

# Poet and Vietnam War veteran Michael Closz receives award from Marine Corps Heritage Foundation

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*The Marine Corps Heritage Foundation has honored poet Michael Closz for his service in the Vietnam War and his poetry collection.*

TRIANGLE, VIRGINIA, USA, May 11, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Marine Corps Heritage Foundation](#) has honored poet Michael Closz for his service in the Vietnam War and the compelling narrative portrayed in his poetry collection [The Haunted Garden](#).

The Foundation recognized Closz with the Robert A. Gannon Award for poetry during its 40th Annual Awards Dinner on April 30 at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Virginia outside of the Marine Corps Base Quantico.

"The Foundation's Annual Awards are a mark of distinction for professionals and talented artists who dedicate themselves to exploring the rich history, traditions, and culture of the Marine Corps, with accuracy and authenticity," according to Maj. General James W. Lukeman, USMC (Ret.), president and CEO of the Foundation. Among the award winners was the former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who received the Lejeune Recognition for Exemplary Leadership Award. The Commandant of the Marine Corps was among a number of notable guests in attendance.

Closz was nominated by a fellow Marine Corps officer and selected following a rigorous four months of deliberation from the judge panel for the award.

Closz' *The Haunted Garden* speaks to his time serving in war-era Vietnam, depicting the country as a metaphorical garden and a haunted paradise. The poet's descriptive language and thoughtful imagery display and explore his complex relationship with this garden and its inhabitants. Throughout the collection, Closz offers an honest and impactful perspective of the nature of the war in Vietnam, and the experiences of the veterans who returned to the United States postwar. His words connect, challenge, and reflect upon his memories of his service, and upon the realities and aftermath of life, and his sense of self, after his return.

"I feel excited and humbled to receive this award for my work. I feel invigorated writing poetry—I feel like I've accomplished something, like I'm constructing something," said Closz. "It was very difficult integrating back into society when I returned home from Vietnam. Sometimes I feel like I

still haven't landed on my feet. Poetry has been a meaningful outlet for me to channel those feelings and I hope that my work helps readers to feel enlightened and gives insight for those that may have questions regarding that time in history, while reflecting upon their own perspective of war."

His gripping work transports readers into the jungles of Vietnam, reverberating with Closz' thoughts and fears. "He knows my every move / Regardless of the masking rain / Or its intensity. The downpour blurs my vision / But I can still see his eyes in the jungle, smiling. I look again and he's gone; Perhaps another apparition, another Waking dream. Silence now, the rain has stopped / And the jungle is steaming," he writes in his poem "Last Watch" in the collection.

Closz holds an MBA in finance, and an undergraduate degree in physical sciences and literature. He has held executive positions with AT&T, Sprint, Fortress Technologies, Closz Management Company, and Global Information Security in Moscow. In the Vietnam War, Closz was an infantry platoon commander with the First Marine Division, located adjacent to the seaside city of Danang. After spending three months in the naval hospital in Guam, he returned to Vietnam to serve in a staff function in Division Headquarters.

The Haunted Garden is available now through Amazon.  
ISBN 9798598380802

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