

# Starting From Paumanok

The Newsletter of Walt Whitman Birthplace Association

## Upcoming Events



Winter Break  
Make A Dream Catcher  
& Tea Party  
February 21, 2018



Walking With Whitman  
Scott Hightower  
March 2, 2018



Walking With Whitman  
Terrance Hayes  
April 6, 2018



Gould Library Launch  
April 26, 2018

## WWBA Announces 2018 Poet-in-Residence

Walt Whitman Birthplace Association is pleased to announce its 2018 Poet-in-Residence, Vijay Seshadri, who will offer a Master Poetry Class and a poetry reading on June 2, 2018.

Poet, Essayist and Critic, Vijay Seshadri was born in Bangalore, India, and came to the United States at the age of five. Currently, he lives in Brooklyn. He earned a BA from Oberlin College and an MFA from Columbia University. Among his literary influences are Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Elizabeth Bishop, and William Blake.

Praised for its elasticity, vivaciousness, and intimacy of tone, Seshadri's poetry includes elements of Indian mythology and religion. His experience as a biologist for the National Marine Fish Service formed the centerpiece of his first collection of poems, *Wild Kingdom* (1996). His second collection of poems, *The Long Meadow*



Vijay Seshadri

(2003), won the James Laughlin Award, and his third collection of poems, *3 Sections* (2013), won the Pulitzer Prize in Poetry. The Pulitzer committee described the book as "a compelling collection of poems that

examine human consciousness, from birth to dementia, in a voice that is by turns witty and grave, compassionate and remorseless."

Seshadri has received fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts, the NEA, and the Guggenheim Foundation, and has been awarded The Paris Review's Bernard F. Connors Long Poem

Prize and the MacDowell Colony's Fellowship for Distinguished Poetic Achievement. He has worked as an editor at *The New Yorker* and has taught at Bennington College. At present, Seshadri directs the graduate non-fiction writing program and teaches undergraduate writing courses at Sarah Lawrence College.

## Washington's Spy Trail Takes Historical Turn

Representative Thomas Suozzi stood outside his office in Huntington on Saturday, July 29, surrounded by Long Island historical figures including Walt Whitman, to announce a bill that would bestow the Washington Spy Trail national historic status. Fifty miles of Route 25A from Great Neck to Port Jefferson which are designated as the George Washington Spy Trail would receive national historic status under legislation introduced by Rep. Thomas Suozzi (D- Glen Cove) and Rep. Lee Zeldin (R-Shirley).

The two Long Island Congressmen are sponsoring the bill to help promote the role of Long Island in the American Revolution. The "Spy Trail" was part of the Culper spy ring, organized in Setauket during the

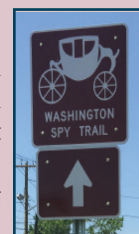
Revolutionary War.

The national historic status of the Washington Spy Trail would benefit Long Island by increasing tourism and federal grant money to preserve the rich legacy in Long Island's historic places. WWBA is proud to stand with Walt Whitman as an important part of Long Island's vibrant history.

WWBA thanks Rep. Thomas Suozzi and Rep. Lee Zeldin for introducing the bill and wholeheartedly supports the efforts of these two Congressmen to preserve history.



L to R: Board Pres.,  
Dr. Walter; Rep. Thomas Suozzi;  
ED Cynthia Shor;  
Whitman Personator, Darrel Ford





## From the Executive Director's Desk

Greetings and Happy New Year! Like Janus, the two-faced Greek god who looks to the future and to the past, our Newsletter brings you the highlights of Summer-Winter 2017 while presenting the coming attractions of 2018.

Our 2018 Program Series, "Celebrating Women with Walt Whitman," recognizes women's achievements using Whitman's prose and poetry as a platform. We especially invite you to join us for a theatrical performance of the LI High School for the Arts on June 9. In addition, all eyes are on 2019, the bicentennial year of Whitman's birth wherein we are planning a major celebration of Walt's 200th birthday.

Our Capital Campaign moves forward with a refurbishing of our exhibit space and site development studies led and sponsored through major gifts by Board President Dr. William T. Walter. He is offered strong Board support which includes new Board Members Dr. Maria Basile, Dr. Susan Fishbein and Lauren Kaushansky. Board Member Jeffrey Gould provided a major gift to acquire the personal Whitman Library of Marvin Feinstein, whose collection was partially donated by the Feinstein family. We invite everyone to join us on April 26, 2018, for the launch of this new collection.

We welcome Chad Lupinacci as our new Huntington Town Supervisor and wish outgoing Superintendent Frank Petrone all the best. We congratulate Legislators Susan Berland, Thomas Donnelly, DuWayne Gregory, and William Spencer on their campaign victories and we thank all the Suffolk County Legislators, and the Huntington Town Council and State Senator Carl Marcellino, for their outstanding leadership and support for historic preservation and the cultural arts. We invite you to come visit, participate, enjoy, and support our mission to preserve and promote the legacy of Walt Whitman with us!

