

Peterborough Poet Laureate

Nomination Information Session

Wednesday, April 10, 2024

7:00pm

Artspace



Introduction & Territorial Acknowledgement



Introduction



“A centuries-old tradition, a Poet Laureate is an appointed artist who primarily composes and presents poems at official occasions.”

Introduction (cont'd)



- Dozens of cities across Canada have Poet Laureate programs.
- Poets Laureate bring new vision and voice to the identity of a city, while adding grace and substance to official civic occasions.
- A creative way to acknowledge and appreciate the arts, particularly poetry, support outstanding living artists and engage citizens in thinking more deeply about where we live and what it means to be here.
- Bring deeper meaning and reflection to all the work that the City does to create a vibrant community for its citizens.

Introduction (cont'd)



- Poets Laureate enhance the value of literacy and the literary arts by building a deeper knowledge and understanding of our histories, our lives today and the place where we live.
- The Poet Laureate is an honorary position established by the City of Peterborough to recognize the excellence and outstanding achievement of professional poets (both print/page and spoken word) living and working in our city and to enhance our civic identity.

History



- The idea to establish a Peterborough Poet Laureate was initiated by local poets Jon Hedderwick and Wes Ryan.
- Funding for the program was negotiated with the City of Peterborough by EC3.
- The program launched as a pilot in 2021-22, and Sarah Lewis was appointed as Peterborough's first-ever Poet Laureate.
- Following an extremely successful term including four appearances at official City occasions as well as some 70 additional engagements, Peterborough's City Council voted to make the Poet Laureate a permanent program and regular position.
- Ziysah von Bieberstein is serving as Poet Laureate for 2023-24.

Sarah and Ziysah



History (cont'd)



- Following feedback from the community and previous Poets Laureate, in 2024 the Poet Laureate position was made into a two-year posting, lasting from **June 2024 to June 2026**.
- This will give the Poet Laureate the opportunity to develop longer-term projects and forge deeper ties in the community.

Introduction (cont'd)



The **City of Peterborough** provides funding (\$2,000 per year) for the Poet Laureate Program, which is administered by the **Electric City Culture Council (EC3)** under the guidance of the City of Peterborough's **Arts and Culture Advisory Committee (ACAC)**.

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility



Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility



- EC3 is committed to to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility in all our programs and encourages applications from self-identified members of marginalized/racialized, equity seeking communities (visible and invisible), including BIPOC artists, Deaf and hard of hearing artists, artists with disabilities, new Canadians, and those artists identifying as 2SLGBTQ+.
- EC3 is committed to establishing fair and equitable practices for all of our programs and services in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.
- EC3 is committed to supporting and promoting diverse artists, artistic practices, and arts communities that represent a wide cross-section of Peterborough City and County.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (cont'd)



- EC3 encourages applications for the Peterborough Poet Laureate from all those who live in our diverse community and advocates for equal opportunity for all applicants in the nomination and selection process.
- EC3 strives to make our juries, selection, and assessment committees equitable and inclusive by ensuring broad representation from the communities outlined above.
- Persons with disabilities are encouraged to come forward by contacting EC3 staff at electriccitycc@gmail.com at any stage of the application process to request support or accommodations, if needed.

Program Description and Goals



Program Description



- The City of Peterborough defines the Poet Laureate as a professional, print/page poet or spoken word artist, resident of Peterborough or Peterborough County who has achieved excellence in their practice, as recognized by their peers, and whose body of work demonstrates a connection with and relevance to Peterborough and the surrounding region and its citizens.
- This is an “honourary” position.

Program Description (cont'd)



- The Poet Laureate will serve a **two-year term**. The 2023 Program will take place from **June 2024 to June 2026**.
- The Poet Laureate will be paid an honorarium of **\$4,000** over the two years of their term.
- The Poet Laureate must create and present a minimum of **eight (8) original works** at official civic events during the two-year term of their tenure.

Program Goals



- The Peterborough Poet Laureate Program supports outstanding professional literary artists in the creation and presentation of new work that speaks to our lives in this place called Peterborough/Nogojiwanong.
- The Poet Laureate acts as an advocate for poetry and spoken word art, as an ambassador for the arts in general, for the literary arts and literacy in particular, and for the City of Peterborough and its residents.

Program Goals (cont'd)



- The Poet Laureate contributes to civic identity and place-making by exploring and reflecting the histories, interests, issues, and perspectives of the varied and multiple communities and individual residents of the municipality.
- Poets Laureate create markers of our history, reflect on our contemporary experience, and explore our future.

