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### **Pitt Press poet wins prestigious National Book Critics Circle Award**

PITTSBURGH—Ross Gay, author of *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude*, published by the University of Pittsburgh Press, has won the 2015 National Book Critics Circle Award for poetry. The NBCC awards were presented Thursday evening in New York City. Gay is one of six acclaimed African American poets who will participate in a landmark event on Monday on the Pitt campus—“Poetry and Race in America: How the Humanities Engage with Social Issues.”

The NBCC award is the latest in a whirlwind of honors for *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude*. Gay recently won the \$100,000 Kingsley Tufts Poetry Prize, was a 2015 National Book Award finalist, and a 2015 finalist for the NAACP Image Award.

“Poetry and Race in America,” an evening of poetry readings and conversation, is slated for the Frick Fine Arts Auditorium, Schenley Drive, in the Oakland section of Pittsburgh, beginning at 7 p.m. Free and open to the public, Gay will be joined by Pitt poets Toi Derricotte, Afaa Michael Weaver, Nathaniel Marshall, Rickey Laurentiis, and Lyrae Van Clief-Stefanon. National Book Award winner Terrance Hayes will moderate the event, co-sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh Press and Pitt’s new Center for African American Poetry and Poetics. It is part of the “Year of the Humanities in the University” at Pitt.

An assistant professor of English at Indiana University, who also teaches in the low-residency MFA program at Drew University, Gay is also the author of the collections *Bringing the Shovel Down* and *Against Which*. He is the co-author, with Aimee Nezhukumatathil, of the chapbook *Lace and Pyrite: Letters from Two Gardens*, in addition to being co-author, with Richard Wehrenberg, Jr., of the chapbook, *River*.

Gay is a founding editor, with Karissa Chen and Patrick Rosal, of the online sports magazine *Some Call It Ballin’*, and is an editor with the chapbook presses Q Avenue and Ledge Mule Press. He is a founding board member of the Bloomington Community Orchard, a non-profit, free-fruit-for-all food justice and joy project. He has received fellowships from Cave Canem, the Bread Loaf Writer’s Conference, and the Guggenheim Foundation.

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