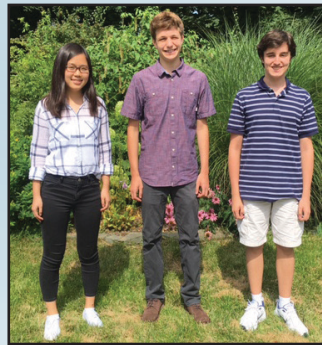


*Cynthia Shor*

## Staff & Intern Spotlight

Posing for the Aug. 21 solar eclipse (L-R):

Claire Hou, Andrew Borges, Carolyn Diglio, Colin Cassidy, Kristin Walter, Richard Ryan



Interns (L-R):  
Claire Hou,  
Scott Magid,  
Andrew Borges

## WWBA graciously acknowledges support from the following Donors, Sponsors & Patron Level Members:

Carlos Aguasaco, Luis Ambroggio, Penny & John Barr, Maria Basile, MD, Matthew Bessell & Peter Bridgstock, George & Joan Blednick, Richard Bronson, MD, Sherri & Thomas Casey, Deer Park HS, David Church, PhD, CMIT Solutions, Elizabeth Velsor Corthouts & Christian Corthouts, Jack Coulehan, MD, Florence L. Dallari, Estee Lauder, John Finkenberg, Mary Flatley, Phil Friedman, Francis Gagliardi, HSBC, Robert & Priscilla Hughes, Ronald Janssen, X.J. Kennedy, Tomislav Kundic, Joe Lattanzio, George Mallis, Meadowbrook Women's Initiative, Alberto Meschiari, Edmund Miller, Shana Nichols, Mark Nuccio, Minuteman Press, Jo-Ann Raia, Riebe's Artist Materials, Ruth Rosenthal, Robert Savino, Simpson & Vail Tea, Harriet Spitzer, Syosset Central Schools, Patti Tana and John Renner, Susan Tane, Alfred Walker, William Walter, PhD, William Wientge, Thomas Wismuller

**Special thanks** to New York State Parks, Suffolk County, Huntington Town, New York State Council of the Arts, Humanities New York, Poets & Writers, and Huntington Arts Council for their continued support

Thank you to all members! Your support helps preserve & promote Walt's legacy!

**Renew or Become a Member:** [www.waltwhitman.org](http://www.waltwhitman.org) or call (631) 427-5240 ext. 114

## Starting From Paumanok:

The Newsletter of Walt Whitman Birthplace Association

Editor: **Cynthia Shor**

Copywriter: **Michelle Augello**

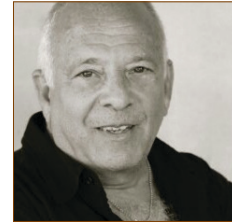
Assistant Editor: **Jackie Lam**

Design: **Irene Dittrich**

## LI Poet Named Laureate Of Int'l Poetry Festival

The 21st International "Days of Naim" Poetry Festival in Macedonia named poet George Wallace the Grand Prize winner and Laureate of its gathering in October.

Wallace, who was chosen by a jury of international poetry critics and scholars, is Writer-in-Residence at WWBA, professor of writing at Pace University and Westchester



Community College, and former laureate of Connecticut's Beat Poetry Festival. He is the first Poet Laureate of Suffolk County (2003-05), and has appeared recently at the Ledbury Festival (UK), Festival d'Avignon (France) and the Woody Guthrie Festival in Okemah, Oklahoma.

Said Wallace, author of 31 chapbooks, "I'm honored, as Laureate of the Ditet e Naimit Festival 2017, to contribute to their important work in fostering the role of poetry -- as language and as light -- for communication and understanding in today's complex global community."

In Spring 2018, Wallace will facilitate a Reading & Discussion Series entitled, "Votes for Women." From March 12-April 16, participants will join Wallace in the Gathering House on Mondays at 7 pm to discuss the following readings, which examine the suffragette movement: *A Woman's Crusade: Alice Paul and the Battle for the Ballot*; *Sex Wars: A Novel of Gilded Age New York*; *Votes for Women: The Struggle for Suffrage Revisited*; and *Elizabeth Cady Stanton: An American Life*.

This past Spring, Wallace's series focused on Truman Capote's novel *In Cold Blood* as a starting point into the history of American crime, along with other readings that participants called "powerful, relevant, and enriching."

The NYCH series, sponsored by Humanities NY, is free and open to the public; refreshments are served. Please note registration is required, and books are available to rent. Please contact Jackie at 631-427-5240 ext. 112 to register.

## "The Doctors Are In": Poetry & Healing

On November 19, Dr. Maria Basile, Dr. Richard Bronson, and Dr. Jack Coulehan shared "*The Doctors Are In*": Poetry & Healing, a poetry performance directed by Lauren Kaushansky, a Stony Brook University (SBU) lecturer in education with experience in theatre.



The doctors performed excerpts from Basile's *Minimally Invasive: Poems from a Life in Surgery*, Coulehan's *Wound Dresser*, and Bronson's *Passage*, in addition to their other poetry collections. Among the attendees were local physicians including Dr. Aaron Kumar, Executive



L to R: Dr. Richard Bronson; Dr. Maria Basile; Dr. Jack Coulehan

Director of Suffolk County Medical Society. Dr. Kumar expressed his excitement and stated that he is "looking forward to more events like these in the community."

Dr. Basile, a colorectal surgeon, is Assistant Vice President of Medical Affairs at Mather Hospital and Commissioner of Communications for the NYS Medical Society. She teaches medical and graduate-level courses at SBU and serves on the core faculty for SBU Center for Medical Humanities, Compassionate Care and Bioethics (CMCCB).

Dr. Bronson, Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Pathology, acts as Director of Reproductive Endocrinology at SBU Medical Center and is the recipient of several awards, including the Poem of the Year Award from the American College of Physicians.