Roles and Responsibilities



Roles and Responsibilities



The Poet Laureate will...

- Compose and present poems at Peterborough City Council and other official City of Peterborough events and occasions, including at least **once** a year to Peterborough City Council during **National Poetry Month (April 2025 and 2026)**, and a minimum of **three other official municipal events per year**, to be determined annually in coordination with City staff and/or EC3 (**total of eight new works and eight public readings**).
- Make public presentations as the Poet Laureate at a variety of civic or community events annually, at the discretion of the Poet Laureate. The Poet Laureate may accept additional fees for this work.

Roles and Responsibilities (*cont'd*)



- The Poet Laureate may accept requests from schools and community organizations to do workshops and accept at their discretion. EC3 can provide support for these engagements as necessary.
- Liaise with City staff and/or EC3 on a quarterly basis and provide a written report on their experience at the conclusion of their term.
- Work with City staff and EC3 to develop a legacy project. Such projects may include working with younger people or emerging artists, publications or archives.
- Participate in the following year's Poet Laureate Selection Committee.

Roles and Responsibilities (*cont'd*)



EC3 will...

- Coordinate (intake, review, registration, follow-up) the nomination process and run nomination workshops.
- Facilitate the selection process, including the appointment of the Selection Committee and the management of its work.
- Provide administrative support to the Poet Laureate, project coordination and, where possible, will work in collaboration with City Communications staff on publicity and promotion.
- Work with City staff to coordinate the Poet Laureate Announcement Event.

Eligibility





The application process for Poet Laureate involves both an Artist who wants to be Poet Laureate and a Nominator who puts forward the artist's name.

Nominators and Nominees are encouraged to collaborate on the process.

Eligibility: Nominees



- 18 years of age or older
- A current resident of the city of Peterborough or Peterborough County, including Curve Lake and Hiawatha First Nations
- A Canadian citizen, permanent resident or person upon whom refugee protection has been conferred, and who is legally entitled to work in Ontario
- Prepared to accept the responsibilities of the position and is accustomed to public presentation, citizen engagement and community outreach
- Professionally published according to the eligibility criteria outlined below
- Have made a significant contribution to poetry, or spoken word arts, and the literary life of the municipality and/or of the surrounding region

Eligibility: Print/Page Poets



A **print/page poet nominee** must meet at least one of the following publishing criteria....

Assessment of the poet's work as "published text" will be at the discretion of the Selection Committee.

Eligibility: Print/Page Poets (*cont'd*)



- One book of poetry published by a literary or trade publisher, *OR*
- One self-published book of poetry professionally marketed and distributed, as determined by the Selection Committee, *OR*
- Two chapbooks that have been professionally marketed and distributed, as determined by the Selection Committee, *OR*
- A body of work that demonstrates professional commitment and proficiency, which includes poetry published or presented in professional ‘markets;’ this can be any combination of chapbooks, broadsheets, anthology contributions, or publication in literary magazines.

Eligibility: Print/Page Poets (*cont'd*)



In the **Nomination Letter**, please outline in detail the Nominee's publication history and involvement with the poetry/arts community. In your **Support Materials**, please also include examples of the Nominee's work that the Selection Committee can read.

Eligibility: Spoken Word Artists



A **spoken word artist nominee** must have a body of work that demonstrates professional commitment and proficiency in the field of spoken word poetry, as determined by the Selection Committee.

A body of work may include a combination of the following...

Eligibility: Spoken Word (cont'd)



- A recorded studio album
- Participation on a spoken word team, including touring and competing for at least two years
- Three curated, featured performance sets of at least 15 minutes each
- Print materials, including chapbooks, anthology contributions, publication in literary magazines, etc.
- Commitment to the community through teaching and/or creating performance spaces for other artists

Eligibility: Spoken Word (cont'd)



In the **Nomination Letter**, please outline in detail the Nominee's performance history and involvement with the spoken word/arts community. In the **Support Materials**, please also include links to any audio tracks or videos that the Selection Committee can listen to or view online.

Eligibility: Nominators



Nominators...

- must also be residents of Peterborough or Peterborough County; a Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or person upon whom refugee protection has been conferred; and be 18 years of age or older
- must know the artist nominee, be familiar with their work, and be able to comment knowledgeably on their ability to undertake the duties of a Poet Laureate
- may not be related to the nominee through familial or employment connections or through any of the connections in the Conflict of Interest Guidelines criteria outlined below for jurors
- may nominate only one artist per nomination period for Poet Laureate.

