

# *Poem in Your Pocket Day*

*April 26, 2018*

Every April, on Poem in Your Pocket Day, people celebrate by selecting a poem, carrying it with them, and sharing it with others throughout the day at schools, bookstores, libraries, parks, workplaces, and on social media using the hashtag #pocketpoem.

Join us in celebrating Poem in Your Pocket Day this year!

**academy of  
american poets**

**Poets.ca** THE LEAGUE OF  
CANADIAN POETS

# *A Guide to Celebrating Poetry in Schools, Communities & Businesses*

Poem in Your Pocket Day was initiated in April 2002 by the Office of the Mayor, in partnership with the New York City Departments of Cultural Affairs and Education, as part of the city's National Poetry Month celebration.

The Academy of American Poets, which launched National Poetry Month in 1996, took Poem in Your Pocket Day to all fifty United States in 2008, encouraging individuals across the country to join in and channel their inner bard.

The Academy of American Poets and the League of Canadian Poets, the latter of which has organized National Poetry Month in Canada since 1998, have teamed up to extend the reach of Poem in Your Pocket Day across North America.

## **Ideas for Celebrating Poem in Your Pocket Day**

The beauty of Poem in Your Pocket Day is its simplicity. Individuals and institutions have generated many creative ways to share poems on this special day—from having children create handmade pockets to tuck their favorite poems into, to handing out poems to commuters at transportation hubs, to distributing poem scrolls in hospitals, nursing homes, and local businesses. The ideas are endless but here are a few to get you started. And, of course, we invite you to share poems on any day during National Poetry Month or during the year!

### **In Your School**

- If you're a school principal or administrator, organize a school-wide Poem in Your Pocket Day giveaway using the following curated collection of poems.
- Encourage students to choose a poem from our collection, print it out, and post it in a designated area, such as the school cafeteria, hallways, or the student lounge.
- Hold a student reading of the poems they've selected.

### **In Your Classroom**

- Have your students choose a poem from our collection. Ask them to write a letter to a far-away friend or relative detailing what they like about the poem and why they think the recipient would enjoy it. Send the letters and poems so they arrive on Poem in Your Pocket Day.
- Ask your students to choose their favorite poem from our collection, choose their favorite lines, and add those lines to a bookmark they can decorate with drawings. Collect the bookmarks and redistribute them, letting each student pick one that's not their own for ongoing use in class.
- Ask your students to memorize a poem and share it with the class.
- Have your students choose a poem to give away. Ask them to print out 20 copies of the poem and come up with a creative way to distribute it, such as in the form of a folded-paper animal or object (see the Appendix for instructions on how to create a folded swan), a decorated scroll, a poem tree, or a bookmark.
- Devote a class lesson to teaching your students about the haiku, a three-line poem with seventeen syllables, written in a 5/7/5 syllable count. (See the Appendix for more about the haiku.) Ask your students write their own haikus and share them with the class by reading them aloud. Have your students decorate a copy of their haikus with drawings and stickers, then encourage them to give their poems to a family member or friend.
- Organize a class trip for students to visit a nursing home or community center and to read and share their favorite poems.

### **In Your Community**

- Work with your local community officials to get permission to hand out poems in transportation hubs, shopping malls, pedestrian malls, or other areas where people in our community gather.
- Encourage local businesses to participate in Poem in Your Pocket Day by offering discounts to customers who bring in a poem, by posting poems in their establishments, or by distributing poems on bags, cups, or receipts.
- On April 1, write to your local newspaper asking them to publish a poem by a local poet on Poem in Your Pocket Day or to syndicate Poem-a-Day, a digital series available for free from the Academy of American Poets. (For more information, visit [www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem-day](http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem-day).)

### **In Your Workplace**

- Stand outside the entrance of your place of work and distribute poems to employees and coworkers as they begin their day.
- Organize a lunch for your employees or coworkers to gather and share a meal, as well as their favorite poems by reading them aloud.
- Ask your employer to encourage employees to choose their favorite poems and post them around the office.
- Place printouts of poems on people's desk chairs before they arrive to work.
- Add a poem or link to a poem to your email signature. In addition to the poems in this guide, you'll find thousands more at Poets.org.
- Email a poem to employees and coworkers, encouraging them to read and share their own favorites throughout the day.
- Jot a favorite line of poetry on the back of your business card before distributing them.
- Tape a poem to the watercooler.

### **On Social Media**

- Post poems, links to poems, or photos of poems on Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr, or Twitter using the hashtag #pocketpoem.

# *Poems to Share by Contemporary American Poets*

The Red Poppy *by Louise Glück*

Remember *by Joy Harjo*

Here and There *by Juan Felipe Herrera*

Cotton Candy *by Edward Hirsch*

The Weighing *by Jane Hirshfield*

The Moment *by Marie Howe*

Lyric *by Khaled Mattawa*

Variation on a Theme *by W. S. Merwin*

Burning the Old Year *by Naomi Shihab Nye*

The Dogs at Live Oak Beach, Santa Cruz *by Alicia Ostriker*

Springing *by Marie Ponsot*

When Giving Is All We Have *by Alberto Ríos*

The Owl *by Arthur Sze*

Eleventh Brother *by Jean Valentine*

Imaginary Morning Glory *by C. D. Wright*

# **national** **poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *The Red Poppy*

**Louise Glück**

The great thing  
is not having  
a mind. Feelings:  
oh, I have those; they  
govern me. I have  
a lord in heaven  
called the sun, and open  
for him, showing him  
the fire of my own heart, fire  
like his presence.  
What could such glory be  
if not a heart? Oh my brothers and sisters,  
were you like me once, long ago,  
before you were human? Did you  
permit yourselves  
to open once, who would never  
open again? Because in truth  
I am speaking now  
the way you do. I speak  
because I am shattered.

# national poetry month

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Remember*

Joy Harjo

Remember the sky that you were born under,  
know each of the star's stories.

Remember the moon, know who she is.

Remember the sun's birth at dawn, that is the  
strongest point of time. Remember sundown  
and the giving away to night.

Remember your birth, how your mother struggled  
to give you form and breath. You are evidence of  
her life, and her mother's, and hers.

Remember your father. He is your life, also.

Remember the earth whose skin you are:  
red earth, black earth, yellow earth, white earth  
brown earth, we are earth.

Remember the plants, trees, animal life who all have their  
tribes, their families, their histories, too. Talk to them,  
listen to them. They are alive poems.

Remember the wind. Remember her voice. She knows the  
origin of this universe.

Remember you are all people and all people  
are you.

Remember you are this universe and this  
universe is you.

Remember all is in motion, is growing, is you.

Remember language comes from this.

Remember the dance language is, that life is.

Remember.

# national poetry month

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Here and There*

Juan Felipe Herrera

I sit and meditate—my dog licks her paws  
on the red-brown sofa  
so many things somehow  
it all is reduced to numbers letters figures  
without faces or names only jagged lines  
across the miles half-shadows  
going into shadow-shadow then destruction    the infinite light

here and there    cannot be overcome  
it is the first drop of ink

# national poetry month

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Cotton Candy*

Edward Hirsch

We walked on the bridge over the Chicago River  
for what turned out to be the last time,  
and I ate cotton candy, that sugary air,  
that sweet blue light spun out of nothingness.  
It was just a moment, really, nothing more,  
but I remember marveling at the sturdy cables  
of the bridge that held us up  
and threading my fingers through the long  
and slender fingers of my grandfather,  
an old man from the Old World  
who long ago disappeared into the nether regions.  
And I remember that eight-year-old boy  
who had tasted the sweetness of air,  
which still clings to my mouth  
and disappears when I breathe.

