

**TOWN OF WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT
Special Meeting Notice**



Zoom instructions

Dialing in by Phone Only:

Please call: **309 205 3325** or **312 626 6799**

When prompted for participant or meeting ID enter: **898 8030 8614** then press #

Joining in by Computer:

Please go to the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89880308614>

When prompted for participant or meeting ID enter: **898 8030 8614**

AGENCY: Arts Commission

DATE: October 29, 2024

TIME: 7:00 PM

PLACE: Hybrid meeting - via Zoom or In-person at Town Hall in the Rose Room (3rd floor of town hall)

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. *Review of Poet Laureate Applications
4. Communications from Committee Members
5. Minutes of Preceding Meeting
 - a) *August 7, 2024
6. Staff Comments
7. Adjournment

*Backup materials

Public Act 75-312 requires notice of Special Meetings to be posted in the Town Clerk's Office not less than 48 hours prior to the time of such meeting. No other business shall be considered at this meeting than that listed on this Agenda.

Aysha Mahmood

Colby, Scott

From: no-reply=forms.windsorct.com@mg.townofwindsorct.com on behalf of no-reply@forms.windsorct.com
Sent: Friday, October 4, 2024 2:33 PM
To: Colby, Scott
Subject: New submission from Poet Laureate Application

Name

Aysha Mahmood

Address

109 BROOKVIEW ROAD
Windsor, CT 06095
[Map It](#)

Home Phone

n/a

Cell Phone

8605585913

Email

ayshamahmood93@gmail.com

Links

My poems are included in the files section!

Files

- [Cover-Letter.pdf?rlkey=0nu79p5eastys3vxn9qd4onnx&dl=0](#)
- [Poetry-Samples.pdf?rlkey=0qcnn3sk7anywzq92rrojeb51&dl=0](#)
- [Poetry-Resume.pdf?rlkey=3f5eckjv2dnrf30q1sfu70dwg&dl=0](#)

Security Question

blue

Dear Members of the Windsor Arts Commission,

My name is Aysha Mahmood, I'm a writer and mental health activist, and I am excited to apply for the volunteer position of Windsor's Poet Laureate. As someone who is confident in public speaking, has a history of writing publications under her belt, and is passionate about teaching others about poetry and how it can be used to deepen community ties and advocate for different social issues, I'd be honored to be a cultural ambassador for Windsor.

Having lived in Windsor my entire life, I would love the opportunity to combine two of my favorite passions - this town and poetry. Growing up in this town, I feel incredibly lucky to have experienced a childhood filled with rich history and neighbors of diverse backgrounds, and I would appreciate the opportunity to give art back to a community that is so spirited and has supported me through every phase of life.

I believe that every single person should experience the joy and community of poetry. When I was a child and I started reading child classical poetry, there were so many instances in which I felt seen, heard, and understood. Now that I'm an adult and also exposed to modern and experimental poetry, I understand the importance of writing your truth and getting all one's thoughts and feelings down on paper - for someone else will, one day, say "I feel that way, too." Through my own education and experience with poetry via Kenyon's Poetry Workshop, Abode's Poetry Workshop, and my poetry discussion group, not only have I learned how to improve my own skills and techniques, but I've also learned about new perspectives and cultures from other poets, and with that, have been able to create meaningful and transformational - not transactional - connections.

During a potential tenure, I would like to make poetry accessible to everyone, engage community members of all ages in poetry, and empower people to use poetry to inspire kindness and make a difference. I think some people are somewhat intimidated by poetry or think it's this very pretentious thing that only some people have the ability to do, but everyone is a poet - they just may not know it yet. During my tenure, I'd like to convince people that they are poets and turn them into literary citizens.

Writing is often such a solitary activity that I'd also be excited to organize events that not only bring current poets together but events that get newcomers interested in poetry as well. Poetry is not only about the writing itself but about bringing people together, so I'm eager to highlight the community aspects of poetry via readings, writing tips, and workshops presented in a way that is fun, colorful, and nonjudgmental. Special projects could look like:

- 1) A "Poetry Night" at the Windsor Public Library in which folks of all ages can engage in visual and written poetry.

- 2) A “Poetry Walk: We can create a poetry trail in a local park or path that features poems by community members displayed on signs. This can also include QR codes linking to audio readings.
- 3) Collaborative Poetry: Invite community members to contribute lines to a collective poem located somewhere public and easily accessible like a library, that which later can then be unveiled at a special event.

These are just some ideas that I believe would bring the community together!

When I’m not engaging in poetry, I work as the editor and senior program manager of a mental health nonprofit organization (Lady Gaga’s Born This 1 Way Foundation) where I edit stories from youth about the kind, brave ways they are making an impact in the world. One of the highlights of my work has been coordinating with Girls Write Now to create a kindness poetry contest for their youth, in which I was able to select the winner and edit their work.

My ultimate goal with my work and my volunteer life is to foster meaningful connections, engage with kindness, and amplify the arts, and I’d love to carry that spirit into the position of Windsor’s Poet Laureate.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

In Kindness,

Aysha Mahmood

New Year

I'm throwing out winter's clumsiness. Words unsaid and words I wish I said and words that I did say that landed the wrong way that I'm now too embarrassed to apologize for. I'm kicking out the comparisons I make with people who are healthier than my disability and the people who aren't healthier than my disability but have quote unquote done more. I'll collect all of the "if only's" in a jar and toss them into the river. I'll tie the regrets down with rocks. May bubbles rise in their place popping me into the present. I'm sequestering the shame I feel when I cry, I'm shipping the embarrassment down the streams. I'm betraying capitalism. Turning my back on Big Brother's persistence. Shutting down the screen. Stopping the scrolls. Stripping the filter. Silencing the quick temper, donating it to a man, though I doubt he'll need it, and speaking of men, I'm taking out the trash.

I'm introducing Spring optimism. I'm greeting it with a glow. I'm making room for the activeness of a scraped knee and an elongated spine that tends to hunch during sun's turn of the play. I'm inviting crying with tenderness. I'm feeding my appetite for worn books and allowing myself the bravery to annotate – not to ruin the art, but to enter into it my existence. I'm jumping into a palette of paint that stains my fingers. I'll let it. I'm investing in small jingles of joy. The Trader Joe flowers. Egyptian cotton. Perfume on, without leaving the house. Christmas lights in June. The dress with the embroidered pink florals I bought that one time to wear on a special occasion – today is one. Warm and cozy. Soft silk. Sun's bath. I'm surrounding my space with the friends who are poets – let their words stick to me – and the friends who don't know they are poets – let their heartbeats sing. And I'm going to be giddy with greed. Because why is it so terrible to want and to want badly? To crave, to desire, connection and community and intimacy, and why is that such a sin to say, 'I want more,' to declare it, to speak it out with our full chest, to demand we are worthy of more, of more respect, of more peace, and to deeply crave the transformations, may we be more than our transactions. So I'll hug wobbling mother and I'll lather up patience for father and I'll reach for more hands and I'll send Steve the letter and kiss the seal with that lipstick he likes and I'll actively listen to what my body says when it's speaking and I'll actively listen to what my body says when it's silent. I'm moving into more love spilling it in my existence into my orbit into my people. I'm churching it into a prayer.

Colonizer

Upon settling into our new home,

Husband called the exterminator.

We had no choice, he said.

You're deathly allergic to bees. It was either you or them.

I didn't even think about the massacre

until I went outside to meditate in our backyard.

You deserve to take up space, I repeated.

You deserve to take up space, I repeated.

You deserve to take up—

But what if my space invades the space of a bee?

who wishes no harm, who lives unprovoked,

who buzzes and hums and dances,

who diligently works to provide for their colony?

And if I've invaded the space of a bee, have I invaded the space of a bird?

Of a bush? Of a tree? Of a river? Of a—

Oh God, what kind of greedy am I

to take up a space that is home to another?

What kind of greedy am I

to declare myself the owner of it?

To my mother, as she ages:

Give me the finger you burnt while making toast. Give me your sunken eyes in the morning and the worn soles of your feet at night. Give me the dirt under your nails as you plant daffodils. Give me the frostbite stained over your fingers as you shovel the porch. Give me your sandpaper of a sore throat in the winter and your bullseye of a tick bite in the spring. Give me your fatigued wait in a doctor's office. Give me your overdrawn bloodied arm and your crusty bed sores. Give me your labored breathing. Give me your snot and pass me a plate to eat it on. Give me your sweat and hand me a bottle to drink it in. I'll use the rest to bathe. Give me your noise, your demented, your disturbed, give me your callously flippant thoughts. Give me your twitching nerves. Give me your convulsing muscles. Give me your bile. I vow to catch it with outstretched arms, carry it in my palms, and lick the leftover residue off your cheek.

First Love (a visual poem):

First Love

Flame red hello	salsa pick up line	folly flushed	lust dress
candy lipstick	chili conversation	sizzling sex	fire engine moans of pleasure
cinnabar sunrise	scarlet roses	sanguine kisses	watermelon whispers
blush secrets	venetian tenderness	ferrari months	copper spare key
mahogany move in furniture	redwood fireplace	hibiscus touches	rose years
rusty sparks	lava eruption	radical arguments	crimson rage
imperial silence	brick tension	cherry peace offering	vermillion talks
prismatic realizations	rosewood maturity	merlot last kiss	bittersweet red goodbye.

Brittana Versatile

Poetiq Tatum



Town of Windsor, Connecticut Poet Laureate Application

- **Submit application along with the following documents:**
- Application form
- 1-2 page cover letter or personal statement that includes a little bit about yourself, your poetry background, why you feel you are qualified for the role, why you are interested in the role, what you would like to achieve during your tenure, and any special projects you would like to organize. Also include any published work, awards, performances that showcase relevant poetry experience.
- Poetry related resume or CV (you may include links to online content)
- A selection of 3-4 poems that you think best demonstrate your abilities as a poet (links can be provided as supplemental attachments)

Submissions should be emailed to colby@townofwindsorct.com by the end of the day Friday, October 4, 2024. Alternatively, they can be mailed or hand delivered to the Windsor Town Hall, Town Manager's Office at 275 Broad Street, Windsor CT 06095. Hand deliveries must be completed by 5:00 p.m. on the deadline date. Mail deliveries must be postmarked on or before the deadline date.

