The Poetry Center and American Poetry Archives

The Poetry Center was founded in 1954 by a small donation from W. H. Auden (he surrendered the honorarium paid to him when he read his poetry to celebrate the opening of the new—and current—San Francisco State University campus). Today, The Poetry Center at SF State is one of the most long-lived and nationally renowned literary arts institutions in the United States. Having celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2004, the Poetry Center initiated its pioneering reading series under the direction of Ruth Witt-Diamant, with advice and encouragement from local poets Kenneth Rexroth, Robert Duncan, and Madeline Gleason among others. Since then, The Poetry Center has presented over one hundred continuous seasons of outstanding contemporary poets and writers, reading from their works. With its companion project, The American Poetry Archives, the Center has amassed nearly 3,000 original audio and video recordings of poets and writers reading from their works, representing an irreplaceable collective record of the past half-century of American literary accomplishment. The Poetry Center presents an extensive reading series, on and off campus, during Spring and Fall semesters. It houses a reading library (HUM 512), which doubles as performance space and Creative Writing student lounge. The Poetry Center is open to visitors, Monday through Thursday, and its recordings are available for sale, and for loan to SF State students, faculty, and staff. Offices located in HUM 511, phone (415) 338-2227. For archives recordings, please leave a message at (415) 338-1056. Website: poetry.sfsu.edu (http://poetry.sfsu.edu).