

Houston Philosophical Society Dinner and Lecture

Cohen House, Rice University

16 November 2017

6:00pm cocktails - 9:00pm close

At 8:00 pm President Hall called the meeting to order and welcomed all. President Hall thanked Pat Hughes and David Furlow for running the elections for new members. All four proposed members were elected:

Christian Emden, Ph.D.

Dr. Carmen Mikhail

Margie O'Connor

William F. Stutts

President Hall reminded members that second round nominations are due in the spring. He noted that David Furlow and Herb Ward are co-chairs of the Centennial Committee, and members can channel suggestions to them.

He also thanked Sustaining Members and said that the Section Heads will be reaching out to members. The January meeting will have tables identified by section to encourage members to sit with their section and meet other members.

Members' patience was appreciated with the parking situation and hoped that the supplemental email was helpful.

Guest introductions were made around the tables.

President Hall introduced the topic: "The Creative Process" by speakers Sonja Bruzauskas, Ava Leavell Haymon and Robert Nelson. Ava Leavell Haymon is the former Poet Laureate of the

State of Louisiana and is a poet, playwright, teacher and editor. Sonja Bruzauskas is a professional musician with a wide range of operatic roles, who also designs concert programs and experiences and is the Director of the Theatre Forum at Round Top.

Robert Nelson is Professor Emeritus of Music Theory and Composition at the Moores School of Music, University of Houston. He has written a number of musicals and operas.

Sonja Bruzauskas discussed the concept of creativity as making new connections: two or more independent entities finding common ground. It happens every day but is usually associated with the arts due to a product being produced. Processes are also creative but not as evident. The example that followed illustrated how one product of creativity inspires another and the process continues.

Ann Leavell read her poem “Watercolor Lessons” and discussed the creative process she used to create it.

Robert Nelson explained that to compose a song, he starts with the text and the beauty of the language as well as the structure of the poem. The music should enhance the meaning of the written language.

Sonja Bruzauskas performed several songs that illustrated the verbal art of poetry with music.

After a question and answer period, the meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.