Nomination Package and Process



Nominations



This is a **two-part selection process**. Eligible nominees must agree to participate in both phases: the **submission of the Nomination Package** and, if shortlisted, an **interview with the Selection Committee**.

Nomination Package Checklist



1. Poet Laureate Nomination Form

- Signed, completed application in DOC/DOCX format.

2. Nominee's Curriculum Vitae (CV) (maximum 3 pages)

- A professional CV that demonstrates the nominee's achievements and their formal and informal training.

3. Confirmation of Residence

- Photocopy of driver's licence, property tax bill, utilities bill, etc.

Nomination Package (cont'd)



4. Nomination Letter from the Nominator (maximum 500 words)

- This letter should introduce the nominee to the Selection Committee and describe the artist's achievements and professional practice. It should address the Assessment Criteria, communicate how the artist is involved in and has contributed to Peterborough's arts community in general and the literary arts community in particular, and make a strong case for why the artist is worthy of the appointment of Poet Laureate.

Nomination Package (cont'd)



5. Letter of Intent from the Nominated Artist (maximum 750 words)

- The applicant's goals and objectives (why they want to be the Poet Laureate and what they hope to achieve in the position).
- The applicant's interest in serving in and capacity to hold a public position (how they would represent the Municipality).
- How the applicant would engage the public (e.g. communities/issues of interest).
- How the applicant would engage with the Peterborough Public Library and other local arts, culture, and heritage organizations and institutions.
- How the applicant might use digital engagement and social media platforms to interact with the community and advocate for the literary arts.

Nomination Package (cont'd)



6. Support Materials

- Five examples of work from the past 10 years, as outlined in the Eligibility Criteria and the Support Material Section of the Nomination Form.

7. Artist Bio (maximum 250 words)

Nomination Package (cont'd)



Nomination forms can be found online at www.ecthree.org, and must be submitted to peterboroughpoetlaureate@gmail.com.

If you require assistance with completing or submitting the nomination form, please contact EC3 to request support or accommodations.

Selection Process



Phase 1: Review and Assessment of Nomination Packages

All eligible nominations are reviewed by a Selection Committee composed of jurors that will include:

- Peers who have achieved excellence in the field
- A City representative (e.g. library staff member)
- Citizens who are related professionals in the field (teachers, educators, etc.)
- The previous Poet Laureate (if they qualify under the Conflict of Interest guidelines)

The Selection Committee will choose three finalists for the shortlist of candidates to be interviewed.

Selection Process



Phase 2: Selection Committee Interviews

Shortlisted nominees will take part in a finalist's interview with the Selection Committee, to take place virtually or in person.

The Committee will then select the Poet Laureate.

Selection Process



Recommendation and Approval

EC3 will report the outcome of the selection process to the municipal Arts and Culture Advisory Committee (ACAC), who will then approve the appointment of the Poet Laureate.

Notification

Shortlisted nominees and the approved Poet Laureate will be notified by EC3.

Selection Committee



- The Selection Committee (the jurors) will be inclusive and reflect the diverse nature of our community.
- The Committee will consider all eligible nominees and will endeavour to reach unanimous decisions in the selection process.
- In occasions where unanimity is not achieved, a decision may be reached by majority vote.
- In cases where a suitable candidate is not found within the field of nominations, the Peterborough Poet Laureate Selection Committee reserves the right to make no appointment in any given selection period.

Assessment Criteria



- **Community and Professional Standing:** Contribution to field and impact of work.
- **Excellence in Practice:** Quality of work in relation to expectations of position. Candidate has demonstrated significant and outstanding achievement.
- **Citizen Engagement:** Preparedness to accept the responsibilities of the position. Candidate is accustomed to public presentation, citizen engagement, and community outreach and will create enthusiasm for the Poet Laureate Program.
- **Goals and Objectives:** The Candidate's goals for the two-year program are realistic, achievable, and relevant to the Program and the City of Peterborough.

