



KATIE JACOBSON WRITER IN RESIDENCE:
JOY HARJO

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5pm

presented by

REDCAT

Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater

California Institute of the Arts

CaLARTS

We gratefully acknowledge that we operate on the traditional lands of the Tongva, Tataviam, and Chumash peoples—including the Gabrieleño, Fernandeño, and Ventureño; members of the Takic and Chumashan language families; and other Indigenous peoples who made their homes in and around the area we now call Los Angeles.

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As the CalArts MFA in Creative Writing Program's 2021 Katie Jacobson Writer in Residence, poet, playwright, memoirist, and musician Joy Harjo exemplifies the genre fluidity at the leading edge of literature today. Her relation to the ancestors in all things, her collaborative spirit and commitment to mentorship and empowerment strongly resonates with the kinds of creativity, advocacy and care our program engages and encourages.

Joy Harjo, the 23rd Poet Laureate of the United States, is a member of the Mvskoke Nation and belongs to Oce Vpofv (Hickory Ground). She is only the second poet to be appointed a third term as U.S. Poet Laureate.

Born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, she left home to attend high school at the innovative Institute of American Indian Arts, which was then a Bureau of Indian Affairs school. Harjo began writing poetry as a member of the University of New Mexico's Native student organization, the Kiva Club, in response to Native empowerment movements. She went on to earn her MFA at the Iowa Writers' Workshop and teach English, Creative Writing, and American Indian Studies at University of California-Los Angeles, University of New Mexico, University of Arizona, Arizona State, University of Illinois, University of Colorado, University of Hawai'i, Institute of American Indian Arts, and University of Tennessee, while performing music and poetry nationally and internationally.

Harjo is the author of nine books of poetry, including her most recent, the highly acclaimed [*An American Sunrise*](#) (2019), which was a 2020 Oklahoma Book Award Winner; [*Conflict Resolution for Holy Beings*](#) (2015), which was shortlisted for the Griffin Prize and named a Notable Book of the Year by the American Library Association; and [*In Mad Love and War*](#) (1990), which received an American Book Award and the Delmore Schwartz Memorial Award. Her first memoir, [*Crazy Brave*](#), was awarded the PEN USA Literary Award in Creative Non Fiction and the American Book Award, and her second, *Poet Warrior: A Call for Love and Justice*, is forthcoming from W.W. Norton in Fall 2021.

She has published two award-winning children's books, [*The Good Luck Cat*](#) and [*For a Girl Becoming*](#); a collaboration with photographer/astronomer Stephen Strom; an anthology of North American Native women's writing; several screenplays and collections of prose interviews; and three plays, including [*Wings of Night Sky*](#), [*Wings of Morning Light*](#), [*A Play*](#), which she toured as a one-woman show and was recently published by Wesleyan Press.

She is Executive Editor of the anthology [*When the Light of the World was Subdued, Our Songs Came Through—A Norton Anthology of Native Nations Poetry*](#) and the editor of [*Living Nations, Living Words: An Anthology of First Peoples Poetry*](#), the companion anthology to her [signature Poet Laureate project](#) featuring a sampling of work by 47 Native Nations poets through an interactive ArcGIS Story Map and a newly developed Library of Congress audio collection.

Harjo's awards for poetry include the Ruth Lily Prize for Lifetime Achievement from the Poetry Foundation, the Academy of American Poets Wallace Stevens Award, the New Mexico Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts, a PEN USA Literary Award, Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund Writers' Award, the Poets & Writers Jackson Poetry Prize, a Rasmuson USArtist Fellowship, two NEA fellowships, and a Guggenheim Fellowship.

Harjo performs with her saxophone and flutes, solo and with her band, the Arrow Dynamics Band, and previously with Joy Harjo and Poetic Justice. She/they have toured across the U.S. and in Europe, South America, India, Africa, and Canada. Harjo has produced six award-winning music albums including *Winding Through the Milky Way*, for which she was awarded a NAMMY for Best Female Artist of the year, and her newest album, *I Pray for My Enemies*, with Sunyata Records.

In addition to serving as U.S. Poet Laureate, Harjo is a chancellor of the Academy of American Poets, holds a Tulsa Artist Fellowship, directs For Girls Becoming, an arts mentorship program for young Mvskoke women, and is a founding board member and Chair of the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation. She lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The Creative Writing MFA at CalArts was designed to get over the division between 'creative' and 'critical.' Here, writing is understood as an art form best practiced alongside the other arts, and students benefit from having access to the CalArts community of artists as their peers and fellow travelers. The Program offers graduate students the chance to further develop both their craft and their knowledge base through study across disciplines and forms; its workshops and seminars combine attentive critique of student work with the discussion of readings on and in the various genres—or on special topics particularly relevant to writing today.

The Katie Jacobson Writer in Residence Program was created in memory of our late alum. With this program, we encourage and celebrate the foresight and engagement with the innovative writing arts community that Ms. Jacobson was known for. Each year, the Katie Jacobson Writer in Residence Program brings a prestigious writer to the CalArts campus for a public lecture, a classroom visit, and individual meetings with MFA Creative Writing students, and, in partnership with REDCAT, presents a reading by the Writer in Residence to a wider Los Angeles audience.

The MFA Creative Writing Program would like to thank Jeanine Caltagirone and Dr. Leslie Jacobson for their generosity in making the Katie Jacobson Writer in Residence Program possible, and to Sarah Gray in the CalArts Office of Advancement for her attentive enthusiasm for both this program and the MFA in Creative Writing. Thanks to all the MFA Creative Writing Program faculty— Tisa Bryant, Gabrielle Civil, Brian Evenson, Michael Leong, Anthony McCann, Janet Sarbanes and Matias Viegner— for their hard work and dedication; our students for their commitment, enthusiasm and vision; the faculty and staff of the School of Critical Studies, and its Dean, Amanda Beech.