



California Poets

IN THE SCHOOLS

THE FUTURE WE SPEAK

Statewide Poetry Symposium ~ 2025

AUGUST 15,16,17, 2025
HOLLISTER, CALIFORNIA



Kim Addonizio



ROSANNA ALVAREZ



FERNANDO SALINAS



AMANDA CHIADO



JAMES COATS



GIA CIVEROLO



MICHAEL JASSO



NANCY LYNÉE WOO



SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

FRIDAY 8/15:

5:30pm-7:00pm ~ San Benito Arts Council ~ **Registration & Light Dinner Served**

7:15pm-8:30pm ~ San Benito Arts Council ~ **Fernando Albert Salinas: Evening Program**

SATURDAY, 8/16:

8:30-9:15 ~ San Benito Arts Council ~ **Registration/Breakfast Served**

9:15am-9:30am ~ San Benito Arts Council ~ **Symposium Opening**

9:30am-11:00am ~ San Benito Arts Council ~ **Rosanna Alvarez: The Creative Pulse: Poetry, Expression & Possibility in Community**

11:00am-11:30am ~ **Break**

11:30am-1:00pm ~ Community Foundation Epicenter ~ **Kim Addonizio: Poetry Craft Workshop: Risking Delight**

1:00pm-2:00pm ~ Community Foundation Epicenter ~ **Midday break, Lunch Served**

2:00pm-3:15pm ~ Community Foundation Epicenter ~ **Kim Addonizio: Poetry Reading & Book Signing**

3:15pm-3:45pm ~ **Break**

3:45pm-4:45pm ~ San Benito Arts Council ~ **Breakout Sessions ~ Choose One**

Breakout Session #1: Michael Jasso: Set The Stage: an introduction in bringing Spoken Word to the classroom

Breakout Session #2: Nancy Lynée Woo: Poetry of Resistance

4:45pm-5:00pm ~ **Break**

5:00pm-6:00pm ~ San Benito Arts Council ~ **Breakout Sessions ~ Choose One**

Breakout Session #1: James Coats: Performance Games: Teaching Performance through Play and Improv

Breakout Session #2: Gia Civerolo: Engaging in Erasure Poetry

6:00pm-7:00pm ~ San Benito Arts Council ~ **Dinner Served**

7:00pm-8:30pm ~ Hill's Bookstore ~ **Open Mic**

SUNDAY, 8/17:

9:00am-10:00am ~ San Benito Arts Council ~ **Community Meeting & Breakfast Served**

10:00am-10:15am ~ **Break**

10:15am-11:15am ~ San Benito Arts Council ~ **Amanda Chiado: Gratitude as Gateway**

11:15am-11:45am ~ San Benito Arts Council ~ **Symposium Closing**

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS & BIOS (IN EVENT ORDER)

Evening Program: Fernando Albert Salinas: This workshop is designed to bring together both longtime members of our network and new voices, offering a space to connect, collaborate, and spark creativity. Together, we'll create a poetic tapestry that weaves individual perspectives and experiences of California into a shared expression—deepening our connection to one another and to place through the art of poetry.

Fernando Albert Salinas serves as the Program Manager at California Poets in the Schools. He is well-known for his community leadership as an arts activist throughout the state, and in Ventura County particularly. He is an award-winning educator, has taught poetry workshops to students in over 25 K-12 schools, incarcerated youth, and Re-Entry programs throughout California. He teaches at Ventura College. M.F.A. Full Sail University, B.A. CSU Channel Islands

The Creative Pulse: Poetry, Expression & Possibility in Community: Rosanna Alvarez: In a time when many educators, students, and communities are navigating exhaustion, disconnection, and despair, this restorative poetry workshop invites us to slow down, reconnect, and nourish our creative spirits. Through culturally grounded memory, gentle somatic movement, and storytelling, we'll explore how language can restore presence, rekindle creative energy, and deepen our sense of mutual care. Participants will engage in playful writing prompts, body-based reflection, and dialogue designed to honor memory, cultural voice, and collective renewal. Offering creative practices that support both personal reflection and collective care, this workshop invites us to write into what sustains us—and imagine what becomes possible when we center care, connection, and creative possibility. **Rosanna Alvarez** is an award-winning author and interdisciplinary storyteller with experience across sectors. She uses her voice as a writer, speaker, and strategist to foster collective growth and authenticity. Known for her sincerity and heart, Rosanna shares stories of entrepreneurship, advocacy, and self-discovery. Her creative nonfiction and poetry explore themes of voice, liberation, and re-membering the self. A proud Chicana, mother of three guerreras, and trucker's wife, she's collaborated with nonprofits, government, and arts organizations. She teaches at San José State University, leads Citlali Rose, co-hosts the Hella Chingona Podcast, and is co-founder of Eastside Magazine. Her debut poetry collection, *Braided [Un]Be-Longing*, was a 2023 International Book Awards finalist for Best Poetry Book and Best Cover Design.

