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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEVADA COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL ANNOUNCES 2021 NEVADA COUNTY POET LAUREATE

May 17, 2021 – Grass Valley, CA: Nevada County Art Council announces the 2021 Poet Laureate of Nevada County, Kirsten Casey, following a resolution by Nevada County Board of Supervisors' acceptance of the Council's resolution, in partnership with Nevada County Libraries, during late April, and a subsequent Passing of the Laurels Ceremony in early May.

The Nevada County Poet Laureate Program was inaugurated along with Sierra Poetry Festival in 2017 in the presence of California Poet Laureate, Dana Gioia. Nevada County's inaugural Poet Laureate was celebrated poet, Molly Fisk, who set a high bar after being awarded an Academy of American Poets Laureate Fellowship, leading to the publication of her important anthology, *California Fire and Water: a Climate Crisis Anthology*.

In 2019 Chris Olander was named the new Nevada County Poet Laureate. Chris navigated the COVID-19 pandemic by writing copiously, and in early 2021 publishing his second collection, *Twilight Roses*.

Says Eliza Tudor, Executive Director of Nevada County Arts Council, "Kirsten Casey has been with us along the way. Well before Sierra Poetry Festival and our Nevada County Poet Laureate Program was inaugurated, she was an active member of California Poets in the Schools and, after sixteen years, she is now regional coordinator. She has annually trained our county judges for Poetry Out Loud in the schools, and was founding coordinator for Nevada County Art Council's international children's poetry exchange, Dream a Difference, in 2017."

Casey's first book of poetry, *Ex Viv0: Out of the Living Body*, was published by Hip Pocket Press in 2012. Her upcoming collection of poems explores historical and literary characters struggling with the use of social media in the modern world. In 2020, she co-edited Molly Fisk's collection *California Fire and Water*.

Says Tudor: "When Amanda Gorman stole the show at President Joe Biden's inauguration with *The Hill we Climb*, she moved America and the world with her performance. She made the idea of a "healed" humanity tangible, sharing a dream that finds hope in suffering but does not resign itself to letting conflict and division prevail."

On accepting her nomination as 2021 Poet Laureate, Kirsten Casey said: "I am honored and thrilled to be this year's nominee for Poet Laureate of Nevada County. As a 28-year resident of Nevada City, I truly consider this my home. After over a year of isolation, fear, and civil unrest, it is more important than ever to recognize what connects us as a community... My goal is to make poetry "live" again, in person, in this artistic haven. Hopefully, as the county opens up, I can host events to enhance the experience of poetry: creating it, sharing it, reading it--together. This will be a time of healing and recovery, and I particularly want to reach out to the children and teens who have had an overwhelming amount of time in front of a screen over the past 12 months."

Nick Wilczek, Nevada County Librarian, says of Casey's nomination to the role and the opportunity to partner with Nevada County Arts Council: "I'm also happy that we'll be working together. We have all sort of opportunities to partner up, especially as the library continues reopening!"

More information on Kirsten Casey can be found at nevadacountyarts.org/nevada-county-poet-laureate and by keeping an eye on the Council's community arts calendar for literary events as they occur.

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