Dr. Coulehan is Emeritus Professor of Medicine and former director of CMCCB. Among his honors are the Humanities Award from the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine and the Nicholas Davies Scholar Award from the American College of Physicians.

The three poet-physicians are also founders of *Astonished Harvest*, a community of poets sponsored by CMCCB. *Astonished Harvest* focuses on the art of medicine and the professional development of physicians through the lens of poetry.

## Norman and Jeanette Gould Library

The Jeffrey S. Gould Foundation, established by WWBA Trustee Jeffrey Gould, has generously donated \$10,000 to enable WWBA to complete the acquisition of the Feinstein Collection of 250 Whitman-related books. The collection includes many rare books, including first-editions of *Leaves of Grass* and *November Boughs*.



Trustee Jeffrey Gould

The collection will become known as *The Norman and Jeanette Gould Library*, comprised of the Feinstein Collection.

The public is invited to join the Gould and Feinstein families at the celebratory launch of *The Norman and Jeanette Gould Library* on April 26, 2018, at the Birthplace.

The collection will be housed and preserved on the Walt Whitman Birthplace premises and it will be available to the public for scholarly research, historic documentation, and general appreciation of Whitman's individual and collective writings. All usage of WWBA's library collection is by appointment and under the supervision of Curator Richard Ryan so as to best preserve and maintain the books for generations to come.

Marvin Feinstein was a lifelong book collector and bookseller who lived in Northport, LI. His widow, Miriam, and sons David and Allen, wanted to keep his Whitman collection intact and approached the Whitman Association with the offer to donate half the value of the collection, appraised at approximately \$20,000.

The Association first appropriated funds to purchase ten books, but upon reviewing the items in the collection, decided to try and raise funds to purchase the entire collection. When Trustee Jeffrey Gould heard of the literary and historic significance of the collection, he generously offered to secure the collection with his donation. WWBA extends many thanks to Trustee Jeffrey Gould and to the Feinstein Family for their work on behalf of literary scholarship and historic preservation.



## Salut au Monde Series



WWBA's 2017 Program Series, *Salut au Monde*, explored important issues to forge universal connections among diverse communities. "Salut Au Monde!" ("Greetings to the World") by Walt Whitman is a poem about universal brotherhood. *Salut Au Monde!* was about joining Whitman in expressing what we share in common with others and what is unique about ourselves. Each presentation or event was free and open to the public.



Tatyana Kleyn and Ben Donnellon. Photo credit Danny Ghitis, *The New York Times*

*Salut au Monde* began on June 23, 2017, with Tatyana Kleyn presenting *The Immigration Challenge: From Mexico to the U.S. and Back Again*. She presented the 30-minute film *Una Vida, Dos Paises (One Life, Two Countries)* by Tatyana Kleyn and Ben Donnellon, illustrating the phenomenon of return migration. An interesting discussion followed with a focus on families and how immigration unifies and separates them, often at the same time.

*O Take my hand Walt Whitman!*

*Such gliding wonders! Such sights and sounds!*

*Such join'd unended links, each hook'd to the next,*

*Each answering all, each sharing the earth with all.*



Joseph Bruchac playing flute for audience

On August 13, 2017, Joseph Bruchac and Sandi Brewster-Walker shared their Native American Heritage with Storytelling, Music & Memoir. A Q&A and children's "Make a Dreamcatcher" program followed the event.

For over thirty years, Joseph Bruchac has been creating poetry, short stories, novels, anthologies and music that reflect his Native American heritage and traditions. He is the author of more than 120 books for children and adults. His bestselling *Keepers of the Earth: Native American Stories and Environmental Activities for Children*, and others of his *Keepers* series, integrate science and folklore, and continue to receive critical acclaim and are used in classrooms throughout the country.

Sandi Brewster-Walker is an independent historian, genealogist, freelance writer, and business owner raised in North Amityville. She is a member of the Montaukett Nation, and has traced her ancestry back to the Shinnecock, Unkechaug,

Matinecock, Massapequa, and Setalcott Nations. Brewster-Walker acts as the chair of the Board of Trustees and Executive Director for the Long Island Indigenous People Museum and Research Institute in Ronkonkoma, established in 2014.

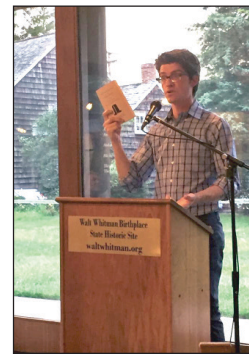
Bruchac offered an hour of lively Native American storytelling, folklore, and flute-playing. Brewster-Walker then shared her family stories through her book, *The Colored Girl from Long Island*. The audience enjoyed a lively and profound performance from Joseph, followed by a fascinating talk from Sandi about the often untold history of Long Island's American Indians, while the children made dream catchers.



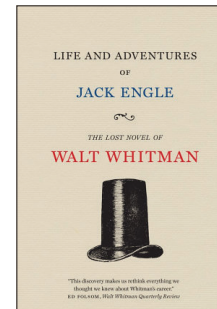
Sandi Brewster Walker and Joseph Bruchac

As Huntington Councilwoman Tracey A. Edwards said at the event, "It's tremendously important to amplify and pay homage to the stories of indigenous peoples, especially in light of recent community disruptions."

