“VISIONS AND REVISIONS” EXHIBIT UNVEILS THE PROCESS OF CREATING POETRY

Despite their usually brief and concise nature, the process of creating poems is anything but that. “Visions and Revisions: An Exhibition of Poems in Process” opens Tues., Jan. 15 and takes visitors on the journey of composition alongside 10 poets whose manuscripts, revisions and final versions of 16 individual poems are on display.

The manuscripts displayed highlight Emory’s collecting strengths in American, British and Irish poetry. Poets featured include Nobel-prize-winner Seamus Heaney of Ireland, the late poet laureate of Britain Ted Hughes, American Sylvia Plath, the late American Pulitzer-prize-winner Anthony Hecht, and two of Emory’s own poets: Pulitzer-prize-winner Natasha Trethewey, and Kevin Young, curator of the Danowski Poetry Library.

The exhibition, housed in the Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library (MARBL) on Emory’s campus, is a testament to the challenge of writing powerfully with few words, says Steve Enniss, MARBL’s director.

“The manuscripts in this exhibition illustrate that composing is a difficult process, and that each poet approaches it differently,” Enniss said. “We see clearly through this exhibition that poems rarely emerge fully formed from the writer’s head on the first try.”

Visitors will note revisions such as those in Heaney’s “Strange Fruit,” which originally included more frequent religious references than appeared in the final version. They’ll also see what inspired some of the poets: British poet Carole Ann Duffy was moved to compose “Recognition” by a letter to the editor she clipped and pasted to her writing paper.

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They’ll also see the different final formats in which poetry can appear, ranging from Plath’s “Sleep in the Mojave Desert,” published in Harper’s magazine, to Hecht’s Pulitzer-prize-winning volume of poetry, to Young’s “Ode to Pork,” published on a single sheet by the Southern Foodways Alliance.

The exhibition is free and open to the public from Jan. 15 through May 21, 2008. It is located in MARBL on the 10th floor of the Robert W. Woodruff Library, 540 Asbury Circle, Atlanta, GA 30322. For more information, you may call 404.727.6887 or send e-mail to marbl@emory.edu.

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The Emory University Libraries in Atlanta and Oxford, Ga., are dedicated to fostering courageous inquiry among students and scholars at Emory University and around the world. The nine libraries' holdings include more than 3.1 million print and electronic volumes, 40,000-plus electronic journals, and internationally renowned special collections. Visit the libraries online.

Emory University is one of the nation’s leading private research universities and a member of the Association of American Universities. Emory is known for its demanding academics, outstanding undergraduate college of arts and sciences, highly ranked professional schools and state-of-the-art research facilities. Emory is ranked as one of the country's top 20 national universities by U.S. News & World Report. In addition to its nine schools, the university encompasses The Carter Center, Yerkes National Primate Research Center and Emory Healthcare, the state's largest and most comprehensive health care system.