About the Roethke Readings

Theodore Roethke (photo by Frank Murphy from dust jacket of Straw for the Fire: From the Notebooks of Theodore Roethke 1943-63, selected and arranged by David Wagoner [Doubleday, 1972])

Theodore Roethke (1908 - 1963) taught at the University of Washington from 1947 until his death in 1963. The Theodore Roethke Memorial Poetry Readings were begun in 1964 to honor his memory by bringing notable contemporary poets to the University of Washington campus to give a reading of their works and, when possible, to meet with students enrolled in the department's advanced poetry writing courses. The annual Roethke Readings, co-sponsored by the Department of English, the University of Washington Graduate School, and the Theodore Roethke Memorial Fund Committee, are normally scheduled on the Thursday in May closest to Roethke's birthday (May 25), and since 1972 have been held in Roethke Auditorium, 130 Kane Hall, on the UW campus. They are free and open to the public, and regularly attract large audiences of poetry lovers from around the Pacific Northwest.

UW Arts & Sciences Newsletter article on 40th Anniversary of the Roethke Reading (2003).

Roethke Links on the Web:

- UW Digital Collections: Roethke photos
- "I Hear American Singing": "The Snake" set to music
- Modern American Poetry Roethke page (Univ. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)
- Roethke timeline (Arches, University of Georgia)
- "Salvaged Poems of Theodore Roethke" (Scott Ruescher, ArtsEditor.com article, January 2000 issue)
- Selected poems

Charles Simic is the 2018 Roethke Reader. See the Events Calendar for information about the Spring 2018 Reading.

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