

*jazz*

*hip-hop*

*spoken word*

*Language*  
**LIBERATES**

**DODGE  
POETRY**



**3-day festival**

**oct 17 – 19**

**njpac**

# dodge poetry festival map

- 1 NJPAC**  
Prudential Hall  
Victoria Theater  
Chase Room  
NICO Kitchen + Bar  
1 Center Street
- 2 Center for Arts Education (CAE)**  
24 Rector Street
- 3 New Jersey Historical Society**  
52 Park Place
- 4 Military Park** · 51 Park Place
- 5 Trinity & St. Philip's Cathedral**  
608 Broad Street
- 6 Express Newark**  
Hahne & Co.  
54 Halsey Street · 2nd Floor
- 7 St. Patrick's Pro-Cathedral**  
91 Washington Street
- 8 Clement's Place**  
Rutgers University  
15 Washington Street
- 9 Newark Public Library**  
5 Washington Street · 2nd Floor



Light Rail Stops



Festival Bookstore



Parking



Information (located inside rotunda)

# thursday, october 17

For the fourth Festival in a row, the **Academy of American Poets** — a leading supporter of poets and poetry across the United States for 90 years — teams up with the **Dodge Poetry Festival** to present readings and conversations on the art and practice of poetry. The Academy's Board of Chancellors have curated three sessions (\*) on Thursday, which they will also lead. The Chancellors are a group of esteemed poets who serve as artistic advisors to the organization and ambassadors of poetry to the nation at large.

## 10:30 – 11:40AM

Victoria Theater, NJPAC

Academy of American Poets Presents: Poetry & Pause\*

**Ed Roberson and Tracy K. Smith**

A conversation with Academy Chancellors Ed Roberson and Tracy K. Smith on slowing down in a rapidly evolving climate and world. Hand-in-hand with justice work, the act of reading poems responds to the profound need for reflection.

*CART captioned.*

## 10:30 – 11:40AM

Chase Room, NJPAC

The Nature of the Poetry Biz  
**Dr. Helena D. Lewis, Nancy Mercado and JRose**

Poetry is an art form; being a poet is also a business proposition. Get the inside scoop on the undiscussed business of poetry from how to get a book published, to how to market yourself and establish an LLC. Poets who've made a living with their words will read their works, and then offer real-world tips for navigating writing careers.

## 12 – 1:10PM

Victoria Theater, NJPAC

Academy of American Poets Presents: Poetry & Resurgence\*

**Carolyn Forché, Patricia Smith and Afaa Michael Weaver**

A conversation with Academy Chancellors Carolyn Forché, Patricia Smith and Afaa Michael Weaver on the use of writing prompts/exercises — and “model” poems accompanying these prompts — as active and responsive ways to invite creativity, especially in our rife times.

## 12 – 1:10PM

Chase Room, NJPAC

Publishing in the Era of Social Media  
**Cito Blanco, Jeri Rae and JRose**

Poets have found amazing success promoting their work on social media platforms. These plugged-in poets, who can boast of large followings, will talk about how they've promoted their work digitally and how a social media following is replacing a string of magazine publications as a way to launch a career and promote a new book.

## 1:30 – 2:40PM

Victoria Theater, NJPAC

Academy of American Poets Presents: Poetry & the Collection\*

**Jericho Brown and Kimiko Hahn**

A conversation with Academy Chancellors Jericho Brown and Kimiko Hahn that demystifies what building a poetry collection is all about — how to start, where to end, and how to keep attention going. Sharing poems from their own poetry collections, this session is tailored for educators and for lifelong learners of the art form.

*CART captioned.*

## 1:30 – 2:40PM

Chase Room, NJPAC

Writing the Best Years of Your Life

**Kathy Kremins, Dr. Helena D. Lewis and Ameerah Shabazz-Bilal**

Have a conversation with an experienced generation of poets, and hear them read some of the best works of their careers, at this gathering that focuses on mature poets who are thriving artistically. What experiences are these poets documenting, and what kinds of conversations do they want to have with young writers and with each other? What kind of resources ensure that they can continue their work? Learn how to keep the words flowing through the decades.

## thursday, october 17

### 3 – 4:10PM

Chase Room, NJPAC

#### Activism and Poetry for Educators

**Kai Coggin, Diana Goetsch,  
Paul con Queso LaTorre and  
Ameerah Shabazz-Bilal**

How can poetry bring activism into the classroom and other learning spaces? Hear from educators and activists who have found success in getting learners — from children to adult learners to incarcerated people — interested in social justice by incorporating poetry into their lesson plans. This conversation offers best practices for tying poetry to social justice and is appropriate for a wide range of educators, or for those simply curious about the connections.

### 7:30 – 10PM

NICO Kitchen + Bar

**Free!**

#### Catalyst Open Mic and Mixer hosted by EvoluCulture

Join us on opening night when Dodge Poetry and EvoluCulture, Newark's staple poetry organization, will offer an opportunity to be on stage and share your work alongside a live jazz band. This is YOUR chance to connect and mingle with festival poets and members of the Newark arts community. EvoluCulture CEO and poet Sean Battle will emcee, headlined by poets Craig Bradley, DS Will and Newark's own Margie "Mia X" Johnson with other surprises in celebration of EvoluCulture's 10th anniversary and the 20th *Dodge Poetry Festival*. This event is free, no ticket needed. Doors open at 7PM — please arrive early to sign up for the open mic.

