

CITY OF ORLANDO MEDIA ALERT:

The City of Orlando Is Seeking a Poet Laureate

Orlando, FL – July 12, 2017 - Mayor Buddy Dyer has announced that the City of Orlando, through a partnership with United Arts of Central Florida and Orlando-based nonprofit literary publisher Burrow Press, is seeking to appoint the City's first Poet Laureate. The purpose of the position is to promote poetry and an appreciation of poetry among residents, and to inspire an emerging generation of literary artists and readers of literature.

The Poet Laureate is a ceremonial appointment, and the selected poet will serve as a prominent fixture in the City's cultural and literary arts communities, presenting original works of poetry at City events and youth activities. The selected poet will be introduced in October during National Arts and Humanities Month.

From today through August 7, qualified applicants can submit an application for the position by visiting www.UnitedArts.cc/Poet-Laureate/.

"Orlando is a vibrant, inclusive City with many important stories to tell, and the Poet Laureate will serve as our official storyteller. Arts and culture help create our community's unique sense of place, and the Poet Laureate appointment will further Orlando's growth as a cultural hub," Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer said.

Mayor Dyer has appointed a Poet Laureate Selection Committee — a diverse group of poets, scholars and literary experts — to assist in the selection process. United Arts of Central Florida will convene and facilitate the committee.

The Selection Committee will review all eligible applications based on artistic merit of literary work samples, experience and background. Each nominee must show evidence of achievement in the art of poetry, including substantial publications, and significant recognition or awards. The nominee must also be a resident of Central Florida, at least 21 years of age, not currently enrolled in an academic program, and able and willing to conduct the public engagement duties of the Poet Laureate. Full requirements are in the program guidelines are on the website.

Poet Laureate Selection Committee

- Panel Chair: Linda Landman Gonzalez, Board of Directors, Florida Humanities Council
- Vidhu Aggarwal, Associate Professor of English, Rollins College
- Dr. Shari Koopman, Professor of English, Valencia College Teaching/Learning Academy
- Leo Linares, Melrose Center Audio Production Instructor, Orange County Library System
- Cecilia Milanés, Professor, Department of English, University of Central Florida
- Ryan Rivas, Publisher, Burrow Press
- Shawn Welcome, Performance Poet, host of "Diverse Word" open mic night at Dandelion Communita Café

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