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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ARTHUR SZE WINS \$50,000
JACKSON POETRY PRIZE**

Poet hyper-awake to fact that “we cannot act if we are asleep”

New York, NY – Poets & Writers announced today that **Arthur Sze** is the winner of this year’s Jackson Poetry Prize. The \$50,000 prize is given annually to an American poet of exceptional talent who deserves wider recognition. The award is designed to provide what all poets need: time and the encouragement to write.

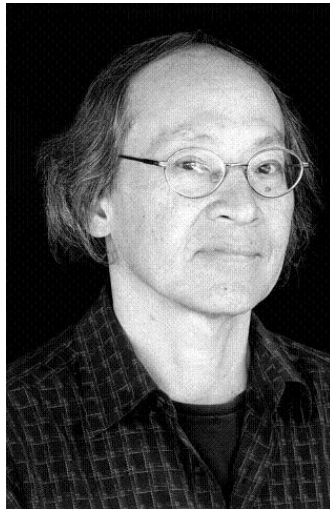


Photo by Mariana Cook

Mr. Sze is the seventh winner of the award. He was selected by three esteemed judges—the poets **Reginald Gibbons**, **Natasha Trethewey**, and **C. D. Wright**. In selecting Sze, the judges’ released the following citation:

Everything can happen in the teeming space of a stanza by Arthur Sze; almost everything does. The profane and the glorious are never far apart; more often than not they are contained in the same couplet. And the extraordinary invariably manifests itself in the ordinary or as he writes, “Revelation never comes as a fern uncoiling/a frond in mist; it comes when I trip on a root,/slap a mosquito on my arm.” Sze specializes in the serial or linked poem. He specializes in irresolvable contradictions and the simultaneity of their circumstance. He is deft with improbable metamorphoses. He is undeterred

from the uninflected actual, “When//Robin’s coworkers were terminated, she left/ her communications job to groom horses.” Little escapes his attention, be it a particular mushroom camouflaged in the forest floor or light lifting off the length of a power line while a sous-chef slices ginger and scallions. All that is teeming is specific and nothing is unrelated. His “mind aligns such slivers.” Sze is hyper-awake to a chance that a petal may tip the balance of life; to the fact that “we cannot act if we are asleep.” Through eight collections of poetry, translations of Chinese poetry and the recently edited *Chinese Writers on Writing*, Arthur Sze has proven to be one of our most patient, painstaking, and prepared observers. The impression of land and sky on mind and mind on the mess we tend to make of things is seldom brought to such an exquisite degree of awareness. In exacting language, Sze has brought his gleaming perceptions and looming concerns to a rare quality of order.

Sze is the author of eight books of poetry, including *The Ginkgo Light*, *Quipu*, *The Redshifting Web*, and *Archipelago*. A new collection, *Compass Rose*, is forthcoming from Copper Canyon Press in 2014. He is also a translator and editor and has published *The Silk Dragon: Translations from the Chinese* and edited *Chinese Writers on Writing*. His previous awards include a Lannan Literary Award, a Lila Wallace-Reader’s Digest Writers’ Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and two National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing fellowships. A professor emeritus at the Institute of American Indian Arts, Sze lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico and is a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets.

A reading and reception will be held in New York City on May 15, at which time the award will be officially presented to Mr. Sze. For more information contact rschuder@pw.org.

The Jackson Poetry Prize, which is awarded by Poets & Writers, is made possible by a donation from the Liana Foundation and named for the **John and Susan Jackson** family. It is one of the most substantial awards given to an American poet. There is no application process; poets are nominated by a panel of their peers who remain anonymous. Previous recipients of the Jackson Poetry Prize are **Henri Cole** (2012), **James Richardson** (2011), **Harryette Mullen** (2010), **Linda Gregg** (2009), **Tony Hoagland** (2008), and **Elizabeth Alexander** (2007).

About Poets & Writers

Poets & Writers is the nation’s largest nonprofit literary organization serving creative writers. Founded in 1970, the organization’s mission is to foster the professional development of poets and writers, to promote communication throughout the literary community, and to help create an environment in which literature can be appreciated by the widest possible public.

Poets & Writers accomplishes its mission through *Poets & Writers Magazine*, an award-winning bimonthly publication; pw.org, a website that provides trustworthy advice, information, and a lively online community for writers; Readings/Workshops, which pays writers fees for giving readings and leading workshops throughout New York and California, as well as in eight cities outside those states; and by sponsoring awards that honor and encourage writers. In addition to the Jackson Poetry Prize, Poets & Writers sponsors the Maureen Egen Writers Exchange Award, and the Amy Award. Learn more at pw.org.