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Summary:

(October 8, 2003)-One of Russia's most famous poets, Yevgeny Yevtushenko, will give a public poetry reading at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 16, in Humanities Fine Arts Recital Hall at the University of Minnesota, Morris. Yevtushenko will also be available to talk informally in the Humanities Lounge, 105 Humanities building, between 3:30 and 4:30 p.m. the same day. The presentation is free.

Yevtushenko has toured 93 countries reading his poetry. His poems have been translated into 72 languages. Yevtushenko will read his works in English and Russian. Bill Davidson, professor of communications at the University of Wisconson-Stevens Point, will also read some of Yevtushenko's works in English translation.

Yevtushenko has responded to politics through poetry since his first published poem in 1949. He has spoken out against oppression and Stalinism throughout his life, as well as for freedom of speech, religion, and emigration. He gained international fame in 1961 with his poem, "Babii Yar," which speaks out against anti-semitism. In 1972, Yevtushenko performed for two months in the U.S., including performances at Carnegie Hall and Madison Square Garden. Former President Richard Nixon and former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger received Yevtushenko in the Oval Office. Yevtushenko has published 42 books of poetry, and is currently finishing his novel, Don't Die Before your Death.

Yevtushenko not only wrote poems about politics, he was politically active for many years. In 1988, he helped found "Memorial ," a group in Russia that advocated democracy. Yevtushenko also served a three-year term on the Soviet Parliament from 1988 until 1991.

Argie Manolis, instructor of English and Service Learning coordinator at UMM, believes that Yevtushenko's reading will have appeal to people interested in the arts, poetry, history, or politics. She said, "I think it will be a great experience for students, faculty, everyone really." Those interested in transportation to the reading may contact Manolis at 320-589-6257.

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