

# What's New at the 2018 FisherPoets Gathering

**E**ven if this is your 21st consecutive FisherPoets Gathering, you can be sure, once again, it'll be like no other. For one thing, 18 new voices join several scores of returning fisherpoets this year. Imagine the collective experience they bring.

From around the great Gulf of Alaska come Catie Bursch, Georgeanna Heaverly, Nancy Lord, Harry Moore, Marie Rose and Oceana Wills. John Mellor has come up from San Francisco Bay. From around the Salish Sea, for the first time come Bob Gudmundson, Marty McCallum, Philip Randolph Patten, Mike Scott, Mark Tarabochia, Mark Titus and Jonathan White. From closer to home Bruce Jones, Greg Neitzel, LeeAnn Schmelzenbach and Kevin Scribner have drifted in off the Columbia.

We've spread our special event workshops among new and iconic Astoria venues for people to enjoy. Clatsop Community College's renovated Patriot Hall, the Clatsop County Heritage Museum and Studio 11 host us this year for the first time. You'll have new opportunities to investigate more workshops Friday and Saturday afternoons this year, as well.

We continue to offer a seventh reading venue Saturday evening. This year Astoria's historic Labor Temple Cafe has invited us in. Though the event center is closed, the stunning and spacious Liberty Theatre hosts a full schedule of readings both nights, including the Gathering's first-ever juried poetry slam "Poetry at the Line." Let's see how that goes.

Oregon Public Broadcasting is coming this year to broadcast its weekly show "State of Wonder" noon to 1 p.m. Saturday from the Wet Dog Cafe, the original home of the FisherPoets Gathering. We'll see how that goes, too.

And, like most years, we've got a new Gearshack address. At 1174 Commercial St., you'll find it next door to last year's. Ray Troll's terrific FisherPoets Gathering T-shirt is for sale again there.

The 2018 FisherPoets Gathering is bigger than ever again, and at some venues the first readings have had to move south to 4 p.m. Our film sessions and open mic are a little earlier, too. So study that schedule carefully, pin that button to your chest and miss as little as you can. When it's over, you'll have some stories of your own. Thanks for coming.



ALEX PAJUNAS PHOTO

Sierra Golden, of Seattle, Washington, will perform at this year's FisherPoets Gathering.

## "Lashing Down Lines in a Midnight Storm"

By Maggie Bursch, fisherpoet

I cling to the heaving rail and pray to god  
that I won't die this way, with skin so soft  
and halite crystals growing in my hair.  
Then barely hanging on, I swear  
and look into the filthy brine below.  
Why is it that they say it's green and blue  
when for days it's boiled every shade of black  
like it's been drinking and drinking makes it mad.

I tie the line that's been banging at my head  
And wish these tangled waves looked less like bed.  
I pull up the blanket and slip into the deep.  
How is it I expect myself to sleep  
With a drunk man smashing, smashing at my boat  
And all these currents rising in my throat?

## The FisherPoets Gathering thanks its 2018 silent auction donors

Come by the FisherPoets Gathering Gearshack (1174 Commercial St.) and have a look. Bidding starts Friday, Feb. 23, at 1 p.m. and ends Saturday, Feb. 24, at 4 p.m.

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