

# Thirst

My cupped hands leak more water than I drink.  
My fingers – my life, too -- are sieves.  
Plunge deep, to your palms, take in all you can,  
as long as the faucet runs.

Joe Alan Artz

**Poetry in Public 2024**



# Dead Heat

In the dead heat of winter, doves whistle and die  
and become guardian angels. Snow crunches  
beneath my boots, frozen in the mold of tire tracks,  
bad maps, birch limbs. Her gravestone peeks  
above the rolling white. The world turns  
mercilessly. I never wanted to go back  
before now.

Eleanor Ball

**Poetry in Public 2024**



# A December Walk with Leo

A glowing circumference reminiscent of the hue of August's sweet corn,  
now but a ghost of summer's echo –  
too perfect for aperture or lens to capture.

The centerpiece against a backdrop of navy charcoal gives way to the cozy, sugar-dusted conifers,  
awash with a healthy smattering of fog, suspended in the crisp, rustic air, infused with smoke from a crackling fire,  
surely warming a gathering of friends. My gaze falls upon the majestic winterscape's final layer –  
a frozen blanket of a trillion twinkling diamonds, reflecting curious light of the universe's mysteries.

Melodee Bashir

**Poetry in Public 2024**



# Downtown

I walked through downtown, surrounded by magic.  
A child fell off the play tower by the library, hung suspended in midair until caught.  
Lovers who haven't met yet walked past Yotopia, not noticing each other.  
An old guitar played a song heard in a dream  
By a weathered man anointed with coins.  
I remembered your name, watching an unidentified bird  
Rise blackly against the salt-colored sky.

Philip Beck

Poetry in Public 2024



# The Secret Universal Order of Adjectives

how an old  
blue man &  
a blue old  
man are  
different men  
with different  
problems

Jacquelyn Bengfort  
**Poetry in Public 2024**



# In the Night

Moth-thoughts wake me.

The moon is a fist  
in the still black sky.

I try turning off my mind  
but worry is an incandescent burn  
that draws all the whispering wings.

Nancy Lael Braun

**Poetry in Public 2024**



# An Evening Stroll

The post at Court and Summit Streets,  
while bowing to the elements,  
still keeps its shape and holds its plaques,  
a churchyard sort of stone, which meets  
us bearing civic sentiments.  
About it circle whitetail tracks.  
Me: “Thomas Gray.” You: “No way. Keats.”

Dan Champion

**Poetry in Public 2024**



# In the Art Museum with Franklin, a Third Grader

We look at the hazy patterned squares of the adire eleko cloth hanging on the wall. A Yoruba artisan had applied cassava paste to the material before dyeing it a deep indigo blue.

Faint images appeared as the paste washed away.

Franklin tells us he thinks those images are spirit beings, and the cloth was made to wrap a body in before burying it.

David Duer

**Poetry in Public 2024**





# A Thank You to Hawkeye Women's Basketball

On a whim we bought season tickets,  
at the behest of my nine-year-old: We HAVE to.  
I wasn't prepared at all for the magic of it.  
Of something so much bigger than us.  
Ice cream and hot dogs, cheering, and tears  
and JOY — dreams realized and ignited,  
and my daughter's hand in mine through it all.

Alexandra Fell

**Poetry in Public 2024**



# Diverse Chirps United

blackbirds pepper sky

starlings, red wings, grackles mix

multitudes flocking

woven warbles, novel notes

instinctively inclusive

Laura Felleman

**Poetry in Public 2024**



# Being of Sound Mind

Anyhoo, it is 2051, and I have simply ceased,  
survived by a son, a brother, by beeches,  
birches, big-mouthed bass, bottlebrush. By  
memories of manatee, mantis, man-of-war.  
By the time you read this, I will have been consumed  
by bacteria, beetle, moss, maggot. No, fire. By the  
fire of the Mexican Hermit Hummingbird.

