

UNIVERSITY OF PUGET SOUND

PRESENTS

# Edwidge Danticat

*Create Dangerously*

UNIVERSITY OF PUGET SOUND SCHNEEBECK CONCERT HALL

MARCH 31, 2015 | 8 P.M.



# Edwidge Danticat

Edwidge Danticat has been writing since she was 9 years old. When she was very young, her parents immigrated to New York from Port-au-Prince, Haiti, leaving her behind to be raised by family, until she joined them in Brooklyn at the age of 12. Memories from those formative years in Haiti remain vivid to this day, and the love of Haiti and all things Haitian that Danticat developed as a child has deeply influenced her writing.

After earning a bachelor's degree in French literature from Barnard College, Danticat pursued a Master of Fine Arts degree at Brown University, where, as her thesis, she wrote her first novel, *Breath, Eyes, Memory*, telling the story of four generations of Haitian women who overcome poverty and powerlessness.

Danticat published her second book, *Krik? Krak!* at the age of 26, and became the youngest finalist ever for the National Book Award. The collection of short stories paints portraits of Haiti and Haitian Americans before democracy came to that nation. In an interview with NPR, she explained that the book was an effort "to raise the voice of a lot of the people that I knew growing up ... poor people, who had extraordinary dreams, but also very amazing obstacles." The title for the collection comes from the Haitian tradition of a storyteller calling out for an audience ("Krik?"), and willing listeners gathering around and answering ("Krak!").

A natural storyteller, Danticat has written numerous books and essays, and edited multiple anthologies. Her epic and semi-autobiographical novel *Brother, I'm Dying* won the National Book Critics Circle Award and Dayton Literary Peace Prize, and her third novel, *The Dew Breaker*, was a finalist for the PEN/Faulkner Award. She has received numerous honors for her work, including a MacArthur Fellowship and The Story Prize.

Danticat's life experiences have served as inspiration for much of her writing. Her characters often encounter the themes of migration, separation, and adaptation, and her voice continues to shine a light on the immigrant experience of one of the most underrepresented cultures in American literature.

Edwidge Danticat currently lives in New York, and teaches creative writing at New York University.

# Program

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Tuesday, March 31, 8 p.m.  
University of Puget Sound  
Schneebeck Concert Hall

Introduction

Ronald R. Thomas  
President

## **Edwidge Danticat**

Questions and Answers

Reception following the lecture in Pierce Atrium, Wyatt Hall.

Please turn off all cell phones and pagers.  
No photo or recording devices allowed.





The Susan Resneck Pierce Lectures in Public Affairs and the Arts series was named in honor of Susan Resneck Pierce, University of Puget Sound president from 1992 to 2003, in recognition of her years of outstanding service to the university. The lecture series annually brings to the University of Puget Sound campus and the wider community public intellectuals, writers, and artists of significant prominence.

**2014–Henry Louis Gates Jr.**

Genealogy and Genetics

**2014–E.J. Dionne**

Our Divided Political Heart: The Battle for the American Idea in an Age of Discontent

**2013–Junot Díaz**

An Evening with Pulitzer Prize and *New York Times* Bestselling Author

**2013–Wole Soyinka**

Writing for Freedom

**2012–Robert Reich**

The Global Economy and the Future of Everything National

**2012–Carlos Fuentes**

From Law to Literature: A Personal Journey

**2011–Kay Redfield Jamison**

Minds on Fire: Mood Disorders and Creativity

**2011–Spike Lee**

America Through My Lens

**2009–Sherman Alexie**

Without Reservations: An Urban Indian's Comic, Poetic, and Highly Irreverent Look at the World

**2009–Suzan-Lori Parks**

An Evening with Suzan-Lori Parks

**2008–Twyla Tharp**

The Creative Habit

**2008–Cory Booker**

An Evening with Cory Booker

**2007–David Brooks**

How Does Being American Shape Us?

**2007–Philip Glass**

An Evening with Philip Glass

**2006–Cornel West**

Democracy Matters

**2006–Edward Albee**

Improvisation and the Creative Mind

**2005–Fareed Zakaria**

The Future of Freedom

**2005–Nina Totenberg**

The Supreme Court and Its Impact on You

**2004–Robert Pinsky**

Poetry in the World

**2004–Terry Tempest Williams**

The Open Space of Democracy

**2003–David Halberstam**

The Children: The Unique Courage and Faith of Ordinary Citizens to Change America

**2003–Anna Deavere Smith**

Snapshots: Glimpses of America in Change

**2002–Thomas Friedman**

Global Economy and American Foreign Policy