

INSPIRING  
STUDENTS



**POETRY**  
**OUT LOUD**

**2015**  
**NATIONAL**  
**FINALS**



Lisner Auditorium  
The George Washington University  
Washington, DC



**National  
Endowment  
for the Arts**  
arts.gov

The National Endowment for the Arts was established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government. To date, the NEA has awarded more than \$5 billion to strengthen the creative capacity of our communities by providing all Americans with diverse opportunities for arts participation. The NEA extends its work through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector. To join the discussion on how art works, visit the NEA at [arts.gov](http://arts.gov).



The Poetry Foundation, publisher of *Poetry* magazine, is an independent literary organization committed to a vigorous presence for poetry in our culture. It exists to discover and celebrate the best poetry and to place it before the largest possible audience. The Poetry Foundation seeks to be a leader in shaping a receptive climate for poetry by developing new audiences, creating new avenues for delivery, and encouraging new kinds of poetry through innovative partnerships, prizes, and programs.



Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation develops partnerships and programs that reinforce artists' capacity to create and present work, advance access to and participation in the arts, and promote a more sustainable arts ecology. The Foundation was created in 1979 and is a private non-profit organization that is closely allied with the region's state arts councils and the National Endowment for the Arts. It combines funding from state and federal resources with private support from corporations, foundations, and individuals to address needs in the arts from a regional, national, and international perspective.

Poetry Out Loud is a partnership of the National Endowment for the Arts, the Poetry Foundation, and the State and Jurisdictional Arts Agencies of the United States.



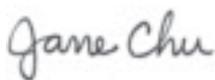
Welcome to our nation's capital and the final competition of the 2015 Poetry Out Loud National Recitation Contest.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of Poetry Out Loud. Since the program began in 2005, more than 2.7 million students across the country have committed a poem to memory, and this year alone, some 365,000 students representing more than 2,300 high schools participated in Poetry Out Loud. Fifty-three students have advanced to the National Finals—one from every state, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. We congratulate all our state champions on their successes and recognize the courage and hard work that brought them here today. Of course they are not alone, but joined by the family, friends, teachers, and state arts agency staff and partners who have supported and inspired them along the way. We offer an enthusiastic round of applause to all those who have journeyed with these students—thank you.

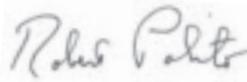
Every audience member, whether with us in person, watching the live webcast, or following us at #POL15, will witness how a poem is transformed when taken off the page and spoken aloud. These students have explored the nuances of poet and poem and brought their own experience to the interpretation and delivery. It is their task to return the poem to the world, to make it new. You will hear poems written centuries ago and others newly minted, and you will hear a few poems recited more than once—consider what each unique perspective reveals.

Poetry is an ancient art that still thrives in our popular culture because of its magical simplicity, its allegiance to imagination and invention, and its ability to distill human thought and feeling into a few pure lines of language. As poet Mary Oliver writes, "Poetry is a life-cherishing force...poems are not words after all but fires for the cold, ropes let down to the lost, and something as necessary as bread in the pockets of the hungry." We invite you to listen closely to these recitations and be inspired by their power to connect us to one another, to nourish our intellect, and to light new paths.

A warm welcome to all of our guests, and best of luck to our competitors.



Jane Chu  
Chairman  
National Endowment for the Arts



Robert Polito  
President  
Poetry Foundation



Photo by Strauss Peyton Studios



Photo courtesy of the Poetry Foundation

**April 28**  
**SEMIFINALS**  
**PROGRAM**

- 9:00 am **Semifinal One**
- 1:00 pm **Semifinal Two**
- 5:00 pm **Semifinal Three**
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**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Eleanor Billington  
Stephen Young

