

*The Belle of Two Arbors* is a page-turning read, hosting 678 fast-moving pages!

Authors Paul Dimond and Martha Buhr Grimes, dance together in multi-genre dichotomy. Dimond's prose narrative drives the action while Grimes' poetic perspective reflects and deepens the action to give closer insight. Absorbing Emily Dickinson's poetry at her mother's knee, Belle, the fictitious protagonist, moves among real life poets such as Robert Frost, Theodore Roethke and W.H. Auden to offer readers a story beyond a story about poets and their poems during overlapping years spent in Ann Arbor. Met with antagonists such as Sven Surtr and his disrespect for preserving the majesty of Sleeping Bear Dunes or Ned Strait and his rigid academic constraints, this novel knits a cast of characters involved with architecture and athletics, race and religion, and science and sexism to take the reader on an enjoyable archeological dig of subjects and concerns that give its characters context. Whether embraced in the Great Lakes of Glen Arbor (up north) beginning in 1913 or Ann Arbor's University of Michigan (down state) ending in 1978, this historical novel weaves on-going concerns for Michigan's land and its people: both sacred.

Ann Ransford, Director, Roethke House Museum, review introducing the authors for "A Feast of Poems: Belle and Ted" at the Roethke Historic House in Saginaw, Michigan, May 13, 2017.