## friday, october 18

### Starting at 9AM

Prudential Hall, NJPAC

#### *Hip Hop Arts & Culture Performances*

Throughout Young Artist Day, enjoy music and performances by a DJ and lyricists from *Hip Hop Arts & Culture*. This NJPAC Arts Education program asks students to come up with creative ways to express their style, point of view and imagination. Talented hip hop faculty bring lyrical ideas to life and develop skills in emceeing, music production, dance and choreography. Join *Hip Hop Arts & Culture* and celebrate more than 50 years of this artform — a phenomenon that inspires everyone to be their best selves!

### 9:30 – 10:40AM

Prudential Hall, NJPAC

#### Poetry as Catalyst: Inspiration & Motivation

**Cortney Lamar Charleston, Ching-In Chen,  
Aracelis Girmay and Haydil Henriquez**

What motivates communities mobilizing for change and fuels long-term social movements? Joy. Hear from writers who make a difference by focusing on the inspiration that sustains the work of poets and activists alike. How do we locate wonder and practice rejoicing in the midst of struggle? Hear how these poets search for hope in this very challenging work.

*CART captioned.*

### 9:30 – 10:40AM

Victoria Theater, NJPAC

#### Writing Our Story, Preventing Erasure

**Ariana Benson, Kathy Kremins,  
Nicole Sealey and Issam Zineh**

How do we preserve and lift up narratives that history has nearly forgotten? Or excavate stories that have been suppressed and ignored? Poets from a range of backgrounds discuss the importance of telling our communities' stories — ensuring truths are preserved in the historical record — by way of poetry.

# friday, october 18

## 9:30 – 10:40AM

Chase Room, NJPAC

Poetry as Catalyst:  
Field Notes from Newark

**Tehsuan Glover,  
Paul con Queso LaTorre and  
Ameerah Shabazz-Bilal**

Poets discuss Newark as a model city for advancing social justice through the arts. Brick City writers offer their take on using poetry as a powerful tool to spur political movements and societal evolution, plus hear all the ways this jewel of a city continues to inspire and invoke love poems to and about Newark.

## 9:30 – 10:40AM

NJPAC Center for Arts Education

My Life as a Poet

**Dr. Helena D. Lewis,  
Dr. Craig Santos Perez,  
Dimitri Reyes and  
Claire Schwartz**

What happens when a poet wakes up in the morning? What is the daily routine of a word-worker? How can poets navigate a career in poetry? Successful poets unveil their daily lives; share personal observations, habits and experiences; and illuminate the challenges and rewards, delights and disappointments, of the life they've chosen in poetry.

## 9:30 – 10:40AM

Trinity & St. Philip's Cathedral

Developing a Lexicon  
Toward Liberation

**Carlos Andrés Gómez,  
Marwa Helal,  
Roque Raquel Salas Rivera  
and Gein Wong**

How do poets from marginalized and vulnerable communities experiment with new forms and definitions of poetry to create language that is all their own — one that expresses experiences of their communities? Hear from innovative poets who play on the page, offer breathtaking translations and reclaim power through text and language.

## 9:30 – 10:40AM

St. Patrick's Pro-Cathedral

Undocupoets

**Janine Joseph, Esther Lin and  
Beatriz Yanes Martinez**

The nonprofit Undocupoets promotes the work of poets who are currently or formerly undocumented in the United States and raises consciousness about the structural barriers they face in the literary community. The organization works to expand access and provide resources to current and formerly undocumented poets, allowing them the means to focus on their work. Hear from three dynamic poets writing from this unique perspective.

## 9:30 – 10:40AM

Express Newark

Lucille Clifton's Buffalo:  
Writing a City in Poetry

**Kazim Ali**

In a series of poems written across her lifetime, Lucille Clifton, who served as a *Dodge Poetry Festival* poet nine times since 1988, wrote about the people and neighborhood of her childhood home. These poems are political, nostalgic, angry and wistfully tender. By looking at several poems describing Buffalo, New York, Ali will offer writers an opportunity to gain tools and strategies to represent the homes and neighborhoods that have shaped them.

## 9:30 – 10:40AM

New Jersey Historical Society

Festival Open Mic

Here is your opportunity to read your poetry in front of other festival goers — whether it's your first time or 50th time! Share your work in our supportive community by bringing one poem (no longer than three minutes) to read aloud on the mic.



# friday, october 18

## 11AM – 12:10PM

New Jersey Historical Society  
**Festival Open Mic**

Here is your opportunity to read your poetry in front of other festival goers — whether it's your first time or 50th time! Share your work in our supportive community by bringing one poem (no longer than three minutes) to read aloud on the mic.

