

NYS Poet Jean Valentine to read works at Alfred University

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Jean Valentine, who was named New York State Poet earlier this year, will read from her work at 5:30 p.m. Nov. 20 in Susan Howell Hall on the Alfred University campus. Her visit to Alfred is jointly sponsored by the Division of English in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, and the Writing Center. Established in 1985 by an act of the State Legislature, the title of New York State Poet and the Walt Whitman Citation of Merit are bestowed for two-year terms. The Writers Institute of the State University of New York recommends poets for the gubernatorial appointment. Valentine's most recent book is *Little Boat* (Wesleyan University Press, 2007). Her previous collection, *Door in the Mountain: New and Collected Poems 1965-2003* won the 2004 National Book Award for Poetry. Author Adrienne Rich said, "Looking into a Jean Valentine poem is like looking into a lake: you can see your own outline, and the shapes of the upper world, reflected among rocks, underwater life, glint of lost bottles, drifted leaves. The known and familiar become one with the mysterious and half-wild, at the place where consciousness and the subliminal meet. This is a poetry of the highest order, because it lets us into spaces and meanings we couldn't approach in any other way." Accolades came early for Valentine, a native of Chicago who received her B.A. degree from Radcliffe College. Her first book, *Dream Barker*, won the Yale Younger Poets Award in 1965. She has earned a Guggenheim Fellowship as well as awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Bunting Institute, the Rockefeller Foundation, the New York Council for the Arts, and the New York Foundation for the Arts. Her work has also won the Maurice English Prize, the Teasdale Poetry Prize, the Poetry Society of America's Shelley Memorial Prize and the Morton Dauwen Zabel Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Valentine has received residencies with the Yaddo Colony, the Cummington Community of the Arts, The MacDowell Colony, the UCross Foundation and the Lannon Foundation. She has taught at Sarah Lawrence College, the Graduate Writing Program of New York University, Columbia University and the 92nd Street Y. The College of Liberal Arts & Sciences is the oldest of Alfred University's academic units. It is one of fewer than 300 colleges of liberal arts in the nation to have been awarded a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest honorary society.