

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE---FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Paul Szlosek Chosen for 2023 Stanley Kunitz Medal

Long admired as the inventor of poetry forms and champion of obscure ones, Worcester poet Paul Szlosek has been selected as the 2023 Stanley Kunitz Medal recipient.

Szlosek is a poet with extraordinary gifts who began writing poetry around 1967 at the age of

The Stanley Kunitz Medal originated with a bequest to the Worcester County Poetry Association from the estate of former Poet Laureate of the United States and Worcester native Stanley Kunitz (1905-2006). Szlosek's will be the ninth recipient of the medal, which is bestowed annually on a poet with a strong Worcester County connection who best exemplifies Kunitz's lifelong commitment to poetry by teaching poetry, mentoring poets, speaking poetry, publishing poetry, and supporting organizations which nurture poetry.

PAUL SZLOSEK is a poet with extraordinary gifts who began writing poetry around 1967 at the age of five. His mother Pauline collected his poems in a small booklet entitled "Paul's Poet Tree." These beginning efforts have been nourished for decades, as he matured into one of the most influential poets in Worcester County. His poems have been featured in regional, national, and international print and online journals and anthologies. Paul's poetry has been recognized with numerous awards and honorable mentions, including the Jacob Knight Award for Poetry in 2001. Paul served on the board of the Worcester County Poetry Association for over a decade, where he was co-chair of the committee which created the WCPA's occasional publication, *The Issue* - he was also its very first editor. He is well-known in the Worcester poetry community as a fanatical practitioner and promoter of obscure poetry forms, as well as the creator of his own forms, such as the streetbeatina, the sing-sang song, and the ziggurat, all of which he shares with his readers on his blog, Paul's Poetry Playground. A tradition he began during his First Night Worcester program in association with the WCPA combined poetry, magic, and mathematics, after which he organized and edited dozens of group poems. He has also conducted over two dozen in-depth interviews with poets (local, national, and international) that appear in his monthly online poetry journal, which he compiled and edited in the form of transcripts of imaginary poetry readings called "The International Imaginarium For Word Verse" (formerly known as "The Virtual Poetorium"). He is a frequent workshop leader and participant and visiting poet, not only at schools such as the Floral Street School in Shrewsbury, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and Worcester State University, but at the Peabody Essex Museum, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Worcester Art Museum. As a co-founder and host of the Poets Parlor and Poetorium at Starlite reading and open mic series, Paul continues to inspire countless poets to engage in the magic of poetry.

Also honored with nominations this year were poets Rodger Martin and Sharon A. Harmon.

Paul Szlosek will receive his medal at a ceremony presented by the Worcester County Poetry Association at the Worcester Historical Museum on Thursday, July 27th from 6:30-8:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. There is limited parking at the museum, with additional parking on the street and in the Pearl/Elm Street Garage. Visit worcestercountypoe.org for details.

ATTACHED IMAGE/Paul Szlosek

Contact: Judith Ferrara, Chairperson, Stanley Kunitz Medal Committee
Judy@PaletteAndPen.com, 508-757-0524