## 12:40 – 1:50PM

Prudential Hall, NJPAC  
**Nuyorican Poets Café  
@ Dodge Poetry**

**Caridad De La Luz (La Bruja),  
Paul con Queso LaTorre,  
Nancy Mercado and  
Emanuel Xavier**

Celebrate the legacy of Nuyorican Poets Café, founded 50 years ago in the East Village of New York City. With poetry and storytelling, these all-stars will explore the history of this cultural icon and peer into the future as its 100-year-old tenement building undergoes renovations in preparation for a grand reopening in 2026.

*CART captioned.*

## 12:40 – 1:50PM

Trinity & St. Philip's Cathedral  
**Poetry as Catalyst:  
Field Notes from Activists  
Kazim Ali, Diana Goetsch  
and Janine Joseph**

How do we activate poetry as a catalyst for social change? Poets who are also grassroots activists talk about their work and how poems advance movements for positive change. This conversation is designed to offer suggestions on how we can all get involved as citizens — moving beyond writing and into the on-the-ground work of collective liberation.

## Griots, Troubadours and MCs: Poetry and the Oral Tradition

For thousands of years before the invention of the printing press, people created poetry meant to be performed. From the areito performances of the indigenous tribes of the Caribbean and the griots of Western Africa, to modern day slammers and MCs, the spoken word has been central to poetry's vitality, proving that poetry has always been meant to be recited, performed and sung! In these sessions, poets are invited to perform works that celebrate the oral/aural wonders of poetry. This session will be the title event at seven different locations. See which of your favorites is performing at our various locations below.

## 11AM – 12:10PM

Prudential Hall, NJPAC

**Ashna Ali, Mahogany L. Browne,  
Imani Cezanne and Nancy Mercado**

*CART captioned.*

## 11AM – 12:10PM

Victoria Theater, NJPAC

**George Abraham, Sean Battle,  
Kai Coggin and Emanuel Xavier**

## 11AM – 12:10PM

Chase Room, NJPAC

**Omotara James, Tyehimba Jess  
and Eduardo Martinez-Leyva**

## 11AM – 12:10PM

NJPAC Center for Arts Education

**Noah Arhm Choi, Jessica Ram and Afaa Michael Weaver**

## 11AM – 12:10PM

Trinity & St. Philip's Cathedral

**Jessica Jacobs, Raina León and Myles Taylor**

## 11AM – 12:10PM

St. Patrick's Pro-Cathedral

**Remica Bingham-Risher, Erin Marie Lynch,  
JRose and Vincent Toro**

## 11AM – 12:10PM

Express Newark

**Todd Davis, Niki Herd and Kween Moore**

# friday, october 18

**12:40 – 1:50PM**

Chase Room, NJPAC

**The Things We  
Don't Talk About**

**Haydil Henriquez, Esther Lin,  
Roque Raquel Salas Rivera  
and Claire Schwartz**

Poems can be lighthearted and fun, but they can also be the medium through which we have tough conversations about topics we don't often feel comfortable discussing. Poets who bring to light hushed topics, and constantly ask the tough questions in their work, read their poems and discuss how poetry can give voice to communities often silenced — particularly members of the BIPOC, LGBTQIA+ and disability communities.

**12:40 – 1:50PM**

NJPAC Center for Arts Education

**Call & Response: Performing  
and Engaging Audiences**

**Ching-In Chen, Tehsuan Glover,  
Carlos Andrés Gómez  
and Dimitri Reyes**

These dynamic performers have found ways to transform poetry readings into interactive experiences, from elements including call and response to other methods of inviting audience participation so that a reading becomes a true poetry experience. Get inspired and discover new ways to perform your own work!

**12:40 – 1:50PM**

Victoria Theater, NJPAC

**Letras Latinas Presents:  
Because We Come  
from Everything**

**Diannely Antigua,  
Carmen Calatayud,  
Blas Falconer and  
Naomi Ortiz**

In "Borderbus" former U.S. Poet Laureate Juan Felipe Herrera writes, "We are nothing and we come from nothing / but that nothing is everything, / if you feed it with love / that is why we will triumph // We are everything hermana / Because we come from everything." How do poets embody Herrera's idea of coming from everything? And how does poetry empower our communities in troubling times? Four Latinx poets, presented by Letras Latinas, sing a sampling of their work — and show us how.

**12:40 – 1:50PM**

St. Patrick's Pro-Cathedral

**Writing Our Land:  
Environmental Justice**

**Ariana Benson, Todd Davis and  
Dr. Craig Santos Perez**

From Appalachian mountains to indigenous tribal lands, poetry allows us to visit all kinds of landscapes and understand why protecting our land is important. Through a reading and conversation, poets from different lands will talk about capturing the spirit of a place, advocating for environmental justice and utilizing poetry to preserve the places that care for us and shape us.

**12:40 – 1:50PM**

Express Newark

**When the Personal is Political  
Cortney Lamar Charleston,  
Niki Herd and Issam Zineh**

It's hard to remove the "I" when writing about politics and identity, so how do seasoned writers turn a very personal moment into curiosity, and when should poets establish distance from a poem in order to craft it into a work of art? How do we unpack very raw emotions tied to the political in order to hold wonderment and space for asking tough questions, so that we can advance our communities and society with compassion and empathy?

