Maurice Kenny Bio

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.