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For Immediate Release

Staten Island Museum Celebrates Women Writers

(Staten Island, NY – February 28, 2018) March is Women’s History Month and the Staten Island Museum will celebrate Staten Island women writers. On **March 11 at 2:00pm** poet Dr. Marguerite Maria Rivas will facilitate an open reading from the works of great Staten Island writers: Audre Lorde, Dorothy Day, and Catherine Murray among others. Readers are encouraged to participate.

An avid researcher, Rivas has also mined the Museum’s History Archives to find women writers whose work has been lost through time and deserves to be rediscovered. Expect to hear the powerful voices of extraordinary women via their works of lyrical intensity from a variety of genres including poetry, fiction, non-fiction, diaries, and historical etiquette.

Free with Museum admission. Suggested \$8 adults, \$5 seniors/students, \$2 children 2-12, free for members and children under 2.

About Dr. Marguerite Maria Rivas

Ms. Rivas is a poet and essayist whose work has been published in numerous journals and anthologies including *The America’s Review*, *Waterways*, *The Mas Tequila Review*, and *Quarterday Review*, among other publications. Her work was recently published in the anthology *Resist Much/Obey Little: Inaugural Poems to the Resistance* (Spuyten Duyvil Press) and featured in *Clarion*, the PSC-CUNY newspaper. Rivas has received grants and awards sponsored by the NYC Dept. of Cultural Affairs, City University of New York, and A Room of Her Own Foundation. Rivas reads her poetry both locally and nationally and is widely regarded as the *de facto poet laureate* of Staten Island. She is the author of a chapbook poems as well as a full-length volume, *Tell No One* (Chimbarazu Press), and is an Associate Professor at Borough of Manhattan Community College and is at work on a new volume of poetry.

About the Writers

Audre Lorde

A self-described “black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet,” Audre Lorde dedicated both her life and her creative talent to confronting and addressing the injustices of racism, sexism, and homophobia. Her poetry, and “indeed all of her writing,” according to contributor Joan Martin in *Black Women Writers (1950-1980): A Critical Evaluation*, “rings with passion, sincerity, perception, and depth of feeling.” Born in New York City of West Indian parents, Lorde came to poetry in her early teens. Her first poem was published by *Seventeen* magazine when she was still in high school. Her later poetry, published in volumes including *New York Head Shop and Museum (1974)*, *Coal (1976)*, and her highly acclaimed volume *The Black Unicorn (1978)* frequently deals with lesbian relationships and love in accessible, visceral ways. (From the poetryfoundation.org)

Catherine Murray

Catherine Frances Murray (1918-1990) was a teacher, writer, and poet from Staten Island, New York. Born Catherine O'Malley, she attended NYC public grammar schools and Curtis High School. While at Notre Dame College, she was an editor, columnist, and reporter for the college newspaper. While pursuing a full-time writing career, Murray worked

both as a New York City public school teacher and later as a teaching artist for the New York Poets in the Schools program. The period of Murray's greatest literary production was from the late 1960's to 1982. She completed two novels in the latter part of her career. Her work was published in prestigious journals and magazines including Poetry, Virginia Quarterly Review, Commonweal, and Prairie Schooner, among other publications. She was the author of two books of poetry, *The Transatlantic Flight of the Angel of Death* (1990) and *Lights in the Water* (1993), which was published posthumously. Murray's writing career was cut short when she was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease, making it difficult for her to write. "Awake at Five" was her last poem. It memorializes her struggle as a writer with Parkinson's. Murray died in 1990.

Dorothy Day

Writer, editor and social reformer Dorothy Day was born on November 8, 1897, in New York City. Day was a radical during her time, working for such social causes as pacifism and women's suffrage. She was the third of five children born to her parents, Grace and John, who worked as a journalist. The family moved to California for his job when Dorothy was 6 years old. They later lived in Chicago. After moving to New York City, Day became involved with a literary and liberal crowd in the city's Greenwich Village neighborhood. Playwright Eugene O'Neill was one of her friends at the time. Day worked as a journalist, writing for several socialist and progressive publications in the 1910s and '20s. She interviewed a number of interesting public figures of the day, including Leon Trotsky. (Biography.com)

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About the Staten Island Museum

Founded in 1881 and celebrating its 137th year, the Staten Island Museum engages visitors with interdisciplinary exhibitions and educational programs that explore the dynamic connections between natural science, art, and history based on its diverse collections. Staten Island Museum is owned by the City of New York and benefits from public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. For current exhibits, visit [StatenIslandMuseum.org](https://www.statenislandmuseum.org).