**HOSTS**

Stephen F. Schmidt  
Elizabeth Acevedo  
Josephine Reed

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**FIRST ROUND**

**SECOND ROUND**

*Intermission*

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF REGIONAL FINALISTS**

Top eight competitors in each semifinal will recite a third poem

**THIRD ROUND**

**AWARDS PRESENTATION**

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF NATIONAL FINALISTS**

Top three competitors in each semifinal will advance to the National Finals



**April 29**  
**NATIONAL  
FINALS  
PROGRAM**

7:00 pm

**WELCOME**

Taylor Mali

**ROLL CALL OF STATE CHAMPIONS**

**OPENING REMARKS**

Jane Chu, Chairman  
National Endowment for the Arts

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**FIRST ROUND**

**REMARKS**

Robert Polito, President  
Poetry Foundation

**SECOND ROUND**

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF THREE FINALISTS**

**FINAL ROUND**

**PERFORMANCE**

Gabriel Kahane

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF POETRY OUT LOUD CHAMPION**



# National Finals

## HOST AND JUDGES

### HOST

**Taylor Mali** is one of the most well-known poets to have emerged from the poetry slam movement and one of the original poets to appear on the HBO series *Def Poetry Jam*. A four-time National Poetry Slam champion, he is the author of two collections of poetry and a book of essays, *What Teachers Make: In Praise of the Greatest Job in the World*. In April of 2012, Mali completed a 12-year project of convincing 1,000 people to become teachers and marked the occasion by donating 12 inches of his hair to the American Cancer Society. Years ago he was the official voice of Burger King.

### JUDGES

**Richard Blanco** is the author of *The Prince of los Cocuyos: A Miami Childhood* and *For All of Us, One Today: An Inaugural Poet's Journey*; and the poetry collections *Looking for The Gulf Motel*, *Directions to the Beach of the Dead*, and *City of a Hundred Fires*. In 2013, Blanco was appointed to serve as the fifth inaugural poet of the United States. He has received numerous awards for his work, including an honorary doctorate from Macalester College, and was named a Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellow. Blanco is currently working on a full-length memoir and a children's book.

**Nikky Finney** is a poet, teacher, and activist. She is co-founder of the Affrilachian Poets, a grassroots group of poets of color living in the Appalachian region. Finney has written several books of poetry, including *Rice*, *Heartwood*, and *The World Is Round*, among others. She received a PEN Open Book Award, the Benjamin Franklin Award for Poetry; and her most recent collection, *Head Off & Split*, won the 2011 National Book Award for poetry. Finney currently serves as the John H. Bennett, Jr. Endowed Professor of Creative Writing and Southern Letters at the University of South Carolina.

**Carol Jago** taught English for 32 years and is associate director of the California Reading and Literature Project at the University of California, Los Angeles. She is the previous president of the National Council of Teachers of English, and in 2014, she was awarded the Adolescent Literacy Thought Leader Award by the International Reading Association. Jago is the author of *With Rigor for All: Meeting Common Core Standards for Reading Literature*, as well as numerous essays and a column on education for the *Los Angeles Times*.

**Maria Popova** is a critic, writer, and the founder and editor of *Brain Pickings*, an online inventory of cross-disciplinary interestingness spanning art, science, design, history, philosophy, psychology, and more. She has written for *Wired UK*, *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, *The Huffington Post*, and *Design Observer*, among others, and is a Massachusetts Institute of Technology Futures of Entertainment Fellow. Popova's Twitter feed—@brainpicker—has more than 500,000 followers and was listed by *TIME* magazine as one of “The 140 Best Twitter Feeds of 2012.”

**Brando Skyhorse** won the 2011 PEN/Hemingway Award and the Sue Kaufman Prize for First Fiction from the American Academy of Arts and Letters for his debut novel, *The Madonnas of Echo Park*. The book was also a national bestseller and a Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers pick. Skyhorse is a graduate of Stanford University and the MFA Writers' Workshop at University of California at Irvine. In 2014, he published the memoir, *Take This Man*, and currently serves as the Jenny McKean Moore Writer-In-Washington at George Washington University.

