Poetry Out Loud is a program of the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. In New York State, Poetry Out Loud is presented in partnership with the New York State Council on the Arts and Teachers & Writers Collaborative. Poetry Out Loud is a national program that encourages high school students to learn about great poetry—both classic and contemporary—through memorization, performance, and competition. Since the program began in 2005, more than four million students across the country have participated in Poetry Out Loud.

Students participating in the 2021 Poetry Out Loud New York State Final are the winners from 6 regional competitions that took place throughout the state. The New York State champion will join students from across the country to compete for more than $50,000 in awards, including $20,000 for the national champion. The 2021 POL National Semifinals will take place on Sunday, May 2nd, and the 2021 POL National Finals will take place on Thursday, May 27th. Both will be streamed on arts.gov.

2021 Poetry Out Loud New York State Final
March 13, 2021

Emcee
Dave Johnson
Poet, Playwright, Actor, and Translator; Publisher & Editor of Free Verse and Faculty Member at The New School University and the Cooper Union School of Art

Opening Remarks
Christine Leahy
Arts Program Director, New York State Council on the Arts

Judges
Sarah Dohrmann
Brooklyn-based writer and teaching artists

Samara Huggins
Artist and 2017 Poetry Out Loud National Champion

Darshna Katwala
Professor, Critical Reading and Academic Advancement at Nassau Community College Director, Long Island Writing Project; Coordinator of the Women’s and Gender Studies Project

Kathrine Varnes
Essayist, Poet, Playwright and Professor of English at Fashion Institute of Technology

Accuracy Judge
Amanda Volel
Poet and Communications Associate, Teachers & Writers Collaborative
Finalists

Each student will recite poems in three rounds of performances. Poems are listed in the order in which students will recite them.

Sakura Barthelemy, Robert F. Kennedy Community High School
_I, Too_ by Langston Hughes
_Epitaph_ by Katherine Philips
_I Remember, I Remember_ by Thomas Hood

Carly Branagan, Jamesville DeWitt High School
_Danse Russe_ by William Carlos Williams
_The Gift_ by Li-Young Lee
_I Am_ by John Clare

Uwakmfon-abasi Ebong, Valley Stream Central High School
_April Love_ by Ernest Dowson
_To have without holding_ by Marge Piercy
_Undivided Attention_ by Taylor Mali

Nathaniel Fields, White Plains High School
_Self-Help_ by Michael Ryan
_The Glories of Our Blood and State_ by James Shirley
_The Song of the Smoke_ by W.E.B Du Bios

Madison Grady, Jericho High School
_Planetarium_ by Adrienne Rich
_Through a Glass Eye, Lightly_ by Carolyn Kizer
_The New Colossus_ by Emma Lazarus

Liliana Greyf, Horace Mann School
_It was not Death, for i stood up, (355)_ by Emily Dickinson
_Hanging Fire_ by Audre Lorde
_Sorrow Is Not My Name_ by Ross Gay

Rachel Lin, Syosset High School
_Requests for Toy Piano_ by Tony Hoagland
_The Chimney Sweeper: When my mother died I was very young_ by William Blake
_Don’t Let Me Be Lonely: “At the airport-security checkpoint...”_ by Claudia Rankine

Armani Meza, Fontbonne Hall Academy
_Ode on Solitude_ by Alexander Pope
_You, If No One Else_ by Tino Villanueva
_Self-Employed_ by David Ignatow

Emily Monfort, Valley Stream Central High School
_I Am Offering this Poem_ by Jimmy Santiago Baca
_Gulf Memo_ by Stephen Sandy
_God’s Grandeur_ by Gerard Manley Hopkins

Zaida Polanco, White Plains High School
_El Olvido_ by Judith Ortiz Cofer
_No, I wasn’t meant to love and be loved_ by Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib
_Dirge Without Music_ by Edna St. Vincent Millay

Nya Santeliz, Bethlehem Central High School
_A Poison Tree_ by William Blake
_Kitchinette Building_ by Gwendolyn Brooks
_Who Said It Was Simple_ by Audre Lorde

Taíña K. Stevens, Shenendehowa High School East
_There Are Birds Here_ by Jamaal May
_Fairy-Tale Logic_ by A.E. Stallings
_Revenge_ by Letitia Elizabeth Landon