



**For Immediate Release
February 11, 2015**

**BEYOND BAROQUE HONORS POETS SUZANNE LUMMIS AND ELENA KARINA BYRNE
AT THE 5TH ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER, SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2015 AT THE CHURCH IN OCEAN PARK**

Beyond Baroque is pleased to announce that it will be honoring award-winning poet, educator and publisher, Suzanne Lummis, and award-winning poet, editor and moderator, Elena Karina Byrne with awards for their dedicated service to the art and craft of poetry at its 5th Annual Awards Dinner at The Church in Ocean Park (235 Hill Street, Santa Monica, CA 90405) on Sunday, April 12, 2015.

Elena Karina Byrne will receive the Distinguished Service Award. The award is given to a Los Angeles-based poet who has inspired public interest in poetry through his or her good works, and raised the pursuit and practice of poetry to new heights. Former Regional Director of the Poetry Society of America, Elena Karina Byrne, is a Poetry Curator and Moderator for The Los Angeles Times Festival of Books; Contributing Editor for the Los Angeles Review of Books; and Literary Programs Director for The Ruskin Art Club. Publications include a Pushcart Prize, Best American Poetry, Yale Review, Paris Review, APR, among others. Books include: *The Flammable Bird*, *MASQUE* and the forthcoming *Squander* (Omnidawn 2016) and *Voyeur Hour: Meditations on Poetry, Art and Desire*. Previous recipients of this Award include: S.A. Griffin, Amélie Frank, Mike Sonksen, and Rick Lupert.

Suzanne Lummis will receive the George Drury Smith Award for Outstanding Achievement in Poetry, named after the founder of Beyond Baroque. The award is given to a Los Angeles-based poet whose work has raised the profile of poetry outside the bounds of Los Angeles, and has brought widespread attention to the craft of poetry in Los Angeles. Suzanne Lummis' poetry collection, *Open 24 Hours*, won the Blue Lynx Poetry Prize and was published by Lynx House Press in 2014. Recently, she had a poem in The New Yorker, and in 2013 NPR's "All Things Considered" aired a feature on her, "Writing Noir Poetry with L.A. as a Backdrop". She is the director of The Los Angeles Poetry Festival, which in 2011 produced a 25-event, citywide series, *Night and the City: L.A. Noir in Poetry, Fiction and Film*. One of her signature poems about Los Angeles is discussed in depth in Lawrence Goldstein's book-length exploration, *Poetry Los Angeles: Reading the City's Essential Poems* (U. of Michigan), and her poetry and literary activism in Los Angeles are noted in Bill Mohr's important history of Los Angeles poets, *Holdouts: The Los Angeles Poetry Renaissance, 1948-1992*, and in Jack Foley's sweeping *Visions and Affiliations: A California Literary Time Line*. She has taught for many years for the UCLA Extension Writers' Program; several noted poets of the region got their start in her classes. She is a founding member of the serio-comic performance troupe Nearly Fatal Women, together with Laurel Ann Bogen and Linda Albertano. Previous recipients of the Award include: David St. John, Wanda Coleman, Eloise Klein Healy, and William Mohr.

The 5th Annual Beyond Baroque Awards Dinner will take place at The Church in Ocean Park in Santa Monica, California, and will once again be emceed by poet Brendan Constantine. Tickets to the annual dinner are \$65 each and may be purchased at Eventbrite (5thbbawards.eventbrite.com). This event has sold out every year, and advance purchases are recommended. Those wishing to congratulate the honorees are encouraged to purchase a program ad, also available on the Eventbrite page. No one will be admitted without a ticket.

Beyond Baroque Literary | Arts Center is one of the United States' leading independent literary | arts centers and public spaces dedicated to literary and cultural production, interaction, and community building. Founded in 1968, it is based in the old City Hall in Venice Beach, California, near the Pacific Ocean. It offers a program of readings, new music, free workshops, and publishing. It also houses an independent bookstore featuring a large collection of new poetry an archive featuring thousands of books and artworks from local artists with an emphasis on the Venice Beats, and The Mike Kelley Gallery, which exhibits local and international artists.

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