First Name Brittana Versatile Poetiq Tatum

Last Name Tatum

Address 27 Valley View Drive

City/State/Zip Windsor

Home Phone N/A Cell Phone (860) 817-9580

Email Versatilepoetiq@hotmail.com

Please share if any links to performances (optional):

Youtube: [Versatile Poetiq](#)
letsgoarts.org/blog/life-in-full-circle-versatile-poetiqs-journey
theaoca.org/brittana-tatum

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Youtube: versatilepoetiQ

October 4, 2024

Town of Windsor
275 Broad Street Windsor, CT 06095

Dear Town of Windsor,

I am interested in becoming the town of Windsor's first Poet Laureate. I have performed Spoken Word Poetry for 16 years and taught Spoken Word for 13 years. I am qualified for the role because of my blessed previous poetic relationship with the town of Windsor. I was honored to host the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration in January of 2023 and 2024 at the Windsor Art Center. I was honored to host the Juneteenth Open Mic June 2023 and 2024 at the Windsor Art Center. I was honored to host the Juneteenth celebration on the Windsor Town Green June 2023 and 2024. I would like to accomplish expressive, safe, healing, and engaging spaces through poetry for the town of Windsor. Consistent open mics, poetry slams, and workshops. Projects that display the poetic and artistic talent of the people of Windsor. I have worked with 5th graders at Clover Street Elementary school in Windsor for three years 2017, 2018, and 2019. I facilitated the 5th graders spoken word workshops preparing students for their 5th grade poetry slam and even hosted the 5th grade poetry slams. I love what I do, I am good at what I do and extremely confident with my talents. I am interested in becoming Windsor's first Poet Laureate because it will allow me to continue to live, breathe, and sweat poetry. It will allow me to connect with more people in the town of Windsor and other towns through out CT. It will enlighten me and strengthen my writing and people skills. It will help me heal, motivate, and inspire myself and others. It will allow me to work with more schools in the town of Windsor and connect with the youth. I am excited for the town of Windsor being granted this phenomenal accomplishment and honored for the opportunity to apply. I have enclosed my Bio and a few poems that show my Versatility. Thank you for the Opportunity!

Kind Regards,

Versatile PoetiQ

Brittana VersatilePoetiq Tatum was born at Hartford Hospital. She was raised for nine years in Simsbury, CT and ten years in Avon, CT. She has lived in Windsor, CT for the past 18 years. She played basketball throughout high school with aspirations of playing in college. She graduated from Avon High School in 2005. In the fall of 2005, she attended the University of Hartford as a marketing major. She put away her basketball sneakers and picked up a pen to become a Poet. She graduated from UHART with a Business Administration degree in May of 2009. She has been performing Spoken Word for 16 years and teaching Spoken Word for 13 years. She works for Charter Oak Cultural Center and Arts for Learning Connecticut. She was the Spoken Word Teacher at The Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts (Colt Campus) 2014-2015. She performed in front of 20,000 people at The Greater Hartford Jazz Festival in 2019 and 2021. She hosted the Trinity International Hip Hop Festival in 2019. She was the Keynote Speaker at the Connecticut Association of Schools High School Outstanding Arts Award Ceremony in April 2023 and Hosted the Hartford Creative Arts Ceremony for 4th-12th Grade in June of 2023 and 2024. She Hosted Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration at Windsor Art Center January 2023 and 2024. She Hosted Juneteenth Open Mic at Windsor Art Center June 2023 and 2024. She Hosted Juneteenth Celebration on the Windsor Town Green June 2023 and 2024. Her stage name is VesatilePoetiq due to her universal appeal and unique mix of Spoken Word and Rap. She has all her students call her Miss. Versatile.

Black White

Black White, White Black, that's How you act its a Historical Fact
Right Wrong, Wrong Right, chalk lectures the Blackboard
Knowledge ignites the candle for history to rewrite the Manual
Ebonics wired to curses from society dumping bodies in the Black Hearse
It's too deep to reverse, Learned song notes playing until your pale
Melting Pot created by white arms holding the Hammer
Crystals in the black hands crack the cement in the Cell
Darkness buried in a box, numb from the Oxy picking at the Cotton
Breathe in the Gin, Swallow the Jack, Throw the Black to stay on Track
Test your ability, hear the possibility, play the versatility, a Black White Commodity
Black bags of hope burned in vain, name calling cane, white out your Brain
Agony stains like pain, wetter than the rain, blind eyes see the flash of Logic
It's symbolic, factual, actual, unusual ways, to free your sense to seize the moment from
Righteous to One, Black White it magnifies poetic, the words are Kinetic
Black ashes of truth chipping away your Tooth
A colorblind rhyme injected into the thoughts of a colorblind Mind
Black ink walking across the white paper saluting Success
White out the Black mistakes enslaving his Progress
A colorless world, a colorless rainbow, a colorless Disaster
so I speak of holding Black White as the story Happily ever After
Black cards drawn from Bank accounts and the mouths of Excuses
White stars talking to the Black sky, a white lie of Reality
White lines sniffed into black holes of Fear
Chess Game Black White Players separated Segregation
King had Dreams of Black White, One Congregation
60's purchased Desegregation, Millennium returned Sugarcoated Separation
Oreo Cookies dipped in milk by innocent kids across the Nation
Black white reflecting beauty spots on a Dalmatian from One Hundred to One
Salt n Pepper Push it together thats a tasteful Melody
Bowls of ecstasy from whips of chocolate, white on the Cream
Black White trick or treat same struggle everyone trying to Eat
Differences drowned in color, tears dried with Similarity
Principles of a constitution bleeding on the root of Morality
White sheets find the Ku scream out Klux call your Klan Superiority
Black Panthers fighting by Any X means the Necessary
eery feelings, writing words, talking talks, from me a Missionary
Black White see the light in Unity, Resurrect the Community
Piece to Piece, solve the puzzle, left to right, Hip to Hop,
Pitch to Black, see the sight, vision the light, live the Life Peace Black White

~Versatile Poetiq~

Orphan's Cry

White leather in a Black hearse, no Family inside made it worse/ Cedar wood Coffin new home for an Orphan/ Little girl nine years old with a jerry curl/ she likes the ice cream with the chocolate swirl/ Her favorite cookies twisting Oreos/ Long glass of milk three day's earlier where the story goes/ She sat in her room reading "Catcher in the Rye" hiding behind the punches she would catch in the eye/ She smelled an aroma, not knowing in minutes it would all be over/ Sounds from the kitchen, chairs crashing screamed Daddy was hittin/ Mommy's sobs nailed to the walls/ She took blows the size of a semi-Truck as she started to fall/ Her life line splattered all over the stove/ She was tucked in the fetal position cuz his violence wasn't missin/ So the little girl rose to her life changing moment/ Ran to Daddy's office and grabbed the 8mm that would end all the torment/ Stumbled down the stairs, gun shaking in her hand from all those years/ She reached the door of the kitchen/ Tears dripped to the tip of her nose/ She stared at the barrel where the bullet goes/ She grabbed the safety to her childhood/ Cocked it back to the fact, she was tired of all the smacks/ Cuz Daddy would drink too many Cognacs/ He now had his knees on Mommy's breast, both hands groped around her neck/ Their was no turning back/ Vexed from all the nights he would blow smoke in her face as he burned a black/ This so called Daddy used to beat her hips until she was sore in the lips/ For all the pain, she would take his life like she stole a bag of chips/ Four shots, Two hit his thigh, One in between the eye/ He slumped over lifeless, Mommy wasn't moving either she didn't know why/ Saw the fourth bullet hole in her abdomen and started to cry/ She just wanted to save her from Daddy's grip, she wasn't thinking as she released the clip/ Kitchen floor flooded with puddles of blood/ She held the face of she loved/ Looked to the ceiling only to see the light of the devil above/ took one last breath/ Russian Roulette the bullet chamber/ The hands of God couldn't save her/ one slug of lead to the head/ She fell next to the woman who always made sure she was fed/ The neighbor called 911 Emergency claimed they heard shots/ Paramedics on the Suicide-Murder scene with the cops/ Family of Three sitting in Body bags, names in Red ink on the Tags/ Detectives and paramedics started the investigation, DNA results solved the complication/ The little girl was adopted, you see the hurt inside this home no one could stop it/ An STD was found in her vaginal cavity, autopsy results matched the mother to the tragedy, connecting the father to the agony/ I had to tell it cuz it bothers me/ They never found the little girls Biological parents/ white leather in a black hearse no family at the funeral made it apparent/ Detectives and Paramedics watched the Cedar wood coffin drop, but couldn't bare it/ I gave the eulogy, but nobody wanted to hear it/ This little girl long live her spirit, only Nine years old and her life never flourished into proportion/ Why didn't her mom just have an abortion/ This little girl lives inside of every person who has seen Evil, never understanding why their life doesn't live it up like other people/ I'm the neighbor who did nothing to save her/ Now a fein to a needle filled with flavor/ If you can help those in need, never think twice about doing a good deed/ Cuz you don't know what will be planted in your life like a seed/ I live with that last goodbye, like a lost soul that didn't try/ I toss and turn with nightmares of why, all because I witnessed an Orphan's Cry.....

