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Poet Heid Erdrich to present reading on campus

Summary: Invited to campus by the Briggs Library Associates, Erdrich received the 2009 Minnesota Book Award.

(November 4, 2009)-On Monday, November 16, 2009, poet Heid E. Erdrich will hold a poetry reading and book signing at 7 p.m. in Oyate Hall. The event is sponsored by the Briggs Library Associates.

Erdrich was raised in Wahpeton, North Dakota, where her parents were teachers at the local Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding school. A respected and decorated author of three poetry collections, Erdrich won the Minnesota Book Award in 2009 for *National Monuments the others*, *The Mother's Tongue* and *Fishing for Myth*, likewise garnered award nominations. With her sister, fellow poet and author Louise Erdrich, she co-founded the Turtle Mountain Writing Workshop and Birchbark House, a nonprofit American Indian literature clearinghouse. Erdrich taught for more than a decade at the University of St. Thomas before leaving full-time teaching in 2007 to concentrate on her writing and to serve as a visiting writer at various universities and colleges nationwide.

"I first met Heid several years ago when she served as a mentor to a number of emerging Minnesota poets," says Chrissy Kolaya, lecturer in the Division of Humanities. "Given our campus history and our strong American Indian student community, Heid's work, which reflects her background as a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwe, will have special resonance with many students."

The Brigg's Library Associates extended the invitation to Erdrich to visit campus. With Erdrich's appearance, the Library Associates continue to fulfill their goal to provide programs and exhibits that enrich the lives of people on campus, in the Morris community, and the region.

"We're very excited about Heid's coming to UMM," says Lory Lemke, philosophy lecturer and an executive member of the Library Associates Board of Directors. "She is a skilled poet and reader, and seems to enjoy mentoring others in her field. We think she will be a wonderful model for both students and faculty."

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