Les Murray Visits Midwest Poets Series for National Poetry Month

They say that good things come to those who wait, and that is what we anticipate. Australian poet Les Murray, a highlight of the Midwest Poets’ 30 anniversary celebration, has rescheduled his March 21 reading for Thursday, April 11. Murray will read his poems at 7 p.m. in the Student Activities Hall.

In a recent review in The Guardian, Nicholas Wroe says that Les Murray has become known, virtually without dispute, as one of the leading poets of the English-speaking world. The late Nobel Laureate Joseph Brodsky expanded this praise when he said, Murray “is, quite simply, the one by whom the language lives.”

Murray’s 12 books of poetry—translated into 10 languages—include Subhuman Redneck Poems, which received the prestigious T. S. Eliot Prize. In 1998, he was awarded the Queen’s Gold Medal for Poetry, presented by Queen Elizabeth II. Recent collections include New Selected Poems (Carcanet, 2012), Taller When Prone (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2011) and The Biplane Houses (FS&G, 2008).

Admission is $3 at the door; no one will be denied admission for lack of funds. Books will be available at the event. A reception with book signing immediately follows the reading. View www.rockhurst.edu/campus-map and scroll to the Student Activities Hall for location and convenient parking. For information, call 816-501-4607.

Religion Scholar, Writer to Discuss Origins of Theological Changes in March 18 Talk

Diana Butler Bass, a renowned religion scholar and writer, will deliver the Rev. William Rossner, S.J., Theology Lecture “A People’s History of Christianity” as part of this season’s Visiting Scholar Lecture Series.

Bass’ talk will be based on her book, A People’s History of Christianity: The Other Side of the Story. Bass argues that the assumption that theological change is driven by prominent theologians and church leaders is incorrect. Instead, she asserts that most important and notable theological changes are driven by lay people who set the stage for intellectual leaders to articulate the theological transformations taking place in the pews and on the streets.

Bass is a Chabraja Fellow with the SeaburyNEXT project at Seabury Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill. She earned a doctorate from Duke University.

Her books include Christianity After Religion: The End of Church and the Birth of a New Spiritual Awakening (2012) and the best-selling Christianity for the Rest of Us (2006), named one of the best religion books of the year by Publishers Weekly and featured as a cover story in USA Today.


Bass’ lecture begins at 7:30 p.m., Monday, March 18, in Mabee Theater, Sedgwick Hall. To register your attendance to this free lecture, call 816-501-4828.

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Plays-in-Progress Workshop, April 24

Rockhurst’s Plays-in-Progress Workshop will present a reading of the spring 2013 playwriting contest winner at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, April 24, in Sedgwick Hall, room 115.

Student actors will read the work. After the reading, audience members will discuss the play with the playwright, actors and director. A reception follows the reading.

Donations will be accepted at the door. For more information, contact the Plays-in-Progress Program Director Charles Kovich, Ph.D., at 816-501-4034.
April 18
Rockhouse Theatre
“Tartuffe” by Molère
Thursday & Friday: 7:30 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday: 2:30 p.m.
Mabee Theatre, Sedgwick Hall
Tickets at the door: $8
April 21
Mabiolica Chorus, Orchestra
Handel: Chandos Anthem
“Have Mercy on Me”
Saturday & Sunday, 2:30 p.m.
Mabee Theater, Sedgwick Hall
Registration: 816-501-4828
April 23
Visiting Scholar Lecture Series
Fawaz Gerges, Ph.D.
“The Arab Spring and Jihadism: Myth Confronts Reality?”
Monday, 7 p.m.
Mabee Theater, Sedgwick Hall
April 5 – May 4
Greenlease Gallery
Painter James Moore & photographer, video artist
Dawn Woolley
Opening Friday, April 5
Gallery Talk: 6:30 p.m.
Sedgwick Hall, Room 115
Donations accepted at the door
Works by Handel, Mozart Close Musica Sacra Season
Musica Sacra Chorus and Orchestra concludes its 22nd season joined by some of the region’s premier vocalists as it performs music by Handel and Mozart Sunday, April 21.
Soprano Rebecca Lloyd, mezzo-soprano Unulda Feener will be featured in Handel’s Chandos Anthem “Have Mercy on Me” and two works by Mozart, “Regina Coeli,” K. 276, and the Coronation Mass, K. 317.
George Frideric Handel served as resident composer in 1717-1718 at Cannons, the home of the Duke of Chandos. While working there, he composed 11 large scale anthems, the masque Acis and Galatea and two works with Mozart, “Regina Coeli,” K. 276, and the Coronation Mass, K. 317.

