Get Involved

There are countless ways to get involved with Cave Canem Foundation. To be a part of our rapidly growing community, visit cavecanempoets.org for more information or email us at info@ccpoets.org.

Get in Touch

@CaveCanemPoets
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Cave Canem Foundation, Inc.
Cave Canem Foundation
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- Letter from the President ........................................... 1
- Cave Canem Awarded 2018 Spark Prize .......................... 1
- Annual Retreat .............................................................. 1
- Community Achievements ............................................. 1
- Public Programs ............................................................ 1
- The Team ....................................................................... 1
- Institutional and Individual Donors ................................. 1

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

- Page 6

**LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Dear friends and supporters,

We are proud to present you with Cave Canem Foundation’s 2018 Annual Report. Founded in 1996 by poets Toi Derricotte and Cornelius Eady, Cave Canem Foundation has become the leading “home for black poetry.”

Please find enclosed details on the organization’s recent developments. This includes highlighted achievements over the past year—such as Cave Canem receiving the 2018 Spark Prize—and fellows being awarded several of the highest literary honors. We are continuing on the path of new growth, structure and leadership to help champion our mission of remedying the under-representation and isolation of African American poets.

Warmly,

Parneshia Jones, President
Cave Canem Foundation, Inc.

**MISSION**

Cave Canem Foundation is a home for the many voices of African American poetry and is committed to cultivating the artistic and professional growth of African American poets.

**CAVE CANEM AWARDED 2018 SPARK PRIZE**

Cave Canem was named a recipient of Brooklyn Community Foundation’s second annual Spark Prize, a distinction that includes a grant award of $100,000.

**ANNUAL RETREAT**

Cave Canem’s flagship retreat, annually held at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg, Pennsylvania, offers an unparalleled opportunity to join a community of peers and study with world-class faculty. Once accepted to the retreat, poets become lifelong “fellows.” Cave Canem boasts a high-achieving fellowship of more than 450.

**THIRD-YEAR GRADUATING FELLOWS**

From left to right: Biterume Rangwa, Matthew Brownlee, Cinque Lamar Charleton, Dustin Pearlman, Jessica Lamy, Essence London & Maya Marshall

**FACULTY**

Every year, a distinguished cohort of the country’s most influential, daring and groundbreaking poets make up the faculty at Cave Canem’s retreat.

**THIS YEAR’S FACULTY**

- **CHRIS ABANI**
  - Board of Trustees Professor, English at Northwestern University; winner, Guggenheim Award

- **CONRADI EADY**
  - Professor, MFA Program in Creative Writing and Literature at SUNY Stony Brook Southampton; finalist, 1999 Pulitzer Prize in Drama

- **EVE SHOCKLEY**
  - Professor, English at Rutgers University; finalist, 2018 Pulitzer Prize in Poetry

- **AMBER FLORA THOMAS**
  - Professor, Creative Writing at East Carolina University; winner, Richard Peterson Poetry Prize; winner, Ann Stanford Poetry Prize

**FORMER FACULTY**

- **Eliza Rain**
  - Winner, 2015 National Book Award in Poetry

- **Tyrone Hayes**
  - Winner, 2018 National Book Critics Circle Award

**TYEHIMBA JESS**

The recipient of a 2018 Guggenheim fellowship, a National Book Critics Circle Award nominee and a Cave Canem fellow, Tyehimba Jess is the author of *Olio*, which won the 2017 Pulitzer Prize in Poetry, and *Locally, which won the 2004 National Poetry Series.

“Single handedly, [Cave Canem] has been responsible for fostering the careers of hundreds of black poets who have gone on to win nearly every poetry award and book prize available.”

—Fellow and Pulitzer Prize-winner Tyehimba Jess

**GUEST PORT**

- **ROBIN COSTE LEWIS**
  - Provost’s Fellow; Poetry and Visual Studies at the University of Southern California; winner, 2015 National Book Award in Poetry

“I have faith in my work that I never had before. I am considering myself as a serious writer and that my work means something serious to the state of contemporary arts and letters.”

—2018 Cave Canem Fellow

**FELLOW PROFILE**

- **FELLOWSHIP**
  - 2018 Cave Canem Fellow

“Receiving the Spark Prize highlights our influence beyond the literary arts. Cave Canem is also a service and justice-oriented organization for the people of Brooklyn.”

—Isioma Komada-John, Grants Manager

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COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENTS

Awards garnered by Cave Canem fellows, faculty and elders include, among many others, the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, the National Book Critics Circle Award and the National Poetry Series award. Cave Canem fellows have 325+ books in print.