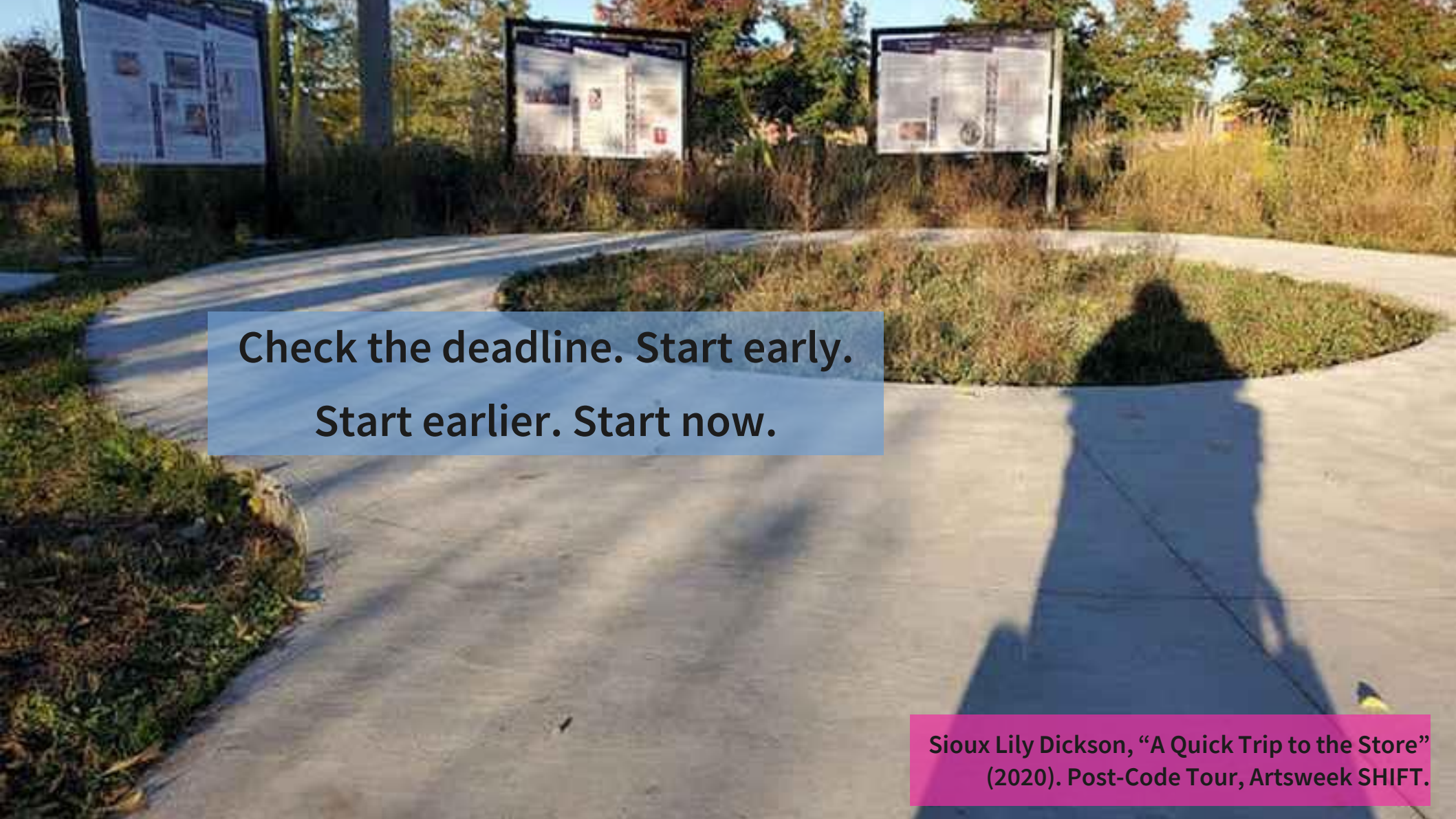
Important Dates



- **March 21, 2024:** Poet Laureate Program Launch, Nominations Open
- **April 22, 2024:** Nominations Due (at 11:59pm)
- **June 2024 to June 2026:** Poet Laureate's Term