Zachary Turpin, a University of Idaho assistant professor and former University of Houston graduate student, discovered a previously unknown novella by Walt Whitman. *Re-Discovering Walt: The Story Behind the Research* was featured as the second *Salut au Monde* program on July 8, 2017. Zachary Turpin was a graduate student at the University of Houston when he discovered two books Whitman published under pseudonyms. His energetic and engaging presentation included a discussion on the questions: *Could there be more Walt Whitman left to be discovered?* and, *How might one find it?* Turpin discussed the importance of the digitization of archives in archival research, and the implications of "new facts" on interpreting history. He discussed the importance of historic research in preserving and promoting new understandings and who we are and where we have been.



Zachary Turpin



Below is an excerpt from student Carlos Leon's "A poem to every-1":



L to R: Whitman scholar Dr. Karen Karbiener; Board President Dr. Walter; Zachary Turpin; ED Cynthia Shor

### Poetry for a Diverse World, Multilingual Poetry Reading

In *Poetry for a Diverse World*, English-as-a-New-Language (ENL) students from Hicksville High School reflected on their personal experiences as an insider or an outsider through the lens of Walt Whitman's poem, *Salut au Monde!* They added their unique contributions to the diversity of voices celebrated by Whitman.

Teacher and facilitator Barbara Suter guided the students through workshop writing and their poetry presentations. Hicksville High School teacher Margaret Mitchell collaborated on the project with Suter. The students also enjoyed a Birthplace tour, picnic lunch, and posed for a picture.



Facilitator Barbara Suter

Hicksville Schools Superintendent Dr. Carl Bonuso attended the performance and said, "I am so proud of what all you students accomplished today."

Below is an excerpt from student Carlos Leon's "A poem to every-1":

*What do you hear my friend?  
I hear the laments from people who  
came seeking a better life,  
I hear the factories where my  
compatriots work,  
I hear their stories and I feel their  
suffering...*

*I'm here in America and I believe in  
this country,  
struggles are always presented in our  
lives, but we can overthrow them,  
memories from my country El  
Salvador are treasures in my mind,  
life is different but future is unknown.  
But will be better.*

### Favorite Poem Project With Danielle Campbell, News12 LI

WWBA presented the continuation of its Favorite Poem Project event on Sunday, November 12, 2017. Over 55 participants of all ages and from all walks of life sent in their favorite classic published poem and 24 entrants read their submissions. Danielle Campbell, news anchor from Cablevision News 12 Long Island, emceed the event. Former NYS Assemblyman and current Huntington Town Supervisor Chad Lupinacci read "In Flanders Fields" by John McCrae in commemoration of Veteran's Day.



L to R: Trustees Susan Fishbein, EdD and Dr. Jack Coulehan; News 12 Danielle Campbell; Darrel Ford; Trustees Dr. Maria Basile and Robert Savino; ED Cynthia Shor

Walt Whitman was the most popular poet submitted, followed by Robert Frost, Maya Angelou, and Emily Dickinson.

Attendee Mark Nuccio remarked, "I can see this becoming a recurring 'go to' event," while Elaine Pasquali called it "delightful." Kate Dickson said, "When I experience beauty and meaning - I am automatically connected to every other human being... In this way, the [Favorite Poem Project] was a great success." Ronald Janssen observed, "It's not easy to stand up in front of a group and talk or read, so I thought this was a wonderful event not only for the work presented but also for the courage and effectiveness of the people who did the readings."

The Favorite Poem Project was founded by former U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky shortly after the Library of Congress appointed him to the post in 1997. Pinsky created the project to celebrate, document, and encourage poetry's role in American lives.



## Marilyn Hacker, 2017 Poet-in-Residence, Presided at Whitman Birthday Weekend

WWBA's 2017 Poet-in-Residence Marilyn Hacker officiated at Walt's 198th Birthday Weekend Celebration on June 3 & 4 at the Birthplace. The Celebration is held on a weekend close to Whitman's birthday of May 31 (1819). The annual Poet-in-Residence designation was established in 1981 to honor poets who continue to embody Whitman's spirit of democracy, diversity and creativity. It is proudly sponsored by New York State Council of the Arts (NYSCA) through Huntington Arts Council Re-grant Program.

Marilyn Hacker is an award-winning poet best known for formal poems that mix high culture and colloquial speech. Over a career spanning forty years, Hacker has established herself as a preeminent voice in the tradition of Robert Lowell and Adrienne Rich. Her books of poetry include *Presentation Piece* (1974), which won the National Book Award, *Love, Death, and the Changing of the Seasons* (1986), and *Going Back to the River* (1990). In 2009, Hacker won the PEN Award for "Poetry in Translation" for the poem

"King of a Hundred Horsemen" by Marie Étienne, which also garnered the first Robert Fagles Translation Prize from the National Poetry Series. In 2010, she received the PEN/Voelcker Award for Poetry. She was shortlisted for the 2013 PEN Award for "Poetry in Translation" for her translation of *Tales of A Severed Head* by Rachida Madani.



ED Cynthia Shor, Trustee Dr. Bronson and Mrs. Bronson, Marilyn Hacker, Trustee Jo-Ann Raia, Trustee Dr. Jack Coulehan and Mrs. Coulehan, and Trustee Thomas Wysmuller

On Saturday, June 3, Marilyn Hacker presented a Master Class in Poetry, where participants responded to poetry, discussed aspects of inspiration, wrote their own poems, and shared their creativity. Later the same evening, Hacker gave an evening poetry reading at the Birthplace. On Sunday, June 4, she officiated the 31st Annual Young Poet Awards

Ceremony. WWBA thanks Marilyn Hacker and the community for making Walt's Birthday Weekend a celebration filled with poetry, creativity, diversity, and inspiration.

