



Arts Institute

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

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INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTS RESIDENCY PROGRAM: www.artsinstitute.wisc.edu/iarp.htm

ARTS INSTITUTE WEBSITE: www.artsinstitute.wisc.edu

JUAN FELIPE HERRERA'S WEBSITE: www.juanfelipepoet.com

Former UW-Madison Arts Institute's Interdisciplinary Artist in Residence, Juan Felipe Herrera, is appointed as the U.S. Library of Congress Poet Laureate

On June 10, 2015, the [Library of Congress](http://www.loc.gov) announced [Juan Felipe Herrera](http://www.juanfelipepoet.com) as their 21st Poet Laureate for one year starting in September 2015. This is one of the highest levels of recognition for a poet and Herrera is the first Latino poet bestowed this distinction. He also served as California's Poet Laureate from 2012-2014.



Juan Felipe Herrera. Photo credit: Tomas Ovalle for the [Los Angeles Times](http://www.losangeles.com)

"This is a mega-honor for me, for my family and my parents who came up north before and after the Mexican Revolution of 1910—the honor is bigger than me. I want to take everything I have in me, weave it, merge it with the beauty that is in the Library of Congress, all the resources, the guidance of the staff and departments, and launch it with the heart-shaped dreams of the people. It is a miracle of many of us coming together."

-Juan Felipe Herrera quote in the Library of Congress announcement

Herrera was on the UW-Madison campus as the Arts Institute's [Interdisciplinary Artist in Residence](http://www.artsinstitute.wisc.edu/iarp.htm) for about a week in April 2008. During his residency, he was very active on campus and in the greater Madison community. There were three events open to the public, including where he read and performed from his book *187 Reasons Mexicanos Can't Cross the Border*. He spoke to seven classes on campus and spent an intensive amount of time with first and second grade students at Lowell Elementary School creating a performance with the students based on his children's book *Super Cilantro Girl/La Superniña del Cilantro*.



Juan Felipe Herrera in Madison in 2008.
Photo credit: UW-Madison Arts Institute

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Even though his residency was short in duration, the impact he had on the community was enormous. Here are some quotes from his residency:

"Mr. Herrera's visits were ones that brought energy and enthusiasm to our students. He honored culture and infused drama, literature, and reading together into a motivating experience for children. We loved having him and our students enthusiastically participated in his work with them."

- Lisa Kvistad, Principal at Lowell Elementary School



Juan Felipe Herrera at Lowell Elementary School in Madison in 2008. Photo credit: UW-Madison Arts Institute

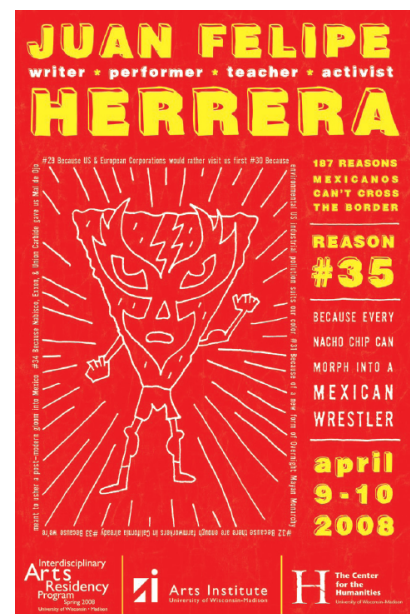
"His visit was phenomenally successful. The students absolutely loved him—several called it the highlight of their academic year or even their four years at UW-Madison. He connected with the students in a fantastic way. For my literature class, he also had a spoken word workshop, and I was amazed at what he was able to pull out of the students. Not only did they produce great spoken word pieces (and get a new found interest in the genre), they also incorporated spoken word into subsequent student presentations."

- former Assistant Professor Birgit Brander Rasmussen, Chicano/a Literature

Herrera's residency was sponsored by the [UW-Madison Arts Institute](#) and hosted by the Center for the Humanities in partnership with the departments of English, Communication Arts, Spanish and Portuguese, Theater and Drama, Library and Information Studies, the Chican@ and Latin@ Studies Program, and LACIS (Latin American Caribbean and Iberian Studies) along with community support from the Madison Metropolitan School District.

Additional Information on Juan Felipe Herrera

Besides being a Poet Laureate, Herrera has received two National Endowment for the Arts Writers' Fellowship Awards, a Guggenheim Fellowship, National Book Critics Circle Award, the Ezra Jack Keats Award for his book *Calling the Doves*,





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Smithsonian Children's Book of the Year Award, New York Public Library Outstanding Book for High School Students Award, two Latino Hall of Fame Poetry Awards, and many more recognitions. Herrera has written approximately 30 books with many of them incorporating his visual arts skills. He is also a visual artist, performer, educator, and activist—especially on Latin@/Chican@ issues.

[Herrera](#) taught for about a decade at UC Riverside in their Creative Writing Program where he retired as Professor Emeritus. Additional university teaching experience includes California State University in Fresno, University of Southern Illinois-Carbondale, and Stanford University. His degrees include an MFA in creative writing from the University of Iowa, a master degree in social anthropology from Stanford University, and a BA in social anthropology from UCLA.

For more information on Juan Felipe Herrera, visit his website: www.juanfelipepoet.com/

Library of Congress Announcement:
www.loc.gov/today/pr/2015/15-096.html

About the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arts Institute's Interdisciplinary Arts Residency Program & Arts Institute "The Voice of the Arts"

The University of Wisconsin-Madison Arts Institute's Interdisciplinary Arts Residency Program (established in 1999) brings world-renowned interdisciplinary artists to campus to teach, conduct community outreach, and present their work to the public.

As a division of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the Arts Institute speaks for and on behalf of the collective voice and vision of the arts at UW-Madison. We advance the arts as an invaluable resource to a vital university, and we promote all forms of artistic expression, experience, and interpretation as fundamental paths to engaging and understanding our world. The Institute's various programs include the Interdisciplinary Arts Residency Program, Wisconsin Film Festival, Madison Early Music Festival, Arts Outreach Program, Communicating Science, Arts on Campus website, and more.

To learn more, visit: www.artsinstitute.wisc.edu

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