

Poetry Selections for: *Dawn Chorus*, 2018 at the Rail Park
1300 Noble St, Philadelphia, PA 19123

Introduction

Dawn Chorus is a site-specific public artwork by **Brent Wahl** and **Laynie Browne**, commissioned by the City of Philadelphia's Percent for Art Program of the Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy. It consists of two parts: 1. A sculpture comprised of a repurposed utility pole and cast aluminum birds, and 2. Poetry excerpts engraved in paver stones. This document details more information for the poetry aspect of the project.

The poetry excerpts in *Dawn Chorus* celebrate communication, rail lines, and the city as a meeting place. Thirteen languages are represented, reflecting the abundance of literary arts in our community. They connect ground to sky and include imagery of birds, threads, and transmission.

Below are the poetry selections in their original languages, with translations where applicable, as well as bio notes of the poets.



SELECTIONS IN ORIGINAL LANGUAGES
(with translations where applicable)

And the distant starry highway
You will know and travel often
Richard Calmit Adams



Constellations also have the power to
understand—
Etel Adnan



А в небе заря стояла,
Как ворота в ее страну.
Анна АХМАТОВА

And like gates into her country
In the sky stood the dawn
Anna Akhmatova



Risalimmo le lettere del libro
il mistero della luce a spirale
nella stanza— a branchi, in fuga
Maria Attanasio

We re climbed the letters of the book
the mystery of the spiral light
in the stanza—in herds, in flight
Maria Attanasio



Niebo złote ci otworzę,
w którym ciszy biała nić
Krzysztof Kamil Baczyński

I'll open for you the golden sky
where the white thread of silence is
Krzysztof Kamil Baczyński



Blow wind blow, anon am I
Everything passes into everything
Anon I pass to everything
Caroline Bergvall



What you call matter, flowers, represent tones held together in a harmonic spectrum you can
see
Mei-mei Berssenbrugge



and the grass flesh
and the flesh memory
and the memory nodding
Kamau Braithwaite



IN DER LUFT, da bleibt deine Wurzel, da
in der Luft.
Paul Celan



IN THE AIR, there your root remains, there,
in the air.
Paul Celan

I hope
for another
to garden with my
bare hands

CAC Conrad



Snow and sunshine are companions
Through an invisible string we
walk to each other
Victor Hernandez Cruz



当鸟路界定天空
你回望那落日
消失中呈现的是
时间的玫瑰

北岛



when bird roads define the sky
you look behind at the sunset
to emerge in disappearance is
the rose of time
Bei Dao

The book I was writing couldn't exist without these maps that separated streets from sentences, that showed
awnings in paragraphs, that always had a river.
Renee Gladman

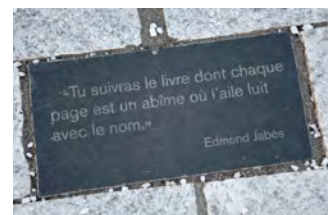


Pale blue heavenly air is supporting
A white wing high against the breeze
Seamus Heaney



“Tu suivras le livre dont chaque page est un abîme où l'aile luit avec le nom.”
Edmond Jabès

You will follow the book, whose every page is an abyss where the wing shines with the name.
Edmond Jabès



I'll have a million neighbors in the city
All at once above below it's easier for love
Bernadette Mayer



كم غيمة تنقصني
لأمطر أمنياتي على المدن؟
دنيا ميخائيل

How many clouds do I need
to rain my wishes over the cities?
Dunya Mikhail

Spirits taught me to write
Countless spirits writing this
Hoa Nguyen



Guide us as You do the birds and the spiders and the dandelion fluff
that know their homes.
Ladan Osman



El libro y el cuaderno
repliegan las alas y reposan
Octavio Paz

The book and the notebook
unfold their wings and rest
Octavio Paz



Algo caía en el silencio. Mi última palabra fue yo pero me refería
al alba luminosa.

Alejandra Pizarnik

Something falling in the silence. My final word was I, but by this I meant
the luminous dawn.

Alejandra Pizarnik



毎日、葉のやうな細い指先が
地図をかいている。

左川ちか

Every day, fingertips thin like leaves
Are drawing maps
Chika Sagawa



common ground
is we, forever
breathing earth

Sonia Sanchez



हमारी नींद जड़ों का तकिया लगाती है
और पेड़ की तरह सपने देखती है
व्योमेश शुक्ल

our sleep uses roots for pillows
and dreams like trees
Vyomesh Shukla.