**12:40 – 1:50PM**

New Jersey Historical Society

**Festival Open Mic**

Here is your opportunity to read your poetry in front of other festival goers — whether it's your first time or 50th time! Share your work in our supportive community by bringing one poem (no longer than three minutes) to read aloud on the mic.

## friday, october 18

**2:10 – 3:20PM**

Prudential Hall, NJPAC

How History Informs Our Writing

**Joshua Bennett, Tyehimba Jess,  
Nicole Sealey and Vincent Toro**

These seasoned poets engage with history, both documenting the past and inviting readers to explore actionable change for the future. Join us for an inspirational afternoon with writers whose poems have chronicled the Puerto Rican diaspora, the Black experience in America and pivotal moments in our nation's history. Poets will read from their work and passionately explore a way to chart a new path forward.

*CART captioned.*

**2:10 – 3:20PM**

New Jersey Historical Society

Festival Open Mic

Here is your opportunity to read your poetry in front of other festival goers — whether it's your first time or 50th time! Share your work in our supportive community by bringing one poem (no longer than three minutes) to read aloud on the mic.

**6 – 7:30PM**

Victoria Theater, NJPAC

**The 2024 Nuyorican Slam Team @ Dodge Poetry**

Known as "Friendly Fire," the 2024 Nuyorican Slam Team is the first adult team of slam poets New York City has formed since before the pandemic. Coached by Tony McPherson, the team consists of: Brittany Barker (the team's North Star, moral compass and Chief of Draft Management), Sumbodies Mama (Team Captain with powers that can only come from The Bronx), UGBA (Chief of Group Pieces & Choreography, Head of Costume Design) and Sola Kush (Champion who brought The Nuyorican a 1st place trophy for the first time this millennium). Through their writing, they hope to inspire us to win our own competition against our greatest nemesis: our egos.

*CART captioned.*

## saturday, october 19

**9:30 – 10:40AM**

Prudential Hall, NJPAC

Praise and Reclamation

**Mahogany L. Browne,  
Aracelis Girmay, torrin a. greathouse,  
Marwa Helal, Douglas Kearney,  
Roque Raquel Salas Rivera and  
Afaa Michael Weaver. With music  
accompaniment by Carlos "Carly" Maldonado**

Celebrate and kick off the last, and most awe-inspiring day of the festival, with a dynamic reading by powerful voices lifting up their poems in gratitude and in praise of their roots, bodies and communities. This is an opportunity for festival attendees to gather in community with each other, open our day in rejoicing and music and break bread together in the form of poetry. Don't miss this very special festival experience.

*CART captioned.*

**11AM – 12:10PM**

Chase Room, NJPAC

**Poetry Generative Writing Workshop  
with Kai Coggin**

The *Dodge Poetry Festival* is now offering an intimate space to generate new work with support from festival poets. Thought-provoking prompts will get your writing flowing in a 70-minute workshop. Space is first come, first served. Please be prepared with a pen and paper; arrive promptly and plan to stay for the full 70 minutes.

**11AM – 12:10PM**

Chase Room, NJPAC

**Queering the Poem**

**Kazim Ali, Jessica Jacobs, Kathy Kremins  
and Eduardo Martinez-Leyva**

Authenticity lives in the gray and muddy realms where answers aren't so black and white. Queering a poem, or venturing into the beauty of the nonbinary, can offer up poems where an "answer" to a question is best expressed as an unknown. Some of our most interesting work challenges readers to lean into the unanswerable. Join us as we explore the blurred boundaries of gender, sexuality, love and identity.

*CART captioned.*



# saturday, october 19

## family fun day

**Saturday, October 19**

Military Park

**FREE!**

The extraordinary talent of regional poets will shine on the Community Catalyst Stage. Bring your family for activities including face painting, a DJ, drag storytelling and food truck vendors.

**11AM DJ Wallah**

**11:30AM JP Howard, Megha Sood,  
"King" Mariah Ayscue**

**12PM Drag Lunchtime Story Hour  
with Harmonica SunBeam,  
Chris Fabs and Honey Marie**

**1PM RescuePoetix,  
Kay Ulanday Barrett**

**1:30PM attorious renee, Elliott Fant,  
paulA neves**

**2PM Talena Lachelle Queen, Italy  
Ja'rae Lee, Scarlet Gomez**

**2:30PM Keisha-Gaye Anderson,  
Positive Gunter, Alexis Green**

**3PM K. Desireé Milwood,  
Purvi Shah, Sean Battle**

**3:30PM Isabel Cruz,  
Paul con Queso LaTorre**

Participating individuals and organizations include:

After-School All-Stars / New Jersey	NJPAC Community Engagement
Associated Humane Societies – Newark	Poetry Foundation Prudential Center / New Jersey Devils
Clean Water Fund	Sheila Silva
D-Cross	Somerset Patriots
EvoluCulture	St. Clare's Social Services
GlassRoots	The New Jersey Historical Society
Karina Kelly de Oliveira	Umoja Dance Company
Lisa Lewis	WBGO
NAACP Newark	WNYC
New Jersey Symphony	Local Newark food trucks & others
Newark Public Library	
Newark Yoga Movement	
NJ Kids on the Go	
NJPAC Arts Education	

**11AM – 12:10PM**

Trinity & St. Philip's Cathedral

Writing Our Story, Preventing Erasure

**Carlos Andrés Gómez, Tyehimba Jess,  
Kween Moore and Emanuel Xavier**

How do we preserve and lift up the narratives that history has nearly forgotten? Or excavate stories that have been suppressed and ignored? Poets from a range of backgrounds discuss the importance of telling our communities' stories — ensuring truths are preserved in the historical record — by way of poetry.

