



*eternally dancing between worlds* photo by Natasha Hanna



she conducts the rose-tint sky  
a whorled evening in blues,  
grays, salmons, pinks  
overlaid with a black tating of  
hemlock

arms rise in thin hallelujahs  
an ecstasy of command  
the twigs of her unruly hair  
snap and crackle

has she summoned this chill  
through bones and branches  
a shiver to exalt the night  
cut to black with hidden stars

Eve Rifkah

**Presented by the Worcester County Poetry Association, and The  
Worcester Historical Museum,  
August 19, 2021, 6:30 p.m.30 Elm St., Worcester, MA**

**THE STANLEY KUNITZ MEDAL** is presented annually to a person with a strong Worcester County (Mass.) connection who best exemplifies Stanley Kunitz's life-long commitment to poetry and poets. The award recognizes the total commitment to poetry as Stanley lived it: teaching poetry, mentoring poets, speaking poetry, publishing poetry, and supporting organizations which nurture poetry.

**STANLEY KUNITZ** (1905-2006) was born in Worcester, Massachusetts, a city he said, "provoked him into poetry." After studying at Harvard University he worked as an editor, writing poetry for his first book, *Intellectual Things* (1930). After serving in World War II, he began work as a professor and completed his collection *Passports to the War*, (1944). He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1959 for his work *Selected Poems, 1928-1958* (1958). His later collection *Passing Through* (1995) won a National Book Award. He served as Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress from 1974-1976, and again from 2000-2001. He was instrumental in founding both the Fine Arts Center in Provincetown, Massachusetts, and Poets House in New York City. After his death he left a bequest with The Worcester County Poetry Association to establish a poetry award in his name. The awarding of this medal is the legacy of Stanley's request.

**EVE RIFKAH** was co-founder of Poetry Oasis, Inc. (1998-2012), a non-profit poetry association dedicated to education and promoting local poets. Founder and editor of *DINER*, a literary magazine. MFA Vermont College.

She is author of "Dear Suzanne" (WordTech Communications, 2010) and "Outcasts: The Penikese Island Leper Hospital 1905-1921" (Little Pear Press, 2010). Her next book "Lost in Sight," will be coming out in 2021 from Silver Bow Publishing. Rifkah has published two Chapbooks: "Scar Tissue," (Finishing Line Press, 2017), and "At the Leprosarium" 2003 winner of the *Revelever* Chapbook Contest. Her single poems, flash fiction stories and essays have appeared in many journals.

Stanley Kunitz Medal Selection Committee 2021

**John Hodgen  
Kent Ljungquist  
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Sponsor:

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