Cecile Goding

**Poetry in Public 2024**



# Blizzard Aftermath

splitting under the weight of snow

heavier than she has ever borne

Cedar exposes her inner core

Dark and rich against the backdrop

of barren winter.

When we cannot bear the weight, we, too, crack and reveal.

Leslea Haravon Collins

**Poetry in Public 2024**



# For My Fledglings

I want to tell you,  
some things won't require a box come moving day.  
Like the low hum of the wind  
coursing through our woods into our dreams,  
these things hush steady and strong in you,  
softly singing through your hearts.  
Just listen, my winged girls. Listen.

Jennifer Horn-Frasier  
**Poetry in Public 2024**



# Pikuach Nefesh (Seven Lines for Palestine)

In Jewish law, if life is in danger, the commandments may and must be abandoned. If a man fasting for Yom Kippur grows hunger sick, then he may eat. If on the day of rest, a child loses balance and falls into a river, she must be saved, no matter the rules of the Sabbath. If a nation starves, they may eat unkosher food. Above all else, life.

Rachel Lapidés

**Poetry in Public 2024**



# Haiku from the End of the World

an hour left of us  
until we are comet dust  
as stars, I love you

Jenna Mather

Poetry in Public 2024



# Hollowed

The tree on the forest floor,  
so mighty, ages ago.

A sight of hollowed beauty,  
till someone decides to claim it as home.

Tell me, wise tree, shall I too, sit and wait  
for good souls to seek refuge in me?

Gaby Maymi

**Poetry in Public 2024**





# Starling

Who hasn't seen a starling  
by the side of the road, say, a single starling  
bobbing its oily, black feathers, picking at grit  
the same starling who will later disappear  
into a murmuration above us, now, not a picker of grit  
but a spontaneous, intricate wave  
riveting our attention to the sky.

René Paine

Poetry in Public 2024



# Heaven

The shrapnel chose to leave young  
Youssef, chose to return a bomb,  
the bomb chose to tilt into the sky,  
Israel chose to return the bomb, we  
chose to dismantle it, we  
nestled the metal in the earth.  
We have always chosen life.

Elim Pilet

**Poetry in Public 2024**



At some point, the last cicada sings

I do not want to be one of those people  
counting off the days of summer,  
mourning the sun as it sets earlier each night,  
bemoaning summer's demise  
before the first leaf has even thought to fall.

Lisa M. Roberts

**Poetry in Public 2024**



# Olive Tree (Seven Lines for Palestine)

I long for you to stand still with thousand-year roots  
To twist up to the sky for warmth  
Not for fear of what it carries  
To hear your children play beneath your dappled light  
Not weep at your uprooting  
To feed them your fruit cultivated in love  
For what good is soil eroded by hate?

Marisa Rude

**Poetry in Public 2024**



# Glass Genocide

## Seven Lines for Palestine

there was a man today      who I saw on a screen      through a camera in Gaza  
round cheeks under      glasses, he might have a laugh younger than his face,  
he might like the color green      walking back back,      besides his friends or family,  
carrying a white flag      His mother, his brother      he says      they had not been  
allowed to evacuate      and the camera walks forward, past the man, to catch the crack  
of an Israeli sniper.      you cannot see the black bullet      until the flag falls onto his  
chest, red, scattered in letters      which spell the end to color

Rasmus Schlutter

Poetry in Public 2024



# Prayer for a Little Woman

She's teeny and beautiful, brunette but graying.  
She's maybe seven. She's seen more than I, and more than most everyone.  
Let me hold her and, by osmosis, take in the tears that choke her.  
Put them on the fire and let her breathe.  
Let each teardrop simmer down to the sweetest syrup, all hers to drape across a pastry.  
Across anything she wants.  
Across anything other than the charred bread that stinks of animal feed. Across anything  
other than the grass and weeds, boiled.  
I want to be her lungs and she just wants her mother.

Julie Watkins

**Poetry in Public 2024**