Cutting shade, cool spades and little last beds, make violet, violet when.
Gertrude Stein



낮달이 식구였다
고은

The daytime moon was one of her family
Ko Un



Cuerda en el aire
El hilo es sendero, me pierdo en él
El sendero es perfume, me voy con él

Cecilia Vicuña

String in the air
the thread is a path I lose myself on
the path is a scent I go down

Cecilia Vicuña



Hu'u 'at ma:si
Ñeid 'o mat am ma:si g hu'u, mat am e-na:to.
Ofelia Zepeda

They have seen the place where stars are born.
They are embryonic.

Ofelia Zepeda



Bio Notes of Poets

Richard Calmit Adams (1864-1924) was a Delaware (Lenape) Indian who devoted twenty-five years of his life to being a champion of Delaware causes. He acted as their legal representative in Washington, D.C., helping to direct the tribe's fierce legal battles with the Cherokee Nation over land rights.

<https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/richard-calmit-adams>

Etel Adnan (born 24 February 1925 in Beirut, Lebanon) is a Lebanese-American poet, essayist, and visual artist. In 2003, Adnan was named "arguably the most celebrated and accomplished Arab American author writing today" by the academic journal *MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States*. <http://www.eteladnan.com/>

Anna Akhmatova (1889-1966) Anna Andreyevna Gorenk better known by the pen name Anna Akhmatova (Анна Ахматова), was a Russian modernist poet, one of the most acclaimed writers in the Russian Canon. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/anna-akhmatova>

Maria Attanasio (Born in Caltagirone, Italy, in 1943—where she still lives, writes, and teaches philosophy—Attanasio is the author of five collections of poetry and four works of historical fiction.

<https://www.litmuspress.org/books/amnesia-of-the-movement-of-clouds-of-red-and-black-verse>

Krzysztof Kamil Baczyński (1921-1944) was a Polish poet and Home Army soldier, one of the most renowned authors of the Generation of Columbuses, the young generation of Polish poets of whom several perished in the Warsaw Uprising and during the German occupation of Poland.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Krzysztof_Kamil_Baczy%C5%84ski

Carolyn Bergvall (1962, Germany) is poet of French-Norwegian nationalities based in UK since 1989. She is an artist, writer and performer who works across artforms, media and languages.

<http://www.carolinebergvall.com/>

Mei-mei Berssenbrugge (1947) was born in Beijing and resides in the U.S. Winner of two American Book Awards, her work is often associated with the Language School, the poetry of the New York School, phenomenology, and visual art. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/mei-mei-berssenbrugge>

Kamau Braithwaite (1930) is a Barbadian poet and academic, widely considered one of the major voices in the Caribbean literary canon. Braithwaite was the 2006 International Winner of the Griffin Poetry Prize for his volume of poetry *Born to Slow Horses*. <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/kamau-brathwaite>

Paul Celan (1920-1970) was a Romanian-born German language poet and translator. He was born as Paul Antschel to a Jewish family in Romania (now Ukraine), and adopted the pseudonym "Paul Celan". He became one of the major German-language poets of the post-World War II era.

<https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/paul-celan>

CAConrad (1966) is the author of seven books, the latest is titled *While Standing in Line for Death* (Wave Books, 2017). He is a 2015 Headlands Art Fellow, and has also received fellowships from Lannan Foundation, MacDowell Colony, Banff, Ucross, RADAR, and the Pew Center for Arts & Heritage. <http://caconrad.blogspot.com/>

Victor Hernandez Cruz (1949) was born in Aguas Buenas, Puerto Rico. In 1954, his family moved to NYC and lived in Spanish Harlem. His book *Maraca: New and Selected Poems, 1966-2000* was shortlisted for the 2002 International Griffin Poetry Prize. <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/victor-hern%C3%A1ndez-cruz>

Bei Dao (1949) is the pen name of Chinese poet **Zhao Zhenkai** (S: 赵振开, T: 趙振開, P: *Zhào Zhènkāi*). He was born in Beijing. Bei Dao is the most notable representative of the Misty Poets, a group of Chinese poets who reacted against the restrictions of the Cultural Revolution. <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/bei-dao>

Renee Gladman (1971) is a writer, visual artist, and author of many books. She is the recipient of a 2014-2015 fellowship from The Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University and a 2016 grant to artists from Foundation for Contemporary Arts. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/renee-gladman>

Seamus Heaney (1939-2013) was an Irish poet, playwright, translator and lecturer from Northern Ireland. He received the 1995 Nobel Prize in Literature. Heaney also received include Griffin Poetry Prize and in 2012, a Lifetime Recognition Award from the Griffin Trust. https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1995/heaney-bio.html