# national poetry month

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *The Weighing*

Jane Hirshfield

The heart's reasons  
seen clearly,  
even the hardest  
will carry  
its whip-marks and sadness  
and must be forgiven.

As the drought-starved  
eland forgives  
the drought-starved lion  
who finally takes her,  
enters willingly then  
the life she cannot refuse,  
and is lion, is fed,  
and does not remember the other.

So few grains of happiness  
measured against all the dark  
and still the scales balance.

The world asks of us  
only the strength we have and we give it.  
Then it asks more, and we give it.

# **national** **poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *The Moment*

**Marie Howe**

Oh, the coming-out-of-nowhere moment

when, nothing

happens

no what-have-I-to-do-today list

maybe half a moment

the rush of traffic stops.

The whirl of I should be, I should be, I should be

slows to silence,

the white cotton curtains hanging still.

# national poetry month

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Lyric*

**Khaled Mattawa**

Will answers be found  
like seeds  
planted among rows of song?

Will mouths recognize  
the hunger  
in their voices, all mouths in unison,

the ah in harmony, the way words  
of hope are more  
than truth when whispered?

Will we turn to each other and ask,  
how long  
has it been...how long since?

A world now, a world then  
and each  
is seeking a foothold, trying

to remember when we looked  
at one another  
and found—A world again—Surely

what we long for is at the wheel  
contending.

Surely, we'll soon hear  
its unearthly groan.

# national poetry month

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Variation on a Theme*

W. S. Merwin

Thank you my life long afternoon  
late in this spring that has no age  
my window above the river  
for the woman you led me to  
when it was time at last the words  
coming to me out of mid-air  
that carried me through the clear day  
and come even now to find me  
for old friends and echoes of them  
those mistakes only I could make  
homesickness that guides the plovers  
from somewhere they had loved before  
they knew they loved it to somewhere  
they had loved before they saw it  
thank you good body hand and eye  
and the places and moments known  
only to me revisiting  
once more complete just as they are  
and the morning stars I have seen  
and the dogs who are guiding me

# **national** **poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Burning the Old Year*

Naomi Shihab Nye

Letters swallow themselves in seconds.  
Notes friends tied to the doorknob,  
transparent scarlet paper,  
sizzle like moth wings,  
marry the air.

So much of any year is flammable,  
lists of vegetables, partial poems.  
Orange swirling flame of days,  
so little is a stone.

Where there was something and suddenly isn't,  
an absence shouts, celebrates, leaves a space.  
I begin again with the smallest numbers.

Quick dance, shuffle of losses and leaves,  
only the things I didn't do  
crackle after the blazing dies.

# **national** **poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *The Dogs at Live Oak Beach, Santa Cruz*

**Alicia Ostriker**

As if there could be a world  
Of absolute innocence  
In which we forget ourselves

The owners throw sticks  
And half-bald tennis balls  
Toward the surf  
And the happy dogs leap after them  
As if catapulted—

Black dogs, tan dogs,  
Tubes of glorious muscle—

Pursuing pleasure  
More than obedience  
They race, skid to a halt in the wet sand,  
Sometimes they'll plunge straight into  
The foaming breakers

Like diving birds, letting the green turbulence  
Toss them, until they snap and sink

Teeth into floating wood  
Then bound back to their owners  
Shining wet, with passionate speed  
For nothing,  
For absolutely nothing but joy.

# national poetry month

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Springing*

Marie Ponsot

In a skiff on a sunrisen lake we are watchers.

Swimming aimlessly is luxury just as walking  
loudly up a shallow stream is.

As we lean over the deep well, we whisper.

Friends at hearths are drawn to the one warm air;  
strangers meet on beaches drawn to the one wet sea.

What wd it be to be water, one body of water  
(what water is is another mystery) (We are  
water divided.) It wd be a self without walls,  
with surface tension, specific gravity a local  
exchange between bedrock and cloud of falling and rising,  
rising to fall, falling to rise.

(1962)

# national poetry month

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *When Giving Is All We Have*

Alberto Ríos

*One river gives  
Its journey to the next.*

We give because someone gave to us.  
We give because nobody gave to us.

We give because giving has changed us.  
We give because giving could have changed us.

We have been better for it,  
We have been wounded by it—

Giving has many faces: It is loud and quiet,  
Big, though small, diamond in wood-nails.

Its story is old, the plot worn and the pages too,  
But we read this book, anyway, over and again:

Giving is, first and every time, hand to hand,  
Mine to yours, yours to mine.

You gave me blue and I gave you yellow.  
Together we are simple green. You gave me

What you did not have, and I gave you  
What I had to give—together, we made

Something greater from the difference.

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Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *The Owl*

**Arthur Sze**

The path was purple in the dusk.  
I saw an owl, perched,  
on a branch.

And when the owl stirred, a fine dust  
fell from its wings. I was  
silent then. And felt

the owl quaver. And at dawn, waking,  
the path was green in the  
May light.

# **national** **poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Eleventh Brother*

**Jean Valentine**

Rone arm still a swan's wing  
The worst had happened before: love—before  
I knew it was mine—  
turned into a wild  
swan and flew  
across the rough water

Outsider seedword  
until I die  
I will be open to you as an egg  
speechless red.

# **national** **poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Imaginary Morning Glory*

C. D. Wright

Whether or not the water was freezing. The body  
would break its sheathe. Without layer on layer  
of feather and air to insulate the loving belly.  
A cloudy film surrounding the point of entry. If blue  
were not blue how could love be love. But if the body  
were made of rings. A loose halo would emerge  
in the telluric light. If anyone were entrusted to verify  
this rare occurrence. As the petal starts to  
dwindle and curl unto itself. And only then. Love,  
blue. Hallucinogenic blue, love.

## Contributors' Notes

Louise Glück is the author of over a dozen books of poetry, including *Faithful and Virtuous Night* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014), which won the 2014 National Book Award in Poetry. Her other honors include the Pulitzer Prize and the Lannan Literary Award for Poetry. In 1999, Glück was elected a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets, and in the fall of 2003, she was appointed the twelfth U.S. Poet Laureate. She lives in Connecticut.

Joy Harjo's poetry collections include *Conflict Resolution for Holy Beings* (W. W. Norton, 2015) and *How We Became Human: New and Selected Poems* (W. W. Norton, 2002). In 2015, she received the Wallace Stevens Award from the Academy of American Poets. Her other honors include the PEN Open Book Award and the American Indian Distinguished Achievement in the Arts Award. She lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Juan Felipe Herrera was the U. S. Poet Laureate and served as a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets from 2011 to 2016. He is the author of many collections of poetry, including *Notes on the Assemblage* (City Lights, 2015) and *Half of the World in Light: New and Selected Poems* (University of Arizona Press, 2008), a recipient of the PEN/Beyond Margins Award. He lives in Fresno, California.

Edward Hirsch is the author of several books of poetry, most recently *Gabriel: A Poem* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), which was nominated for the National Book Award, as well as the national bestseller *How to Read a Poem and Fall in Love with Poetry* (Harcourt, 1999). He was elected a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets in 2008, and he currently serves as the president of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. He lives in New York City.

Jane Hirshfield's poetry collections include *The Beauty: Poems* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2015), which was nominated for the National Book Award, and *Come, Thief* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2011). In 2004, the Academy of American Poets awarded Hirshfield the Academy Fellowship for distinguished poetic achievement. Her other honors include the Poetry Center Book Award and numerous

fellowships. She served as a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets from 2012 to 2017, and she lives in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Marie Howe is the author of the poetry collections *Magdalene* (W. W. Norton, 2017) and *The Kingdom of Ordinary Time* (W. W. Norton, 2008), which was a finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize. Howe is the recipient of the 2015 Academy of American Poets Fellowship and has also received grants from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Bunting Institution, and the National Endowment for the Arts. She currently serves as a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets. She lives in New York City.

