



MEDIA ALERT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mayor Eric Garcetti Names Robin Coste Lewis As Poet Laureate of Los Angeles

**Award-winning poet is nationally recognized as a major figure of
contemporary literature**

LOS ANGELES — Mayor Eric Garcetti announced today that Robin Coste Lewis, winner of the National Book Award, is the new Poet Laureate of the City of Los Angeles.

As an official ambassador of L.A.'s arts community, Lewis will promote and celebrate the written word, and represent the city's rich literary scene.

"Robin is a fearless writer whose lyricism reclaims history for people who feel forgotten, and gives voice to those who feel silenced," said Mayor Garcetti. "Los Angeles is fortunate to be represented by such a powerful artist. She will push boundaries and challenge us to rethink our perspectives."

The Los Angeles Poet Laureate Program is a collaboration between the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) and the Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL). Its aim is to enhance the presence and appreciation of poetry and the literary arts in Los Angeles, and to engage Angelenos who have limited exposure to poetry and other forms of expressive writing.

"The role of the L.A. Poet Laureate is two-fold: first, to celebrate and curate an ever-widening cross-city appreciation for poetry of all kinds, from all cultures and nations; second, to celebrate the rich and diverse history of Los Angeles poetry," said Lewis. "Poetry is high art, sure, but it is also an exceedingly accessible cultural game that anyone can play. From the elderly to prisoners, I try at all times to remind my students that the only difference between a great poet and a lousy one is practice. Poetry isn't rocket science. It's merely love."



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A native of Compton, Lewis is the author of the award-winning collection *Voyage of the Sable Venus*. She is a writer-in-residence and provost's fellow at the University of Southern California. A finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize and the California Book Award, she has published poems in *The New Yorker*, *The Best American Poetry*, *Lambda Literary Review*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, and *Wide Awake: Poets of Los Angeles and Beyond*.

About the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)

As a leading, progressive arts and cultural agency, DCA empowers Los Angeles' vibrant communities by supporting and providing access to quality visual, literary, musical, performing, and educational arts programming; managing vital cultural centers; preserving historic sites; creating public art; and funding services provided by arts organizations and individual artists.

Formed in 1925, DCA promotes arts and culture as a way to ignite a powerful dialogue, engage LA's residents and visitors, and ensure LA's varied cultures are recognized, acknowledged, and experienced. DCA's mission is to strengthen the quality of life in Los Angeles by stimulating and supporting arts and cultural activities, ensuring public access to the arts for residents and visitors alike.

DCA advances the social and economic impact of arts and culture through grant-making, public art, community arts, and strategic marketing and development. DCA creates and supports arts programming, maximizing relationships with other city agencies, artists, and arts and cultural nonprofit organizations to provide excellent service in neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles.

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