

**Final Program - Theatre 170
Voice for Performance
Winter 2025
Thursday March 12, 2026**

The Struble Theatre 11:00

The Cool Web by Robert Graves
All
Ars Poetica by Archibald MacLeish
All

Individual Poems

Kaleb Morgan

I, Too by Langston Hughes

“I, Too” is a poem by Langston Hughes that acknowledged the ever present racial segregation that was the norm during the Harlem Renaissance, when the poem was published. It is also hopeful for an America that, one day, would allow for racial integration. I chose “I, Too” because of its relevance to discrimination that’s happening almost exactly 100 years after it was published, and I believe that strand of hope is a powerful message to the strength we all have together.

Sachin Jain

Dim Lady by Harryette Mullen

I chose to perform *Dim Lady* because, honestly, most poetry we read in school feels way too serious, and this one is just straight-up silly. I love how this poem takes a classic Shakespeare poem and turns it into a joke about brand names and junk food. Instead of talking about some perfect goddess, this poem talks about White-Out, Red Lobster, and messy hair. It’s funny because it sounds like a weird grocery list instead of a love song. I picked it because I wanted to do something that makes people laugh and shows that poetry doesn’t have to be deep and depressing—it can just be goofy and relatable.

Harrison Whitfill

Blizzard

Working primarily as a physician, 20th-century poet William Carlos Williams drew inspiration from the “inarticulate poems” of his patients in his own work, often scrawling lines of poetry on prescription blanks. Eschewing purple language, his voice is remarkably colloquial. This stylistic choice is particularly noticeable within his poem “Blizzard,” a piece which first appeared in his 1921 collection, *Sour Grapes*. His grounded tone is evident through the poem’s undecorated language, and—in particular—is exemplified in his use of the interjection “eh” in line 7. Despite its deceptive simplicity, the poem is rich and evocative, with vibrant descriptions of “blue and yellow flakes” and “hairy” trees. A pioneer of American poetry, Williams reminds us of the beauty in everyday American speech.

Iris Hernandez

The Botticellian Trees by William Carlos Williams

William Carlos Williams (1883-1963) was a pioneer of the modernist and imagist movements of the early twentieth century. His work stood out for its attention to the quotidian, enduring details of the modern world, resisting the bleaker outlook of many of his contemporaries. His poem "The Botticellian Trees" divulges the season's change from winter to spring to summer, unfolding in painting-like snapshots of color and shape. In fact, the title is perhaps a reference to *Primavera* by Botticelli, which features the bloom of orange trees around a springtime scene. This work stood out to me for William's ability to mimic the blooming of fresh foliage in his sharp, short, alliterative phrases.

Vani Bansal

Don't Stand at My Grave and Weep by Mary Elizabeth Frye

Each line, though short, holds a wealth of meaning. I believe it reminds us that while life is fleeting, it always persists, and how the people who we think are gone, never really are. We will always live on, in some way or another. I also find the closing line particularly powerful. It reinforces the idea that we are inseparable from nature, that just as we emerge from it, we eventually return to it. Breathing, living, being, through it.

Aaron Butikofer

Let It Go by E E Cummings

I choose the poem "Let It Go" for all of the failures in life. It's hard when you put in a lot of work and don't succeed. However, what is meant for you will never miss you, and what's not meant for you will always miss you. Let it go not because you want to but for your peace. Live knowing this is how it was meant to be.

Lianny Camilo

Album by Kay Ryan

I chose the poem "Album" by Kay Ryan because I thought the imagery did a wonderful job of displaying what death can mean. The metaphor of a photo album intrigued me when I initially read the poem because I associate albums with liveliness and fond memories. Ryan illustrates that death exists alongside such vibrant life and joy. Death is an inevitable thing that happens to everyone, but that doesn't mean it has to be scary. In fact, Ryan emphasizes the beauty of death by comparing it to the shadows behind a cherry blossom tree. Such an image depicts the radiance of life, but also the subtle accompaniment of death. Peace can be achieved, if we should learn to accept the pairing.

