



Links & Threads

A Newsletter for Arts Partners Published by the Ohio Arts Council and the Ohio Department of Education **Volume II Issue III**

Links and Threads is an electronic newsletter for district and school leaders who value arts learning as an integral part of the core curriculum. Its purpose is to assist school leaders in achieving the greatest advantage possible from the arts for their schools and districts. The publication will build upon the knowledge gained through the 2004 NEA Summer Institute for School Leaders, promote dialogue about the role of arts learning in school improvement, share success stories, and keep schools and districts informed about arts-related developments and opportunities.

Leadership Voices

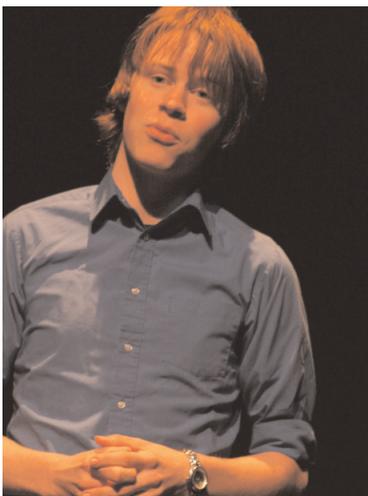
Ohio Student Wins National Poetry Out Loud

With support from the Ohio Arts Council (OAC) and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), Ohio students in the Capital region encountered poetry with a new depth last spring as they participated in *Poetry Out Loud*, a national poetry recitation competition sponsored by the NEA and the Poetry Foundation. Jackson Hille of Ohio, a senior at Columbus Alternative High School, was judged the winner on May 16 at the historic Lincoln Theater in Washington, D.C.

Hille received a \$20,000 scholarship. His journey started with his English teacher's suggestion that he participate in *Poetry Out Loud* for extra credit.

Jackson's ability to, as one Ohio judge describes it, "embody a poem" won him a spot in the state finals, held on April 29 at the Southern Theater in Columbus. Since his win in Washington, he has appeared on National Public Radio, visited with U.S. Representatives Deborah Pryce and Patrick J. Tiberi, and received congratulations and autographed books from a number of poets,

(continued next page)



"How can I be a bridge between the audience and the poem?" was the question that guided Jackson Hille, winner of the 2006 Poetry Out Loud Recitation Competition.

SiteLines

Participants are continuing the learning that began at the 2004 Summer Institute.

Last year, The Africentric Secondary School, a **Columbus Public Schools** high school partnered with the Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus to deliver "Pages: An Art and Writing Program" to 50 students.

Students experienced and wrote about works in the multiple arts disciplines featured at the Center. Dionne Custer, educator for school programs, says Wexner plans to continue offering the program to Columbus and other districts. The Wexner Center also will be holding a Teacher Open House on September 21 at 4:30 p.m. to preview some of the upcoming exhibits, screenings, and performances planned for the coming year.

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Ohio's Finalists and Their Poetry Selections

Emily Astorian
Granville High School

"Forgetfulness" by Billy Collins;
"Catch a Little Rhyme" by Eve
Merriman; "Advice to a Prophet"
by Richard Wilbur

Jackson Hille
Columbus Alternative School
"A Satirical Elegy on the Death of
a Late Famous General" by
Jonathan Swift; "Altruism" by
Molly Peacock; "Forgetfulness" by
Billy Collins

Lee Horton
Mount Gilead High School
"Eagle Poem" by Joy Harjo;
"Famous" by Naomi Shihab Nye;
"Ways of Talking" by Ha Jin

Robert Jones
Eastmoor Academy High School
"The Negro Speaks of Rivers" by
Langston Hughes; "Broken
Promises" by David Kirby; "To My
Mother" by Wendell Berry

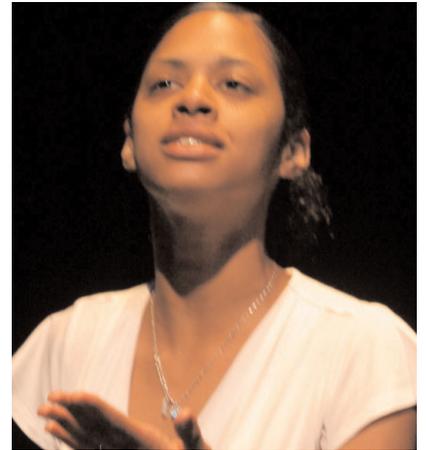
John Lamotte
Bishop Hartley High School
"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy
Evening" by Robert Frost; "Hope is
the thing with feathers" by Emily
Dickinson; "Trees" by Joyce Kilmer