Ulysses (2009) This film captures the life and times of James Moore, Lost Coast, 2010, oil on canvas, 47” x 34”

J. S. Bach’s St. Matthew Passion at 7 p.m. in Mabee Theater. Admission, at the door, is $3 or $7 for the series. The concert will take place at 7 p.m., Sunday, April 21, in St. Francis Xavier Church, 52nd and Troost Avenue west of Rockhurst University.
Director Timothy L. McDonough will present “Live Program Notes” at 6:15 p.m. For tickets ($18 adults, $12 students and senior citizens), contact the Central Ticket Office at 816-235-6222 or purchase at the performance.

“Have Mercy on Me” is a setting of texts from the penitential Psalm 51, “Mercy,” and contains some of the composer’s most glorious music. The opening sonata and choral set a somber and profound mood, and the soprano-tenor duet “Wash Me Thoroughly From My Guilt” displays Handel’s incredible gift of mood writing.

Mozart wrote the “Regina Coeli” and Coronation Mass for services at Salzburg Cathedral. The music is celebratory, orchestrated with brilliant trumpet and timpani parts. Whether in the hushed central section of the Credo or the sublime soprano solo in the Agnus Dei (reminiscent of the aria “Dove sono” from The Marriage of Figaro), the work is among the best Mozart ever composed.

Mozart Sunday, April 21.
Rheingold Soprano Rebecca Lloyd, mezzo-soprano Unulda Feener will be featured in Handel’s Chandos Anthem “Have Mercy on Me” and two works by Mozart, “Regina Coeli,” K. 276, and the Coronation Mass, K. 317.
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Workshop: Thursday, April 18, 7-9 p.m.
In a workshop on gustatory and olfactory perceptions, Anne Pearce will discuss “Music for the Senses” with special emphasis on Handel’s Chandos Anthems, the Messiah and the Coronation Mass.

Awards for Handel’s Chandos Anthems – The words for the Chandos Anthems were taken from the well-known songbook Gesangbuch des 17. Jahrhunderts, a collection of 200 chansons published in 1681. It is a rich source of choral music and has been published over 1,000 times. The Chandos Anthems are based on texts from the liturgy of the Rommonan Church, a liturgical book that was widely used in England in the 17th century. The Chandos Anthems were composed as a tribute to King George I, who was the Supreme Governor of the Church of England from 1714 to 1727.
Performances of Moliere’s ‘Tartuffe’ Open April 18 in Mabee Theater

Rockhurst University Theatre closes its season with four performances of Richard Wilbur’s translation of “Tartuffe.” Written in 1664 by French actor and playwright Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, known as Moliere, the play casts its light on a crafty hypocrite named Tartuffe, who masquerades as a holy man and takes advantage of his gullible, and wealthy, Parisian benefactor who falls under his spell. This sharp and witty comedy/farce, which is presented in rhyme, has been delighting audiences for more than three centuries. Performances are at 7:30 p.m., Thursday and Friday, April 18 and 19, and 2:30 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, April 20 and 21. Director Susan Proctor cautions that general seating for each performance is limited to 60. She suggests arriving early. The box office opens 45 minutes prior to curtain; tickets are $8.

Rockhurst Student Choruses Perform American Music Gems

The Rockhurst University Chorus, Chamber Singers and Women’s Chorale will present a concert of American music, from William Billings and the Southern Harmony and Musical Companion, to gospel, to contemporary settings of American traditional music. Music by Kansas City composer and guitarist Kevin Hiatt will be a special feature at the 7 p.m. program on Thursday, April 4, in Mabee Theater.

The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion is an old collection of “shape-note” hymns and songs first published in 1854. The shape-note tradition flourished in the 19th century in the American South and Midwest, where it is still practiced today. The printed music’s peculiar note-heads, each representing a solmization syllable, fa, sol, la (called the “fasola system”), was intended to make learning these songs easier for singers with little expertise.

This practice is depicted quite accurately in the film “Cold Mountain” during a scene in which Nicole Kidman’s character sings in church while she and the congregation mark time with a “chopping” hand motion. The choruses will draw from the repertoire represented in this scene and from Kevin Hiatt’s choral gems.

Hiatt grew up in Kansas City, attended the Conservatory of Music and later earned a doctorate in music composition from the University of Miami. He has written more than 80 works of music that include chamber music, electronic music and orchestral pieces. His compositions have been performed in the United States and Europe.

Music Director Victor Penniman, DMA, presents the Rockhurst student choruses in this evening of music that celebrates the history and diversity of American culture—from the mountains of Appalachia to just down the street. Tickets are not required for this free concert.