

Full Name

Keiko O'Leary

Residential Address

[REDACTED]

City

Campbell

State

California

Zip code

95008

Daytime Phone

[REDACTED]

Evening Phone

Email

[REDACTED]

Resident/Employer

Resident

Employer

Cupertino Address

I am at least 21 years old

Yes

I am an active poet and have been published or been publicly recognized for my contributions to poetry

Yes

I am the sole creator of the attached poems

Yes

I am a resident or currently employed in Cupertino for at least 2 consecutive years

Yes

I am comfortable speaking in public. If speech impaired, I may delegate reading tasks to qualified speaker

Yes

Keiko O’Leary

www.KeikoOLEary.com

Objective

- To serve as the Poet Laureate of Cupertino for the 2023-2025 term.

Selected Publications

- *Your Writing Matters: 34 Quick Essays to Get Unstuck and Stay Inspired*, Thinking Ink Press, August 2022
- “Magnetic Charging Cable,” *Cesura*, 2021
- “The Real Willie Blake,” *FICTION Silicon Valley*, November 2016
- “White Mice” short story on a postcard, Thinking Ink Press, 2015
- “Give the Gift of Unconditional Love: Write,” *My Kitchen Table*, 2013

Performances

- Cupertino Poet Laureate events, invited speaker
 - Multilingual Prose & Poetry Night, May 2018
 - Community Poetry Night, various
- Play On Words San José
 - “Recipe for Hamburgers, 1985,” performed by Francheska Loy, June 2021
 - “The Golden Beauty of Carlina Johansen, Author of *Milliner’s Dreams*” performed by Alex Draa, January 2016.
- Flash Fiction Forum, selected reader
 - “Through the Missing Brick,” February 2022
 - “Chemistry Class,” January 2019
 - “Decisions of Great Pith and Moment,” March 2017

Writing Activities and Memberships

- Founder and organizer, Write to the End writing group, 2004-present www.WriteToTheEnd.com
- Member, Poetry Center San José, 2004-present www.PCSJ.org
- Co-founder and editor, Thinking Ink Press, 2014-present www.ThinkingInkPress.com
- Advisory board member, Prolific Writers Life, 2021-present www.ProlificWriters.life

Experience

- Assisted Cupertino Poets Laureate Ann Muto and Kaecey McCormick in various projects, including:
 - Designing and binding a poetry collection for Cupertino McClellan Ranch Preserve Library
 - Instructing and assisting participants to create their own handbound poetry books
 - Facilitating feedback groups for poetry revision
 - Organizing a multilingual poetry event conceptualized by Jing Jing Yang
- Taught a year-long series of poetry workshops at the Sunnyvale Library, including topics such as understanding poetry, editing poetry, reciting poetry, and writing haiku as a mindfulness practice.

Honors

- Keynote speaker at the one-year anniversary celebration of the multilingual poetry journal *Tsmadim*, 2020
- Served on the panel of judges for Barnes & Noble Stevens Creek poetry contest, 2006

Languages

- Fluent in English and Spanish

Education

- Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Computer Science, University of California, Santa Cruz, 2000

More stuff I could use instead

- Wrote poetry on demand at Anne and Mark's Art Party, September 2016
- Mentored seventh grade writers at Discovery Charter School, 2021-2022
- Competent in Italian
- Basic knowledge of Klingon
- Spoke about writing groups at Barnes & Noble Educator Reception, 2006
- "Ghost Window," October 2020 Flash Fiction Forum
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Rorschach Moon

The moon today: a half moon, like poster paint on butcher paper,
not a half circle, but this more organic shape,
like it's trying to be a circle but failing.
It's like this next card the doctor shows me: multicolored, complex,
chaotic, not symmetrical. "What might this be?"
It looks like a dragon, like a tree on roller skates,
like anything you want, but I stop saying more possibilities
because I've been trained to be polite, and unending
creativity is not polite. What do they diagnose
about people who don't stop,
who misunderstand the test as an invitation
to see anything they want, keep on
seeing things, more things, forever, because really you can,
can't everyone? But I know
how to be polite: "How many do you want me to see?"
The corner of his smile moves. "As many as you see."
I assess his face. "Those are the main ones." He takes
the card, shows me another. This one, too, could contain a moon.



Reading *Alturas de Macchu Pichhu*

Neruda addresses

the stone city as a person:

He subido hasta ti.

I read in my lowest voice,
Alex's head on my shoulder,
his hands limp and forgotten in his lap,
his eyes closed. He looks like a child,
his cheek round and smooth,
like leavened bread,
his face open.

Our unused wine glasses shine
in Neruda's light:

Rosa de piedra; pan de piedra.

Alex's real name

is Alejandro. He remembers Spanish
only as a sound, the echo
of his grandmother's voice:

Santa María, madre de Dios, ruega por nosotros.

He begs me to read out loud to him
And not tell him what it means.



Recipe for Hamburgers, 1985

Get the teriyaki sauce from the fridge.
Only Mom knows how to make the teriyaki sauce, and
Only with her special container.
Form the ground beef into patties.


Only Mom knows how to make the teriyaki sauce,
And she calls the ground beef “hamburger.”
Place the patties on the baking pan,
already covered in tinfoil.

