



ARTS COUNCIL For Monterey County

Enriching the lives of our community through the arts

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Arts4MC Announces 2024- 2025 Monterey County Poet Laureate

[SALINAS, CA. January 23, 2024] After a competitive application and evaluation process by a panel of literary experts, and approved by the Board of Supervisors, the Arts Council for Monterey County (Arts4MC) is pleased to announce Rachele Escamilla as the 2024 – 2025 Monterey County Poet Laureate.

The Poet Laureate is an honorary position that celebrates Monterey County’s cultural heritage and promotes literacy and literature among county residents. Escamilla is only the second to hold the title. She begins a two-year term commencing immediately and will receive a \$5,000 honorarium, funded by Arts4MC. “We are very excited and looking forward to what Rachele will be able to accomplish during her term to promote poetry in Monterey County,” said Jacquie Atchison, Executive Director of Arts4MC.

More about Rachele Escamilla

Rachele Escamilla is a Chicana poet from the Central Coast of California. She is the author of three books of poetry: *Imaginary Animal* (Willow Books, 2015 & 2021), *Me Drawing a Picture of Me[n]* (Willow Books, 2019) and *Space Junk from the Heavenly Palace* (Nomadic Press/Black Lawrence Press 2023). Escamilla is the founder of a number of organizations and international literary programs including: *The Poets and Writers Coalition* and *Legacy of Poetry Day* at San José State University; *The English-language Center for Creative Writing* at Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou, China; and the *Latinx Poetix Symposium* at California State University Monterey Bay.

From 2015-2020 Rachele was the producer and host of the longest running poetry radio show in the US, *Out of Our Minds* on KKUP Cupertino 91.5 FM. Escamilla recorded her poems for the *Archive of Hispanic Literature on Tape: Palabra* and published an article, *Searching for my Family* with the Library of Congress.

Escamilla is the recipient of several awards including the Virginia de Arujo Academy of American Poets Prize, James Phelan Literary awards and *Philanthropist of the Year* for helping the *Friends of the SBC Free Library* develop an online presence.

Escamilla hopes to adapt her poetry into a play to be directed by Katherine Wilkinson and scheduled to show at *Access Theater* in New York, which was supposed to happen during the summer of 2020. Escamilla has been featured at a number of poetry events across the US., but most notably at *UC Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive*, at the *Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History* and at *City of Asylum alongside Eileen Myles and Alexia Bomtempo*.

To learn more, visit arts4mc.org/poetlaureate.

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Arts Council for Monterey County (Arts4MC) is committed to enhancing the quality of life for all residents in our region through the arts. We provide a variety of ways to make art more accessible to everyone, including but not limited to providing **Arts Education** programs through schools and community organizations, offering business resources for artists and nonprofits through **BusinessWorks**, creating studio and public art spaces for local artists by **Curating Public Exhibitions** and via our **ArtWorks** locations, awarding **Scholarships**, and providing **Grant Funding** to individual artists and nonprofits for community programs and events related to arts and culture. To learn more, visit arts4mc.org.