**11AM – 12:10PM**

St. Patrick's Pro-Cathedral

Braggadocious: Boasting Our Roots

**Joshua Bennett, Tehsuan Glover, Dr. Helena D. Lewis,  
Dimitri Reyes and Vincent Toro**

Who doesn't like a humble brag? Maybe there's no need to be humble when celebrating our origins, our roots and our cultures. Immerse yourself in readings that reflect on where we come from with pride and joy. How does praising our roots become an act of resistance that fosters healing and inspires jubilation?

**11AM – 12:10PM**

Express Newark

Cave Canem Presents:

Dante Micheaux in Conversation with  
Charif Shanahan and Taylor Johnson

Join Dante Micheaux, Program Director at Cave Canem, in conversation with Johnson and Shanahan, two poets building exceptional bodies of work who will share their award-winning poems. Cave Canem is pleased to once again add our Fellows' voices to the most vibrant poetry festival in the country!

**11AM – 1PM**

Newark Public Library

Dodge Poetry in the Community Youth Showcase  
Featuring Festival Poet Imani Cezanne

Young artists showcase poems generated in a series of workshops leading up to the *Dodge Poetry Festival*. In partnership with community organizations in Newark, these young people have been guided by experienced mentor Newark poets and Rutgers–Newark MFA students to write poems that reflect their lives and their experiences. Prepare for poems emphasizing themes of identity, self-expression and social justice.

# saturday, october 19

## 11AM – 12:10PM

### New Jersey Historical Society Festival Open Mic

Here is your opportunity to read your poetry in front of other festival goers — whether it's your first time or 50th time! Share your work in our supportive community by bringing one poem (no longer than three minutes) to read aloud on the mic.

## 12:30 – 1:40PM

### Clement's Place Poetry Generative Writing Workshop with Diana Goetsch

The *Dodge Poetry Festival* is now offering an intimate space to generate new work with support from festival poets. Thought-provoking prompts will get your writing flowing in a 70-minute workshop. Space is first come, first served. Please be prepared with a pen and paper; arrive promptly and plan to stay for the full 70 minutes.

## 12:30 – 1:40PM

### Chase Room, NJPAC Poetry as Catalyst: Field Notes

#### **Claudia Rankine and Salamishah Tillet**

In this intimate conversation, two of our country's foremost writers, poet Claudia Rankine and culture critic Salamishah Tillet, explore the intersection of language, identity and activism in civic life. You can learn more about communities across the U.S. that use creative expression to make social change. How can Newark's initiatives — tying the arts to social justice — serve as a muse and model to be replicated in other cities?

*CART captioned.*

## 12:30 – 1:40PM

### Trinity & St. Philip's Cathedral To Be Black and Conscious in America is to be in a Constant State of Rage **Sean Battle, Mahogany L. Browne, Niki Herd and Douglas Kearney**

In honor of the centennial birthday of James Baldwin, hear from poets who are conceptualizing what it means to be Black in America. The presenters honor Baldwin's legacy by grappling with institutions perpetuating systems of oppression and straddling a divide that pits patriotism on one side with accountability on the other. How does living in the United States impact identity? Where will the search for racial justice end?

## 12:30 – 1:40PM

### St. Patrick's Pro-Cathedral When the Personal is Political **George Abraham, Remica Bingham-Risher, Ching-In Chen, Haydil Henriquez and Dr. Craig Santos Perez**

It's hard to remove the "I" when writing about politics and identity, so how do seasoned writers turn a very personal moment into curiosity, and when should poets establish distance from a poem in order to craft it into a work of art? How do we unpack very raw emotions tied to the political in order to hold wonderment and space for asking tough questions, so that we can advance our communities and society with compassion and empathy?

## 12:30 – 1:40PM

### Express Newark "A Poet's Heart is Always Breaking" **Todd Davis, Erin Marie Lynch, John Murillo and Issam Zineh**

This Alice Walker quote ends with the observation that "through that broken window" artists see the world. Melancholy, longing and the raw truth are often revealed in a poet's words. So how do poets protect their emotions when writing intimately about profound subjects? How is the craft of poetry best executed while navigating tenderness and vulnerability?

## 12:30 – 1:40PM

### New Jersey Historical Society Festival Open Mic Here is your opportunity to read your poetry in front of other festival goers — whether it's your first time or 50th time! Share your work in our supportive community by bringing one poem (no longer than three minutes) to read aloud on the mic.