## Semifinals HOSTS AND JUDGES

### HOSTS

**Elizabeth Acevedo** was born and raised in New York City and her poetry is infused with her Dominican parents' bolero music and her native city's tough grit. She holds a BA in Performing Arts from The George Washington University and an MFA in Poetry from the University of Maryland. With over twelve years of spoken word experience, Acevedo has been a featured performer on BET, Centric, and Mun2, as well as delivered a TED talk that aired in the spring of 2013. She has graced stages nationally and internationally, including State Theatre in South Africa, Madison Square Garden, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Acevedo is a National Slam Champion, Beltway Grand Slam Champion, and the 2014 Women of the World representative for Washington, DC. Her first book, *Birth-Marked*, was published in September 2014.

**Josephine Reed** is the media producer for the Public Affairs office at the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). She produces and hosts the NEA's weekly podcast, *Art Works*, a program that features interviews with artists and creative thinkers. Before coming to the NEA, Reed directed XM Satellite Radio's book and contemporary theater channel and hosted the program, *Writers on Writing*. In partnership with the NEA, Reed also created the series, *The Big Read on XM*. Passionate about language, she has interviewed writers of all genres throughout her career, including novelists, historians, playwrights, and poets.

**Stephen F. Schmidt** has been a professional actor for more than 30 years, and has lived and worked in New York, Los Angeles, and for the past 25 years, in the DC-Baltimore area. He is also a teaching artist through Ford's Theatre and for the past seven years has helped conduct a course called "Oratory in American Culture" at Central High School in Prince George's County as well as distance learning with schools in Arizona, Idaho, and Colorado. Recently, he performed in *A Christmas Carol* at Ford's, and to help honor the 150th anniversary of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, will be performing in *One Destiny* at Ford's this spring.

### JUDGES

#### Semifinal One

**Niki Herd** holds degrees in Creative Writing from the University of Arizona and Antioch University. Nominated twice for a Pushcart Prize, she is the recipient of fellowships from Cave Canem and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts. Herd's work has been supported by the Astraea Foundation and the Arizona Commission on the Arts. Her first collection of poems, *The Language of Shedding Skin*, was a finalist for the Benjamin Saltman Award and the Main Street Rag Poetry Award.

**Adrian Matejka**'s first collection of poetry, *The Devil's Garden*, won the 2002 New York / New England Award, and his second collection, *Mixology*, was selected for the 2008 National Poetry Series. His most recent book, *The Big Smoke*, received the 2014 Anisfield-Wolf Book Award and was a finalist for the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize. Matejka has received two Illinois Arts Council Literary Awards and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the Lannan Foundation. He currently teaches in the MFA program at Indiana University.

**Will McInerney** is the co-director of Sacrificial Poets, a nationally competing youth poetry organization devoted to fostering social transformation.

A performer himself, McInerney is a National Poetry Slam finalist and a National Duo Slam champion. In 2010, he taught poetry at the Ramallah Friends School in the Palestinian West Bank. McInerney is currently working towards a degree in Peace, War, and Defense at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

### **Celeste Guzmán Mendoza**

is co-founder and co-director of CantoMundo, a master workshop and retreat for Latina/o poets. Mendoza's chapbook, *Cande, te estoy llamando*, won the Poesia Tejana Prize in 1999, and her first full-length poetry manuscript, *Beneath the Halo*, was published in 2013. She is also a performer and playwright, and her work has been produced in Austin and San Antonio. Mendoza is currently in a doctoral program at the University of Texas at Austin in Higher Education Administration.

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### **Semifinal Two**

**Naomi Ayala** is the author of three books of poetry: *Wild Animals on the Moon*, *This Side of Early*, and *Calling Home: Praise Songs and Incantations*. She is the translator of Luis Alberto Ambroggio's poetry volume, *The Wind's Archeology*, winner of the 2013 International Latino Book Award for Best Nonfiction Book Translation. Ayala has been a visiting

humanities scholar for Hermana a Hermana/Sister to Sister and was co-chair of the board of directors for the organization Change: Building Social Justice, Starting in the Classroom.

**Philippa Hughes** founded the Pink Line Project, a calendar of all things cool and creative in DC, and writes a widely read blog highlighting the best of the DC art scene. She created the Pink Line Project to inspire creative thinking in everyone, to build community, and to open portals to art and culture for the curious. Hughes hopes to help both residents and visitors see beyond the institutions and politics of DC and view the city as a place filled with incredible people doing amazingly creative things using art, technology, and good old-fashioned ingenuity.

