For Immediate Release


Later this month, the University of Kansas Department of English is delighted to bring Michael Dirda to KU to offer this year’s Richard W. Gunn Memorial Lecture, “A Literary Life: Twenty-Five Years at the Washington Post Book World.”

In 1978 Dr. Dirda joined the staff of The Washington Post as an assistant editor in its book review section. In those days, The Post still used typewriters, six-ply paper and linotype machines, and was riding high in the wake of Watergate. In this year’s Gunn Lecture, Dirda—a Pulitzer Prize-winning critic—will talk about literary journalism then and now, life at a great newspaper, some of the writers he has come to know, and the ongoing evolution of books and publishing.

Dirda, a weekly columnist for The Washington Post, is the author of the memoir *An Open Book* and of four collections of essays: *Readings, Bound to Please, Book by Book* and *Classics for Pleasure*. His latest book, *On Conan Doyle*, received the 2012 Edgar Allan Poe Award for nonfiction from the Mystery Writers of America. A Fulbright Fellowship recipient, Dirda graduated with Highest Honors in English from Oberlin College, and earned a Ph.D. in comparative literature (medieval studies and European romanticism) from Cornell University. In 1993 he won the Pulitzer Prize for his literary criticism.

Dr. Dirda’s lecture will be held on Tuesday, October 29th from 5:00-6:30 in the Big 12 Room of the Kansas Union.