordighera Prize. This year he translated nine poems of Cesare Fagiani written in the Abruzzese dialect which will be published in the premier issue of *The Journal of Italian Translation*.

Al Filreis is the Kelly Professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania and the Faculty Director at the Kelly Writers House. He is a specialist in modern and contemporary American poetry and the literary politics of the American 1930s and 1950s. He is the author of *Modernism from Right to Left*.

Vanessa Fisher is a visual and performing artist and storyteller. She was born and raised in an all-Aboriginal community, Cherbourg, Queensland and is descendant of the Dungibara/Garumgar, Jiman and Ewamin peoples. The cultural practices of song, dance, art, music, and language are a part of her daily life as well as the practices shared for survival and living off the land for hunting and spiritual purposes.

She is a teacher and speaker of several languages of Southeast Queensland including Turrbul, Wakka Wakka, Gubbi Gubbi and the languages of the Maranoa and Dawson Rivers. Her works are held in the collection of the National Museum of Australia, the Queensland Museum, and other major museums.

Matthew Fitt, born in Dundee in 1968, is currently National Scots Language Development Officer and has been a Brownbank Fellow. He has lived in Pribram in central Bohemia. He writes in Scots and English, his most recent publications being the novel *But N Ben A-Go-Go* (Luath, 2000), and his second poetry collection, *Kate o Shanter's Tale and Other Poems* (Luath, 2003), also available on CD. He is also a founding editor of Itchy Co., a press for children's books in Scots.

Martin Goicoechea was born in the small town of Gorriti, in the province of Nafarroa. When he was 18, Martin came to the United States—Rock Springs, Wyoming to work for a sheep ranch. From the age of 8 years old, Martin had a great interest in *bertsolaritza*. When the *bertsolaris* were singing on the radio, nobody could move him or persuade him to turn off the radio. In 2003 he received the National Endowment of the Arts National Heritage Fellowship for his work as a *bertsolari*.

Jesús Goñi was born in Oronoz, Naffarroa. He came to live and work in Arizona in 1965 as a shepherd. He served a brief stint in the Spanish military where he would sing poetry with a fellow *bertsolari* in his military camp. In 1970 he returned to the United States where he started improvising *bertsoak* (verses) in public. He takes part in *bertsolari* events throughout the American West and in Eutope as well.



Jarlath Henderson

In 2003 he received the National Endowment of the Arts National Heritage Fellowship for his work as a *bertsolari*.

Beyle Schaechter-Gottesman is a Yiddish poet, songwriter, traditional singer, and teacher, and a winner of the National Heritage Award from the National Endowment for the Arts. Born in Vienna, Austria, Ms. Schaechter-Gottesman emigrated to the United States with surviving family members after the Holocaust. Singing had always been her family's great pleasure, inspiring her later work in music and poetry. Her compositions have helped spur a revival of Yiddish song.

Itzik Gottesman is the Associate Editor at the weekly Yiddish-language *Forward*. His latest book is, *Defining the Yiddish Nation: the Jewish Folklorist of Poland*, from Wayne State University Press.

Suheir Hammad is the author of "Born Palestinian, Born Black," "Drops of This Story," and "ZaatarDiva." She is the original writer and cast member of the TONY Award-winning Russell Simmons Presents Def Poetry Jam on Broadway.

Jarlath Henderson has been playing the Uilleann pipes since he was 10 years old. He learned to play the pipes from Armagh Piping Club teachers Brian Val-lery, Mark Donnelly, Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn and Eamonn Curran. Jarlath also plays whistle, classical and traditional flute and guitar and has a keen interest in traditional song. In 2003, at the age of 17, he won the BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Musician of the Year Award, dazzling the audience and judges alike with his piping prowess and easy stage presence. He is a three times 'All-Ireland Champion' Uilleann Piper.

