

“Now” By Hannah Senesh (1938)

Now—now I’d like to say something,
Something more than mere words,
More dappled than color,
More musical than rhythm or rhyme,
Something a million people haven’t already said or heard.
Just something.
All about the land is silent, listening,
The forest gazing at me, expectant.
The sky watches me with a curious eye.
Everything is silent. And so am I.

By All Indications

By Kari Gunter-Seymour, Poet Laureate of Ohio

I spent time today studying
forehead lines, linked into yet another
Zoom meeting, my screen a window
of windows inside a dollhouse.
I like to think I have good ears
and what I hear from Ohioans
is this — grateful.
Grateful for a governor who believes
in masks and distancing, feeding
displaced school children and poetry.
Grateful for an unusual autumn of sun
and balmy breezes prevailing
well into November, leaves clinging
to their colors like a Matisse painting
or a toddler with a fist of Crayolas.
The election is over. Time moves,
then moves again and forehead lines
are bar charts, flesh and bone
diagrams of courage.

After Many and Much

By Kevin Stein, Former Poet Laureate of Illinois

have been taken from us, we gather what remains
like hallowed guests at our otherwise empty table.
Feast of hunger, insatiable if consolable, we welcome
the checkout girl whose eyes smile above her mask,
our improv Zoom bedtime stories, his smile-pained wave
behind panes of glass, corn in its bin and acres harrowed
before snows, assembly lines birthing their progeny,
the crimson maple leaf alighted in a boy's front-porch lap,
the ballot cast, the television muted like index to lips,
shoosh — This sudden apothecary of hope like sugar
upon the tongue, your ungloved hand in mine.

Thanks, With Northern Lights

By Joyce Sutphen, Poet Laureate of Minnesota

In Minnesota, from Main Street
to Highway 61, from Paisley Park

to Park Rapids, we're thankful for
snow that comes down from Canada

covering the leaves we didn't rake
and how sometimes after that, we

get a heat wave and a second chance
to put things right in the world

so we can meet our friends in a park
and savor being together (safely

apart). We feel so lucky that we smile
our biggest smiles behind our masks,

making our eyes crinkle and shine
like the elusive Northern Lights