Casey Osman
Westland High School
"Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good
Night" by Dylan Thomas; "We
Wear the Mask" by Paul Laurence
Dunbar; "Let It Be Forgotten" by
Sara Teasdale

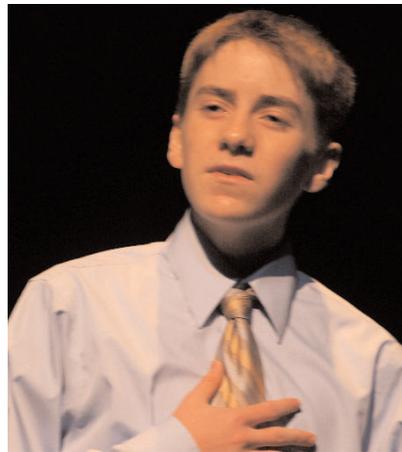
Meredith Smith
Thomas Worthington High School
"Still I Rise" by Maya Angelou;
"Beautiful Black Men" by Nikki
Giovanni; "Bilingual/Bilingue" by
Rhina P. Espaillat



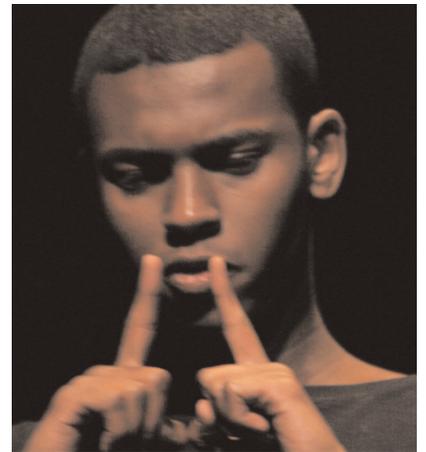
Lee Horton



Second place winner Meredith Smith



John Lamotte



Casey Osman

Ohio Student Wins! *continued from Page 1*

including Billy Collins and Molly Peacock. He starts this fall at Otterbein College in Ohio.

For both the state and national competitions, students recited three poems from memory, adding whatever gestures, facial expressions, cadences, vocal techniques, and other touches were needed to illuminate and interpret the poems they chose.

Ohio's second and third prizes went to Meredith Smith of Thomas Worthington High School and Robert Jones of Eastmoor Academy High School. Judges were David Hassler, poet, OAC Arts Learning artist, and director of the Wick Poetry Center at Kent State University; Dionne Custer, educator for school programs at the Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus; and Ann Townsend, poet and director of Denison University's creative writing program.



Third place winner Robert Jones



Emily Astorian

Below from left to right: 1) Dayton poet Herbert Martin performs. 2) Students pose with host Dan Stone, Poetry Out Loud creative director, NEA. 3) The judges: David Hassler, Ann Townsend, and Dionne Custer

Institute Reflections

from students who competed in Poetry Out Loud

Ohio students who participated in the *Poetry Out Loud* state finals say that memorizing and reciting the poems deepened their appreciation of language and love of poetry. Some say they gained insight into their own writing. All plan to continue reading and memorizing poems.

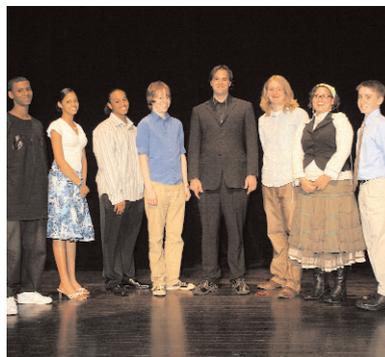
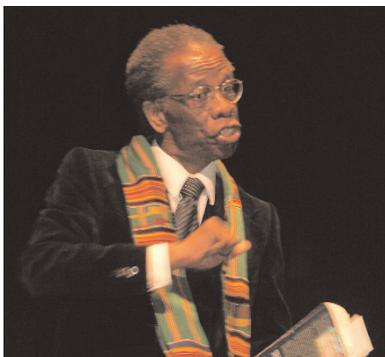
According to poet and educator Sandra Miller, who served as Ohio's *Poetry Out Loud* coordinator, watching high school students "form such close relationships with works of poetry" was a wonderful, unforgettable experience: "They connected to the poems so deeply and in so many different ways," says Miller. Four students spoke with *Links & Threads* about this challenging and transformative experience.