SELECT AWARDS AND HONORS

ELIZABETH ACEVEDO
Winner, 2018 National Book Award in Young People’s Literature for The Poet X; winner, 2015–19 New York City Book Award

SAPIA EHLILLO
Recipient, 2018 Rabiib Lilly and Dorothy Sargent Rosenberg Poetry Fellowship

ALISON C. ROLLINS
Winner, 2018 Rona Jaffe Foundation Writers’ Award

RICKEY LAURENTIIS
Winner, 2018 Whiting Award

DANEZ SMITH
Prize for Best Collection; winner, 2018-19 National Book Award in Young People’s Literature; winner, 2018 National Book Award

EVIE SHOCKLEY
Winner, 2018 Hurston/Wright Legacy Award in Poetry; finalist, 2018 National Book Critics Circle Award

JUSTIN PHILLIP REED
Winner, 2018 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work in Poetry

NATASHA TRETHEWEY
Winner, 2018 Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award; shortlisted, 2018 Forward Prize for Best Collection; shortlisted, U.S. Editor Prize

PATRICIA SMITH
Winner, 2018 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work in Poetry

JULIAN RANDALL
Recipient, 2018 Legacy Award in Poetry; finalist, 2018 National Book Award in Poetry

TRACY K. SMITH
Winner, 2018 Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award; shortlisted, 2018 Forward Prize for Best Collection; shortlisted, U.S. Editor Prize

MAHOGANY L. BROWN
Winner, 2018 National Book Award in Poetry

MITCHELL C.H. DOUGLAS
Winner, 2018 Hurston/Wright Legacy Award in Poetry

COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENTS

Cave Canem’s 2018 program offerings reached more than 3,000 audience members through nearly 45 public programs and contracted over 160 artists. Programs included Legacy Conversations with poets and scholars who have historically played important roles in black poetry; a Lectures & Master Classes Series, bringing thought and scholarship to the forefront; rare opportunities to work with accomplished poets through community-based writing workshops; Poets on Craft, featuring mid-career poets in conversation with each other; and New Works Readings, showcasing the latest publications from the Cave Canem community. Through our growing institutional partnerships, our organization offered residencies to and secured speaking engagements through our Poets Tour program for Cave Canem fellows.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

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A TRIBUTE TO JUNE JORDAN

This day-long conference offered an intergenerational exploration of the legendary poet’s life, work and legacy. The tribute included panels, discussions and readings with more than a dozen Cave Canem fellows, attracting an audience of nearly 400.

PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

Kelly Strayhorn Theater
Broyard Park Reading Room
Center for African American Poetry
City College of New York
Brooklyn Museum
New York City Department of Environmental Protection

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New York City Department of Environmental Protection
Soul of a nation reading series at the Brooklyn Museum
We expanded our programming with the Brooklyn Museum to feature readings every month from October 2018 to February 2019, in celebration of the exhibition Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power. The readings garnered more than 600 attendees in 2018 alone, and featured fellows such as Hafizah Geter, Omotara James and Joel Dias-Porter.

“Cave Canem never ceases to educate and evoke in the African diaspora. Hands: black swans toward heaven gripping gold or grapes of God’s glory.”
— Audience Member

Poetry & the Body
Cave Canem is a proud founding member of the Poetry Coalition, a national alliance of organizations dedicated to promoting the cultural value of poetry. In March, Coalition members offered programs on the theme “Poetry & the Body.” Through social media, Cave Canem fellows and faculty submitted poetic lines for inclusion in an ensamble, which debuted online on March 1, 2018. Cave Canem also presented the organization’s first-ever open mic featuring poems about poetry and the body.

Excerpt from the Poem
“Cave Canem’s Fellows & Faculty Ensemblore Excerpt
Sweet skin, so dissonant, My long-armed dissection walks shirtless down the night street. Hands: black swans toward heaven gripping gold or grapes of God’s glory.”

The Team
Staff
Nicole Sealey, Executive Director
Elizabeth Bryant, Programs
Dee Commerce, Communications Manager
Jessen Kamuka-John, Grants Manager
Zara Hazard, Administrative Assistant
Della Green, Workshops & Administrative Fellow
Natalie Desmemmes, Programs & Communications Fellow

Retreat Staff
Dana McRae, Coordinator
Maxine Jackson, Staff

Interns
Sakina Yaya Riddle
Montrell S. Chandler
Nuriel Dhem
Nicole Hatcher
China Pham
Chelsie Williams

INSTITUTIONAL DONORS

Lannan
Rockefeller Foundation
Whiting
Southern Poverty Law Center

Individual Donors

A Gathering of the Tribes
Alice Janus Banks
Association of Writers and Writing Programs
The Minority Community Impact Fund
The Betsy Hotel
Banks Are Magic, LLC
Brooklyn Museum
Bryant Park Corporation
Brooklyn Reading Room
Center for African American Poetry & Poetics, University of Pittsburgh
City of Asylum/Pittsburgh
Community Foundation of Greater Monongahela
Community of Writers at Square Valley
Cudahy Charitable
Fine Arts Works Center in Potsdam
Flowering Lotus Productions, LLC
HarpersCollins Publishers
HickmanBlue Cross Blue Shield
JeAf-Atlas Banks
The June J. Mordan Literary Estate
LineBreaks Media
LitAP
Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City’s Cultural & Education Arts
Mississippi Writing Foundation
The New School, MFA Creative Writing Program
New York University, MFA Creative Writing Program
Northwestern University Press
O. Mann Foundation/University of Wyoming, Inc.
Poets & Writers, Inc.
People’s Project
Redemptorist Fathers of New York
Rose O’Neill Literary House
Starbucks Coffee
The Tillman Hotel Foundation
Two Trees Cultural Space Subsidy Program
Vermont Studio Center
Westville Dandelion
The William and Mary Lanier Foundatoin (in honor of Lucy Wainwright)

Financial Report
To view a complete copy of our Fiscal Year 2018 audit, visit our website at https://cavecanempoets.org/financials/.