**Joshua Weiner** is the author of three books of poetry, most recently *The Figure of a Man Being Swallowed by a Fish*. He is also the editor of *At the Barriers: On the Poetry of Thom Gunn*, and the poetry editor of *Tikkun* magazine. Weiner has received a Whiting Writers' Award, the Rome Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Amy Lowell Poetry Traveling Scholarship, and he is a Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellow. Weiner is a professor of English at the University of Maryland.

**Anderson Wells** is the associate education manager at the Studio Theatre Acting Conservatory in Washington, DC. As a Linehan Artist Scholar, he earned a BFA in Acting from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). Wells has been in many a cappella groups, including the UMBC Cleptomaniacs, Vox Pop, and The Lobby. He was recently seen acting in Brave Spirit Theatre's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and in repertory with *The Two Noble Kinsmen*.

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### **Semifinal Three**

**Dan Brady** is the poetry editor of *Barrelhouse*, a literary magazine and small press based in Washington, DC, and the former editor of *American Poet*, the journal of the Academy of American Poets. He is also the author of two chapbooks: *Cabin Fever/Fossil Record* and *Leroy Sequences*, and his poems have appeared in *Artifice*, *Big Lucks*, *BlazeVox*, and *Dark Sky*, among others.

**Teri Cross Davis** is the poetry and lectures coordinator at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC. She is the recipient of fellowships from the Ford Foundation, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and Cave Canem. Cross Davis's poems have been published in many journals and anthologies, including *Poet Lore*, *Natural Bridge*, *Bum Rush the Page: A*

*Def Poetry Jam*, and *Gathering Ground: A Reader Celebrating Cave Canem's First Decade*.

**Hannah Sanghee Park** is the author of the chapbook *Ode Days Ode*, and her work has appeared in *Petri Press*, *Poetry Northwest*, and *Best New Poets 2013*. Park's forthcoming collection, *The Same-Different*, was selected by Rae Armantrout for the 2014 Walt Whitman Award from the Academy of American Poets. She has received fellowships from the Iowa Arts Council, 4Culture, and the MacDowell Colony. Park currently attends the Writing for Screen & Television Program at the University of Southern California School of Cinematic Arts.

**Rowan Ricardo Phillips** is the author of *The Ground: Poems* and *When Blackness Rhymes with Blackness*. He is also the translator of Salvador Espriu's story collection *Ariadne in the Grottesque Labyrinth*. Phillips received the PEN/Joyce Osterweil Award and the Great Lakes Colleges Association New Writers Award for Poetry, as well as a 2013 Whiting Writers' Award. He teaches in the Creative Writing program at Princeton University and is director of the Poetry Center at Stony Brook University.

# 2015 State



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**ALABAMA**

**Nicole Louw**  
Holy Spirit Catholic School

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**ALASKA**

**Maeva Ordaz**  
West Anchorage High School

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**ARIZONA**

**Zaskia Natalie Villa**  
Nogales High School

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**ARKANSAS**

**Carol Pollard**  
Osceola High School

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**CALIFORNIA**

**Levi Lakota Lowe**  
Sonora High School

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**COLORADO**

**Jeana Lovett**  
Liberty High School

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**CONNECTICUT**

**Owen Elphick**  
Edwin O. Smith High School

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**DELAWARE**

**Hannah R. Sturgis**  
Polytech High School

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**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

