



NEWS FROM
ULSTER COUNTY
County Executive Jen Metzger

******For Immediate Release******

Date: Friday, February 14, 2025

Contact: Amberly Jane Campbell, Assistant Deputy County Executive
(845) 340-3800 x8958 / acam@co.ulster.ny.us

Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger Announces 2025 Ulster County Poet Laureate

KINGSTON, NY - Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger has appointed Mike Jurkovic, a published poet and music critic who lives in the Shawangunk hamlet of Wallkill, as the County's 2025 Poet Laureate. Jurkovic succeeds poet Kate Hymes of New Paltz, the County's first resident to hold this honorary title, which was created by the County Executive in 2023.

"Words possess the remarkable ability to bridge hearts and minds, uniting our community through the art of verse, and through his evocative poetry, Mike Jurkovic captures the essence of everyday life and invites us to explore the hidden beauty in our daily experiences," **said County Executive Jen Metzger.** "Congratulations on this well-deserved honor, Mike — we look forward to the inspiration and creativity you will bring to this role!"

Originally hailing from the South Bronx, Jurkovic has called Ulster County home for more than three decades. A cornerstone of the Hudson Valley poetry scene, he serves as the president and co-founder of [Calling All Poets](#) — a distinguished poetry organization and series that, this year, proudly celebrates 26 years of fostering poetic expression both in the Hudson Valley and on the international stage.

Jurkovic is known for his expressive and often surreal poetry, which has been featured in various literary journals and poetry readings across the United States, including New York City, San Francisco, Baltimore, and London. His work explores themes of everyday life, absurdity, and human connection. Some of his notable poems include "The Whereabouts of Heaven," "My Love Don't Dream, She Vignettes," and "Mediums Mystics and Madmen."

Jurkovic, a prolific poet and music critic, was nominated for the prestigious Pushcart American literary prize. His work has appeared in more than 400 magazines and periodicals,

and he has published several full-length collections and chapbooks, including "smitten by harpies & shiny banjo catfish" (Lion Autumn Press, 2016), "Eve's Venom" (Post Traumatic Press, 2014), and "Purgatory Road" (Pudding House Press, 2010). His work has also been included in national and regional anthologies, and he is a monthly contributor to various magazines, including *Elmore Magazine*, *Folk and Acoustic Music Exchange*, and *Chronogram*. His column, "The Rock n Roll Curmudgeon," appeared in *Rhythm and News Magazine* from 1996 to 2003. He currently co-chairs the Music Fan Film Series at the Rosendale Theatre, and hosts NuJazzXcursions, Mondays at 9AM, on WVKR-91.3FM Vassar College.

"With the grand family of writers and poets in the Hudson Valley, I am humbled to serve as Ulster County Poet Laureate," **said Jurkovic**. "In this role it is my aim to highlight as many voices as possible."

"We are grateful for County Executive Metzger's commitment to the arts community in Ulster County, and we can all celebrate the appointment of Michael Jurkovic as our Poet Laureate for 2025," **said Melissa Dvozenja-Thomas, Executive Director of Arts Mid-Hudson**.

"Promoting poetry across Ulster County enriches residents of all ages and backgrounds, and we commend County Executive Metzger for her ongoing support of the arts."

The Ulster County Poet Laureate program was instituted in 2023 by County Executive Metzger, and is an unpaid, one-year role. The Poet Laureate recites a poem at the annual State of the County address, leads workshops and readings, writes and publishes poetry inspired by local history and culture, participates in community events, and engages in educational outreach. Arts Mid-Hudson manages the process of the public call for nominations, inviting a panel of literary professionals and community members to select from the nominations, and promoting the appointment.

Information about the Ulster County Poet Laureate and the upcoming programs can be found at www.artsmidhudson.org/uc-poetlaureate

###



Ulstercountyny.gov