For Immediate Release

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Mongrel Empire Press

**Mongrel Empire Press Announces *Monahsetah, Resistance and other Markings on Turtle's Back, a lyric history in poems and essays by Maurice Kenny.***

Norman, OK 6/1/17—Mongrel Empire Press, an Eclectic Publishing House specializing in regional and uncommon literary works, is happy to announce the publication of *Monahsetah, Resistance and other Markings on Turtle's Back*, a lyric history of poems and essays by Maurice Kenny.

In the introduction, editor Chad Sweeney, writes that “Maurice Kenny spent his life and career exploring the intersection of the Native American with the European. In interviews, essays, and personal conversations, Kenny often confessed that he was searching for himself in exploring these historical figures of contact. In his final work, Maurice Kenny interrogates that crisis of contact between European-American expansion and the free Cheyenne Nation, and especially the enigmatic woman, Monahsetah, the Cheyenne second “wife” to General George Armstrong Custer, whom the Cheyenne reviled . . . In tracing Monahsetah’s cultural negotiations, Kenny is perhaps, once more, trying to locate himself within that insoluble inquiry: after five centuries of massacre and exploitation, how may one's Native loyalties be reconciled to one's European roots? And what forms may resistance take?”

Lisa Tatonetti in a *World Literature Today* review, praises *Monahsetah, Resistance and other Markings on Turtle's Back*, saying, “Maurice Kenny’s final collection, *Monahsetah,* offers readers more than just the last words of a major figure in Indigenous literature—it is by turns a poetic history and a poignant walk through shards of personal and collective memory. Kenny’s significance as a poet, short fiction writer, editor, and mentor cannot be overstated . . . [T]his beautifully assembled collection showcases the undiminished power of Kenny’s poetic voice, reminding us of the impact and reach of his literary genius.”

Native American poet Lance Henson says of Kenny, “Maurice was a gentle surveyor of ancient indigenous reality. He moved within that source, like wind through water reeds.”

Of Kenny’s life and work, the artist, writer, and poet Wendy Rose says, “Maurice Kenny stands at the forefront of his generation. Few writers of any ethnicity are destined to be remembered in the mainstream of literary history; I believe that Kenny’s contributions as a poet are among those few. He writes from the center, as our Elders would say.”

Maurice Kenny is a major Native American author, historian and editor with over fifty collections of poetry and fiction to his name. Kenny earned special renowned for his poetry readings which inspired audiences across the United States and Europe with a blend of humor, lyric intensity and rhythmic oracular chanting. Kenny’s generosity was famous among colleagues and students in hosting dinners and discussions at his house and poetry events in the community while teaching poetry and Native history at SUNY Potsdam, University of Oklahoma, Paul Smith’s College, North Country Community College, and the En’owkin Center at the University of Victoria in British Columbia. With Joshua Gosciak, he edited the influential *Contact/II Magazine* for twenty years and was publisher and editor of Strawberry Press which featured works by Native writers. Maurice Kenny was educated at Butler, St. Lawrence University, and New York University where he studied with the eminent poet, Louise Bogan. Twice nominated for the Pulitzer Prize and inducted into the New York Writers Hall of Fame, Maurice Kenny’s awards include an American Book Award for *The Mama Poems* (1984), A National Public Radio Award for Broadcasting for a radio production of his poem “*The Dugout*,” the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Native Writers’ Circle of the Americas, the Elder Recognition Award from Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers, and a Lila Wallace *Reader’s Digest* Writers’ Award for which he toured nationally with Carolyn Forché. He was also awarded an honorary doctorate from St. Lawrence University. After retiring from SUNY Potsdam in 2011, he returned to his beloved Saranac Lake where he passed away in April of 2016 at the age of 86.

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**About Mongrel Empire Press**

Mongrel Empire Press was established in 2007 with a mission to publish well-written, thoughtfully-considered works across generic and disciplinary boundaries. The Press actively identifies and promotes Oklahoma and regional writers while at the same time making room for outside the region works that, because of their mixed generic, disciplinary, and philosophical approaches, cannot find a home at other presses that have a more narrowly defined mission.

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