

Please join The Worcester County Poetry Association as it presents the

Stanley Kunitz Medal

to

Judith Ferrara

for her life-long contributions to poetry,
best exemplified by Worcester's own (twice) U.S. Poet Laureate Stanley Kunitz

Poem with a line from Stanley Kunitz

I am a nightingale
In search of a fallen glove
Waiting for a cloudburst
Inside my chest.

Once I was a coat of quills
Seared by the wisdom of an owl
Sighting a forest of crashing limbs
Some of them my own.

Now I fly over meadows
With a mate, whose cry
Is a keepsake of kelp
A reminder of our near drowning.

Soon we will stop in a guarded grove
First to confess our altered affection
Then quaff a flurry of petals
And some gazing ball fluorescence.

Because we know the ratio of burden to strength.
Because we know which way is home.



The Worcester Historical Museum

30 Elm Street, Worcester, MA • Thursday, July 26, 2018, 6:30 to 8:30 pm

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.

Writer and visual artist **Judith Ferrara** lives in Worcester, Massachusetts. Her poetry and essays have been published in three collections: *Gestures of Trees* (Mellen Poetry Press), *A Brush with Words* (Autumn Light Press) and *The little O, the earth: Travel Journals, Art & Poems* (Palette and Pen Studio), and in journals such as *the black fly review*, *The Comstock Review*, *The Portland Review Literary Journal*, *GSU Review* and *The Worcester Review*. In 2009, she began a study of poet Stanley Kunitz and Ferrara continues to do research on his life and poems. In 2016, she transcribed the correspondence, memoir, and diary of his mother, Yetta Kunitz Dine and is currently developing a manuscript that includes these materials as well as supporting chapters about her life. Her art has appeared in group and solo exhibitions since 1998.

The Stanley Kunitz Committee, 2018

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