



Council President Nick Licata

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Seattle celebrates its Poet Populist

Current populist reads to flute and drum as nominations for the next come in

SEATTLE –Council President Nick Licata and the Seattle Public Library present: "*Music and Poetry: Seattle Poet Populist Peshya Joyce Gertler and Friends.*" Gertler, Seattle's official **Poet Populist** for 2005-2006, will read her poetry, accompanied by hand drums and a flute.

“Peshya sets the standard for Poet Populists to come” said **City Council President Nick Licata**, who launched the program in 1999. “Her readings touch a lot of people who may never have been exposed to poetry – and that’s the goal of a poet populist.”

The celebration, free and open to the public, will take place from **3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, April 29** at the Central Library, 1000 Fourth Ave., Microsoft Auditorium (Level 1). Tickets and reservations are not required. Parking in the Central Library garage will be available for a \$5 special event rate. Doors open at 2:30 p.m.

The nomination process for the next Seattle Poet Populist is underway and will end May 22nd. Voting will take place from June to August and any resident of Seattle can vote. The winner will be announced on the literary stage at this year’s **Bumbershoot Arts Festival** and awarded a cash prize of \$500. The Seattle Poet Populist program is sponsored by the Seattle Public Library, Council President Nick Licata and Bumbershoot.

Gertler's one-year term has enabled her to take her poems to places they don’t ordinarily go. She has read her work at homeless shelters and even at the Mayor’s official swearing-in ceremony. Gertler has taught creative writing workshops at North Seattle Community College and the University of Washington Women's Center.

Local poets Judith Roche, J.T. Stewart and Koon Woon will also read their work. Roche, the author of two collections, won an American Book Award. Stewart is a contributor to "Raven Brings Light to this House of Stories," a collaborative, permanent art and poetry exhibit in the Paul Allen Library at the University of Washington. Woon is the author of "The Truth in Rented Rooms" and is editor and publisher of Chrysanthemum magazine and Goldfish Press.

Visit the Seattle Poet Populist Web site at <http://www.cityofseattle.net/council/licata/poetpop/> #