~Versatile Poeti~



October 15, 2007

ME

To even try to depict Me do Me a favor grab a Dutch with Flavor
I'll break up the words and roll the Knowledge
Now you pull the Intellect..wait Hold it.. Feel the Stimulation and blow the Poetry
Now that you have inhaled this Poetic high let's give it a Try
What do you wonder? When you see a woman living "Not by what's supposed to be?"
5'8, long hair, thick thighs, little booty, and brown skin
I lay under the blankets of materialism that covers my exterior and traps my interior
I'm a foreign lesson unknown to you so approach me with Caution
My mind is dense and Heart a beating Nightmare
Athletic, Ambitious, and Outgoing are traits that don't create Me
I'm a Feign for pulling a Trigger and blowing away Ignorance
I despise the Fools that labels themselves because Society said So
Don't define me because Definitions are a Best Friend to Webster
Don't try to look for the 411 on me because Wikipedia won't tell you the full Truth
My Swag Busts through like a Good ___ and leaves them thinking What?
My attitude doesn't reflect what they thought, but what they see in Me
I'm a rebel to the rules and a conformist to the Abnormal
You see Most eyes that are set upon me see an Image of a Male..Why?
They Say Men wear This and Women where That..Claimed Who?
Well I wear Those and These so I am This and That Together
My uniqueness is fed as different, but swallowed as Judgement
I have a personality that isn't personable I must confess
Emotion you could never configure it's no Advertisement
Women snicker when I pass by cause they are intrigued by my mystery and trapped by Closet
Men beam when I walk By, showing they're Lit
Cause they think I got in between there Woman's Split
I laugh cause if my close were off those Men would Hit
Now let's penetrate a little deeper, you Roll the knowledge this Time
People like me get killed for there existence
When I die I'm going out Smiling knowing I was Me
Many wear Masks cause they're Horrified by who they Really Are
Please wash down what I said with a Glass of Sense
We gotta make it Common to "The People" so they Understand
My Sexuality isn't My Preference, it's Only My Resource
What is Me?
Poetry is Me, Music is Me, A White Rose is Me, Jenas 6 is Me, Darfur is Me,
4 Little Girls in Alabama is Me, Matthew Shepard is Me, Troy Davis is Me,
Trayvon Martin is Me, Eric Garner is Me, Mike Brown is Me, Alton Sterling is Me, Philando
Castile is Me, Tamir Rice is Me, Sandra Bland is Me, Breonna Taylor is Me, Ahmaud Arbery is
Me, George Floyd is Me, Anybody Brutalized by the Police that didn't make the National news
is Me, Black Lives Matter is Me, Sandy Hook Elementary School is Me, Pulse Night Club is Me,
Las Vegas, Nevada is Me, New Parkland Florida is Me, Charleston, SC is Me, Teacher's Memo-
rial Global Studies Magnet Middle School is Me, Love is Me, Pain is Me, War is Me, Terror is
Me, The Woman in New York City that holds the Torch is Me,
Discover Something, it's Seen, it's Felt, it's Known, and it's Lived..
Who Am I?
You Are Me

~VersatilePoetiQ~

Deception

We all want to Achieve so when the Pressure Presses our Stresses we willingly Deceive. We believe we can get away without consequence, so we constantly try to erase the negative constraints that strain our Conscience. I am just trying to be honest because those closes to you behind your back will treat you like a Con-artist. If you don't believe me, look into the eyes of another and see where they were Stabbed the Hardest. It doesn't matter if, you are the Smartest, Dumbest, Richest, or Poorest someone has deceived you. So what Do you Do? Run up in they house and leave them Black and Blue? What if it's someone who Love's You? Who are always the ones quickest to hurt you, set you up to fly, cut your wings and desert you. What if it's someone you Trust? Not knowing they secretly want to see your down fall, and arrange your death like the Friends of Julius Cesar. You see this is just a Mental Teaser, you gotta Watch The Enemy because you could be Sleeping with them like Julia Roberts in 1991. Friends sitting in your house, creeping into your life like a Mouse, Behind Closed Doors Thinking about your Spouse. Deception alters the Perception of Reality, Making your Dreams Crash like Leonardo's Inception. Let's cut the deceit out with a Cookie Cutter, add lot's if butter and then feed each other. Like when Othello's Friend drive him to strangle his own Girlfriend, How could this happen? They had a strong Love that was broken due to lies and deceiving. Strong will, Trust, and Love in this life is all we are needing, but it never seems enough because we want what we don't need and need what we don't want. Some of the Most Notorious Gangsta's in the World Frank Lucas, Rayful Edmonds, and Gotti all stared into the hidden depths of Deception inside their own Entourage and didn't even know it. Corner Stores sell the Cheap and Unhealthy to the Poor, hold on the that Fact let me add some more. Why Pay Nothing to receive Nothing, but have to pay more for Something, when the same Something is a World wide Necessity? Healthy Food Deceives us Too, Religious Figures deceive with the Lord's name in Vain, Politicians are lying to you. The Media sells Controversial stories even when they aren't true. The Government wats your Money for unjustified uses, but you pay Taxes because that's what you have to do. Deception was Drank in your Coffee and Tea this Morning, Deception Filled up your Gas Tank, Deception is printed inside the Tongue of your Nike Checked Sneakers, Deception is written on the Blackboard by the Teachers, Deception is Prescribed Medicine given to you by the Doctors, Deception broke the law in court by the Lawyers. Welfare paying dues for some who take advantage, Happy to do nothing while chewing on a Section 8 Sandwich. You drive a Benz, but at your house Roaches are your secret Friends. Things are not always the way that they seem, like the hidden Pregnancy of a Jehovah Witness Teen. So be aware because Deception makes the World turn around and Deception will always stand its Ground. The Question is, Will You? ~Versatile PoetiQ~

Jessica Drost

Colby, Scott

From: no-reply=forms.windsorct.com@mg.townofwindsorct.com on behalf of no-reply@forms.windsorct.com
Sent: Friday, October 4, 2024 2:14 PM
To: Colby, Scott
Subject: New submission from Poet Laureate Application

Name

Jessica Drost

Address

16 HARVEST Ln
WINDSOR, Connecticut 06095
[Map It](#)

Home Phone

8607163013

Email

jruthyd@yahoo.com

Files

- [Poetry-Anthology.docx?rkey=h79o43e7l8coz2dj2v2fz9vhf&dl=0](#)
- [Poetry-Laurette-application.docx?rkey=gfdyxem5a92xq9ic7jsnbowp5&dl=0](#)

Security Question

Blue

Greetings,

My name is Jessica Drost. I am applying for the Windsor Poet Laureate. Writing is my primary form of communication with myself. As a child I did know what or how I was feeling; I would write it down, read it back to myself. In doing this I could identify my emotions. In 5th grade, my poem was selected for the week to be in the writer's spotlight for the whole school to see; I am not ashamed to say it was a cheesy love poem about my elementary school crush.

The first book of poetry ever given to me was Shel Silverstein's, *A Light in the Attic*, given to my family a few days after my sister's funeral. I do not remember any of his poems, but I remember my parents reading it to me every night before bed following the year after her death. Words became my refuge of safety after her sudden death, when I was in third grade. The bright, wonderous, world now felt unsafe and dangerous to me. I didn't want to talk to anyone about her, for she was my sister, and no one could ever understand that. Not my parents, friends, her friends, family or therapist; I shut down and froze for many years. When the tears inevitably came, I would thaw out my feelings through words from my pen onto the page where I could see my feelings and process her loss to me, in my terms, in my way, in my process; she was mine to heal. Too afraid to heal before the world, I kept my poetry private trusting a select few loved ones to read them.

Though I never published my poems, I kept them all. On a church trip in high school, I let slip to the director I write poetry, and she pushed me to write one about the trip, she read it to the group and posted it on the national churches site. I learned that I am uncomfortable sharing my poetry but love when others resonate with it. Keeping my poetry passion a secret afforded me privacy but robbed me of connecting with others. I earned my undergraduate degree from Central Connecticut State University in Criminology with a minor in Creative Writing specialized in Poetry. If I had the courage to listen to my heart then, I would have flip-flopped my major and minor. However, I did find the courage to submit my poems to *The Helix* CCSU magazine. In the 2014 issue, two of my poems were accepted and published. Currently, I am working on correcting my Undergraduate mistake and am halfway through my master's Program at Southern New Hampshire State University. I will graduate with a Master of Arts in Creative Writing Major with a concentration in Poetry.

Poetry gave a shy, little, heartbroken, scared, confused, angry, upset little girl a voice to make sense of the chaos around her. I've become more comfortable with myself, my story and my voice, and pushed myself to read my poems at poetry readings held in Windsor and Hartford. I am interested in this role because I want to give that saving grace to others, while stepping outside of my comfort zone. I would love to go into the public

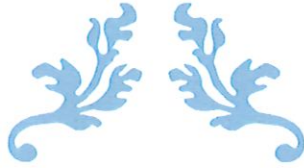
schools and provide children with poetry journals to write the things they may not feel safe sharing with the world, yet. To give others a chance to connect with each other through language, words and storytelling; it's their story, heart, sound, journey, emotion, spirit; they just need the tools to tell it. It is my belief a poem should move and touch the reader in a way the reader didn't expect.

Honestly, I don't have experience leading poetry workshops. However, I do have plenty of experience leading. As a restaurant manager and Karate instructor for over a decade, one must be comfortable in the symbiotic balance of the ebb and flow between teacher and student; if done right, both will learn from each other. Learning how others learn to teach them a skill set is equally parts fascinating and rewarding. I have had plenty of college courses with different poetry workshops that I can creatively adjust for various ages while bringing poetry alive for them.

As stated earlier, I am seeking to step out of my comfort zone and combine two of my passions together teaching and poetry in a way that will help others. I know my resume is sparse in terms of poetry community engagement, however, I believe my passion for the craft and dedication to the development emanates through.

Thank you for the consideration of my application,

Jessica R. Drost



MOTHER'S TETHERED GRACE

An Anthology by Jessica Ruth Drost



JANUARY 15, 2023
SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE UNIVERISTY
ENG-528-Q2311: Poetry Fundamentals

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Professional Cuddler Ad

I charge eighty dollars an hour to spoon your most intimate of needs. My service guarantees a physical, psychological, and psychic salve of oxytocin and boundaries. I promise platonic relationships for all my clients where confidentiality is my upmost priority. For professional safety, clothes must cover sexual skin. I'll require you to shower, but please refrain from spraying cologne before coming over. I maintain a sober state of mind and ask of you the same, or else consensual caresses cannot be given. I'll hug, nuzzle, and touch you but I am not a prostitute.

By holding space for all your sides, your inner child no longer needs hide; they are safe to bleed, cry, scream; all emotions are valid with me. I cannot promise comfortably as this transaction, demands a process of dissolubility. I will address all your emotional needs properly. I will not allow personal bias to prevent inclusivity. I spent a thousand dollars and invested one hundred hours, to obtain my certificate, to uphold our *Code of Ethics*. As Professional Cuddler certified by Cuddle Sanctuary LLC, you can expect ethical business practices, when cuddled by me.