## 2 – 3:10PM

### Clement's Place Poetry Generative Writing Workshop with Dimitri Reyes The *Dodge Poetry Festival* is now offering an intimate space to generate new work with support from festival poets. Thought-provoking prompts will get your writing flowing in a 70-minute workshop. Space is first come, first served. Please be prepared with a pen and paper; arrive promptly and plan to stay for the full 70 minutes.

# saturday, october 19

## 2 – 3:10PM

Chase Room, NJPAC

Disability Visibility

**Ariana Benson,  
torrin a. greathouse,  
Naomi Ortiz and Jessica Ram**

This reading and conversation will explore what it means to be a person with disabilities and if/how that identity informs creativity and self-expression. The varying strengths, emotions and physical conditions of writers with disabilities make building a community of inclusion nuanced. What does it mean to identify as a writer with a disability? What barriers in the poetry business need to be removed to promote accessibility? And how do we create spaces for conversations on disability justice?

*CART captioned.*

## 2 – 3:10PM

Trinity & St. Philip's Cathedral

Griots, Troubadours,  
and MCs: Poetry &  
the Oral Tradition

**Joshua Bennett,  
Imani Cezanne,  
Marwa Helal and  
Caridad De La Luz (La Bruja)**

For thousands of years before the invention of the printing press, people created poetry meant to be *performed*. From the areito performances of the indigenous tribes of the Caribbean and the griots of Western Africa, to modern day slammers and MCs, the spoken word has been central to poetry's vitality, proving that poetry has always been meant to be recited, performed and sung! In these sessions, poets are invited to perform works that celebrate the oral/aural wonders of poetry.

## 2 – 3:10PM

St. Patrick's Pro-Cathedral

Muddy with Ash:  
Community and Writing

**George Abraham,  
Ashna Ali, Noah Arhm Choi  
and Gein Wong**

Andrea Abi-Karam writes, "Poetry provides a way to inhabit revolutionary practice, to ground ourselves in our relations to ourselves and each other, to think about an unevenly miserable world and to spit in its face." *Reorienting Reads*, a collective of trans, nonbinary and intersex Asian diasporic writers, was formed in response to the erasure of lives and stories. What is the role of poetry in social reimagination? How could we look to queerness and transness to articulate possibilities beyond hierarchy and corporate organization? This session will consider the ways that poetry, transness and community might animate our efforts to create new worlds that center our collective liberation. This session was specially curated by festival poet Ching-In Chen.

## 2 – 3:10PM

Express Newark

Poetry Foundation Presents:  
Ruth Lilly and Dorothy  
Sargent Rosenberg  
Poetry Fellows

**Rob Macaisa Colgate,  
Marissa Davis,  
Hermelinda Hernandez Monjaras,  
Chandanie Somwaru and  
marion eames white**

The Poetry Foundation presents the first public group reading of the 2024 Ruth Lilly and Dorothy Sargent Rosenberg Fellows. The annual fellowship, awarded since 1989, honors outstanding young poets for their current and potential future contributions to poetry. Located in Chicago, Illinois, the Poetry Foundation publishes *Poetry* magazine, hosts free poetry events, provides grants to nonprofit organizations with a core commitment to poetry and the literary arts and more in service of amplifying poetry and celebrating poets.

## 2 – 3:10PM

New Jersey Historical Society  
Festival Open Mic

Here is your opportunity to read your poetry in front of other festival goers — whether it's your first time or 50th time! Share your work in our supportive community by bringing one poem (no longer than three minutes) to read aloud on the mic.

**saturday, october 19**

**3:30 – 4:40PM**

Clement's Place

**Poetry Generative Writing Workshop with Esther Lin**

The *Dodge Poetry Festival* is now offering an intimate space to generate new work with support from festival poets. Thought-provoking prompts will get your writing flowing in a 70-minute workshop. Space is first come, first served. Please be prepared with a pen and paper; arrive promptly and plan to stay for the full 70 minutes.

**3:30 – 4:40PM**

Chase Room, NJPAC

**What's at Stake?  
Writing Our Truths**

**Cortney Lamar Charleston,  
Omotara James,  
Eduardo Martinez-Leyva  
and Myles Taylor**

Writing is a privilege and a power. When we write our hard truths, how do we grapple with the ripple effects of our poems' impact on friends, family and communities? How do we focus on the craft and muster the courage to be vulnerable while also realizing that our writing can have consequences? Poets will explore ways they navigate writing honest work that effect change, and the responsibilities that come with it.

*CART captioned.*

**3:30 – 4:40PM**

Trinity & St. Philip's Cathedral

**Dear Yusef: A Celebration**

**Joel Dias-Porter,  
Dante Micheaux,  
Yesenia Montilla, John Murillo  
and Nicole Sealey**

Yusef Komunyakaa is not only one of the most influential poets of the last half-century, but also one of its most beloved teachers and mentors. This reading features fellow poets, friends and former students reading from the anthology gathered in his honor, *Dear Yusef: Letters, Poems, and Essays For and About One Mr. Komunyakaa*, edited by poets John Murillo and Nicole Sealey.

