

Racine Public Library Program Announcement
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For Immediate Release
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CALLANAN BRINGS HIS TALENTS TO THE LIBRARY

Racine - The Racine Public Library, 75 Seventh St., is excited to host an evening of dynamic readings, film screenings, and lively discussion with nationally recognized author Liam Callanan on Tuesday, March 9 at 6:30pm.

UW-Milwaukee English Professor Liam Callanan is the author of two very well-received works of fiction, *The Cloud Atlas* and *All Saints*, and is a regular contributor to local and national public radio. He has written for such publications as *Esquire*, *Commonweal*, *Slate*, *Good Housekeeping*, *New York Times Book Review*, the *Times'* op-ed page, the *Washington Post Magazine*, *Forbes FYI*, *Parents* and a number of other publications in locations ranging from Canada to Brazil. His short fiction has appeared in a variety of literary journals, including the *Writers' Chronicle*, *Blackbird*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Southern Indiana Review*, *Caketrain*, *failbetter* and *Phoebe*. Liam is also the creator and co-executive producer of the *Poetry Everywhere* animated film series, a groundbreaking effort that, with the help of PBS and other collaborators, has taken poetry and literature into the lives of ordinary people.

Callanan's 2007 book, *All Saints*, is at once a mystery, a love story, and a powerful rumination on secrets, temptation, and faith set in a small, beachfront Catholic high school, and narrated by a beautifully complex heroine—theology teacher Emily Hamilton. The book has received an array of very positive reviews.

Christopher Buckley, author of *Thank You for Smoking* called the book "A stunning piece of writing by a genuinely precocious talent: haunting and smooth and wise."

Ayelet Waldman, author of *Love and Other Impossible Pursuits* declares, "Liam Callanan is that rare thing, a writer adept and creative enough to inhabit the mind of a character entirely different from himself. He does so completely, with absolute authenticity and emotional truth. This book is every bit as good as *The Cloud Atlas*, and that is saying a lot."

According to *Publisher's Weekly*, Callanan's first novel, *The Cloud Atlas*, is a richly textured, study debut. Painstakingly rendered against an Alaskan backdrop, the book tells the story about the unlikely adventures of an 18-year-old soldier trained in bomb detection and disposal during World War II. *Cloud Atlas* was a finalist for the Edgar Award for best first novel.

One of Liam Callanan's most ingenious projects is *Poetry Everywhere*. Not long after moving to Milwaukee, the author discovered that the local public transit system was one of the first in the country to be outfitted with onboard video displays. As he watched a variety of content being aired, he had a flash of creativity: it would be a perfect vehicle for displaying poetry. In a collaborative effort with Milwaukee Public Transit, TransitTV, filmmaker Brad Lichtenstein, docUWM productions, and the Poetry Foundation, a series of animated poetry films were developed and *Poetry Everywhere* was born. The series of short films feature poems from a variety of contemporary poets with animation created by UW-Milwaukee students. They now have more than 30 films in circulation featuring a variety of poetic and visual aesthetics.

In 2009, WGBH and David Grubin Productions, in association with the Poetry Foundation, undertook to increase the presence of these poetic films by gathering them on the PBS

website and creating a "Poetry Everywhere" project. The films are accessible through the website and through broadcasts on local public television throughout the country with Garrison Keillor as host.

In addition to his creative writing and poetry ideas, Callanan is an outstanding performer, as witnessed in his recent appearance at *BONK!*, the library's monthly performance series. His live readings have been called "electric" and continue to draw diverse and enthusiastic crowds. The library event on March 9 will feature Liam Callanan reading from his body of work, as well as screenings of *Poetry Everywhere* films. The author will be available for questions and book signings.

The program is free and open to the public. No registration is necessary. Free parking is available in the library lot. Questions may be directed to 262.636.9170.

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