## 31st Annual Student Poetry Contest

Students submitted over 2,700 entries in the 31st Annual Student Poetry Contest of 2017. The Young Poet Contest was founded in 1986 by the late WWBA Trustee Maxwell C. Wheat. The Poet-in-Residence & Birthday Celebration are sponsored by NYSCA through the Huntington Arts Council Re-grant program.

Poet-in-Residence Marilyn Hacker and former Huntington Town Councilwoman and current Suffolk legislator Susan Berland offered words of congratulations to the 100 student award winners and commended the teachers and parents for keeping poetry alive in the Young Poets. Whitman Personator Darrel Blaine Ford posed for photographs with all prize winners. Grand Champions read their winning poems. All winners received a certificate and a gift bag prize. A wonderful day was had by all!

Congratulations to the Grand Champions: Tesse Burke, Muskan Kumar, Nathan Barry, Hadar Leybov, Sophia Takvorian, Christian Ramos. The class anthology award was presented to Shari Zindman/Grades 3 &

4: Locust Valley Intermediate School; Ms. Christina Tambini/Grades 5 & 6: South Country School; Mr. Karl O'Leary/Grades 7 & 8: Richard T. Stank Middle School; Mrs. April Zabinsky/Grades 9 & 10: North Shore Hebrew Academy High School; Ms. Ellen Michael/Grades 11 & 12: Longwood High School; and Mrs. Rand/Ms. Rubenstein/Grades 3-12: JFK Middle School.

Besides the Grand Champions, there are also 5-10 additional winners in each category. For a complete list of



Executive Director Cynthia Shor and Whitman Personator Darrel Ford with a young poet

winners, please visit our website. Thank you to all participants for keeping the spirit and legacy of Walt Whitman alive!



Audience for the Young Poets Awards Ceremony

## Walking with Whitman: Poetry In Performance/Open Mic

The seventh season of our signature series, *Walking with Whitman: Poetry in Performance*, returned on October 6, 2017, for a stellar evening with Swansea poet, Ian Griffiths. Griffiths read from his book *Conversations with Birds* and celebrated the poetry and prose of Dylan Thomas. The series continued with featured poets Dorianne Laux (November 3) and David Amram (December 1). New to the series is the Community Open Mic, a popular addition which has attracted and inspired many local poets and writers.

The first half of our seventh season began with dozens of people ready to take the mic and share their poetry, a full house in attendance, and award-winning poet Martín Espada on March 3. Espada's latest book, *Vivas to Those Who Have Failed* (2016), was sold out by the end of the evening. Patricia Spears Jones continued the series on April 7 to another full house. She received a standing ovation for her powerful reading and offered an intimate Q&A and book signing. On May 5, WWBA gave a warm welcome to Wendy Barker, who read from her sixth book of poetry, *One Blackbird at a Time*, ending the first half of the series on a strong note.

Poetry Readings and Open Mics are open to the public and include discounted tickets for members. The event, which begins at 6 pm with the Community Open Mic, continues with refreshments and a musical interlude by Tom Santoriello & Friends before the featured poet takes the stage at 8 pm. After the reading, each poet offers a

Q&A and book signing.

*Walking with Whitman: Poetry In Performance* is hosted by George Wallace and sponsored by Poets & Writers.

The eighth season of the series kicks off on March 2, 2018, with Scott Hightower and continues on April 6, 2018, with Terrance Hayes. John Dorsey will finish the first half of the season on May 4, 2018.

On Dec. 1st, composer and performer David Amram reflected on the influence of Walt Whitman, his aesthetics and the aesthetics of artists (including Jack Kerouac) with whom he has worked. He offered anecdotes in a presentation punctuated with readings from his memoirs, as well as musical sampling from his 1977 cantata "A Year In Our Land."

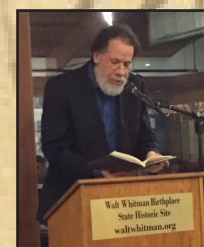
Amram also improvised a song about WWBA with Tom Santoriello and Margaret Lassen, which was truly a delight.



David Amram plays two pennywhistles



Tom Santoriello & Margaret Lassen



Martín Espada



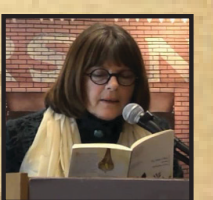
Patricia Spears-Jones



L to R: Trustee Bob Savino, ED Cynthia Shor, Wendy Barker, Writer-in-Residence George Wallace



Ian Griffiths signing books for attendees



Dorianne Laux

## T.A.P.F.N.Y.

The Americas Poetry Festival of New York 2017, the fourth annual multilingual poetry festival and writers' conference organized by poets and Professors Carlos Aguasaco, Yrene Santos and Carlos Velásquez, was held on Thursday, October 6, at 11am-1pm.

This free event featured poets from Lithuania, Brazil, Spain, Argentina, Cuba, Uruguay, Ecuador, and the USA, and was sponsored by Walt Whitman Birthplace Association, CUNY and Instituto Cervantes. The poets read from *The America's Poetry Festival of New York's 2017*



TAPFNY Poets & Organizers

*Multilingual Anthology*, a rich diverse multilingual sampler from poets of 22 different countries, coedited by poets and Professors Carlos Aguasaco, Yrene Santos and Carlos Velásquez Torres.