Mom calls the ground beef “hamburger,”
And the teriyaki sauce has no sugar.
All baking pans are already covered in tinfoil:
All meat is teriyaki, except for fish.

The teriyaki sauce has no sugar.
Mom grates ginger and garlic; pours sherry and *shoyu*.
All meat is teriyaki, except for fish.
Mom knows the proportions, measured by the container.

Mom grates ginger and garlic; pours sherry and *shoyu*.
Pour teriyaki sauce on the patties until it's enough.
Mom knows the proportions, measured by the container.
The kids from school eat hamburgers at McDonald's.

Pour teriyaki sauce on the patties until it's enough.
Bake the patties until they're done.
The kids from school eat hamburgers at McDonald's.
Remove from oven. Serve with rice.



Chemistry Class

Walt Barstow sat next to me in chemistry class.
“Sure, there’s a cross on the wall,” said Mr. Pangburn,
“but God created electrons and protons, and
neutrons, each after its kind. And He created
magnesium, which burns so bright you can’t look at it,
and sodium, which we can’t have at school because
it could explode. And He set the atoms in the heavens
and on earth to combine according to His eternal
purpose, with nothing wasted, the great mathematics
of His will made rock and leaf and star.”

Every day Walt’s amber curls combined with his eternal face.
His mechanical pencil made magic runes on ruled pages,
balanced acids and bases, his eyes so bright I couldn’t look at them.
Instead I watched Mr. Pangburn as he illustrated
the sharing of electrons to bring forth something new. I knew
the feeling of everything canceling out, neutralizing into salt,
like the sparkling titration that one day happened in Walt’s mind,
the sudden swirling chemicals that made
him speak in rhyme, proclaim that he would save
us, that the angels were communicating through a wire in his brain.

His mother wasn’t home the day
the angels told him to sacrifice himself.
He called 911. He knew
at least that much, that day,
that the voices were molecules,
that he had to pick up the phone.
A week later it wasn’t the same:

the angels spoke, he listened, that was all.

The next day in class, we sat in our ordered rows,
Walt’s desk empty next to me, the periodic
table of the elements staring down from the wall
like some science-y version of the Ten Commandments,
telling us what could and couldn’t be.

To Whom It May Concern

I am writing to recommend Keiko O'Leary for the position of Cupertino Poet Laureate (CPL)

I have known Keiko O'Leary for 6 years ever since I met her in the Poetry Memoir Workshops presented by my predecessor Amanda Williamson (3^d Cupertino CPL). She was such a regular participant, I thought she was a Cupertino resident. When I became the 4th Cupertino CPL, Keiko assisted me to plan and implement some of my objectives as CPL.

The following are specific projects that we completed together:

- Creation of individual handmade poetry memoir books for participants to take home at the end of the series of workshops.
- Design of and completion of the binding for the nature poem anthology "gifted" to the Cupertino McClellan Ranch Preserve Library. The anthology expressed the gratitude of the CPL program to the Preserve staff for leading nature walks and for the sharing of classroom space.

Keiko has always been generous with her time and talents. There is no doubt in my mind that she would be an excellent addition to the list of dedicated poets who have served as Cupertino Poets Laureate.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] if you have any further questions or requests.

Regards,

Ann Muto

Past Cupertino Poet Laureate (2016-2017)

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Cupertino Poet Laureate program

May 27, 2022

Dear Cupertino Poet Laureate Representative,

Keiko and I met at one of her Thinking Ink Press events in San Jose in 2015. Since then we have continued to bump into each other when we were leading and participating in various writing workshops and events. We were destined to become colleagues. I was impressed with Keiko's talent and invited her to lead writing workshops for Prolific Writers Life (PWL), a company I founded in 2019.

Keiko has been leading PWL virtual workshops for writers since July 2020. She has a following of peers who show up for anything she offers because they know how much wisdom and creativity she has to offer. I recall one of her haiku workshops where she gave everyone a taste of haiku and then provided guidance on how we could write our own haikus. And we did. And it was surprising how fun it was. Keiko enjoys teaching and learning, and she knows how to make it engaging for everyone involved. She knows how to break things down into manageable steps so that everyone can follow along.

Having witnessed firsthand Keiko's writing ability, teaching talent, and publishing expertise, I can say with conviction that she's one of the most talented authors I know. She has natural talent and she's a lifelong learner always on the lookout for ways to improve her craft. She keeps her skills sharp and up to date, not because she has to, but because she wants to. She has top-rate writing, communication, and teaching skills.

Keiko is delightful. She knows how to deal with various personalities. I've personally witnessed her working with writers of all genres, as well as eccentric experts in the writing industry. Despite what's going on, she remains tactful, professional, and calm.

As the Founder of Prolific Writers Life, I can attest that we would not have achieved our current level of success without Keiko on our advisory board. She is a valued asset and is likewise well qualified for the Cupertino Poet Laureate position. Keiko demonstrates flexibility and resourcefulness in helping us accomplish our goals and moving targets. She's a team player. I tell Keiko often how much I love working with her because it's the truth.

I highly recommend Keiko for the Cupertino Poet Laureate position. I guarantee she'll exceed your expectations.

Sincerely,

Lorraine Haataia

Lorraine Haataia, Ph.D.
Founder, Prolific Writers Life