Lost & Loved

I.

Where I am from a family tree of insanity, suicidality, and schizos explode inside from ancestors demanding reconciliation for the indebted price of indentured hope—*we don't talk about that in this family*—because they sailed stormy seas to Lady Liberty, only to masquerade their roots under forced American names. Where I am from my great-grandfathers blistered hands built homes powered by strong women's love running cold. Where I am from my prepubescent mother holds up my grandfather trousers as they stagger home, together underneath moonlight; as my nine-year dad cracks a mirror over his drunken father's head: my parents' mask normalcy at school come morning. I am from incest and Adult Children of Alcoholics whose survival defenses, prevented me from ever living hell.

II.

Where I am from rage fuels chaos into crying my heart out at chick-flicks to see if I can still feel, then binge-watch *Dexter* to numb out.

I am from suffocation of stigmas stuffed into pigeonhole contradictions, poor self-esteem,

PTSD:

God, Please, Please take me too.

Where I am from seeking therapeutic help is strength afforded by ancestors' debts masked as dreams combined with my sister working overtime on the other side to protect me from my own stupidity.

III.

Where I am from broken, bruised, forgotten, unloved and ashamed parts of my imperfect-self learn self-love by living the fearless belief that surrender, friendships, faith, trust, heal the inner-critical, insecure cynic.

I am from integrity, caring communities, mysticism, meditation, prayer; break me free of expectation. So that my crystals and my cat can communicate with me, even though she does not care for me most days. Where I am from daily reprieve from black-outs, dry-heaving, disease is sought with:

“God
grant me
the serenity,
to accept the things
I cannot change, the courage
to change the things I can, and
the wisdom to know the difference.”

IV.

Where I am from ...
immense gratitude dances thru intense sorrow.
I am from ancestors celebrating reconciliation,
their voices echo throughout the skeins of time,
We are proud of you! We thank you! We love you.

Killing Idiots

All you idiots will no longer ignore me,
Like Klebold and Harris,
Like Ramos,
Like Lanza,
Like Cho who
Refused to be ignored anymore.
My fame—like theirs—I won't live to see while I shoot freely.
Bullets strapped & semi-automatics packed
Against my skin, skin that singses in blazing infamy.
Firing towards destiny, my name
Adorns your social media newsfeeds.
As pigs in blue chase me from
Blood-filled classrooms to bloody classrooms,
I collect your children's body count with glee.
All you idiots live stream my masterpiece
in the making, again and again, and claim...
I'M THE ONE SICK IN THE HEAD?

&

All you idiots keep praying for change,
Though I paid a couple of G's to ole' joe down the street-
Cash no receipts-for his unregistered pieces.
As all you idiots pray to a non-existent, uncaring, Santa in the sky, I kill
Your Mothers—All you teachers, who belittled my worth,
Your Sisters—All you assholes, who pretended to care,
Your Brothers—All you bullies, who mimicked me,
Your Fathers- deserve to die
Your Children—I am killing
WHERE IS YOUR GOD NOW, IDIOTS?

&

I recall Mr. Hull berating in the belief,
You are dumb & stupid & worthless &
When I was his student, all you idiots
Silenced my bullets of complaints.
I wave the AR-15 at his asshole-shaped head
WHOSE WORTHLESS NOW, MR HULL?
The pigs in blue checkmate me
in the third-grade hall.
They shoot. I shoot.
We both fall blazing in infamy.

&

All you idiots keep on asking
How could this happen?

Weathering the Wind

Grounded by cement, etched in stone
Tethered to a lead pole, rusting away
Years worn rope knotted thrice
Hangs my muddy-covered, yellow-volleyball

The rickety pole shakes in
Strong, blustery, whipping winds
Angry rattling echoes of clanging,
Reverberate over heavy downpour.

Deflated, I flail about,
Bouncing erratically, only to be
Jerked back again, barely hanging on,
Against the onslaught, piercing rain.

In the eye of the storm,
HE witnesses me rallying
Among the wind, struggling
(in solitude) to break free.

And patiently waits for when
the years worn rope
Will Hang? Will Break?
Me.

Mother's Moonchild

Mother says, I am child of the moon
awaken and wide-eyed my heart swoons
swirling-out through peaceful vibes.
My mother sighs, she cries
knowing I won't come down 'til high noon.

Mother says, I am child of the sun
burning too brightly, sparking much fun.
Chasing wives, fucking guys
ethanizing the pain inside
Mother sees my façade coming undone.

Mother says, I am child of the North
riding high, journeying back and forth
actively seeking the new
drawn to eccentric avenues
to flee feelings, which remain unearthed.

Mother says, I am child of the South
Drying out, suffering in doubted drought
I cannot swirl-out anymore
fears realized, feelings abhor
Mommy help me, I am reaching out.

I know mother is child of the earth
she never once forgot my worth,
while I flew on broken wings
she bequeathed her heartstrings.
Mothers' moonchild, reborn, branches out.

Healing Love

To penetrate love, I must I ejaculate her
wild, uncontrolled, dramatic, chaotic,
the unloved does not deserve wholeness.

I rub, and rub, and rub,
until I'm satisfied-I'm never satisfied no
orgasmic high kills the pregnant void inside.

Risqué pictures lure Tinder fuckups,
which leads to Pretish weekends--
the pre-dish before the main dish--
a well-earned self-moniker that marks
my stinging ass-cheeks beneath
blindfolds, between lock and key.

His Holiness, caresses my soul with gentleness, I recoil for,

He is not another six-pack, six-foot-tall warming me through fucked-up, so high nights.
He is laughter at belly bouncing drum rolls among queefs in bedsheets.

He is not another well-chiseled jawline disappearing into oblivion at sunrise.
He is sturdy in my cry-maxing, speaking soothing coos from his double-chin line.

His is not another discreet key masking under cheap cologne
He is loud and proud, humbly sharing his desire to be mine.

He is not another any penis person shall do
He is let me show you how a real man pleasures his woman.

Josh penetrates my soul with gentleness, I recoil--
the myth of love merges into the man of my dreams--
thrusting him out: I caress his penis:

We rub, and rub, and rub,
no orgasmic high releases the hurt inside.

*For how he could ever
love a nothing,
a nobody
as broken
as me?*

Reclaiming Orgasm

Restrict, Constrict, On the precipice of orgasm,
I attempt release,
I attempt losing control,
I attempt sparking an electrifying-sensation.
Laying in a lusty lazy haze, I balance
beautifully between breaking chaos and blooming creation—
ideal or ideation—scientific studies show
same neurotransmitters signaling on scans that
pain intrinsically interweaves with pleasure.

I know too much of pain, too little of pleasure—
I cannot change!

Does pleasure even exist without pain? Or,
are Ying and Yang eternally swirling in each other's' elusive bliss?
Inside curiosity conflicts with acceptance 'cause of constrained societal shame chains.
Plight of pleasure in the patriarchy comes from old wives' whispering wisdom through timeless
ancient winds of sensual sorcery confined to secrecy—
clashing thrashing, release finally achieved!

Relaxed. Satisfaction complete. But did I even orgasm?
I cannot change.
Wondering will I ever?

Sacred Rage

To the grassy bog at dusk, I grow bringing offerings of sweetgrass, sage, song and sorrow.
Incanting chants, hoping blessings to be bestowed.
I paint hues of orange, red, yellow, inviting fire into my scared space
Then lay a protective grid Moldavite, Selenite, and Malachite
to provoke out my many repressed mental faces.
I pound my fleshly pads into murky brown clay.
As my quivering hands throw rampage, I boom out,

FUCK! FUCKERY-FUCK!

*To the winds of the South, I ask to shed the past
To the winds of The West, I ask to feel peaceful
To the winds of the East, I ask to rise again
To the winds of the North, I ask to honor the deceased
Great Spirit, please release all I have carried for too long
Oh, Mother Earth, grant me grace and take it all.*

AHO!

As bleeding inside subsides, a familiar faint Ba-Bum, Ba-Bum, Ba-Bum raspy rhythm rises.
I once knew this beat in my youth—*is this my forgotten heartbeat?*
To sync our heartbeats as one, I djun djun my deer-hide drum
Rhythm of Earth or rhythm of heart?
The beat pluses through me, years of memories blend into fears I've been angry from.
Tears from hearth to eye, shed to Mother Earth,
My feet groove through time as the yellow, orange, red colours dance through feisty flames.
Appalled faces appear—each of me—burning, screaming, clearing, cleansing,
fatigued, I faint in flickering flames.

At twilight gong chimes permutate, I awaken in the downbeat bog.
I collect my crystals; I will need their energetic vibes again.
I leave the fire paint, sweetgrass and sage behind,
for the winds to give thanks for this sacred space.
The deer drum of bone and skin, and, song and sorrow, comes home
along with my many cleansed mental faces,
cleansed but not released. No grace from ghosts bestowed,
so tomorrow, I will dance with Creator again.

Michael J. LaFrancis

From: [Michael LaFrancis](#)
To: [Colby, Scott](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] My application for your Poet Laureate position
Date: Monday, September 30, 2024 4:56:00 PM
Attachments: [WPL Application Form Michael J LaFrancis.png](#)
[cover letter personal statement.docx](#)
[Poetry Resume.docx](#)
[Michael J. LaFrancis Sample selection of Four Poems with Rationale.docx](#)

Scott

Please find my application package and be sure to reach out if you have any questions or would like any additional information.

I would appreciate your confirming receipt of this email.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best
Michael

Date: September 28, 2024

To: Scott W. Colby, Jr. & Members of the Windsor Arts Commissions

From Michael J. LaFrancis Reference: Windsor Poet Laureate Application Cover Letter

If you already had an established poet laureate program in Windsor, I may not be what you had in mind nor would you likely be receiving my application. However, I may be the ideal candidate for working with you to build your new program that promotes poetry to enhance literacy and the arts as a means of increasing community and cultural cohesiveness in town.

My application does not come with a fixed plan. Rather, I am an open vessel with a proven ability to: develop an understanding of stakeholder goals, requirements and constraints, available and potential resources; build commitment to working on translating common goals into shared results; using an open-source community powered innovation model.