Alberto Ríos is the author of several poetry collections, most recently *A Small Story About the Sky* (Copper Canyon Press, 2015). His honors include the 1981 Walt Whitman Award from the Academy of American Poets and the Arizona Governor's Arts Award. Ríos currently serves as the inaugural state poet laureate of Arizona, as well as a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets. He lives in Tempe, Arizona.

Khaled Mattawa is the author of four poetry collections, including *Tocqueville* (New Issues Poetry & Prose, 2010), and he has also translated many volumes of contemporary Arabic poetry. He is the recipient of the 2010 Academy of American Poets Fellowship. Mattawa's other honors include the PEN American Center Poetry Translation Prize and numerous. He currently serves as a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets and lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

W. S. Merwin is the author of many books of poetry, including *The Shadow of Sirius* (Copper Canyon Press, 2008), which won the Pulitzer Prize, and *Selected Translations* (Copper Canyon Press, 2013), which was awarded the Harold Morton Landon Translation Award from the Academy of American Poets. His other honors include the Lannan Literary Award for Lifetime Achievement and the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize from the Academy of American Poets. He is a former Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets and served as the U.S. Poet Laureate from 2010 to 2011. He lives in Hawaii.

Naomi Shihab Nye is the author of several poetry collections, including *Transfer* (BOA Editions, 2011), as well as several children's books. In 1988, she received the Academy of American Poets' Lavan Award, and she served as a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets from 2010 to 2015. She has also received awards and fellowships from the International Poetry Forum and the

Guggenheim Foundation, among others. She lives in San Antonio, Texas.

Alicia Ostriker is the author of over ten books of poetry, including *Waiting for the Light* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2017) and *The Old Woman, the Tulip, and the Dog* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2014), as well as several books of criticism. Her honors include the Paterson Poetry Award and the William Carlos Williams Award of the Poetry Society of America. She serves as a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets. She lives in Princeton, New Jersey.

Marie Ponsot is the author of several poetry collections, including *Easy* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2009) and *The Bird Catcher* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), which won the National Book Circle Award. Her honors include the Delmore Schwartz Memorial Prize and the Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize. She was elected a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets in 2010, and she lives in New York City.

Arthur Sze is the author of nine books of poetry, most recently *Compass Rose* (Copper Canyon Press, 2014). His honors include an American Book Award, the Jackson Poetry Prize from Poets & Writers magazine, a Lannan Literary Award for Poetry, and a Western States Book Award for Translation. Sze served as a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets from 2012 to 2017, and he was the first poet laureate of Santa Fe, New Mexico, where he lives.

Jean Valentine is the author of several poetry collections, including *Shirt in Heaven* (Copper Canyon Press, 2015). She is the recipient of the 2009 Wallace Stevens Award from the Academy of American Poets. Her other honors include the National Book Award and the Shelley Memorial Prize from the Poetry Society of America. She lives in New York City.

C. D. Wright was the author of several poetry collections, including *Shall Cross* (Copper Canyon Press, 2016) and *One With Others* (Copper Canyon Press, 2010), which received the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize from the Academy of American Poets. Among her numerous honors are a Lannan Literary Award and a Whiting Award. Wright served as state poet of Rhode Island from 1994 to 1999, and in 2013, she was elected a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets. She died in January 2016.

# *Poems to Share by Contemporary Canadian Poets*

Whale Hunt *by Robert Colman*

Swamp Zone *by Joan Conway*

Today I Will Different *by Karin Cope*

Dawn *by Stephanie Cui*

Thirst *by Kim Fahner*

Not Just My Bunions *by Bernice Lever*

Constellations Retreat before This Truck Stop Night *by D. A. Lockhart*

Name Me after a Fish *by Leah MacLean-Evans*

The Metamorphosis of Punctuation Marks *by Diana Manole*

Sel *by Kate Marshall Flaherty*

Nightwalking between Centuries *by Colin Morton*

Two Haiku *by Jacquie Pearce*

Choosing a Friend *by Ayaz Pirani*

Photograph of Earth from Space *by Pamela Porter*

I Have a Problem *by Greg Santos*

Migrations *by Eleonore Schönmaier*

Flight Speed *by Lesley Strutt*

Marcus *by Melanie Thompson*

Resurrections *by Myna Wallin*

There is a voice *by Bānoo Zan*

Poem in Your Pocket Day

# Whale Hunt

Robert Colman

*“If this breaks you die.”*

—A machine shop owner, cradling an airplane part in his hands.

We ask you to pull us further  
from land, the harpoon  
snug in your side, the seal bladder  
ballast above you.

We ask  
after we leap from our boats  
and pierce your flesh  
that you carry our skiffs  
as far as your might allows.

Let me roll my bone dice,  
clack the dominoes back in place.  
There is not one leviathan we do not love  
unto death. Who drew whom  
into the deeps? Wasn't everything  
necessity?

I carved a compass face  
on this scrimshaw box  
because direction was all I could think,  
wind and current  
and your back as it breached.

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If they say I must now put away my blade  
I would still follow you, all the ropes  
you once towed us with stretching unseen  
from bulwark and mast, cliff side  
and the gaff sail of earth pounded  
solid, this doorway.

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Swamp Zone*

Joan Conway

That summer the swamp was our world  
I rowed with my sister  
among bulrushes and pond lilies  
waxy cups, a floating garden  
flat disk of leaves  
platforms for dragonflies  
black veined wings  
iridescent in sunlight.

That summer my uncle fried up frog legs.  
'Just like chicken' he declared  
them sitting on a plate coated in flour  
at night I dream of slippery bodies surrounding the cabin  
throat pouch ballooning taught  
vociferous croaking call missing partners.

My mother would stretch out  
on smooth curved rocks  
sunning herself  
rubbing lotion on her creamy white thighs  
wet and slippery  
my uncle massaging oil onto her back  
laughing down at her  
and told us kids to go play.

**Poem in Your Pocket Day**

In the swamp zone searching for frogs  
how they would lie perfectly still  
if you stroked their belly  
legs dangling open in some private rapture.

Where I crouched  
stranded amongst the reeds  
long taper of leaves surrounding me,  
closer to shore  
roots left high and dry  
by the end of that summer.

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Today I Will Different*

**Karin Cope**

You wake, you say  
today will be different, today  
I will do what I do what I must what I will  
today I will efficient today  
tasks completed today organized today  
my desk in order.  
Today I will different.  
Do today as if some other un-waylaid by wind  
or whim or want. Someone of will, not wanton  
wondering. What song will you sing then when  
salsa flings you circumsolar when  
lightslant leaps across your foot when  
urgency, like sucking sand, slips seaward and  
beckons you to swim?

Poem in Your Pocket Day

# *Dawn*

**Stephanie Cui**

Out in the moonlight  
The trees are glowing white.  
They are fully dressed and await the wind's call.

But the wind is a shy girl at four in the morning,  
And she does not come out to play.  
Dawn slowly tip-toes, blueing the sky.  
I am lost on a path so familiar.

Does darkness lock up my eyelids  
With a key that only belongs to dawn?  
I sneak by buildings,  
They seem unrealistic against the early light.  
Windows lit here and there, like the fading stars.

My footsteps are shaky,  
My voice—the only echo remaining in the world.  
The sun rows the moon across the sky, claiming its throne.  
And I step into the day drunk with awe.

Poem in Your Pocket Day

# Thirst

Kim Fahner

The house sips slowly  
at the offerings of  
bowls that sit, solitary,  
on ancient radiators.

It devours silently,  
savouring water  
that lowers itself slowly,  
reduces itself, erases,  
until painted bowls  
remain, naked,  
with only skin of water  
leaving a full moon  
on bottom of  
concave ceramic.

