

Steven Barclay Agency

12 Western Avenue
Petaluma, California 94952

707-773-0654
707-778-1868 facsimile
www.barclayagency.com

Robert Hass

United States Poet Laureate (1995–1997), Environmentalist, and Teacher

Robert Hass is, first of all, a poet of great eloquence, clarity, and force, whose work is rooted in the landscapes of his native Northern California. Widely read and much honored, he has brought the kind of energy in his poetry to his work as an essayist, translator, and activist on behalf of poetry, literacy, and the environment. Most notably, in his tenure as United States Poet Laureate, Robert Hass spent two years battling American illiteracy, armed with the mantra, “imagination makes communities.” He crisscrossed the country speaking at Rotary Club meetings, raising money to organize conferences such as “Watershed,” which brought together noted novelists, poets, and storytellers to talk about writing, nature, and community. For Hass, everything is connected. When he works to heighten literacy, he is also working to promote awareness about the environment. Hass believes that natural beauty must be tended to and that caring for a place means knowing it intimately. Poets, especially, need to pay constant attention to the interaction of mind and environment. And when he is talking about poetry itself, whether Matsuo Basho’s or Elizabeth Bishop’s, Hass is both spontaneous and original, offering poetic insights that cannot be found in any textbook.

Robert Hass has published many books of poetry including *Field Guide*, *Praise*, *Human Wishes*, and *Sun Under Wood*, as well as a book of essays on poetry, *Twentieth Century Pleasures*. Hass translated many of the works of Nobel Prize-winning Polish poet, Czeslaw Milosz, and he edited *Selected Poems: 1954-1986* by Tomas Tranströmer, *The Essential Haiku: Versions of Basho, Buson, and Issa*, and *Poet’s Choice: Poems for Everyday Life*. He was the guest editor of the 2001 edition of *Best American Poetry*. His essay collection *Now & Then*, which includes his *Washington Post* articles, was published in April 2007. As US Poet Laureate (1995-1997), his deep commitment to environmental issues led him to found River of Words (ROW), an organization that promotes environmental and arts education in affiliation with the Library of Congress Center for the Book. Hass is chairman of ROW’s board of directors, and judges their annual international environmental poetry and art contest for youth; he also wrote the introduction to the poetry collection *River of Words: Young Poets and Artists on the Nature of Things*. He is also a board member of International Rivers Network. Robert Hass was chosen as Educator of the Year by the North American Association on Environmental Education and, in 2005, elected to the American Academy of Arts & Sciences. His most recent book is a collection of poems entitled *Time and Materials* (fall 2007), which won both the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize. In spring 2010, Ecco will publish *The Apple Trees at Olema: Selected Poems & Essays, 1985-2009*. Hass is also currently working on a collection of selected essays.

Awarded the MacArthur “Genius” Fellowship, twice the National Book Critics’ Circle Award (in 1984 and 1997), and the Yale Series of Younger Poets in 1973, Robert Hass is a professor of English at UC Berkeley.

“Hass has significantly broadened the role of poet laureate to include not only his love for poetry but also his concern for literacy and his passion for environmentalism.”

— *Los Angeles Times*