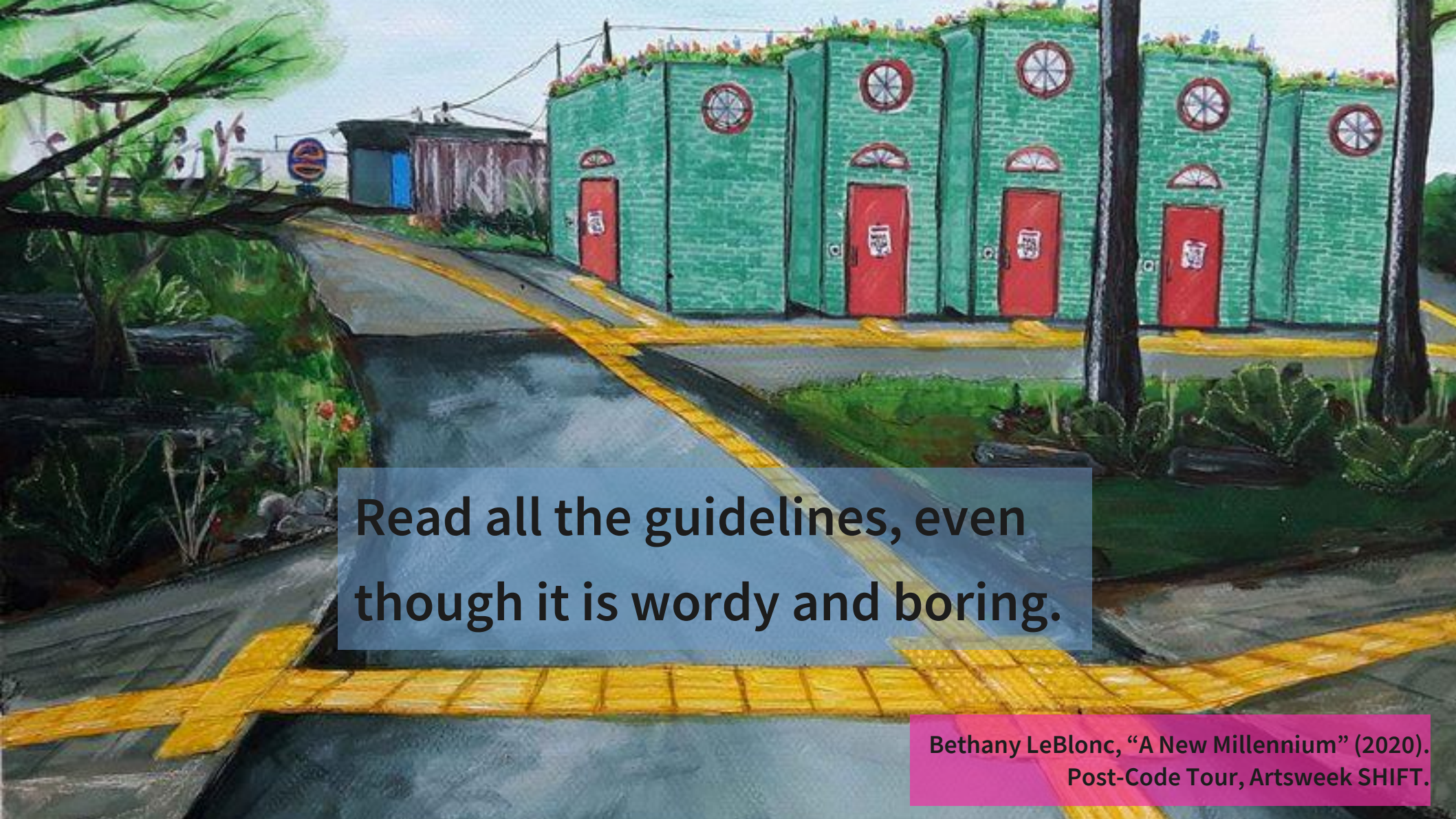
Tips & Tricks





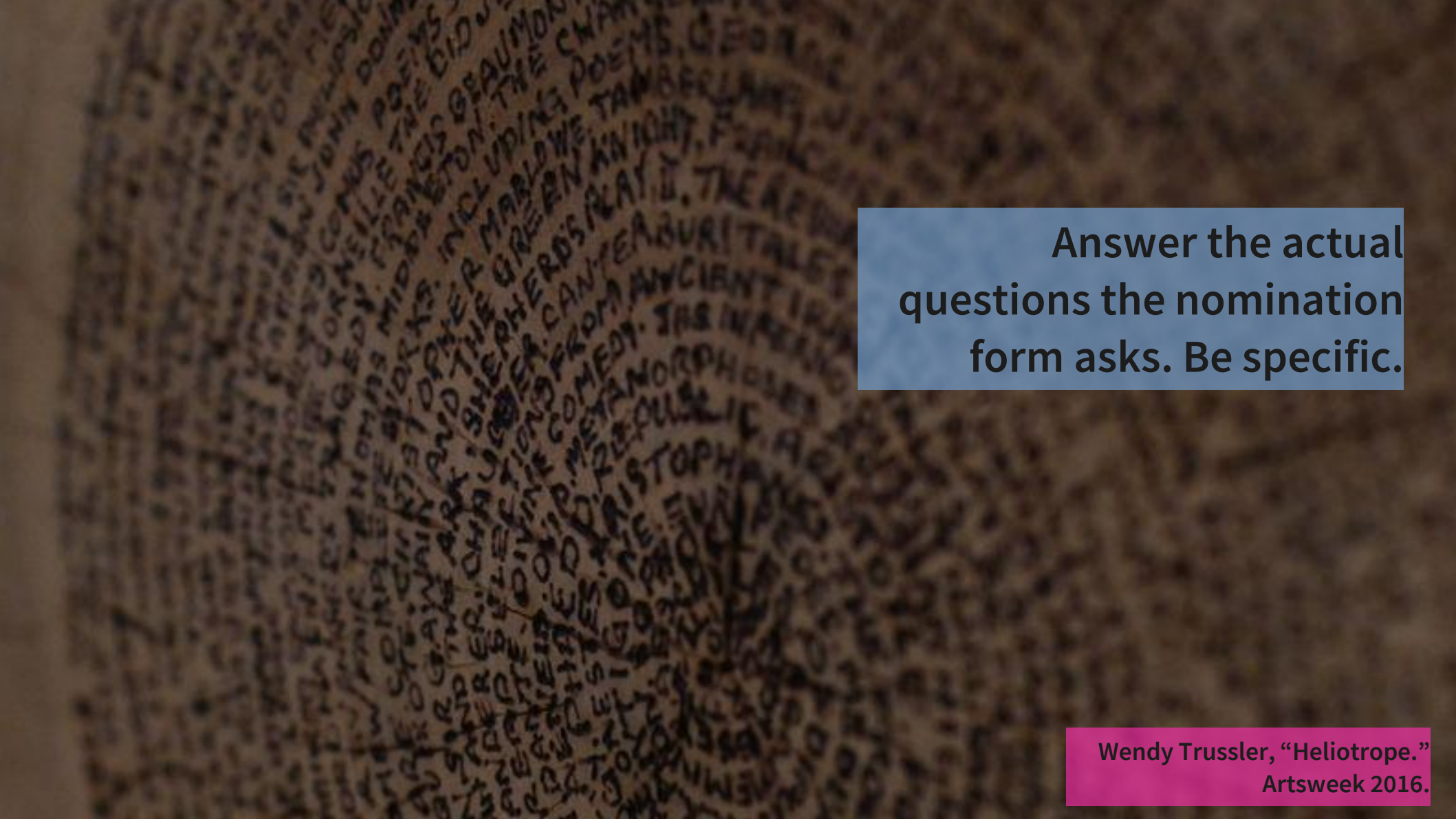
**Check the deadline. Start early.
Start earlier. Start now.**

**Sioux Lily Dickson, “A Quick Trip to the Store”
(2020). Post-Code Tour, Artsweek SHIFT.**



Read all the guidelines, even though it is wordy and boring.

Bethany LeBlonc, "A New Millennium" (2020).
Post-Code Tour, Artsweek SHIFT.



Answer the actual questions the nomination form asks. Be specific.

Wendy Trussler, "Heliotrope."
Artsweek 2016.



Be prepared to write many drafts of your nomination.

“Sorry About What Happened at the Mall,” Artsweek 2018.



Pay attention to the evil
word count in your drafts.

Save and print.

Take-Out Poetry Cart, Artsweek 2018.



Be clear and concise.
Avoid jargon and art-speak.

Shaun Phuah reading at The Theatre on King
(2020). Downtown, Artsweek SHIFT.

**Get help. Get feedback.
Absolutely get someone to
proofread and double check
the checklist.**



Porchapalooza, Artsweek 2016.



Double check for completeness and consistency:

- Have you used the checklist?
- Is information accurate and up to date?

“The Flying Canoe,” Artsweek 2018.

Contact EC3 at electriccitycc@gmail.com with questions and/or concerns.

If you are Deaf or hard of hearing, we can assist with your application.

We are here to HELP!!!



Backyard readings (2020).
Downtown, Artsweek SHIFT.

Any questions?

Contact

Su Ditta

Executive Director, EC3

(705) 749-9101

electriccitycc@gmail.com

www.ecthree.org