I fill and then re-fill,  
wondering which ghosts  
drink at night, what echoes  
of memory might dance  
through shadows, round  
painted corners and through  
the French doors.

The house sips, slowly,  
reminds me that all things  
vanish, with time, with patience.

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Not Just My Bunions*

**Bernice Lever**

Not just my bunions,  
they're not that unique:  
    red balls in summer,  
    purple onions when cold,  
cracking the shiny leather  
of fashionable shoes,  
bulging the sides of slippers,  
    perhaps they miss the beat  
    when I'm dancing  
by their legacy of curved space.

Not just that my whole understanding  
    is deformed:  
my nose is crooked, too.  
It heads left as I move ahead:  
    of no use, the hours I spent  
    pushing it right with my fist,  
    my elbow braced on a wooden school desk,  
it has a direction of its own.

My teeth, with early independence,  
    left on their own accord,  
my eyes keep clicking the dimmer switch  
    refusing to focus  
on my expanding, free form waistline,  
my ears hear their own tune,

**Poem in Your Pocket Day**

while my mouth sings another:  
    all that enters me is changed.

All of me escapes ideal:  
    not just my bulky bunions,  
there are other things,  
    I have my excuses—  
    barriers against love.

Poem in Your Pocket Day

# *Constellations Retreat before This Truck Stop Night*

D. A. Lockhart

After sunset these prairies  
hide their absence of rise  
in the evenness of darkness.  
Backlit Flying J road sign  
declaring this strip of Wyoming  
belongs to the constellation  
drawn from diesel vapour  
of long-haul truckers coast  
bound. Private showers, ample  
parking, and 24 hour steak dinners  
just rewards for crossing the space  
between. In this September hour  
you know you make your own  
gospel and the only surety  
of the upcoming season  
is the gristle of your 2 am sirloin  
Here, under this portioned out  
license plate of a settler highline  
across Lakota land, that surety  
carries the weight it must  
before you sleep through till  
dawn in a Ford Ranger cab  
at great remove from the sign  
that bleaches out the horizon  
and expanse of stars beyond.

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Name Me after a Fish*

Leah MacLean-Evans

Goldeye or Cichlid

silver and smooth and genderless, make me as an alien, forget

the rules, name me

Corydoras of two halves, name me Coelacanth for surviving

name me Plecostromus name me Trout

name me Catfish

let them imagine my genitals as smooth tough skin, not think to touch them.

Say, let me introduce Pickerel.

Say, have you met my friend Haddock. Say, this is my daughter Herring.

And I will breathe water in and through me, swim flicking in the slip

Poem in Your Pocket Day

# *The Metamorphosis of Punctuation Marks*

Diana Manole

They spell themselves out and I pretend I understand

*comma*

stuffed plump commas slither on our skin  
seeking the best place to come  
to a full stop

*semicolon*

translucent jade wings ingrained  
in bodies of blackness  
future flutters still faulted by default  
the course of life is not the course of writing  
unless

*dot dot dot*

commas square the circle  
like Lilliputian miracle hands

*semicolon*

if I were to slice them open  
at the right time

**Poem in Your Pocket Day**

acid ink would ooze out  
dissolving any scab in its way

*semicolon*

eagerness  
eagerness to lose themselves  
into the context  
vital mostly when absent  
no better than a long-lost lover  
an afterthought

*semicolon*

they have risen indeed  
from between the words  
like moths shooting for the light  
with no memory of the caterpillars  
having  
to cannibalize themselves  
for the sake of  
flying

*period*

Poem in Your Pocket Day

# Sel

Kate Marshall Flaherty

*I would never scold an onion for causing tears*  
—Naomi Shihab Nye

I learned  
the salt content of tears  
is the same as blood  
and the sea—

that lysosomes  
are healing enzymes,

and sea salt  
has nourishing minerals.

We are the same three-fourths water  
as the earth.

Grey Dead Sea salt is the same  
as pinkish Himalayan;

both, so far from home.

Tears are the same saline  
whether they fall to the ground  
unnoticed,

**Poem in Your Pocket Day**

or streak cheeks pressed close  
in a refugee boat. They dissolve  
the borders, or should.

Let us not wait  
for another boy washed up on shore.

Salt, enzyme, saline, suffering—  
let fear dissolve  
into the pool that is us all.

Poem in Your Pocket Day

# *Nightwalking between Centuries*

Colin Morton

Somewhere between ends and beginnings  
alert to the scuff of a shoe in the shadows  
a block away, I walk the night streets  
of this city midway through self-demolition  
—half-metamorphosed half-decayed—  
passing shadows of my former self  
on streets where storefronts have shifted,  
signs altered, brick facades from another century  
caught in a bank tower's funhouse mirrors.

And turning a corner I sometimes glimpse  
the virtual, the becoming city  
as near in time as this red brick  
though barely imagined here at street level  
where for years I've crossed against the light  
and soon the first transhumans will cross,  
become one with their devices.

At the edges of vision they pass like shadows  
eyes never meeting, as if they don't see me  
or if they do do not see me as forebear  
—flat-footed, astigmatic, fatally flawed—  
an X of flesh in a world of unknowns  
caught in reflection between walls of glass.

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Two Haiku*

Jacque Pearce

after the rain  
my daughter jumps into  
each piece of sky

lingering grief...  
a trace of Fukushima  
in the salmon

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Choosing a Friend*

Ayaz Pirani

He's off the list  
like Pluto.

I can share apples with that one  
but it's formal as Piaget.

She's bitter-gourd,  
a pinch of turmeric.

His ear for an echo,  
standing like scissors.

Her shrimp-paste face  
is tempting

but he looks like drought.  
The other, lake effect.

All that's left is that  
punctuation mark.

Poem in Your Pocket Day

# *Photograph of Earth from Space*

Pamela Porter

On the outskirts of Luanda, Angola,  
Gerald Nduma has walked an hour to school  
carrying his chair, which is really  
an empty coffee can. Nine years old,  
he holds in his other hand a mango  
which will be his lunch. At school,  
which is really a tree, Gerald  
places his lunch beneath his chair.  
This day, a missionary has come  
with magazines. Gerald takes what  
is given him. Soon he does not hear  
the teacher's instructions. He does not hear  
the students' chatter. He is looking  
at the photograph of Earth  
floating in a dark sea  
which Gerald imagines  
is plenteous with fish.

Poem in Your Pocket Day

# *I Have a Problem*

Greg Santos

All I care about is everything.  
I like to lie down and look up at the stars,  
even when there are none.  
I am almost nothing but thoughts and water.

I find mirrors unbearably off-putting.  
My children find them droll.  
Do you feel that too?  
My left hand feels like a cataclysmic storm.

I will never tire of looking at my wife.  
Her smile is like a constant sonar beep  
in the depths of my chest.  
I hear rain even when it's sunny out.

Have you ever squinted at the ocean  
so the sky and the water blend until  
you don't know where one ends and the other begins?  
I'm doing that right now with you.

Poem in Your Pocket Day

# *Migrations*

Eleonore Schönmaier

The police squint

into the glare on the water looking  
for small boats. On a clear day  
the lightkeeper sees all the way

to Algeria. Over his sofa  
hangs a tapestry woven  
by his grandmother from red

human hair. Only the birds  
travel without papers.  
Though often now

their tiny legs  
when they perch  
on the lighthouse railings

are colour banded.

