

DIALOGUE THROUGH POETRY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CENTENARY OF NERUDA: Worldwide Programs Celebrate 100 Years of Pablo Neruda & Reading of “Heights of Macchu Picchu” on Mountains in South America and Mt. Everest.

CONTACT: Ram Devineni, Program Coordinator at info@rattapallax.com

The writer Gabriel García Márquez wrote, Pablo Neruda was “the greatest poet of the twentieth century — in any language.” *Dialogue Through Poetry*, Rattapallax, and Fundacion Pablo Neruda are helping to promote literary programs around the world to celebrate Neruda’s accomplishments and his role as a global citizen. Some notable events are occurring at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.; The Americas Society in New York City; Jardim das Artes in São Paulo, Brazil; and Auditorio de Comfenalco in Cali, Colombia.

Working with poets and professional mountain climbers, there will be readings of Neruda’s classic poem “Heights of Macchu Picchu” on Mt. Aconcagua (Argentina); Mt. Huascaran (Peru); Illimani (Bolivia); Chimborazo (Ecuador); Mt. Everest (Nepal); the Andes in Chile; and Macchu Picchu (Peru). Photos and/or video will be provided as reference for each reading. The program called *Neruda on the Peaks* is a continuation of the successful *Poetry on the Peaks* program started in 2002 to celebrate the United Nations’ Year of the Mountain (IYM). The professional climbing partner is Alpine Ascents International. Additional readings will coincide with the annual *Dialogue Through Poetry Week* and UNESCO’s *World Poetry Day* happening the week of 21, March 2004.

In addition, Pulitzer Prize winner Yusef Komunyakaa (*Neon Vernacular: New & Selected Poems*) and American Book Award winner Martín Espada (*Imagine the Angels of Bread*) will travel to Santiago to participate in Chile’s celebration of their national poet on July 12, 2004. The event hosted by Rattapallax will be featured at Universidad Diego Portales.

Martín Espada, called by Sandra Cisneros, *the Pablo Neruda of North American authors*, says: “This represents the fulfillment of a dream: to visit Neruda’s Chile and to pay homage to the poet who has most deeply influenced me, as a writer and person.”

A new documentary, *Aabanza, Pablo Neruda*, is being produced connecting the two September 11ths with Pablo Neruda and the metaphor of “bombings.” Also, several important anthologies and new translations such as *The Poetry of Pablo Neruda* edited by Ilan Stavans (Farrar Straus & Giroux) and *The Essential Neruda* edited by Mark Eisner (City Lights). Rattapallax magazine will present a special issue on poets and musicians influenced by Neruda featuring work from Edward Hirsch, Marjorie Agosin, Martín Espada, musicians Luciana Souza and Marciano, and many others.

Lastly, to honor Pablo Neruda, a petition has been submitted to the International Astronomical Union (IAU) to name a crater on Mercury after the beloved Chilean poet.

For more information about the programs, please visit <http://www.rattapallax.com/neruda.htm> or information about the Neruda Foundation, please visit <http://www.fundacionneruda.org>. Information on the film can be seen at <http://www.rattapallax.com/films.htm>