Often cited as America’s most famous living poet, Billy Collins has been compared to Robert Frost for his ability to combine critical acclaim with a broad popular appeal in his writing. On May 9 in Paterson, he will read from *Aimless Love: New and Selected Poems*, his most recent collection of poetry for which he won the 2014 Paterson Poetry Prize.

Presented by the Distinguished Poets Series of the Poetry Center at PCCC, the reading by Collins and finalists of the Paterson Poetry Prize will begin at 1 pm at the historic Hamilton Club Building, 32 Church St., Paterson. The reading is free. Call 973-684-6555 or visit pccc.edu/poetry for more details.

Collins was the U.S. Poet Laureate from 2001-2003 and NY State Poet Laureate 2004-2006. He has ten collections of poetry and two chapbooks and has edited several anthologies. He is a recipient of the Poetry Foundation’s 2004 Mark Twain Prize for Humor in Poetry and the 2013 Donald Hall-Jane Kenyon Prize in American Poetry. He is a Distinguished Professor of English at Lehman College of the City University of New York, as well as a Senior Distinguished Fellow of the Winter Park Institute at Rollins College.

Also reading on May 9 are Paterson Poetry Prize finalists: Valerie Bandura, *Freak Show* (Black Lawrence Press, Pittsburgh, PA); Daisy Fried, *Women’s Poetry: Poems and Advice* (Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, PA); Jonathan Gillman, *My Father, Humming* (Antrim House, Simsbury, CT); Rachel McKibbens, *Into the Dark & Emptying Field* (Small Doggies Press, Portland, OR); Jose Antonio Rodriguez, *Backlit Hour* (S. F. Austin State Univ. Press, Nacogdoches, TX). Charles Simic, *New and Selected Poems 1962-2012* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, NY, NY), is also a finalist but is not attending the reading.

Collins is expected to read his favorites. Afterwards, he will answer questions and autograph his books.

Receiving the highest honor bestowed upon a poet in this country—U.S. Poet Laureate—Collins was given an office overlooking the Capitol and near the Supreme Court.

No one was more surprised than Collins. “It seemed much too serious and kind of a conventional job for me,” Collins said in a recent interview. “In England, (the Poet Laureate) is supposed to write poems for royal occasions. There is no such obligation for the American Poet Laureate.”
Families will showcase the arts in an Interactive Family Workshop at Paterson School 15, 98 Oak St., on May 12 from 9:15 to 10:15 am. Led by the NJPAC teaching artists-in-residence, the event celebrates their collaboration and completion of the NJPAC Wolf Trap Early Learning Through the Arts Program. The 14-session program began in March with the goal to engage the arts enrichment to existing curriculum. Contact Sally Ortega at 973-321-0240, ext. 22445, or sortega@stpaulscdcnj.org for more info.

The 7th annual Art Walk in Paterson is June 12 to 14. The Paterson Arts Council has brought together hundreds of regional and international artists to exhibit their art, create site-specific installation art and perform on multiple music stages throughout the Great Falls Historic District at the Art Factory, the adjacent National Park, the Paterson Museum and Center City Mall. Art Walk 2015 is free and open to the public on June 12 from 7 to 11 pm and June 13 and 14 from 11 am to 7 pm. Call 973-979-0479 for more info or email arts@artfactory.us.com.

The Ringwood Manor Association of the Arts presents its 36th Young Artists Expo May 13 to June 10. The exhibit features artwork and photography from students in grades 4-12. Students may submit work at no charge. Receiving is on May 6 from 3 to 6 pm and May 9 from 10 am to 1 pm. The Barn Gallery is in Ringwood State Park, Sloatsburg Rd., Ringwood. Call 973-839-0921 or visit rmaarts.wordpress.com for prospectus.

The Passaic County Senior Citizen Art Exhibition is open to those age 60 and over. There is no fee to enter but entries must be show-ready and participants are limited to one exhibit. To enter, bring one show-ready piece of art to Senior Services from 9 am to 4 pm on June 1 to 4. Entries will be displayed June 8 to 26 at the Passaic County Senior Services office, 930 Riverview Dr., Suite 200, Totowa. A reception and an awards ceremony is on June 27 at 2 pm. For details, call 973-569-4060.

Volunteers are needed at the NJ State Botanical Garden in Ringwood on May 16 at 1 pm to help establish 1,000 milkweed plants. The plant provides a feeding and breeding site for endangered Monarch butterflies on their annual migration. Info: 973-962-9534 or info@njbg.org.

At left, Kinnelon High School students burying a time capsule on Nov. 18, 1965. It is one of 70 photos selected from over 16,000 images, which appeared on the pages of the now closed Paterson Evening News from 1946 through 1972. See the exhibit, presented by the Passaic County Historical Society, at Lambert Castle, 3 Valley Rd., Paterson, through June 28. This newly digitized collection, made possible by the Fred J. Brotherton Charitable Foundation, offer an invaluable look at the history of Passaic County and the state of New Jersey. The museum is open Wednesday to Sunday, noon to 4 pm. General museum admission fees apply. Details at lambertcastle.org
Got Work? The New Deal/WPA in New Jersey is an exhibit at the American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark which presents a portrait of the experience of New Jersey’s families and the Works Progress Administration programs during The Great Depression. The exhibit of historical photographs and reproductions is on loan from the Middlesex County museum and can be viewed at the Botto House, 83 Norwood St., Haledon, through Aug. 29. A May Day Festival is on May 1 at 7 pm at the Botto House. Performances of folk and labor music by Annamaria Stefanelli, George Mann, Marty Confurius & Al Podber, the New Jersey Industrial Union Council (IUC) Solidarity Singers and the Harmonic Insurgence will perform traditional workers’ songs. Prices and other info at labormuseum.net or call 973-595-7953.

