



City Council

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Lafayette City Council Introduced to
Lamorinda Arts Council Poet Laureate Amy Alysa Glynn**

LAFAYETTE, CALIF., Apr. 26, 2018—The Lamorinda Arts Council (LAC) introduced Poet Laureate for Lafayette and Orinda Amy Alysa Glynn to the Lafayette City Council at its meeting on Monday, April 23. After a three month search by LAC, Glynn, a Lafayette resident, was chosen by an independent selection committee to serve the two-year term as Poet Laureate.

Glynn is a poet, essayist, and fiction writer whose work appears widely in journals and anthologies including *The Best American Poetry*. She has been a James Merrill House Fellow, a Bread Loaf Orion Environmental Writers' Conference Scholar, and a Mona van Duyn Scholar at the Sewanee Writers' Conference. She has co-curated "Favorite Poem Project" readings with former U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky at Amherst College in 2015 and the Head-Royce School in Oakland in 2017.

During her two-year term as Poet Laureate, Glynn, who receives a yearly \$3,000 honorarium from LAC, will be called upon to write poems of occasion for community and civic events. She will also support LAC's Poet Laureate Program of activities for all ages in the community and schools, and serve as a liaison with literary organizations. For more information about LAC and its program, please visit www.lamorindaarts.org/volunteer, and check the Poet Laureate box to join us in organizing poetry events and activities.

Glynn was received by the City Council and read a poem she composed to the Councilmembers and the public during the meeting.

Chamise
Adenostoma fasciculatum

There is no wind. The chaparral has gone
to decadence. And the sun, at such a height,
leaves the sky desiccated, bleached ash-white.
A concentrated brightness, an indrawn

gathering of the light, as if the whole
world were enclosed within a camera
obscura, an inverted replica
universe cynosured through a pinhole.

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Even the soil is aching from the heat;
a cracking bed of serpentine where few
species contrive to grow, and those that do
sustain themselves on nothing but complete

famine and drought. More than sustain: they flout
the whole system, responding to the mean
conditions with a kind of libertine
excess, oiling themselves elaborately, without

a care for consequence. Inviting fire.
Anointing their dry leaves with aromatic
resins just to inspire a dramatic
response. Spontaneous combustion. Dire

consequences, but they've thought of that
too, developing at once two kinds of seed:
one sprouts in wet soil. One is only freed
if the achene is scorched. This habitat

requires certain adaptations. And
rather than being meager in return
for meagerness, why not agree to burn?
Say there is nothing you cannot withstand.

(From *A Modern Herbal*, published by Measure Press, 2013, reprinted with permission of the author.
The poem first appeared in Orion magazine.)

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