Teacher Alex Lima and 55 Deer Park High School students were also in attendance. Seniors Christopher Isola, Bianca Pungier, Katharine Vasallo, Dayanna Zuluaga, and Michael Pacheco read their poetry as well as poetry selections from published writers. The afternoon was filled with sounds of multilingual poets and the spirit of Walt Whitman.



## Special Events

### Children's Events: Back-to-School & Yuletide Family Day

On August 30, WWBA held *Make a Dream Catcher* and a *Victorian Tea Party*. Children were invited to attend one or both of the events, and there was a quite a lively group! Dream catchers were originally made by the children of Native



Children's Victorian Tea

American tribes. To indigenous people, dreams were messages sent by sacred spirits. Children learned the legend of how dream catchers ward off bad dreams, and crafted their own.

Next, children enjoyed a Victorian Tea, an informative program that includes role-playing while teaching social skills and confidence. Children learned dining manners, such as how to properly hold utensils and cut with plastic knives and forks. Kids also practiced table setting and introductions.



Make a Dreamcatcher  
Children's Program

On December 3, families joined WWBA for the annual Yuletide Family Day. A holiday sing-along kicked off the event at 1 pm, and was followed by a visit with Santa (as portrayed by Darrel Ford). Kids decorated cookies and delighted in face painting with Miss Carin. Children also made ornaments, played with Whitman-era games and toys, and took guided tours of the Birthplace. Parents were able to win raffle prizes.



Darrel Ford

Throughout the year, there are many events for children, including school programs for all grade levels.

### Make a Dream Catcher & Victorian Tea Party will be held February 21, 2018 at 1 pm

To register or for more info, contact Carolyn at 631-427-5240 ext. 113 or [educator@waltwhitman.org](mailto:educator@waltwhitman.org)

## Adult High Tea

Maintaining a tradition that began in 1860 with Queen Victoria, WWBA hosts afternoon tea parties. Afternoon tea can be one of the most special times of the day. Enjoy the elegance of a bygone era and transport yourself back in time as you experience High Tea at our historic site.

Docent Margaret Guardi discusses and presents Whitman-era clothing and etiquette. A guided tour of the Walt Whitman Birthplace follows the program.



Tea party patrons

Several public high teas are held throughout the year. Rentals for groups of 12-24 people are available.



Above: Guardi presenting Civil War-era costume to tea party patrons

Right: Civil War-era costume on mannequin and tea party tablescape



Contact Margaret Guardi at [teaparty@waltwhitman.org](mailto:teaparty@waltwhitman.org)

## New Program! Tea for Teens

Learn the history of the afternoon tea and the etiquette that makes it a special occasion! Tables will be set with elegant china cups, saucers, teapots and flowers on lovely tablecloths. The brewing of loose tea will



be demonstrated and a delicious baked item served. The program not only teaches dining manners, self-esteem and confidence, but also updates social skills to the 21st century! Learn communication manners--no cell phones while eating! Practice personal introductions! Adults are invited to participate.

A guided tour of the home in which Walt Whitman was born follows the tea.

The program is well-suited for Senior Girl Scouts and teens 12-16 years old. \$9.00/teen (Minimum fee: \$115.00) \$5.00/adult participant  
Estimated time: 1 1/2 hours

Contact Carolyn, 631-427-5240 ext. 113 or [educator@waltwhitman.org](mailto:educator@waltwhitman.org)

## Irish Dancers



Join us for our yearly Irish Dancers celebration, featuring dancers from the award-winning Mulvihill-Lynch Studio of Irish Dance!

Sunday, March 4, 2018

1 pm

**\$9.00/child, chaperones FREE**

- Simple Irish dance lesson
- Dance performance, history presentation and Q&A with professional dancers
- Face painting with Miss Carin
- Guided Tours of the Birthplace

Contact Carolyn  
631-427-5240 ext. 113 or  
[educator@waltwhitman.org](mailto:educator@waltwhitman.org)

## Art at the Birthplace *Land, Sky, Sea, Words.* by Mark Nuccio

*Land, Sky, Sea, Words.* by Mark Nuccio, a multimedia event of poetry and painting, took place on September 23, 2017. The reception was held in the Birthplace's Gathering House. This art show, inspired by Walt Whitman's Long Island roots, marked Nuccio's second Walt Whitman Birthplace showcase in 35 years. Nuccio also debuted his first poetry collection, "Salvaging Hope," which includes 118 of his own poems and one of his father's.

Mark C. Nuccio is a lifelong artist, author, and inventor. Nuccio has exhibited his paintings widely and has been published in periodicals,



Mark Nuccio and his acrylic on canvas painting "Lo! the unbounded sea"

newspapers, and chapbooks. He also writes a monthly historical article for *Boating World* magazine. In 1987, Nuccio and his wife Linda founded Design Edge, a graphic design/manufacturing company. The couple lives on Long Island and Oak Island,



Nuccio's oil on canvas painting "Song at Sunset II"

New York. The exhibit is running through March 1, 2018, in the Gathering House and is available for viewing upon request.

