12 Prize-Winning Poets Read New Work from “Lines in Long Array”

First Time the Smithsonian Has Commissioned Works of Poetry

As America continues to recognize the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, the National Portrait Gallery will host 12 contemporary poets for a public reading of their original works in Lines in Long Array: A Civil War Commemoration: Poems and Photographs, Past and Present. The reading, taking place Nov. 16 at 2 p.m. in the museum’s Nan Tucker McEvoy Auditorium, will be moderated by David C. Ward, a co-editor of the book. A book signing will follow; the book is available for purchase in the museum store for $19.95 and as an e-book.


These major American poets were asked to consider the Civil War and provide their own unique interpretation of the events from a contemporary perspective. They produced deeply felt and well-wrought poems on subjects ranging from the history of the conflict to the experience of the common soldier. At the reading, they will debut their new work and also read from other poems about the war. The readings will conclude with a round-table discussion about the war and its lasting impact on American culture and history.

Published by the National Portrait Gallery in collaboration with the Smithsonian’s commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War and distributed by Smithsonian Books, Lines in Long Array is a collection that meditates on this important conflict then and now.