Robert Hershon is the author of 11 books of poetry, most recently *The German Lunatic*, and his work has appeared



Kewulay Kamara

in more than 40 anthologies. He is the editor of Hanging Loose Press and publisher of *Hanging Loose* magazine.

Tuomas Hil, a native of Finland, recently graduated from Columbia University where he was studying drama.

Edward Hirsch is the author of numerous books of poetry and criticism, including *On Love* and *How to Read a Poem and Fall in Love with Poetry*. A 1998 MacArthur Fellow, he is currently President of the Guggenheim Foundation.

Bob Holman is a founder of the NYC Poetry Calendar and the former coordinator of the St. Mark's Poetry Project. For seven years he was the slam impresario at the Nuyorican Poets Café. He founded Mouth Almighty Records, the all-poetry label, and produced the PBS series, *The United States of Poetry*. His most recent collection of poetry is *The Collect Call of the Wild*. He is a visiting professor of poetry at Columbia University, and proprietor of the Bowery Poetry Club.

Pierre Joris left Luxembourg at nineteen & has since lived in the US, Great Britain, North Africa and France. In 1992 he returned to the Mid-Hudson valley and teaches poetry and poetics at SUNY-Albany. He has published numerous books of poetry — most recently *Poasis: Selected Poems 1986–1999*.

Kewulay Kamara comes from the Koinaduga District of Sierra Leone and is of the KurankBa Mandeng ethnic group. His family is part of the *finenu* group, who are poets, emissaries, mediators, and masters of ceremony at important occasions.

Galway Kinnell won the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award for his *Selected Poems* in 1982. He teaches Creative Writing at New York University. He was



Galway Kinnell

awarded the distinction of State Poet of Vermont and has been the recipient of the prestigious MacArthur Fellowship.

George Kovach is a poet and entertainer from Philadelphia. He is deemed by many a literary phenomenon as a result of his claim to be the incarnation of Edgar Allen Poe and William Shakespeare in spontaneous literary pieces. He also has the ability to spontaneously create verse and prose using any word or topic that he is presented.

Mark Kurlansky is the *New York Times* bestselling and James A. Beard wining author of *1968, Cod*, *A Basque History of the World*, and a collection of short stories, *The White Man in the Tree*. He lives in New York City.

Denizé Lauture, first born of 13 peasant children, migrated to the United States from Haiti in 1968. Lauture writes in Creole, English and French. His most recent book is *The Black Warrior & Other Poems* (Subpress:2006).

Tato Laviera is a Puerto Rican poet, playwright, and composer. He has taught at Rutgers University and directed the Prep School at University of the Streets. He has published several volumes of poetry including, *La Carreta Made a U-turn* and *AmeRican*.

David Levering Lewis is Julius Silver University Professor and professor of history at New York University. He has twice won the Pulitzer prize for biography, for *W.E.B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race, 1868–1919* and for *W.E.B. Du Bois: The Fight for Equality and the American Century, 1919–1963*.



Iwan Llwyd

Gwyneth Lewis is Wales' first National Poet. She has published six books of poetry in Welsh and English. Her first collection in English, *Parables & Faxes* won the Aldeburgh Poetry Festival Prize. *Y Llofrudd Iaith (The Language Murderer)* won the Welsh Arts Council Book of the Year Prize.

Tsaurah Litzky has lived in New York City since she was three weeks old and currently lives on the Brooklyn waterfront. Her poetry collection, *Baby on the Water*, was published by Long Shot Press (2003). Tsaurah's erotic novella, *The Motion of the Ocean* (Simon and Schuster, 2004), was published as part of the *Three the Hard Way*, a series of erotic novellas edited by Susie Bright. She teaches erotic writing at the New School.

Iwan Llwyd writes in Welsh. He was born in Camo, Mid Wales in 1957 and lives in Talybont, near Bangor in the North, with his family. He won the Crown at the National Eisteddfod in 1990 with his sequence of poems *Gwreichion (Sparks)*. He has published numerous collections, one of which, *Far Rockaway*, appeared bilingually.