Renowned folk-rock duo Aztec Two-Step will perform the Simon & Garfunkel Songbook: An Evening of Songs & Stories with guest narrator Long Island Music Hall of Fame Archivist Tony Traguardo. This performance takes place at the Rosen Performing Arts Center at the Wayne YMCA, 1 Pike Dr., on May 2 at 7:30pm. Tickets: $26 in advance; $30 at the door. Info: 973-595-0100.

The 2015 Lambert Castle Concert Series opens on May 3 at 5 pm when the Passaic County Historical Society will host CJSO on the Go, a chamber music outreach program featuring members and friends of the Central Jersey Symphony Orchestra. On May 31 at 5 pm the Clifton-based Original Blue Valley Music and Acoustic Favorites performs their vocal harmonies and memorable melodies and lyrics. Admission is $15 to each event. The castle is at 3 Valley Rd. on the Paterson/Clifton border. Info at lambertcastle.org or call 973-247-0085.

The Harmony Singers, a mixed-voice community chorus, presents its 50th anniversary concert on May 3 at 3 pm at the Temple Tikvah, Preakness Ave., Wayne. Admission is $15, children under 12 free. Purchase at door and details at harmonysingersnj.org.

TLC, the Theater League of Clifton, presents the Broadway classic, South Pacific. This epic musical romance by James A. Michener centers on a group of American sailors and Navy nurses stationed in the South Pacific during World War II. Dates are May 8, 9, 10 and 15, 16 and 17 and it is staged at the Theresa Aprea Theater at The Learning Center, 199 Scoles Ave., Clifton. For tickets, times or to volunteer, leave a message at 973-928-7668 or go to theaterleagueofclifton.com.

Pearls is an original jaw-dropping, dramedy that follows the lives of 10 unique individuals, pictured above. Each person’s ‘true’ self will be revealed at the end of the show. It will premiere at the Rosen Performing Arts Center, 1 Pike Dr., Wayne, on May 30 at 7 pm. The question is: Who is the pearl? Written by Paterson’s Lavene Gass, this suspense-filled production features live music under the direction of Dale ‘Skip’ Van Rensalier. Tickets are $30 at lavenegass.com or call 973-743-3859.

The Giggles Children’s Theater presents live shows for pediatric patients at St. Joseph’s Children’s Hospital in Paterson. Shows are free and the community is invited to attend. Performance dates are: May 12 at 6 pm, the Wyckoff YMCA Dancers; May 14 at 10:30 am, Broadway, TV and film stars The Pettet Sisters; May 19 at 10:30 am, a performance of The Little Mermaid! by students of The Phoenix Center, a school for children with autism, multiple disabilities, behavioral and intellectual disabilities; May 27 at 1:30 pm, Stories for Teens! by Angel and Evelin from the Passaic Vicinage. Info: call 973-754-4960 or write mcaliendo@mmissions.org.

The 14th Annual Lollipops & Roses Intergenerational Concert by the Clifton Community Band under the baton of Bob Morgan is on May 16 at 2 pm at the Clifton High School Auditorium, Colfax Ave. Tickets are $7 and children under 12 are free. Proceeds benefit the Clifton Education Foundation and the Clifton Community Band. Tickets at CliftonBand@optonline.net or 973-771-3751.
A Humanist Vision: The Paintings and Drawings of Michael Lenson is an exhibition of artworks (1903-1971) on display at the Clifton Arts Center from May 13 to July 25. Lenson, who lived and painted for many years in Nutley, has been called “New Jersey’s most important muralist” by Who Was Who in American Art. Lenson’s works are in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian Institution, the Johnson Museum at Cornell University, the Princeton University Art Museum, the Butler Institute of American Art, the Wolfsonian and others. Lenson was born in Russia in 1903 and came to America with his family in 1911. After studies at the National Academy of Design in New York, he won the prestigious $10,000 Chaloner Prize which paid for him to study in London, Paris and the Netherlands from 1928 through 1932. Following his return to the US, he presented a series of one-man exhibitions that won critical praise from critics of The New York Times and other publications. A reception open to the public is on May 16, from 1 to 4 pm. Admission is $3. The Clifton Arts Center is on the grounds of the municipal complex, corner of Clifton and Van Houten Ave., which also features a Sculpture Park. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Saturday, from 1 to 4 pm. Info at cliftonnj.org or call 973-472-5499.

Michael Lenson “Self Portrait with Paint Rag” circa 1968 Acrylic on Wood, will be displayed in Clifton.

The PCCHC is offering 2016 arts and history re-grants. The deadline for arts applications is July 9, 2015 and for history applications, July 16, 2015. The applicant must be based in Passaic County; be a tax-exempt non-profit organization or a municipal government entity; have been in existence at least two years; demonstrate that the project has clear artistic or historic merit; match every dollar of the arts re-grant with one dollar of its own and match every dollar of the history re-grant with fifty cents of its own; create programming that culminates in a public presentation; and use the re-grant for an arts or cultural project to take place in Passaic County in 2016 or a history project, between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016. Go to pccc.edu/cultural-affairs/pcchc for details. Contact Susan Balik at sbalik@pccc.edu or 973-684-5444 to schedule a meeting to help with the grant writing process.