

Annex Arts
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, August 5, 2021

Contact: Goody-B Wiseman, Executive Director, annexartsorg@gmail.com, 213-839-0851

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE NAMED MAINE'S POET LAUREATE

CASTINE - Local arts organization, Annex Arts, celebrates Maine Arts Commission's announcement of Julia Bouwsma as the state's newest Poet Laureate.

Ms. Bouwsma was named as Maine's newest Poet Laureate in an announcement on August 4, 2021. Currently participating as one of Annex Arts' Artists-in-Residence, Ms. Bouwsma is the organization's first poet and is in residence during the month of August.

"We are thrilled to celebrate this announcement with Julia and grateful that she is participating in our program this summer," says Goody-B Wiseman, Annex Arts executive director. "Since 2017, Annex Arts has hosted more than 30 artists-in-residence. What started as a traditional visual arts residency, has evolved to include playwrights, novelists, and now, poets. We are excited that our program resonates with all artists and we congratulate Julia on this incredible achievement as Maine's Poet Laureate."

As part of her residence, Ms. Bouwsma will be the featured guest for Annex Arts fourth and final Village Reads session of 2021 featuring Ms. Bouwsma's collection of poetry, "Midden". As part of their Readers & Writers in Conversation, Sonja Krusic O'Donnell will facilitate the discussion with Ms. Bouwsma, Myron Beasley, and the audience. The event takes place in a live webinar on Thursday, August 12. The event is free and open to the public but registration is required. A replay of the event will be available to the public on Friday, August 13.

According to the Maine Arts Commission website, a "Maine's Poet Laureate position is an appointment designed to promote poetry throughout the state while honoring an eminent Maine poet for his or her achievements." This honorary position was established in 1995 and requires that the "Poet Laureate reside in Maine and be a poet who has published 'distinguished poetry'. The nominee is selected by the governor from a list of candidates recommended by the Maine Arts Commission"

Governor Mills is an enthusiastic supporter of Bouwsma's poems. "I deeply appreciate Julia Bouwsma's ability to capture the courage and spirit of our state, including life in rural Maine and the resilience of Maine people," said Governor Mills. "With unflinching honesty, her poems explore the history, the heartache, and the hope of people who seek to build a better life for themselves here in Maine, with dirt under their nails and grit in their souls. Congratulations, Julia, on being named Maine's sixth Poet Laureate. I am confident people will connect with your work as I have, and I look forward to joining with you in celebrating poetry across our state."

Julia Bouwsma lives off-the-grid in the mountains of western Maine, where she is a poet, farmer, freelance editor, critic, and small-town librarian. She is the author of two poetry collections: Midden and Work. She is the recipient of the 2018 Maine Literary Award; the 2016-2017 Poets Out Loud Prize and the 2015 Cider Press Review Book Award. Her poems and book reviews can be found in Grist, Poetry Northwest, RHINO, River Styx, and other journals. A former Managing Editor for Alice James Books, Bouwsma currently serves as Book Review Editor for Connotation Press: An Online Artifact and as Library Director for Webster Library in Kingfield, Maine. She is the sixth person to hold the position of Maine's Poet Laureate.

Annex Arts Summer 2020/2021 programs are made possible through generous support from HUMANITAS, a non-profit organization that promotes “peace and love in the human family—one story at a time,” from the Maine Community Foundation, whose broad mission is “to improve the quality of life for all Maine people,” from Maine Arts Commission, an organization dedicated to empowering and advocating for Maine's cultural sector, and from all Annex Arts supporters and participants. All Annex Arts programs are free of charge and all information, schedules, and event registration can be found at annexarts.org.

Annex Arts' is an artist residency program and center for the arts whose mission it is to support artists and the arts as agents of personal, institutional, and community change. Their programs support the creation of new work and meaningful opportunities for public interaction with our artists and public programs. They aim to connect community with new ideas and perspectives as a way of weaving vibrancy, resilience, and social connection into the fabric of daily lives.

###

Image



Image caption:

Poet Julia Bouwsma, Annex Arts Artist-in-Residence, Summer 2021. Image courtesy of the artist.