"Taking over what the poet was going through" was how Casey Osman described his experience in reading and rereading a Paul Laurence Dunbar poem. "Passion comes to the fore and you're standing in the shoes of the poet for a brief moment in time."

John Lamotte chose not to focus on the undertones of life and death often noted in the Robert Frost poem he chose. Rather he sought to capture the simple emotions of a man "caught off guard by beauty" as he looked at the forest on a snowy night.

Emily Astorian, who plans to study psychiatry, noticed that her changing moods affected how she saw and recited the poems on different days. This observation, she says, "helped me understand better how the human brain works."

Jackson Hille, who hopes to act on the Shakespearean stage, won by capturing both the humor and the subtle sadness of "Forgetfulness" by Billy Collins. "I focused on how I felt when I read it," says Jackson. "It had to be me saying it."



Learning Links

Need to learn more? These Web sites are valuable resources:

Poetry Out Loud
<http://www.poetryoutloud.org>

Go to this site to explore the *Poetry Out Loud* curriculum and other resources.

The Poetry Foundation
<http://www.poetryfoundation.org>

News, reviews, and events related to poetry, along with an archive of poems that can be searched by subject, occasion, or author.

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
<http://www.ncte.org>

The *Poetry Out Loud* curriculum addresses most of the 12 NCTE standards, which are presented on this site.

American School Board Journal
<http://www.asbj.com/specialreports>

Check the June 2006 edition or go to this site for a special report called "A Rich Picture: The Why and How of Arts Education." Four articles are available. Be sure to read about the value of arts educators as change agents in "The Promise of Art Education" by Dr. Sarah Tambucci.

Keep Arts in Schools
<http://www.keepartsinschools.org>

Assists advocacy by reporting national opinion research on arts integration. The Ford Foundation is the sponsor.

The Artcyclopedia
<http://www.artcyclopedia.com>

A valuable reference for those interested in learning more about the visual arts. Provides links to other Web sites and to museums.

Poetry Out Loud *Far-Reaching Value*

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Poetry Foundation launched *Poetry Out Loud (POL)* "to give schools and students the opportunity to experience their literary heritage in a new way and to learn the skills of public speaking and performance," says Dan Stone of the NEA, whose roles in the program have included curriculum author, program manager, and creative director.

Based on results to date, that vision is being realized.

State arts agencies are supportive. In 2005-06, all 50 states participated through either statewide initiatives or, like Ohio, through pilots conducted in part of the state. Plans to expand the program in 2006-07 are under way. According to Mary Campbell-Zopf, director of the Ohio Arts Council's Arts Learning Program, next year's competition will extend to a larger radius around the Capital region.

The arts community is delighted. A diverse audience that included a number of literary figures, theater people, arts journalists, and other supporters filled the Lincoln Theater for the finals. "The audience was mesmerized by these students performing poems that clearly meant a great deal to them," says Stone. "I was just stunned at how powerful it was."

Most of all, educators and students are enthusiastic. *Poetry Out Loud* began with a pilot project in Chicago and Washington, D.C. in 2004-05. Ninety-five percent of the teachers in that pilot report deciding to use the *Poetry Out Loud* curriculum every year. Stone hopes that school leaders will take advantage of the opportunity *POL* affords to bring schools and communities together in meaningful ways. "But *Poetry Out Loud* is not an extracurricular activity," he says. "It meets nine of the twelve NCTE standards. It enriches the serious analysis of literature. And students have been wildly enthusiastic." Stone says the experience of competing lit a spark for many of the national finalists. "This was a way to get to poetry that worked for them. Now they are writing more and planning to continue their studies."

The expert judges for Ohio's state finals expressed wholehearted belief in the power of *Poetry Out Loud*.

"The most evocative experiences of language need to happen out loud," says Ann Townsend, poet and director of Denison University's creative writing program. "It was so good to see the students recognize that power."

David Hassler, poet and program and outreach director for Kent State University's Wick Poetry Program, says memorizing for recitation encourages deep reading of poems, as well as exploration of a broader range of great poems. "Too often," he says, "students are taught to stand outside a poem, to dissect it in search of its meaning. But a poem is a living thing, and its meaning is always an open-ended question."

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ODE Update: *Exploring Arts Integration*

A good first step for exploring arts integrated teaching is a look at the interdisciplinary lesson plans that are part of the state's model standards-based fine arts curricula. Each is the basis for an engaging learning experience that addresses both the fine arts standards and the standards of one or more other subject areas. All the model lessons provide an easy five-item survey that allows teachers to rate the lesson and add comments. Teachers can see the feedback each lesson receives before deciding to use it.

