

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 11, 2004

Event: Hill-Stead Museum Receives Arts Award
Place: Hill-Stead Museum, 35 Mountain Road, Farmington, CT 06032
Contact: Alison Meyers, 860.677.4787 ext 110; meyersa@hillstead.org

Hill-Stead Museum Receives Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts

Hill-Stead Museum, Farmington, CT was recently awarded a \$10,000 Creativity Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The award has been given in support of the Sunken Garden Poetry Festival, the museum's largest public program, now in its 13th consecutive year. In its fiscal year 2004, the NEA has distributed 915 grants to nonprofit organizations across the country for projects that fall under the categories of Creativity, Services to Arts Organizations and Artists, Literature Fellowships and Leadership Initiatives. In the Creativity category, museum received 58 grants totaling nearly \$2.6 million.

Hill-Stead Museum's Sunken Garden Poetry Festival has been hailed by poet Billy Collins as "a cultural phenomenon." Poet Galway Kinnell has called Hill-Stead's historic one-acre garden, the festival's performance venue, "a little paradise for poetry." In 2003, the festival showcased Pulitzer Prize winning poet Maxine Kumin. Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize winner Yusef Komunyakaa headlined in 2002. Acclaimed poet and short story writer Grace Paley will inaugurate the 2004 performance season on June 2, 2004. Other poets, many Connecticut-based, who read in recent seasons include Jack Agüeros, Marilyn Chin, Margaret Gibson, Tim Seibles and Vivian Shipley. Every summer the poetry festival reaches an audience of

over 5,000, and engages a listening audience of 1,250,000 via National Public Radio's *Weekend Edition Saturday* and five Connecticut public radio stations.

A National Historic Landmark, Hill-Stead Museum in Farmington is noted for its 1901 33,000-square-foot house filled with art and antiques. Pioneering female architect Theodate Pope designed the Colonial Revival-style house, set on 152 hilltop acres, to showcase the Impressionist masterpieces amassed by her father, Cleveland iron industrialist Alfred A. Pope. Collections include original furnishings, paintings by Monet, Degas, Manet, Whistler and Cassatt, as well as numerous works on paper and Japanese woodblock prints. Stately trees, seasonal gardens, over three miles of stonewalls and woodland trails for walks or cross-country skiing accent the grounds. A centerpiece of the property is the c. 1920 sunken garden designed by Beatrix Jones Farrand, and today the site of poetry and music performances. The house is open year-round for tours Tuesday through Sunday, 11 am – 4 pm, November - April, and 10 am – 5 pm, May - October. For tour information and driving directions, call 860.677.4787.

###