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Flight Speed*

Lesley Strutt

yellow finch sun-framed the window smeared  
with the wet eye of a woodpecker  
lying on the stones now neck broken

no wonder I take off for weeks on end  
“What are you looking for?” you ask

I want flight speed when I don't stop to think  
I can get anywhere fast fling myself at my own reflection  
find something good and hard

Poem in Your Pocket Day

# *Marcus*

Melanie Thompson

“There is lipstick smeared across my mirror. I have crushed so many tubes that I am left with a palette of shades of pink, orange, and red; a myriad of feminine torment. There are still strands of hair woven in my carpet from two fortnights ago, when I took Mother’s pruning shears to the blonde lying across my shoulders and hacked myself a straw nest. I thought the hatred would fall off in the golden clumps, but I can easily find it in each glass reflection. Last week I cracked a rib from wearing shirts three sizes too small and my brother laughed and called me crazy, said he could take the knife to my chest whenever I was ready. But I’ve already tried. They won’t come off.”

—My name is ~~Isabelle~~ Marcus and I am a boy

Poem in Your Pocket Day

# *Resurrections*

Myna Wallin

My mother is alive again  
in my dreams.  
And so is my father,  
though they rarely appear together.

In one variation  
my mother returns to visit,  
her cancer healed.  
We talk for a bit & she whispers  
*Don't tell your father I was here.*

I ask her why she doesn't stay,  
admitting, embarrassed,  
*I thought you were dead.*  
No, *there's no such thing* & laughs lightly  
though she can't explain why her visits  
are so infrequent.

Immortality makes sense at night.  
My father's heart seems strong again  
as he rushes around with purpose.  
Sometimes he tells me not to worry.  
*It will be all right.*

My mother though is still frail,  
and we hold each other, rocking.

**Poem in Your Pocket Day**

In the morning I'm startled that  
I remember her touch—  
the exact pressure of her hand on mine.

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *There is a voice*

**Bānoo Zan**

that sings your song

opens your veins to  
blood

There is a voice  
who is not you

gives you words  
you never had

invites you  
to the allegory  
of the cave

There is a voice  
in whose tales  
you are a myth

shatters your pettiness  
and makes you whole

There is a voice  
that claims you—

abyss and wings and all

**Poem in Your Pocket Day**

There is a voice  
that is yours

when you cross  
your borders

There is a voice—

Take yourself  
out of its way

Let it sing  
through you

Let it make you  
a song—

There is a voice

## Contributors' Notes

Robert Colman is a Newmarket, Ontario-based writer and editor. He is the author of two full-length poetry collections, *Little Empires* (Quattro Books, 2012) and *The Delicate Line* (Exile Editions, 2008), as well as the chapbook *Factory* (Frog Hollow Press, 2015).

Joan Conway is a Terrace-based poet, blogger, and multidisciplinary artist who has a deep respect for the culture and geography of the north, which strongly influences her work. Her poetry has appeared in several publications including *Dreamland*, *Northword*, and in the Caitlin Press anthology *Unfurled: Collected Poetry by Northern BC Women*.

Karin Cope is a poet, sailor, photographer, scholar, rural activist, blogger and associate professor at NSCAD University in the Division of Art History and Contemporary Culture, where she teaches courses in creative and critical writing, gender and sexuality studies, pedagogy, art and environment and other topics. Her publications include scholarly works, popular histories, short stories, policy papers, blogs and poetry; her artworks include photographs, installations, performances, videos, guerrilla theatre and mixed media and online works.

Stephanie Cui is the 2018 winner of the League of Canadian Poets' Jessamy Stursberg Poetry Prize for young poets. Her poem was winner in the junior category.

Kim Fahner lives and writes in Sudbury, Ontario. She was the fourth poet laureate of the city of Greater Sudbury (2016–2018), and the first woman to be appointed to the role. Fahner has published four volumes of poetry, including *You Must Imagine the Cold Here* (Scrivener Press, 1997), *braille on water* (Penumbra Press, 2001), *The Narcoleptic Madonna* (Penumbra Press, 2012), and *Some Other Sky* (Black Moss Press, 2017). Fahner has also completed a novel, a piece of historical fiction set in Northern Ontario, titled *The Donoghue Girl*. She is a member of the League of Canadian Poets, the Writers' Union of Canada, and PEN Canada.

Bernice Lever, a writer, editor and teacher, creates poetry on Bowen Island. Her tenth book of poems was *Red Letter Day* (Black Moss Press, 2014). She edited WAVES, *Fine Canadian*

*Literature*, at York University, Toronto, 1972–1987. Lever’s travels have let her read poems on five continents. Her grammar and composition book (now a CD or free PDF) is *The Colour of Words*. Although she is active in many national writing organizations in Canada, she is now delighted to be on the west coast again, writing PEACE poems for World Poetry.

D. A. Lockhart is the author of *The Gravel Lot that was Montana* (forthcoming from Mansfield Press), *This City at the Crossroads* (Black Moss Press, 2017), and *Big Medicine Comes to Erie* (Black Moss Press, 2016). He holds an MFA from Indiana University–Bloomington where he held a Neal Marshall Fellowship in Creative Writing. He has received grants from the Ontario Arts Council and the Canada Council for the Arts. He is a pukuwankoamimens of the Lenape nation and a member of the Moravian of the Thames First Nation, and he lives in Waawiiyaatanong on the south shore of the Detroit River.

Leah MacLean-Evans lives on the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishnaabeg people. She’s the 2017 fiction winner of the Blodwyn Memorial Prize. Her writing has appeared in *Qwerty*, *untethered*, *Ottawater*, *On Spec Magazine*, and elsewhere. She has an MFA in writing from the University of Saskatchewan and is the proofreader of *Grain Magazine*.

Diana Manole is a writer, translator, and scholar who was born in Romania and currently lives in Toronto, Canada. A Pushcart Prize nominee, her poetry in English (co-translated with Adam J. Sorkin—or written originally therein) has appeared in magazines in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and South Africa. Her poems have also been translated into and published in French, German, Polish, Spanish, Albanian, and Belarusian, while her translations of Canadian poetry have been featured in major Romanian magazines. *B&W*, her latest collection of poems, was published in 2015 by Tracus Arte (Bucharest, Romania) in a bilingual English-Romanian edition.

Kate Marshall Flaherty is a poet, teacher, editor, and performer. She has five books of poetry, including *Reaching V* (Guernica Editions) and *Radiant* (Inanna Press 2019). Her work has been published in numerous Canadian and international journals and anthologies, has been shortlisted for Descant’s Best Canadian Poem, the Pablo Neruda Poetry Prize, the Thomas Merton Poetry of the Sacred Prize and the Robert Frost Poetry Award.

Colin Morton is an award-winning Canadian poet who has published ten books of poetry, a novel, and many reviews and essays. His poems have been translated into French, Spanish, Urdu,

and Albanian, and have been adapted by Canadian, American and Hungarian composers. He co-produced the animated poetry film *Primiti too taa*.

Jacquie Pearce grew up on Vancouver Island. She has published poetry, short nonfiction, and several novels for children. Her haiku have won awards and appeared in a variety of publications, including the *Haiku Canada Review*, *Frogpond*, *The Red Moon Anthology*, and *Of Skin on Skin*, an anthology of erotic haiku.

Ayaz Pirani was born in Musoma, Tanzania, to parents born in Kapsabet and Tanga. He grew up in Canada and studied humanities and writing. His degree is from Vermont College of Fine Arts, where Pirani was a student of the late Jack Myers. His first book, *Happy You Are Here*, was published in 2016. His second book, *Kabir's Jacket Has a Thousand Pockets*, is forthcoming from Mawenzi House.

Pamela Porter is the author of the Governor General's Award winning *The Crazy Man*, as well as ten other books of poetry. She lives in a big thicket of firs and ferns, animals domestic and wild, and a few humans. She likens poetry to a feather, which ends in air and begins in blood.

