



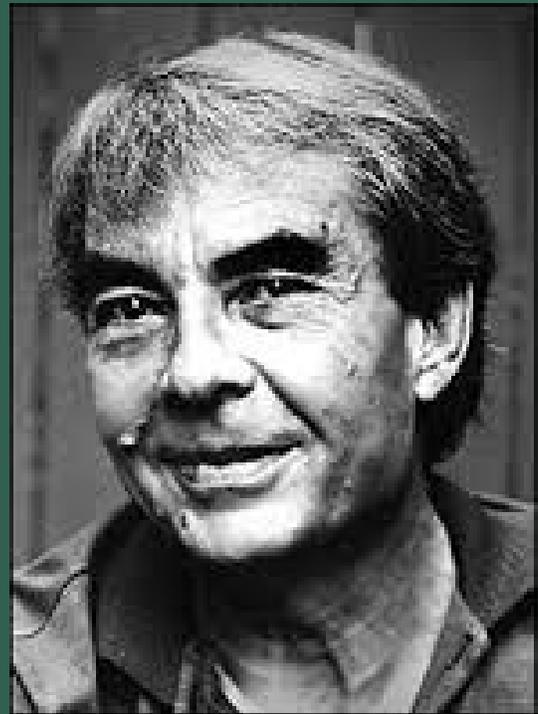
2016 Inductee
to the
South Carolina
Academy of Authors

When Anderson native Guy Davenport (1927-2005) won a “genius award” from the MacArthur Foundation in 1990, their letter of announcement to him cited “your accomplishments in essays and fiction which demonstrate your originality, dedication to creative pursuits, and capacity for self-direction.”

An internationally recognized scholar, writer, artist, and translator, Davenport had since 1963 published more than thirty works of fiction, nonfiction, poetry and translation (some of which were illustrated with his own drawings and paintings). These included such short-story collections as *Tatlin!* (1974), *Da Vinci's Bicycle* (1979), and *Eclogues* (1981) as well as his widely admired book of essays *The Geography of the Imagination* (1981), which was nominated for the National Book Critics Circle Award. Between 1991 (when he retired from teaching) and 2004 Davenport produced another dozen or so books and booklets, including *The Cardiff Team* (1996), *The Hunter Gracchus* (1997), and two works of translation: *7 Greeks* (1995) and *The Logia of Yeshua: The Sayings of Jesus* (with Benjamin Urrutia, 1996).

Davenport attended Anderson's Boys High School, but quit in order to study art at Duke University, where he majored in classics and English literature (much later he intimated that he still preferred drawing to writing). In 1948 he won a Rhodes scholarship to Oxford (where he wrote the first thesis on James Joyce to be accepted by that institution). After serving from 1950 to 1952 in the U.S. Army's 18th Airborne Corps, he taught at Washington University in St. Louis. He completed a doctorate at Harvard (where he wrote his dissertation on *The Cantos* by Ezra Pound, whom he had met in 1952) and taught at Haverford College (1961 to 1963) before embarking upon a lengthy teaching career at the University of Kentucky.

Readers (he once joked that he had thirteen of them) and critics have debated whether Davenport would best be remembered for his modernist short stories or his learned and witty essays. In truth, his writing in both genres is original and distinctive in style: “Style is everything,” he once said, and he himself was hailed by Erik Reece (his former student, now Writer-in-Residence at the University of Kentucky), as “the greatest prose stylist of his generation.” -Thomas L. Johnson



Guy Davenport