



COMMUNICATION UPDATE

TO:	Mayor and Members City Council
DATE:	January 18, 2024
SUBJECT:	Poet in Place 2024-2025 (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
SUBMITTED BY:	John Summers Acting Director, Tourism and Culture Planning and Economic Development Department
SIGNATURE:	

The purpose of this Communication Update is to advise Council that Lishai Peel has been selected as Hamilton's first Poet in Place.

Lishai Peel is a Hamilton based writer, spoken word artist and community-engaged consultant with over a decade of experience working in the arts and culture sector. As well as being a working writer, Lishai has freelanced for various institutions and youth serving organizations, supporting them to think through matters of access, representation and equity in the arts. Lishai's approach is fuelled by a recognition that people know what is best for their communities and any work that is carried out, programming or advocacy, must be deeply rooted in local contexts.

As a spoken word artist, Lishai has performed in over 300 venues across the country. Her writing has won awards with The Malahat Review, The Vancouver Writers Fest and the Writers' Trust of Canada. Her essays and poems have been published by Book*hug Press, Room Magazine, Lilith Magazine, Hey Alma, Middleground Magazine, Arc Poetry Magazine, The Malhat Review, Illanot Review and others. Lishai has an MFA in creative writing from Guelph University and works as the Executive Director of gritLIT, Hamilton's festival of readers and writers.

All applications to the Poet in Place program were reviewed by a selection committee comprised of poets, literary artists and individuals with project and placemaking experience. During the adjudication process, Lishai's application achieved the highest score and her work received high praise. In particular, the selection committee

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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recognized her poetic voice, impactful performance ability, and her experience in creative project management. They also noted the high level of community engagement demonstrated in Lishai's application and the potential to build connections between the public and the poetic arts through the power of words.

In the role of Poet in Place for 2024-2025, Lishai Peel will perform original works at select city events and programs, enhance public spaces through poetry projects and deliver workshops in partnership with the Hamilton Public Library. Rooted in creative placemaking, the Poet in Place program will create meaningful opportunities for Hamiltonians to engage with the poetic arts.

For more information about the Poet in Place program visit hamilton.ca/PoetInPlace or please contact Sarah Ehmke, Senior Project Manager – Placemaking and Animation by email at Sarah.Ehmke@hamilton.ca or by phone at (905) 546-2424 Ext. 7505.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Not Applicable.