



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FIRE IS THE THEME OF THE SEVENTH ANNUAL M.F.K. FISHER EMERGING WRITERS CONTEST
CALL FOR ENTRIES ANNOUNCED

[February 2, 2026] — The recently formed M.F.K. Fisher Foundation is pleased to announce the call for entries for the seventh annual M.F.K. Fisher Emerging Writers Contest. The Foundation has assumed stewardship of the annual competition, initially established by All Hands Ecology (formerly Audubon Canyon Ranch), home to Fisher's *"Last House"* on the Bouverie Preserve in Glen Ellen, California.

"It is a great joy to announce the call for entries for the seventh annual M.F.K. Fisher Emerging Writers Contest," said Kennedy Golden, President of the M.F.K. Fisher Foundation. "For the past six years, the contest has enjoyed beautiful, touching, and thoughtful submissions from writers of all ages from around the world. This year's writing contest, the first under the umbrella of the M.F.K. Fisher Foundation, will no doubt enjoy similar submissions. I believe that my mother, M.F.K. Fisher, would love the fact that this juried writing contest is open to any and all emerging writers who wish to submit their essays.

"With yet another wonderful list of Judges, the M.F.K. Fisher Foundation invites all who wish to participate to register, and to share this call for entries with anyone who might wish to submit an entry. My mother always encouraged young and emerging writers of all ages, and this continuation of her ongoing support will hopefully interest all who enjoy writing about their lives, thoughts, and interests. As a Judge, I cannot wait to read YOUR submission."

Writers are invited to submit an original unpublished essay or short story (*no poetry please*) expressing their own unique viewpoint on this very real element of our lives: **Fire**.

From the glow of candlelight, the warmth of the kitchen stove, the rage of romantic passions, and the devastation and renewal of flames in the wild, fire is elemental to our existence. What fire means to us, in practical and metaphorical terms, inspires this year's challenge.

"In winter, when alone, I ate by the fire on the hearth of the living-dining room. In spring, I carried my plate and glass into the new warmth of sunlight on the terrace, ankle-deep in wild flowers and a hundred tender grasses."

Love in a Dish . . . And Other Culinary Delights by M.F.K. Fisher, edited by Anne Zimmerman

“Passion, here at least, means the height of emotional play between the two sexes, not the lasting fire I felt for my father once when I was about seven and we ate peach pie together under a canyon oak.”

An Alphabet for Gourmets from *The Art of Eating* by M.F.K. Fisher

“...I was on fire. I was in Hell. From the shoulders up to the last hair on my head I buzzed like an agonized bee...”

A Cordiall Water by M.F.K. Fisher

Submissions begin: Submissions are currently being accepted (as of February 1, 2026).

Deadline for submissions: Monday, May 25, 2026 - 5 p.m. PST

Contest entry and details: mfkfisher.org/emerging-writers-contest

Format: Writers are invited to submit an original unpublished essay or short story (*poetry not accepted*) in PDF format, 300–500 words for children and youth, 750 words maximum for adults 18 and older. Please include your name, category, and essay title at the top of your submission.

Entries accepted in three age categories:

- **Adults 18 and older**
- **Youth (13–17)** (must have parent or legal guardian's consent (indicate on registration))
- **Children (8–12)** (must have parent or legal guardian's consent (indicate on registration))

Entry Fees:

- **Adults:** \$50
- **Children and Youth:** Thanks to a generous donation by a donor who wishes to remain anonymous all entries for children and youth are free of charge.

Judges: (*confirmed to date*)

Chair: Clark Wolf, consultant and NPR host. Assisted by Susan Ryan, Director of Operations of Russian Riverkeeper and bookseller.

Ruth Reichl, author, editor, and chef; Gurdeep Loyal, author, food and travel writer, and trend consultant; Luke Barr, author and grandnephew of M.F.K. Fisher; Tom Gardali, conservation scientist and CEO All Hands Ecology; Kennedy Golden, President, M.F.K. Fisher Foundation, Trustee of the M.F.K. Fisher Literary Trust, and daughter of M.F.K. Fisher; Alex Wright, Vice President, M.F.K. Fisher Foundation, Successor Trustee of the M.F.K. Fisher Literary Trust, and grandson of M.F.K. Fisher; Florence Fabricant, author and reporter, New York Times; and Tim Zahner, Executive Director, Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau.

Announcement: All winners will receive a phone call on or about July 3, 2026. Winners will be announced publicly on our website (mfkfisher.org), on social media, and in the M.F.K. Fisher Foundation newsletter.

Prizes include:

- \$250.00 awarded to the first place winner in each category
- An additional \$250.00 awarded to the grand prize winner
- First, second and third place submissions (and their authors' names) in each category will be published on the M.F.K. Fisher Foundation website.

Terms of entry: By entering the M.F.K. Fisher Emerging Writers Contest you agree that the M.F.K. Fisher Foundation may screen your submission through GPTZero (or a similar tool) and may use the results, at the Foundation's sole discretion, to evaluate originality and eligibility. Entrants further agree to allow the M.F.K. Fisher Foundation to publish/reprint your essay and name. Employees/board members of the M.F.K. Fisher Foundation and immediate family members are exempted from entering.

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About the M.F.K. Fisher Foundation

The M.F.K. Fisher Foundation has been formed to preserve and promote the enduring legacy of author M.F.K. Fisher, exploring the deep connections between hunger - both physical and intellectual - and the human experience. We celebrate and honor her belief that food is far more than sustenance by seeking to support those who embrace her sensuous, thoughtful approach to life. We carry forward her legacy, inspiring a world where the hunger for meaning, beauty, nourishment, and love is met with wisdom, passion, and a reverence for living life to its fullest.

The M.F.K. Fisher Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization as determined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). All donations are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

For more information about M.F.K. Fisher, the Foundation, its mission, and upcoming initiatives, please visit mfkfisher.org.