**Daiana M. James**  
Benjamin Banneker Academic  
High School

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**FLORIDA**

**Baxter R. Murrell**  
Winter Park High School

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**GEORGIA**

**Paris J. Stroud**  
Paulding County High School

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**HAWAII**

**Ari Dalbert**  
Homeschool

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**IDAHO**

**Cheyenne A. Schultz**  
Teton High School

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**ILLINOIS**

**Annabelle Emuze**  
Springfield Southeast High School

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**INDIANA**

**Emma Libersky**  
Plymouth High School

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**IOWA**

**Josie Kasik**  
Sergeant Bluff-Luton High School

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**KANSAS**

**Leanne Chun**  
Olathe South High School

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**KENTUCKY**

**Haley Bryan**  
Grant County High School

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**LOUISIANA**

**Kyla Rose Bates**  
Zachary High School

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**MAINE**

**Rose Horowitz**  
Mt. Ararat High School

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**MARYLAND**

**Kyle Fox Shreve**  
Tuscarora High School

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**MASSACHUSETTS**

**Caroline Sprague**  
Monument Mountain Regional  
High School

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**MICHIGAN**

**Coral Brantly**  
Petoskey High School

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**MINNESOTA**

**Cameron Patricia Downey**  
The Blake School

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**MISSISSIPPI**

**Joy Cariño**  
Mississippi School for Mathematics  
and Science

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**MISSOURI**

**Maya Michelle Bryant**  
Emil E. Holt Senior High School

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**MONTANA**

**Taylor Ann Rogers**  
Willard Alternative High School

# Champions

**NEBRASKA**

**Amanda Pohlman**  
Skutt Catholic High School

**NEVADA**

**Dominique Groffman**  
Douglas High School

**NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**Dessaline Etienne**  
Goffstown High School

**NEW JERSEY**

**Beatrice Dimaculangan**  
Jonathan Dayton High School

**NEW MEXICO**

**Rachel Patty**  
Raton High School

**NEW YORK**

**Nichola Metzger**  
Brighton High School

**NORTH CAROLINA**

**Casey Ryan Goggin**  
Pinecrest High School

**NORTH DAKOTA**

**Zachary Howatt**  
Northern Cass School

**OHIO**

**Sarah Binau**  
Bexley High School

**OKLAHOMA**

**Edson Alvarado**  
Bethany High School

**OREGON**

**Gypsy Prince**  
Academy of Arts & Academics

**PENNSYLVANIA**

**Elliot G. Davidson**  
Lewisburg Area High School

**PUERTO RICO**

**Roberto Jr. Claudio Montes**  
Escuela Superior Tecnológica  
Manuel Mediavilla Negrón

**RHODE ISLAND**

**Zoe Butler**  
Portsmouth Abbey School

**SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Joshua T. Mugabe**  
York Preparatory Academy

**SOUTH DAKOTA**

**Ashley Brage**  
Watertown High School

**TENNESSEE**

**Grace Whitten**  
Battle Ground Academy

**TEXAS**

**Sam Terry**  
Keystone School

**UNITED STATES  
VIRGIN ISLANDS**

**Jonathon Qualls**  
Antilles School

**UTAH**

**Sadie Belle Merkley**  
Box Elder High School

**VERMONT**

**Samuel Boudreau**  
Bellows Free Academy

**VIRGINIA**

**Ahkei Togun**  
Tallwood High School

**WASHINGTON**

**Alexandra Hanesworth**  
Anacortes High School

**WEST VIRGINIA**

**Neely Seams**  
Greenbrier East High School

**WISCONSIN**

**Ian Walls**  
Milwaukee High School of the Arts

**WYOMING**

**Dylan James Collins**  
Arvada-Clearmont High School

Out of more than 365,000 contestants in the 2015 Poetry Out Loud Recitation Contest, these are the 53 State Champions from all fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Congratulations to all!



# Semifinal One

April 28, 9:00 am

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## NEW YORK

### Nichola Metzger

"The Pulley" by George Herbert

"In Memoriam: Martin Luther King, Jr." by June Jordan

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## RHODE ISLAND

### Zoe Butler

"Ode to the Midwest" by Kevin Young

"The Good-Morrow" by John Donne

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## DELAWARE

### Hannah R. Sturgis

"The Applicant" by Sylvia Plath

"Snake Oil, Snake Bite" by Dilruba Ahmed

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## CONNECTICUT

### Owen Elphick

"Digging" by Seamus Heaney

"To Autumn" by John Keats

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## NEW HAMPSHIRE

### Dessaline Etienne

"Weighing In" by Rhina P. Espaillat

"The Man with the Hoe" by Edwin Markham

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## MAINE

### Rose Horowitz

"Lovers' Infiniteness" by John Donne

"Entirely" by Louis MacNeice

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## MASSACHUSETTS

### Caroline Sprague

"Sonnet 15: When I consider everything that grows"

by William Shakespeare

"The Golden Shovel" by Terrance Hayes

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## PENNSYLVANIA

### Elliot G. Davidson

"It Isn't Me" by James Lasdun

"Holy Sonnets: Death, be not proud" by John Donne

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## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

