The Department of French and Italian welcomes Guadeloupean novelist, poet, and essayist

Daniel Maximin

Poetry Reading

Les Antilles, entre l’exil et le natal

4:00 pm, Thursday April 24, 2014
Hoosier Room, Indiana Memorial Union
Reception following the reading, which will be in French

Public Lecture

Geo-Poetics of the Caribbean: Francophone Writers in Dialogue with their Anglophone and Hispanophone Counterparts

2:30 pm, Friday April 25, 2014
Faculty Room, University Club, Indiana Memorial Union
Reception following the lecture, which will be in English

A writerly dialogue has always brought together Caribbean poets, beyond their differences of language—English, Spanish, French, Creole—because their history, geography and cultures are so similar, linked, in fact. These poets are all heirs of the collision of four continents that made each island and they know both the hell and the paradise of their shared “insular” geography. Taking the example of the generation of Aimé and Suzanne Césaire, who were in dialogue in the Paris of the 1930s and 40s with poets in exile from different Anglophone, Francophone, and Hispanophone countries, we will trace the cultural unity and diversity of the sister islands of the Caribbean.

Daniel Maximin was born in Guadeloupe and moved to Paris with his family at the age of thirteen. He studied literature at the Sorbonne and then taught literature at Orly. He was literary editor for the publisher Présence africaine 1980-1989 and produced francophone radio programs for France Culture. He returned to Guadeloupe to serve as director of cultural affairs from 1989 to 1997. In 1998, he returned to Paris to serve as commissioner for the 150th celebration of the abolition of slavery in France. He served as advisor to the French Ministry of Education 2000-04 for the Mission pour les Arts et la Culture à l’École. In 2006, he was head of the literature and education section of the Festival francophone en France (called Francoffonies).

Maximin is the author of numerous novels, poems, and essays. Among them: L’Isolé soleil (novel, 1981), Soufrières (novel, 1987), Tu, C’est l’enfance (autobiography, 2004), Les fruit du cyclone, une Géopoétique de la Caraïbe (essay, 2007), and L’invention des Désirades (poetry collection, 2009). His most recent publication is Aimé Césaire, Frère-Volcan (2013), which reflects on 40 years of dialogue with the renowned poet from Martinique.

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