Risking Delight: Kim Addonizio: This craft and generative workshop will be about joy, an emotion that's difficult to access these days given the state of our country and the world. But as Jack Gilbert wrote, If we deny our happiness, resist our satisfaction, /we lessen the importance of their deprivation./ We must risk delight. In this workshop, we'll look at some poems that do just that, and muster some writing of our own to counteract the negative forces around us that insists on pain, destruction, and despair. **Kim Addonizio's** most recent poetry collection is *Exit Opera* (W.W.Norton, 2024). She is the author of eight other poetry collections, two novels, two story collections, and two books on writing poetry, *The Poet's Companion* (with Dorianne Laux) and *Ordinary Genius*, as well as a memoir-in-essays, *Bukowski in a Sundress: Confessions from a Writing Life*. Addonizio's work has been honored with fellowships from the NEA and Guggenheim Foundation, and her collection *Tell Me* was a finalist for the National Book Award. She lives in Oakland, CA and teaches writing workshops on Zoom. <https://www.kimaddonizio.com>

Set The Stage: an introduction in bringing Spoken Word to the classroom: Michael Jasso: With its ever increasing popularity through social media, poetry slams, even in publishing; spoken word has become one of the fastest growing literary movements since the beatniks. In this session we will provide useful writing prompts, resources, and techniques our Poet Teachers can utilize to bring Spoken Word to their classrooms. **Michael Jasso** is a Spoken Word Artist from Visalia with over 15 years of community involvement. He's performed and facilitated workshops across California and beyond as a Poet, Emcee, Volunteer, and Slam Coach. For over 12 years, he has led Visalia's Loud Mouth Poetry Jam.. He's represented Visalia at national competitions, including the 2014 & 2015 National Poetry Slam and the 2018 Individual World Poetry Slam. Michael is the 2024 Loud Mouth Grand Slam Champion, a Certified Poet-Teacher with California Poets In The Schools, serves on the Arts Visalia board, and was named Tulare County's 2025 Artist of the Year.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS & BIOS CONTINUED (IN EVENT ORDER)

Poetry of Resistance: Nancy Lynée Woo: How can poetry be used as an instrument for peace, empathy, and justice during a time of social crisis? This generative workshop will offer frameworks of thinking about the role of poetry during authoritarian takeover, including example texts and writing prompts, with time to write and share. If time allows, we can briefly touch on how poetry teachers and organizations can form Social Impact Partnerships with local nonprofits to bring direct action and poetry education together.

Nancy Lynée Woo is an eco-centric poet, teaching artist, and community organizer based in Long Beach, California. Nancy is the winner of the Brett Elizabeth Jenkins Poetry Prize, author of *I'd Rather Be Lightning*, and a past PEN America Emerging Voices Fellow. She currently serves as the mentor for the Long Beach Youth Poet Laureate program, and is an Arts Education Leader with the Los Angeles Department of Arts and Culture. She believes in the power of the arts to bring people together. Her MFA is from Antioch University. You can find her at nancylyneewoo.com and Instagram @fancifulnance.

Performance Games: Teaching Performance through Play and Improv: James Coats: In this workshop we will learn performance games that help students come out of their shells and share their ideas and voices. Each game teaches a different performance element to help them be more comfortable expressing themselves in the poetry class and beyond.

James Coats is an author, poet and educator from Southern California. As a creative change agent he believes the arts can inspire the youth and influence positive change in the world. He became the Artist in Residence at The Garcia Center for the Arts in 2022. Additionally, you can take a poetry workshop with him through his organization Lift Our Voices Education which hosts an award winning workshop monthly called *Be The Change: Social Justice Writing Workshop*. He also has four poetry collections: his newest poetry collection *Midnight & Mad Dreams* published by World Stage Press. He is a 2023 Poetry Pushcart Prize nominee.

Engaging in Erasure Poetry: Gia Civerolo: This workshop will explore six styles of Erasure Poetry. Participants will create Found Poems during the session achieving publishable quality pieces. The seminar will give definitions and historical context of Erasure Poems.

Gia Civerolo is a Los Angeles based poet, photographer, producer, educator, and special needs advocate. Her self-published book of poetry, *"She Confuses Lovers, Movies, Angels & Poems"* won a 2025 International Impact Award and she was the winner of the first CLI Alumni Of The Year Award in 2024. She is honored to be published in several anthologies as well as featured in the *Bards of Southern California: Top 30 SoCal Poets*. She can be seen performing throughout Los Angeles. Her photos have been exhibited in museums, city halls and art galleries. Gia is most proud to be Riley and Holden's Mother.

Gratitude as Gateway: Amanda Chiado: In this generative workshop, participants will work with gratitude as a springboard for creating new work. Gratitude will also be explored as a method to structure student workshops and build community.

Amanda Chiado is the author of *Prime Cuts* (Bottlecap Press, 2025) and *Vitiligid: The Ascension of Michael Jackson* (Dancing Girl Press, 2016). Her work has most recently appeared in *Southeast Review*, *RHINO*, and *The Pinch Journal*. She is the Director of Arts Education at the San Benito County Arts Council, is the Board Secretary for California Poet in the Schools, and edits for *Jersey Devil Press*.