Philip Lopate is the Adams Chair at Hofstra University, where he is Professor of English. He is an essayist, novelist, poet, and memoirist. His latest book is *Waterfront: A Journey around Manhattan*.

Gearóid MacLochlainn's work has been described by *The Irish Times* as "performance poetry for the 21st century." Gearóid writes in Irish and English and his dual-language book, complete with per-

formance recording, *Stream Of Tongues/Sruth Teangacha*, received the Michael Hartnett Award, among others. His recent book, *Rakish Paddy Blues*, paid homage to the great travelling musicians of Ireland.

Aonghas MacNeacail was born on the Isle of Skye. He is a well known Scottish poet, writing in the Gaelic language and also works as a journalist, broadcaster, researcher, scriptwriter and librettist. In his works he addresses the problematic history of Scotland, the state of the Gaelic language as well as depicting human relationships. His works include: *Gollancz* (1976) *Seeking Wise Salmon* (1983), *Oideachadh Ceart — A Proper Schooling* (1996).

Joxe Mallea-Olaetxe has received degrees in History from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln and the University of Nevada, Reno. He has conducted extensive research on Basques during the period of Spanish colonization and in the American West. His publications include *The Power of Nothing: The Life and Adventures of Ignacio "Idaho" Urrutia* (2000) and *Shooting from the Lip: Bertsolariak Ipar Amerikan Improvised Basque-Verse Singing*.

D.H. Melhem is a poet, novelist, and scholar. Her most current work is her seventh collection of poetry, *New York Poems* (Syracuse University Press, 2005). She has numerous awards for poetry and prose including the American Book Award.

Ashraf Mian was born and raised in Pakistan where he practiced law until leaving for New York in 1986. He now works for the weekly New York *Awam*, and as

an associate editor for the monthly *Zavia* literary magazine.

Robert Minhinnick is the editor of the international quarterly, *Poetry Wales*, a translator, and a poet. His poetry collections include *A Thread in the Maze*, *The Dinosaur Park*, and *Hey Fatman*. A Selected Poems was published by Carcanet in 1999. His translations from the Welsh, *The Adulterer's Tongue: An Anthology of Welsh Poetry in Translation* was published in 2003. Robert Minhinnick lives in Porthcawl, South Wales.

Mick Moloney combines the careers of folklorist, musicologist, arts presenter and advocate, record producer and professional musician and college professor. In 1999 he was awarded the National Heritage Award from the National Endowment for the Arts — the highest official honor a traditional artist can receive in the United States.

Elisa New is Professor of English at Harvard University and author of *The Line's Eye: Poetic Experience, American Sight*.

Cathal Ó Searcaigh was born in Donegal and lives at the foot of Mount Errigal. His collections of poetry include *Homecoming/An Bealach 'na Bhaile* (Cló Iar-Chonnachta, 1993); *Na Buachaillí Bána* (Lagan Press, 1995); and *An Tnúth leis an tSolais* (Cló Iar-Chonnachta, 2001), for which he received 2001 *The Irish Times* Irish Literature Prize for the Irish language. He has been awarded the Seán Ó Riordáin Prize for Poetry in 1993 and the Duais Bhord na Gaeilge in 1995.



Gwyneth Lewis



Aonghas MacNeacail



Mick Moloney



Edgar Oliver

Edgar Oliver is a writer and performer who resides in the East Village. He has written numerous plays, including *The Poetry Killer*, *Chop Off Your Ear*, and *Mosquito Succulence*. His novel, *The Man Who Loved Plants*, was published by Panther Books.

Ishle Yi Park is the Poet Laureate of Queens, New York and a star of *Def Poetry Jam*. Her first book, entitled *The Temperature of This Water*, won the 2005 PEN America Beyond Margins Award and the 2005 Members' Choice Award of the Asian American Literary Awards.

