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Department of English

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Monday, October 7, 2013

ROBERT HAYDEN: A CENTENNIAL CONFERENCE

The Department of English at the University of Michigan has announced plans for a one-day conference on November 1, 2013 in honor of Robert Hayden, the distinguished poet and educator who grew up in Detroit, received an M.A. degree from the University of Michigan in 1944 and returned to teach at the university in 1970 as Professor of English until his death in 1980.

Hayden has emerged as a major figure in American literary history. He is the leader, along with Gwendolyn Brooks, of the generation of African American poets that emerged in the 1940s to achieve widespread critical attention and a massive presence in anthologies and textbooks. He served as Poetry Consultant to the Library of Congress (the position now known as Poet Laureate of the United States) from 1976-1978. The U.S. Post Office issued a postage stamp in 2012 to honor his achievement.

The keynote address of the conference, to be held in the Rackham Amphitheater, will be delivered by Harryette Mullen, Professor of English and Creative Writing at UCLA, a Guggenheim Fellow (among other honors), and a finalist for the National Book Award and the National Book Critics Circle Award. Her volume of essays and interviews, *The Cracks Between What We Are and What We Are Supposed to Be*, appeared in 2012.

Professor Mullen will be introduced by A. Van Jordan of the U-M faculty. A panel discussion in early afternoon will include Harryette Mullen, Linda Gregerson (of the U-M faculty), Lawrence Joseph, a Detroit native and one of the most distinguished Arab-American poets of our time, and Frederick Glaysher, editor of Hayden's *Collected Poems* and *Collected Prose*. Laurence Goldstein, Professor of English and co-editor (with Robert Chrisman) of *Robert Hayden: Essays on the Poetry* (University of Michigan Press, 2001), will serve as panel moderator.

In late afternoon, MFA students will read from and speak about Hayden's poems, along with other participants in the conference.

The conference is free and open to the public.

Timetable:

10 a.m. Keynote address by Harryette Mullen

12-1:30 p.m. Lunch at various restaurants around campus

1:30-3:00 p.m. Panel discussion

3:30-5:00 p.m. Readings and remarks by audience members

Posted by [Joanne Beverage](#) at [11:52 AM](#)