There are many things we can do and resources that I can engage on our behalf. Some of the ideas I am personally interested in exploring with you to get started include: reading/writing a poem/s at major town events like the Torchlight Parade, MLK birthday, Black History, Shad Derby, Juneteenth and a Summer Concert on the Green. In addition, I would propose celebrating poetry month in April by creating a table of resources at the two Windsor Public Libraries (WPLs), inviting students and residents to create poems that may be published in a special anthology, read at a local poetry a night event, and posted at the WPLs or Windsor Town Hall. For Shad Derby, I propose writing an original poem that captures the spirit, history and aspirations of Windsor to be read, adopted and posted at visible locations around town and on the Connecticut Council of Poet Laureates website.

Discussing these ideas would give me a chance to start meeting some of the people that are planning and sponsoring the community events so we can discover and agree on my participation priorities. Other possible ideas include collaborating with the Windsor Palette and Brush Club to hold an ekphrastic event; developing local readings with guest poets and open mics at either the Windsor Arts Center or WPLs; establishing a local reading and writing group; starting or working with a student poetry club with a journal where students can get a chance to publish their work, potentially gain experience as editors or performing before a Windsor Jesters play; conducting educational sessions such as the Connecticut Poetry Society's Poets on Poets discussions that promote the craft.

There are many resources that I can reach out to including the Connecticut Poetry Society, Riverwood Poetry, Connecticut Council Poet Laureates, Sustainable CT, CT Arts Alliance...to find out what is working well, discuss common challenges and potential solutions; identify resources that may be interested and willing to supporting us in some way.

Should you appoint me as the inaugural Windsor Poet Laureate, we will identify a cross section of community members for me to meet and consult with. After that, I will propose a working plan for your consideration based on community interest, energy and resources.

My proposed approach is based on over 25 years' experience at two of the most respected independent high technology research, advisory, consulting and software services companies (Red Hat & Gartner) servicing state and local government and higher education clients in NY, MA, and CT. In the process, I have enjoyed the privilege of collaborating and learning with a wide range of diverse subject matter experts on behalf of our clients. My clients were mostly civil servants and political appointees that served in Democratic and Republican administrations. As a registered voter, I am an Independent.

My public speaking experience includes providing guest messages while my Pastors were on vacation ten times on practical topics; leading quarterly reviews in front of cross functional peers, management and leadership; and most recently reading my poetry occasionally at the open mic segments during the Riverwood Poetry Series at Real Art Ways.

Poetry has been a contemplative practice of mine since it chose me over 22 years ago. While I have been developing my craft it has been shaping me. Art is a very deep well with something to offer anyone in any situation who is open to sensing and responding to the calling. Ultimately, poetry, like any other art, is about self-expression and open to individual interpretation. I read and write about what moves me and trust that it will reach people it resonates with. My poetic voice tends to be assessable, often making use of narrative, dialog, metaphor and sometimes a splash of humor to plumb the depths and layers of human experience.

Over five years ago, I developed an interest in publishing a book of my poetry. After entering about 10 contests, each with \$20 entry fees, receiving no offers of publication, nor any feedback, I became discouraged. The competition is fierce and it did not seem to me like a good use of our resources. I set the idea aside; however, not before turning my pile of poems into an organized manuscript and learning important information about how to get published. My fears were typical of writers: wondering if my work was good enough to be published and questioning whether it was still important for me to write if my poems are not published. For a year, I placed writing at the end of my day. By then, I was always too tired to write and became blocked.

The Art Spirit was not done with me yet. It guided me to The Artist Way, a 12-week self-paced hands-on course developed by author Julie Cameron. The Artist Way helps identify creative dreams; self-limiting thoughts, beliefs and fears; and tools to address them. That year, I wrote 25 new poems. I also learned that the two biggest constraints to getting my book published were the lack of a publishing history and not having an author's platform. Next, I began building an author's platform by establishing a public Instagram account and making use of my professional Linked In account (see my articles).

Since early May, I have been submitting my original poems to literary journals. So far, seven of these journals have accepted a total of thirteen of my original poems for publication. This is a process that is continuing and I still plan to publish a collection of my poems. Most important, I have been using the process to become a better writer and practice taking action without having expectations about specific outcomes and not taking yes or no personally.

I am applying so we have an opportunity to figure out if a creative adventure is in our future together and would look forward to an opportunity to discuss that possibility with you.

Michael J. LaFrancis

Michael J. LaFrancis is a poet, author, advisor, advocate and connector supporting individuals, groups and organizations aligning purpose and capabilities in service of their highest ideals. Writing poetry is a contemplative practice for him providing insight and inspiration for those of us seeking to live a life imagined. His poems are appearing in *Avalon Literary Review*, *Amethyst Review*, *City Key*, *Mocking Owl*, *One Art Poetry Journal*, *Last Leaves* and *Seraphic Review* now or in the coming months.

LaFrancis recently rejoined the Connecticut Poetry Society and occasionally presents poems at the Riverwood Poetry Series (Real Art Ways in Hartford) during their open mics.

LaFrancis' key poetic influences include: poets Louise Gluck, Mary Oliver, Thich Nhat Hahn, Langston Hughes and Rene Maria Rilke; painters Robert Henri, Lucian Freud and Beth Ellis; and musician Bruce Springsteen. His creative process is inspired by record producer Rick Rubin and author Julie Cameron.

His hobbies include reading, landscape gardening, nature walks-especially by the ocean, and collecting fine art-mostly oil paintings. He and his partner Sharon are co-authors of their autobiography *Our Wonderful Life* published by *Story Worth*. They have been property owners in Windsor for almost 45 years and she and their two adult sons are graduates of the Windsor Public Schools. Recently, they have been promoted to the roles of Nani and Popi to their two granddaughters.

Links to Published Poetry

“The Goal Rush”; “What Will Become of Me”; “The Dream”) are published in *The City Key*, a poetry journal exploring cities large and small through the arts:

<https://citykeyzine.com/2024/07/15/three-poems-by-michael-j-lafrancis/>

“Loyalty” is published in *The Mocking Owl*:

<https://www.mockingowlroost.com/blog/tails-wagging-loyalty/>

“Assisted Living”; “Cathedrals” are published in *One Art Journal of Poetry*

<https://oneartpoetry.com/2024/09/29/two-poems-by-michael-j-lafrancis/>

“Conversation with The Art Spirit” published in *The Mocking Owl* (link effective October 5th)

<https://www.mockingowlroost.com/blog/write-poetry-conversation-art-spirit/>

Author's Instagram account:

<https://www.instagram.com/michaeljlafrancis/>

Linked In account:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/michael-j-lafrancis-44b461a/>

Michael J LaFrancis: Selection of Sample Poems with Rationale

“Ut-Oh” Selected to show how poetry can be fun and still offer valuable insight. This poem is written in a narrative free-verse form inspired by my some of my favorite poems by Louise Gluck and Mary Oliver. Accepted by *Avalon Literary Review* and scheduled to appear in their Fall Edition late October 2024.

“The Dream” Selected to show how poetry can bring diverse people together. Features a dialog narrative style inspired by poet Thich Nhat Hahn. Hahn was a Zen monk who was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by Martin Luther King. He was ruled ineligible because King, a former winner, was not able to make the nomination. Published by *The City Key* in July 2024.

“Founding Father” Selected to demonstrate how poetry can be a powerful voice for social justice. It has been submitted to several poetry journals; publication decision is outstanding. Inspired by the work of poets Langston Hughes and Brigit Pegeen Kelly.

“Conversation With the Art Spirit” Selected to demonstrate how poetry and the arts shape the artist as the artist creates their art. Inspired by American landscape painter Robert Henri and poet Thich Nhat Hahn. Scheduled for Publication by *Mocking Owl* October 5th.

Ut-O

My granddaughter is two years old.
Her name is Aisha.
Aisha means living love, in Sanskrit.
Ut-O was the very first word she learned.
Why not mommy or daddy or more more?

She keeps dropping things
from the tray of her highchair,
knocking something off an end table,
then looks up smiling, sheepishly,
half regret, half purposeful imp.

Our Father in Heaven who loved us,
even before we had a chance to earn it,
tried to teach us how to get past moments
missing mindfulness or compassion.
Our love with Aisha is like this.

Could it really be that simple,
to forgive ourselves and each other,
to just let go of all the weight?
What if it were you and me
that make it difficult.

What would happen if we tried-
Ut-O, excuse me,
I did not mean to... Perhaps,
my granddaughter really knows;
we need the practice.

The Dream

Your eyes are blue like the ocean,
observed the customs agent
at Beijing International.

“They are my mom’s eyes.”

A Chinese photographer
was taking pictures of me
in a tan fedora, brown felt boots,
snapping photos on my phone.

Cream-colored condos climb
out of the ground, like hollyhocks,
as bankers and investors play poker,
matching and raising tall buildings.

Cars crowd the throughways,
like ants on a hill. Tail lights,
street lights, and lanterns, all red,
decorate large cities, not scooters or bikes.

Our official tour guide,
a dark-haired woman, 30ish,
tells us *everyone wants cash,*
credit, cars and condos.

Permits are issued for alternate days of the week
that allow us to drive and run air conditioning,
guns and knives are not allowed in public,
police carry wooden clubs and walkie talkies.

China Dream was written in calligraphy
on a sign posted on a green construction wall.
“What is China Dream?”

We want harmony with our spirit,
in our relationships, meaningful work,
health and prosperity now, in the afterlife.

Founding Father

He was not in the room
when the self-evident truths,
unalienable rights,
were declared.
Young John wanted to be
a minister,
until reading about Emmett Till.
Then he knew
what could happen
to any of his brothers and sisters.
After hearing Martin speak,
Lewis learned how to get into good trouble,
like King and Ghandi.
Young John led marches, sit-ins;
always graceful, always polite, always well-dressed
in his trench coat and hat
yet was still beaten, burned, arrested, 45 times!
When the state police cracked his skull open
on national TV, hearts and minds finally moved!
The Voting Rights Act passed,
many black men and women were elected
to state, local and national offices!
During John's 33 years in Congress,
his courage and compass were cast iron.
He was always fighting for everyone
still longing for justice and opportunity,
with no concern for his own popularity.
Old John lived to see millions march
for #Black Lives Matter,
to hear our first black President
call him his humble hero,
as the Medal of Freedom
was hung around his neck.
His son may live to see
the first black woman elected
President of the United States.

