



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 10, 2012

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CAMBRIDGE ARTS COUNCIL
presents
THE CAMBRIDGE POETRY JAM
Saturday, May 5, 2012: 11:00am - 4:00pm
Location: Cambridge Public Library Main Branch

Cambridge, MA—**Toni Bee**, Cambridge Poet Populist hosts the *Cambridge Poetry Jam* on **Saturday, May 5, 2012, 11:00am-4:00pm** at the Cambridge Public Library Main Branch (Community Meeting Room & Lecture Hall, 449 Broadway, Cambridge). This poetry festival celebrates poetry and the local poet community. Poetry across various poetic genres will be represented: Traditional Poetry (11:00am-12:00 Noon), Multilingual Poetry (Noon-1:00pm), Slam/Spoken Word (1:00-2:00pm), Poetry Music Mash-up (2:00-3:00pm), and Free Verse (3:00-4:00pm). Local poets **Charles Coe, Sheri J. Fife, Danielle Georges, Regie Gibson, Irene Koronas, Tontongi, Jason Wright**, and many more poets read and perform. This event, produced by the **Cambridge Arts Council**, is FREE and open to the public. For information, please visit www.cambridgeartscouncil.org/poetpopulist or call [617-349-4380](tel:617-349-4380).

:: Download photos of **Cambridge Poet Populist Toni Bee** at:
<http://www2.cambridgema.gov/gallery/?AlbumID=500>

At the *Cambridge Poetry Jam* on Saturday, May 5, poets and friends of poetry will be honored, including **Jeff Robinson** of the Jeff Robinson Trio, who has been one of the first in Cambridge to create the fusion of Poetry and Music; **David Harris**, former editor of *The Cambridge Chronicle*, who has shown great commitment to the Cambridge arts community and to covering socio-economically and culturally diverse communities in Cambridge; and a Surprise Awardee to be announced at the event.

About the Cambridge Poet Populist Program

The Poet Populist Program is sponsored by the City of Cambridge, Cambridge Arts Council, and Cambridge Public Library. The Poet Populist is elected by Cambridge residents to this unofficial office of the City of Cambridge with a “mandate” to create his or her unique style of poetry-focused events and programs that celebrate poetry and benefit the broader population.

Modeled, in part, on Seattle's Poet Populist Project, Cambridge's Poet Populist program was developed in 2007 to facilitate the creation and appreciation of poetry throughout the city for all Cambridge residents. Cambridge developed a Poet Populist program to give Cambridge residents the opportunity to nominate and elect fellow

citizens to the position, rather than appointing a poet to represent poetry, which is the common procedure for Poet Laureate programs.

Toni Bee, Cambridge Poet Populist

Cambridge residents elected Toni Bee to the position of Poet Populist in 2011. Her goal as Poet Populist is to celebrate Cambridge’s richly diverse poetry scene by working to fuse the community of poets together through events like the **Cambridge Poetry Jam**.

Toni Bee was born in Boston and raised in a middle-class household. While attending college she became pregnant and segued into becoming a homeless single mother. Now, she works and lives in Cambridge (Area 4). She is a writer, photographer, student at Simmons College, and mother to her ten-year-old daughter. Toni Bee is a Neighbor Media journalist at Cambridge Community Television (CCTV). In autumn 2011, she was honored by the YWCA with an “Outstanding Woman” award for her advocacy and commitment to community and the arts.

Toni Bee hosts many poetry events in Cambridge, including “The BeeCool Mashup,” where poetry, music and song collide” which takes place at the Middle East Restaurant and Nightclub. The **Cambridge Poetry Jam** on **May 5** showcases this unification of multiple genres with poetry. Contact Toni Bee at poetpopulist@cambridgema.gov

The Cambridge Arts Council is supported in part by the City of Cambridge, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

The Cambridge Poetry Jam received additional support from Cambridge Community Television (CCTV), *The Cambridge Chronicle*, and Follow the Honey



Cambridge Arts Council

The Cambridge Arts Council exists to ensure that the arts remain vital for people living, working and visiting Cambridge.

www.cambridgeartscouncil.org or 617-349-4380