

✓ Authors 1990-6 -15-94

# \$374,000 poetic license for Rich



Adrienne Rich

## Staff and wire services

SANTA CRUZ — Local poet Adrienne Rich is one of 20 Americans to be named fellows of the MacArthur Foundation.

The nationally recognized writer and feminist theoretician will receive \$374,000 over five years, with no strings attached. Rich said the award would allow her the economic freedom to explore new forms.

"I haven't even been able to imagine how much it would lighten certain kinds of anxieties and pressures," the 65-year-old poet said from her Santa Cruz home.

Rich, who once taught at Stanford and San Jose State universities, retired from teaching two years ago and said "a free-lance life is always one that has its ups and downs and carries with it a certain amount of worry. This is a very wonderful thing for me."

As a lesbian writer who has written of the world through the lens of both her lesbianism and Judaism, Rich said she didn't dare believe she's won one of the so-called "genius grants" when she heard the message on her phone machine.

In the more than 40 years since her award-winning first book was published, Rich's writing has explored motherhood and feminism, and challenged the notion that poetry and politics don't mix.

"I want a poetry that is not blindly ideological, that doesn't follow a correct line, that is as complicated as our lives are," she said in January before a local reception for her most recent work, "What Is Found There: Notebooks on Poetry and Politics."

Rich was one of the founders of "Bridges: A Journal for Jewish Feminists and our Friends" and now sits on its national advisory board.

Since 1981, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, whose founder made his fortune in insurance, has given out more than \$120 million to 414 fellows. The recipients are nominated by anonymous talent scouts and chosen on the basis of skill, creativity and dedication.

The fellowships range from \$235,000 to \$375,000 over five years, or \$45,000 to \$75,000 annually.

The other California recipients were:

- Hugo Morales, 45, co-founder of Radio Bilingue, the nation's first bilingual public radio network. Morales has worked to improve education among farm workers and was instrumental in creating Satellite, a 24-hour public satellite network that makes Spanish-language programming available nationwide. He will receive \$280,000.

- Rogers Brubaker, an associate professor at UCLA. Brubaker, 49, was recognized for his research into the ways immigration, social movement and public discourse have shaped Europe. He received \$245,000.

- Joseph Marshall, co-founder of the Omega Boys Club, a violence-prevention organization, and a radio show called "Street Soldiers." He was awarded \$290,000.