



Cambridge Public Library to Host “Sweeter than Wine:” A Pre-Valentine’s Day Poetry Reading and Discussion

CAMBRIDGE, MA, January 31—The Cambridge Public Library will host poets Jill McDonough, Rachelle Toarmino, and Tawanda Mulalu for a reading and conversation about the intersection of love and poetry on the eve of Valentine’s Day. On Tuesday, February 13, from 6-8 p.m., the poets will present in the Main Library Lecture Hall (449 Broadway). Each poet will read for about 20 minutes and then join the Library’s own Program and Events Coordinator, Zachary Bond, in a discussion of love poetry. This event is hybrid, and [registration is required](#).

Three-time Pushcart prize winner **Jill McDonough** is the recipient of Lannan, NEA, Cullman Center, and Stegner fellowships. Her most recent book is *American Treasure*. She teaches in the MFA program at the University of Massachusetts Boston and offers College Reading and Writing in Boston jails.

Rachelle Toarmino is a poet from Niagara Falls, New York. She is the author of the poetry collection *That Ex* and several chapbooks, most recently *Comeback* with Foundlings Press. Her poems and essays on poetry have appeared in *American Poetry Review*, *Bennington Review*, *Electric Literature*, *Iterant*, *Literary Hub*, *Poets.org*, *The Slowdown*, and elsewhere. She earned her MFA in poetry at UMass Amherst, where she received an Academy of American Poets Prize. She is also the founding editor-in-chief of *Peach Mag*, the poetry editor of *Traffic East*, and the founder and lead instructor of Beauty School, a new independent poetry school. She lives in Buffalo.

Tawanda Mulalu was born in Gaborone, Botswana, in 1997. His first book, *Please make me pretty, I don’t want to die* was selected by Susan Stewart for the Princeton Series of Contemporary Poets and is listed as a best poetry book of 2022 by *The Boston Globe*, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. His chapbook *Nearness* was chosen as the winner of *The New Delta Review* 2020-21 Chapbook Contest, judged by Brandon Shimoda. Tawanda’s poems appear or are forthcoming in *Brittle Paper*, *Lana Turner*, *Lolwe*, *The New England Review*, *The Paris Review*, *A Public Space* and elsewhere. His writing has been supported by Brooklyn Poets, the Community of Writers, the New York State Summer Writers Institute and Tin House Books. Tawanda has also served as a Ledecy Fellow for *Harvard Magazine* and as the first Diversity and Inclusion Chair of *The Harvard Advocate*. He was recently awarded *The Denver Quarterly’s* 2022 Bin Ramke Prize for Poetry.

“I’m excited for this panel of award-winning poets to address the audience’s burning questions about love poetry, like why do so many people read love poems at weddings? Why do so many Valentine’s Day cards feature rhyming verse? Is there something about love that is inherently poetic? Or is there something about poems that make them suitable vessels for human desire? And what do you need to know right now in order to write a poem so good and so true it will convince your crush to change their mind about you?” says Zachary Bond, the event’s moderator.

This event is cosponsored by the Cambridge Public Library Foundation. Porter Square Books will be on site selling copies of the panelists' books.

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About the Cambridge Public Library:

At the Cambridge Public Library, we welcome all, inspire minds, and empower community. We support a Cambridge where everyone has equitable opportunities to learn, people live their best lives and democracy thrives. The Library's programming provides an opportunity for civic dialogue, conversation, and learning, which includes exploring a wide range of views. [Visit our website](#) to learn more. Subscribe to our email list to stay up to date on our events [here](#).

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