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Award-winning Alabama Poet Celebrates National Poetry Month (April) with New Collection

Birmingham – Poet Weaves History, Nature and Art in Second Book of Poems

National Poetry Month provides an official opportunity for poetry lovers to celebrate words and language. But for author Irene Latham, it's a way to share the joy and to show others how poetry is found in all the nooks and crannies of life.

“People are often intimidated by poetry,” said Latham, a Birmingham resident for the past 26 years. “But what poetry strives to do is illuminate the smallest moments in everyday life, including the heartache and wonder.”

Which is why her latest collection *The Color of Lost Rooms* (Blue Rooster Press, ISBN: 978-0976255741) is pocket-sized and includes poems inspired by not only by images such as a spider's web and a classic black dress, but also a host of historic characters like Hester Prynne and some art pieces found in the National Museum of Women in the Arts (Washington, DC).

In a world where change is the only constant, there is always something to grieve: lost love, lost time, lost dreams. Rooted in history, nature and art, The Color of Lost Rooms is a haunting collection of brave, vulnerable and sometimes philosophical poems. The collection journeys through passion and loss to illuminate the many rooms we occupy, inviting the reader to discover ways love defines the human experience – and how to survive it.

Praised for the simple, emotive quality of her writing, Latham was named 2006 Alabama Poet of the Year. Her first book of poems *What Came Before* was named 2007 Book of the Year and earned a 2008 Independent Publisher's (IPPY) Award. After the 2010 release of her debut novel *Leaving Gee's Bend* (Putnam/ Penguin), she is often asked why she continues to write for a market as small as poetry. Poetry is her passion, Latham said.

“I love the compressed emotion poetry provides, how you can have an intense experience in a matter of minutes without turning a page. Mostly I write for women just like me -- the introspective ones who crave a meaningful life.”

Latham lives with her husband and three sons in the Inverness area, where volumes of poetry can be found in every room. Has she been able to convert her family to poetry lovers as well?

“I've read Shel Silverstein and other poems to the boys since they were small. The youngest can recite one by heart, and the middle one won an Honorable Mention in a poetry contest. I'm still working on my husband and oldest son,” she said.

The book can be purchased with inscription and autograph through Paypal at the author's website www.irenelatham.com. For more information about Irene Latham or her books, please visit www.irenelatham.com. To schedule an interview or photo with Latham, please contact her at 205-981-1935 or irene@irenelatham.com.