## 2018 WWBA LONG ISLAND POET OF THE YEAR NOMINATIONS

The Walt Whitman Birthplace Association is seeking nominations for our 2018 Long Island Poet of the Year award. This award is given annually by WWBA to a Long Island poet recognized regionally for the excellence of his or her work and who is active in supporting and promoting poetry on Long Island.

The nomination should consist of a:

- Brief bio/CV
- Publications
- Artistic engagements
- Community activities
- A two-page sample of the poet's work.

This material should be submitted by email attachment to: [director@waltwhitman.org](mailto:director@waltwhitman.org)  
Or by mail to:

Executive Director  
Walt Whitman Birthplace Association  
246 Old Walt Whitman Road  
Huntington Station, NY 11746

Self-nominations are accepted. Nominations must be received by February 1, 2018. The WWBA Board of Trustees Program Committee will choose the awardee by February 28, 2018. The award will be presented at a reception/reading in April 2018.

## "A Call for the Arts," hosted by the Syosset High School Mural Club



*A Call for the Arts*, hosted by the Syosset High School Mural Club and the Walt Whitman Birthplace Association, took place on May 20, 2017. The multi-faceted event showcased the artistic, musical, and literary talent of students in Syosset High School. The event gave the artists of Syosset High School an opportunity to exhibit work in a gallery setting for viewing by students, teachers, faculty, and members of the community. Visitors had the opportunity to purchase pieces through a silent auction. The evening contained performances by

students in Orchestra and Band, as well as spoken word pieces. Proceeds were donated to Action Against Hunger and WWBA.





## Community Outreach

### H.A.C. Awards



The Huntington Arts Council (HAC) NYSCA 2017 Grants for the Arts Ceremony Reception took place March 21. Above on left, HAC ED Mark Courtade presents awards.

### Poetry for the H.A.R.T.



The Huntington Town Board recognized 16 local teen poets selected to participate in the Town's "Poetry for the HART: Public Art Initiative." The winners received certificates signed by Huntington Town Board members during the April 26 ceremony. Their poems will also appear on Huntington Area Rapid Transit (HART) buses.

### Bard's Day



The Bard's Initiative held their 7th annual "Bard's Day" at the Walt Whitman Birthplace. Included in the events of the day were readings from the *Bards Annual* 2017 (the yearly publication of the Bard's Initiative), the announcement of the Bard's Awards 2017, food, entertainment, half-time shows, and an all-around good time!

## Bards Initiative Hosts Book Launch to Celebrate Long Island's Poets Laureate



L to R: (back) Trustee Bob Savino, Ed Stever, Lorraine LoFrese Conlin, (front) Pramila Venkateswaran, Gayl Teller, Tammy Nuzzo-Morgan, Linda Opyr, George Wallace

Every year, poets convene during National Poetry Month to celebrate their craft. Saturday, April 8th, was no exception as the Bard's Initiative gathered at the Birthplace

to host a book launch. Nassau and Suffolk County Poets Laureate celebrated their new anthology *Laurels: Poems by Long Island's Poets Laureate*, edited by James Wagner.

With an introduction by Suffolk County Legislator Vivian Fisher, the night included an Open Mic after the Laureates' reading, a Q&A, book signing. Over 50 people attended the memorable event.

Wagner described the night as "such an awe-inspiring, poetically historical, culturally relevant and important event with special thanks to Vivian Fisher for getting the Poet Laureate program started, to George Wallace for his editorial advisement on the book, and to the Poet Laureates of the Island for their poetry, their wisdom and their contribution to the arts."

## Remembering Maxwell Wheat, Jr.

On July 8, 2017, WWBA held a tribute for community-acclaimed Nassau County Poet Laureate Maxwell Wheat, Jr. Local poet Tom Stock officiated, sharing memories, stories, poems and song with those gathered to celebrate Wheat's life and express gratitude for his inspiration and mentoring.

Wheat lived a full life, and he shared his love, his curiosity, his sense of community, and his passion for poetry and nature with all he encountered. In 2007, he was unofficially named Nassau County's first Poet Laureate after being snubbed by the legislative committee for his anti-war views.

Like Walt Whitman, Wheat was a son of Long Island. He connected strongly with the natural world and the environment, and he loved people and bringing others together. In addition to his workshops and classes, Wheat also

founded several community programs including *Taproots* and *You Can Write Poetry!* Wheat was WWBA Long Island Poet of the Year in 2003. He will be deeply missed.



L to R: Sabrina Savino and Trustee Bob Savino, Tom Stock, Whitman Personator Darrel Ford



Maxwell Wheat. Photo credit: Paula Camacho



## Tulip Festival



During this free festival at Heckscher Park on May 7, WWBA presented an activity for children: "How to Set a Table for a Victorian Tea Party." Everyone had a lot of fun learning about tea party manners and table setting. Victorian-era toys were also on hand for the children to explore.

## Draw Out!



Heckscher Park's free arts festival certainly drew out a crowd on September 24. WWBA presented Whitman-era toys for children. Other cultural partners provided life-size chess games, live model sketching, and artist-guided painting. Complimentary art supplies were provided. Photo credit: Heckscher Park

## Museum Day Live!

WWBA opened its doors free of charge to over 100 visitors on September 23 as part of Smithsonian magazine's 13th annual *Museum Day Live!* This initiative involves participating museums across the US who emulate the spirit of the Smithsonian Institute. Free admission was granted to those who downloaded a Museum Day ticket in late August. WWBA recognizes the importance of museums and is proud to be a part of this program. For more information, please visit [Smithsonian.com/museumday](http://Smithsonian.com/museumday).