Edmond Jabès (1912) was one of the best known literary figures to write in French after World War II. When Egypt expelled its Jewish population Jabès fled to Paris in 1957, and he became a French citizen in 1967, the same year that he received the honor of being one of four French writers to present his works at the World Exposition in Montreal. In 1987, he received France's Grand National Prize for Poetry (Grand Prix national de la poésie). <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/edmond-jabes>

Bernadette Mayer (1945) Born in Brooklyn, Mayer is a poet often associated with the New York School. She is the author of numerous books and her awards include a Guggenheim fellowship. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/bernadette-mayer>

Dunya Mikhail (1965) was born in Baghdad and earned a BA at the University of Baghdad. She worked as a translator and journalist for the *Baghdad Observer* before being placed on Saddam Hussein's enemies list. She immigrated to the United States in the mid-1990s. Her first book published in English, *The War Works Hard* (2005), was shortlisted for the Griffin Poetry Prize, and was selected as one of the 25 Best Books of 2005 by the New York Public Library. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/dunya-mikhail>

Hoa Nguyen (1967) was born in the Mekong Delta and raised in the DC area. She is the author of many books and her poetry has been collected in many anthologies including *Poem-a-Day: 365 Poems for Every Occasion* (Abram Books 2016), and *Best Canadian Poetry In English* 2015 and 2016 (Tightrope Books). <http://www.hoa-nguyen.com/>

Ladan Osman is a Somali-American poet and teacher. In 2014, she was awarded the annual Sillerman First Book Prize for her collection *The Kitchen Dweller's Testimony*. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/ladan-osman>

Octavio Paz (1914-1998) was a Mexican poet and diplomat. For his body of work, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1990. <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/octavio-paz>

Alejandra Pizarnik (1936-1972) is considered one of the most significant contributors to twentieth-century Argentine poetry. During her short lifetime she wrote seven books of poetry and one book of prose, as well as numerous translations, short stories, essays, and drawings. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/alejandra-pizarnik>

Chika Sagawa (1911-1936) whose real name was Aiko Kawasaki, was one of the first female modernist poets in Japan. <http://www.canarium.org/chika-sagawa>

Sonia Sanchez (1934) is a renowned writer, poet, playwright and activist. She has authored over a dozen books of poetry, as well as short stories, critical essays, plays, and children's books. She was a recipient of 1993 Pew Fellowships in the Arts. In 2001, Sanchez was the recipient of the Robert Frost Medal. She was the first poet laureate of Philadelphia (2012-2014). <http://soniasanchez.net>

Vyomesh Shukla (1980) was born in Varanasi, India. Besides writing poetry, he writes reviews and criticism and has translated works by Edward Said, Raymond Williams, Terry Eagleton, Harold Pinter, Howard Zinn and Eliot Weinberger's book *What I Heard About Iraq* into Hindi. <https://www.asymptotejournal.com/poetry/vyomesh-shukla-what-i-wanted-to-write/>

Gertrude Stein (1874-1946) was an American novelist, poet, playwright, and art collector. Born in the Allegheny West neighborhood of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and raised in Oakland, California, Stein moved to Paris in 1903, and made France her home for the remainder of her life. <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/gertrude-stein>

Ko Un (1933) is a South Korean poet whose works have been translated and published in more than fifteen countries. After witnessing the devastation of the Korean War, Ko entered a monastery and became a Buddhist monk. He left the Buddhist community in 1962. In the 1970s and early 1980s, Ko was detained, tortured, and imprisoned repeatedly for his opposition to the military regime. Ko has published more than 100 books, including translations of his poetry into more than a dozen languages. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/ko-un-56d207070306a>

Cecilia Vicuña (1947) is a poet, artist, filmmaker and activist. Born and raised in Santiago de Chile, she has been in exile since the early 1970s. Vicuña began creating "precarious works" in the mid 1960s in Chile, as a way of "hearing an ancient silence waiting to be heard." Her multi-dimensional works begin as a poem, an image that morphs into a film, a song, a sculpture, or a collective performance. These ephemeral, site-specific installations in nature, streets, and museums combine ritual and assemblage. <http://www.ceciliavicuna.com/>

Ofelia Zepeda (1952) is a member of the Tohono O'odham tribe. She was born in the rural farming community of Stanfield, Arizona. Her parents' families are originally from O'odham villages in Sonora, Mexico. She won the prestigious MacArthur Award in 1999 for her work toward maintaining native languages. http://universeofpoetry.org/tohono_oodham.shtml



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