### Daiana M. James

"Ars Poetica" by Archibald MacLeish

"Tomorrow" by Dennis O'Driscoll

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**SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Joshua T. Mugabe**

*"Song of Myself: 35" by Walt Whitman*

*"Ozymandias" by Percy Bysshe Shelley*

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**MARYLAND**

**Kyle Fox Shreve**

*"Possible Answers to Prayer" by Scott Cairns*

*"Dover Beach" by Matthew Arnold*

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**NORTH CAROLINA**

**Casey Ryan Goggin**

*"To Elsie" by William Carlos Williams*

*"The Applicant" by Sylvia Plath*

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**NEW JERSEY**

**Beatrice Dimaculangan**

*"The Bones of My Father" by Etheridge Knight*

*"A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the  
Road Unknown" by Walt Whitman*

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**VERMONT**

**Samuel Boudreau**

*"Novel" by Arthur Rimbaud*

*"Degrees of Gray in Philipsburg" by Richard Hugo*

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**WEST VIRGINIA**

**Neely Seams**

*"Mi Historia" by David Dominguez*

*"Epitaph on the Tombstone of a Child, the Last of Seven  
that Died Before" by Aphra Behn*

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**OHIO**

**Sarah Binau**

*"After Apple Picking" by Robert Frost*

*"The Author to Her Book" by Anne Bradstreet*

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**UNITED STATES  
VIRGIN ISLANDS**

**Jonathon Qualls**

*"Advice to a Prophet" by Richard Wilbur*

*"Ecology" by Jack Collom*

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**VIRGINIA**

**Ahkei Togun**

*"Football" by Louis Jenkins*

*"The Canonization" by John Donne*

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# Semifinal Two

April 28, 1:00 pm

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## NEBRASKA

### Amanda Pohlman

"There Are Birds Here" by Jamaal May

"Mad Song" by William Blake

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## ARKANSAS

### Carol Pollard

"a song in the front yard" by Gwendolyn Brooks

"The Bones of My Father" by Etheridge Knight

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## WISCONSIN

### Ian Walls

"The American Soldier" by Philip Freneau

"Hysteria" by Dionisio D. Martinez

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## MISSISSIPPI

### Joy Cariño

"It Isn't Me" by James Lasdun

"To David, About His Education" by Howard Nemerov

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## INDIANA

### Emma Libersky

"A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the  
Road Unknown" by Walt Whitman

"Ode on a Grecian Urn" by John Keats

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## PUERTO RICO

### Roberto Jr. Claudio Montes

"On Monsieur's Departure" by Queen Elizabeth I

"Danse Russe" by William Carlos Williams

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## KENTUCKY

### Haley Bryan

"Domestic Situation" by Ernest Hilbert

"For Love" by Robert Creeley

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## GEORGIA

### Paris J. Stroud

"The Death of Allegory" by Billy Collins

"Ode on a Grecian Urn" by John Keats

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## LOUISIANA

### Kyla Rose Bates

"I'm a Fool to Love You" by Cornelius Eady

"I felt a Funeral, in my Brain" by Emily Dickinson

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**TENNESSEE****Grace Whitten**

*"The Applicant"* by Sylvia Plath

**"Make a Law So That the Spine Remembers  
Wings"** by Larry Levis

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**MISSOURI****Maya Michelle Bryant**

*"Self-Help"* by Michael Ryan

*"The Ocean"* by Nathaniel Hawthorne

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**MICHIGAN****Coral Brantly**

