

Arts & Entertainment

Hwang Tong-Gyu Shares Korean Culture

Denise Peck

Taking off the professor's cap, Dr. Hwang Tong-Gyu read in what he terms the "human voice" a three-part poem about Port Chong-ryong.

Thursday night's Writer's Forum audience listened intently as Hwang made references to the historic port, where King Tanjong was abdicated and hung in the 15th century.

Hwang, one of the leading Korean poets, is proud of this poem because it is free of his professor voice, even though he is Professor of English at Seoul National University in Seoul, Korea.

Hwang is pleased that many universities and colleges hire poets as professors, but he warns against complicated poetry.

"If we make efforts, we may take off the professor's gown whenever we write," said Hwang. "A professor's poem is likely to have a brain-generated voice, something that retains the dusty smells of a study or a library."

"Teaching the audience weakens art," said Hwang. He prides himself in teaching only about life through his poetry.

"An artist should lead an artist's life," suggests Hwang. "There should be some kind of truth in writing along with pizzaz in verbal expression."

Resisting worldly temptations at times, being independent and never being a coward are qualities all artists should embrace, said Hwang.

Hwang has friends as poetry consultants in Korea and he tries to move at least one of them with each poem he writes. His Korean audience is much larger than a few friends, however.

"Poetry is stronger than politics," said Hwang. In the first year, his anthology "Wind Burial" sold about 10,000 copies to an audience of 43 million Koreans. Hwang also expects 3,000 to 4,000 copies to sell yearly for 10-15 years after publication.

The strength of emotion in his poetry is clear when Hwang reads to his audience in Korean. There is one poem however, 'A Passage to the Bronx', that has special meaning to him in English.

'A Passage to the Bronx' recalls when he was mugged in New York during the second week of his visit to the U.S. By the end of the poem, Hwang said he had overcome the hatred that grew from the

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Original Scripts Featured

Denise Peck

A Playwrights Symposium featuring the original scripts "Magnetic Fields" and "Check List" will be held at St. Andrews Presbyterian College on Monday, Feb. 22 at 8 p.m.

"Magnetic Fields," a comedy by Wilmington residents Maggie Maxwell and Steve Reilly, is a story about opposites attracting. Readers of the script include Carl Bennett, Distinguished Professor of English at St. Andrews, Erik Faircloth, a St. Andrews student and Brenda Gilbert, a Laurinburg resident.

Scotland High School English and journalism teacher Kate Blackburn is the author of the second script, "Check List." Readers for this poetry drama include Amy Sarno, Alison Foley and Marian Scholz, St. Andrews students, and Ellen Walters, an academic aid at the college.

Janice Burgess, Assistant Professor of Theatre and D.K. Beyer, Associate Professor of Theatre initiated the idea of a symposium with an open call for scripts last December. Although Beyer taught a scriptwriting course in the fall, the offer was also open to the community.

The Reader's Theatre presentation of scripts will be held in the Hagan Choral room in the Vardell Building at St. Andrews. A discussion with the playwrights and audience will follow the readings.

This Monday Night in the Arts presentation is free and the public is invited to attend.

You're astute enough to discuss the philosophical ramifications of Victor Frankl's "Existential Vacuum."

And you're still smoking?

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

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Blackburn, Martin Kick off Writers' Forum

Beth Russo

Jill Stricklin

The first of the new Spring Season of Fortner Writer's Forums took place on February 11, featuring Kate Blackburn and Rob Martin. Rob McLean read a few of his poems in the Open Mike which followed.

Kate Blackburn earned her Master's Degree in Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. Some of her poetry was published by the St. Andrews Press in *Four North Carolina Women Poets*. Her first play, entitled "Check List", will be premiered on February 22 at St. Andrews.

Opening with "Accident for Sylvia Plath", Blackburn commemorated the 25th anniversary of Plath's death. Another poem of Blackburn's was "Stirfry in One Pan", in which she condemned Pandora, the Greek mythological creature who let loose the world's misfortunes, to packaging Jolly Green

Giant Stirfry Sweet and Sour Chicken. The last line declared, "I am satisfied, I am stirred, we're all fried." Many of her poems were inspired by her travels in Scotland, England, and Brunnenburg castle in the Italian Alps. Blackburn also read an excerpt from her novel which is soon to be published.

Rob Martin, who is a 1986 graduate of St. Andrews and is presently Director of Alumni Affairs, presented to the public for the first time a short story which relayed the dilemma of a man who had gone through with a vasectomy without yet informing his wife.

Martin also read several of his poems, including "Grandad," and "The Visit."

Martin has performed in the Vienna Theater for 2 years, sung in night clubs in New York, and has been published in the *St. Andrews Review* and *The Cairn*.



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