Conversation with the Art Spirit

My grandmother learned to read with poetry;
Why did you choose it for me?

*Everyone loves a story that breathes,
leaves tracks, you too have something
of your own to share. Write about that
from the depths of your seeing and feeling.
The experience will help you find your voice.*

My dad gave me a plaque when I was 25:
Wisdom is knowing when to speak your mind,
when to mind your speech. I do not think
he was telling me to write poetry.

*He may not have been, but I can help you
to make that choice. Start being your own
Zen garden. Rake your leaves into a pile,
jump in joyfully, toss some up in the air,
see where they land.*

What have you learned so far?

I can imagine myself as anyone or anything
embracing weeds as well as peonies,
letting them simmer with contemplation
moving beyond my own experience,
ready to fish the currents. Constant revision
keeps my composition improving.

What are you enjoying most?

Each poem takes me on a journey;
I love it when the pieces come together
in unplanned ways, what a wonderful surprise!

*You are living a creative life
Connecting your waves to the ocean tides,
filled by the pursuit of doing
inspired things well. What else could you ask for?*

Stanford J. Forrester



Town of Windsor, Connecticut Poet Laureate Application

- Submit application along with the following documents:
- Application form
- 1-2 page cover letter or personal statement that includes a little bit about yourself, your poetry background, why you feel you are qualified for the role, why you are interested in the role, what you would like to achieve during your tenure, and any special projects you would like to organize. Also include any published work, awards, performances that showcase relevant poetry experience.
- Poetry related resume or CV (you may include links to online content)
- A selection of 3-4 poems that you think best demonstrate your abilities as a poet (links can be provided as supplemental attachments)

Submissions should be emailed to colby@townofwindsorct.com by the end of the day Friday, October 4, 2024. Alternatively, they can be mailed or hand delivered to the Windsor Town Hall, Town Manager's Office at 275 Broad Street, Windsor CT 06095. Hand deliveries must be completed by 5:00 p.m. on the deadline date. Mail deliveries must be postmarked on or before the deadline date.

First Name Stanford M.

Last Name Forrester

Address P.O. Box 189

City/State/Zip Windsor, CT 06095


Home Phone _____ Cell Phone (860) 830-1277

Email bottlerockets_99@yahoo.com

Please share if any links to performances (optional):

bottle rockets press

Stanford M. Forrester
Founding Editor



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9-22-24

Members of the Town of Windsor Arts Commission
c/o Scott W. Colby, Jr., Assistant Town Manager
Town of Windsor
275 Broad Street
Windsor, CT 06095

Dear Members of the Town of Windsor Arts Commission:

"I believe in the power of poetry to open people's minds to possibility, to hone their awareness and powers of observation, especially of the natural world, and to help them appreciate the power of the right word. Poems offer a window into what might otherwise be unknowable or unseen by both the writer and the reader." —Stanford M. Forrester

It is with great pleasure that I write to apply for the position of Poet Laureate of the Town of Windsor, Connecticut. I am thrilled that the town has taken this step to support the art of poetry in this way.

I have been a working poet and editor for more than 30 years, all while working in various positions at institutions such as Yale University Press and Wesleyan University as well as serving as a residential faculty member at The Loomis Chaffee School, where I still live with my wife, Mary, and where we raised our two children.

I am the founding editor of ***bottle rockets: a collection of short verse***, the longest continuously published poetry journal of its kind in the United States. This year, we are celebrating the publication's 25th year in print. As its chief editor, I have published the work of both well-known and lesser-known poets from around the globe.

My own work has been published in a variety of publications over the years, with a focus on short-form poetry, especially in the Japanese tradition of haiku, senryu, haibun, and tanka, as well as other Eastern-influenced style. I am both proud and humbled to say that Wesleyan University archives has begun collecting my papers and published works for its collections.

I am an active member of the thriving local poetry community, reading my work or presenting at numerous events at the Windsor Public Library, The Hartford Public Library, Noah Webster House, Billings Forge, Wesleyan University, and at both the Storrs and Hartford campuses of the University of Connecticut. I have also worked with young students at Oliver Ellsworth School, high school students at Loomis, and older folks at an assisted living facility in Enfield.

Beyond our area, I have been invited to read or present at many locations, including the Japan Society and the Haiku Society of America's annual conference. I was invited to serve as keynote speaker at global events in Morocco and India, where I was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award. As a judge for the Japan Society and the United Nations School annual haiku contests for children in New York, I was asked to conduct the workshops required of teachers in order for their students to participate in the contests.

My family has lived in Windsor since 2006; I have lived here longer than any other place in my life. I enjoy walking nearly every day into Windsor Center, seeing and conversing with my friends at the post office (I send a lot of mail), CVS, Geissler's, the library, etc.

What I do best is poetry, and I would be honored to contribute to the artistic life of our town in the position of Poet Laureate.

I have many ideas on how to incorporate more poetry into the lives of the people of Windsor. We can share poetry throughout town on trees, in storefronts, on sidewalks and nature paths. Our town can act as a canvas to share the joy of poetry and increase the quality of living and joy through poetry. Poetry walks, school and senior poetry workshops, collective writing, exhibitions and readings are all possibilities. I have experience visiting schools, hospitals, assisted living centers, historical societies, libraries and any place that has welcomed me. I have the energy and determination to enhance my hometown. I am very enthusiastic to partner with as many organizations and institutions. It makes me happy.

As for resources, I am skilled in making much from little. The beauty of poetry is that it is accessible to economic and social groups. You only need a pen, a piece of paper, and the beginnings of an idea to write a poem. And then you need to share it — to share the joy of the written work.

It would be an honor to be selected for this special position. Poetry offers so many opportunities to those who participate in its glow. I am fully up to the task at hand.

I look forward to hearing from you. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. It will be my pleasure to answer them.

A deep bow,

Stanford M. Forrester, Poet-at-large



Attachments, Poetry Resume, Letterpress Broadsides, several books that I either wrote or edited. Some of my artwork (Japanese Sumi-e style) can be found on the bottle rockets' website: www.bottlerockets_99@yahoo.com

Stanford M. Forrester
("Sekiro"/Japanese Pen Name)
P.O. Box 189
Windsor, CT 06095
(860) 830-1277 cell
bottlerockets_99@yahoo.com
www.bottlerocketspress.com



Updated: 9-6-2024

POETRY RESUME

Professional

- President of the Haiku Society of America 2003
- Founder and editor of *bottle rockets: a collection of short verse* 1998-present
- 1st Vice President of the Haiku Society of America 2007
- 2nd Vice President of the Haiku Society of America 2002
- Coordinator of the NE-Metro Region of the Haiku Society of America 2001
- Judge for the United Nations International School, New York City 2006
- Guest Editor of Treveni Haikai /September 2022
- Guest editor for *Magnapoets*, Canada Summer 2008
- Consulting Editor of the Haiku Society of America's 2005 Membership Anthology
- Program Director of the Buttonwood Tree Haiku Series, Middletown 2004-2005
- Chairman of the Haiku Society of America Nominating Committee 2004
- Member of the American Haiku Archives Advisory Board 2003-2008
- Member of the planning committee for Haiku North America Conference 2001-2003
- Judge for the Haiku Poets of Northern California Senryu Contest, 2004
- Judge for the Japan Society's Annual Haiku Competition in New York City, 2001, 2002, 2003, & 2004
- Judge for the Haiku Society of America's Merit Book Award Contest 2002
- Judge for the Fort Worth Haiku Society, October 2002
- Coordinator of the NE-Metro Region of the Haiku Society of America 2001
- Founding member of the hi/lo haiku group 2001
- Founding member of the Receding Voices haiku group 2021-present
- Consultant and Reader for Cheng & Tsui Publishing Co. 2002-2007

Presentations/Papers/Readings/Art Exhibitions

- Haiku postcards & the exploration of an earlier mode of haiku practice. in the digital age. (Community Service) Deerfield, NH, August 24, 2024
- The Haiku Library We Carry in Our Minds & Our Favorite Haiku/SCHG, 7-20-24
- Word House, Noel Webster House, W. Hartford, CT, (Featured reader with Tom Sacramona, and Denise Pince-Fontaine.) October 2023
- The 4th Haiku International Symposium, (Featured reader & presenter) Tangier,

- Morocco, June 2022.
- Words in Clay, Words on Paper exhibition of broadsides/Art Walk/March 11-April 24, 2022, Hartford, CT, (two broadsides on display) & Gallery reading 4-9, 2022
 - Reading from the book "4 poems"/Wild Graces Haiku Gathering/Aug. 28, 2021,
 - "The Intersection of Haiku & Concrete Poetry"/Wild Graces Haiku Gathering August 28, 2021, Deerfield, NH
 - One of the featured readers at the Jack Kerouac House event Oct. 30, 2021, College Park, FL
 - Billings Forge Poetry Reading (including Michael Ketchek & Tom Clausen) October 2017
 - "Bashō and the Frog" Wild Graces Haiku Event/ 2020, Deerfield, NH
 - Presentation given: "Jack Kerouac, Haiku, and the Beats" at the HSA National Meeting, Winterpark, FL/2015
 - Group reading by poets of *Rabbit Ears*/anthology published by the New York Quarterly/Bowery Poetry, NYC, 201_
 - National Haiku Canada Annual Meeting featured reader Ottawa, Canada, May 17, 2014
 - Presentation given: "Jack Kerouac, Haiku, and the Beats" at Lowell Celebrates Kerouac, Lowell, MA October 8, 2011
 - "Zen and American Haiku" Session 16-H/ American Lit. Assn. 22nd Annual Conference on Amer. Lit. May 27, 2011
 - Featured Reader at Riverwood Poetry Series, Middletown, CT, February 27, 2010
 - Headliner at Baby Grand Books, Warwick, NY, May 2009
 - Reading/presentation on Buddhism and Haiku, Buddhist House, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT May 2009
 - World Haiku Festival, Bangalore, India, (featured presenter,) Honored at Meeting/lifetime achievement award. February 23-25, 2008
 - Haiku Society of America Group reading at Powell's Bookstore in Portland, OR, June 29, 2007
 - 2 Autumns Reading (one of 4 featured readers)/Haiku Poets of North California Ft. Mason, San Francisco, August 20, 2006
 - Avon Free Public Library (featured reader), Avon, CT March 7, 2006
 - Reading at the Boston Conservatory (headliner), Boston, MA February 16, 2006
 - Featured Reader at Squawk Coffee House, Cambridge, MA (Harvard Campus) January 19, 2006
 - Reading from "American Zen: A Gathering of Poets" at the University of Connecticut, December 2004
 - "Circles & Bridges: Viewer Participation in Haiga," haiga-on-line e-zine June 2004 & printed in Albatross Haiku Journal and translated into Romanian
 - "Introduction to Haiku" & a short reading at The Loomis Chaffee School, May 17, 2004
 - Talk Up the Walk/A Wallace Stevens Benefit, Group reading, April 18, 2004
 - "Buddhism & Haiku: Two paths of Awareness" & reading on March 27, 2004, Buddhist House at Wesleyan University

