

For Immediate Release



Contact: Ekaterine Tchelidze
Town of East Hartford
Phone: 860-291-7202
Cell: 860-817-8590
etchelidze@easthartfordct.gov

Poets John Stanizzi and Sam Normal Visit the East Hartford Public Library

East Hartford, CT—John L. Stanizzi and Sam Norman have been close friends for many many years. Through those years, Sam has dabbled on and off with poetry. However, on New Year's Eve, 2018, the unthinkable happened. Sam's boy, Benjamin, was involved in a weather related traffic accident and lost his life. Sam, and his family, have been devastated beyond comprehension. Then the poems began to pour from Sam, his way of processing the utterly unthinkable. In five months Sam has written nearly one hundred poems, many of which have now been published in fine literary journals across the country. Sam has organized the poems into his inaugural book, called *Still Here*. It is a riveting, gut-wrenching collection of one man's journey through a brutal, unforgiving landscape. What he has done is nothing short of mind-boggling -- to write that many poems in so short a time under *any circumstances*, is astonishing. To write them in his condition is *miraculous*. The reading at the library will be Sam's first public reading, and we invite you to come out and support him and his family, and to hear these wonderful poems which are healing, heartbreaking, brilliant, and uplifting all at once. What a remarkable show of love and tenderness from a dad to the boy he loved so much, and lost.

Reading with Sam will be John L. Stanizzi. John is the author of *Ecstasy Among Ghosts*, *Sleepwalking*, *Dance Against the Wall*, *After the Bell*, *Hallelujah Time!*, *High Tide-Ebb Tide*, *Four Bits -- Fifty 30-Word Pieces*. John will be launching his eighth collection -- *Chants* -- tonight. This will be John's third reading at the library. His new collection is a collection of memoirs composed as sonnets. Of reading at the East Hartford Library, John says, "There is something so heartwarming, so nostalgic about 'coming home' to read. Initially, I was a little unsure about the idea. Now, as I prepare for my third reading here I am filled with excitement, gratitude, and humility. Each time I've read at the library it has been to a full house. How does one express gratitude for that kind of support? I'm not sure. The best I can do is to present you with the finest, most heartfelt performance I can, and tell you again that I am deeply honored. Thank you so very much."

The event is co-sponsored by the East Hartford Commission on Culture and Fine Arts. No registration is required. The East Hartford Public Library is located at 840 Main St., East Hartford, CT. For more information, [visit our online events calendar](#) or call the reference desk at 860-290-4331.