

PRESS RELEASE

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Mary Ruefle Named Vermont Poet Laureate

Montpelier – On Monday, October 28, Governor Phil Scott signed a proclamation appointing Bennington poet Mary Ruefle as Vermont Poet Laureate. At a gathering to pay tribute to the outgoing Laureate, Chard deNiord, and to welcome Ruefle to her new position, Governor Scott spoke of Vermont’s history of honoring poets, starting in 1961 with Robert Frost.

“Vermont has a long history of story-telling, spoken word, and poetry, starting with our first citizens, the Abenaki people,” noted Governor Scott. “Vermont’s spectacular landscape, frigid winters, and vibrant fall foliage provide creative inspiration—as we all know from the famous Robert Frost poem, *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*.”

Ruefle is a writer of worldwide recognition. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Literature from Bennington College and has taught at Vermont College of Fine Arts and the University of Iowa Writers’ Workshop. Her many publications include *Dunce; My Private Property; Trances of the Blast; Madness, Rack, and Honey: Collected Lectures*.

Ruefle has also published a comic book, *Go Home and Go to Bed!*, and is an erasure artist, whose treatments of nineteenth century texts have been exhibited in museums and galleries and published in *A Little White Shadow*.

Over her career, Ruefle has received many literary honors. She was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award in Criticism, and Selected Poems. She was a winner of the William Carlos Williams Award from the Poetry Society of America. Ruefle also received the Robert Creeley Award, an Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Guggenheim fellowship, a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship, and a Whiting Award.

The honorarium for Vermont’s Poet Laureate is \$2,000, thanks to generous contributions from the Poetry Society of Vermont and Sundog Poetry Center, Inc.

About the Vermont Poet Laureate

The poet laureate serves as Vermont’s ambassador for the art of poetry and is called upon to participate in official ceremonies and readings within Vermont and nationally. This is a four-year honorary position, appointed by the governor based on the recommendation of a

distinguished panel of judges. Vermont's first Poet Laureate, Robert Frost, was appointed in 1961. In 1988, Governor Madeline Kunin re-established the position. Since 1988, Sydney Lea, Ruth Stone, Grace Paley, Ellen Bryant Voigt, Louise Glück, Galway Kinnell and Chard deNiord have held the post.

About the Vermont Arts Council

The Vermont Arts Council envisions a Vermont where all people have access to the arts and creativity in their lives, education, and communities. Engagement with the arts transforms individuals, connects us more deeply to each other, energizes the economy, and sustains the vibrant cultural landscape that makes Vermont a great place to live. Since 1965, the Council has been the state's primary provider of funding, advocacy, and information for the arts in Vermont. www.vermontartscouncil.org.

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