

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ascot Branch Library to be Dedicated in Honor of Poet Wanda Coleman Monday, Nov. 30, 1:00 p.m.



Wanda Coleman

LOS ANGELES (Nov. 19, 2015) – The community is invited to the dedication of the Ascot Branch Library in honor of Wanda Coleman (1946-2013), a prolific poet and political activist, who was known as the “Unofficial Poet Laureate of Los Angeles.” A plaque will be unveiled in a ceremony on Monday, Nov. 30, at 1:00 p.m., at the Ascot Branch, 120 W. Florence Ave.

Raised in Watts, Coleman began writing at age 5 at the encouragement of her parents and had several poems published in the community newspaper by age 15. She and her siblings spent many hours as children at the Ascot Branch Library, and throughout her career, she often researched projects at the Central Library. By age 20, she was a political activist, wife, mother and committed to a career as a professional writer. She went on to become one of the most published black poets in the country with more than 20 books of poetry, stories and essays in print.

Coleman won many prestigious honors, including fellowships from the John P. Guggenheim Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, and the California Arts Council in fiction and in poetry. In 2003, she was named the L.A.’s first literary fellow. Her honors also include an Emmy for Daytime Drama writing, The 1999 Lenore Marshall Prize for *Bathwater Wine*, and a nomination for the 2001 National Book Awards for *Mercurochrome*.

“Coleman frequently writes to illuminate the lives of the underclass and the disenfranchised, the invisible men and women who populate America’s downtown streets

(more)

Peter Persic, Public Relations & Marketing Director

after dark, the asylums and way stations, the inner-city hospitals and clinics,” author and college professor Tony Magistrale wrote in the “Black American Literature Forum.”

A 2015 recipient of the nation’s highest honor for library service—the National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Los Angeles Public Library serves the largest and most diverse urban population of any library in the nation. Its Central Library, 72 branch libraries, collection of more than 6 million books, state-of-the-art technology accessible at www.lapl.org, and more than 18,000 public programs a year provide everyone with free and easy access to information and the opportunity for life-long learning.

The Jefferson Branch is located in the 10th Council District, represented by Councilman Herb J. Wesson, Jr.

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