Many of the lessons are easy to plan and implement—perfect for first attempts at arts integration. For example, in a unit called “Putting on a Show,” students explore how sounds differ in various areas of their school. A practical problem in drama/theater—determining what changes would need to be made to make an area a performance place—is part of the lesson.

Other lessons provide a glimpse of the intensive collaboration and planning required for more in-depth arts integration. “Jingle Sells, Jingle Sells,” for example, is

an eighth-grade unit that can be taught as an integrated English language arts, visual art, and music unit or as part of a more extensive unit that integrates those three subject areas with mathematics, science, and drama/theater. Students learn about how products are sold as they write words and music for advertising jingles and design packaging for products. The products themselves can be developed in science lessons, and additional activities can include figuring the surface area of the packaging in mathematics, developing and performing commercials in drama/theater, and writing essays on the different roles students assume in the project. Complementary math and science lessons also can be found in the Model Curricula.

To access the lessons, go to www.ode.state.oh.us. Under *Quick Links*, click on *IMS (Model Curricula)*. Selecting the *Lesson Plans* button, a grade band, and one of the fine arts as the content area and using “interdisciplinary” as a keyword will display all the lessons that integrate the selected arts discipline with other subject areas.

More Arts Integration Ideas

Here are some more ideas for arts integration from Ohio's Model Curricula:

Science and Dance

In the unit “Opposites Attract: Magnets in Action,” students learn about attraction and repulsion while learning dance concepts.

Math and Visual Art

In “Understanding Symmetry Through Visual Art,” fourth graders demonstrate knowledge of symmetry, radial balance, and fractions while exploring artworks and creating their own designs.

English Language Arts and Visual Art

In “Pictures and Poetry,” students design and produce a book while reading and writing several poetic styles.

Social Studies: and Music

In the unit “Ohio Regional Cultures,” fourth-graders connect music and other ways to express a region's culture.

Poetry out Loud *continued from Page 4*

“I love that young people are learning to love poetry and read it, that they are putting their own voices to the poems,” says Dionne Custer, educator for school programs at the Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus. “I saw such a command of the language, an understanding of what they were reciting.”

Each of the judges recommends that teachers of English, creative writing, and theater explore the *Poetry Out Loud* curriculum and anthology and take advantage of what poetry offers—opportunities to develop the creative sensibility that is vital in comprehending literature and realizing the dramatic possibilities of language. As Dionne Custer puts it: “There is so much more to poetry.”

Find the *Poetry Out Loud* curriculum and materials at <http://www.poetryoutloud.org>.

You're Invited . . .

The Ohio Arts Council (OAC) and the Ohio Department of Education invite you to attend the opening night of the *Promoting Creativity Conference* on Friday, September 29, 2006, at the Riffe Center for Government and the Arts, 77 South High Street, Columbus, Ohio. The evening begins with a reception and artist talk at 6 p.m. at the Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery. At 7:00, Sir Ken Robinson will give the keynote address—"Leading a Culture of Innovation"—in the Center's Capitol Theatre. The reception and presentation are open to the general public.

Sir Ken Robinson has worked with national governments in Europe and Asia, with international agencies, Fortune 500 companies, major not-for-profit corporations and some of the world's leading cultural organizations. He speaks to audiences throughout the world on the creative challenges facing business and education in the new global economies. His dynamic presentation, combined with his thought-provoking and humorous delivery, will surely make this one of the most-talked about events of the year.

The evening will be presented in partnership with the Ohio Arts Foundation, Inc. The conference is an annual gathering of OAC artists-in-residence, artists on the roster for residencies, and funded residency sponsors.

Institute Participants

- Botkins Local School District
- Cincinnati City School District
- Clark County Educational Service Center
- Cleveland Municipal School District
- Columbus City School District
- Dayton City School District
- Hamilton City School District
- Lakota Local School District
- Lima City School District
- Mississinawa Valley Local School District
- Stark County Educational Service Center
- Steubenville City School District
- Toledo City School District
- Yellow Springs Exempted Village School District

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ODE Mission

The Ohio Department of Education supports high achievement for all students every year by setting clear and high expectations for all students; by making sure that educators have the skills, knowledge and resources to help students improve; by fostering the ability of families and communities to help students succeed; and by measuring, publicizing and rewarding achievement results.



25 South Front Street
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www.ode.state.oh.us

OAC Mission

We're Building Ohio through the Arts. The Ohio Arts Council is a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally, and economically.



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Ohio Arts Council

www.oac.state.oh.us

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