Bushra Rehman was born and raised in New York City, but has also lived in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Bushra is co-editor of *Colonize This! Young Women of Color on Today's Feminism* (Seal Press, 2002) and author of the collection of poetry, *Marianna's Beauty Salon* (Vagabond Press, 2000). In her work, Bushra tells stories of her immigrant upbringing in Queens, the aunties, bodegas, stray dogs and street life of children.

Keith Roach is a poet born in Sydenham Hospital, who has since taken a vow of amnesia.

Jerome Rothenberg is the author of over 50 books of poetry and the co-editor, with Pierre Joris, of the two-volume *Poems for the Millennium*. He has received a Guggenheim Fellowship and several awards from the National Endowment for the Arts. For over three decades he has been a literary radical and a prominent influence on the American avant-garde. He teaches at the University of California at San Diego.

Sapphire is a poet, writer, and performing artist. Her two books of poetry are *American Dreams* and *Black Wings &*



Sekou Sundiata

Blind. Her novel *Push* won the Book of the Month Club Stephen Crane Award for First Fiction. Her work has been translated into twelve languages.

Judith Sloan and Warren Lehrer are coeditors of *Crossing the Boulevard: Strangers, Neighbors, Aliens in a New America*, a pioneering volume of oral histories with new immigrants in Queens. Judith is a performance artist, oral historian, and audio artist; Warren, a graphic designer, writer, and photographer.

Jimmy Smith is an internationally recognized didgeridoo player and teacher and a descendant of the Wiradjuri people. He regularly teaches in primary and secondary schools as well as at universities in Australia.

Sekou Sundiata is a poet who writes for print, performance, music, and theater. He was featured in the Bill Moyers PBS series on poetry, "The Language of Life," and has recorded two CDs, *The Blue Oneness of Dreams* and *longstoryshort*. He is a professor at The New School, where he also produces the Talking Book Festival of Literary Arts.

Ulali features Soni (Mayan, Apache, Yaqui), Jennifer (Tuscarora.), and a roster of guest artists. Founded over fifteen years ago, Ulali created a new and influential genre of Native American music. Their sound encompasses an array of indigenous music including Southeast choral singing (pre-blues and gospel) and pre-Columbian (before the borders) music. Ulali has performed and recorded with Robbie Robertson, Buffy St. Marie, Floyd Westerman, Miriam Makeba, John Trudell, Sting, Richie Havens, the B-52's, Bonnie Raitt, and the Neville Brothers.



Ulali

Cecilia Vicuña is a Chilean poet, editor, artist, and filmmaker who works in the oral tradition of the High Andes, forging a poetic universe in which ancient wordplay meets modern linguistics and contemporary realities.

Matvei Yankelevich is the editor of the Eastern European Poets Series at Ugly Duckling Presse, and co-edits *6x6*, a poetry periodical. His translation of Vladimir Mayakovsky's "A Cloud In Pants" was recently published in *Circumference Magazine*.

Ofelia Zepeda is Professor of Linguistics at the University of Arizona and the Director of The American Indian Language Development Institute. She is a MacArthur Fellow and Poet Laureate of Tuscon, AZ. Her books published in Tohono O'odham and English include, *Jewe I-hoi/Earth Movement: O'odham Poems* and *Ocean Power: Poems from the Desert*, and she is the author of the only pedagogical textbook on the Tohono O'odham language, *A Papago Grammar*.

Other Artists: **Gaetano Cipolla** (Sicilian Poetry); **Kumalo South African Band** (Tongue Tripping); and **Yoel Matveyev, Charles Nydorf, Mindl Rinkewich, Leah Robinson, Albert Rosenblatt** (Yiddish poetry); Dr. Gaetano Cipolla, President Arba Sicula, Nino Provenzano, Vice President Arba Sicula, Joseph Turriciano, Gaspare Pipitone, Antonina LiCastri, and Frank Piazza.