Dear Friends: In March 2015 when Cheryl Strayed visited Seattle Arts & Lectures, I took her to visit Nathan Hale High School, where—through her own journey as a writer, as well as her book, *Wild*—she shared the idea of an epic quest, and how so often in literature and life, the transition to a new phase is marked by some sort of extraordinary journey that takes you to places you never imagined possible. Over the past several years, SAL has been on just such a journey. And in our 2014/15 season, over 26,698 people (an increase of 45% over 2013/14) of all ages and backgrounds, in classrooms or performance halls, joined us on our quest. On our journey, James McBride reminded us that “Fiction lets dreams come true,” Colm Tóibín offered wise insight that imagining others through literature is “the most important thing we do in our lives,” and Frank Bruni encouraged us all to read and think broadly and not to use our vast digital access to “dwell in precisely circumscribed and customized information and entertainment cocoons.” And while our visiting writers inspired us to new heights and challenged us to new thoughts, behind the scenes, SAL undertook its own extraordinary journey. We launched a new series, Hinge, with a lower ticket price to attract new audiences; unveiled a new Back to School Breakfast to support our Writers in the Schools program; and partnered with the Seattle Public Library to delight in a whole summer of reading fun with Summer Book Bingo. Eleven of our events sold out, including both The Moth and Cheryl Strayed at Benaroya Hall, and thanks to the partnership and support of so many of you, we closed the year strongly in the black, including both The Moth and Cheryl Strayed at Benaroya Hall, and thanks to the partnership and support of so many of you, we closed the year strongly in the black. In short, it was a year of tremendous success and momentum, where we lived into our mission in new ways, made great progress on our strategic plan goals, and built our team and infrastructure. We are so proud to share with you this snapshot of our 14/15 year; thank you to everyone who joined us on this spectacular journey and for having the faith to walk with us to places we had never imagined.

Thank You
Seattle Arts & Lectures is profoundly grateful to the following corporate, public, foundation, and organizational partners for their generous support of our programs in 2014/15.

4Culture; Amazon.com; ArtsFund; powergiver presented by ArtsFund; Boeing; Confidence Foundation; Copper Canyon Press; Davis Wright Tremaine, LLP; Elizabeth George Foundation; Expedia, Inc.; Fales Foundation; Glittertweed; Goldman, Sachs & Co; Harvest Foundation; Iron Springs Resort; Jeffirs Wood Foundation; Lighting Supply, Inc; Manix Carby Foundation; Marquand Books; Medina Foundation; MFA in Creative Writing & Poetics—UW Bothell; National Endowment for the Arts; Nordcliff Foundation; Nordstrom; Norman Archibald Charitable Foundation; NuBe Green; O’Donnell Family Foundation; Olson Kundig Architects; PATH; Pemco; Pershing Advisor Solutions; Petunia Foundation; Poets & Writers; Posner-Wallace Foundation; RealNetworks Foundation; Reed Longyear Mahalt & Ahrens PLLC; Schmidt Financial Group, Inc.; Seattle Foundation; Seattle Office of Arts & Culture; Steel Rives LLP; Tom Douglas Seatown Restaurants; Touchstone Builders; University Book Store; Umpqua Bank Charitable Foundation; Washington State Arts Commission; Whittier Trust; Women’s Funding Alliance

We are also immensely grateful to the individuals and additional partners that supported our work last year. A full list is featured on our website: www.lectures.org.

2014/15 Season

**Literary Arts Series**
7,372 ATTENDEES
James McBride
Colm Tóibín
Ruth Ozeki
Cheryl Strayed
Sheri Fink
Frank Bruni

**Poetry Series**
2,834 ATTENDEES
Ted Kooser
Matthea Harvey
Sherman Alexie
Timothy Donnelly
Lucie Brock-Broido
Terrance Hayes

**SAL Presents**
5,535 ATTENDEES
Nicholas Kristof
Ann Hamilton
The Moth
Judy Blume
Hinge / 1,146 ATTENDEES
John Darnielle
Patton Oswalt
SAL U / 1,105 ATTENDEES
Hacking the Brain
Thinking Animals
WITS / 749 EVENT ATTENDEES
Anthology Launch
Writers Works in Progress
Year End Readings

**Total Attendance**
18,741 EVENT ATTENDEES
+61% event attendance over 2013/14

2014/15 Financials

**Income**
Total: $1,619,600
Individuals: 25%
Foundations: 7%
Corporations: 8%
Public: 4%
Earned Income: 33%
In-Kind: 24%

**Expenses**
Total: $1,444,992
Literary Arts Series: 14%
Poetry Series: 7%
SAL Presents: 8%
Hinge: 2%
SAL U: 2%
WITS: 25%
Administration: 5%
Fundraising: 10%
In-Kind: 27%

“I was honored to be part of the SAL series. Its reputation as being one of the best in the country is well deserved. The folks in the greater Seattle region have a real treasure on their hands, and I admire the way they cherish and nurture it.”

