

Biography: Samuel Hazo



Spanning six decades and circling the globe, author Samuel John Hazo's oeuvre includes poetry, fiction, drama, essays, and various works of translation. He has published more than 50 books that have been translated into numerous languages, and his literary distinctions include The Griffin Award for Creative Writing from the University of Notre Dame and the Maurice English Award for Poetry. His collection of poems *Once for the Last Bandit* became a National Book Award finalist.

A life-long resident of Pittsburgh, Hazo graduated Magna Cum Laude from the [University of Notre Dame](#) before earning graduate degrees from [Duquesne University](#) and the [University of Pittsburgh](#). He is the McAnulty Distinguished Professor of English Emeritus at Duquesne University, where he taught for 43 years, and he served as the inaugural Poet-In-Residence at [La Roche College](#).

Named as [Pennsylvania's Poet Laureate](#) by Governor Robert Casey in 1993, Hazo served in this esteemed position for ten years, receiving the Hazlett Award for Excellence in Literature from the Governor. Twice recognized as Pittsburgh's Man of the Year in Arts, he has also been awarded twelve honorary degrees, an honorary membership in Phi Beta Kappa, and the Forbes Medal for Outstanding Cultural Contributions to Western Pennsylvania. In 2024, Hazo received the Common Wealth Award of Distinguished Service in Literature, recognizing his exceptional contributions to American letters and cultural life.

As founder and director of the International Poetry Forum from 1966 until 2009, Dr. Hazo hosted over 800 distinguished poets and performers from around the world, establishing Pittsburgh as a cultural and artistic nerve center. Notable guests included Seamus Heaney, Robert Lowell, Anne Sexton, W.S. Merwin, Galway Kinnell, A.R. Ammons, Richard Wilbur, Maxine Kumin, Octavio Paz, Derek Walcott, Tennessee Williams, Edward Albee, Gregory Peck, Princess Grace of Monaco, Anthony Hopkins, Eva Marie Saint, and James Earl Jones.

Hazo's work scrutinizes themes of family and faith, mortality and love, and the passage of time with what poet Naomi Shihab Nye describes as "immense intelligence, lyricism, and humanity."