*"The Gaffe"* by C.K. Williams

*"Song for the Last Act"* by Louise Bogan

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**OKLAHOMA****Edson Alvarado**

*"Degrees of Gray in Philipsburg"* by Richard Hugo

**"A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the  
Road Unknown"** by Walt Whitman

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**ILLINOIS****Annabelle Emuze**

*"Celebration for June 24"* by Thomas McGrath

*"The Blackstone Rangers"* by Gwendolyn Brooks

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**FLORIDA****Baxter R. Murrell**

*"Baudelaire"* by Delmore Schwartz

*"A Locked House"* by W.D. Snodgrass

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**ALABAMA****Nicole Louw**

*"Memory as a Hearing Aid"* by Tony Hoagland

*"On Virtue"* by Phillis Wheatley

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**KANSAS****Leanne Chun**

*"The Pulley"* by George Herbert

*"And Soul"* by Eavan Boland

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**IOWA****Josie Kasik**

*"For the young who want to"* by Marge Piercy

*"Abandoned Farmhouse"* by Ted Kooser

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# Semifinal Three

April 28, 5:00 pm

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## MINNESOTA

### Cameron Patricia Downey

"The World Is Too Much With Us" by William Wordsworth

"Ode to the Midwest" by Kevin Young

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## COLORADO

### Jeana Lovett

"The Hospital Window" by James L. Dickey

"An Autumn Sunset" by Edith Wharton

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## NEW MEXICO

### Rachel Patty

"Jabberwocky" by Lewis Carroll

"Over and Under" by John Brehm

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## MONTANA

### Taylor Ann Rogers

"The Applicant" by Sylvia Plath

"Planetarium" by Adrienne Rich

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## WASHINGTON

### Alexandra Hanesworth

"It Isn't Me" by James Lasdun

"The Empty Dance Shoes" by Cornelius Eady

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## NEVADA

### Dominique Groffman

"Planetarium" by Adrienne Rich

"To Live with a Landscape" by Constance Urdang

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## WYOMING

### Dylan James Collins

"Dulce et Decorum Est" by Wilfred Owen

"every single day" by John Straley

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## NORTH DAKOTA

### Zachary Howatt

"Machines" by Michael Donaghy

"The Tables Turned" by William Wordsworth

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## CALIFORNIA

### Levi Lakota Lowe

"A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the  
Road Unknown" by Walt Whitman

"They Feed They Lion" by Philip Levine

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UTAH

**Sadie Belle Merkley**

**"I Remember, I Remember"** by Thomas Hood

**"Full Moon"** by Elinor Wylie

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IDAHO

**Cheyenne A. Schultz**

**"A Poison Tree"** by William Blake

**"The Uniform"** by Marvin Bell

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OREGON

**Gypsy Prince**

**"Mrs. Caldera's House of Things"** by Gregory Djanikian

**"Backdrop addresses cowboy"** by Margaret Atwood

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ALASKA

**Maeva Ordaz**

**"The Nail"** by C.K. Williams

**"Ode on a Grecian Urn"** by John Keats

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TEXAS

**Sam Terry**

**"The Windhover"** by Gerard Manley Hopkins

**"Monet Refuses the Operation"** by Lisel Mueller

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SOUTH DAKOTA

**Ashley Brage**

**"For the young who want to"** by Marge Piercy

**"Ovation"** by Carol Muske-Dukes

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HAWAII

**Ari Dalbert**

**"Old Men Playing Basketball"** by B.H. Fairchild

**"Sonnet 55: Not marble, nor the gilded monuments"**

by William Shakespeare

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ARIZONA

**Zaskia Natalie Villa**

**"Movement Song"** by Audre Lorde

**"Deliberate"** by Amy Uyematsu

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## PRIZES

### NATIONAL FINALS

#### 1st place

\$20,000 award

#### 2nd place

\$10,000 award

#### 3rd place

\$5,000 award

#### 4th–9th places

\$1,000 award

The schools of the top nine finalists will receive \$500 for the purchase of poetry books.