**3:30 – 4:40PM**

Express Newark

**The Things We Don't  
Talk About**

**Kai Coggin, Diana Goetsch,  
Janine Joseph and Raina León**

Poems can be lighthearted and fun, but they can also be the medium through which we have tough conversations about topics we don't often feel comfortable discussing. Poets who bring to light hushed topics, and constantly ask the tough questions in their work, read their poems and discuss how poetry can give voice to communities often silenced — particularly members of the BIPOC, LGBTQIA+ and the disability communities.

**3:30 – 4:40PM**

New Jersey Historical Society

**Festival Open Mic**

Here is your opportunity to read your poetry in front of other festival goers — whether it's your first time or 50th time! Share your work in our supportive community by bringing one poem (no longer than three minutes) to read aloud on the mic.

Don't miss  
the pop-up  
bookstore  
provided by  
**Source of  
Knowledge!**  
Book signing  
schedules will  
be posted in the  
bookstore daily.

Outside of  
NICO Kitchen + Bar  
NJPAC

**HOURS:**

**Thursday  
9:30AM – 10PM**

**Friday  
8:30AM – 8PM**

**Saturday  
8:30AM – 11PM**





**Nikki Giovanni, Javon Jackson & Christian McBride**

**SAT, OCT 19 @ 2PM**

In this performance, the poems of Nikki Giovanni are paired with new takes on traditional spirituals. Tenor saxophonist Javon Jackson, one of Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers, is joined by his excellent combo alongside NJPAC Jazz Advisor and bassist Christian McBride, a 16-time GRAMMY® nominee and nine-time winner. It’s a treat to hear Giovanni — the esteemed writer and civil rights activist — sew her poetry into this musical quilt.



**Nikki Giovanni**

Nikki Giovanni is an award-winning poet, writer, educator and activist. She is the author of numerous poetry anthologies, children’s books, three *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* Best Sellers and several recordings. Many of her works — including two notable poetry collections *Black*

*Judgment* (1968) and *Those Who Ride the Night Winds* (1983) — were influenced by her participation in the Black Arts and Black Power movements of the 1960s. The Nikki Giovanni Poetry Collection was a 2004 GRAMMY® finalist for Best Spoken Word Album. Giovanni is the recipient of dozens of awards including seven NAACP Image Awards, the inaugural Rosa L. Parks Woman of Courage Award, the American Book Award, ALC Lifetime Achievement Award, The Langston Hughes Award and was a finalist for the National Book Award and named one of Oprah Winfrey’s 25 Living Legends. Since 1987 she has been on the faculty at Virginia Tech where she is a University Distinguished Professor.



**Javon Jackson**

Javon Jackson has recorded many albums under several labels including Blue Note, Palmetto, Smoke Sessions and his eponymous Solid Jackson Records. In 2009, the Syracuse International Film Festival commissioned Jackson to compose a full-length score for an Alfred Hitchcock silent film *The Lodger*.

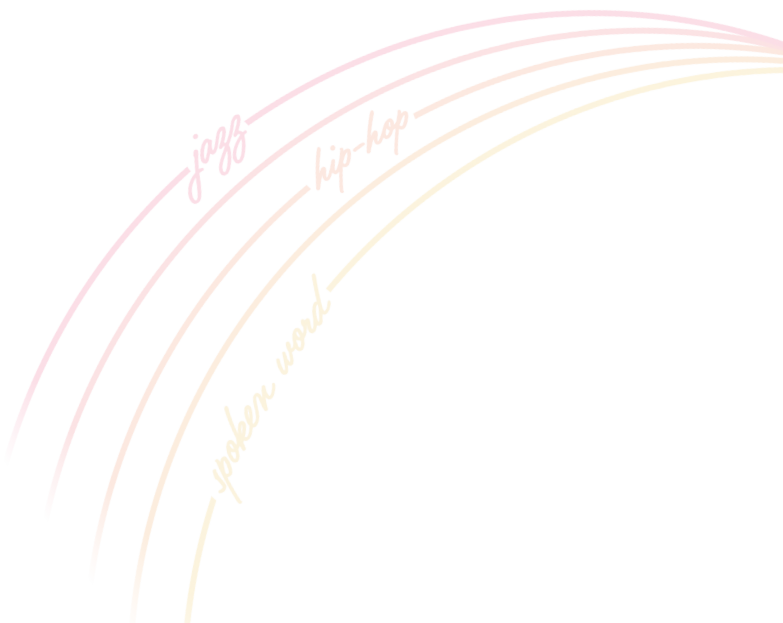
In 2012, Jackson released his potent tribute, *Celebrating John Coltrane*, his inaugural release on Solid Jackson Records. That same year he received the prestigious Benny Golson Award from Howard University for recognition of excellence in jazz. *The Gospel According to Nikki Giovanni* is his fifth album for his Solid Jackson Records label. Jackson is Professor of Jazz Saxophone and Director of the Jackie McLean Institute of Jazz Studies at the University of Hartford’s Hartt School of Music, Theatre and Dance.



