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17th Annual Wallace Stevens Birthday Bash Features Poet, Novelist and Critic Jay Parini

Hartford, Connecticut (October 10, 2012) — Hartford Public Library is pleased to announce the 17th Annual Wallace Stevens Birthday Bash, on November 3, at 6:30 p.m. at the Downtown Library's Center for Contemporary Culture, featuring poet, novelist and critic, Jay Parini. Jay Parini said, "Stevens has always been a favorite of mine. He's one of the poets I have returned to again and again over more than forty years. I love his poetry, and have taught him a lot, too — first at Dartmouth, then at Middlebury, where I still teach him every year. I'm really glad to come to Hartford and have a chance to share my ideas on Stevens and the uses of the imagination — the difference, really, between reality and the imagination in his work — with the audience. I'm hoping for lots of questions, too."

Mr. Parini is Axinn Professor of English at Middlebury College in Vermont. His six novels include *The Last Station*, based on Leo Tolstoy's final days and adapted to film in 2009, starring Helen Mirren, Christopher Plummer, and Paul Giamatti; the film received multiple Golden Globe & Academy Award nominations. His volumes of poetry include *The Art of Subtraction: New and Selected Poems*. He has also written a volume of essays on literature and politics as well as *The Art of Teaching*. His latest novel, *The Passages of H.M.*, is a stirring novel about the adventurous life and tragic literary career of Herman Melville.

The event is presented by Hartford Public Library and the Friends and Enemies of Wallace Stevens. Jim Finnegan, President of the Friends and Enemies of Wallace Stevens, said "Our guest speaker is accomplished in many genres: poet, novelist, biographer, critic, and anthologist. I'm eager to hear Jay Parini bring his broad perspective to bear on the work of Wallace Stevens."

This festive and illuminating event will begin with a reception of wine and hors d'oeuvres, followed by Mr. Parini's presentation, and will conclude with a book signing, birthday cake and champagne toast!

Tickets are \$50 per person and may be purchased online at <http://wallacestevens.eventbrite.com/> or by sending a check to Hartford Public Library, 500 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06103-3075. For further information about the event, please contact Mary Crean, chief development officer at (860) 695-6360 or by email at mcrean@hplct.org.

About the Friends and Enemies of Wallace Stevens

Founded in 1996, the Friends and Enemies of Wallace Stevens (FEWS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the literary arts in central Connecticut and to creating greater awareness of Wallace Stevens (1879-1955), who made his home here while working as an executive at The Hartford Insurance Company, and whose poetry places him among the greatest of the American modernist poets.

About Hartford Public Library

The Hartford Public Library traces its roots to 1774. It operates 10 locations in the City of Hartford. The Library receives more than 860,000 visits per year. Services include access to a large collection of materials for reading and research, as well as music and video. Programs provide education, information and enrichment to the people of Hartford in such areas as citizenship training, literacy, business skills and cultural awareness. The mission of Hartford Public Library is to provide free resources that inspire reading, guide learning, and encourage individual exploration. Visit hplct.org and the library's new blog at blogs.hplct.org