The fourth-place student in each semifinal competition will receive an honorable mention award of \$1,000, with \$500 to their school library for the purchase of poetry books.

### STATE FINALS

More than \$50,000 in cash and school stipends were awarded at state final competitions.

*Awards will be made in the form of lump sum cash payouts, reportable to the IRS. Tax liabilities are the sole responsibility of the winners and their families.*

## PRODUCTION

**Michael Baron** (director) is the Artistic Director of Lyric Theatre of Oklahoma and has directed over 80 productions at theaters across the country. Most recently at Lyric, he directed *Les Miserables*, *A Little Night Music*, *An Inspector Calls*, *Triangle*, Disney's *Tarzan*, *Big River*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, *Call Me Madam* with Tony winner Beth Leavel, *Spring Awakening*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Ragtime*, and *Oliver!* Baron's other directing highlights include the recent production of *Peter and the Starcatcher* at Zach Theatre, this past season's production of *A Christmas Carol* at Ford's Theatre, and *A Year with Frog and Toad* at Adventure Theatre, for which he received a 2012 Helen Hayes award for Best Direction of a Musical. He earned his MFA in Directing from Brown University/Trinity Repertory Company and a BA in Theatre from Wake Forest University.



### ASL INTERPRETERS

#### Finals

Jessica Gabrian and Andrea K. Smith

#### Semifinals

Cheryl Ringel and Heidi Johnson

**Chris Burns** is a DC-based music producer, promoter, and DJ with over 15 years experience. Burns is regularly called upon to play at some of DC's most acclaimed venues, including U Street Music Hall, Flash, Eighteenth Street Lounge, and the 9:30 Club. He has released original music and remixes, and engineered projects for labels such as Italians Do It Better, Nervous, Quantize/Unquantize, New Jersey Records, Plant, and his own recording label, Mysteries of the Mind. Burns is also a licensed real estate agent in DC and Maryland.

<http://chrisburnsdc.com>  
<http://soundcloud.com/chrisburns>

## MUSICAL GUEST

### Gabriel Kahane

Hailed by *Rolling Stone* as “one of the year’s very best albums,” Gabriel Kahane’s major label debut, *The Ambassador* (Sony Music), is a meditation on the underbelly of Los Angeles seen through the lens of ten street addresses. The acclaimed album was conceived for the stage as well, in a production directed by Tony winner John Tiffany and seen this season at the Brooklyn Academy of Music’s Next Wave Festival, as well as at the Center for the Art of Performance at the University of California, Los Angeles. A tireless collaborator, Kahane’s recent credits include a track on this year’s *Beck Song Reader* (Warby Parker), an album that also features Jack White, Jarvis Cocker, Laura Marling, and Beck himself; an appearance on Blake Mills’ *Heigh Ho*; several projects with Sufjan Stevens; as well as performances and recordings with Chris Thile of Punch Brothers, with whom Gabriel toured this spring. Dividing his time between the club, the theater, and the concert hall, Kahane has been commissioned by, among others, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Carnegie Hall, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Kronos Quartet, and Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. His musical, *February House*, was commissioned and produced by the Public Theater in New York, where it received its world premiere in 2012. He lives in Brooklyn.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### POETRY OUT LOUD IS MANAGED AT THE STATE LEVEL BY

Alabama State Council  
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Alaska State Council on the Arts

Arizona Commission on the Arts

Arkansas Arts Council

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Delaware Division of the Arts

DC Commission on the  
Arts and Humanities

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and many incredible partners

### THE NATIONAL FINALS ARE THE RESULT OF THE REMARKABLE EFFORTS OF

Karen Newell and Mid Atlantic  
Arts Foundation, Peggy  
Dahlquist, Michael Baron, DJ  
Chris Burns, guest hosts and  
judges, and staff at the National  
Endowment for the Arts and  
Poetry Foundation.

“Think not of winning, but of the message of your words. They will carry you further than you know, on and off stage.”

Anita Norman, 2014 National Poetry Out Loud Champion

[www.poetryoutloud.org](http://www.poetryoutloud.org)



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