## WWBA Receives \$25K Grant from NYS

The Park and Trail Partnership Program, created by Governor Cuomo in 2015, is a \$500,000 capacity-building matching grants program funded by the NYS Environmental Protection Fund. Twenty partner organizations received \$450,000 to advance their work to raise private funds for capital projects, perform maintenance, provide educational programming, and promote public use through hosting special events. Grants were matched by over \$200,000 in private and local funding.

On May 6, 2017, Governor Cuomo announced the second round of state grants to 20 organizations dedicated to the stewardship and promotion of NYS parks and historic sites.

WWBA received a \$25,000 grant to "Bring Walt Into the 21st Century" and modernize exhibit space to include new information, emphasize Whitman as the Poet of Democracy and add newly acquired artifacts.

The Park and Trail Partnership Program grants are designed to enhance the preservation, increase the sustainability, and promote the tourism and economic development of Parks and Historic Sites.

The announcement coincided with the annual *I Love My Park Day*. This year's event was sponsored jointly with Parks & Trails New York, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the National Park Service, Excelsior Conservation Corps, and the New York State Commission on National and Community Service.

Approximately 8,000 volunteers participated in this statewide event, helping with community clean-up,

beautification and stewardship events at more than 125 state parks, historic sites and public lands across New York. Volunteers worked on dozens of park and trail projects, planted trees and gardens, cleared debris, restored trails and wildlife habitats, and cleaned beaches and shorelines.

"New York is home to some of the most beautiful parks in the world and it is our duty to preserve and protect them for future generations," Governor Cuomo said. He is committed to revitalizing the State park system with his NY Parks plan, a commitment to leverage \$900



L to R: WWBA ED Cynthia Shor, I Love My Park Day volunteers, tour guide Cameron Williams

million in private and public funding for State Parks from 2011 to 2020. The 2017-18 state budget proposal allocates \$120 million toward this initiative.

State Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey said, "...volunteers are crucial to making our park system a success." WWBA Executive Director Cynthia Shor (pictured above) stated, "This Parks & Trails grant greatly enhances our stewardship of the Birthplace of America's great poet, Walt Whitman, born here in 1819. WWBA appreciates the support from Governor Cuomo and Parks & Trails." Shor went on to say, "WWBA thanks the 20 volunteers who assisted in cleanup for the 2017 *I Love My Park Day*."



Walt Whitman Birthplace Association  
246 Old Walt Whitman Road  
Huntington Station, NY 11746-4148  
631-427-5240 • [www.waltwhitman.org](http://www.waltwhitman.org)

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Permit No. 283  
Huntington Sta. NY 11746-4148

Summer/Fall/Winter 2017 Vol. XXX No. 2

### Walt Whitman Birthplace Association

#### Board of Trustees

William T. Walter, Ph.D., President  
Jack Coulehan, M.D., Vice President  
Thomas Wismuller, Treasurer  
Maria Basile, M.D., Secretary  
Richard Bronson, M.D.  
Susan Fishbein, Ed.D.  
Jeffrey Gould  
Lauren Kaushansky  
Jo-Ann Raia  
Robert Savino

#### Honorary Trustees

Nelson DeMille  
Darrel Blaine Ford  
Ed Folsom, Ph.D.  
Susan Isaacs  
Karen Karbiener, Ph.D.

#### Executive Director

Cynthia Shor

#### Curator

Richard Ryan

## Bicentennial Celebration

### International Whitman Birthplace Festival (August 9-11, 2019)

Call for papers that examine different aspects of Walt Whitman and his contributions to humanity!  
Studies relevant to culture, using any scholarly method, are welcome.

**Submission Deadline: July 1, 2018**

Topics of interest for paper or panel proposals include, but are not limited to:

- Impact of Whitman and the domestic & international social justice experience
- Whitman's influence on pop culture (e.g.: *Breaking Bad*, *Dead Poets Society*, *The Twilight Zone*, *Paper Towns*)
  - Whitman's sexuality
- Comparative approaches to Whitman and other poets
  - Technology & Whitman
- Impact of social media on poetry & what Whitman would think of this phenomenon
- Cross-cultural influences created by Whitman's poetry in politics, art, music and other aspects of society
- Significance of Place in Early Childhood: How the ecological landscape impacts the child

To submit a paper, email [tammynuzzomorgan@gmail.com](mailto:tammynuzzomorgan@gmail.com) and submit a paper abstract of 250 words or a panel proposal including short abstracts and titles of each prospective paper. Include in your submission the name, affiliation, address, and email address of each author/participant as well as their CV/bio. You must specify any special A/V or scheduling needs when submitting your proposal.

If you wish to pursue financial grants, we will gladly provide a letter to support your grant application.

Co-Artistic Directors & Event Coordinators Cynthia Shor (WWBA ED) & Tammy Nuzzo-Morgan (2017 WWBA LI Poet of the Year)

Stay Connected:



[www.facebook.com/WaltWhitmanBirthplaceAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/WaltWhitmanBirthplaceAssociation)



@wwbirthplace



## Our Mission

Walt Whitman Birthplace Association is Walt Whitman's voice today, celebrating the poet's vision of democracy, diversity, and creativity. Our programs and exhibits educate the public on Whitman's life and times, explore his contribution to our nation's rich cultural heritage, and inspire young poets and writers.