ABOUT L.J. SYSKO

SHORTEST BIO (74 WORDS) – for the truly sane

L.J. Sysko's debut collection *THE DAUGHTER OF MAN* was selected by Patricia Smith for the 2023 Miller Williams Poetry Series. Her work has appeared in anthologies *BEST NEW POETS and EKPHRASTIC POETRY; BATTLEDORE*, a chapbook; and literary journals *Ploughshares, The Georgia Review,* and *Electric Lit*, among others. Sysko earned her MFA in poetry at New England College, is a writers.com faculty member, *Publishers Weekly* poetry book reviewer, and *Tupelo Quarterly* Contributing Editor.

SHORTER BIO (200 WORDS) – for event introductions

"A valley girl Beowulf" is how one reviewer described American Feminist poet L.J. Sysko. Her debut full-length collection *THE DAUGHTER OF MAN* was selected for the Miller Williams Poetry Series by Patricia Smith and published by University of Arkansas Press in 2023. *THE DAUGHTER OF MAN* is "goddam funny" and "a clinic in irony," said poet Ross Gay; *Publishers Weekly* wrote, "This whip-smart collection is a playful celebration of feminine power;" and *Compulsive Reader* joked that Sysko's imagery "poked [her] jealous g-spot." L.J. Sysko's work has been anthologized in *BEST NEW POETS* and *EKPHRASTIC POETRY: AN INTRODUCTION*; published in *BATTLEDORE*, her chapbook about pregnancy and postpartum depression; and featured in *Ploughshares*, *The Georgia Review*, and *Electric Lit*, among other literary journals. Sysko taught high school English for 14 years before transitioning to work as a professional speechwriter, faculty member at writers.com, *Publishers Weekly* poetry book reviewer, and Contributing Editor at *Tupelo Quarterly*, where her original interview series *Be Kind Rewind: Where Poetry Meets Proust* appears. A three-time Dorothy Sargent Rosenberg honoree, two-time Delaware Division of the Arts Fellow, and MFA from New England College, Sysko lives in Wilmington, Delaware with her husband and two mostly grown children.

LONG BIO (378 WORDS) – for general knowledge

Leslie Jones "L.J." Sysko is the author of two books of poems, including her debut full-length collection *THE DAUGHTER OF MAN*, selected by Pulitzer Prize finalist and National Book Award winner Patricia Smith for the 2023 Miller Williams Poetry Series, published by University of Arkansas Press. *THE DAUGHTER OF MAN* revises the heroine's journey through a tragicomic, Pop, ekphrastic lens. *Publishers Weekly* wrote, "This whip-smart collection is a playful celebration of feminine power," poet Ross Gay called the book "goddam funny" and "a clinic in irony," *Compulsive Reader* joked that Sysko's imagery "poked [her] jealous g-spot," and *Feminist Book Club* said, "Sysko explores the power and vulnerability of young womanhood and the way it evolves through maturity, motherhood, and beyond through poems that are bursting with biting intelligence and humor."

Sysko's poems have been anthologized in *BEST NEW POETS 2009*, *EKPHRASTIC POETRY: AN INTRODUCTION (forthcoming, Princeton University Press, 2027)*, *FORM & FLEXIBILITY: A BOOK OF CONTEMPORARY FORMS* (forthcoming, Small Harbor Press,

2027), and *LET ME SAY THIS: A DOLLY PARTON POETRY ANTHOLOGY (Madville Publishing, 2023);* appearing also in *BATTLEDORE*, a chapbook about pregnancy and postpartum depression (FLP, 2017); and literary journals *Ploughshares*, *Electric Lit (forthcoming 2027)*, *The Missouri Review*, *Mississippi Review*, and *Rhino*, among many others. Sysko holds an MFA in poetry from New England College ('06); she is a three-time Dorothy Sargent Rosenberg honoree, a two-time Delaware Division of the Arts Fellow, and a Palm Beach Poetry Festival "Thomas Lux Scholar."

Also a prose author, Sysko's nonfiction was *The Georgia Review* inaugural Prose Prize finalist in 2023, selected by judge Jennine Capó Crucet, and has been recognized by *Zoetrope: All Story,* judged by novelist Anthony Marra, *The Bellingham Review* Annie Dillard Award for Creative Nonfiction, and *The Pinch* Literary Awards.

Sysko taught high school English for 14 years–serving as department chair for seven years–before transitioning to work as a professional speechwriter, primarily in her role as Director of Executive Communications at Delaware State University, one of the nation's finest public HBCUs. Sysko serves the literary community as a *Publishers Weekly* poetry book reviewer, Contributing Editor at *Tupelo Quarterly*–home to her original interview series *Be Kind Rewind: Where Poetry Meets Proust*–and writers.com faculty member. She lives in Wilmington, Delaware with her husband and two mostly grown children.