Greg Santos is the author of *Rabbit Punch!* (DC Books, 2014) and *The Emperor's Sofa* (DC Books, 2010). He holds an MFA in creative writing from The New School in New York City. His writing has appeared in *The Walrus*, *Geist*, *Queen's Quarterly*, *Cha: An Asian Literary Journal*, and The Best American Poetry Blog. He regularly works with at-risk communities and teaches writing and literature at the Thomas More Institute. He is the poetry editor of *carte blanche* and lives in Montreal with his wife and two children. His new book, *Blackbirds*, is forthcoming from Eyewear Publishing spring of 2018.

Eleonore Schönmaier's most recent books are *Dust Blown Side of the Journey* (2017) and *Wavelengths of Your Song* (2013) both published by McGill-Queen's University Press. Her poetry has been set to music by Canadian, Dutch, Scottish, American, and Greek composers. She has won the Alfred G. Bailey Prize, the Earle Birney Prize, and has been twice shortlisted for the Bridport Prize. Her poetry has been published in *The Best Canadian Poetry* and has also been translated into Dutch and German.

Lesley Strutt is a poet, playwright, essayist, novelist, and blogger living in Merrickville, Ontario. Her writing has appeared in anthologies, e-zines, as well as journals such as *Montreal Serai*, *CV2*, *Prairie Fire*, *Ottawater*, *The Literary Review*, *Bywords*, and the *Canadian Woman Studies*

*Journal*. Her chapbook *Small as Butterflies* won the 2015 Tree Chapbook prize. Her first full-length collection of poems, *Window Ledge*, will be published by Inanna Publications.

Melanie Thompson is the 2018 winner of the League of Canadian Poets' Jessamy Stursberg Poetry Prize for young poets. Her poem was winner in the senior category.

Myna Wallin is a Toronto poet and prose writer. She received her MA in English from University of Toronto. Her first collection of poetry, *A Thousand Profane Pieces*, was published by Tightrope Books in 2006. Her second book, the novel *Confessions of a Reluctant Cougar*, was also published by Tightrope Books in 2010. Her next book of poetry, *Anatomy of An Injury*, is forthcoming from Inanna Publications in spring 2018.

Bānoo Zan is a poet, translator, teacher, editor, and poetry curator, with more than 160 published poems and poetry-related pieces as well as three books. *Song of Phoenix: Life and Works of Sylvia Plath*, was reprinted in Iran in 2010. *Songs of Exile*, her first poetry collection, was released in 2016 in Canada by Guernica Editions. It was shortlisted for Gerald Lampert Memorial Award by the League of Canadian Poets in 2017. *Letters to My Father*, her second poetry book, was published in 2017 by Piquant Press in Canada. She is the founder of Shab-e She'r (Poetry Night), a poetry reading and open mic series in Toronto.

# Poems to Share from the Public Domain

Spellbound *by Emily Brontë*

Oread *by H. D.*

Wild Nights—Wild Nights! *by Emily Dickinson*

Holy Sonnet 14 *by John Donne*

Summer in the South *by Paul Laurence Dunbar*

Design *by Robert Frost*

Bright Star *by John Keats*

The Tropics of New York *by Claude McKay*

Afternoon on a Hill *by Edna St. Vincent Millay*

Anthem for Doomed Youth *by Wilfred Owen*

Sonnet 18 *by William Shakespeare*

Storm Ending *by Jean Toomer*

Song of Myself, I *by Walt Whitman*

A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal *by William Wordsworth*

The Lake Isle of Innisfree *by W. B. Yeats*

*For biographies of these poets, visit [www.poets.org](http://www.poets.org).*

# **national** **poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Spellbound*

**Emily Brontë**

The night is darkening round me,  
The wild winds coldly blow;  
But a tyrant spell has bound me  
And I cannot, cannot go.

The giant trees are bending  
Their bare boughs weighed with snow.  
And the storm is fast descending,  
And yet I cannot go.

Clouds beyond clouds above me,  
Wastes beyond wastes below;  
But nothing drear can move me;  
I will not, cannot go.

# national poetry month

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Oread*

H. D.

Whirl up, sea—  
Whirl your pointed pines.  
Splash your great pines  
On our rocks.  
Hurl your green over us—  
Cover us with your pools of fir.

# **national poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Wild Nights—Wild Nights!*

**Emily Dickinson**

Wild Nights — Wild Nights!  
Were I with thee  
Wild Nights should be  
Our luxury!

Futile — the winds —  
To a heart in port —  
Done with the compass —  
Done with the chart!

Rowing in Eden —  
Ah, the sea!  
Might I moor — Tonight —  
In thee!

# **national** **poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Holy Sonnet 14*

**John Donne**

Batter my heart, three-personed God, for you  
As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend;  
That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend  
Your force to break, blow, burn, and make me new.  
I, like an usurped town, to another due,  
Labour to admit you, but Oh, to no end.  
Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend,  
But is captived, and proves weak or untrue.  
Yet dearly I love you, and would be loved fain,  
But am betrothed unto your enemy:  
Divorce me, untie or break that knot again,  
Take me to you, imprison me, for I,  
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,  
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

**national**  
**poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

# *Summer in the South*

**Paul Laurence Dunbar**

The oriole sings in the greening grove  
As if he were half-way waiting,  
The rosebuds peep from their hoods of green,  
Timid and hesitating.

The rain comes down in a torrent sweep  
And the nights smell warm and piney,  
The garden thrives, but the tender shoots  
Are yellow-green and tiny.

Then a flash of sun on a waiting hill,  
Streams laugh that erst were quiet,  
The sky smiles down with a dazzling blue  
And the woods run mad with riot.

# **national** **poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Design*

**Robert Frost**

I found a dimpled spider, fat and white,  
On a white heal-all, holding up a moth  
Like a white piece of rigid satin cloth—  
Assorted characters of death and blight  
Mixed ready to begin the morning right,  
Like the ingredients of a witches' broth—  
A snow-drop spider, a flower like a froth,  
And dead wings carried like a paper kite.

What had that flower to do with being white,  
The wayside blue and innocent heal-all?  
What brought the kindred spider to that height,  
Then steered the white moth thither in the night?  
What but design of darkness to appall?—  
If design govern in a thing so small.

# **national poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Bright Star*

**John Keats**

Bright star! would I were steadfast as thou art—  
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night,  
And watching, with eternal lids apart,  
Like Nature's patient sleepless Eremite,  
The moving waters at their priestlike task  
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,  
Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask  
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—  
No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,  
Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,  
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,  
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,  
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,  
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

# **national** **poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *The Tropics of New York*

**Claude McKay**

Bananas ripe and green, and ginger root  
Cocoa in pods and alligator pears,  
And tangerines and mangoes and grape fruit,  
Fit for the highest prize at parish fairs,

Sat in the window, bringing memories  
of fruit-trees laden by low-singing rills,  
And dewy dawns, and mystical skies  
In benediction over nun-like hills.

My eyes grow dim, and I could no more gaze;  
A wave of longing through my body swept,  
And, hungry for the old, familiar ways  
I turned aside and bowed my head and wept.

# **national poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Afternoon on a Hill*

**Edna St. Vincent Millay**

I will be the gladdest thing

Under the sun!

I will touch a hundred flowers

And not pick one.

I will look at cliffs and clouds

With quiet eyes,

Watch the wind bow down the grass,

And the grass rise.

And when lights begin to show

Up from the town,

I will mark which must be mine,

And then start down!

