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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## MEDIA RELEASE

*St. Mary's University and The Rouge Forum proudly present*

***An evening of poetry and discourse with Canada's Poet Laureate, George Elliott Clarke***

**CALGARY** – On Friday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016, St. Mary's University and The Rouge Forum welcome George Elliott Clarke, Canada's Poet Laureate. Clarke is set to give a public talk as the key note speaker for the 2016 Rouge Forum Conference, taking place at St. Mary's University.

Clarke is an officer of the Order of Nova Scotia and the Order of Canada. Born in 1960, he is a seventh-generation Canadian of African-American and Mi'kmaq heritage. He has received the Governor General's Literary Award for Poetry, the National Magazine Awards' Gold Medal for Poetry, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Achievement Award.

Marginalization, justice and anti-racism will be the subject of Friday's talk. A versatile and engaging writer, Clarke has been instrumental in promoting the work of writers of African descent.

"We are thrilled to have George Elliot Clarke at St. Mary's University to kick off the Rouge Forum Conference and our *Inspiring Conversations*," said Dr. Tara Hyland-Russell, Vice-President Academic and Dean. "Friday's event is the first in a series of upcoming university sponsored lectures, titled *Inspiring Conversations*, where St. Mary's University will engage Calgarians in dialogue about pertinent issues facing our global community," said Dr Hyland-Russell.

Derek Beaulieu, Canadian poet, publisher and anthologist, and Calgary's Poet Laureate from 2014 to 2016, contributed his visual poetry to Friday's event.

The event is free to Rouge Forum attendees, and \$10 for adults and youth.

Register for the event at [www.stmu.ca/rougeforum](http://www.stmu.ca/rougeforum)

Register for the Rouge Forum Conference at [www.rougeforumconference.wordpress.com](http://www.rougeforumconference.wordpress.com)

### **The Rouge Forum Conference:**

The Rouge Forum Conference seeks to bring together scholars, teachers, students, and community members to discuss issues of social justice through a critical lens. It seeks to create an environment that challenges the status quo and empowers individuals to address areas of concern. The Forum's structure is atypical, with sessions designed to maximize opportunities to engage in dialogue and build professional relationships around common interests. This year's theme, *Teaching for Democracy and Justice in an Age of Inequality*, helps to frame for presenters the critical role that interrogating related issues has for modern democracies.

### **About St. Mary's University:**

St. Mary's University is an innovative teaching and research university that provides affordable, accredited and highly valued degrees in the Liberal Arts, Sciences and Education located on a historic site in Calgary, Alberta. The students at St. Mary's are inspired to combine academics with a passionate commitment to ethics, social justice and respect for diversity of opinion and belief.

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