Shame Every Rose: Images from Afghanistan
New Photography Exhibit at the University of Arizona Poetry Center

January 6, 2015, Tucson Arizona—The Poetry Center is proud to host an exhibition of the works of photographer and filmmaker Seamus Murphy, containing images of Afghanistan created over a period of 18 years. In partnership with the Poetry Foundation of Chicago, and co-sponsored by the UA Center for Middle Eastern Studies, this exhibit features images displayed in pairs and sequenced to suggest the form of a landay. The landay is a form of oral folk poetry, comprised of short, couplet-style poems, composed by and circulated among Pashtun women living on the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. They represent the voices of more than 20 million women on the subjects of war, separation, homeland, grief, and love. Many of the women who compose landays are illiterate; landays are traditionally sung aloud, sometimes to the accompaniment of a hand drum. Landays are one of the few outlets of expression for the women who compose them and sing them in secret.

The exhibit was originally on view at the Poetry Foundation in Chicago, Illinois from June 19 to August 24, 2013, and is now traveling to the University of Arizona Poetry Center.

The artists’ talk and screening brings the award-winning artist and journalist responsible for the exhibit to Tucson in person to discuss their work.

The exhibit and event are presented in partnership between the University of Arizona Poetry Center and the Poetry Foundation, two of the leading literary organizations in the United States.

About the Exhibit:

Exhibit: February 22 – May 23, 2015
Artists’ Talk and Screening: March 5, 2015, 6 PM
Featuring a talk by Seamus Murphy and Eliza Griswold, the screening of a short film by Murphy titled Snake, readings, conversation, and the chance to view the Shame Every Rose exhibit. Co-sponsored by the University of Arizona Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

The exhibit is travelling from Chicago’s Poetry Foundation, the publisher of Poetry magazine. The June 2013 issue of Poetry magazine featured landays alongside Murphy’s images of Afghanistan and an essay by poet and journalist Eliza Griswold, who collaborated with Murphy and recorded a collection of landays. Murphy and Griswold are the co-authors of I Am the Beggar of the World: Landays from Contemporary Afghanistan (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2014), a book of images of Afghanistan taken by Murphy and landays created by Pashtun women and recorded by Griswold.

The exhibit will also feature the text of several landays recorded by Griswold displayed on the walls and windows of the Poetry Center’s Jeremy Ingalls Gallery.
About the Artists:
Seamus Murphy began photographing Afghanistan in 1994, leading to the book *A Darkness Visible: Afghanistan* (Saqi Books, 2008), a focus on the Afghan people through the turbulent years 1994–2007. His film of those experiences was nominated for a 2012 Emmy Award and received the 2012 Liberty in Media Prize.

Eliza Griswold is a Guggenheim fellow; her nonfiction book, *The Tenth Parallel: Dispatches from the Fault-line between Christianity and Islam* (2010), was awarded the Anthony J. Lukas Prize in nonfiction.

LINKS
Link to Poetry Foundation press release about the exhibit, originally on view at the Poetry Foundation’s Chicago, Illinois headquarters from June 19 to August 24, 2013:
http://www.poetryfoundation.org/foundation/press/2013/186398

Link to June 2013 Poetry Magazine online, with photos by Seamus Murphy and essay by Eliza Griswold:
http://www.poetryfoundation.org/media/landays.html

The University of Arizona Poetry Center is housed in one of three landmark buildings for poetry in the nation. In addition to its world-renowned collection of contemporary poetry, the Poetry Center is known for its long running readings and lecture series, international symposia, classes and workshops, writers’ residencies, and a wide range of programs for children and youth. For more information, please visit poetry.arizona.edu or call (520) 626-3765.