



Public Contact:
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

POET POPULIST 2008-2009

Announcing a New and Improved Program for Election Year

Enriched online voting experience, curriculum development with student outreach and more

Seattle Washington (August 1 2008)—In an ongoing effort to bring wider awareness and participation to the Seattle's Poet Populist program we've made the following updates:

- **New election calendar:** The election will now run September 15 through November 4.
- **New inclusiveness for students:** the new schedule will allow students and schools to participate to a greater degree.
- **Curriculum development:** We are developing a curriculum for high schools that will examine democracy and the arts, and provide opportunities for candidates to visit schools. This effort is supported by Seattle Arts & Lectures and the Seattle Public Schools.
- **Improved web site:** More dynamic features (live voting updates, audio and video embedding, candidate's toolkit) will enhance the voter experience and improve the public presentation of candidates and participating organizations.
- **Fiscal sponsorship:** The program is newly a project of the non-profit Shunpike, which serves as a fiscal sponsor.
- **Final event:** The four finalists with the highest vote totals will be invited to read at the Richard Hugo House on November 14, where the winner will be announced and awarded a cash prize of \$500.

About Poet Populist

The Poet Populist program supports creative public thinking, articulate leadership, and the practice of democracy. It proposes that artists can be part of the civic discourse, and that the civic discourse can be artistically inclined. It also gives dozens of arts organizations a chance to reach out to new audiences city-wide.

By electing a Poet Populist, Seattle is promoting the idea that arts and democracy don't have to be separate: the idea, in other words, that our leaders can think and speak with creative vision, and that a dialogue with the public is a literal, integral part of that vision

The program was founded by City Council President Nick Licata in 1999, and is supported by resolution of the Seattle City Council.



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Poet Populist is currently a program of Luna Park and The Shunpike, with funding by the City of Seattle. Additional program support is provided by the Seattle Public Library, Seattle Arts & Lectures, Richard Hugo House, and the Seattle Weekly.

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