

## THE CLEVELAND HEIGHTS / HEIGHTS ARTS OFFICE OF POET LAUREATE

### PURPOSE OF THE LAUREATESHIP

Heights Arts, with the endorsement of the City of Cleveland Heights, established the Office of Poet Laureate 20 years ago to celebrate and elevate poetry as an art form for the benefit of the community's residents. Every two years Heights Arts' Community Team (Heights Writes) conducts a process to solicit applications and select a local poet to serve in this post. The Community Team is comprised of volunteers with expertise in the literary arts, supported by Heights Arts staff.

### TERM OF SERVICE AND ELIGIBILITY

The Cleveland Heights Poet Laureate serves for twenty-four months beginning in April of even-numbered years and concludes their service at the end of March. The laureate must commit to serve for the full term and maintain a significant relationship to the Cleveland Heights community throughout the full two-years of service.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Heights Arts' On-site Programming:**
  - **Curate:** With support from the Heights Writes Community Team and staff, the laureate curates and produces five *Ekphrastacy* (artists talk and poets read) programs in each of their two years of service. *Ekphrastacy* is a signature program of Heights Arts in association with our curated group exhibitions. The poet laureate works with the Heights Writes Community Team to invite and select participating poets, encourage poets' engagement with a diversity of artworks represented in each exhibition and organizing and hosting the events.
  - **Participate:** The laureate also writes and reads at least two ekphrastic poems inspired by the work in each exhibition as part of every Ekprastacy program.
- **Community Engagement:**
  - **External Events:** As part of the Office's mandate to expand community engagement with the art form, the laureate will arrange and present a minimum of eight solo or group readings or workshops at external venues in the greater Heights community over their two-year term. The Heights Writes Community Team will help develop contacts for these events, but the laureate will create the focus and content of each community engagement event.
  - **Other Opportunities:** The laureate will likely have additional opportunities to read outside of the above required duties. Heights Arts encourages this. The laureate must, however, acknowledge their role as the Cleveland Heights Port Laureate and Heights Arts' sponsorship of their position at all public or private events or solo readings during their two-year term.
- **Farewell Event:** As a celebration of their tenure, the laureate will be the focus of a featured reading at the end of their term of service (March/April timeframe). The new laureate will be introduced at the event and read a poem, and former laureates will be invited to each read a poem as well.

## ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

### The Cleveland Heights Poet Laureate:

- Will deliver a report to Heights Arts at the end of each year, which captures the laureate's activities and provides feedback on the experience so that the position can continue to be improved.
- Will serve on the Heights Writes Community Team during the term and at least one year after the term ends, for a minimum of three years.
- Must be a champion for Cleveland Heights and share their enthusiasm for the community through their work as laureate.
- Should be able to write or offer occasional poems to celebrate or commemorate key events in the life of the city, if asked.

## HONORARIUM

Heights Arts will provide an honorarium of \$1,000 per year to the laureate in compensation for services. This Honorarium will be paid in two installments each year; September and March.

## SELECTION PROCESS

### Eligibility

Poets must be residents of Cleveland Heights, or have a significant relationship to the Cleveland Heights community, and commit to serve the full 24 month term of service if selected.

### Identification of Candidates: Two Processes

1. Any poet who meets the eligibility criteria and can commit to the term of service, may submit an application for consideration. Applications may be submitted anytime between November 1 and the deadline of December 31.
2. In the absence of sufficient quality applications, the Heights Writes Community Team may reach out to local poets to solicit applications.

### Application Information:

The application deadline is *December 31* of odd-numbered years. Interested candidates must apply online. The application form can be found at <https://www.heightsarts.org/portfolio-item/2020-2022-cleveland-heights-poet-laureate/>

The application will ask for important demographic and contact information. Applicants will be asked to submit their credentials and resume, a sample of no fewer than six recent poems. A short essay that helps the selection committee understand what the applicant appreciates about the City of Cleveland Heights, and why they are seeking this position, will also be required.

Following the deadline, the Heights Writes Community Team will review all applications and determine no more than three poets for final consideration. Those not being considered will be notified by the end of January.

Finalists will meet with members of Heights Writes Community Team in separate interviews in early February with a decision on the winning applicant by mid-March. Term of service commences April 1.