—JAMES MCBRIDE, 14/15 LITERARY ARTS SERIES SPEAKER
WITS 2014/15

Writers in the Schools (WITS) inspires young people to discover and develop their authentic writing and performance voices. WITS is the only literary arts education program in the region that pays professional teaching artists to infuse the classroom with the joy of writing while also meeting curriculum standards to positively influence the writing, motivation, and lives of every student.

In 2014/15, 25 WITS writers-in-residence completed literary arts education residencies at 21 public schools across 4 school districts and at Seattle Children’s Hospital to directly reach 6,100 K-12 students and 132 teachers through 2,352 hours of sequential in-class writing instruction.

- An estimated 1,800 students benefited from spotlight author visits and complimentary tickets to Seattle Arts & Lectures’ literary events.
- SAL paid $215,000 to WITS writers-in-residence, providing meaningful employment to local professional writers and thereby strengthening Seattle’s literary sector.
- 97% of WITS students’ self-confidence increased, 88% improved their writing, and 91% have an increased appreciation for and interest in writing.
- WITS is positively impacting the teaching of writing; 90% of WITS school teachers are adapting and using lessons developed by the WITS writers-in-residence, and 85% said their knowledge of different literature, types of writing, and writing techniques increased.

“WITS has made the students enjoy writing more. This has crossed over into every subject. Once students learn the enjoyment of writing, there is no end to what they can do.”

—MIKE AGRELLAS
B.F. DAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER

WITS Writers-in-Residence
Aaron Counts, Ann Teplick, Corinne Manning, Clare Meeker, Daemond Arrindell, Ed Skoog, Emily Bedard, Erin Malone, Greg Stump, Imani Sims, Karen Finneyfrock, Kathleen Flenniken, Katy Ellis, Laura Gamache, Margot Case, Matt Gano, Melanie Noel, Michael Overa, Peter Mountford, Rachel Kessler, Samar Abulhassan, Sara Brickman, Sierra Nelson, Tara Hardy, Vicky Edmonds

WITS Sites
B.F. Day Elementary, Blue Heron Middle School, Broadview Thomson K-8, Cascade K-8, Catharine Blaine K-8, Center School, Franklin High School, Garfield High School, Hamilton International Middle School, Health Sciences & Human Services High School, Hutch School, Lafayette Elementary, McClure Middle School, Nathan Hale High School, Port Townsend High School, Roosevelt High School, Seattle Children’s Hospital, TOPS K-8, View Ridge Elementary, Washington Middle School, West Seattle High School, Whittier Elementary

Strategic Plan Updates

As many of you know, 2014/15 marked the first year of our three-year strategic plan. We have made strong progress on our strategic plan goals and are pleased to share successes in each of our priority areas. A snapshot of the full plan is available at http://www.lectures.org/files/SAL_Strategic_Plan.

Deepen Participant Connections and Experiences:
- Commissioned local writers to create new works about 2014/15 Season authors in order to deepen audience engagement with visiting authors. Developed partnerships with Poetry Northwest and Literary Hub to showcase content.
- Developed a blog vision and added staff capacity to help manage the initiative. SALblog.org launched in November 2015.
- Partnered with the Seattle Public Library to present Summer Book Bingo, a free summer reading program to more deeply engage area readers, book clubs, and book store partners.
- Amplified SAL’s digital presence through social media platforms, increased Facebook following by 57%, and launched an Instagram account.

Strengthen and Expand WITS:
- Researched summer camp program models and developed a program plan after assessing mission fit, ability to reach new children, community need, and fiscal viability. The WITS summer camp will pilot in July 2016, a full year ahead of schedule.
- WITS expanded spotlight author visits, increasing the number of students reached year over year by 80%
- Expanded out-of-school opportunities by bringing the Youth Poet Laureate program to Seattle in partnership with Urban Word (New York City), increasing community visibility of WITS and expanding the reach of poetry for teens throughout Seattle.

Build Capacity:
- Launched a new fall fundraiser to support WITS, providing additional fall cashflow, and augmenting individual and corporate giving.
- Added development staff capacity to robustly pursue foundation support and manage increased development initiatives, and added marketing staff to launch and manage our blog.
- Researched specific funding to support the redesign of our website, database, and ticketing systems, submitted a letter of inquiry to a foundation and have been invited to submit a full proposal.