



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**\*\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\*\***

**MAYOR NEWSOM NAMES DIANE DI PRIMA AS 5<sup>TH</sup> SF POET  
LAUREATE**

**San Francisco** – Mayor Gavin Newsom today introduced Diane di Prima as the City's 5<sup>th</sup> Poet Laureate. Poet, prose writer, playwright and teacher, di Prima is the author of 44 books of poetry and prose, She is the author of 44 books of poetry and prose, including *Pieces of a Song* (City Lights, 1990), *Loba: Books I and II* (Penguin, 1998), *Recollections of My Life as a Woman* (Viking, 2001) and the new expanded version of *Revolutionary Letters* (Last Gasp Press of San Francisco, 2007). Her work has been translated into over twenty languages.

“Diane di Prima is a feminist writer, poet, teacher, and one of the few female Beat writers to attain prominence,” said Mayor Newsom. “Her writing reflects the political and social upheavals of the 1960's and 1970's, as well as her personal life, interest in alchemy, and Eastern philosophies. As one of the strongest literary voices of her generation, her work continues to inspire, and we are honored to name her the San Francisco Poet Laureate.”

Born in Brooklyn, New York in 1934, Diane di Prima lived and wrote in Manhattan for many years, where she became known in the Beat movement and other experimental post-World War II literary and art movements. For the past 42 years she has lived and worked in and around San Francisco. She took part in the activities of the Diggers, doing street performance and delivering free food to 25 communes three times a week, studied meditation at the San Francisco Zen Center with Suzuki Roshi and Sanskrit at the California Institute of Asian Studies (now CIIS) and raised her five children.

In addition to her writings, Diane di Prima has done readings and lectures at over 300 universities and major institutions; and has taught at the Zen Center, Naropa Institute School of Poetics, Esalen Institute, New College of California, California College of Arts & Crafts, San Francisco Art Institute, among many others. She has produced plays and poetry used in theatre productions and has performed in several experimental movies in New York in the 1960s.

As Poet Laureate, di Prima anticipates hosting a number of poetry centered events, including readings and discussion, community based poetry readings and informal poetry workshops in the neighborhoods.

Diane di Prima lives and works in the Excelsior District. She teaches private classes and workshops in the Mission, and is currently working on the second volume of her autobiography.

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