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Arts Council for Monterey County Announces Monterey County's 1st Poet Laureate

(Seaside, CA - January 11, 2022) Poet/Professor/Performer Daniel B. Summerhill has been selected as Monterey County's first Poet Laureate, with a two-year term that begins immediately.

Summerhill was selected through a competitive application and evaluation process by a panel of literary experts, with the Monterey County Board of Supervisors approving the final decision. The Poet Laureate receives a \$2,500 honorarium for the two-year term, funded by Monterey County.

The Poet Laureate is an honorary position that celebrates the County of Monterey's cultural heritage and promotes literacy and literature among county residents. He will also lead a community project to make poetry more accessible.

"I am so pleased that the County Board of Supervisors approved this program to celebrate poetry in our community, and Daniel is the perfect person to launch this inaugural position. When he recites his poetry, he brings it to life - his words are powerful and soul-stirring," shared Jacquie Atchison, Arts4MC Executive Director.

Summerhill is Professor of Poetry/Social Action and Composition Studies at California State University, Monterey Bay. He has performed in over thirty states, the UK, and was invited by the US Embassy to guest lecture and perform in South Africa. He has earned a Sharon Olds fellowship as well as a fellowship from the Watering Hole. His work has appeared in Columbia Journal, Rust & Moth, Button Poetry, Anti-heroin Chic, The Hellebore, and others. Summerhill's poetry has earned him two pushcart nominations as well as a best of the net nomination.

"Being the inaugural Poet Laureate of Monterey County is exciting but doesn't come without its due responsibility and urgency. I now have a specific duty to the county [read: people] to leverage language as a means of social action, community building and truth-telling. I plan to use this same sentiment to foster exposure and relationships to poetry that folks might not have had previously. Poet June Jordan says a poet is somebody who is free. I plan to use poetry in service of freedom. To unearth the songs that folks already have in their bellies," said Daniel B. Summerhill.

Please visit arts4mc.org/poetlaureate for more information.

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The mission of the Arts Council for Monterey County (ACMC) is to improve the quality of life for everyone in our region through the arts. For more information, please email info@arts4mc.org

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