**national**  
**poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

# *Anthem for Doomed Youth*

**Wilfred Owen**

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?  
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.  
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle  
Can patter out their hasty orisons.  
No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells;  
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,  
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;  
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.  
What candles may be held to speed them all?  
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes  
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.  
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;  
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,  
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

# **national** **poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Sonnet 18*

**William Shakespeare**

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate.  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And summer's lease hath all too short a date.  
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;  
And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimmed;  
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,  
Nor shall death brag thou wand'rest in his shade,  
When in eternal lines to Time thou grow'st.  
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,  
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

# **national poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Storm Ending*

**Jean Toomer**

Thunder blossoms gorgeously above our heads,  
Great, hollow, bell-like flowers,  
Rumbling in the wind,  
Stretching clappers to strike our ears . . .  
Full-lipped flowers  
Bitten by the sun  
Bleeding rain  
Dripping rain like golden honey—  
And the sweet earth flying from the thunder.

# **national** **poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *Song of Myself, I*

**Walt Whitman**

I Celebrate myself, and sing myself,  
And what I assume you shall assume,  
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.

I loafe and invite my soul,  
I lean and loafe at my ease observing a spear of summer grass.

My tongue, every atom of my blood, form'd from this soil,  
    this air,  
Born here of parents born here from parents the same, and  
    their parents the same,  
I, now thirty-seven years old in perfect health begin,  
Hoping to cease not till death.

Creeds and schools in abeyance,  
Retiring back a while sufficed at what they are, but never  
    forgotten,  
I harbor for good or bad, I permit to speak at every hazard,  
Nature without check with original energy.

**national**  
**poetry month**

Poem in Your Pocket Day

*A Slumber Did My  
Spirit Seal*

**William Wordsworth**

A slumber did my spirit seal;  
I had no human fears:  
She seemed a thing that could not feel  
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;  
She neither hears nor sees;  
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,  
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

# national poetry month

Poem in Your Pocket Day

## *The Lake Isle of Innisfree*

W. B. Yeats

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,  
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made:  
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee;  
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,  
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;  
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,  
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day  
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;  
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,  
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

# Appendix

## Haiku

A traditional Japanese haiku is a three-line poem with seventeen syllables, written in a 5/7/5 syllable count. Often focusing on images from nature, haiku emphasizes simplicity, intensity, and directness of expression.

Haiku began in thirteenth-century Japan as the opening phrase of renga, an oral poem, generally 100 stanzas long, which was also composed syllabically. The much shorter haiku broke away from renga in the sixteenth-century, and was mastered a century later by Matsuo Basho, who wrote this classic haiku:

*An old pond!  
A frog jumps in—  
the sound of water.*

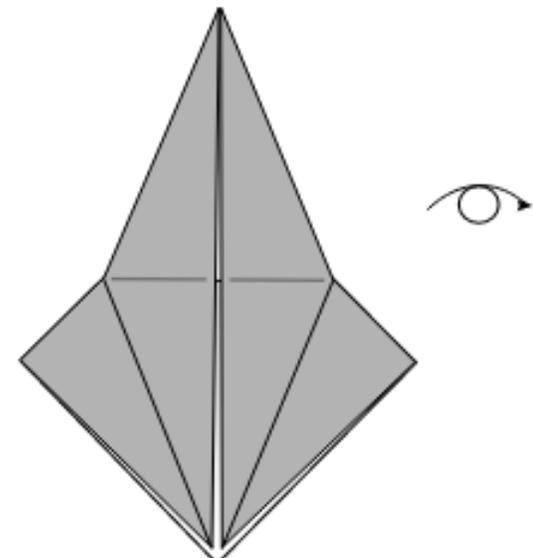
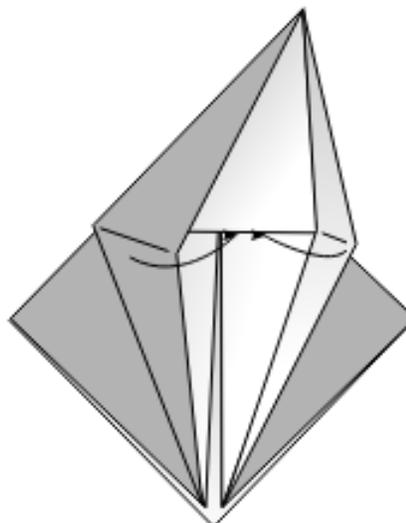
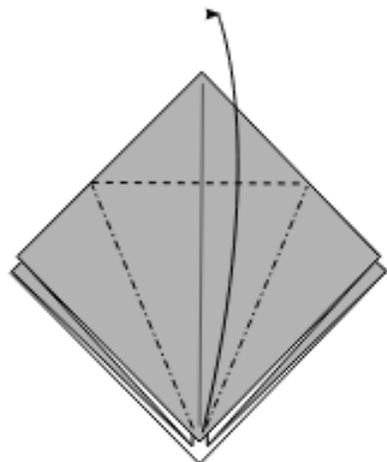
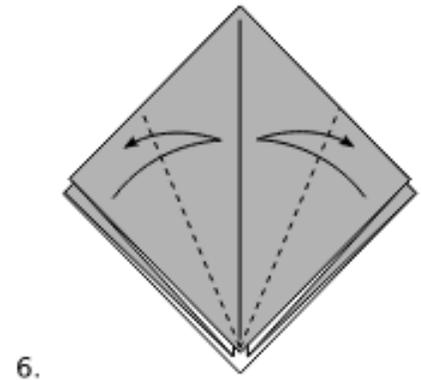
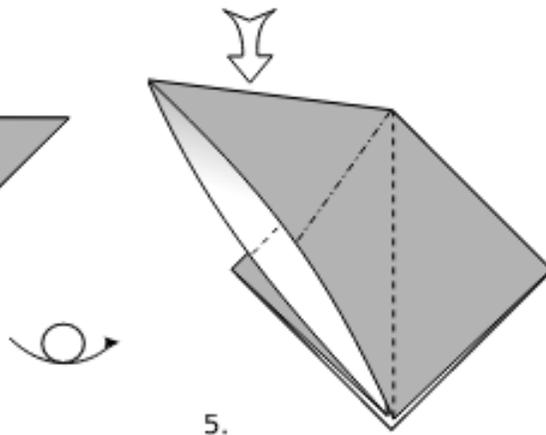
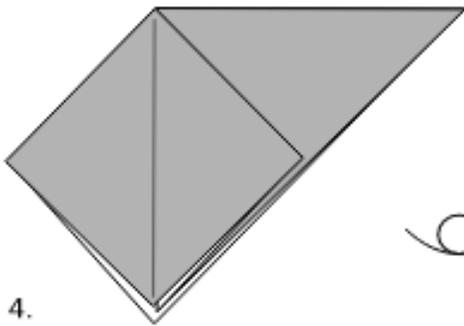
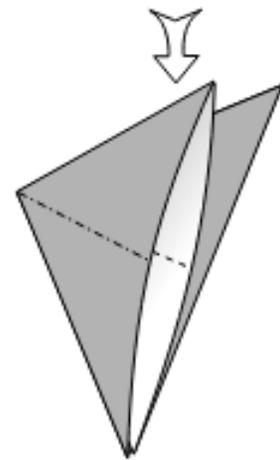
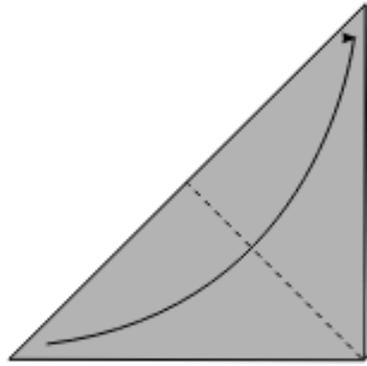
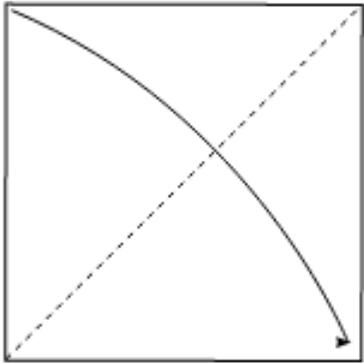
Haiku was traditionally written in the present tense and focused on associations between images. There was a pause at the end of the first or second line, and a “season word,” or kigo, specified the time of year.

