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March–April 2003 Issue

### *Editors' Note*

Teachers & Writers Collaborative would hardly live up to its name if it did not celebrate the collaborative impulse around it. More specifically, the collaboration between two pioneering nonprofits—Poets House and City Lore—and the biennial fruit of their labor: the People's Poetry Gathering.

This issue offers our readers a unique glimpse into this year's festival—the focus of which will be epics and ballads—with educational and writerly insights from some of its (many) contributors.

The Gathering, which begins on April 11 in New York City, will feature more than 100 readings, student workshops, films, and musical performances dedicated to exploring the cultures (past and present) and the nations (far and wide) that have found expression in these narrative forms. The epic and the ballad share a fascinating history: scholars have argued that the Homeric epics consisted largely of ballads.

Writers and educators who are interested in learning more about the wide array of epic and ballad events—including performances by traditional epic singers from Kazakhstan and the Ukraine; concerts by Arlo Guthrie and Pete Seeger; readings by Bosnian and Iraqi poets; and a recitation of the *Odyssey* aboard a tall ship—should visit [www.peoplespoetry.org](http://www.peoplespoetry.org).

—*Christopher Edgar & Christina Davis*

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