

# Rhythm & Reviews

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1998

## Lucky 7

A rising band of all University students will play WOW Hall on Valentine's Day

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## 'Up the Down Staircase'

A play based on Bel Kaufman's novel tells the story of one teacher's struggle to gain the trust and respect of her students

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Oregon Daily  
**Emerald**

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■ **Patty Larkin** will play at the Wild Duck Music Hall tonight in support of her new album, 'Perishable Fruit.' A New York Times critic recently called her music 'comparable to the best of Bonnie Raitt.' Tickets are \$14 at the door.

■ **The Five Fingers of Funk** with **Habeneros** will perform at WOW Hall tonight. Doors open at 9, and tickets are \$7.

■ **The Valentine's Day 'Carnival of Love'** at the Nexus Club (1045 Willamette) will feature a Delphina clothing store fashion show as well as Belly dancing, juggling and a drag show. Tickets are \$7 for one person, \$10 per couple at the door.

■ For their February concert, the **Eugene Symphony** will present the 'Sounds of Spain.' The program will be conducted by **Miguel Harth-Bedoya**, with award-winning pianist **Angela Cheng** as the featured soloist. The concert will occur at the Hult Center at 8 p.m. on Feb. 19. Tickets are \$12-36, \$10 for students.

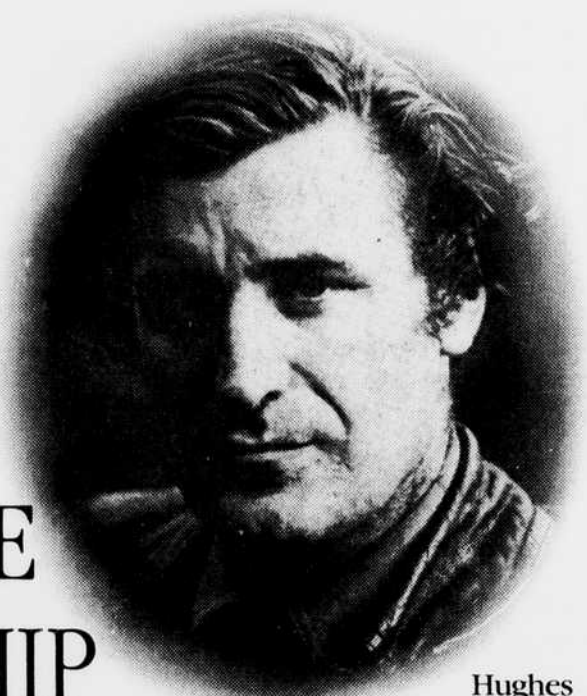
■ Songwriter/performer **Mason Williams** will be the featured speaker at the School of Music's Forum at 1 p.m. in Beall Hall on Feb. 19. Mason's topic is 'Choosing Community as a Reason for Music.' Williams is a two-time Grammy award winner.

"I refuse to be drawn into reading ['Birthday Letters'] as a kind of psychic healing for Hughes or as a recognition that we should forgive him."

**Karen Ford**  
University English professor



Plath



Hughes

## A LOVE-HATE RELATIONSHIP

By **Sara Pritchard**  
Freelance reporter

Earlier this month, England's Poet Laureate Ted Hughes published his 14th book of poetry, "Birthday Letters." The collection of poems is inspired by his late wife, the famous American poet Sylvia Plath.

"Birthday Letters" was published to mark the anniversary of Plath's death. February holds a certain ironic significance for Hughes and Plath: It was the month in which they met and the month in which she died. The book signifies the end of Hughes' silence about their tragic relationship and acts as a catalyst for new discussion.

The story of Plath and Hughes begins in 1956 in Cambridge, England. Plath graduated from Smith College in Massachusetts and received a Fulbright Scholarship to study and teach at Newnham College. Hughes returned to Cambridge that same year,

having received a degree in English from Pembroke two years prior.

After meeting at a party in February 1956, they were married in a private ceremony in June. The only person in attendance was Plath's mother, and no photos were taken. In 1957, the Hughes moved to America. Plath returned to Smith to teach while Hughes taught at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.

In December 1959, they returned to England where they continued their writing careers. In April 1960, their first child, Frieda, was born. Later that year, Plath published her first book of poetry, "The Colossus."

In 1961, Plath published her autobiographical novel "The Bell Jar" under a pseudonym. In October 1962, not long after their second child, Nicholas,

was born, Plath and Hughes separated.

On February 11, 1963, Plath committed suicide by placing her head in a gas oven. The children were safely tucked away in their rooms.

This time line would have provided sufficient biographical information had Hughes been a responsible executor of her posthumous work. The recent publication of "Birthday Letters," however, is a continuation of Hughes' abuse of his role as owner of Plath's literary body.

Although Hughes has been the Poet Laureate of England since 1984 and is considered an exceptional poet in Britain, his latest work succeeds in reopening wounds for Plath readers and scholars.

As the executor of her work, Hughes was presented with two options: He could either seal the work or publish the remaining poems, letters and journals in their entirety. But Hughes chose another option — to destruc-

tively edit Plath's work.

Perhaps he did this to protect himself and his family; however, it was this editing that created a hatred that continues to haunt him.

"In about 1980, he handed over some of the papers to Smith College and published the collected poems. It was such a long time after her death that [critics] felt he was suppressing material," said Karen Ford, a University professor of English.

Hughes published a book of her poetry titled "Ariel," but later he revealed that he had edited and changed the sequence of the poems.

"We realized that he had manipulated the literary remains in yet another way — that even this book that her whole reputation was raised on wasn't the book that Plath had left behind," Ford said.

This knowledge only made his

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COMMENTARY  
**Sara Pritchard**

## University professor debuts collection of short stories

Author and professor **Peter Ho Davies** will sign copies and read from his book, 'The Ugliest House in the World,' on Feb. 19

By **Shannon Sneed**  
Entertainment Reporter

University creative writing professor Peter Ho Davies will read from and sign copies of his debut collection of short stories, "The Ugliest House in the World," on Thursday, Feb. 19 in the Knight Library Browsing Room.

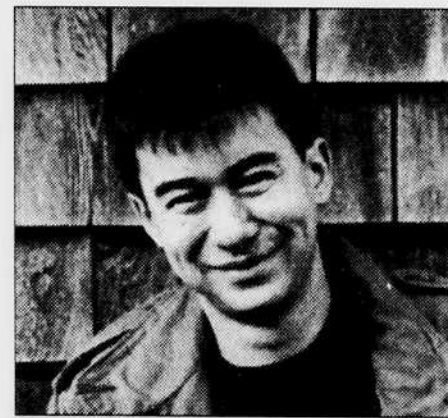
The book features a collection of eight short stories that range from past to present and are set in places all over the world, from England to Malaysia to Africa, Davies said.

"One thing so appealing about writing short stories as opposed to a novel is the ability to make changes in voice, changes in place and changes in time," Davies

said. "I've always been drawn to working with different material."

Part of this attraction stems from Davies' own mixed cultural heritage. He was raised in Wales, and his mother is Chinese and his father is Welsh — an odd combination of heritages that has helped inspire his interest in different cultures and experiences, he said.

The short stories in the book also have a wide emotional range, from heartbreaking tragedy to warm humor. In the title story, for example, Davies tells the tale of the funeral of a six-year-old boy, but then he quickly switches to humorous plot twists in "I Don't Know, What Do You Think?," a sto-



COURTESY PHOTO

Peter Ho Davies is a University professor.

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