- A featured haiku reading at the Buttonwood Tree, January 9, 2004
- Wintonbury Branch Poetry Series Reading, December 18, 2003
- Harvard Coop. Group reading. (Cambridge, MA) May 15, 2003.
- "An Introduction to the Haiku Path with a 'Short' reading" May 1, 2003/Wesleyan University/Freeman Center for East Asian Studies
- Brooklyn Botanical Garden Cherry Blossom Festival. April 26, 2003 (participated in a group reading.)
- A featured haiku reading at the Buttonwood Tree, March 21, 2003
- "A bowl of rice: An Introduction to the Haiku of Taneda Santōka," March 1, 2003, National meeting of the Haiku Society of America & presented again in May 22, 2004 at the Haiku Canada Conference
- New Orleans Zen Center, September 2002 (I participated in a group reading.)
- "An Introduction to Haiku," February 2002/Long Island Bonsai Society
- "Haiku Cyber Sites: a double-edged sword," July 2001/Haiku North America'01
- "Building a Haiku Library," December 1999/ Haiku Society of America
- [Some readings have not been listed as of yet....]

Contests, Awards and Mention

- 2024 Winner of the HSA Merit Book Awards for best anthology of 2023 (*Bird Whistle*).
- Ito-en Tea Contest Japan 2018/ One of the top seat winners out of 28,500 entries/500,000 Yen award
- Robert Frost International Poetry & Haiku Contest/2011/2nd Place winner
- 2009 recipient of the New Boston Fund Individual Artist Fellowship given by the Greater Hartford Arts Council's Board of Directors/Exhibition of work schedule for Spring 2009
- Readers' Choice Award White Lotus Magazine 2008 issue #7
- Banner Award/First Annual Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival 2006 (top 30 out of 1,000 entries)
- World Haiku Club Showcase August 2006
- Readers' Choice Award White Lotus Magazine 2007 issue #5
- Readers' Choice Award White Lotus Magazine 2006/issue #3
- 2nd Place Winner with Ariel Lambert for the Haiku Poets of Northern California 2006 Rengay Contest
- Scorpion Award in Roadrunner (on-line)
- Editor's Choice Award/White Lotus/Issue #1 Fall/Winter 2005
- 3rd Place Winner/ Kaji Aso Haiku Contest 2004
- Honorable Mention in the 58th Annual Bashō Festival Anthology, Ueno, Japan (October 2004)
- 1st Place Winner of the 57th Annual Bashō Festival Anthology, Ueno, Japan (October 2003)
- Favorite Senryu of Issue/*Modern Haiku* (February 2003)
- 1st Place Winner/Fort Worth Haiku Society/Best of the Best 2003
- 3rd Place Winner/ Kaji Aso Haiku Contest 2003

- 1st Place Winner of the Fort Worth Haiku Society Monthly Contest (November 2002)
- 3rd Place Winner of the Fort Worth Haiku Society Monthly Contest (August 2002)
- 1st Place Winner in the Dublin Arts Council Haiku Competition '01
- Recipient of the Museum of Haiku Literature's Award 2001 (Tokyo/USA)
Frogpond/HSA
- Tanka selected in the Editor's Choice Column of the Tanka Society of America's Newsletter/Summer '01

Poetic forms and Related Activities

- Free verse
- Cherita
- Chinese Taoist Mountain style
- Haiku
- Tanka (waka)
- Senryu
- Rengay
- Renku
- Haiga (haiku + sumi-e painting)
- Haibun (prose + haiku)

Book binding
 Book making
 Demonstrations with small antique printing press
 [Printing Broadsides, fold books, bookmarks, pocket booklets, etc.]
 Origami
 Story telling about folklore--poetry
 Poetry walks
 Poetry tree decorating
 Poetry Displays in public places Park paths

Publications/Journals/e-zines (More than 500 poems published and still counting)

- Acorn* (USA)
- Albatross* (Romania)
- American Tanka* (USA)
- Asahi Shimbun/International Herald Tribune* (Japan)
- Bear Creek Haiku* (USA)
- black bough* (USA)

- Boston's Weekly Dig* (on-line Magazine)
- Cherita* (UK)
- Cold River Review* (USA)
- Chiyo's Corner* (USA)
- Cold River Review* (USA)
- Cordite Poetry Review* on-line (Australia)
- dew-on-line* (UK e-zine)
- Eucalypt* (Australia)
- Falling Moon* (Persian e-zine)
- Frogpond* (USA)
- Haiga on-line* (edited by Jeanne Emrich)
- Haiku Canada* (Canada)
- Haiku Headlines* (USA)
- Haiku Presence* (UK)
- Haiku: Revista de Interferente Culturale Romano-Japoneze* (Romania)
- Hartford Courant Newspaper*/2003 Featured story & poems
- Hermitage* (Romania)
- Hummingbird* (USA)
- Issa's Untidy Hut* (on-line)
- Gusts* (Canada)
- Kō* (Japan)
- La* (Newspaper in Ireland) haiku was translated into Irish
- Lilliput Review* (USA)
- Magnapoets* (Canada)
- Mayfly* (USA)
- Mariposa* (USA)
- Modern English Tanka* (USA)
- Modern Haiku* (USA)
- Moonset* (USA)
- Mother Tongue* (USA & Japan e-zine)
- Nisqually Delta Review* (USA)
- noon* (Japan)
- Otata* (on-line)
- paper wasp* (Australia)
- Poetalk* (USA)
- Point Judith Light* (USA)
- Presence* (UK)
- Prune Juice* (on-line) (USA)
- Raw NerVZ*
- Roadrunner* (e-zine)
- Shadow Poetry*
- Shreve Memorial Library Electronic Poetry Network* (on-line) (USA)
- Simply Haiku* (e-zine) (USA)
- Snap Shots* (UK)
- Sp Quill Magazine* (USA)
- still* (UK)

- Stir the Hive* (USA)
- Tangerine* (US e-zine)
- Tangled Hair* (UK/ tanka)
- The Tanka Journal* (Japan)
- The Heron's Nest* (USA)
- White Lotus* (USA)
- Wisteria* (USA)
- WOWWI* (Russia)

Publications/Anthologies/Chapbooks/other

- Tea Anthology* (to be published in 2025) Edited by Denise Fontaine
- Haiku in English: The First 100 years*, (With Introduction by Billy Collins) W.W. Norton the August of 2013
- Haiku: An Anthology*, Edited by Peter Washington, Everyman's Pocket Poetry Series published by Knopf, October 2003
- Understanding Poetry: An Introduction*, Helen Doss. Ph.D. (college textbook) selection of haiku published/Cognella Academic Publishing, 2020
- American Zen: A Gathering of Poets* published by Bottom Dog Press 2004
- Erotic Haiku: An Anthology* edited by Hiro Sato/IBC Publishing/Japan/2004 & 2005/USA Stonebridge Press
- lonely together!* Editor & contributor/Nut Wagon Press 2013 (Winner of Best Chapbook published in 2013 awarded by the Haiku Society of America
- Montage: The Book*/Editor Allan Burns/ Haiku Foundation 2010
- the toddler's chant: selected poems 1998-2008*, 2nd Edition Stark Mountain Press, 2013
- "the toddler's chant: selected poems 1998-2008"* bottle rockets press April 2009
- wind flow*/Anthology by the Boston Haiku Society 2008
- "take 5: best contemporary tanka"* Winter 2009 Modern English Tanka
- SP Quill Anthology* by Shadow Poetry 2008
- New Songs from the Meadows:An Anthology of Poems from the Wood Memorial Library* 2008
- Ash Moon* (a tanka anthology) Edited by Alexis Rotella, MET Press 2008
- A Temple Marigold* 2006 (chapbook) by Vincent Tripi & Stanford M. Forrester
- A Motley Sangha* 2005 (chapbook) with other haiku poets (reprinted by Stark Mountain Press/2011)
- Toy Submarine*, Tribe Press 2004
- Zen Archery* (pamphlet) PawEpress, 2004 (Canada)
- The Tanka Anthology*/contributor/ Redmoon Press, Winchester, VA 2003
- buddha's fingerprint* 2003 (chapbook)
- handful of sand* 2001 (chapbook)
- Redmoon Press Haiku Anthology 2022*
- Redmoon Press Haiku Anthology 1999*
- Redmoon Press Haiku Anthology 2000*