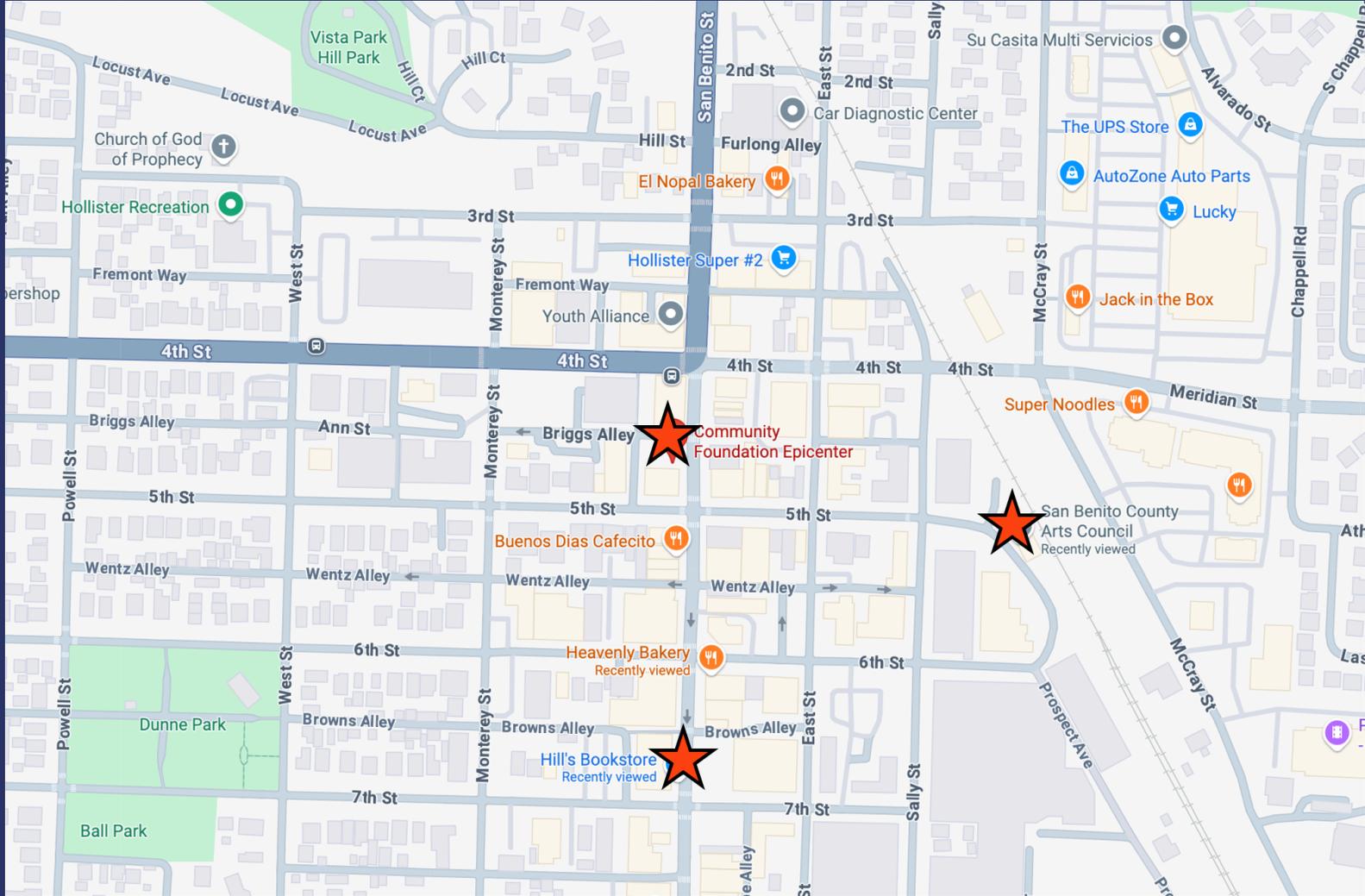
Community
Foundation
FOR SAN BENITO COUNTY



Poets & Writers



Warm thanks to the San Benito County Arts Council, the Community Foundation for San Benito County, Hill's Bookstore, Poets & Writers and the California Arts Council for their generous support in providing space and funding to help make this event accessible and affordable for everyone.



Location addresses:

San Benito Arts Council:
(Main Location - Most Workshops)
35 5th St, Hollister, CA 95023

Community Foundation Epicenter San Andreas Conference Room
((Kim Addonizio Craft Workshop & Reading, Saturday afternoon)
440 San Benito Street, Hollister, CA 95023

Hills Bookstore
(Open Mic, Saturday Evening)
650 San Benito street, Ste 140

Distance from San Benito Arts Council to Community Foundation Epicenter: 0.2 miles
Distance from San Benito Arts Council to Hills Bookstore: 0.3 miles