April 9, 2015

Professor Zdanys Edits New Anthology of Epistolary Poems

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Jonas Zdanys, professor of English and creative writing at Sacred Heart University, has edited a new book called *Pushing the Envelope: Epistolary Poems*, a unique anthology of poems in the form of letters. A bilingual poet and translator, Zdanys is the author of 44 works, 40 of them collections of poetry, written in English and in Lithuanian. He has received a number of prizes, awards, grants and public recognitions for his own poetry and for his translations.

Zdanys’ latest book takes a contemporary look at a literary tradition more than 2,000 years old, now often forgotten, that combines the art of letter-writing with poetry. “This is the first anthology of contemporary epistolary poetry,” he says. “I selected them from many submissions and chose works by more than 50 poets from the United States, Canada, Europe and Israel.”

An exciting component of this collection is that it contains a poem from SHU student Mark Podesta ’15. Podesta’s entry, “A Letter Addressed to a Man with a Remarkable Future,” made it through a very rigorous selection process and attempts “to make sense of the transition from childhood to adulthood that we all as individuals have to work to understand,” he says. Podesta is the youngest poet to be included in the compilation and the only one who has not already published one or more collections of poetry. The book contains works by Poets Laureate of several states and of a country, winners of major prizes and literary awards, who are well known to poetry audiences.

Zdanys was thrilled to have Podesta’s submission and says “It holds wonderful promise for his success as a writer in the years to come. I was certainly very proud, as his teacher, to see him earn a place in that important book.” Podesta himself “couldn't be more thrilled to be placed among such an incredible collection of poets. It is beyond an honor, and I am very grateful.” The work was published by Lamar University Press and is available through Amazon, Barnes & Noble and other booksellers.