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Contact

Gayle Anderson/Marc Littman
Metro Media Relations
213.922.2702/922.2700
www.metro.net/pressroom
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Live poetry readings at Union Station invite rush-hour commuters to cherish the moment during National Poetry Month

● **Monday, April 30 – 4 to 6 p.m.** : Metro Art presents live poetry readings at Union Station with acclaimed L.A. poets: [Elena Karina Byrne](#), [Tony Barnstone](#), [Brendan Constantine](#), [liz gonzález](#), [Teka-Lark Lo](#), [Imani Tolliver](#). (or see [Biographies](#))

The muse may be mysterious in her wanderings, but in April, the month designated by the Poetry Society of America as National Poetry Month, she can be counted on to keep her annual rendezvous with Metro Rail, a decidedly alternative space for poets who converge upon the Metro system to read poetry to rush-hour commuters during National Poetry Month.

This year, celebrated poet Elena Karina Byrne and a band of poets will read from their work and selected poems from the Poetry in Motion series from 4 to 6 p.m. on Monday, April 30, in the East Portal atrium of Union Station. There is no admission fee.

Breaking through the rush-hour monotone, poets Tony Barnstone, Brendan Constantine, Liz González, Teka-Lark Lo, Rubén Martínez, Imani Tolliver and Elena Karina Byrne will invoke the muse to lift the heart, sooth the spirit and invite Metro riders and public transportation users alike to cherish the moment.

The rush-hour readings personify and extend the experience of Poetry in Motion ® L.A., where the work of poets inscribed on placards placed aboard nearly 2,400 Metro buses brings poetry to more than one million bus riders a day.

Metro Art, in partnership with Poetry in Motion L.A., has staged annual rush-hour readings during National Poetry Month since 1999. The alternative space in the context of a transit system has become a welcome platform for the spoken and written word, delivered to delighted audiences by published poets in great performances.

Established in 1989, Metro Art has commissioned more than 250 artists for a wide variety of temporary and permanent artworks throughout the Metro system. For more information about Metro Art and its free docent guided tours, visit www.metro.net/art or call Metro Art at 213-922-4ART.

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Biographies:

● **Brendan Constantine** is a poet born and raised in Los Angeles. He is a two-time finalist for the National Poetry Series and his work has appeared in numerous magazines and online journals, most notably Ploughshares, RUNES, Artlife, The Cortland Review, StellaZine and the L.A. Times best seller The Underground



Poet Elena Karina Byrne leads live poetry readings April 30 for afternoon rush-hour commuters at Union Station.

Guide To Los Angeles. New work is forthcoming in The Los Angeles Review. A popular performer and teacher, he is currently poet in residence at the Windward School in west Los Angeles.

- **Tony Barnstone** is Professor English at Whittier College, and has published his poetry, fiction, essays and translations in dozens of major American journals. His books of poems include *Sad Jazz: Sonnets* (Sheep Meadow Press, 2005) and *Impure: Poems by Tony Barnstone* (University Press of Florida, 1998). His other books include *The Anchor Book of Chinese Poetry*; *Out of the Howling Storm: The New Chinese Poetry*; *Laughing Lost in the Mountains: Poems of Wang Wei*; *The Art of Writing: Teachings of the Chinese Masters*; and the textbooks *Literatures of Asia, Africa and Latin America*, *Literatures of Asia*, and *Literatures of the Middle East*. Books to be published in late include *The Golem of Los Angeles* (Red Hen Press, winner, Benjamin Saltman Award). He is the recipient of many national poetry prizes and of fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council. Born in Middletown, Connecticut, and raised in Bloomington, Indiana, Barnstone lived for years in Greece, Spain, Kenya and China before taking his Masters in English and Creative Writing and Ph.D. in English Literature at UC Berkeley.

- Poet, visual artist, educator, and arts activist, **Imani Tolliver** is a graduate of Howard University where she studied English Literature and African-American Studies. During her studies, she was awarded a Lannon Literary Fellowship at the Folger Shakespeare Library, the John J. Wright Literary Award and is a graduate fellow of Cave Canem African-American Writer's Workshop and Retreat. She has served as a consultant to community organizations, museums and educators.

- **Teka-Lark Lo** is a poet in the satirist tradition, freelance writer, and editor of the *BrickBat Revue*, a literary editorial broadsheet on the poetry and art scenes in Los Angeles. She is also the Southern California Events Coordinator for Tupelo Press.

- As a child, **liz gonzález** traveled with her grandparents by train from San Bernardino to Union Station many times. liz is the author of the limited edition chapbook *Beneath Bone*, published by Manifest Press, and her poetry, fiction and memoirs have been published widely. Her recent awards include the Arts Council for Long Beach's 2005 Professional Artist Fellowship, a fiction-writing grant from The Elizabeth George Foundation and a residency at Hedgebrook. She is the assistant editor of the online magazine *Speechless the Magazine*, and she teaches writing at Long Beach City College and creative writing in private workshops and through the UCLA Extension Writers' Program.

- **Elena Karina Byrne** is a teacher, visual artist, Poetry Moderator and Consultant for The Los Angeles Times Festival of Books, the West Hollywood Book Fair, and former 12-year Regional Director of the Poetry Society of America. She has served as Poetry Consultant to the Getty Research Institute (GRI) and curated a poetry reading series at the Chateau Marmont and The J. Paul Getty Center. She now runs the reading series for University of Southern California's Doheny Memorial Library, and The Ruskin Art Club with Red Hen Press. With Stephen Yenser, she is the 2004-2005 Poetry Co-Editor for *The Los Angeles Review*. Her many recent publications, among others, include, *The Yale Review*, *Chelsea*, *Verse*, *The Paris Review*, *American Poetry Review*, *Poetry*, *Ploughshares*, *Colorado Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Painted Bride Quarterly*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Volt*, *TriQuarterly*, *Hotel Amerika*, *The Journal*, *Nimrod*, *Best American Poetry 2005*, *Poetry Daily: 366 Poems from the World's Most Popular Poetry Website* and *The Anthology of Magazine Verse & Yearbook of American Poetry*. Elena is an eight-time Pushcart Prize nominee who has won awards from the Academy of American Poets, The Chester H. Jones Foundation and the Kudzu Poetry Prize. Her first book, *The Flammable Bird*, is available from Zoo Press. She has just completed another, *Masque*, and is working on a collection of essays on poetry and contemporary culture entitled, *Poetry and Insignificance*. Elena was recently filmed for the National Endowment for the Art's *Shakespeare In American Communities* and is working with Red Car Studios designing a Poetry Clip/Motion Picture Project: "Face Value."