

California Poet Laureate Lee Herrick's 'My California' Selected for America250 Time Capsule

Poem will represent California's creative spirit and be preserved outside Independence Hall until 2276

SACRAMENTO, CA, UNITED STATES, July 2, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- California Poet Laureate [Lee Herrick](#)'s poem "My California" has been selected as one of seven official California contributions to the America250 time capsule, Governor Gavin Newsom and First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom [announced](#) in celebration of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

The time capsule will be buried outside Independence Hall in Philadelphia on July 4, 2026, and will not be opened until 2276.

Written by California's current poet laureate, "My California" captures the diversity, imagination, vitality, and promise of the California experience. Herrick, a two-time appointee of Governor Newsom, celebrates the spirit of the Golden State and the Central Valley — the agricultural capital of the United States — through a poem that speaks to place, belonging, creativity, and the many voices that shape California.

"'My California' was inspired by my deep belief that every person's voice is beautiful and important. California's creative spirit is fueled by our diversity and imagination, ideals held dear by the [California Arts Council](#). I hope that future Californians and Americans always have the arts and continue to hope, dream, and create," said Herrick.

Herrick has worked closely with the California Arts Council through statewide poetry initiatives, including the California Poetry Out Loud recitation contest for high-school students and Our California, Herrick's cultural writing project inviting California residents to share their own



Lee Herrick, California Poet Laureate, emcee of California Arts Council's 50th Celebration

creative expressions about their town, city, or state.

For the California Arts Council, the inclusion of “My California” affirms poetry’s enduring power to preserve memory, express identity, and connect Californians across generations.

“Lee Herrick’s ‘My California’ is a beautiful and deeply fitting contribution to this historic time capsule because it portrays a unique experience and perspective through a lens that reflects the multitudes of experiences and perspectives that are possible within this amazingly kaleidoscopic state of ours,” said California Arts Council Executive Director Danielle Brazell. “For the California Arts Council, this moment is a powerful reminder that the arts are not only part of California’s history — they are essential to how we carry our stories, our values, and our hopes into the future.”



As California Poet Laureate, Herrick serves as an advocate for poetry across the state, inspiring new generations of literary artists and helping Californians experience poetry as a living, accessible, and powerful form of creative expression. His selection for the America250 time capsule underscores the importance of the arts in documenting California’s past, reflecting its present, and speaking to future generations.

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*Danielle Brazell, Executive
Director, California Arts
Council*

The selection also comes as the California Arts Council marks 50 years of championing arts, culture, and creative expression as essential to California’s communities, identity, and future.

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About the California Arts Council

Members of the California Arts Council include: Roxanne Messina Captor, Chair; Nicola Miner,

Vice Chair; Roque Barros; Caleb Duarte; Vicki Estrada; Leah Goodwin; Roy Hirabayashi; Alex Israel; Dorka Keehn; Phil Mercado; Rick Stein. Learn more at www.arts.ca.gov.

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About California Poet Laureate

The California Poet Laureate is a Governor's appointee whose mission is to advocate for the art of poetry in classrooms and boardrooms across the state, to inspire an emerging generation of literary artists, and to educate all Californians about the many poets and authors who have influenced our great state through creative literary expression.

Over the course of a two-year term, the Poet Laureate provides public readings in urban and rural locations across California, educates civic and state leaders about the value of poetry and creative expression, and undertakes a significant cultural project, with one of its goals being to bring poetry to students who might otherwise have little opportunity to be exposed.

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