TaLea Carter

In an Artist's Studio Christina Rossetti

While Christina Rossetti was not the most intentional feminist figure, I find this poem to be an amalgamation of the female muses seen through male artistry, and as an artist myself. I have always been fascinated with this concept. Women at the center of art tend to be viewed as this ethereal beauty, full of innocence and grace, yet this is only through the manipulation of a man's creativity. Even in this visual pedestal that women are put atop, there are still

tragedies that lead to their dreadful fates. In the end, this is “not as she is, but as she fills his dream”. She is a fantasy made to paint over the true complexities that come with being, only to be the aesthetic pleasure that men want.

Charlize Collado

In a Silken Tent by Robert Frost

The author Robert Frost wrote this poem about his relationship with married Kay Morrison. It's interesting because Morrison and her marriage is compared to a tent's paradoxical relationship to its ties and pole. The ties and the pole are needed for the tent to stand and move freely. However, the ties and the pole also limit the tents freedom. Frost is able to highlight proficiently the benefits and restrictions of marriage for women due to the social constraints of the time. I hope this poem allows for the audience to reflect on women's rights and expectations within society currently.

Molly Coogan

Women by Louise Bogan

Women is a poem written by Louise Bogan in 1923 about her frustrations with the constrictions of her gender. What strikes me as interesting about this poem is the author's clear anger; she is not just voicing a distaste with the condition of women, but she is calling out every woman who is passive in her oppression. I chose this poem because of its linguistic beauty, but also because of the undercurrent of anger that runs through it. It calls out both the political climate of its time, and the reader. More than anything, this poem is an acute damnation of a woman who doesn't think critically about the system that constrains her. In our current society, people seem to be forgetting what can happen when you willingly participate in your own oppression.

Jack McCullough

To A Snail by Marianne Moore

I chose my poem “To A Snail” by Marianne Moore, because I think it is incredibly witty, without seeming full of itself, and makes apt suggestions regarding the general way art should be expressed. Indeed, just from listening to it, it can be easy to miss the fact that Moore is talking about snails at all, even if her description of them is for use in a larger metaphor. Essentially, Moore argues that art should display itself in a simple, concise manner, similar to the minimalist efficiency present in the biological design of a snail, one of the most basic animals on Earth. At the end of the day, art should be for all, and thus shouldn't be too bogged down by needless complication or bedazzlement. Rather, it should be to the point, and accessible, and with this poem, I hope you all can see those qualities shine through.

Artemis Papastavrou

Wild Geese by Mary Oliver

Mary Oliver is renowned for taking the ordinary, the everyday, and turning it into art that speaks to the human experience. I chose *Wild Geese* because it captures the sentiment I wished someone expressed to me before starting college. The simplicity of the poem and its symbolic references to nature highlight a sense of liberation from the self and the exterior world. I experience that liberation the more time I spent doing what I truly love - performing.

Sierra Smith

Omen By Hannah Bambach

I chose this poem because of my parents. I'm very lucky to have grown up with the perfect example of love, healthiness, and growing up alongside your partner from my parents. I think the simplicity and mundane aspect of love that this poem represents is beautiful, and this idea is something I got to admire as a kid into my own adulthood in watching my parents' love. I think audiences will be interested in this poem because of its idolization of love in its most genuine form. When a lot of us think about how we idolize love, we think of the adults around us as children who helped us form this idea of love; be it parents, family friends, idols, or even fictional characters. I hope audiences can relate to this romanticization of love, even in its simplest form, and think about those who created this image for them. For me, it's my parents Jessica and Wade. Thank you for showing me what it truly means to be loved by someone—completely and unconditionally

Elias Roberts

"*Travail et Joie*" by [Adrienne Rich](#)

I chose *Travail Et Joie* primarily because the poet's choices felt beautiful and purposeful to me. Each line break allowed me to fully visualize the last word of each line, which provided me with a very pleasant reading experience. The poem feels warm and comforting to me, which made me want to share it with others.

Sterling Powell

When I first came across this poem, I felt a magnetism. I liked how intimate it felt and how vulnerable as well. In regard to the intimacy, I felt it in the aspect of connection with the unnamed individual the character talks to, and how emotionally and viscerally close the story feels to the individual who is speaking. The abstract and metaphorical nature of the story, balanced with its poetic construct, was part of it, too. This poem, to me, feels nostalgic, deep, and evocative. I hope you find that as well!

All

The House That Jack Built

Surprise Cold Reading