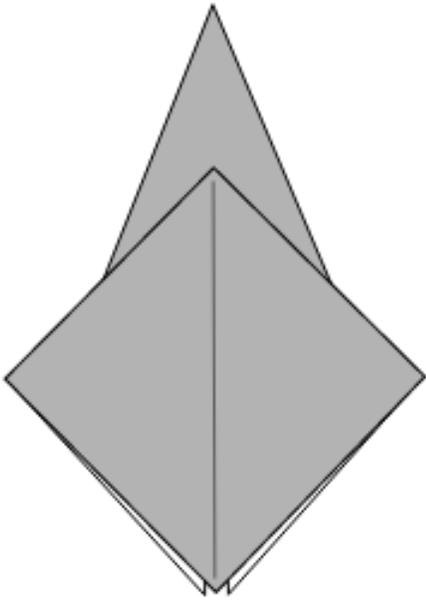
As the form has evolved, many of these rules—including the 5/7/5 practice—have been routinely broken. However, the philosophy of haiku has been preserved: the focus on a brief moment in time; a use of provocative, colorful images; an ability to be read in one breath; and a sense of sudden enlightenment and illumination.

To read more examples of poems written in the haiku form, visit [www.poets.org/haiku](http://www.poets.org/haiku).

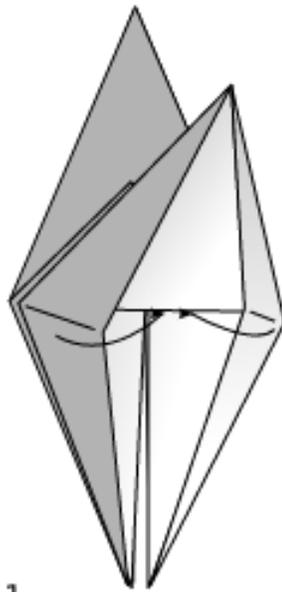
To read about other poetic forms, such as the acrostic, the cinquain, and the sonnet, visit [www.poets.org](http://www.poets.org).

# How to Create a Folded Swan

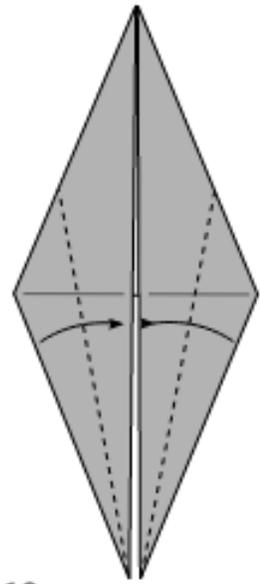




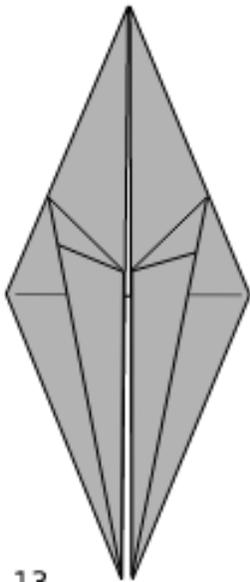
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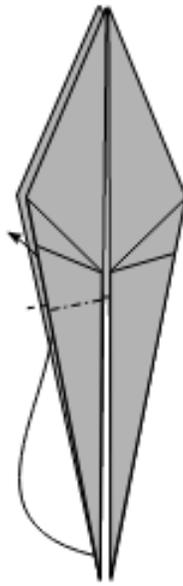
11.



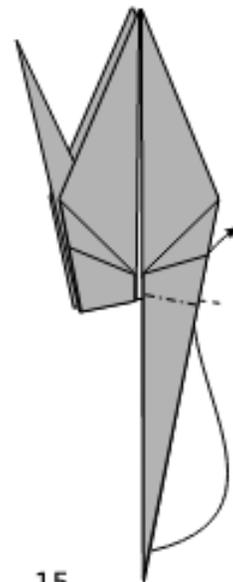
12.



13.



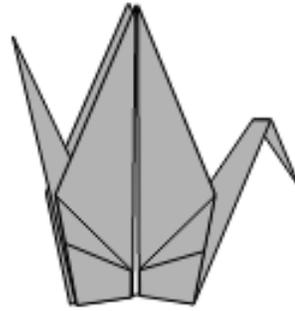
14.



15.



16.



17.



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# Other Resources

## Poem-a-Day

Poem-a-Day is the original and only daily digital poetry series featuring over 200 new, previously unpublished poems by today's talented poets each year. On weekdays, poems are accompanied by exclusive commentary by the poets. The series highlights classic poems on weekends. Launched in 2006, Poem-a-Day is now distributed via email, web, and social media to 450,000+ readers free of charge and is available for syndication. For more information, visit [www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem-day](http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem-day).

## Teach This Poem

Inspired by the success of our popular syndicated series Poem-a-Day, Teach This Poem is produced for K-12 teachers and features one poem a week from our online poetry collection, accompanied by interdisciplinary resources and activities designed to help teachers quickly and easily bring poetry into the classroom. The series is curated by our Educator in Residence, Dr. Madeleine Fuchs Holzer, and is available for free via email. For more information, visit [www.poets.org/poetsorg/teach-poem](http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/teach-poem).

## Poetry Lesson Plans

The Academy of American Poets presents lesson plans, most of which align with Common Core State Standards, and all of which have been reviewed by our Educator in Residence with an eye toward developing skills of perception and imagination. We hope they will inspire the educators in our community to bring even more poems into your classrooms! For more information, visit [www.poets.org/poetsorg/lesson-plans](http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/lesson-plans).

## National Poetry Month

National Poetry Month is the largest literary celebration in the world, with tens of millions of readers, students, K-12 teachers, librarians, booksellers, literary events curators, publishers, bloggers, and, of course, poets marking poetry's important place in our culture and our lives.

While we celebrate poets and poetry year-round, the Academy of American Poets was inspired by the successful celebrations of Black History Month (February) and Women's History Month (March), and founded National Poetry Month in April 1996 with an aim to:

- highlight the extraordinary legacy and ongoing achievement of American poets,
- encourage the reading of poems,
- assist teachers in bringing poetry into their classrooms,
- increase the attention paid to poetry by national and local media,
- encourage increased publication and distribution of poetry books, and
- encourage support for poets and poetry.

For more information, visit [www.poets.org/npm](http://www.poets.org/npm).

### **The Academy of American Poets**

The Academy of American Poets is the largest membership-based nonprofit organization fostering an appreciation for contemporary poetry and supporting American poets. For over three generations, the organization has connected millions of people to great poetry through programs such as National Poetry Month, the largest literary celebration in the world; Poets.org, one of the leading poetry sites online; *American Poets*, a biannual magazine; an annual series of poetry readings and special events; and its education programs.

### **The League of Canadian Poets**

The League of Canadian Poets is the professional organization for established and emerging Canadian poets. Founded in 1966 to nurture the advancement of poetry in Canada, and the promotion of the interests of poets, it now comprises over 700 members. The League serves the poetry community and promotes a high level of professional achievement through events, networking, projects, publications, mentoring and awards. It administers programs and funds for governments and private donors and encourages an appreciative readership and audience for poetry through educational partnerships and presentations to diverse groups. As the recognized voice of Canadian poets, it represents their concerns to governments, publishers, and society at large, and maintains connections with similar organizations at home and abroad. The League strives to promote equal opportunities for poets from every literary tradition and cultural and demographic background.