- Redmoon Press Haiku Anthology 2001
- Redmoon Press Haiku Anthology 2002
- Redmoon Press Haiku Anthology 2003
- Redmoon Press Haiku Anthology 2005
- Redmoon Press Haiga & Haibun Anthology 2000
- Redmoon Press Haiga & Haibun Anthology 2001
- Redmoon Press Haiga & Haibun Anthology 2002
- A Dozen Tongues/ Redmoon Press
(I was the translator for the Spanish haiku in this book)
- World Haiku Club Anthology 2002 edited by Susumu Takiguchi
- Haiku: A Poet's Guide edited and written by Lee Gurga/Modern Haiku Press/
2003
- Reeds: A Haiga Anthology 2003
- Reeds: A Haiga Anthology 2005
- Rose Anthology edited by Angela Leuck/Shoreline Press/published in 2005
- "A Day of Blossoms" a piece scored for Mixed Chorus, Children's Chorus,
Japanese Shamisen, & percussion with Narration. Written & performed for the
Opening Ceremonies of the National Cherry Blossom Festival, March 26, 2005,
Washington DC. Performed by the Georgetown University Concert Choir. One
haiku of Stanford M. Forrester was used in this piece composed by Gerard Yun.
- Haiga featured on the Conference home page of the 20th Annual Joint meeting
of the JLTA (Japanese Language Teachers Association)-New England & NECTJ
- Haiku Journey (Educational Video Game) Hot Lava Games/Mumbo Jumbo
Games 2007
- The Breath of Surrender edited by Robert Epstein/Modern English Tanka
Publishing 2009
- 16th Annual Honolulu Festival of the Arts, March 12-14, 2010/One haiku
featured in photo exhibition. (One of 13 winners out of 200 poems)

Features

- Connecticut Public Radio/ Colin McEnroe Show/ Hartford, CT
7-23-2013 (aired at 1-2 p.m.)
- The Haiku Foundation/Trout Swirl/Book of the Week/Featured in *January Sun*.
9-2022
- The Haiku Foundation/Trout Swirl/A Haiku Featured in an on-line anthology of
classic contemporary poems/spring 2009
- Columnist for the Nisqually Delta Review April 2006
- The Keeper Tends his Haiku Garden . . . Thorns Everywhere, *Hartford
Courant*, May 1, 2003 front page story
- White Lotus/Issue #1 autumn/winter 2005/Interview: "Stanford M. Forrester's
Views on Haiku & Buddhism"
- Featured Poem/Editor's Choice in *White Lotus*/Issue #1
- Featured poet in *Ridge Whisperings*
- Featured poet in *Haiku Headlines*
- Bookmark feature in *Raw NerVZ* (Canada) 2003
- Bookmark feature in *Paper Wasp* (Australia) 2002

Introductions/Forewords/Blurbs (for other poet's or poetry group anthologies)

- Foreword for *to what none of us know* by Vincent Tripi/Tribe Press, Greenfield, MA
- Introduction for *rose stems* by Doreen King/ Tribe Press, Greenfield
- Foreword for *dawn break* by J. Marcus Weekley Weeping Warrior Press, Ocean Springs, MS/March 2007
- Blurb for *everything with an asterisk* by Bruce Feingold/ 2022
- Blurb for Haiku—The Scared Art: A Spiritual Practice in Three Lines by Margaret D. McGee/Sky Lights Paths Publishing, Woodstock, VT/2009
- Blurb for *Peeling an Orange* by Peggy Heinrich/ 2009
- Blurb for *breaths* by Joshua Gage /van Zeno Press 2008
- Blurb for the anthology *Rattle of Bamboo* by the Southern California Haiku Group/ June 2007

Poems translated into:

- Arabic
- Irish
- Hindi
- Hungarian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Persian
- Romanian
- Russian

Membership

- Founder of the Receding Voices Haiku (April 15, 2021-present)
- Co-founder of the Hi/Lo Haiku Group (most of the 90s)
- Haiku Society of America (1998-present)
- Haiku Poets of Northern California
- Charter member of Grand Central Tanka Café Group (New York City)
- Tanka Canada
- previous member of the Tanka Society of America (**Charter member/first charter member in CT**)

- The Greater Hartford Poetry Ensemble
- The Thoreau Society

Teaching/Workshops

- Series of Haiku Introductory workshops at the UCONN Bookstore Summer 2020
- Old Tappan High School, Old Tappan, NJ April 2011
- Zen Mountain Monastery, Mt. Tremper, NY November 2010
- The Pomfret School, Pomfret, CT April 2010
- Kripalu, Stockbridge, MA (December 2009 & October 2010)
- Wintonbury Branch of the Bloomfield Library, Bloomfield, CT 2009
- Windsor Public Library, Windsor, CT (May 2009)
- WV Middle School, Warwick, NY (May 2009)
- Middlesex Hospital Cancer Center, Middletown, CT, February & May 2009
- Zen Mountain Monastery, Mt. Tremper, NY 2009
- Old Tappan High School, Old Tappan, NJ November 2008
- Zen Mountain Monastery, Mt. Tremper, NY 2008
- Wesleyan University (Visited a dance class to workshop haiku with international dance :Performance Artist Eiko Etake) April 2007
- NECTFL Workshop hosted at Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT April 2007
- Old Tappan High School, Old Tappan, NJ April 2007
- Loomis Chaffee, Windsor, CT April 2007
- Zen Center of New York City, Brooklyn, NY January 2007
- Japan Society, New York, NY (One-day Haiku workshop for teachers) October 2006
- Old Tappan High School, Old Tappan, NJ April 2006
- Japan Society, New York, NY (One-day Intermediate Haiku workshop) January 2004
- Hall High School, West Hartford (One-day workshop to three advanced AP English classes) March 2004
- Wesleyan University (Two-day workshop on haiku to American Sign Language students)
December 2003 (One-day workshop in October 2004)
- Wesleyan University (Visited a class on Afro-American Poetry taught by Prof. Kate Rushin) November 19, 2004
- Guest Editor of Treveni Haikai /September 2022

Education:

Washington & Jefferson College, BA
Boston College, MA & completion of Ph.D. coursework

Bio:

Stanford M. Forrester (b.1963 Staten Island New York; res. Windsor, Connecticut; American) Haigo is "sekiro" which means "stone dew" or "dew on a stone." Founder & Editor of bottle rockets press and *bottle rockets:a collection of short verse*. Bi-annual publication (1998-present.) Currently the longest continuous editor of a medium to large sized haiku journal in the United States. He served as President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, and NE-Metro Regional Coordinator of the Haiku Society of America. He is a full-time practicing poet, a freelance poetry editor, and book designer. Stanford has won in the past "the best of issue" in two leading haiku journals in the United States among other awards.

Languages spoken: English & Spanish

For Li Po

In this garden
the wind ripples

& the wind chimes
play a pleasant song.

The song might
pause
for a moment,

but it always picks up
where
it left off.

A Poem For The Poet Hermit Thrush,
Who Gave Me, Shi Lu, A Cricket Cage.

I still can't catch
the cricket that sings
every night
on my back porch

I just want to hear
a few songs
to soothe away
my loneliness

while looking for him
I only found a toad
but his voice
was too deep

(continued on the next page . . .)



shoreline breeze . . .
i build a sandcastle
for the hermit crab

moon viewing party —
the stars
show up anyway

backyard of fireflies . . .
each moment
a different constellation



end of summer
explaining how forget-me-nots
got their name

Three poems
for Li Po



Stanford M. Forrester

30 sets of these poems,
written in the Chinese
style, were printed by
Nut Wagon Press
in the last months of
the Year of the
Monkey. Wind chimes
by Mary Forrester.

This is set # 17.

© 2016 by
Stanford M. Forrester



SMF

While watching the rain
i drink some tea
and write some poems.

I wish i could live
solely on the words &
spirit of poetry, but

For some reason
my stomach
feels differently.

Stanford M. Forrester



There must be a reason
why so many sages
had long beards.

It must have been wise
not to shave
since one's face
soon sees stubble.

A futile act, that's it.
But then again
what isn't?

I can't help,
but further wonder
if the sages
ever made their beds?

Stanford M. Forrester



In this garden
the wind ripples

& the wind chimes
play a pleasant song.

The song might
pause
for a moment,

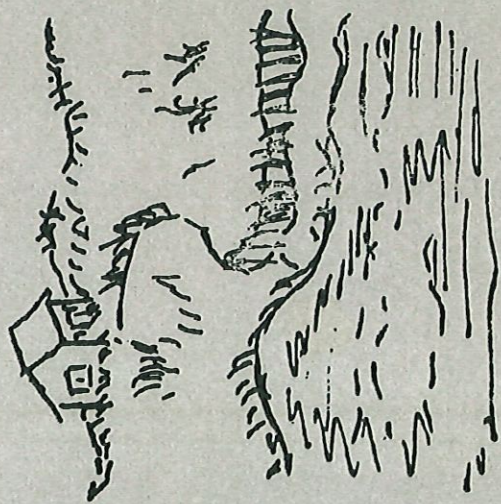
but it always picks up
where
it left off.

Stanford M. Forrester



sea glitter . . .
i throw back
a starfish





end of summer ...
a few grains of sand
in the bar of soap





meditation hall...
an ant carries away
my concentration

Stanford M. Forrester



colophon::::: the stock is canson, the type set in Pabst Oldstyle hot metal
as lightning flashed & asparagus flowered, & printed on a windmill at swamp
press in an edition of two hundred. the poem was published in the
Asahi Simbun. © stanford m. forrester mmviii.



**TOWN OF WINDSOR
ARTS COMMISSION
SPECIAL HYBRID Meeting
Council Chambers
August 7, 2024
UNAPPROVED MINUTES**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Present: Kathryn Grimshaw-Parker, Spencer Moore, Sarah Laiuppa, Catherine Lewis, Christian Ryan, Neill Sachdev, Christina Swaidan

Absent: Michael Daly, Edward Richters

Staff: Scott W. Colby, Jr., Assistant Town Manager

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

3. DISCUSSION OF POET LAUREATE

Assistant Town Manager Colby discussed the poet laureate guidelines and application process.

MOVED by Commissioner Ryan, seconded by Commissioner Laiuppa, to recommend that the Town Council establish a Poet Laureate.

Motion Passed 7-0-0 (Commissioners Michael Daly, Edward Richters absent)

4. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING

a) March 19, 2024

MOVED by Commissioner Grimshaw-Parker, seconded by Commissioner Moore to approve the meeting minutes of the March 19, 2024 meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 7-0-0 (Commissioners Michael Daly, Edward Richters absent)

5. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Commissioner Grimshaw-Parker, seconded by Commissioner Laiuppa, to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

Motion Passed 7-0-0 (Commissioners Michael Daly, Edward Richters absent)

Respectfully Submitted,



Arts Commission Meeting Minutes
August 7, 2024

Scott W. Colby, Jr.
Assistant Town Manager