**Christian McBride**

Christian McBride, the Artistic Advisor for Jazz Programming at NJPAC, is a nine-time GRAMMY® Award-winning bassist, composer and arranger. He performs and records with the Christian McBride Band, the Inside Straight quartet, the

Christian McBride Big Band and the Christian McBride Trio. He hosts and produces *The Lowdown: Conversations With Christian* on SiriusXM satellite radio and National Public Radio’s *Jazz Night in America*, a weekly radio show collaboration between WBGO, NPR and Jazz at Lincoln Center. McBride has played and recorded with musicians ranging from Herbie Hancock and Chaka Khan to The Roots and Paul McCartney. McBride is Artistic Director of the Newport Jazz Festival and Jazz House Kids, the nationally recognized community arts organization founded by his wife, vocalist Melissa Walker.





**Represent!**  
**Social Justice Through Spoken Word**  
**SAT, OCT 19 @ 8PM**

MCs and poets unite at the *Dodge Poetry Festival* for this celebration of the spoken word as a catalyst for social justice. This all-star lineup features Rakim, Big Daddy Kane, MC Lyte, DJ Spinna, Caridad De La Luz (La Bruja), Mahogany L. Browne, Tyehimba Jess and Mayor Ras J. Baraka. This event is produced by Bill Stephey and was created in partnership with 94.7 The Block. Don't miss out on the post-show after-party!



**Big Daddy Kane**  
Big Daddy Kane, formerly of the Juice Crew, is known for his lyrical dexterity on songs like "Young, Gifted and Black," "Ain't No Half-Steppin'," "Raw," "Smooth Operator" and "Set It Off."



**MC Lyte**  
MC Lyte, the first female rapper to release a full solo album, dominates the mic on "Ruffneck," "Cha Cha Cha," "Poor Georgie," "Lyte as a Rock," "10% Dis" and "Paper Thin."



**Rakim**  
Rakim, the influential rapper and "inventor of flow," first exploded onto the scene with Eric B. is President and raised the bar for all future MCs.



**DJ Spinna**  
DJ Spinna is producer and remixer for De La Soul, Mary J. Blige, Stevie Wonder, Eminem and his groups, The Jigmastas, Polyrhythm Addicts and Domecrackers.



**Miss Jones**  
Miss Jones is an R&B singer, radio personality and host of the morning show for classic hip hop, 94.7 The Block WXBK, serving the New York City area.

**Joan Baez: An Evening of Poetry and Conversation**

Moderated by Christian McBride  
**SAT, OCT 19 @ 8PM**

Singer, songwriter and activist Joan Baez comes to our stage in a new role: published poet. Though she's written poetry for many years, she hasn't shared it publicly until the release of her 2024 collection, *When You See My Mother, Ask Her to Dance*. In this intimate conversation, Baez will share personal poems about childhood, family and musical contemporaries like Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen and Jimi Hendrix.



**Joan Baez**  
Joan Baez has endured as a musical force of nature for over six decades, with an unwavering commitment to social activism and the arts. She was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2017. At the same time, Baez has earned her place in history for her role in human rights

and anti-war struggles. She received a Kennedy Center Honor in 2020. Her ongoing series of "Mischief Makers" paintings continues to immortalize risk-taking visionaries like herself who have helped bring about social change with portrait subjects ranging from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to Bob Dylan and the Dalai Lama. The 2023 documentary *Joan Baez: I Am A Noise* has won overwhelming critical acclaim since its premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival. *Am I Pretty When I Fly?: An Album of Upside Down Drawings* was published in 2023 and her first book of poetry, *When You See My Mother, Ask Her to Dance*, an intimate, autobiographical collection was released in April.

Developing a Lexicon  
Toward Liberation

**Ricardo Alberto Maldonado,  
Aurielle Marie, Anastacia-Reneé  
and Marcus Wicker**

How do poets from marginalized and vulnerable communities experiment with new forms and definitions of poetry to create language that is all their own, that expresses the experiences of their communities? Hear from innovative poets who play on the page, offer breathtaking translations and reclaim power through text and language.

“Poetry, Like Bread,  
is For Everyone”

**Adrian Matejka,  
Stephanie Pacheco and  
Claire Schwartz**

Is poetry accessible? How can we use language to create opportunities for communities to feel included and seen? Inspired by the idea that poetry is a necessity, this session is an opportunity to talk about the ways in which each of us are creators of art, and how crucial poetry is to the evolution of our nation and society. Poets from different styles and backgrounds come together to talk about making poetry an art form that is available for all.

The Body, a Praise Song  
**Meg Day, Cynthia Manick,  
Leah Lakshmi  
Piepzna-Samarasinha  
and Danez Smith**

We invite you to celebrate all the ways our bodies are both strong and vulnerable. This session is an opportunity to praise our bodies, their functionalities and frailties, and acknowledge all the ways in which we are connected in spite of our bodies' differences. Join us and witness the intersections of the body and the spirit. ASL interpreted.

**Find the pre-recorded content on [njpac.org/series/dodgepoetry](https://njpac.org/series/dodgepoetry).**